

The case for case workers

Reimagining the Jobcentre
service



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Summary

In November, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) published the [Get Britain Working white paper](#), which outlined a plan to reform Jobcentres. The main aim of the reforms is to increase employment and move more people on benefits into work. This discussion paper provides a vision of what a reformed Jobcentre could look like.

Our central proposal is to introduce a new role: the case worker. This would overhaul the work coach role by splitting it into two separate positions. The case worker would be the primary point of contact for service users, providing ongoing pastoral and practical support, and making referrals for more specialist support. The second role, the careers advisor, would be a specialist in employment support, meeting service users when they need in-depth job coaching. We also propose introducing a benefits advisor, bringing in-house some of the support that the DWP currently only offers over the phone.

In combination, these roles would help to target support more efficiently, so that service users only see the staff members who can help with their specific needs. They would have access to more comprehensive, specialist advice, which over time could adapt to their changing needs. Jobcentre staff training would also be much more targeted, allowing staff to specialise and offering more opportunities for career development within the Jobcentre.

In the reformed Jobcentre sanctions would be treated as a backstop, as proposed in the Get Britain Working white paper. Claimants could still be sanctioned for failing to make adequate efforts to search for work. However, in a departure from current rules, the claimant commitment would be scrapped and there wouldn't be specific tasks they must complete. Instead, Jobcentre staff would agree a support plan with claimants centred around what a reasonable effort to engage with the Jobcentre might look like for them. Additional safeguarding measures would be introduced to ensure discretion is used consistently and fairly. This would help Jobcentre staff to build more trusting relationships with benefits claimants.

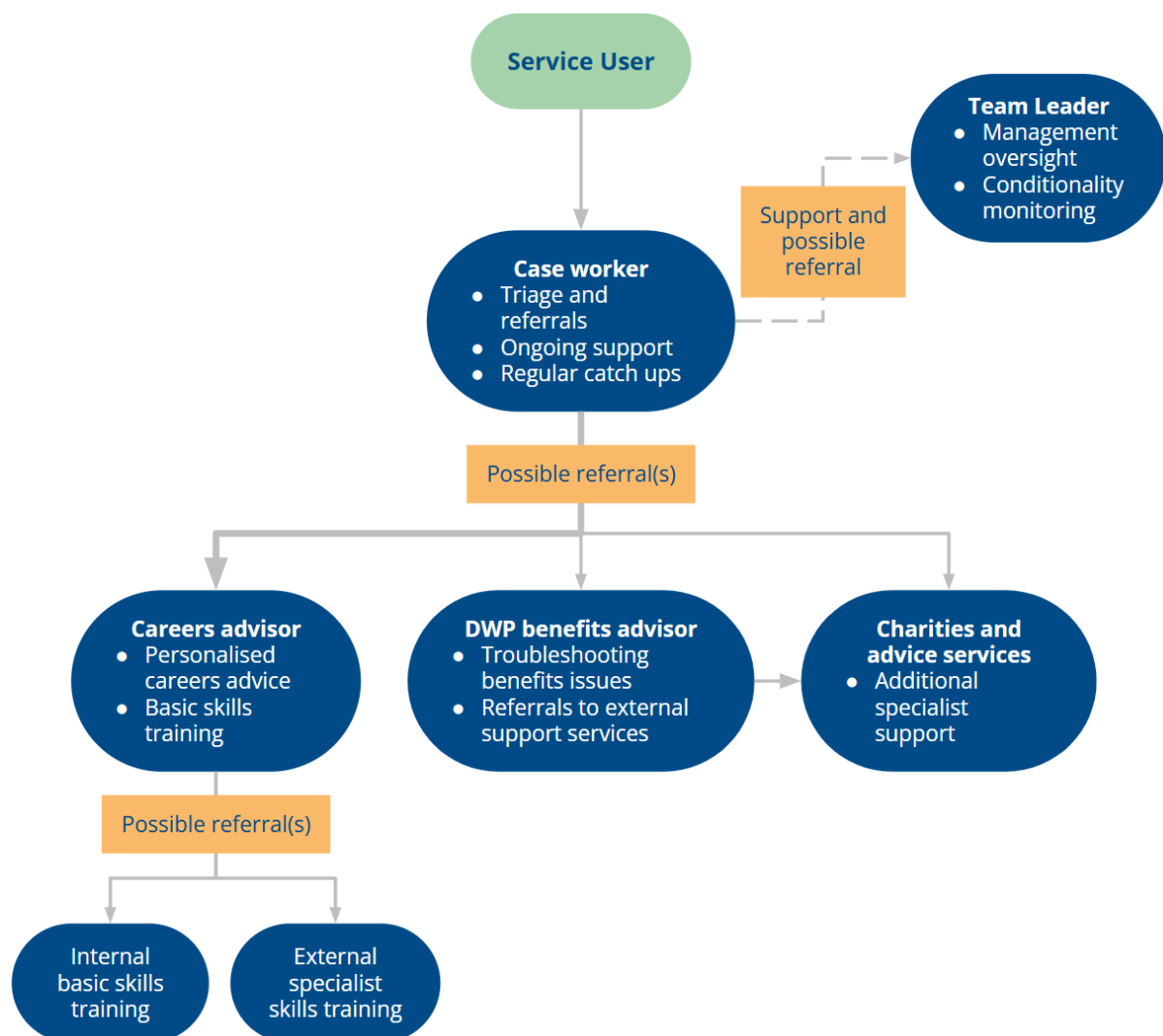
The claimants' path at the Jobcentre would typically follow these steps:

1. Initial appointment with a case worker to identify needs, including whether advice is needed on careers, benefits, housing, etc

2. The case worker refers the claimant to relevant internal and external advisors, including DWP benefits advisors, charities and advice services
3. Where needed, a careers advisor provides personalised support and makes referrals to external organisations, including training providers, adult education institutions and job fairs
4. Claimants see careers and benefits advisors as and when needed
5. Regular check-ins with the case worker, at a frequency and channel decided based on a joint assessment of need (e.g. monthly phone calls)

For service users who don't claim benefits, the path would be similar. They would be offered check-ins with their case worker based on their needs and preferences. The following flow chart summarises this support path.

Figure 1: Flow chart showing service users' support path



The future of the Jobcentre

Background

In November, the DWP published the [Get Britain Working white paper](#), which outlined a plan to reform Jobcentres. The main aim of the reforms is to increase employment and move more people on benefits into work. Central to this reform is the merging of Jobcentre Plus with the National Careers Service, to create a new national jobs and careers service.

In the [Pathways to Work green paper](#), published in March, the DWP also proposed significant changes to disability benefits. One of the key consequences is that many disabled people will become subject to conditionality who were previously exempt. This means that their benefits payments will be dependent on fulfilling a set of work-related requirements. As a result, Jobcentres will need to support people who don't currently meet with a work coach.

In January, we published [research](#) examining the relationships between work coaches and Universal Credit (UC) claimants. We interviewed UC claimants and Citizens Advice advisers, surveyed our network of advisers, and visited 2 Jobcentres where we spoke informally with work coaches, team leaders and senior staff.

Based on the evidence from our research, this paper proposes a vision for how Jobcentres could be restructured to better support people in their search for work. This paper is intended to provoke discussion and further thinking, rather than to provide a blueprint. For a full understanding of the rationale behind this paper, it should be read in conjunction with our report [Found anything yet?](#)

Work coach support today

Currently, work coaches are the main point of contact for people accessing the Jobcentre. They have two primary roles, the first is providing practical and pastoral support to claimants, and the second is providing employment support. Their tasks include providing work search assistance, referring claimants for skills training, safeguarding, wellbeing support, benefits advice and monitoring claimants' compliance with their claimant commitment. Our research shows that

work coaches are often overstretched and have limited time to provide this support - typically just 10 minute appointments.

Claimants told us that they often see different work coaches and find it draining and frustrating to repeat personal information to new people. There is also excessive focus on monitoring compliance. The claimant commitment sets out the requirements that claimants must agree to in order to receive their UC payments. This sets the tone for the relationship as one-sided and raises the threat of sanctions from the beginning. Many claimants felt the risk of being sanctioned undermined trust in their relationships with their work coaches.

Work coaches have discretion to alter, reduce or pause the requirements on claimants. The use of discretion is vital to successful relationships, as it allows work coaches to offer flexibility and tailored support. In practice, though, their use of discretion is limited and some claimants' needs are not adequately taken into account. For example, some people are asked to look for work when they aren't well enough. Stronger safeguarding is needed to ensure work coaches apply their discretion appropriately.

Our vision

This discussion paper provides a vision of what the new service could look like. We argue that DWP should end the current focus on benefits compliance and build a more compassionate service that actively supports claimants. As outlined in the Get Britain Working white paper, we support the goal for the Jobcentre to provide meaningful employment support for anyone who wants it.

To achieve this, we believe a reformed Jobcentre should provide:

1. **A tailored service** that meets the differing needs of service users
2. **An effective service** that offers constructive employment support
3. **A skilled service** founded on targeted and specialised staff training
4. **A welcoming service** that builds consistent, trust-based support relationships

To achieve these aims, we propose introducing a new role: the case worker. This overhauls the work coach role by splitting it into two separate positions. The case worker would be the primary point of contact for all service users, providing ongoing pastoral and practical support, and making referrals for more specialist

support. The second role, the careers advisor, would be a specialist in employment support, offering service users in-depth job coaching.

The new structure is intended to address a number of existing issues. The first issue is that work coach support is currently limited and not well tailored to the different needs of service users. For example, not everyone needs in-depth employment support, while others need very specialist support. The case worker would be able to assess individual needs, including light-touch employment support, and make targeted referrals to relevant advisors.

Second, our research shows that employment support is currently very limited. By splitting the work coach role, careers advisors would focus on providing high quality employment support, while the case worker focuses on pastoral and practical support. With a narrower remit and improved training, careers advisors would be able to offer higher quality employment support.

Third, training for work coaches is inconsistent and often lacks detail, such as how different health conditions can affect people. By splitting up the work coach role, training would be more targeted and specialised, offering staff a deeper knowledge of topics relevant to their domain. Generalist case workers would likely need less training than current work coaches, so training resources could be directed accordingly.

Fourth, many claimants find it difficult having to repeat personal information to multiple work coaches and DWP staff members. In this model, the case worker would provide a consistent, trust-based relationship with the service user. It would be their ongoing responsibility to pass on information to other staff members as required, rather than the service user. There should be a consistent protocol for how information is shared, to ensure that staff are adequately informed and that service users have a say in what is shared.

These changes, along with others, are outlined in more detail below.

Acknowledgements

The author is grateful to Jagna Olejniczak, Craig Berry, Maddy Rose, Becca Stacey and Simon Collerton for advice and support with this paper. Thanks to Andrew Phillips at Phoenix Insights and Tom Pollard at NEF for helpful conversations and feedback that contributed significantly to this work.

New roles within the Jobcentre

Central to this paper is the proposal to introduce case workers as part of the Jobcentre service. The work coach role would be separated into case workers and careers advisors. This chapter provides more detail on these positions, as well as other new roles that strengthen the service provided by the reformed Jobcentre.

Case worker

- Primary point of contact for service users
- Has regular check-ins with benefits claimants
- Provides ongoing pastoral and practical support
- Refers service users for more specialist support

The case worker would be responsible for providing the pastoral and practical support that is currently provided by work coaches. They would be the first point of contact for anyone using the Jobcentre, offering a triage service and ongoing support. They would assess service users' needs and refer them for more specialist support, as appropriate. These referrals might include internal careers advice, support applying for benefits, and help from charities and advice services.¹

Case workers would provide light-touch employment support. This might include proofreading and general feedback on CVs or job applications. They could also offer practical support with preparing for job interviews, such as guidance on travel arrangements or accessing the Household Support Fund. For service users needing more in-depth employment support, case workers would refer them to a [careers advisor](#).

The relationship between the service user and case worker would be sustained throughout their engagement with the Jobcentre. Only in exceptional

¹ This role builds on the 'welcome and triage' position proposed in Demos' report [Open Door Policy](#) (see p.44). Particular thanks to Andrew Phillips for our conversations developing this aspect of the proposal.

circumstances, such as a member of staff leaving their role or at the service user's request, should they be allocated a different case worker.

The case worker would act as an ongoing gateway to services and would have primary responsibility for safeguarding and checking on service users' wellbeing. They also would monitor benefits claimants' efforts to engage with the system in a light-touch way, but wouldn't refer people for sanctions.²

Benefits claimants would be required to keep in regular contact with their case worker via email, phone, video call or in person. The frequency and channel of this contact would be adapted to the needs of the individual, agreed with the claimant based on a joint assessment of need. For example, someone receiving intensive employment support from a careers advisor might only need periodic phone calls with their case worker.

Someone who is seeking work but doesn't need sustained employment support might have more frequent meetings with their case worker. Their case worker would monitor progress and any changes to their support needs. These service users would benefit most from case workers' light-touch employment support.

Service users who don't claim benefits would be offered meetings with their case worker as they wish but with no particular requirements.

Our research shows that many benefits claimants find it difficult having to repeat personal information to multiple work coaches and DWP staff members. In our service model, they would explain their circumstances and needs to their case worker in order to access support. The case worker can then, with service users' permission, pass on relevant information in any referrals so it's not necessary for the service user to repeat what they have already shared.

The sustained nature of the relationship would help to tackle the challenges some claimants currently face in not seeing the same work coach over time. It would be the case worker's responsibility to pass on information to other staff members, rather than the service user.

The case worker would have knowledge of benefits and the stakeholder landscape but wouldn't provide detailed advice. Their training would primarily focus on customer service skills, including building trusting relationships,

² See [Changes to welfare conditionality](#) below for more detail on this.

safeguarding and triaging users according to needs. They would also be given basic training in employment support.

Careers advisor

- Specialist in employment support
- Meet service users when they need in-depth job coaching
- Refer service users for training, further education and job fairs

Careers advisors would provide employment support to both benefits claimants and any other service users. They would help to identify jobs, discuss training needs, provide support and feedback on CVs, and discuss career goals. They could also offer mock interviews and one-to-one application support. This role would benefit from the merging of Jobcentre Plus with the National Careers Service (NCS), as they can use the information, training and tools from the NCS to provide advice and support.

Careers advisors would be responsible for referring service users for training, further education and job fairs. They would have a detailed knowledge of the training available, both internally and externally, as well as the local employment market.

Some benefits claimants don't need active employment support if they already have the tools to apply for jobs, such as those with established skills or professions. These claimants wouldn't see a careers advisor on a regular basis - only as and when they need employment advice. They would instead regularly meet with a case worker, who would be able to refer them for employment support as needed.

As with the existing work coach role, there is significant scope for careers advisors to specialise. As with existing work coaches, specialisms would include long-term unemployment, disabilities and health conditions, self-employment, younger people and older workers. Careers advisors could also specialise in particular professions, particularly in areas where there are regional and local industrial specialisms.

Benefits advisor

- Bring in-house some support currently provided through DWP phone lines
- Answer benefits questions, offer advice on possible benefit eligibility and help to troubleshoot issues

Currently, work coaches spend a significant amount of time in appointments answering claimant's queries about their benefits claims. This is time consuming and work coaches often lack the time and training to sufficiently answer questions and resolve issues. Some claimants also receive inconsistent information from different work coaches, which leaves them confused. Instead, we propose a new benefits advisor role within the Jobcentre, to whom case workers would refer claimants for benefits support.

The benefits advisor role would bring into the Jobcentre some of the support that people currently get over the phone with their benefits claims from DWP. These advisors would answer questions, offer advice on possible benefit eligibility and help to troubleshoot issues. For more complex issues, they can then refer people for other DWP support (such as phone lines) and external advice (such as Citizens Advice).

The overall level of benefits support that the DWP provides would remain unchanged, although it would increase the support available directly in the Jobcentre.

Benefits advisors based in the Jobcentre would be able to provide quicker and more accessible assistance for initial enquiries and simpler issues. It may be costly for the DWP to train staff in this additional role, which goes beyond the current scope of work coaches. However, it's likely to save significant time for work coaches (or case workers in the new model) and reduce calls to DWP support lines. It would also help to resolve costly benefits issues before they escalate, reducing costs for the DWP and claimants, as well as reducing claimant stress and related harms.

This role could also be partially performed by external advice services, such as Citizens Advice, co-located in the Jobcentre. Additional funding would be needed

to bring in external support, however this could reduce the costs of training DWP staff to provide benefits advice.

In addition to the benefits advisor role, it would also be beneficial to introduce more in-depth, and wide-ranging professional advice to the Jobcentre.

Co-location of charitable advice services within Jobcentres could offer claimants quick access to support that goes beyond the remit of Jobcentre staff.

People getting support from the Jobcentre often have multiple complex issues that cause them stress and lead to them being less able to engage in work search activities. Bringing advice services into the Jobcentre building would help DWP to develop a holistic and effective service, empowering jobseekers to address the multiple issues they face and support them to gain employment.

The service user experience

Currently, work coaches are responsible for providing employment support, pastoral care, conditionality monitoring, benefits support and external referrals. The table below summarises how existing work coach responsibilities would be distributed among Jobcentre staff in the proposed model.

Table 1: Proposed distribution of existing work coach responsibilities

Existing work coach tasks	Example activities	New responsibility
Regular one-to-one check-ins	Monitoring progress, referring for additional support	Case worker
Safeguarding and wellbeing support	Regular wellbeing checks, referrals for support	Case worker (with support from all staff)
Light-touch employment support	CV and application proofreading	Case worker
In-depth employment support	Careers guidance, job search support	Careers advisor
Skills training referrals	Referrals to Restart	Careers advisor
Benefits advice	Troubleshooting benefits issues, identifying possible benefits eligibility, referrals to external support services	DWP benefits advisor
Conditionality checks	Assessing work search efforts, sanctions referrals	Team leader (with support from all staff)

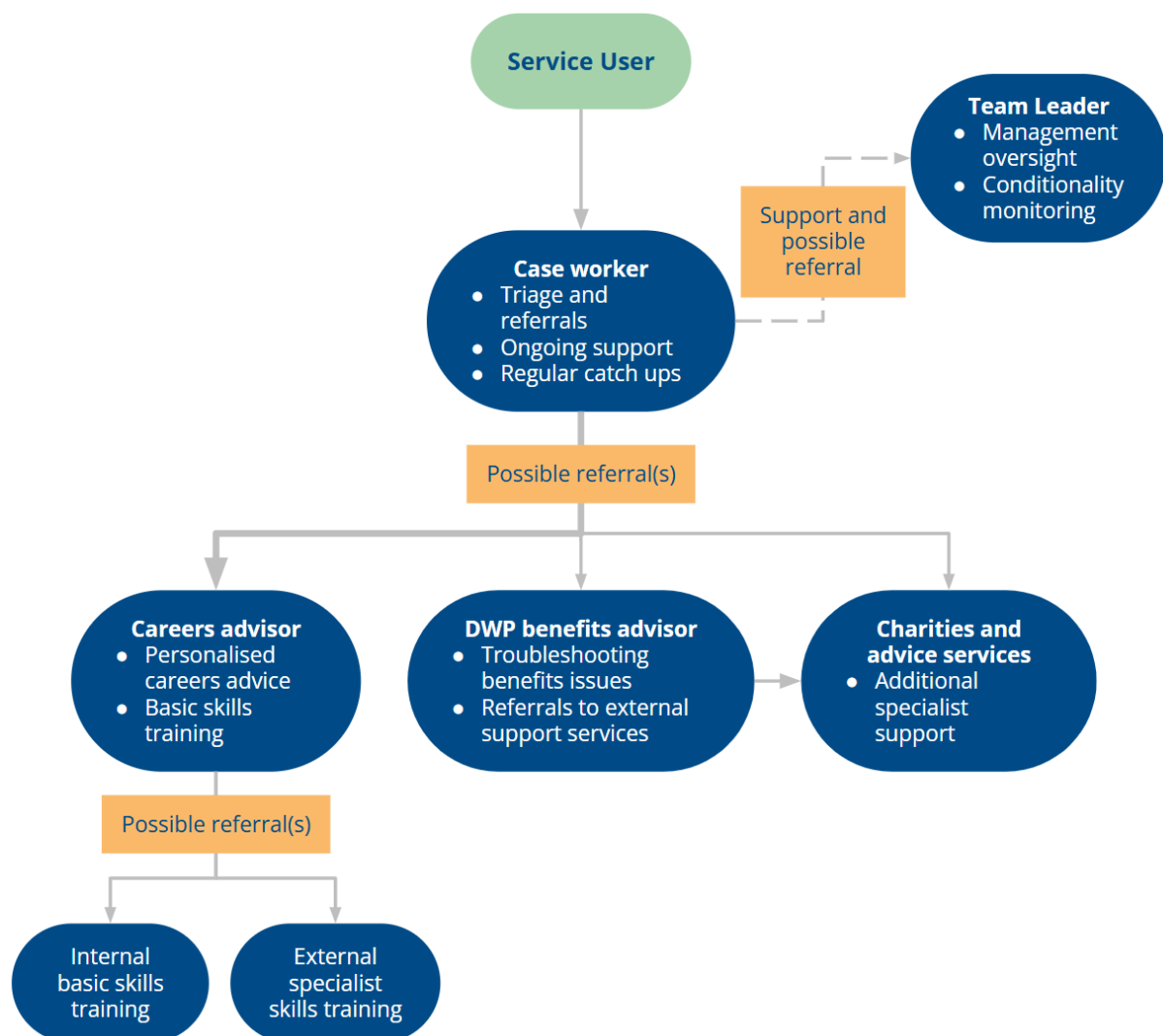
Based on these changes, we envision that benefits claimants' path at the Jobcentre would typically follow these steps:

1. Initial appointment with a case worker to identify needs, including whether advice is needed on careers, benefits, housing, etc
2. The case worker refers the claimant to relevant internal and external advisors, including DWP benefits advisors, charities and advice services

3. Where needed, a careers advisor provides personalised support and makes referrals to external organisations, including training providers, adult education institutions and job fairs
4. Claimants see careers and benefits advisors as and when needed
5. Regular check-ins with the case worker, at a frequency and channel decided based on a joint assessment of need (such as monthly phone calls)

The path would be similar for service users who don't claim benefits. They would be offered check-ins with their case worker as appropriate to their needs and preferences, but with no set requirements. The following flow chart summarises this support path.

Figure 1: Flow chart showing service users' support path



Making this work in practice

There are three general principles central to ensuring this structure would work in practice: flexibility, communication and safeguarding.

Flexibility

Currently, work coaches have some discretion in how they support claimants, as they are able to alter, reduce or pause the requirements on claimants. This use of discretion is vital to successful relationships, as it allows work coaches to offer flexibility and tailored support. In practice, though, their use of discretion is limited and some claimants' needs are not adequately taken into account. For example, some people are asked to look for work when they aren't well enough.

In this model, staff use of discretion would be extended to allow them to be more adaptable to the needs of different service users. Staff should be empowered to identify and discuss what is and isn't appropriate for any one service user. Where appropriate, policies and processes around provision of ongoing support and referrals shouldn't be prescriptive.

A key example is providing flexibility in who claimants talk to and when. If a claimant isn't regularly seeing any specialist advisors, their case worker meetings would be more frequent. Yet, in the event of the claimant needing a one-off careers advisor meeting, these case worker meetings might be paused. The overall aim would be that claimants aren't bombarded with meetings, just that they are regularly engaging in some way.

Communication

Clear and consistent communication between staff is necessary to provide flexible and tailored support. Effective referrals for specialist support will rely on case workers sharing accurate and detailed information about service users. Case workers' expectations of claimants must also be made clear to other staff members, particularly their team leader, so that their engagement can be monitored fairly. Advisors will need to keep case workers informed on the progress of the service users they're working with.

For example, if a claimant is having intensive employment support, they might not be seeing their case worker regularly. Instead, their case worker would regularly speak to the careers advisor to check on the claimants' progress and identify any concerns. The team leader would also be communicating with both staff members to ensure the claimant is engaging in good faith.

Relatedly, it's vital that staff communication with service users is clear, consistent and accessible. Strong communication is particularly important if a team leader is working with a claimant who has disengaged. Their expectations for the claimant and any relevant processes should be clearly stated both verbally and in writing. However, all staff should prioritise communicating clearly and inclusively with service users, adapting to their needs as required.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is also essential. When there is staff discretion and flexibility, this means there is more opportunity for errors or malpractice. Our research shows that some claimants find their work coaches condescending and belittling. A common sentiment was that work coaches wanted to catch people out and waited for them to make a mistake. Some felt their work coaches wanted to punish them, for example by referring them for sanctions without a fair reason.

Stronger safeguarding is therefore needed to ensure that staff apply their discretion appropriately. Team leaders should check in with all staff regularly, periodically observing meetings and providing regular staff training. Case workers would be primarily responsible for safeguarding but all staff would be expected to contribute.

A clear, transparent and consistent complaints process should be established and information about it should be easily available to service users. Service users should be able to access team leaders to discuss concerns, even when these concerns don't amount to formal complaints. There should also be an explicit option for complaints to be handled independently where needed.

Changes to conditionality would also support greater safeguarding. As outlined [below](#), we propose introducing a formal warning process and making team leaders responsible for sanctions referrals. This would increase opportunities to identify and address underlying issues and reduce harm to claimants.

Provision of on-site basic training

Many Jobcentres currently provide some basic training sessions on-site. We propose expanding the range of courses available, including providing support aimed at disabled people who will be newly required to engage with the Jobcentre. This could include sessions on accessing existing support with returning to work, such as Access to Work and occupational health. The training could also provide help with career change due to a health issue or redundancy. The courses would mostly be run by careers advisors, but there is scope for some to be run by specialists and local employers. More specialist and detailed training would still be outsourced to external training providers.

In-house training is likely to be impractical at many of the smaller Jobcentres, so larger Jobcentres would act as central hubs for training. Where possible, the most popular courses would rotate between smaller offices so that at least some training is provided locally. The DWP should cover travel expenses for benefits claimants attending these courses, especially in cases where training can't be provided at the local Jobcentre.

There would be additional costs to the DWP in providing this service, including additional staff training, provision of space and claimants' travel costs. However, there would be significant benefits. Jobcentre staff would have an understanding of both local labour market needs and local barriers to employment. They could therefore provide more effective, localised training tailored to the service users. Barriers to entry would be lower for service users, including disabled people, as training would be provided in a local, familiar environment. Careers advisors and case workers would see the direct impact of the training and be able to regularly review and improve it.

More broadly, expanding training provision could help to change service users' perceptions of the Jobcentre. It would be viewed as a place where you are directly provided with meaningful help, rather than simply referred elsewhere. For Jobcentre staff, the potential to become a trainer would also provide career development opportunities. This could help to attract talent, as it would make the careers advisor role more varied, and reduce turnover of staff.

Costs

In the Pathways to Work green paper, the government has committed to new employment support spending. It is important that at least some of this money is invested in Jobcentre reform. Currently the Jobcentre service is overstretched and not effective at moving people into good, meaningful and sustainable work. Investment is needed to make employment support more effective and to ensure that claimants' individual needs are supported.

We acknowledge that these proposals will cost money and require significant time to enact. However, investment in providing a more effective service will have longer term pay offs in terms of higher employment, which will ultimately bring costs down.

Our proposals also offer some modest operational cost savings in the medium to long term. Training case workers will be cheaper and more efficient than work coaches, as they will need very limited training in employment support. Careers advisors would need more in-depth training than work coaches currently receive, however their training in benefits administration would be significantly reduced.

Jobcentres are currently understaffed and face high turnover of staff. Our proposals offer an improved service with new opportunities for Jobcentre staff development and career progression. There is also scope to create a more positive working environment with greater job satisfaction. These improvements are likely to reduce staff turnover which would reduce recruitment costs and improve efficiency.

The benefits advisor role could also reduce costs elsewhere, as work coaches (or case workers in the new model) would spend less time dealing with benefits queries. Calls to DWP support lines would also be reduced and costly benefits issues will be resolved before they escalate. This would reduce costs for the DWP and claimants, as well as reducing claimant stress and related harms.

Changes to welfare conditionality

Replace the claimant commitment

Central to ensuring strong and trusting relationships between Jobcentre staff and benefits claimants is ending the current focus on benefits compliance. Our evidence shows that conditionality has a consistently negative impact on work coach relationships with claimants, which undermines the support they offer. In the reformed Jobcentre, in line with proposals from the [Get Britain Working white paper](#) and the [New Economics Foundation](#) (NEF), conditionality and sanctions would be treated as a backstop.³

Claimants could still be sanctioned for failing to make adequate efforts to search for work. However, in a departure from current rules, there wouldn't be specific tasks they must complete. Instead, Jobcentre staff would discuss with claimants what a reasonable effort to engage with the Jobcentre might look like for them.

The claimant commitment would be scrapped, as there would no longer be a need to document specific commitments. It would be replaced with a less formal support plan, in which the claimant and case worker would mutually agree a set of goals or objectives. The focus would no longer be on setting out specific steps the claimant would have to take, such as applying for a set number of jobs a week. Instead an objective might be to actively seek work by applying for a range of appropriate vacancies.

The plan would clearly state the support that the DWP would provide to help them achieve their goals. For example, the Jobcentre might commit to offering in-depth careers advice to identify skills and suggest suitable employment options. This would help to make the relationship more two-sided and increase accountability.

It would be important that the support plan isn't formalised in the first appointment. Claimants' first interactions with the Jobcentre would instead be focused on positive career discussions and relationship building. The support plan would be discussed over several appointments, with consultation from

³ This section draws heavily on NEF's work on conditionality. See: From compliance to engagement: rethinking the use of conditionality in our social security system, New Economics Foundation, 2023. Available [here](#).

other staff members, especially careers advisors, as needed. Ideally, the exact amount of time allowed to finalise the plan would remain flexible, but it would be reasonable for the DWP to set a limit on how long this should take.

Benefits claimants would be expected to meet regularly with their case worker, but attendance wouldn't be mandatory in the current sense. Case workers would be responsible for making genuine, repeated attempts to contact and encourage claimants who appear not to be engaging in good faith. If they repeatedly refused to engage with their case worker and (if relevant) their careers advisor, this would be escalated to a team leader who would begin a review process, with the possibility of sanctions.

As [proposed by NEE](#), claimants would be put on warning if they do not appear to be making genuine attempts to find work, in the style of a Performance Improvement Plan. At this stage it would be appropriate to set out a more formal commitment of specific tasks that are required of claimants, akin to the existing claimant commitment. This would more closely mimic the way that performance is monitored in the workplace. If a claimant consistently fails to engage after undergoing a formal review and warning process, the team leader would be responsible for referring them for a sanction.

These significant changes to conditionality should result in fewer sanctions, which would reduce the hardship they often cause. It would also reduce administrative and decision maker staffing costs, as fewer claimants would be referred for sanctions.

Separation of benefits compliance checking and employment support

- Team leaders would monitor benefits claimants' engagement and, when necessary, make sanctions referrals
- They would work closely with case workers and other colleagues to assess claimants' engagement
- Team leaders would put claimants on warning if they don't engage, using sanctions only as a last resort

Team leaders would be responsible for assessing claimants' efforts to search for work and, where necessary, referring people for sanctions. Monitoring benefits compliance harms work coaches' ability to form good relationships with claimants. This task therefore shouldn't fall to careers advisors or case workers, so they can build trust and reciprocity in their relationships with claimants.

Team leaders would primarily monitor claimants through checking in with their case workers and advisors. We would expect there to be ongoing conversations about the level of engagement that staff see during meetings and whether claimants are taking action appropriate to their circumstances. Claimants might be actively searching for work, attending training and/or engaging with health services. Case workers and advisors would therefore still monitor claimants, but wouldn't make any decisions, particularly around sanction referrals.

Conclusion

In our model, the work coach role would be split into two: a case worker and a careers advisor. The case worker would provide ongoing pastoral and practical support, and referrals for more specialist support. The careers advisor would be a specialist in employment support. Separately, an in-house benefits advisor would troubleshoot benefits issues and refer claimants to external advice services.

Team leaders would become responsible for assessing claimants' efforts to search for work and, where necessary, referring people for sanctions. This task wouldn't fall to careers advisors or case workers, to help them build trust and reciprocity in their relationships with claimants. A formal warning process would also improve opportunities to identify and address underlying issues before sanctions are applied.

In combination, these roles would help to target support more efficiently, so that service users only see the staff members who can help with their specific needs. They would have access to more comprehensive, specialist advice, which over time could adapt to their changing needs. Jobcentre staff training would also be much more targeted, allowing staff to specialise and offering more opportunities for career development within the Jobcentre.

Based on our vision, the reformed Jobcentre would offer:

1. **A tailored service** that meets the differing needs of service users
2. **An effective service** that offers constructive employment support
3. **A skilled service** founded on targeted and specialised staff training
4. **A welcoming service** that builds consistent, trust-based support relationships

A more flexible and tailored service will help Jobcentres to cope with the increased and different demand from UC health claimants. By ensuring appointments are always relevant to service users, Jobcentres can be more efficient and effective.

We acknowledge that these proposals will cost money and require significant time to enact. However, investment in providing a more effective service will have longer term pay offs in terms of higher employment, which will ultimately

bring costs down. In the Pathways to Work green paper, the government has committed to new employment support spending. It is important that at least some of this money is invested in Jobcentre reform. There is also the potential for some modest operational cost savings in the medium to long term, through more targeted and effective staff training and reduced staff turnover. The benefits advisor role could also save significant time for work coaches and help to resolve costly benefits issues before they escalate.

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