

Work Able Scotland Frequently Asked Questions 2017/18

1 April 2017

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Introduction

This document should be read in conjunction with the Work Able Scotland (WAS) Rules 2017-18. The WAS Rules are published in Provider Central together with supporting documentation:

Questions have been clustered under the following sections:

1. Service Provider Information for DWP and Service Provider Marketing
2. Pre Start
3. Entry and Re-entry
4. Action Plan
5. Exit
6. Progression and sustainment
7. Miscellaneous

Each updated version will show latest additions in **green**.

These FAQs will be reviewed **as and when required**.

1. Service Provider Information for DWP and Service Provider Marketing

Q1.1 Are Service Providers required to complete a Factsheet for each local area within their Contract Package Area (CPA) area?

A1.1 Yes, Service Providers should complete a separate Factsheet for each local area of their CPA, so that the differences in delivery are reflected for each local area. Factsheets are required to be approved by the Skills Development Scotland Provider Relationship Manager (PRM) prior to being distributed to DWP.

Q1.2 Do small changes in a Factsheet need approved by the SDS PRM?

A1.2 SDS would prefer if any change to the Factsheet was passed by the PRM in the first instance.

Q1.3 How do DWP receive the Referral Form they have to complete?

A1.3 DWP are issuing guidance to their work coaches and this will include the link to the Referral Form that is on SDS website.

2. Pre Start

Q2.1 When should the referral interview take place?

A2.1 The referral interview should take place 7 days from the date of the referral phone call from DWP.

Q2.2 What happens if the Customer is unable to attend the referral meeting within 7 days of the Service Provider receiving their details?

A2.2 SDS and DWP have agreed that if a referral meeting is not achievable within the 7 days then the Service Provider must agree a revised timescale with DWP and record the agreement on the Referral form. Work Able Scotland Rules have been updated accordingly.

Q2.3 When was the Referral Form amended?

A2.3 The Referral Form (completed by DWP) and associated Guidance Document have both been reviewed and updated. The updated documents were circulated to DWP on 14 June 2017 for immediate use and are now available on Provider Central. Please note that the previous version and the new version of the Referral Forms are acceptable for compliance purposes.

Q2.4 Can Service Providers pick up completed Referral Forms from the JobCentre?

A2.4 DWP staff have been informed that WAS Referral Forms must be posted to Service Providers. No alternatives can be used for transfer of Customer details between DWP and WAS Service Providers. Please note that for transfer of Participant details internally within Service Providers, between Service Providers and their sub contractors and between Service Providers and SDS, Service Providers must adhere to the SDS Information Security Policy (Appendix 9 of the WAS Rules).

Q2.5 Is a Customer who is in receipt of a qualifying benefit but working under 16hours per week as per the DWP “permitted work scheme” eligible for WAS

A2.5 Customers on the “permitted work scheme” are not eligible for WAS.

However, Participants can progress into “Permitted Work” whilst on WAS. If this is agreed as a suitable option for the Participant, the Service Providers must organise a case conference with JCP work coach and the Participant as soon as possible. For the avoidance of doubt, Participants

can move into “Permitted Work” prior to the case conference and Service Providers must continue to support these Participants whilst on WAS. “Permitted Work” is employment and can be used as evidence for a job outcome if it meets the criteria outlined in the WAS Rules.

Q2.6 Can expressions of interest made at Information Sessions be counted as referrals?

A2.6 No. The purpose of the group sessions is to generate interest that leads to a referral. You should only count actual JCP referrals received by the Single Point of Contact and these should be recorded on the daily spreadsheet

Q 2.7 What if takes longer than 28 days between referral and start date?

A 2.7 If the start date is beyond 28 days of the Referral Form being signed by DWP then DWP has to review the information supplied on the Referral Form to ensure that the individual is still eligible and suitable for the WAS. If the information has not changed or the changes can be updated on the original Referral form then an updated signature from DWP and the individual is enough to ensure that the requirement has been met (an email signature is acceptable and must be printed by the Service Provider and kept with the original Referral form). If the information has changed and the changes are not easily updated on the original form then a new form should be generated and signed.

Q2.8 What is the last date for referrals to WAS?

A2.8 Referrals can now be made to WAS up until midnight 9th March 2018. Please note that the referral interview and agreed start date must follow current WAS timeline guidance from the date of referral.

3. Entry and Re-entry

Q3.1 Can a Customer re-enter Work Able Scotland?

A3.1 If the customer wishes to return to the service prior to 9 March 2018 then this **may** be possible but is entirely at the discretion of the Service Provider. Customers will be unable to return to the service after 9 March 2018 as no referrals will be accepted beyond this date.

Prior to 9 March 2018, if a Service Provider is approached by a former Work Able Scotland participant who wishes to re-engage in the service, they must be directed to their Work Coach in the first instance. The Work Coach should verify with the Service Provider whether they are able to accept the customer back onto the service at this point. Service Providers will consider requests on a case-by-case basis and the total period of support offered through the service will not exceed 12 months across different periods of engagement.

Where a customer re-enters the service, Service Providers need to create a new assignment for the Participant on CTS using the same temp NI number. SDS will not count this as an additional programme start.

Q3.2 If a participant changes benefit after joining WAS, can they stay on programme for the remainder of their 12 months?

A3.2 ESA customers who move to UC can still participate in WAS as long as they are in the conditionality level 4 group. If a customer moves from ESA to UC, subject to conditionality level 4, they are still eligible to participate in WAS. (Limited Capability for Work; ESA WRAG equivalent; those within Work Preparation regime) who are assessed as capable of progressing into work within a 12 month period and demonstrate a desire to work can be referred to Work Able Scotland. If a participant changes to JSA whilst on WAS, the DWP work coach would have the discretion to consider the provision as work preparation activity, depending on the circumstances of the claimant and what would help them move into work. The Work Coach would need to update the claimant commitment to reflect this.

4. Action Plan

Q4.1 Can the Work Able Scotland Service Provider amend the Action Plan?

A4.1 Appendix 3 - the Work Able Scotland Action Plan contains the minimum information required – Service Providers can add to it, as long as they are not changing or removing any of the existing content.

5. Exit

Q5.1 What evidence will SDS be looking for to ensure Service Provider is effectively managing Participant disengagement from Work Able Scotland?

A5.1 The Service Provider will be completing the Action Plan. The Service Provider is expected to retain copies of evidence of engagement with the Participant, and subsequent actions taken to re-engage.

Q5.2 What are the compliance implications if a Service Provider is unable to obtain the Participants signature on the Exit Report?

A5.2 If the Service Provider is unable to obtain the Participants signature on the Exit Report they should continue to complete and return the form within the timescales indicated. The Participants signature on the Exit report will not form part of the SDS compliance checks.

Q5.3 Does all WAS support finish 52 weeks after the date of referral?

A5.3 No. WAS Participants are eligible to receive 52 weeks of support from their agreed start date on WAS.

6. Progression and sustainment

Q6.1 Job outcome definition clarification

A6.1 To claim a job outcome the Participant needs to work a minimum of 16 hours per week, for a consecutive period of at least 6 weeks to count towards achievement of the job outcome and sustainment.

7. Miscellaneous

Q7.1 Will scanned copies of documents be acceptable for Compliance purposes?

A7.1 Skills Development Scotland can confirm that scanned copies of original signed documents would be acceptable for Compliance purposes whilst a Participant is on the WAS programme. The Lead Service Provider should retain the original documents in one central location after the Participant has left the programme. The documents Compliance would need to see are as follows:

- Appendix 2 - Referral Form
- Training Agreement
- Appendix 3 - Action Plan
- Appendix 5 - Exit Report
- Appendix 11 – Job Outcome Form
- Appendix 12 – Sustained Job Outcome Form

This may be required to be reviewed at a later date.

Q 7.2 Can Participants on Work Able Scotland access the ASN Fund?

A7.2 No, the ASN Fund is only available to participants on the Employability Fund.

Q7.3 Why has the Appendix 6 Change of Circumstances been removed?

A7.3 This has been removed as it is no longer required – the Customer will sign a declaration on the Referral Form which states that they will inform DWP of any change in their circumstances.

Q7.4 Why are Service Providers not able to send an invoice to request payment of the Service Fee?

A7.4 As the decision was taken at the outset to use CTS for Work Able Scotland, CTS is the only way to initiate payments to Service Providers for Work Able Scotland. SDS Finance are happy to accept invoices from the Service Providers if they wish to submit them to support their VAT records however they should do so retrospectively with, "paid with thanks" on the face of them.

Q7.5 How will the unexpected low number of referrals impact on the Service fee payment?

A7.5 As agreed at a meeting with Work Able Scotland Service Providers and SDS Chief Executive Damien Yeates, we can re-assure our Work Able Scotland Service Providers that, in accordance with the Work Able Scotland Programme Rules 2017-19, where a Service Provider can demonstrate that it was unable to fulfil the forecasted number of registered 'Starts' for reasons outwith the Service Provider's reasonable control, SDS will not seek to reduce the Service Fee."

SDS confirms that the referral situation for WAS is deemed as outwith the Service Provider's reasonable control and will therefore not seek to reduce the service fee. SDS will advise Service Providers if this situation changes.

Q7.6 Can Service Providers link in with other ESF Funded Provision to support delivery of WAS

A7.6 As the outcomes for WAS are very similar to those of ESF programmes, it is difficult to see what added value would be achieved from a WAS participant accessing ESF funded provision. If a Service Provider felt they had a strong case for accessing provision funded through ESF, and not through the funding made available to them under WAS, this would have to be reviewed on a case by case basis with ESF to ensure there is no double funding.

Q7.7 Are WAS Participants able to access the new Individual Training Account whilst on WAS?

A7.7 No. From 23 October 2017 ILAs have been replaced by the new Individual Training Account (ITA). ITAs cannot be used by Participants to fund training delivered as part of WAS Activity or for any elements of the Action Plan. WAS Participants will be ineligible to apply for SDS ITA funding or to renew an existing account for SDS ITA funding whilst participating in WAS. Further information is available on the SDS website: [Individual Training Accounts](#)

Q7.8 Has the extension to the referral period had any impact on the contract period and the cut off date for outcome claims?

A7.8 No the contract period and cut off date for claims remains the 15 November 2019.