

In-Work Progression: Engagement with Employers

The Department for Work and Pensions is committed to supporting Universal Credit Claimants at a time of cost-of-living pressures. We want everyone to be able to find a job, progress in work and thrive in the labour market, whoever they are and wherever they live.

What is the In-Work Progression Offer?

- Our intention is to support those with a very low incomes from work to help them access opportunities to increase their earnings. This will be done through supportive conversations and activities at a pace that suits the circumstances of our claimants, who may have caring responsibilities, health conditions or other barriers.
- The support is currently available on a voluntary basis for certain UC claimants and is provided by Jobcentre Plus work coaches. From September 2023 onwards, we will start to require some claimants to engage with this support.
- There will be no one-size-fits-all approach, and no claimant will be expected to change jobs if it is not in their best interests. Instead, the work coach will provide tailored support to claimants, to help them understand the steps they can take in the short and medium term to increase their earnings.

Who are the District Progression Leads?

- We are currently rolling out a network of thirty-seven Progression Leads, one in each Jobcentre Plus District in Great Britain. They will spearhead the Department's new focus on supporting working Universal Credit claimants to progress in work and increase their earnings.
- District Progression Leads will work with key partners, including local government, employers, and skills providers to identify and develop local progression opportunities, and to overcome barriers that limit progression of employees.

Employer Support | District Progression Lead

District Progression Leads are there to help employers consider new and practical working practices to aid employee progression, enhancing existing employee retention rates and attracting new staff. They can help them think creatively about how to support their staff – for example, if additional hours or upward progression opportunities are not immediately available, employers could consider re-designing the claimant's existing role to make it more stretching and fulfilling, giving them additional skills and experience to add to their CV.

Claimant Support | Work Coaches

Work Coaches understand their claimant's unique circumstances and how best to support them. If there are no opportunities for a claimant to increase their earnings in their current job or sector, then other options could be explored, such as re-training in order to enter a company/sector with better progression opportunities or finding a job with better pay or more hours on offer. For some, the focus will be on developing skills or confidence in the first instance.

**Progression Lead is Claire Behan contact on
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Progression Pathways to Increase Earnings

Claimant Journey



Increase earnings with current employer

- Does the claimant have access to eligible childcare support?
- Do claimants understand that they are better off earning more under UC taper rules?
- What are the options in the current job?



Increase hourly rate in current job

- Is this an option in the current job?
- Are there opportunities to secure promotion or a different position with the employer?



Identifying any skill gaps

- Does the claimant have the required skills?
- Has the claimant explored virtual/F2F upskilling opportunities?
- Does the claimant know where to find relevant upskill opportunities?
- Is the claimant aware of any eligible upskilling support/funding?



Move employer to increase hours and/or hourly rate

- Has the claimant considered moving to another employer who could help them to increase their hours and/or their hourly earnings

Employer Journey



Offer increased responsibilities or pay

- Does the employer have capacity to provide more contracted hours?
- Can they offer a more stable contract?



Offer increased hourly earnings

- Does the employer have capacity to provide an increase in hourly earnings?
- Can they offer an opportunity for promotion or a lateral move with greater prospects for progression?



Upskilling current employees

- Are there areas where employees could be upskilled to increase their earning opportunities?
- Could the employer offer upskilling or re-skilling within the workplace or allow time off to attend external training?



Provide progression structures in company

- Does the employer offer a career progression structure?
- Does the employer offer opportunities for promotion within the company?