

No One Left Behind

Definitions of work-related activities and allowances

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Developed in partnership with key stakeholders from across the employability landscape

DEFINITIONS OF WORK-RELATED ACTIVITIES AND ALLOWANCES

The information within this document aims to clarify the different work-related activities, allowances and payments which may be offered using **No One Left Behind** funds.

These opportunities can be used as part of the employability pathway to build skills and work experience and can be aligned with Employer Recruitment Incentives to support participants to progress into sustainable employment.

NB Universal Credit claimants should notify and discuss participation in any work-related activities with their Work Coach to ensure compliance with their Claimant Commitment and minimise any impact on benefits.

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YOUNG PEOPLE SPECIFIC ALLOWANCES:

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

Can be paid to eligible young people aged 16 – 19 who are past school leaving age, and taking part in No One Left Behind activity of more than 4 hours per week.

Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) provide financial support to young people aged 16-19 from low-income families to stay on in post-16 education, either in school, college or taking part in a Learning Agreement (previously known as Activity Agreement).

This is paid by local authorities at £30 per week and is dependent on an acceptable level of attendance - [Education Maintenance Allowances \(EMAs\) - Young people: training and employment - gov.scot](#)

Those who are in receipt of EMA are unlikely to claim Universal Credit in their own right, although there are some exceptions.

Training Allowance – up to a maximum 16 weeks

Can be paid to those taking part in structured training activity – usually more than 10 hours per week – and not in receipt of Universal Credit or other financial incentives

Training Allowances have been developed to align with other financial support available, such as Education Maintenance Allowances for young people taking part in formal Learning Agreements.

These should only be offered to those who are not eligible to access other methods of financial support, such as reserved benefits or college bursaries.

Local Authorities have discretion on the level of funding available as a Training Allowance in the local area. Guidance suggests this should be no less than £55 per week (pro-rata at a daily rate) and no more than the current Universal Credit standard allowance per week for the duration of the training.

Where a young person is in receipt of EMA, the provider may top-up the difference between EMA and the Training Allowance.

The impact of Training Allowance on parental benefits should always be considered. Where families are in receipt of Universal Credit, they should be encouraged to seek confirmation from DWP regarding treatment of payments before accepting a Training Allowance.

Further information on Training Allowances can be found at [APPENDIX 1](#)

ALL-AGE WORK-RELATED ACTIVITIES:

Whilst taking part in these opportunities is unlikely to affect benefits, individuals who are receiving Universal Credit must check with their Work Coach before taking part in any work-related activities, as there are clear rules about participation and financial impact.

Volunteering – wide range of time commitments, usually not age limited

Volunteering opportunities can be undertaken with a wide range of public and third (community & voluntary) sector organisations. Volunteering is unpaid activity that people freely choose to do to help others, or nature and the environment.

Volunteering can be an effective tool in supporting an individual's pathway to work, especially where it is part of a return to work after a period of poor health and/or to build confidence and social connection in the early part of someone's journey towards work.

There are rules on volunteering for claimants of UK Government (Department for Work and Pensions - DWP) benefits - of which claimants should be made aware. [Volunteering and claiming benefits - GOV.UK](#)

Claimants should discuss volunteering opportunities with their Work Coach to ensure compatibility with their Claimant Commitment.

Out of pocket expenses paid as part of volunteering will not be taken into account as part of any Universal Credit claim.

Further information on volunteering can be found at [APPENDIX 2](#)

Work Experience – usually not more than 8 weeks

Work experience placements are short-term activities where individuals develop employability skills and gain hands-on experience with local employers. The primary goal is for the participant to learn about a specific industry, build skills and gain exposure to a professional environment.

A training allowance may be paid to eligible participants if they are not in receipt of benefits as noted within Training Allowance section above. For others, out-of-pocket expenses can be paid.

Claimants should discuss work experience opportunities with their Work Coach to ensure compatibility with their Claimant Commitment.

Work Taster/ Work Shadowing – usually maximum 3 days/week over 2 weeks

These are short interventions, usually lasting only a few hours over a few days. This option should be used for an individual to trial whether a specific job/ employer opportunity may be suitable for a longer-term paid placement.

As with volunteering, actual out of pocket expenses may be paid at a level that should not affect DWP benefits, however, Claimants should discuss these opportunities with their Work Coach to ensure compatibility with their Claimant Commitment.

ALL-AGE PAID WORK-RELATED ACTIVITIES:

Universal Credit claimants must declare paid work placements as work in their Universal Credit claim. Where applicable, a work allowance may be applied before earnings reduce Universal Credit

Paid Work Placements – also known as Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) - maximum 30 hrs per week up to 12 months

These offer an important stepping stone for people on their journey to work where the individual would benefit from longer-term experience in a real work context to become more 'job ready'.

These opportunities provide space for people to gain confidence, skills and experience to support their progression to employment in a supportive work environment. They usually last anywhere from 3-12months.

Paid Work Placements do not necessarily require having a job outcome at the end of the term and can be hosted within any supportive workplace.

There can be significant variability in paid work placements/ILMs including hours/week, length of placements and whether an opportunity for further employment with the same employer is available at the end of the placement.

Participation in a paid-work placement must not prevent benefit claimants from meeting any work-related requirements contained in their Claimant Commitment.

Some areas combine Paid Work Placements/ILMs with ERI opportunities as a follow on.

Employer Recruitment Incentive – usually 6-12 months

ERIs represent a progression step for eligible participants, building on earlier work-related interventions. They are often used as a continuation from other paid opportunities such as Paid Work Placements /Intermediary Labour Market roles.

Unlike these earlier interventions, an ERI is intended to move the participant closer to sustained employment by supporting their progression into a longer-term post with the same employer.

ERIs are paid directly to employers and can be used by them in several ways where additional support is not already available, such as:

- supervisory costs;
- training
- initial travel to work costs
- specialist in-work support
- wages

ERIs can only be paid where participants fall under the exceptions outlined in the Scotland Act 2016 (disabled people, those at risk of long-term unemployment, in receipt of reserved benefits, and where support will last for at least a year).

Please see the [published ERI Framework](#) for more information.

APPENDIX 1

No One Left Behind Training Allowance Guidance

Training Allowances are for eligible individuals who are participating in No One Left Behind employability support and activities. They may also be offered to those who are not eligible to access other methods of financial support, such as reserved benefits or college bursaries.

Description

Training allowances will be paid:

- For undertaking structured training and/or work experience of at least 2 days per week;
- For participation of a minimum of 10 hours per week;
- At a minimum of £55 per week (pro-rata at a daily rate) for the duration of the training, up to a maximum of 16 weeks;
- For no more than the current Universal Credit standard allowance per week.

Eligibility

- Clients who are not in education, employment or training, and not in receipt of DWP benefits are eligible for the No One Left Behind Training Allowance. Clients should be encouraged and supported to apply for Universal Credit where appropriate.
- A care experienced young person receiving Basic Living Allowance can still receive the Training Allowance.
- A client already receiving Education Maintenance Allowance of £30 per week can receive a top-up to meet the total award of Training Allowance.
- In certain circumstances, a Training Allowance can be offered to those aged 18+ who are not eligible to other forms of financial support such as reserved benefits or college bursaries.
- Under immigration rules, support from No One Left Behind for training for employment is not considered a public fund as set out in [section 115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#) and at [paragraph 6 of the Immigration Rules](#).

However, the eligibility to receive payment for this activity would depend on the individual's right to work status (this may be limited to specific job roles or industries) so it is not a straightforward eligibility.

Employability Key Workers should carefully assess someone's status to ensure there are no relevant immigration-related restrictions. Further support should be sought from either the Scottish Refugee Council (Asylum Seekers only) or from the local immigration officer.

Process

- Training Allowances will be paid as per the agreed Local Authority process.
- The Training Allowance is a weekly allowance regardless of the attendance pattern, although a minimum of 10 hours a week must be achieved.
- Reductions to payments may apply:
 - If a client fails to participate fully in their training activity as set out in their individual action plan
 - If a client fails to participate in any week, payment will be at the discretion of the local authority.
- Transport costs should be refunded over and above Training Allowance payments. Public transport i.e. bus or train should be used where possible and practical. Where no public transport exists or is suitable, providers should consider refunding alternative transport costs.

APPENDIX 2

Volunteering

Volunteering is unpaid activity that people freely choose to do to help others or nature and the environment. It supports personal growth, skills development, career progression, social connections and improved wellbeing of volunteers. There is also, "clear-cut evidence that those subject to exclusion and disadvantage in society have the most to gain from volunteering in terms of their health and wellbeing." ([Volunteer Scotland | Volunteering, Health & Wellbeing 2018](#))

Indeed, Volunteering is, "the golden thread running through all of our policies and contributing right across the National Outcomes in the National Performance Framework" as outlined in Scottish Government's [Volunteering for All - Our National Framework](#).

Volunteering opportunities can be undertaken with a very wide range of public and third (community & voluntary) sector organisations. Generally speaking, people in the UK are free to help out, volunteering as much and as often, as they wish. However, there are rules on volunteering for claimants of UK Government (Department for Work and Pensions - DWP) social security - of which claimants should be made aware. [Click here for more info: Volunteer Glasgow | Will Volunteering affect my benefits?](#) And you can [click here for further guidance for volunteer-involving organisations - Volunteer Wiki | Volunteering and UK State Benefits](#)

By definition, Volunteering is unpaid. However:

- For inclusion, it is best practice that people should not be out-of-pocket for their volunteering. Involving organisations should always seek to reimburse people to the nearest penny for expenses such as travel and refreshments while they are volunteering. [Click here for further info on best practice and pitfalls to avoid: Volunteer Wiki | Volunteer Expenses](#)
- There are a wide range of recognition and rewards mechanisms that organisations can and do use for their volunteers, such as [Saltire Awards and Young Scot Rewards points](#).
- For involving people in research and participatory activities, the Scottish Government have published specific guidance for staff. [Gov.scot | Guidance: paying participant expenses and compensating for time \(2024\)](#)

Volunteer Scotland's [Volunteer Charter](#) establishes [ten key principles](#) to ensure volunteers benefit from a positive, safe, and supported experience.

Further information on local volunteering opportunities can be obtained through the relevant [Third Sector Interface \(TSI\)](#).

Some LEPs also invest in specialist services to provide additional support for volunteering as part of someone's journey to work – check out local service directories for more information.