

# Expert employability support for jobseekers.

WHP Pioneer



# Introduction

**Work Routes is a free support service that helps unemployed people start working.**

The service is an expansion of the Department for Work and Pension's Work and Health Programme designed specifically to support people who are economically inactive. This expansion may sometimes be referred to as **WHP Pioneer**, which is a phase of **Universal Support**.

Work Routes provides additional support that is distinct and additional to that available through Jobcentre. It helps people with multiple barriers to work and/or a disability or health condition, using integration with other local community services.

## Eligibility

**Eligibility and referral is at the discretion of DWP.**

**Some of the reasons jobseekers might be eligible can include:**

- 1** They are economically inactive (unemployed and not in the UC IWSR or JSA). If a jobseeker is claiming other benefits, or no benefits at all, it means they are eligible to receive our support; or
- 2** They have a health condition or disability and need more support than can be provided within standard Jobcentre or other available services; or
- 3** They fit into one of the following groups:
  - An ex-offender (someone who has completed a custodial sentence or a community sentence), or an offender (someone who is serving a community sentence)
  - A carer or ex-carer
  - A homeless person
  - A former member of HM Armed Forces
  - A member of the HM Armed Forces reserves
  - A partner of current or former Armed Forces personnel
  - A person for whom a drug/alcohol dependency (including a history of) presents a significant barrier to employment
  - A care leaver
  - A refugee
  - A young person identified as being involved or at risk of being involved in gangs or serious violence
  - A victim of domestic violence
  - An Afghan Resettler
  - A Ukrainian Evacuee



# How it works

Work Routes provides a five-step approach based on the British Association for Supported Employment's 'Place and Train model'. The service is entirely voluntary for all those taking part.

## 1 Participant engagement

We work throughout the local community to provide timely and supportive access to the service to those who would benefit from using it.

You can liaise directly with one of our Participant Engagement Officers to set up referral pathways and collaborative working activities.

Referrals can be made at our website [workroutes.co.uk](https://workroutes.co.uk) – participants can also self-refer themselves here. Eligibility and suitability requirements apply.

## 2 Vocational Profiling Assessment

On starting the service, participants meet their new Employment Adviser who takes them through a comprehensive Vocational Profiling Assessment process, called the Getting to Know You sessions. This assessment identifies individual work aspirations, skills, experience and personal circumstances. It also assesses the participant's job readiness and readiness to change.

Information from the assessment informs an Action Plan, which is agreed by the participant

and Employment Adviser. The plan includes SMART actions and work-focused, barrier-removal activity and support, which is coordinated by the Employment Adviser. The aim is to progress the participant into suitable employment at the earliest opportunity.

The relationship between participant and their Employment Adviser is key to success with the service. Regular reviews take place to maintain progress through the service towards sustainable employment.



## 3 Job finding

### Employability

A range of **intensive employability support** is provided to all participants. This includes help to develop a gold standard CV, identify suitable job goals, job search effectively and complete applications. Interview preparation is also provided.

Participants are **guaranteed face-to-face engagement with employer within 30 days of joining the service**, including through open days, site visits, jobs fairs, employer presentations and work trials or experience.

Employment Advisers can support participants to arrange **reasonable adjustments** if they have accessibility requirements during their job search and application activity.

Funding is available for travel costs, interview clothing, equipment, self-employment activity – including for the first month of work before a participant receives their first pay.

Our **Online Careers Centre** provides 24/7 access to interactive and personalised employability and skills content, job vacancies and the opportunity to submit applications. This includes an AI Interview Simulator that provide instant personalised feedback and a CV360 tool to optimise CVs.

### Barrier removal

Alongside our employability offer, Work Routes provides access to a range of additional support.

**Skills training courses** are available, including on personal development topics such as self-confidence and resilience. IT and Digital Skills courses are included. Courses developed with local employers provide sector-specific training and taster sessions, with a guaranteed job interview at the end.

**Wellbeing support** from our partner Reed Wellbeing is available to participants with physical and mental health conditions. Specialist courses and interventions include help coping with stress or anxiety, managing pain, improving their diet, being more physically active and managing their health at work.

**Money management** and planning guidance helps participants ensure they are better off in work by analysing the impact of work on their benefits, housing, caring responsibilities and debt.

Signposting to **specialist support services** allows participants to take advantage of our local partnerships and arrangements to address specific needs, including additional help with mental health, language barriers or childcare arrangements. A pot of funding is available to pay for some services or courses, if required.



## 4 Employer engagement

Reed in Partnership has extensive employer relationships to ensure a wide range of appropriate vacancies are available to participants.

We use the outcomes of our Vocational Profiling Assessments with participants to ensure the suitability of our relationships, in conjunction with our detailed labour market analysis of growth sectors and local opportunities.

We are a Disability Confident Leader and provide a full package of support for employers to recruit and retain participants using Work Routes. This includes help with inclusive recruitment practices, onboarding support and workplace or role adjustments.

## 5 In-work support

Participants are supported for up to six months once they start working.

This includes development of an In-Work Action Plan designed to ensure everything that may affect sustainment in work has been identified and addressed. This might include first day plans, benefits tapering, financial support, Access to Work applications, childcare or care needs or assigning work buddies.

Weekly contact with an Employment Support Officer helps the participant adapt to working life. Our team also liaises with the employer to ensure a successful, sustainable relationship with the participant.

Career progression support is provided after three months of employment.

## About us

Work Routes provided by Reed in Partnership.

Reed in Partnership's mission is to deliver services that positively transform people and their communities. We have helped over 250,000 people start working.

We are working with several organisations to deliver Work Routes. They are APM, East Midlands Chamber, Framework Housing, Northern Rights, Standguide and Triage.

The service is an extension of the Work and Health Programme, which is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions. In South London it is commissioned by the South London Partnership.

## Refer someone

If you would like to refer someone to use Work Routes, visit [workroutes.co.uk](https://workroutes.co.uk) and complete our referral form.

Our team will be in touch to get them started.

Alternatively, you can call us on **0800 015 5332**