

DWP Stakeholder Bulletin – October 2011

Welcome to the October 2011 issue of the DWP Stakeholder Bulletin – an e-newsletter to let you know what is happening in the Department for Work and Pensions.

If you have a comment or feedback about this bulletin, please email corporate.stakeholders@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

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Sector-based work academies

In August 2011, sector-based work academies were launched in England (a similar offer is currently being discussed with the Devolved Administrations in Scotland and Wales). They are part of a number of new initiatives introduced by the Government to get Britain working.

Sector-based work academies can last up to six weeks and have three key components:

- Pre-employment training designed to give people the skills to work in a demand sector
- Work experience placements which are of benefit to both individuals and business
- A guaranteed job interview

Sector-based work academies are flexible and can be tailored to meet business needs. They are targeted towards people who are motivated and ready to work but would benefit from a short, sharp training intervention and

work experience placement to help them into a job. They are open to recipients of Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment & Support Allowance (work-related activity group).

Jobcentre Plus is working with employers, Sector Skills Councils, colleges and training providers to ensure that the pre-employment training delivered is flexible and responds to the needs of the local community and businesses.

- [Sector-based work academies \(Business Link website\)](#)
- [Sector-based work academies \(Skills Funding Agency website\)](#)

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The Pensions Bill

The Report stage of the Pensions Bill was successfully completed on 18 October. A transcript of the debate can be found in Hansard. A date for Lords Consideration is to be confirmed.

- [House of Commons Hansard Debates for 18 Oct 2011 \(Parliament website\)](#)

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Automatic Enrolment Stakeholder toolkit

The Department has launched an Automatic Enrolment Stakeholder toolkit, which builds on some existing documents and adds two new fact sheets. The toolkit provides interested organisations with information about the pension reforms, including when employers are required to start automatically enrolling their workers, and case studies that highlight how individuals may be affected by the changes. The toolkit will be regularly refreshed and new products added, as required.

- [Workplace Pension Reform - Information for stakeholders \(DWP website\)](#)

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Lords Committee consideration of the Welfare Reform Bill

The Welfare Reform Bill, introduced in the House of Commons on 16 February 2011, enables the most fundamental reforms to the social security system for 60 years. It is aimed at delivering a system that is simpler, fairer and ensures that work always pays. The Bill completed its Commons stages

on 15 June 2011. It started its Committee stage in the House of Lords on 4 October 2011.

- [Progress of the Welfare Reform Bill \(UK Parliament website\)](#)

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European Social Fund Supporting Families

On 17 October, DWP announced the preferred bidder in each of the 12 contract package areas where European Social Fund Support for Families with Multiple Problems will be delivered later this year. The provision is aimed at families with multiple problems as identified by Local Authorities, and aims to move family members closer to employment or into work. DWP and preferred bidders are now finalising arrangements with a view to contracts being signed for delivery to commence in December 2011.

- [European Social Fund \(DWP website\)](#)

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Universal Credit policy briefing notes

We have recently published a series of short briefing notes, which support the Welfare Reform Bill and offer detail on the shape of Universal Credit. These follow on from notes previously published in this series in September. The notes focus on:

- Treatment of income (other than earnings)
- Childcare
- Extending conditionality under Universal Credit to working claimants: setting a new conditionality threshold
- Conditionality under Universal Credit: the work search and work availability requirements
- Extending conditionality under Universal Credit to working claimants: safeguards within the new regime
- Earnings disregards and tapers.

- [Universal Credit briefing notes \(DWP website\)](#)

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DWP consultations

New DWP-related consultations launched since the last Stakeholder bulletin, with closing date.

- [Consultation on the abolition and transfer of functions of the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission \(DWP website\) closing date 3 January 2012](#)

All current live DWP consultations and the latest published consultation responses are available on the consultation pages of the DWP website.

- [Consultations \(DWP website\)](#)

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