Department for Work & Pensions

Government Social Research

The Evaluation of the Restart Scheme

May 2024

Acknowledgements

Summary

Background

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) launched the Restart Scheme in June 2021, as part of the government's 'Plan for Jobs', in response to the expected increase in long-term unemployment resulting from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The Restart Scheme was designed to provide up to 12 months of personalised support to participants to help them to find and maintain sustainable employment.[1]

DWP commissioned eight prime contractors across 12 contract package areas (CPAs) covering England and Wales, to provide coaching and tailored support to participants on the scheme. The contracts were hybrid 'payment by results' contracts, meaning that a fixed delivery fee was combined with payments dependent on the number of participants moving into sustained work. The provision of tailored support which drew on strong partnerships with employers, local stakeholders, and support services was a key feature of the scheme.

The Restart Scheme was mandatory for eligible participants. The first referrals to the scheme were in July 2021 with an initial focus on those who had been on Universal Credit in the Intensive Work Search (IWS) regime between 12 and 18 months, were in IWS at the point of being referred and had not spent any time in the last six assessment periods in Working Enough or Light Touch - In Work groups. The eligibility criteria were later widened in response to lower-than-expected referrals due to unemployment rates being lower than anticipated following the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Referrals to the Restart Scheme are due to finish in June 2024, with the last Restart participants completing the scheme in August 2025. The intention is to extend referrals to the scheme by two years to June 2026.

The scheme operated in a changing labour market which can be briefly characterised by a reducing unemployment rate, rising employment rates, rising levels of economic inactivity and high levels of vacancies. This was a different labour market from that anticipated in the planned response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Aims of the research

The purpose of the research was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Restart Scheme, which could be used to inform any live running improvements to the service over the scheme's contract, shape the design of any potential successor programme, and build the long-term evidence base for how best to design and run similar

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[1] Sustainable employment is defined as a job which a participant remains for an extended period. In the context of the Restart Scheme, an employed person must accumulate earnings equal to or above the equivalent of someone working for 16 hours per week for 26 weeks at National Living Wage. A self-employed person must achieve 6 months of gainful self-employment.

programmes in the future. The research explored how well and why the scheme worked for different participant groups, and how far providers were able to deliver a tailored programme of support.

Methodology

The research comprised three strands: a longitudinal cohort study, a survey of Restart providers and case study research of 12 geographic areas. The Restart evaluation is one component of a wider programme of research and evaluation of the Plan for Jobs labour market response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. A process evaluation of Kickstart was published in July 2023 and a cross-cutting evaluation of Plan for Jobs is due to be published in 2024. An impact evaluation of the Restart Scheme will also be available at a later date.

The longitudinal cohort study comprised quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with Restart participants and non-participants. It explored the outcomes achieved by different participant groups and what enabled these outcomes.

Wave 1 surveyed 5,285 Restart participants. It was completed between April and May of 2022. Wave 2 was completed between February and April 2023. It surveyed 3,698 Restart participants (1,541 follow-up Restart participants who took part in wave 1 and wave 2, and 1,522 Restart participants who took part at wave 2 only), and 635 non-participants who had been referred to Restart but had not started on the scheme. This group would have met the eligibility criteria and are therefore a useful comparator to the main Restart population. However, they are not a direct control group due to the. factors which resulted in them not starting the Restart Scheme. The demographic profile of this group is different to that of Restart participants, which may have contributed to them not starting the scheme.

Follow up qualitative interviews with selected survey participants took place after each wave of the survey. There were 30 interviews in the first wave and 38 in wave 2.

The provider survey was an online survey sent to providers across all Restart sites from contact details provided by DWP. Respondents were asked their views about the delivery of the Restart Scheme, their wider partnerships, the support offered to participants, and the effectiveness of the scheme. The survey took place between January and February of 2023 and received 138 responses.

The case study research comprised 12 geographically focused case studies, one in each contract package area, to establish a detailed understanding of how the Restart Scheme was delivered across different local areas. The research was conducted in three waves: December 2021 to January 2022, June to October 2022 and May to August 2023. It included a total of 346 qualitative interviews with Restart participants, Restart providers, Jobcentre Plus staff, employers, and wider stakeholders. It also included 22 observations of Restart providers and Restart delivery, as well as desk research and analysis of local labour market information.

Participant outcomes

The findings from this research, while not an impact assessment, suggest that the Restart Scheme supported participants to achieve positive outcomes both in terms of sustainable employment outcomes and wider outcomes (including well-being, qualifications, proximity to the labour market and job searching skills). Evidence from the longitudinal cohort study suggests that Restart participants were more likely to be in work than non-participants. At wave 2, nearly 4 in 10 (38%) of follow-up participants were in work, an increase of 21% from wave 1.

The research identified that the support received enabled some Restart participants to achieve a range of intermediate outcomes including increased confidence and motivation, increased job-search self-efficacy, increased skills, and reduced job selectivity.

The qualitative research strands identified key factors that enabled participants to achieve these intermediate outcomes:

- The primary factor was individual participants' interactions with their Employment Advisor.

- The second factor was a holistic tailored programme of individual support.

- Holistic tailored support was enabled by providers being able to access wider partnerships.

- A good relationship between Jobcentre Plus (JCP) and the provider was a key factor in ensuring that participants engaged with the Restart Scheme.

The case study research identified that **these intermediate outcomes enabled some participants to achieve employment outcomes**. An additional driver for employment outcomes was when providers referred participants to employers by, for example, arranging interview days or forwarding CVs.

The survey showed that those with a more consistent work history, women, those with a child aged under 19, those with English as a second language and those with higher qualifications were more likely to be employed at wave 1 of the longitudinal survey. Those with health conditions or caring responsibilities (such as caring for someone with a health condition, disability or an older person) were less likely to achieve an employment outcome.

Nearly two thirds (64%) of participants found the Restart Scheme useful at wave 1 (33% of survey participants found it very useful and 30% found it somewhat useful). Findings from the survey suggested that participants with higher qualifications, those who had worked more since leaving school and the self-employed were less likely to find the Restart Scheme useful.

The survey showed that while a greater proportion of Restart participants were in work than non-participants, similar proportions of participants and non-participants were claiming Universal Credit (UC). This suggests that the outcomes achieved were not always sufficient to enable eligible participants to stop claiming UC.

Wider findings

Referral volumes were generally lower than expected due to higher than predicted employment rates. Participants were presenting with higher needs and more substantial barriers than anticipated. Providers were concerned about what they saw as high levels of 'unsuitable' referrals. The referral process generally worked well after some initial challenges, but there was some evidence of a lack of clarity on the part of both JCP and providers particularly over which participants should be referred to which programme of support.

Participants' relationship with their Restart Employment Advisor was a key determinant in participant experience. Participants were more often positive about the relationship than not, but some felt their needs were not understood, or that their advisor did not have the skills needed to help them. Others reported that they had changed advisors several times and this had negatively impacted on the quality of support received.

Providers reported delivering a range of support activities, most commonly supporting with CV writing and job searching. Participants also accessed a range of wider support and training, including contact with employers, referral to external partners and funding to support with costs.

There was some evidence of tailoring for individual participants; some of those with English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or childcare needs, or those with transport barriers received targeted support. However, the scheme was less able to help those with physical health conditions or more severe mental health conditions, the longer-term unemployed (generally characterised as more than two years) and the more highly skilled.

There was less evidence of tailoring by local area. There was an expectation that providers would design and tailor their support service in accordance with the local labour market. Where this was in place it was successful, as demonstrated in the case study research in section 4.5.3. However, local tailoring was not consistently observed within the research and was dependent on having good local partnerships in place and sufficient specialised staff.

Communication between JCP and providers was important in determining participant experience particularly around the key points of participants' joining the scheme, mandation, and when participants were at risk of disengagement. The relationship was generally good and had improved over time but varied between different providers and JCPs. There were clear factors that helped a positive relationship, including consistency of staff, single points of contact and providers regularly visiting JCP sites.

There was varied evidence on whether mandation was effective for encouraging engagement with some participants, with some providers and JCP seeing it as essential in ensuring engagement with the Restart Scheme. However, others were much less sure of its value and in some cases thought it made the scheme less attractive. Beyond these mixed views, there was clear evidence that the

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administrative process of mandation did not work effectively. Providers did not generally understand the process, found it time consuming, and had to wait a long time for responses from JCP.

Providers engaged with employers in a range of ways and through a range of activities. There were successful examples of engaging with national employers, or employers with high recruitment needs, as well as local tailoring through activities such as sector routeways. However, there was less evidence of engaging with smaller or more specialist employers.

There was evidence of good partnerships between providers and partners such as local and combined authorities, education and training providers, charities, and other support organisations. However, not all providers engaged with a full range of partners. When looking at how effectively providers engaged with other local partners, this was partly dependent on the strength of existing networks and support systems. Providers could enable better partnership working by ensuring relationships were mutually beneficial; providing consistent staff teams; engaging with partners proactively; and making good use of local intelligence.

External context

It is important to recognise the impact of the external context on Restart delivery and outcomes. The Restart Scheme was designed and implemented as part of the UK government's Plan for Jobs to respond to the anticipated rise in unemployment post the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This meant that it was implemented alongside a range of other support programmes and when COVID-19 restrictions were still being experienced by individuals and organisations. The external context was further complicated by a lower than anticipated unemployment rate. In addition to this, rises in economic inactivity due to ill health, and a cost-of-living crisis impacted on both individuals and support organisations during the Restart delivery period.

These contexts had an impact on the number of referrals Restart providers received, on the profile of Restart participants and the needs and barriers they experienced, as well as wider challenges in areas such as partnership working.

The Restart Scheme successfully adapted to these changes to the external context. This was primarily through DWP's broadening of the eligibility criteria and actions by providers to support a wider range of participants than anticipated.

Considerations for future delivery

DWP should explore whether more targeted referral criteria in future programmes would allow for more effective support. The broadening of the Restart Scheme's eligibility criteria was necessary to ensure the scheme reached those people who needed support to find work in the context of a changing labour market. However, this research suggests that there were some people on the

scheme whose needs were too challenging to be addressed through the support on offer.

DWP should further review the effectiveness of Customer Service Standards (CSS) and performance management to ensure future programmes deliver a minimum service standard to all participants. The evidence from this research suggests that despite provider compliance with CSS, there was still variation in participant experience. For example, many participants reported regular productive meetings with their Employment Advisor, but others did not have regular appointments or did not see their appointments as useful.

DWP should consider how to ensure that guidance on referral criteria is clearly communicated to JCP and providers. There were particular challenges in referrals to the Restart Scheme as it was implemented alongside a range of other programmes where it was not always clear what the best pathway was for individuals.

The evidence suggests that **further consideration is needed on how to support people with health needs within future employment support provision.** This includes earlier identification of health needs to ensure people are on the right scheme. While the Restart Scheme was designed as an employment support programme, there was a very high number of participants with both physical and mental health conditions. This research shows that while providers adapted their offer to attempt to meet the needs of participants with health needs, these participants were generally less effectively supported. This suggests that DWP should ask providers to further improve their health offer. This is particularly important in the context of rising levels of economic inactivity.

Further consideration is also needed on how the more highly skilled or those with specialist qualifications can be supported. The research suggested that these participants were less likely to feel that the support they received was relevant or useful. There was some evidence that deploying specialist Employment Advisors could improve the quality of support for these participants, however, the needs of these participants should be reviewed more widely.

Good practice in how to recruit, train, and retain Employment Advisors should be shared with providers. The advisor-participant relationship was central to whether outcomes were achieved. This means that it is essential to ensure that suitably qualified staff are recruited, trained, and retained on employability programmes. There was some evidence within this research of providers responding to these challenges by, for example, creating more 'on the job' training, developing internal progression routes, and developing specialist roles.

DWP should consider how to encourage good communication between JCP and providers. While relationships between providers and JCP were generally good, some of their shared processes need further consideration. The approach of relying on participants to relay information between JCP and providers did not always work effectively. In particular, there is a need to consider how JCP manage participants'

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return from external programmes. Further consideration is also needed from DWP on how to effectively manage the end-to-end mandation process.

DWP should consider how to further enable partnership working. Limitations to partnership working were a significant factor in why local tailoring was not fully developed across all case study areas. There were extrinsic factors that made partnership working more difficult as Restart providers were dependent on the quality of existing networks and support structures. However, the research also identified potential enablers for good partnership working that could be considered in future programmes. This included more consideration of partnership working at the design phase, potentially including service level agreements with providers, and more mapping of provision and use of labour market intelligence by providers. DWP may also wish to consider taking a more active role in stakeholder management, by for example, sharing aggregated data or convening Local Engagement Meetings (LEMs).

Further consideration is also needed on how providers engage with employers. There was evidence in the research of effective engagement with larger employers but much less evidence of employer engagement at a local level, with smaller/ specialist employers or on behalf of individual participants. This meant that some participants, particularly the more highly skilled or those who needed adjustments for health conditions or caring responsibilities, were less likely to find suitable jobs.

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1. Background and methodology

This chapter outlines the Restart Scheme and policy context and summarises the research questions and methods.

1.1 Restart Scheme and policy context

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) launched the Restart Scheme in June 2021, as part of the government's 'Plan for Jobs', in response to the expected increase in long-term unemployment resulting from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The scheme was designed to provide up to 12 months of personalised support to participants to help them to find and maintain sustainable employment.[2]

DWP commissioned eight prime contractors across 12 contract package areas (CPAs) covering England and Wales, to provide coaching and tailored support to participants on the scheme. The contracts were hybrid 'payment by results' contracts, meaning that a fixed delivery fee was combined with payments dependent on the number of participants moving into sustained work.

The Restart Scheme had Customer Service Standards (CSS) that set out key expectations such as timeliness of referrals and onboarding, frequency of support, and characteristics of support such as diagnostic assessments and action plans. However, providers also had the freedom to design an offer that addressed the needs of individual participants and their local area. The provision of tailored support which drew on strong partnerships with employers, local stakeholders, and support services was therefore a key feature of the scheme.

Prime contractors were able to subcontract some or all of the support. Some prime contractors delivered the whole scheme in their area; others part-delivered the scheme, while also contracting delivery to a range of subcontractors and others contracted the whole of delivery. The number of subcontractors varied; it was often one or two but in some local areas there could be multiple subcontractors.

Work Coaches in Jobcentre Plus (JCP) identified eligible participants and referred them to their local Restart provider. The first referrals to the Restart Scheme were in July 2021 with an initial focus on those who had been on Universal Credit in the Intensive Work Search (IWS) regime between 12 and 18 months, were in IWS at the point of being referred, and had not spent any time in the last six assessment periods

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[2] Sustainable employment is defined as a job which a participant remains for an extended period. In the context of the Restart Scheme, an employed person must accumulate earnings equal to or above the equivalent of someone working for 16 hours per week for 26 weeks at National Living Wage. A self-employed person must achieve 6 months of gainful self-employment.

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in Working Enough or Light Touch – In Work groups. In January 2022 and then again in May 2022, eligibility was expanded to include more JCP customers. From May 2022, the scheme was open to all customers who had spent nine months on Universal Credit.[3] The Restart Scheme was a mandatory scheme for eligible participants who were required to engage with the support offered. The Restart Scheme's current contract is due to finish in June 2024, with the last Restart participants completing the scheme in August 2025. The intention is to extend referrals to the scheme by two years to June 2026.

The Restart Scheme ran alongside other 'Plan for Jobs' schemes including Kickstart and Job Entry Targeted Support (JETS), between 2020 and 2022. Kickstart subsidised wages for young people at risk of long-term unemployment, with referrals between October 2020 and March 2022, while JETS aimed to support the short-term unemployed, with referrals between October 2020 and September 2022. Restart also ran alongside employment support schemes that had been operating before the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic including the Work and Health Programme and the Intensive Personalised Employment Support Scheme.

The Restart Scheme operated in a changing labour market which can be briefly characterised by a reducing unemployment rate, rising employment rates, rising levels of economic inactivity and high levels of vacancies. This was a different labour market from that anticipated in the planned response to COVID-19. This provides an important context for the delivery of the Restart Scheme, particularly in relation to the changes to eligibility criteria, the nature of participants and the barriers they experience, and the availability of jobs.

1.2 Research aims

The purpose of the research was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Restart Scheme, which could be used to inform any live running improvements to the service over the contract period, any changes that could be made to any potential successor programme after the contract ends, and the long-term evidence base for how best to run similar programmes in the future. The research comprised three strands: a longitudinal cohort study, a survey of Restart providers, and case study research. The three strands were designed to answer the research questions set out in section 1.4. The research questions were informed by DWP's theory of change which explored how to ensure a high-quality level of service so that participants are supported to either return or move closer to the labour market.

The Restart evaluation is one component of a wider programme of research and evaluation of the Plan for Jobs labour market response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. A process evaluation of Kickstart was published in July 2023 and a cross-cutting evaluation of Plan for Jobs is due to be published in 2024. An impact evaluation of the Restart Scheme will also be available at a later date.

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[3] In January 2022 all IWS customers could be considered for Restart after nine months and with no upper limit. In May 2022 the focus was expanded again to all customers who were currently on IWS and had spent over nine months on Universal Credit (not limited to IWS).

1.3 Research methods

The research comprised three strands: a longitudinal cohort study, a survey of Restart providers and case study research of 12 geographic Restart Scheme areas. The three strands of research together provide insight into how well and why the Restart Scheme worked for different participant groups, and how far providers were able to deliver a tailored programme of support. [4]

1.3.1 Longitudinal cohort study

Longitudinal survey

The longitudinal survey included a baseline survey, in which Restart participants were surveyed typically up to three months after they started on the scheme, and a follow-up survey eight to ten months later. This research design ensured that the majority of respondents of the follow-up survey had completed the Restart Scheme.

DWP provided the sample of participants who were enrolled on the Restart Scheme between 1 January 2022 and 31 March 2022. At wave 2, non-participants were drawn from a sample of Universal Credit claimants who were eligible and had been referred to the Restart Scheme between 1 December 2021 and 31 March 2022 inclusive, but had not started.

Wave 1:

- Fieldwork was completed between 11 April and 31 May 2022

- 5,285 Restart participants (4,282 online surveys and 1,003 telephone interviews)

Wave 2:

- Fieldwork was completed between 8 February and 19 April 2023

- 3,698 participants (1,957 online surveys and 1,741 telephone interviews) made up of:

    o 1,541 Follow-up Restart participants who took part in wave 1 and wave 2

    o 1,522 Restart participants who started the Restart Scheme at the same time as the original sample and took part at wave 2 only ('boost sample')

- 635 non-participants who had been referred to the Restart Scheme but not started

Individuals who had been referred to the scheme without starting were judged to be the best comparator group available (referred to as 'non-participants'). Survey responses indicated that the profile of non-participants differed from participants, and so cannot be considered a suitable control group to establish the Restart Scheme's

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[4] Technical information about the methodology of each strand is included in appendices 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4

impact on outcomes. However, the survey of non-participants provided insight into DWP customers who are eligible but do not start the Restart Scheme and contributes evidence on the scheme's effect. The in-house impact evaluation of the Restart Scheme aims to produce a robust estimate of the scheme's impact on employment outcomes.

Longitudinal qualitative interviews

After each wave of the quantitative survey, a selection of participants who agreed to be recontacted at the end of the survey were invited to take part in a follow-up qualitative interview.

At wave 1, 30 qualitative interviews were conducted with Restart participants. This comprised 24 individual interviews and 6 couple interviews, in which the partner of the Restart participant also took part in the interview. Fieldwork was conducted between 13 June and 4 July 2022.

At wave 2, 38 in-depth interviews were conducted. 32 with Restart participants and 6 with non-participants. Of those interviewed, 8 were with participants who had taken part in the wave 1 qualitative strand. 20 interviews were conducted in person and 18 over Microsoft Teams or telephone. Fieldwork was conducted between 5 and 28 June 2023.

At both waves, minimum quotas were set on: household status, work status, work history, skill level, labour market type, urbanity, region, ethnicity, gender, health condition, whether they cared for an adult, referral type (discretionary or non-discretionary), and their Job-Search Self-Efficacy score (JSSE). At wave 2 additional minimum quotas were set on: Participant type (Restart Scheme participant or non-participant), if their work status had changed since wave 1, those who reported not receiving support and time in Intensive Work Search regime.

1.3.2   Provider survey

A survey was sent to providers across all Restart Scheme sites from contact details provided by DWP. Invited respondents were typically in junior management positions.

Respondents were asked their views about operational delivery, referrals, onboarding and mandation, communication with Jobcentre Plus (JCP), support offered to participants, the effectiveness of the Restart Scheme in supporting different groups, engagement with employers and stakeholders and participant outcomes.

The multimodal survey was open between 26 January and 15 February 2023 and received 138 responses: 110 online and 28 by telephone. The overall response rate was 49%.

1.3.3   Case study research

The case study research comprised 12 geographically focused case studies, one in each CPA, to establish a detailed understanding of how the Restart Scheme is delivered across different local areas. Area profiles are included in Appendix 6.4.7.

The 12 areas were purposively selected so that they covered a diverse range of operational and local labour market contexts. At least one case study area for every prime contractor was selected.

The research was conducted in three waves from December 2021 to January 2022, June to October 2022 and May to August 2023.

It included a total of 346 interviews with Restart participants, Restart providers, wider stakeholders, JCP staff and employers as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Case study interviewees

Interviewee group	Number of interviews
Restart participants	114
Providers	80
Stakeholders	49
JCP staff	72
Employers	31

Interviewees were asked about their views and experiences of the Restart Scheme, how effective they thought it was and for any suggested improvements. Interviews were semi-structured and lasted between 30 and 90 minutes. Topic guides (included as appendix 6.4.8) were developed and refined for the different interviewee groups, for each wave of the research and for each case study area.

Wave 2 and 3 of the research also included 22 observations of Restart providers and Restart delivery. These were usually a site visit, although some online and telephone activities were also observed. Observations included participant appointments with their Employment Advisors, individual and group support sessions, workshops, a job fair, and provider interaction with partners including JCP and stakeholders.

1.4 Research questions

The evaluation of the Restart Scheme addresses the research questions set out in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 Research questions

Research Question	Addressed by
To what extent do outcomes vary by participant subgroups? Which subgroups were more or less likely to achieve sustained job outcomes, and to what extent was this due to the support provided/ the design of the scheme?	Longitudinal survey
Have people moved into different sectors or occupations as a result of the scheme?	Longitudinal survey
Are referred customers brought closer to the labour market by the intervention, and if so, how? What is the average distance travelled of scheme participants, and how does this compare to non-participants?	Longitudinal Survey
Has the scheme had a positive effect on participants' well-being and life satisfaction compared to non-participants?	Longitudinal Survey
What types of support and provision did participants commonly receive? To what extent did support vary by provider or by type of participant? How effective was the payment by results model in enabling tailored support and provider innovation? Is the scheme's 12-month duration and frequency of interaction right for this kind of support?	All strands
How far have providers delivered a tailored scheme to suit individual needs & barriers?	All strands
To what extent has support been tailored to local labour markets and opportunities? How successfully have providers delivered a locally tailored service? How have providers engaged with local partners in identifying suitable vacancies and services?	Case studies Provider survey
What can we learn from the scheme for developing future provision, and are there some activities that work better for certain groups?	All strands
To what extent did providers 'park' harder to help customers, or customers in harder to help local areas? How effective were the Customer Service Standards in equalising support across all participants?	Case studies Longitudinal survey
How consistently has conditionality been applied across the scheme and between providers? How effective has communication around mandation and sanctions been between providers, Jobcentres, and participants?	Case studies Provider survey
What has been the experience of discretionary or early referral participants? Does this differ from the experience participants who have been referred to the scheme via the standard route?	All strands

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1.5 Interpreting the findings in the report

Wave 1 of the longitudinal survey was conducted up to three months after participants had started on the Restart Scheme. Wave 2 was conducted 10 months later as participants finished on the Restart Scheme. Unless specified otherwise the findings reported are from wave 2. Findings report on both in work and out of work participants. In work participants, were either below the earning threshold and in Intensive Work Search (IWS) or found a job while on the Restart Scheme.

The term 'participants' is used to describe those who took part in the Restart Scheme. The term 'non-participants' is used to describe respondents who were referred to the Restart Scheme but never started. This group would have met the eligibility criteria and are therefore a useful comparator to the main Restart population. They are not a direct control group as the profile of this group is different and other factors may have resulted in them not starting the Restart Scheme. In the longitudinal cohort study, findings for 'follow-up participants' represent the 1,541 participants who took part in both the first survey and the follow-up survey.

Only statistically significant findings from the longitudinal cohort survey and the provider survey have been reported in the commentary. Statistical significance is calculated at the 95% confidence interval. Some charts and tables may include non-statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence interval. When findings are reported as similar, they are not significantly different from each other. On charts, figures that are statistically significantly higher than other figures or subgroups on the chart are denoted by green triangles pointing upwards.

Longitudinal analysis was carried out on follow-up participants' responses at wave 1 and wave 2. The purpose of this was to compare individuals' experiences and work outcomes over time. It also identified which types of people experienced what impacts from the Restart Scheme. These findings are presented throughout the report and designed to demonstrate the difference between participants at the beginning and end of their Restart journey.

Qualitative research is illustrative, detailed and exploratory. It offers insights into people's opinions, feelings and behaviours. All interview data presented should be treated as the opinions and views of the individuals interviewed. Quotations, participant illustrations, and area case studies from the qualitative research have been included to provide rich, detailed accounts, as given by interviewees.

The eligibility criteria and wider contexts for the Restart Scheme changed over the time that the different waves of research were conducted. This means that each group of respondents or interviewees represent a certain time period which may not reflect the views of all Restart respondents at other times.

Qualitative research is not intended to provide quantifiable conclusions from a statistically representative sample. Furthermore, owing to the small sample size and the purposive nature with which it was drawn, qualitative findings are not representative of the views of all participants, or of a particular case study area.

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Instead, these strands of research explore the breadth of views and experiences, to develop deep insight into how effective the Restart Scheme is, for whom, and why.

The findings presented in this report are based on participants' perceptions and recall of details, which may differ from the information recorded in administrative data.

The impact evaluation, which will be available at a later date, will measure the Restart Scheme's impact on participants' outcomes, and will be applying quasi-experimental causal inference techniques such as Propensity Score Matching and Longitudinal Analysis.

Any quantitative findings from these methods will complement this report's insights, offering a robust and objective measure of the Restart Scheme's effectiveness. This report's conclusions provide valuable insight into people's experiences, and any quantitative findings that can be generated on impact will allow us to look at the Restart Scheme's overall effectiveness and value for money to complement this. The intention is that initial impacts will be published in due course.

2. Longitudinal cohort study findings

2.1 Profile

This section outlines the demographic, educational and social profile of Restart participants. The profile information presented is based on data from Restart participants who took part in both waves of the survey ('Follow up Restart participants) as the findings in this chapter focus on this participant group primarily, with some comparisons to non-participants. The section concludes by comparing the profile of wave 2 participants with that of non-participants, highlighting key differences to give context to findings where these groups are compared elsewhere in the report. When drawing comparisons with non-participants, the profile described includes every participant who took part in wave 2 of the survey, whether or not they took part in the first wave ('All participants', made up of 1,541 follow-up participants and 1,522 boost participants).

2.1.1 Participant demographics

As shown in Figure 2.1, two thirds of Restart participants were aged 25-49 years (66%) and nearly three in ten aged 50-65 (28%). One in twenty (5%) were under 25, and 1% 65 or older. The lower proportion of under 25s may be explained by the fact that this age group were eligible for the Youth Offer and Kickstart schemes, and so are likely to have been referred to these programmes instead.

As shown in Figure 2.2, males made up a higher proportion of Restart participants (58%) than females (42%). Male participants were older on average than female participants, with 35% over the age of 50, compared with 21% of female participants, as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Age by gender

■ All ■ Male ■ Female

Age	Value
Under 25 (All)	5%
Under 25 (Male)	5%
Under 25 (Female)	4%
25-49 (All)	66%
25-49 (Male)	60%
25-49 (Female)	75% ▲
50-65 (All)	28%
50-65 (Male)	34% ▲
50-65 (Female)	20%
65+ (All)	1%
65+ (Male)	1%
65+ (Female)	1%
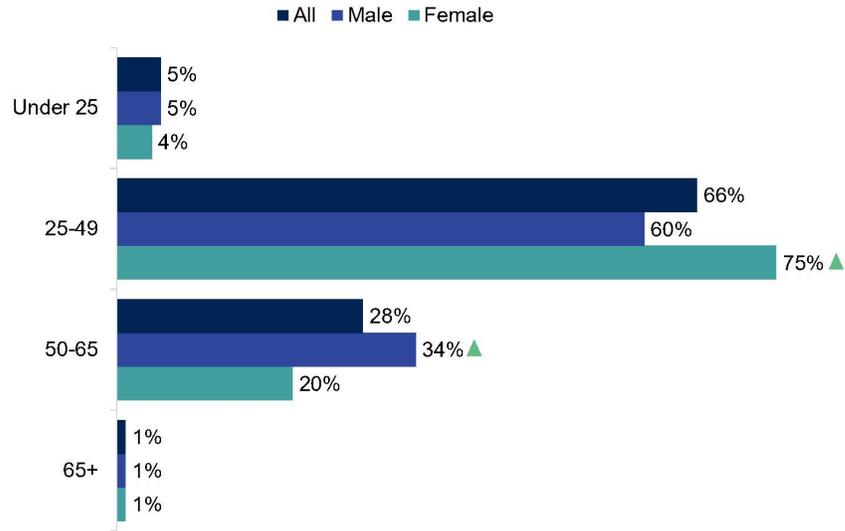
E5: How old are you?

Unweighted base, Males (840); Females (701).

Figure 2.2 Gender

■ Male ■ Female

Male	Female
58%	42%
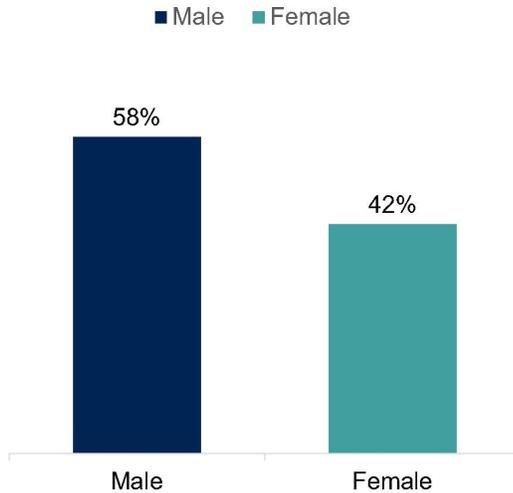
E4: Which of the following describes how you think about yourself?

Unweighted base, wave 2 follow-up participants (1,541)

Over two-thirds (68%) of Restart participants were white (including white ethnic minorities), as displayed in Figure 2.3. Over three-quarters (77%) reported that English was their first language. Of the 22% who had English as another language, a third (31%) said they needed support with their English language skills to find or

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progress in work.

Figure 2.3 Ethnic background
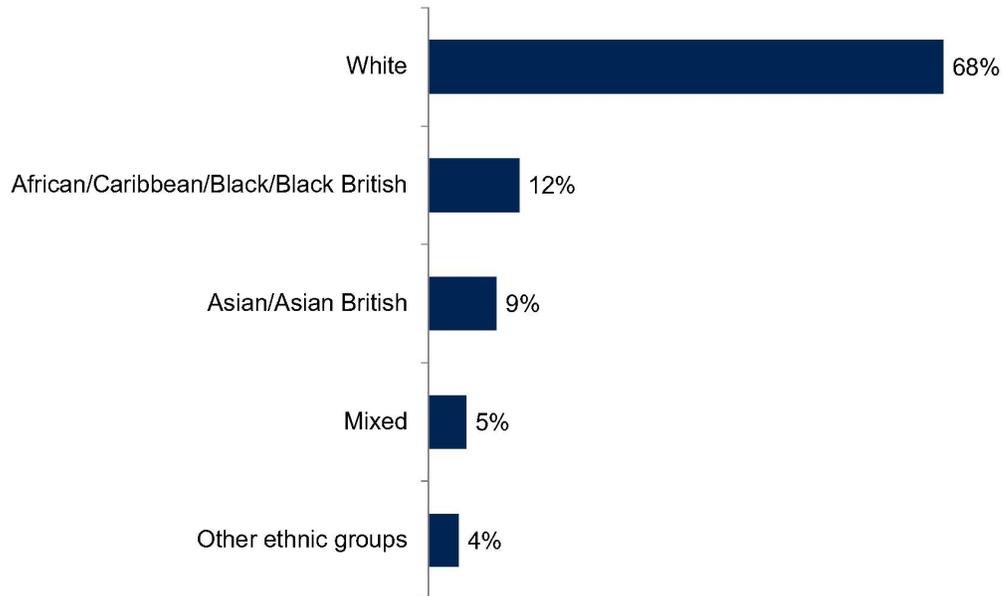
E7. How would you describe your ethnic background?

Unweighted base, wave 2 follow-up participants (1,541)

More than half (54%) of Restart participants had physical or mental health conditions lasting or expected to last 12 months or more (including intermittent conditions or illnesses). Of these, 85% said their condition(s) reduced their ability to carry out day-to-day activities, accounting for 46% of all participants. Participants aged 50 and older were more likely to report having a health condition(s) (61%, compared to 51% of those aged under 50).

2.1.2   Household circumstances

Most commonly, Restart participants reported that they lived alone (37%), with their dependent children (23%), or with parents (21%), as shown in Figure 2.4. Nearly one in five (19%) were lone parents, whereas 4% were parents living with a spouse or partner.

As Figure 2.5 shows, rented accommodation was the most common type of housing lived in by Restart participants: 31% lived in private rented accommodation, and 23% rented from the council or local authority and 15% rented from a Housing Association.

Figure 2.4 Restart participants' current living situation
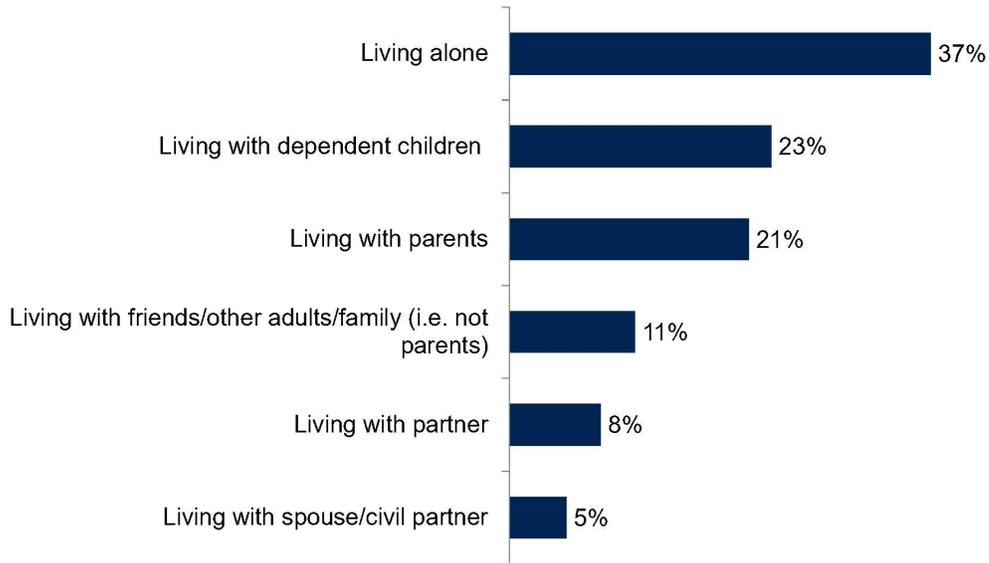
E8. Which of these best describe your living situation?

Unweighted base, wave 2 follow-up participants (1,541)

Figure 2.5 Restart participants' current accommodation type
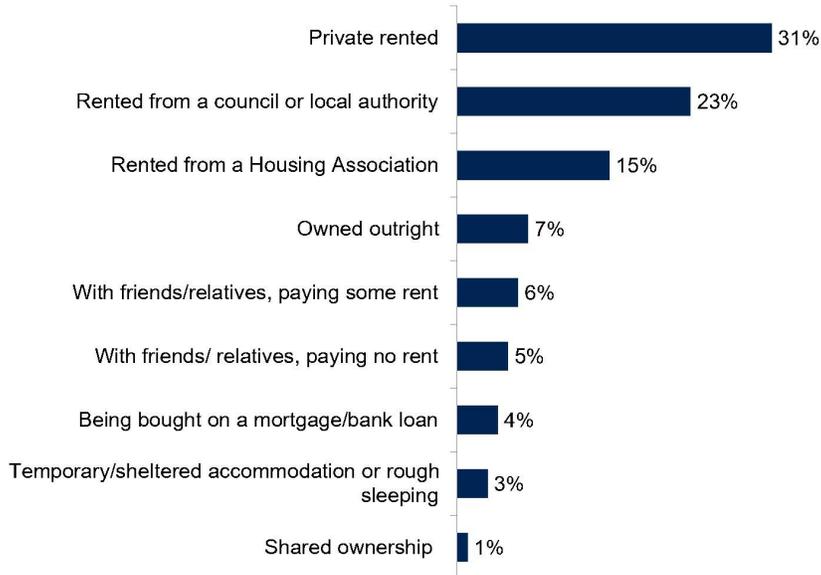
E9. Which of these best describes the accommodation you are living in at the moment?

Unweighted base, wave 2 follow-up participants (1,541)

Three in ten (31%) Restart participants had children under the age of 19 living in their household. As Figure 2.6 shows, of those with children in the household 15% had one child, 10% had 2, and 6% had 3 or more. Female participants were over three times as likely as male participants to have children in the household (51%,

compared to 16% of males). Of those with children in their household, 71% had at least one child under the age of 11 and 91% had at least one under the age of 16, as shown in Figure 2.7.

Figure 2.6 Children in the household by gender
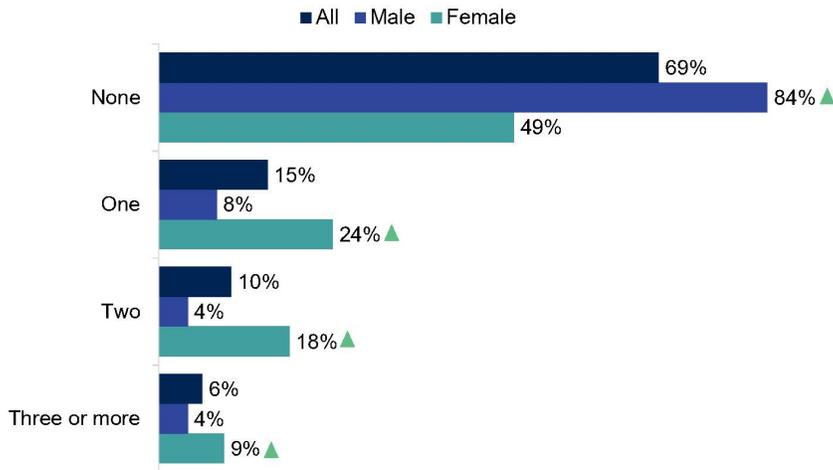
E2: How many children aged under the age of 19 live in your household? And how old is your youngest child?

Unweighted base, wave 2 follow-up participants (1,541)

Figure 2.7 Age of youngest child
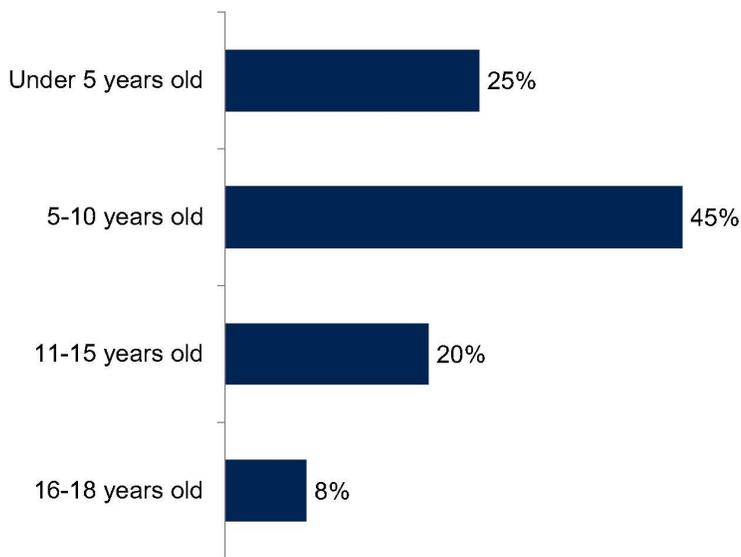
E3: And how old is your youngest child?

Unweighted base, wave 2 follow-up participants with children under 19 (436)

Nearly one in five (18%) Restart participants had caring responsibilities, most commonly for parent(s) (7%) or for a child with a health condition or disability (5%).

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Females were more likely to have caring responsibilities than males (21%, compared to 15%).

2.1.3   Education and employment history

Restart participants held a range of qualifications. While almost a quarter (24%) were qualified to degree level or above, 10% had no qualifications. A fifth (20%) had two or more A levels, 16% had one A level and/or 5 or more GCSEs graded A* to C, and 21% had GCSEs of less than 5 A* to C (or equivalents).

As displayed in Figure 2.8, half of Restart participants (50%) reported they had mostly been in work since leaving full time education, with only one or two breaks (including the break that led them to join the Restart Scheme). Males (53%) and those over the age of 50 (61%) were more likely to have mostly been in work since leaving education than females (45%) and those aged 49 and under (45%). Around one in six participants (17%) said they had spent about as much time working as not working, and one in five (20%) had spent most of their time not working. Participants aged under 50 were less attached to the labour market than those aged 50 and over. Almost a quarter (22%) of participants 49 years and under had spent most of their time not working since leaving education compared to around one in seven (13%) of those aged 50 and over. Reflecting this, participants aged 50 and over were more likely to have worked solidly with one or two breaks (38%) or no breaks (24%) than participants aged 49 and under (27% and 18% respectively).

Figure 2.8 Main employment status since education
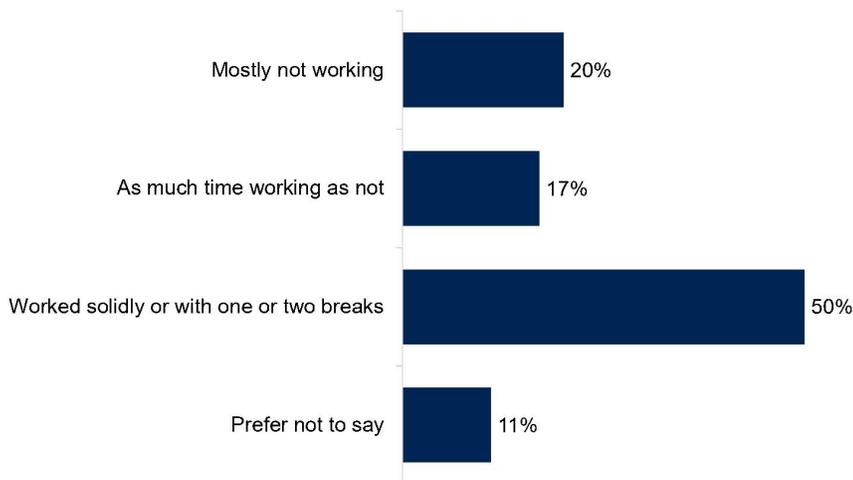
A4. Which of the following best describes the time you have spent doing paid work since leaving education? Unweighted base, wave 2 follow-up participants who have ever worked (1,523)

As shown in Figure 2.9, most Restart participants currently in work were long-term unemployed before starting their current job. 23% were unemployed for under a year and 65% were unemployed for over a year before starting their current job.

Figure 2.9 Length of time unemployed before current job
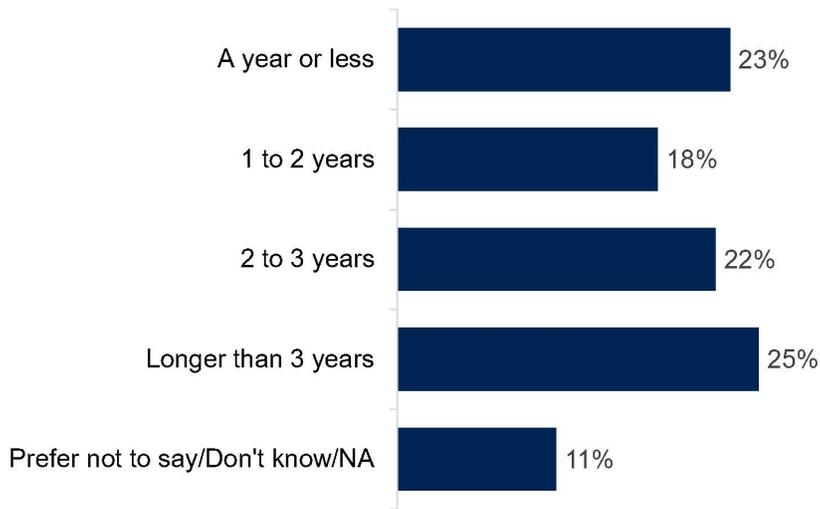
A2A. How long were you unemployed before starting your current job?

Unweighted base, wave 2 follow-up participants who are currently working (562)

Among participants who were currently in work, there was a wide spread of socio-economic grades as identified by current or last paid position. As shown in Figure 2.10, 40% fell into the ABC1 categories and 60% in C2DE (defined fully in the glossary). This was consistent across age and gender. This diversity of educational attainment and work history illustrates the complexity of the participant group. The composition of the group is likely to have been strongly affected by the changes to the labour market which took place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 2.10 NRS Socio-economic grade of in-work participants, derived from current or most recent job title
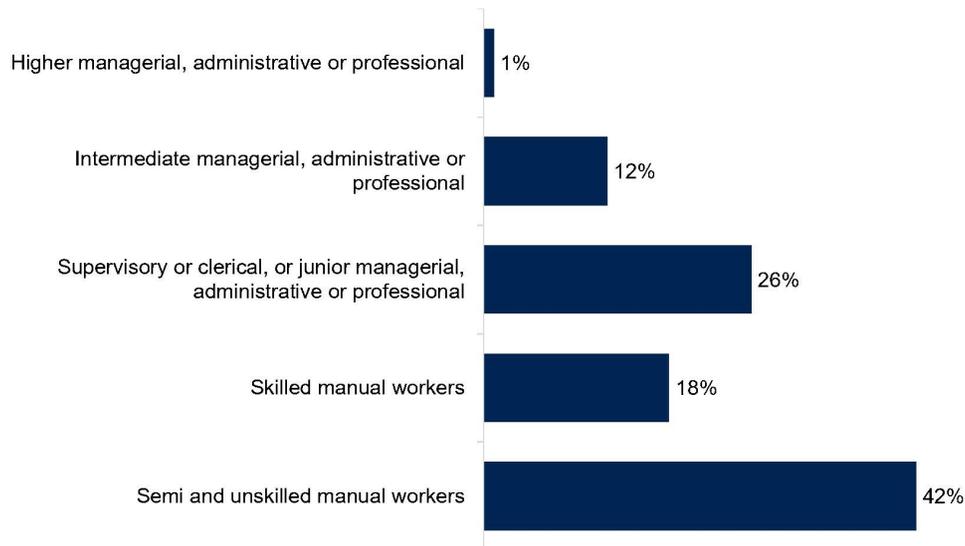
A5. Social grade

Unweighted base, wave 2 follow-up participants in work and who provided an occupation (355)

The amount of time Restart participants had been in Intensive Work Search (IWS) prior to starting on the Restart Scheme varied. As Figure 2.11 shows, around a third had been in IWS for less than a year (32%), a third from 1 to 2 years (32%) and a further third for more than 2 years (32%). The length of time in IWS usually shows how long a claimant has been out of work, or in work with very low earnings.

Figure 2.11 Time in IWS
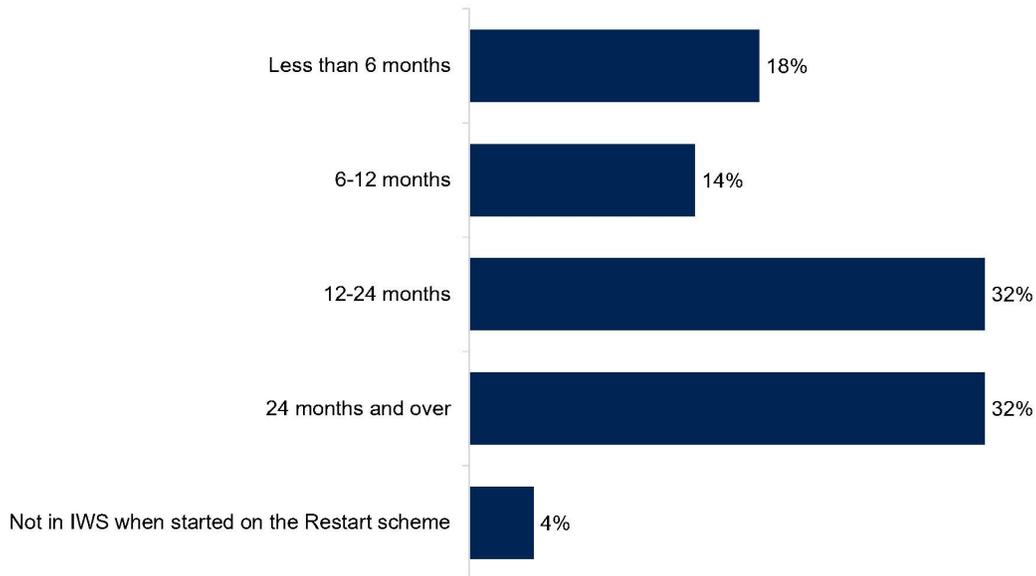
From sample: Time in IWS

Unweighted base, wave 2 follow-up participants (1,541)

Males were more likely to have been in IWS for two or more years, (35%, compared to 28% of females) as were those with no children at home (36%, compared to 24% of those who had children at home).

2.1.4   Internet access

Nearly all Restart participants had access to the internet (97%), compared to [93% of the UK population](#) (reflecting that the age profile of Restart participants is younger than the UK population as a whole). The majority of these had internet access at home, either over home broadband on a laptop or tablet (60%), or through their smartphone connected to Wi-Fi (54%) and/or mobile data (49%). Fourteen per cent relied on public computers and 8% on family and friends; 1% said they could only access the internet at work.

Overall, internet access was consistent across subgroups, with the exception of participants with no formal qualifications (9% either said: they did not have access (6%), or they did not know whether they did (2%)). This difference was driven by a much lower proportion of this group than average having access to home broadband either on a laptop or tablet (33%, compared to 60% overall) or through their smartphone connected to Wi-Fi (42%, compared with 54% overall).

The vast majority of those with internet access said they felt they would be able to access government services if they were available online (95%). Of this group, just over 8 in 10 said they could do this without help (81%) and 13% said they would need some help with this. Those with no formal qualifications (29%) were most likely to say they would need assistance, as were those aged 50 or older (17%) or females (15%).

This suggests that while the majority would be comfortable managing their UC claim and searching for jobs online, there are a minority who would need support.

2.1.5 Comparing participants and non-participants

To give context to the findings in this report which draw out the differences between participants and non-participants, it is useful to know how the profiles of the two groups compare. Participants are those who have taken part in the Restart Scheme. Non-participants are those who claimed Universal Credit, were eligible for and referred to the Restart Scheme, but did not start it. They may not have started for reasons such as them failing to attend a Restart appointment, the Restart provider rejecting their referral, or their referral being cancelled or not acted on by Jobcentre Plus. The profile differences between the two groups are likely to have influenced the outcomes reported by the two groups, meaning the non-participants cannot be used strictly as a control group. Nevertheless, it is useful to see how experiences and outcomes compare when evaluating the impact of the Restart Scheme.[5]

Participants were more likely than non-participants to be female (41%, compared to 36% of non-participants) or over the age of 50 (29%, compared to 20% of non-participants). Fewer participants than non-participants were aged under 25 (5%, compared to 10%). Again, this is likely to be because DWP customers in this age group were likely to be referred to the Kickstart Scheme. The Kickstart Scheme provided funding to create new jobs for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit who were at risk of long-term unemployment. The scheme ran from September 2020 to December 2021.

While the ethnic background profile was very similar between the two groups, Restart participants were more likely than non-participants to report that English was not their first language (23%, compared to 19%).

Restart participants were slightly more likely to live alone than non-participants (37%, compared to 33%) while non-participants were more likely to live with a partner (12%, compared to 9%). Participants were slightly less likely to have children under the age of 19 living in the household (32% of participants compared with 34% of non-participants), and equally likely to have caring responsibilities (each 17%).

Participants were more likely to have several characteristics that might mean they were closer to the labour market than non-participants:

- Restart participants were educated to a higher level than non-participants: 22% had degree-level qualifications or higher (compared to 13% of non-participants), and 18% had the equivalent of two or more A-Levels (compared to 13% of non-participants). Thirteen per cent of participants had no formal qualifications, compared to a quarter (25%) of non-participants.

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[5] In making these comparisons, the "participants" group includes all participants from wave 2 of the survey, therefore some "participant" figures may differ slightly from those already reported.

- Participants were less likely to have health conditions (lasting or expected to last 12 months or more) that might affect their ability to work: 53% reported they had a long-term condition, compared to 63% of non-participants.

- Restart participants were more likely to have internet access than non-participants (97%, compared to 91%). This was most likely to be home broadband, which 57% of participants had compared to 44% of non-participants.

These differences were reflected in the differences in work history between the two groups. Participants were less likely to say they had spent most time not working since leaving education than non-participants (20%, compared to 31% of non-participants).

A summary of the above information on participants' profiles is shown in Figure 2.12.

Figure 2.12 Summary of profile differences between participants and non-participants

Participants		Non-Participants
41% female		36% female
29% over 50		20% over 50
23% did not have English as their first language		19% did not have English as their first language
37% lived alone		33% lived alone
97% had internet access		91% had internet access
22% educated to degree level or higher		13% educated to degree level or higher
53% had a long-term health condition		63% had a long-term health condition
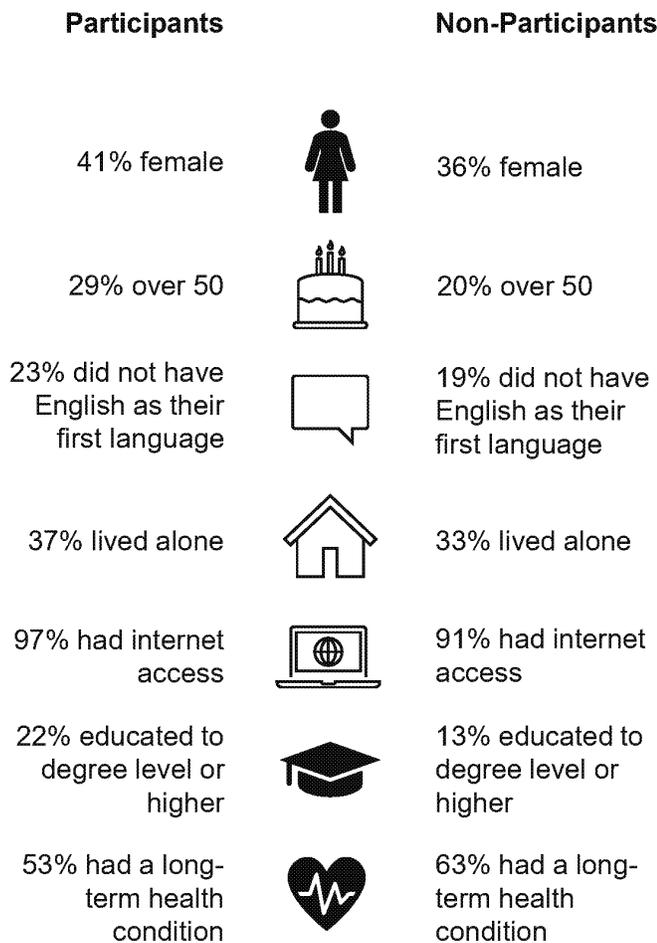
Profile information

Unweighted base, all wave 2 survey respondents (3,698)

2.2 Experiences of looking for work

This section provides an overview of the attitudinal and practical barriers to work, experiences of looking for work, and support preferences of those unemployed at wave 2. Wave 2 was conducted 10 months after wave 1 so that most participants had finished the Restart Scheme. This chapter discusses all unemployed Restart participants at wave 2. It also covers changes in the barriers, experiences, and support preferences of follow-up participants since wave 1 which participants typically answered around 3 months after they had started the Restart Scheme. Where findings cover follow-up participants only, this is identified at the beginning of the paragraph.

2.2.1 Unemployed Restart participants' attitudes to work

A majority of Restart participants who were unemployed at wave 2 held largely positive attitudes towards work and did not report attitudinal barriers to work. As shown in Figure 2.13, over three quarters (76%) agreed that they would be happier and more fulfilled if they were working, and two thirds (66%) agreed that paid work was a realistic goal for them in the next 6 months. Lower proportions agreed with negative sentiments towards work, such as that there are not enough jobs for everyone (43%), that jobs on offer do not pay enough to make working worthwhile (43%), or that it would be difficult for them to work even if they were offered a job (43%).

Figure 2.13 Restart participants' attitudes towards work at wave 2

I would be happier and more fulfilled if working	76%
Paid work is a realistic goal in the next 6 months	66%
Would like to start working only when my children are older*	51%
Not enough full-time vacancies for everyone	43%
Jobs do not pay enough to make working worthwhile	43%
Difficult for me to work now, even if offered a job	43%
Not enough advice and support to help me get a job	38%
Feel pressure from family and friends to get a job	30%
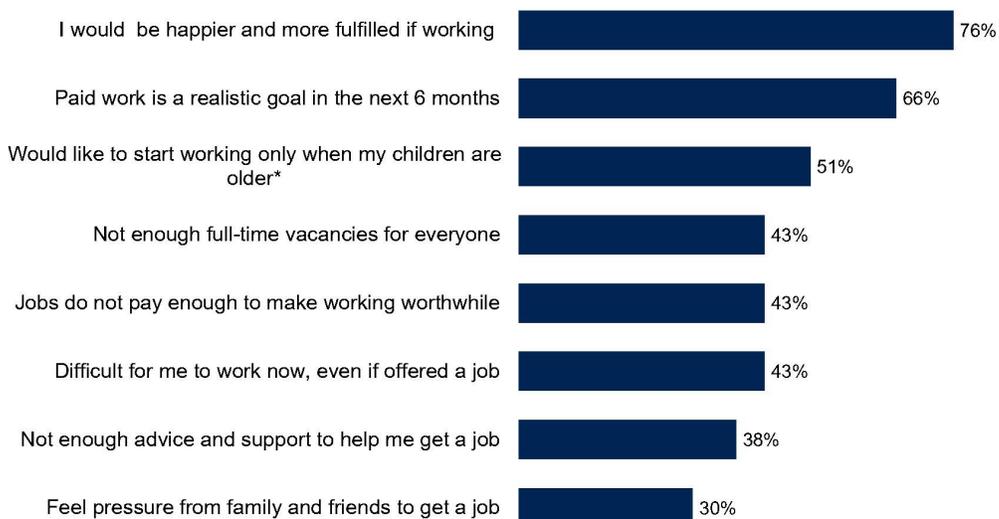
B1: To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements?

*Unweighted base, unemployed Restart participants at wave 2 (1848). *The statement 'I would like to start working only when my children are older' was only asked to survey participants with children*

Change in attitudes between wave 1 and wave 2

Longitudinal analysis was conducted on the survey results of the follow-up survey participants who took part at wave 1 and wave 2. This identified whether individual attitudes changed or remained the same over waves. Among follow-up participants who were unemployed at wave 2, the largest proportion had the same attitudes towards work at both waves of the research. As the majority of follow-up participants unemployed at wave 2 felt positively towards work, overall, a positive attitude was the most common attitude maintained over both waves.

Over half (51%) had the same attitude towards the statement that they 'would be happier and more fulfilled if they were working' and nearly four in ten (38%) retained the same attitude towards the statement that 'paid work is a realistic goal for them within the next 6 months'.

Three in ten (29%) follow-up participants who were unemployed at wave 2 had a negative shift in agreement with the statement that 'with the right support, paid work is a realistic goal' over the waves. Similarly, around a fifth (19%) of this group had less agreement that they would be 'happier or more fulfilled if they were working' at wave 2 than wave 1.

Nearly three in ten (28%) follow-up participants reported increased agreement that 'it would be difficult for them to work now even if they were offered a job'. The same proportion also agreed that 'there is not enough advice and support available'. These changes in attitudes are displayed in Figure 2.14.

Figure 2.14 Changes in attitudes toward work for unemployed Restart participants
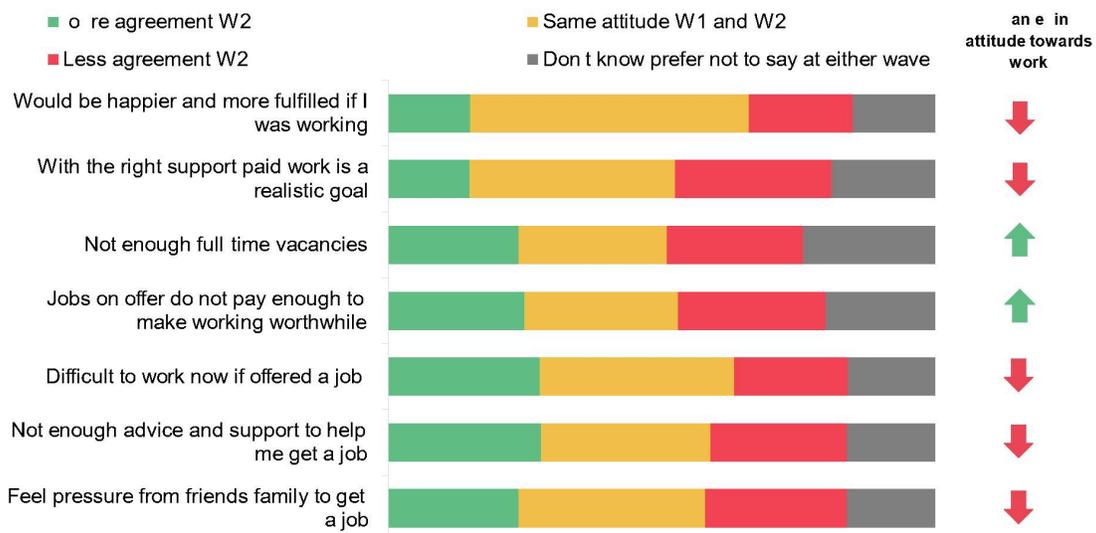
B1: To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements?

Unweighted base, all unemployed follow-up participants (913). Figures calculated from difference in answers at wave 1 and wave 2. For example, if someone answered that they 'somewhat agree' with a statement at wave 1 and 'strongly agree' with the same statement at wave 2, this was described as 'more agreement'. If someone answered 'don't know' or 'prefer not to say' at either wave 1 or wave 2, they were placed into a separate category called 'don't know/prefer not to say at either wave'.

The qualitative research found that a negative shift in attitudes experienced by some follow-up participants was due to frustration at not finding work despite receiving support. They reported that not finding work after up to 12 months of support led to a belief that there is not much that can be done to help them into work, or solidified this belief if they already held it.

> "I feel exactly the same as I felt before Restart. I suspected that would be the case, but hoped they would have been able to help me more." (Not working, Low skill, High barriers)

2.2.2 Practical barriers reported by Restart participants

Wave 1 barriers

Wave 1 was conducted up to three months after participants had started on the Restart Scheme. At this point, the most common practical barrier to work reported by unemployed participants was having a disability, health condition or learning difficulty (42%). This was followed by a lack of relevant skills or experience (41%), the commute to work, such as the cost, time to travel, or access to transport (34%), or their age (31%). Barriers less commonly mentioned included childcare (16%) and caring responsibilities (7%). This data on barriers to work is shown in Figure 2.15.

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Change in practical barriers between wave 1 and wave 2

Between wave 1 and wave 2 there were shifts in the practical barriers to work reported by unemployed Restart participants. In both waves, having a disability, health condition, or learning difficulty was the most common barrier. The percentage reporting this barrier increased by 8 percentage points, from 42% in wave 1 to 50% in wave 2. This may reflect wider data that the proportion of people who are economically inactive due to a health condition or disability is increasing. A lack of relevant skills or experience was the second most common barrier, but its prevalence reduced from 41% at wave 1 to 37% in wave 2, suggesting that the Restart Scheme was able to address this barrier to some extent. Barriers such as the commute to work and age remained relatively stable. Childcare as a barrier decreased at wave 2, however caring responsibilities increased. The increase in caring responsibilities perhaps also reflects the increase in the proportion of people with a health condition or disability (who may have required care by Restart participants). Taken together this shows that the Restart Scheme had some positive impact on the barriers which it was designed to address. It also reflects challenges in the wider operating context, with increases in barriers beyond the Restart Scheme's remit. These statistics on barriers to work are shown in Figure 2.15.

Figure 2.15 Main barriers to work reported by Restart participants at wave 1 and wave 2
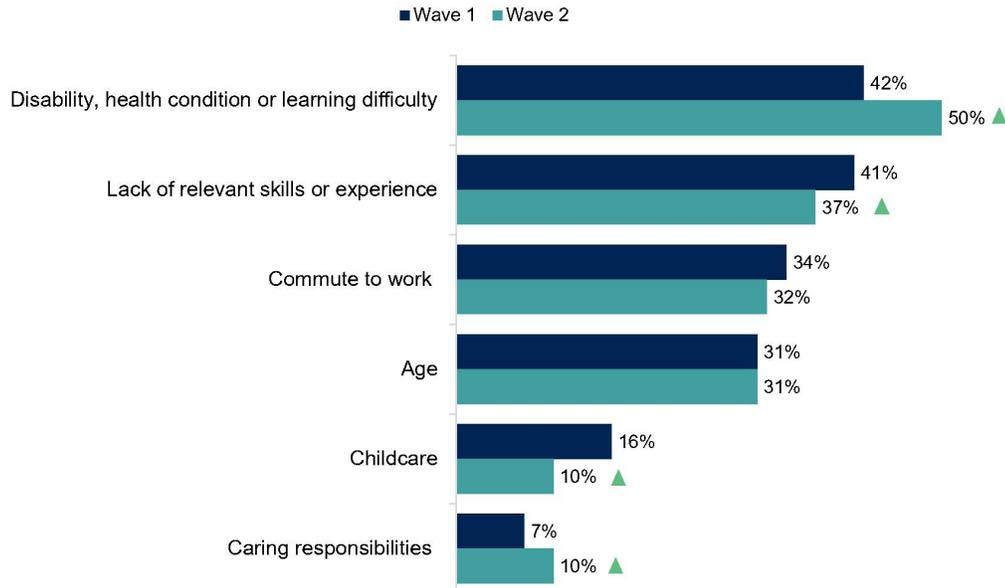
B3: Can you think of anything that makes it difficult for you to get a job?

Unweighted base, all unemployed Restart participants at wave 1 (3866) wave 2 (1848)

Wave 2 barriers

The barriers to work reported by Restart participants at wave 2 differed between subgroups. The qualitative research found that barriers often overlapped, producing complex barriers that could not be easily overcome. Complex barriers are those that would inhibit participants from being able to participate on the Restart Scheme. This includes barriers such as severe mental health conditions or homelessness as well as multiple needs or barriers.[6]

Having a disability or a physical or mental health condition was the most common barrier to work. Prevalence of this barrier varied between subgroups: it was more likely to be reported as a barrier to work by white Restart participants than those of all other ethnic groups combined (55% white ethnicities vs. 37% all other ethnic groups combined). This was also more likely to be reported as a barrier to work by Restart participants who had spent longer in IWS. Restart participants who had spent 12 to 24 months in IWS (55%) and 24 months and over (56%) were more likely to report a health condition or disability as a barrier than those who had spent less than 6 months in IWS (39%). Those who had both a physical and mental health condition were more likely to report their health condition as a barrier (86%) than those who only had one type (physical condition 66%, mental health condition 72%).

The commute to work (either cost, time, or access to transport) was more likely to be reported as a barrier to work by Restart participants who were ethnic minorities (excluding white ethnic minorities) (33%) than white ethnicities (27%). It was also more likely to be reported by Restart participants who had never worked (42%) than

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[6] (Committee of Public Accounts, 2023. *The Restart Scheme for long-term unemployed people*, para.6.)

those who had been out of work for between 13 months and 3 years (29%). The qualitative research found that transport and childcare acted as intersecting barriers. Those with childcare responsibilities could not take jobs which would take a long time to travel to or which clashed with the time the participant needed to transport their child(ren) to and from nursery or school.

A lack of skills or qualifications was more likely to be reported as a barrier by Restart participants of ethnic minorities (excluding white ethnic minorities) than white participants (46% vs. 34%). This was also more likely to be reported as a barrier by Restart participants with English as a second language (46%) than those with English as a first language (35%). Qualitative findings suggest that the skills barriers experienced by ethnic minorities (excluding white ethnic minorities) varied. Examples included lacking English language skills or having qualifications which were not recognised in the UK, such as a a ster's degree from a non-UK university or employment history as an electrician outside the UK.

Age was reported as a barrier by more Restart participants aged 50 and over (63%) than those aged 49 and under (15%). In the qualitative interviews, this group reported feeling that employers would not employ them because they did not want to invest in training an employee who might retire in a few years. Age was reported as a barrier by more males (36%) than females (21%), and by more people of ethnic minorities (excluding white ethnic minorities) than white ethnicities (34% vs. 21%).

Childcare was reported as a barrier to work by more females (22%) than males (4%) and by more people of ethnic minorities (excluding white ethnic minorities) than white ethnicities (13% vs. 9%). Qualitative findings suggest that childcare was a barrier for people who could not find work that fit around the hours they needed, or wanted, to spend time looking after their children. Parents in the qualitative research who experienced this explained that they could not apply for jobs with unpredictable hours or far from where they lived, as they would not be able to manage their childcare responsibilities around the travel or time requirements. The childcare barrier was particularly hard to address for parents who wanted to provide childcare themselves full-time, or for those who could not access childcare either because they could not afford it, there was no availability at after-school clubs, or their child had a disability. Parents who did not need or want to provide childcare full-time, and had few other barriers to work, felt the barrier of childcare could be overcome by finding jobs with suitable hours or finding alternate childcare.

More than half (52%) of Restart participants who had caring responsibilities, which is defined as providing help to someone who needs assistance with everyday life due to illness, disability or old age, reported that this acted as a barrier to work. Restart participants with caring responsibilities were also more likely than those without to say that childcare was a barrier for them (18% vs. 9%).

Longitudinal analysis
Longitudinal analysis of individual experiences found that between wave 1 and wave 2 of the survey, nearly four in ten (37%) unemployed Restart participants reported that the number of barriers to work they faced remained the same. A third (33%)

reported that the total number of practical barriers had decreased, and three in ten (30%) reported that the number of barriers they experienced had increased.

The barriers most likely to remain between wave 1 and wave 2 were health conditions or learning disabilities (37%), lack of skills or qualifications (23%), and age (21%). Age was more likely to remain a barrier at both waves for unemployed Restart participants aged 50 and over (48%) than those aged 49 and under (7%).

Among those in this group who experienced health conditions as a barrier to work, this barrier was more likely to develop than be removed during the 12-month period. DWP customers who experience this barrier may therefore need specialist support, such as Intensive Personalised Employment Support. This was reflected in the case study research, where both providers and participants felt that the Restart Scheme was not designed for those with more severe health conditions.

Nearly one in five (18%) unemployed follow-up participants felt their lack of experience or skills was overcome as a barrier by wave 2, however a quarter (23%) do not report having received sufficient support to achieve this. A further 12% identified new skills barriers at wave 2. This could be due to a changing perspective on the skills they needed to get into work, leading them to identify different or new skills barriers.

Age was a residual barrier for just over one in five (21%) and was addressed for just over one in ten (11%), suggesting that this barrier is surmountable with the right type of support. These changes in barriers are displayed in Figure 2.16.

Figure 2.16 Change in barriers experienced between wave 1 and wave 2
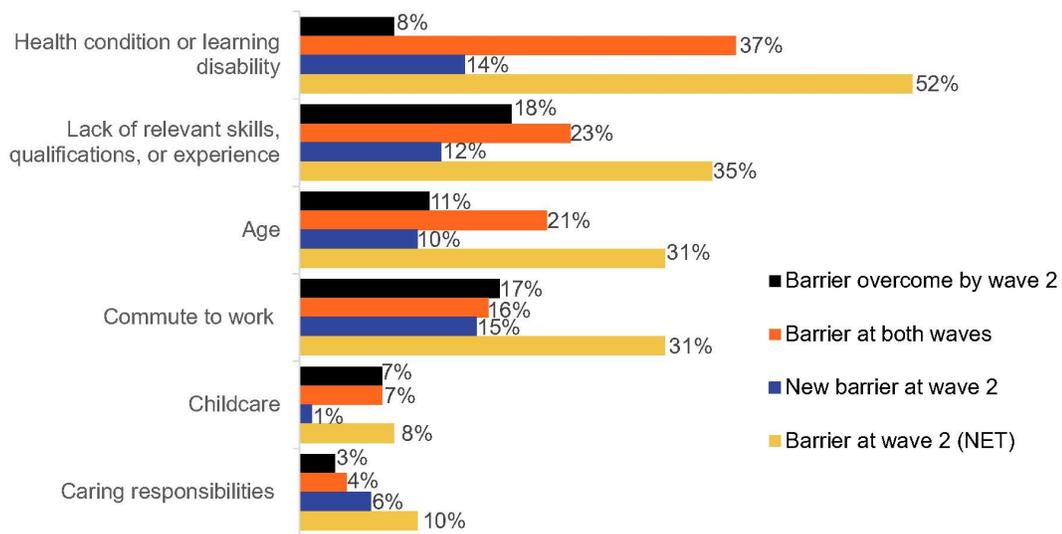
B3: Can you think of anything that makes it difficult for you to get a job?

Unweighted base, all unemployed follow-up Restart participants, figures calculated from answers at wave 1 and wave 2 (913)

2.2.3 Restart participants' experience of job searc i n

Restart participants were confident in their overall ability to look for employment. This confidence was measured using a job-search self-efficacy score (JSSE), calculated using a participant's self-reported agreement to a set of statements about their confidence with job-searching activities. These statements are included in Appendix 6.1.

Considering specific job-seeking skills, Restart participants were most confident looking for and applying for jobs. They were less confident with interviews, finding the right help to become familiar with a new job or approaching employers directly. As shown in Figure 2.17, over three quarters of Restart participants felt confident searching for jobs online (76%) and around three quarters felt confident applying for jobs online (74%), completing a good job application (73%), and making a list of skills to use to find a job (73%). Seven in ten (70%) also felt confident talking to friends or other contacts to discover job opportunities.

Figure 2.17 Confidence with job searching skills
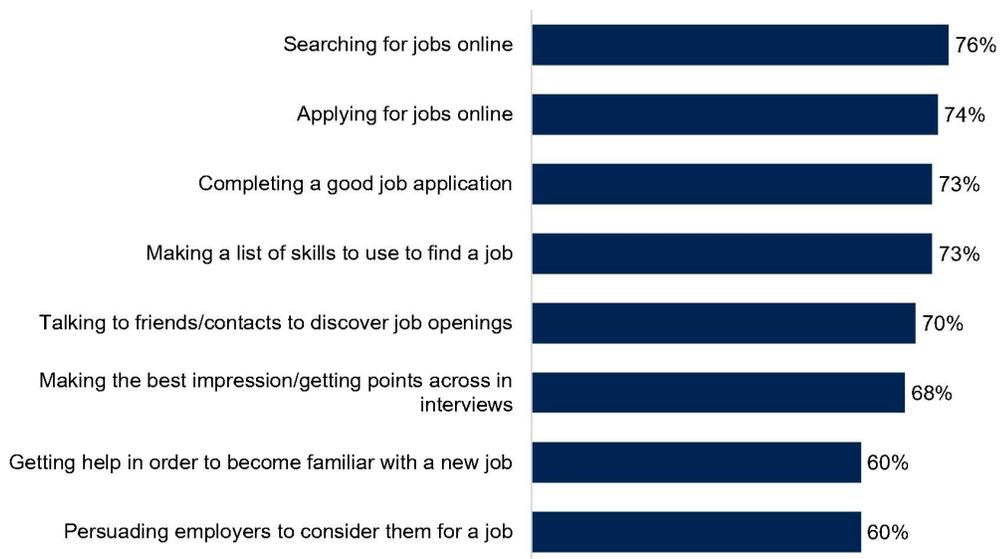
Searching for jobs online	76%
Applying for jobs online	74%
Completing a good job application	73%
Making a list of skills to use to find a job	73%
Talking to friends/contacts to discover job openings	70%
Making the best impression/getting points across in interviews	68%
Getting help in order to become familiar with a new job	60%
Persuading employers to consider them for a job	60%

D1a. How confident do you feel about doing the following successfully?

Unweighted base, all wave 2 Restart participants (3698)

Restart participants with no qualifications were less confident searching for jobs online than those with any level of qualification (61% with no qualifications compared to 80% with level 1 qualifications, and an average of 88% with level 2 qualifications or higher). They were also less confident applying for jobs online. For example, 59% with no qualifications reported they were confident with this activity compared to 79% with level 1 qualifications and 86% (average) with level 2 qualifications or higher. This reflects the lower likelihood of this group to have internet access. Restart participants who had spent most of their time since leaving education not working were also less

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confident searching for jobs online (78%) than those who had spent most of their time working (84%).

In the qualitative interviews, highly skilled participants and those who had a strong employment history felt confident with their job searching skills. Highly skilled participants explained that they felt they already had a good CV and knew how to search for and apply for jobs online, so they felt confident that they could find work.

Participants with less experience searching for and applying for jobs online were less confident in their abilities to do this. Participants with barriers that made it hard to write cover letters and job applications, such as lower English language skills or dyslexia, were also less confident searching for, and particularly applying for, jobs.

In the survey, Restart participants of different ages reported differing levels of confidence with some job searching skills, particularly using the internet. For instance, those aged 50 and over (76%) felt less confident searching for jobs online than those aged 49 and under (83%). This group were also more likely to say they would need assistance accessing government services online (17%) or would not be able to access them at all (3%) than those aged 49 and under (11% needing assistance, 1% unable to access), reflecting that digital skills and confidence are lower for this group overall.

Longitudinal analysis
The longitudinal analysis showed that almost half (49%) of follow-up participants had an increased Job-Search Self-Efficacy (JSSE) score by wave 2, with 14% maintaining their score, and 37% scoring lower at wave 2. Though most participants increased their score over the waves, the proportion who reported feeling confident with the job search activities that are used to calculate JSSE scores increased by up to 5 percentage points per activity. For example, 58% reported they were confident contacting employers at wave 1 and 63% said they were confident with this activity at wave 2, an increase of 5 percentage points. Therefore, even though the most common outcome over waves was to increase JSSE score, this does not mean the same proportion moved from feeling not confident to confident with various job search activities.

Nearly six in ten (57%) follow-up participants who had moved into employment at wave 2 had an increased JSSE score, compared to 49% who remained unemployed. The increased JSSE score among those in work could suggest they achieved this work outcome because of their increased JSSE, or that their self-perception of their personal efficacy has been enhanced by getting a job.

As shown in Figure 2.18, there was a net positive shift for follow-up participants across all statements, with the highest net increase in making the best impression in interviews (from 22% to 30% confident).

The areas where the largest proportion of the cohort felt they had improved were:

- Contacting and persuading potential employers to consider them for a job (31%)

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- Making the best impression and getting their points across in an interview (30%)

- Getting help in order to become familiar with a new job (29%)

- Talking to friends and other contacts to discover promising job openings (29%)

Figure 2.18 Change in the Job-Search Self-Efficacy of follow-up participants between waves
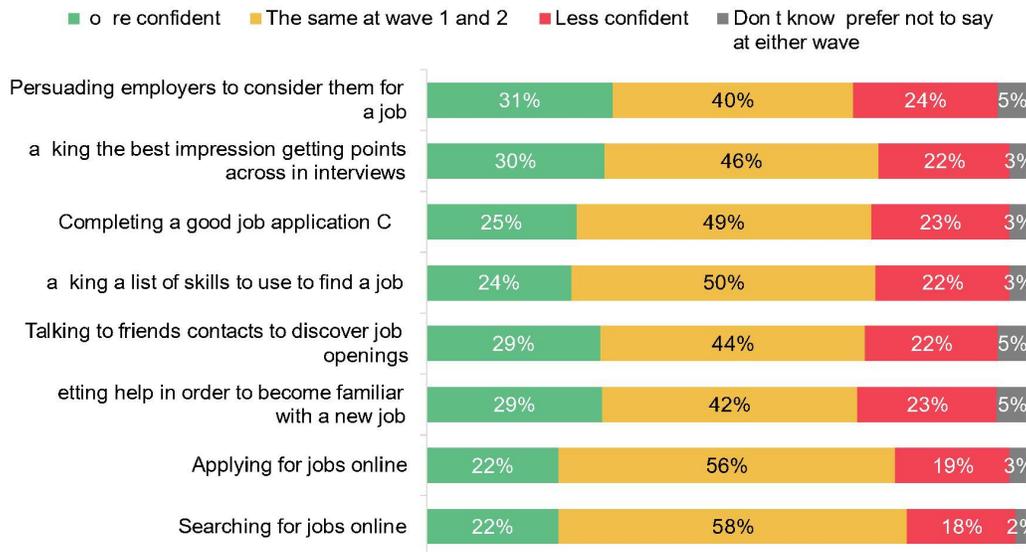
D1a. How confident do you feel about doing the following successfully?

Unweighted base, all follow-up participants (1541). Figures calculated from answers at wave 1 and wave 2. For example, if someone answered that they were 'fairly confident' with a skill at wave 1 and were 'very confident' with that skill at wave 2, their attitude shift across waves was described as 'more confident'. If someone answered 'don't know' or 'prefer not to say' at either wave 1 or wave 2, they were placed into a separate category called 'don't know/prefer not to say at either wave'.

Changes, or consistency of, self-reported JSSE were consistent across demographic subgroups.

The qualitative research found an improvement in confidence searching and applying for jobs among follow-up participants who had found work or felt they had moved closer to work. Those who had found work or felt closer to work felt they had improved their CV, cover letter and interview skills. Specifically, they felt they were better able to write CVs tailored to specific jobs. Interview skills courses or interview practice also had a positive impact on participants' confidence when applying for jobs. These participants also reported using new sources to look for jobs.

> "I feel more positive I will get back into employment, and have the confidence to send it [job application] in." (Not working, High skill, High barriers)

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Job selectivity

In the quantitative survey, participants with lower levels of qualifications reported they were looking for work in fewer sectors than participants with higher levels of qualifications. This could be because there are sectors that require specific types or levels of qualifications in order to work in them, and less qualified participants may be less likely to have the required qualifications.

Qualitative research suggests that one characteristic that affected experiences with job searching, and of the Restart Scheme, was how selective participants were about the type of job they would take, including sector, pay, contract type, location, or hours. Job selectivity was determined by personal preferences, practical barriers, or a mixture of the two. Selectivity and the reasons for it varied between Restart participants.

Though lower-qualified participants were looking in fewer sectors than higher-qualified participants, qualitative findings suggest that among lower-qualified participants, there were those who had open attitudes towards jobs in a wide range of sectors. These were the participants who reported that their aim was to be in work to gain positive work-related outcomes such as self-satisfaction, structure, socialisation, and income that was not benefits. As their main aim was to be in work, they were less selective about the type of work. Therefore, though they were looking for work in few sectors, perhaps due to skills barriers and other practical barriers, they were still attitudinally open to working in a wide range of sectors as their aim was to be in work, not necessarily in a certain type of work. There were also opposing examples of lower-qualified participants in our sample who were very selective and only wanted a job in a specific sector due to a mix of personal preference and practical barriers.

Qualitative findings also suggest that among highly qualified participants, there were those who wanted a job in a certain sector, particularly one they had previous experience in, or wanted a job of a certain seniority level. This was not always the case, as there were also examples of highly qualified participants who reported they were willing to accept lower salaries and more junior roles than they were used to. It may also be that this group feel they have a wider range of sector options available to them as they are more aware of their transferrable skills.

Self-employed participants typically wanted to remain self-employed and were resistant to suggestions from Employment Advisors to find a job working for an employer. However, there were examples of participants being persuaded to consider alternatives: one self-employed participant who owned a recruitment agency was receptive to their Employment Advisor's suggestions to consider working for an employer. Through the Restart Scheme they went to a job fair suggested by their advisor and found a temporary job in retail which they enjoyed. They have now created a separate CV for work for an employer and are more open to working in retail. They explained that their Employment Advisor encouraged them to view themselves differently and consider the possibility of working for an employer. This illustrates how a positive relationship with the Employment Advisor was central to helping participants address this barrier to work.

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"I have stopped viewing myself as just self-employed and seeing myself as a potential employee." (In work, High skill, Low barriers)

There were examples in our sample of Restart participants who had strong personal preferences for certain types of work and high barriers to finding work. These challenges were exacerbated if participants were resistant to their Employment Advisors' suggestions of considering new sectors for work. For example, one participant had a strong preference for working in the area where they lived as they did not want to work far from home. They also only wanted to work within a school or somewhere with not many people as they felt uncomfortable in any other setting. Their practical barriers included no UK qualifications, no relevant work experience in their desired sector, lack of opportunities in their sectors of interest in their local area, and caring responsibilities. This made it challenging for their Employment Advisor to suggest suitable job openings and the participant reported they did not suggest anything that matched their needs and preferences.

2.2.4 Support preferences to help Restart participants find or progress in work

Support preferences amongst Restart participants at wave 1
At wave 1 unemployed participants were asked what support would help them find work. The most common support need for unemployed Restart participants was help with the cost of travel to and from work (39%), followed by support and training with work-related skills (33%), support and training around finding a new job (32%) and support managing a physical or mental health condition (31%). Just a tenth (11%) said they did not need any more support finding work.

At wave 1 employed Restart participants were asked what support had helped them to find work. The most common type of support that had been useful was support and training with getting a new job (32%). The following most common support needs included support and training with work-related skills (18%), access to digital technology and the internet (18%), followed by help with the cost of travel (14%). Just under a third (29%) who were in work did not report anything had been useful in helping them find work.

Support preferences amongst Restart participants at wave 2
At wave 2, unemployed Restart participants were asked again about support preferences to understand how their preferences had changed over time. Employed Restart participants at wave 2 were asked again what support would help them to progress in work.

For participants who were unemployed at wave 2, the most common support types were help with the cost of travel to and from work (39%), help to manage a mental or physical health condition (36%) and support and training with work-related skills (33%). Just over one in ten (12%) said they did not need any more support finding work.

The most common types of support to progress in work requested at wave 2 by those in employment was help with the cost of travel to and from work (24%), support and

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training with work-related skills (21%), support to continue/ start further or higher education (18%) and help to manage a mental or physical health condition (18%). Similar to wave 1 just over a third (34%) who were in work at wave 2 did not feel they needed support to progress in work.

The comparison between wave 1 and wave 2 support preferences of Restart participants reveals some continuing trends and new developments. For the unemployed participants, the most common support need remained the help with the cost of travel to and from work, maintaining at 39% in both waves. However, there was an increase in those needing help managing a physical or mental health condition from 31% in wave 1 to 36% in wave 2.

Maintained support preferences between wave 1 and wave 2
The support preferences of Restart participants at both waves were compared to see how these may have changed between waves. The support preferences that Restart participants who remained unemployed over both waves reported at both wave 1 and wave 2 may provide insight into their unmet needs.

The most common consistent support preferences for finding work were help with the cost of travel to and from work (17%) or support managing a health condition (16%). These were followed by work-related skills support and training (13%), support and training related to finding or getting a new job (12%), and support starting or continuing higher education (9%). These statistics are shown in Figure 2.19.

Figure 2.19 Maintained support preferences for Restart participants who remained unemployed over both waves
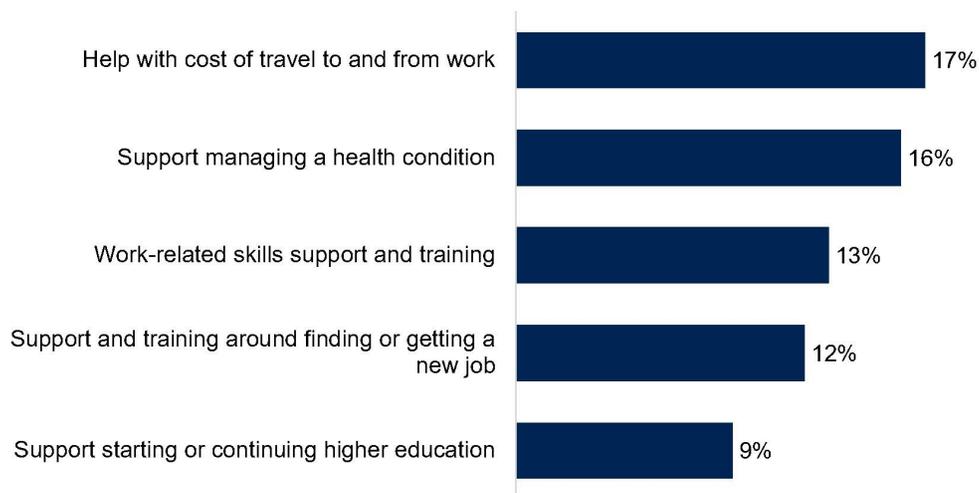
B4: What, if anything, would help you to find paid work?

Unweighted base, all follow-up respondents who remained unemployed at wave 1 and wave 2 (818)

Maintained support preferences differed between demographic groups, particularly age. Younger participants (49 and under) were more likely to want support getting or finding a new job across both waves compared to those aged 50 or older (14% vs. 8%). This group were also more likely to want support to attend higher or further

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education (11% vs. 5%). Female Restart participants were more likely than males to express a desire for support with higher or further education (11% vs. 8%).

Restart participants from ethnic minorities (excluding white ethnic minorities) (16%) and particularly of black, African, Caribbean, or black British ethnic backgrounds (17%) were also more likely to have a continued support preference for help getting or finding a new job than those of white ethnicities (10%).

Support using digital technology was maintained as a support preference by more Restart participants 50 years and older than 49 years and younger (6% vs. 4%), reflecting the overall lower digital confidence among this group.

New support preferences at wave 2

Comparing the support preferences of unemployed Restart participants at both waves can show us how preferences changed between waves. The most common new support preferences for Restart participants (support needs identified at wave 2 and not wave 1) were help with the cost of travel to and from work (16%), work-related skills support and training (15%), support managing a health condition (13%), support starting or continuing higher education (13%), and support and training relating to finding or getting a new job (12%). The increased preference for help with the cost of travel to and from work may relate to increases in the cost of living between wave 1 and wave 2.[7] Figure 2.20 shows the proportion of unemployed Restart participants who identified these support needs at wave 2 and not wave 1.

Figure 2.20 New support preferences for Restart participants who remained unemployed over both waves

B4: What, if anything, would help you to find paid work?

Unweighted base, all follow-up participants who remained unemployed at wave 1 and wave 2 (818)

New support needs varied by demographic subgroups. Restart participants aged 49 and under were more likely than those aged 50 and above to have a new preference

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[7] House of Commons Library, Rising cost of living in the UK Research Briefing

for help with the cost of travel to work (18% vs. 13%). This group were also more likely to have a new preference for help starting or continuing further education (15%) than those aged 50 and above (9%). This was more likely to apply to those with children than without (18% vs. 11%), and people of ethnic minorities than white ethnicities (19% vs. 11%).

Support or training with getting a new job was reported as a new support preference by more Restart participants who did not have English as their first language than those who did have English as a first language (19% vs. 14%).

Participant illustrations

The examples illustrate the experiences of the barriers to work and residual support needs of different types of participants. They are composite illustrations drawn from the qualitative interviews and names have been changed to protect confidentiality.

Jane, female, 25-49, in work, low skill, high barriers

This participant illustration shows an example of a participant adapting to barriers she faced to get into work.

Jane was a single mother to her 13-year-old daughter. She was working at a food packaging factory. She worked shifts and her hours varied from 2 days a week to full-time hours depending on the hours her employer offered. She wanted to work full-time hours and was looking to secure a full-time contract in the near future.

Jane felt her mental health had been a barrier to work as she struggled with anxiety and depression. Childcare had been a barrier in the past and her daughter continued to need support to make sure she attended school. Previously she had not gone to school when Jane started work before school drop-off. Transport was also a barrier to work as Jane did not drive so needed a job she could travel to on the bus.

The Restart Scheme supported Jane by helping her find and apply for jobs which fit her needs for working hours and location. As well as practical support, the scheme improved her confidence in interviews through an interview skills class. The Employment Advisor also provided emotional support which improved Jane's overall wellbeing.

Jane credited the support she received in helping get her job. She had increased life satisfaction as a result of working and having a more structured day.

> "She was really good the lady [the Employment Advisor]. Any problems, I could talk to her…she was so kind and brilliant, like a friend really. I trusted her."

Susan, 25-49 years old, low skill, high barriers

Susan is a single parent of two school-aged children and had only ever had one job, in the retail industry. She suffers from depression due to bereavement.

She had high selectivity for a job in the retail industry as this was the only sector she had a personal interest in.

She was unwilling to consider other sectors, like care work, which had greater availability of jobs locally.

Susan only wanted to work 16 hours per week because of her childcare needs. She also wanted a term-time only job so that she could look after her children during the summer holidays.

There were limited retail jobs locally, but there were more in a nearby city. However, she was unable to travel there and back in time for school pick up, so these jobs did not meet her needs.

On the Restart Scheme, Susan received CV and interview support as well as support searching for jobs and completing application forms. She found this support helpful but her childcare barrier and being signed off work due to her mental health condition meant she remained unemployed.

> "I only want to work in retail. It s what I like to do, always have liked to do... there are care jobs round here, but I don t want to do that... There are some retail jobs, but not the hours I want – I just want to do 16 hours as I don't have anyone to look after the kids."

James, 50-65 years old, low skill, low barriers

James lived with his partner. His partner was out of work due to a long-term health condition. James did not have any childcare or caring responsibilities. James had a physical health condition that sometimes made it difficult, but not impossible, to do physical jobs.

He had strong motivation to work and had a good employment history in several sectors, predominantly retail.

James had a personal preference for a job that was customer-facing and not in retail as he wanted to change sector, but apart from that he was open to accepting different types of job.

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James found a job as a bus driver while on the Restart Scheme but reported that this was not due to help from the scheme. He was happy with this job as it is customer-facing, and he planned to stay in it until he retires.

> "I had that knee operation and could not walk for 7 or 8 months. I still get some pain occasionally, but it's manageable."

> "After retail, I just wanted something different. I wanted to get out of retail, but still do something customer-facing."

2.2.5 Comparing participants and non-participants

This section compares the barriers, job-searching experiences, and support preferences between Restart participants and non-participants. The findings in this section are based on the responses of everyone who took part in the survey at wave 2.

The average number of barriers was similar for Restart participants (1.1) and non-participants (1.3). However, Restart participants and non-participants showed differences in the types of barriers they experienced to work and demonstrated differing attitudes to work. Overall, this suggests that participants at wave 2 (after most had completed the Restart Scheme) were closer to the labour market than non-participants.

Restart participants (50%) were less likely than non-participants (66%) to report that a physical or mental health condition or learning difficulty made it difficult for them to get a job, reflecting the higher proportion of non-participants with health conditions. Furthermore, Restart participants with a health condition were less likely to say this was a barrier for them than non-participants with a health condition (71% vs. 82%).

More Restart participants than non-participants reported they found it difficult to get a job because of a lack of relevant skills or qualifications (37% of participants compared to 32% of non-participants), although they were more highly qualified than non-participants. More Restart participants (31%) reported that their age made it difficult for them to get a job than non-participants (21%), perhaps due to the higher proportion of people aged 50 and over among Restart participants.

One barrier which was consistent across Restart participants and non-participants was the commute to work in terms of cost, distance, time, or access to transport (reported by 32% of Restart participants and 34% of non-participants). The same proportion of Restart participants and non-participants reported they had no barriers to work (each 7%).

The average JSSE score for Restart participants was higher than the average for non-participants (3.99 vs. 3.61).

Unemployed Restart participants were more likely to feel positively about the prospect of working than unemployed non-participants:

- More participants agreed (76%) that they would be happier and more fulfilled if they were working than non-participants (64%)

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- More participants (65%) than non-participants (48%) agreed that with the right support paid work is a realistic goal for them within the next 6 months

- More participants (30%) agreed that that they feel under pressure from family and friends to get a job than non-participants (27%)

- Participants (40%) were more likely to disagree that it would be difficult for them to work now even if they were offered a job than non-participants (25%)

- Participants (29%) were more likely to disagree that they would like to start working when their children were older, than non-participants (17%)

In work participants and non-participants were asked what would help them progress at work. The only support preference that was significantly different was support accessing affordable and good quality childcare. Non-participants (18%) were more likely than participants to want this type of support (12%). Non-participants were more likely than participants to want support to manage caring responsibilities (17% vs 11%) and support to manage a physical or mental health condition (42% vs 35%).

For participants and non-participants out of work they were asked what would help them find paid work. Participants were more likely to want support with skills and education (51%) compared to non-participants (44%).

2.3 Interactions with the Restart Scheme

This section examines participants' interactions with the Restart Scheme. It includes findings from the quantitative survey that relate to the process of enrolling onto the Restart Scheme shortly before wave 1. This chapter also looks at the type of support that participants received on the Restart Scheme and who benefitted from this support. Ratings of the Restart Scheme and improvements that could be made to the scheme are also covered.

2.3.1 Enrolling onto the Restart Scheme

A 'warm handover' was a mandated part of the enrolment process for participants joining the Restart Scheme. This involved a telephone call or in-person meeting between the participant, a Work Coach and an Employment Advisor. At wave 1 all Restart participants in the quantitative survey were asked if they had attended a call or meeting with a Work Coach and an Employment Advisor. Nine in ten (90%) recalled attending a call or meeting, 5% said they had not and 5% could not remember.

In the qualitative interviews conducted at wave 1 participants were asked about their expectations of the Restart Scheme. Overall, Restart participants recalled being given little information about the scheme by their Work Coach prior to starting. They only found out more information about the Restart Scheme once enrolled. From the little they knew about the scheme; participants thought it would be similar to the support provided by Jobcentre Plus with more focus on finding jobs suited to their skills and circumstances.

Participants who had a negative perception of the Restart Scheme before starting said that they only took part to continue receiving Universal Credit. These participants saw the Restart Scheme as a tick box exercise and struggled to see the benefit in the scheme.

> "It seemed exactly the same as the Jobcentre Scheme, just in a different building" (In work, High skill, Low barriers)

Participants with a more positive perception of the Restart Scheme, although lacking knowledge, believed the scheme would benefit their job search.

> "I just felt happy that I was going on it because I could get more help with the stuff I needed to" (Not working, Low skill, High barriers)

2.3.2   Support received on the Restart Scheme

Frequency of contact with Employment Advisor

The design of the Restart Scheme was for providers to offer participants fortnightly meetings with ad hoc support. At wave 2 in the quantitative survey, participants were asked how often they had received contact or support from the Restart Scheme. As shown in Figure 2.21, 74% of participants had a meeting with their advisor every 2 weeks. Nearly 1 in 5 (18%) reported they had a meeting with an Employment Advisor less than every 2 weeks.

Figure 2.21 Interaction frequency with the Restart Scheme at wave 2
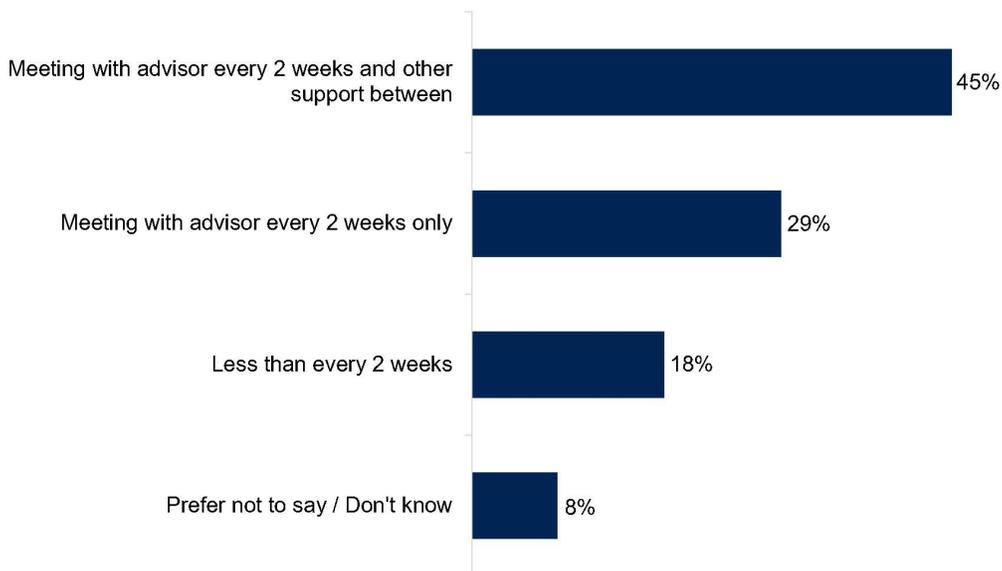
C1a. Which of the following best describes how often you received some form of contact or support from the Restart Scheme or its associated partners?

Unweighted base, all follow-up Restart participants wave 2 (1541)

In the wave 2 qualitative interviews participants were asked their thoughts on the frequency of meetings. Participants who did not receive support beyond the job searching support they received in the first few months on the scheme, did not see the value in meeting every two weeks. They reported meetings only lasting 5-10 minutes where Employment Advisors would repeat the same advice and subsequently saw attending these meetings as a tick box exercise.

Types of support received on the Restart Scheme
At wave 2 in the quantitative survey, 86% of follow-up participants received at least one type of support from the Restart Scheme, as shown in Figure 2.22, and 74% had received more than one type of support. Thirteen per cent reported never having received any support while on the scheme.

Figure 2.22 Received support at wave 2
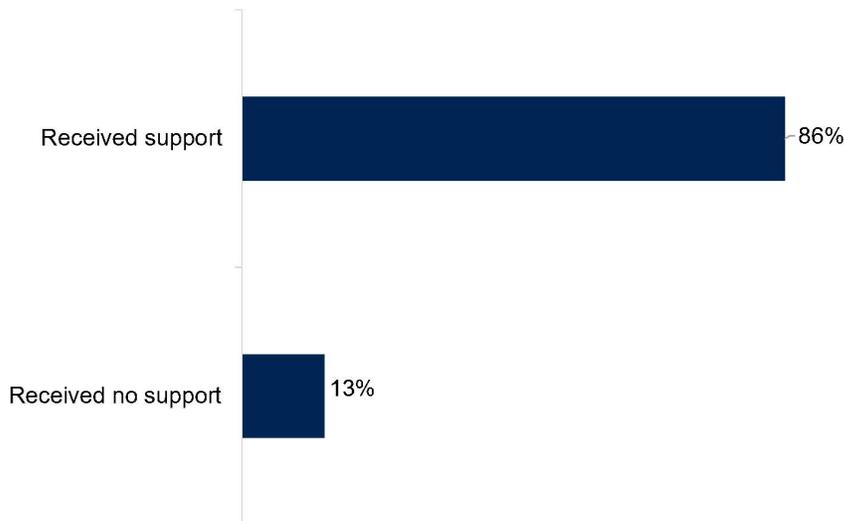
C5/C6. Have you received any of the following support through Restart Scheme / in the last 12 months?

Unweighted base, all follow-up Restart participants wave 2 (1541)

Three quarters (76%) of participants at wave 2 received support with finding a job. This included support to develop their CV or cover letters (58%), help finding job opportunities (48%), writing a personal career action plan (39%), interview preparation (37%) and the Employment Advisor talking to employers and other organisations on behalf of participants (27%).

Follow-up participants were most likely to receive support with job-searching skills (76%). Follow-up participants were equally likely to receive wider support (51%), skills-focused support (51%) or support contacting an employer (49%). Wider support from the Restart Scheme included support to improve confidence or wellbeing (34%), referrals to other types of support or organisations (23%) or Employment Advisors providing ongoing support after the participant had started a new job (21%).

Skills support received by follow-up participants was more likely to be a skills assessment (37%) than training to develop existing skills or qualifications (27%) or training to develop new skills or qualifications (27%).

Support to make contact with employers included job fairs (39%), referrals to an information session with a prospective employer (20%) or a job placement (11%). Finally, 13% of wave 2 follow-up participants had received self-employment support. Figure 2.23 displays all the above information on types of support received.

Figure 2.23 Type of support received at wave 2 amongst follow-up Restart participants
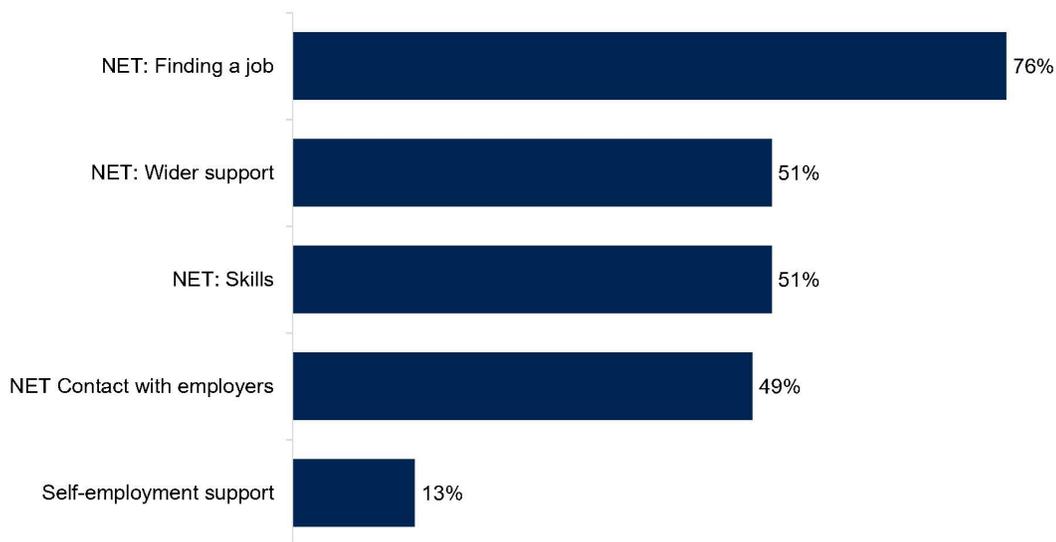
C5/C6. Have you received any of the following support through Restart Scheme / in the last 12 months?

Unweighted base, all follow-up Restart participants at wave 2 (1541)

Comparing participants and non-participants

This section compares the amount of support and type of support received by Restart participants and non-participants. Restart participants were asked about support received on Restart and non-participants were asked about support they had received in the last 12 months. The findings in this section are based on the responses of everyone who took part in the survey at wave 2.

At wave 2, non-participants were more likely to report not having received any support over the last 12 months with almost half (48%) receiving no support. In comparison, 14% of Restart participants did not receive any support while on Restart.

Non-participants were less likely than Restart participants to receive each type of support. Less than a third (31%) of non-participants had received support with finding a job compared to just under three quarters (74%) of Restart participants. Less than a quarter (23%) of non-participants had received wider support such as improved confidence, compared to 47% of Restart participants. Non-participants were less

likely to receive support to help them make contact with employers (16% vs. 45%). Non-participants were also less likely to receive skills support than Restart participants (15% vs. 47%). Finally, non-participants were less likely to receive self-employment support than Restart participants (4% vs. 12%).

Relationship with the Employment Advisor

This section focuses on the findings from the qualitative interviews only. The quality of the relationship and interactions with the Employment Advisor were identified as a consistent theme in determining participants' perceptions of their experiences on the Restart Scheme. Participants who had a positive relationship with the Employment Advisor were more likely to accept their advice and to attribute positive employment outcomes to the Restart Scheme. Those who had a positive relationship with the Employment Advisor and did not achieve an employment outcome were more likely to feel that the Restart Scheme had been a positive experience and brought them closer to the labour market.

A positive relationship was more likely if participants had consistent contact with the same Employment Advisor throughout their time on the scheme. This enabled the participant and Employment Advisor to build a relationship, for the participant to trust the advisor and subsequently for the advisor to learn about their barriers and needs in depth. Participants felt that when their Employment Advisor listened to their needs and barriers, they were able to provide appropriate support. Figure 2.24 visualises the scale of quality of relationship with Employment Advisors and the impact of this on Restart participants' experiences.

Figure 2.24 Relationship between Restart participant and Employment Advisor

Positive relationship and support received
These participants felt that their advisor was friendly, helpful and sufficiently skilled.

Positive relationship but limited support received
These participants had a positive relationship with the advisor but did not feel that the advisor was able to address their support needs.

Negative relationship and limited support received
Participants who had a poor relationship with their advisor described them as cold, unfriendly and inflexible.

Participants who had a positive relationship with their Employment Advisor felt that their advisor was friendly, helpful and sufficiently skilled to understand the challenges they faced and suggest practical solutions. Participants appreciated feeling that their

Employment Advisor had gone above and beyond to support them. A positive relationship with the Employment Advisor also meant that participants were more likely to consider working in alternative sectors. Overall, these participants had a positive perception of their experience on the Restart Scheme.

> "He was really down to earth. I got on well with him.   y confidence was low at the start... but he made me feel at ease.... never put pressure on me." (Not working, Low skill, High barriers)

There were participants who had a positive relationship with their Employment Advisor but felt the advisor was unable to address their support needs. Participants who were applying for highly skilled roles felt the Employment Advisor did not understand their sector or was lower skilled than them and therefore unable to provide support. Although these participants spoke positively of their Employment Advisor, they did not feel that they achieved what they wanted. If these participants had moved into work, they attributed it to their own efforts and the support from the Restart Scheme.

Participants who had a negative relationship with their Employment Advisor tended to speak negatively about the scheme. These participants described the advisor as cold, unfriendly, and inflexible. These participants did not feel they got the support they needed on the Restart Scheme, which they attributed to this poor relationship. Participants whose advisor changed repeatedly found that this negatively affected the relationship they were able to build and that their access to support was delayed while they established their needs with the new advisor. These participants were also more likely to be resistant to suggestions from the Employment Advisor, for example to consider new sectors.

> "They talk to you as if you're a peasant, as if you're homeless, and I've got more experience than them. I don't think they think about who you are, there's nothing personal. It's very cold and clinical." (In work, High skill, Low barriers)

There were also examples of participants being offered particular types of support and not receiving it. For example, one self-employed participant was told the Restart Scheme could fund her insurance to be a personal trainer, but this was not forthcoming after several meetings with her Employment Advisor. She found funding for the insurance independently through a local employment charity.

Participants who benefitted from support
This section focuses on the findings from qualitative interviews only. Participants applying for low skill roles, those who spoke English as a second language or those with low confidence applying for jobs, benefitted most from job-finding support such as CV writing, interview skills and job searching techniques. Those in work credited this support with helping them find a job, and those out of work credited the support with making them feel more confident about applying for work.

> "They [The Employment Advisor] were really useful as they showed me where to look for jobs and how to narrow down jobs on sites like Indeed." (Not working, Low skill, High barriers)

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Participants with low confidence and mental health conditions described benefitting from regular one-to-one meetings with an Employment Advisor, with support which was tailored to their needs, as well as specific confidence building courses. Those who had low confidence applying for jobs found this support increased their confidence applying for jobs and attending interviews. Participants with mental health conditions such as depression or anxiety found the regular meetings improved their wellbeing and increased their positivity about starting work in the future. Those out of work for longer particularly appreciated having someone to talk to regularly to help sustain their motivation. This was the case whether or not they achieved an employment outcome during the course of the Restart Scheme.

> "We did an interview skills class. We did role play to practise, that has been a massive help with confidence. To speak up and sell myself...just suggestions on what I say." (In work, Low skill, High barriers)

Participants who felt their Employment Advisor provided them with support to address the barriers to work presented by childcare were recommended to consider jobs within school hours. Their Employment Advisors recommended sectors that participants had not previously considered, such as working in a school or administrative roles within school hours.

> "She [The Employment Advisor] did try and match to my needs. She understood the hours that I wanted as I was on my own with my daughter. She would then find me jobs that suited, like cleaning jobs in school." (In work, Low skill, High barriers)

Participants who faced transport as a barrier did not drive and were reliant on public transport. Areas with limited public transport did not offer a service early in the morning or late at night, meaning jobs with very early or late shifts were not possible. Participants who raised transport as a barrier saw the cost of public transport as a barrier to work. Employment Advisors supported these participants by only recommending jobs they were happy to travel to and providing financial support with the cost of travel to interviews and when starting a job.

Participants who spoke English as a second language benefitted from English language courses. The Restart Scheme supported these participants into lower skilled jobs which required lower English proficiency, for example, working in a food packaging factory or working as a taxi driver. These participants had ambitions to change jobs as their English improved.

> "In the future, I am sure I will change [jobs]... but my main problem is my English." (In work, Low skill, High barriers)

Participants who did not benefit from support
This section reports on findings from qualitative interviews. Participants who had previously held highly skilled jobs believed they already had a good CV and knew how to apply for jobs. They did not feel that they benefitted from job-searching support. Other participants who did not benefit from this type of support included those who were self-employed, given they did not plan to apply for jobs.

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"There wasn t really much they [the Restart Scheme] could help me with because I already had a C and was already applying for jobs." (In work, High skill, Low barriers)

Participants with physical health conditions, including those awaiting treatment and those with a lifelong physical health condition, did not feel that the Restart Scheme offered support tailored to addressing their barriers. These participants did not see work as a realistic prospect so were reluctant to engage with the Restart Scheme. These participants may have been more suited to a specific scheme to support people with health conditions.

Participants aged 50 and over saw their age as a barrier to work. They believed that employers thought they would retire soon and therefore wouldn't want to employ them. While providers in the case study research generally identified age as a practical barrier where it intersected with health, for some participants this was an attitudinal barrier which could be addressed through activities such as confidence building.

The support delivered through the Restart Scheme did not seem sufficiently specialist to support those furthest from the labour market with complex or multiple barriers; for example, participants who had been unemployed for over 10 years as a result of barriers including childcare, health conditions, criminal convictions or moving from another country. These participants did not benefit from job searching support, as they needed their barriers to be addressed first before they could successfully apply for jobs. The length of time these participants had been out of work intersected with their wider barriers, making it harder for them to re-enter the labour market.

Participants who wanted to apply for highly skilled roles felt that the support they received on the Restart Scheme was not tailored to their needs. They wanted support tailored to their sector and skill level, delivered by an Employment Advisor who specialised in their sector.

Some self-employed participants felt they were encouraged to apply for paid work rather than receiving support on how to grow their income from self-employment. Participants who needed courses or qualifications for their self-employment which were not provided through the Restart Scheme were disappointed and went through other channels.

Restart participants not looking for work
When asked which sectors they were looking for work in, one in five (19%) unemployed participants reported they were not looking for work. Looking for work is a condition of claiming Universal Credit for those referred to Restart, but this group may be claimants awaiting the outcome of a Work Capability Assessment. Those not looking for work had different profiles to those looking for work.

A higher proportion of women (22%) reported that they were not looking for work than of men (15%). A higher proportion of those aged 50 and over (20% vs. 16% aged 49 and under), those with a disability or health condition (23% vs. 8% without), those with caring responsibilities (25% vs. 16% without), and those who had spent

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more than 3 years out of employment (19% vs. 13% unemployed for 12 months or below) also reported that they were not looking for work.

White participants (20%) were more likely than all other ethnic groups combined (11%), specifically those of a Black, African or Caribbean ethnicity (8%) to report that they were not looking for work.

Likelihood of not looking for work was correlated with having fewer or lower qualifications. Those with no qualifications (28%) were least likely to be looking for a job. Those with a level 1, 2, or 3 qualifications (all 17%) were more likely than those with a level 4 (9%) qualification to not be looking for work.

Non-participants were more likely than participants to say they were not looking for work at wave 2 (43% vs. 17%)

2.3.3   Rating of experience on the Restart Scheme

At wave 1 participants in the quantitative survey were asked how useful interactions through the Restart Scheme had been in helping them find work to that point. A third (33%) of Restart participants found the scheme very useful and three in ten (30%) found it somewhat useful. This is shown in Figure 2.25.

Those who found the Restart Scheme useful were more likely to have been on the scheme for 3 months or more (69%). Other groups who were more likely to find the scheme useful were those without a health condition or disability (70%) or those who did not speak English as their first language (68%).

At wave 1 almost three in ten (28%) did not find the scheme useful. Participants who were more likely to say the scheme was not useful were those with higher qualifications (level 3 (30%) or 4 (35%)), those who had spent most of their time working since leaving school (31%) or participants who were self-employed (34%). This reflects the findings from wave 2, suggesting that the participants' early experiences of the scheme (whether useful or not) were likely to be sustained throughout.

Figure 2.25 Usefulness of Restart support at wave 1
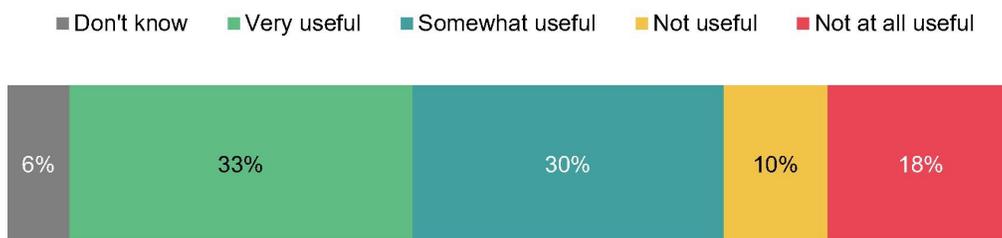
D3. How useful have the interactions you have had through the Restart Scheme been in helping you to find work? Unweighted base, all Restart participants at wave 1 (5285). 'Prefer not to say' option not shown on chart = 3%

2.3.4 Improvements to the Restart Scheme

This section covers the findings from qualitative interviews about how participants thought the Restart Scheme could be improved.

Participants who had several Employment Advisors on the scheme felt that they would have benefitted from only having one advisor. Changing Employment Advisors delayed access to support, while the new advisor got to know the participant, suggesting that where possible participants should have the same advisor for the duration of the scheme. If this is not possible, there should be a mechanism for ensuring a thorough handover so that participants have as seamless an experience as possible.

The types of support offered were not always consistent across Restart providers or individuals. Participants were not always clear on the support available to them from the Restart Scheme. In some cases, participants were told about opportunities for training, courses or funding but found these were not always delivered. While the emphasis on local tailoring means the support offer will vary between areas, it is important that all participants receive a minimum level of service and understand how the Restart Scheme can help them.

Participants looking for highly skilled jobs would benefit from Employment Advisors who have more specialist knowledge to support them or who are experienced in working with these types of claimants. Participants looking for highly skilled jobs may need referring to specialist advisors with training in how to support them. The case study research suggested this was happening in some areas but was not available to all participants who needed it. Despite wanting more specialised support, participants with higher qualifications were more likely to have moved into work.

Participants who were self-employed wanted more specialist self-employment support such as training courses specific to their business, and training and events to help grow their business.

2.3.5 Scheme duration

At wave 2 in the qualitative interviews, participants were asked their thoughts about the 12-month duration of the scheme. Participants who had been on the Restart Scheme for the full 12 months and not offered new types of support felt that the scheme did not offer enough content for this length of time. They reported that no new types of support were offered beyond the job searching support in the first few months and that meetings with the Employment Advisor became repetitive. These participants felt that a 6-month scheme would have been sufficient.

> "Honestly, all I got was my C   and cover letter and that course that was pointless, I could have done all that in like 3 or 6 months." (In work, Low skill, Low barriers)

2.4 Outcomes and next steps

This section covers employment-related and attitudinal outcomes for participants of the Restart Scheme, as well as drawing comparisons between Restart participants and non-participants at wave 2. Outcomes include employment status and duration, results of actions taken since being on the scheme, as well as job search behaviour, confidence, and wellbeing. The section also examines the extent to which outcomes can be attributed to the Restart support. Finally, this section explores barriers and support preferences for those already in work.

2.4.1   Employment outcomes

The proportion of follow-up participants in work more than doubled between wave 1 (3 months after participants started the Restart Scheme) and wave 2 (when participants had usually finished the Restart Scheme), from 17% at wave 1 to 38% at wave 2. The proportion working for an employer increased from 11% at wave 1 to 29% at wave 2. Follow-up participants' employment status at wave 2 is shown in Figure 2.26.

Looking at the movement of follow-up participants into and out of work, over one in five (22%) had moved into work by wave 2, having been unemployed at wave 1, over half (52%) remained unemployed at both waves and four per cent moved out of employment. This change in employment status between waves is shown in Figure 2.27.

Figure 2.26 Employment status at wave 2
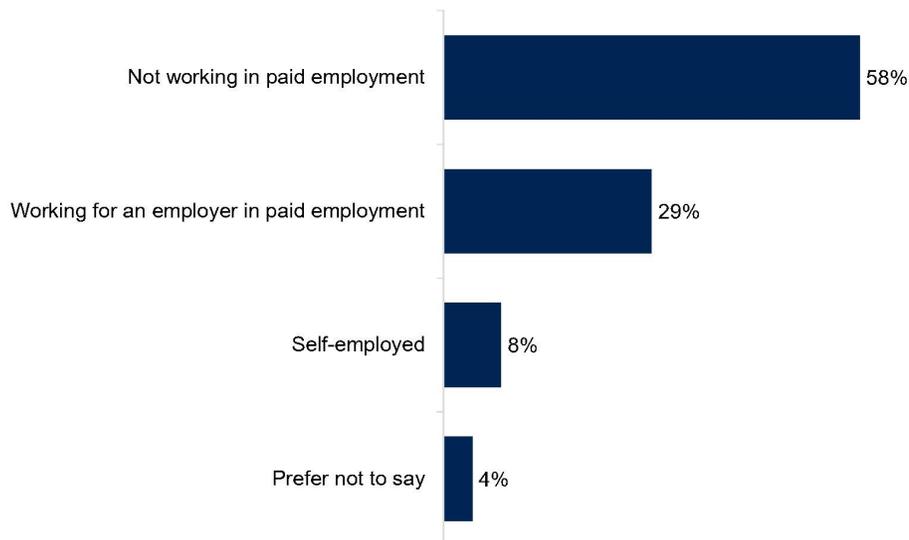
A1. Which of these best describes your current work status?

Unweighted base, all follow-up participants at wave 2 (1541) (current work status)

Figure 2.27 Change in employment status between waves

Moved into employment	22%
Moved out of employment	4%
Remained in employment	13%
Remained unemployed	52%
None of these	9%
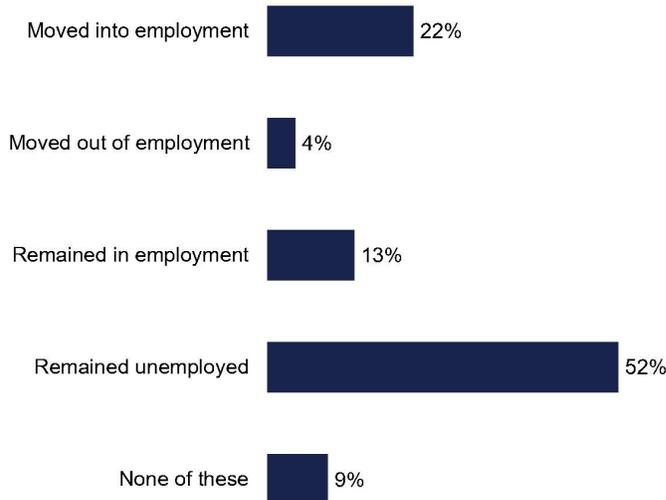
A2. How long have you been unemployed / doing this job?

Unweighted base, all follow-up participants (1541). Calculated by comparing employment status at wave 1 with wave 2 (employment flow between waves)

Female (24% vs. 20% male) and younger participants (23% of those 49 and under vs. 18% 50 and over) were more likely to have moved into work by wave 2, as were those who had mostly worked since education (26% vs. 18% mostly out of work). Those on IWS for less than 6 months prior to the scheme were also more likely to move into employment (33% vs. 22% average or 19% 24 months and over). Those who gained a new qualification through the Restart Scheme by wave 1 (27% vs. 22%) were also more likely to move into work.

Follow-up participants who remained unemployed between waves were more commonly white ethnicities (54% vs. 45% all other ethnic groups combined excluding white ethnic minorities), had a health condition or disability (58% vs. 45% without), did not have children (56% vs. 41% with) or had never worked (3% vs. 1%). This last group were also more likely to have been unemployed and in IWS for longer.

Those whose barriers to work had increased between wave 1 and wave 2 (11%) were more likely to have moved out of employment.

As shown in Figure 2.28 at wave 2 nearly 9 in 10 (86%) follow-up employed participants had been in their current role less than a year, meaning they had started the role while on the Restart Scheme. Around one in six (17%) had entered their role in the last 3 months indicating that participants continued to move into work in the later part of the scheme. One in ten (10%) had been in their role more than a year, suggesting that these workers were working few hours and still in the IWS regime when they started on the Restart Scheme. Those who were self-employed were four times more likely than those working for an employer to have been in their job for over a year (24% vs. 6%) suggesting that they had not been earning enough to take them out of the Intensive Work Search regime.

Of the 38% who were in work at wave 2, a quarter (25%) had previously been out of work for longer than 3 years.

Figure 2.28 Time spent in current job (employed and self-employed)
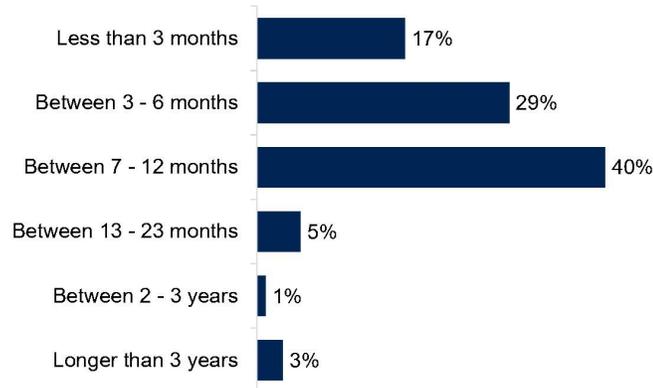
A2. How long have you been doing this job?

Unweighted base, all employed follow-up participants at wave 2 (562)

Regression modelling

Regression modelling was performed to identify which survey variables were associated with a likelihood of being in employment at wave 2, while controlling for other variables. A detailed description of the analytical methodology is set out in Appendix 6.2.

The model showed that certain characteristics were associated with a higher likelihood of being in employment. These included being female, having children or speaking English as a second language. Work history and education were also associated with being in employment: having been mostly in work since leaving education, and holding qualifications including GCSEs, A levels and Degree equivalents (higher qualification levels were correlated with a higher likelihood of being in employment). Respondents were also more likely to be in employment if they were living in an area which had a higher percentage of people with level 4 qualifications or higher.

Groups with a lower chance of being in employment were those who had a physical or mental health condition, especially whose condition significantly reduced their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. Having caring responsibilities was also associated with a lower chance of employment. These barriers intersected: 56% of those with caring responsibilities also had a health condition.

The likelihood of moving into employment was associated with the type of support received, however these relationships indicate correlation not causation and it is likely that these support variables may act as a proxy for 'job readiness'. Receiving self-employment support was associated with a higher likelihood of moving into employment (including self-employment). Those who received self-employment support may have received a wider range of support overall through the Restart Scheme (not just self-employment support), which could be related to successfully

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moving into employment. A lower likelihood of moving into employment was associated with those who received support with their CV or cover letter, training to develop new skills or qualifications, and those who attended a job fair. It is likely that those who were less job-ready were more likely to be recommended more basic job search support activities and need more support to re-enter the labour market.

Type of work

In the qualitative strand, the types of work that participants had moved into varied by their levels of job-related skills and experience, and the practical and attitudinal barriers they faced.

Low-skilled Restart participants who had moved into work quickly were more likely to have low selectivity and few barriers to employment. They had moved into roles which fit with their existing skills and experience on either a part-time or zero-hours contract. These included manual jobs, factory and warehouse work, hospitality roles, kitchen porter, care work, driving (taxi, bus, food delivery) and retail work.

Participants with some barriers such as childcare or transport difficulties had higher selectivity about roles they felt they could apply for or accept, and therefore took longer to find work.

Participants with experience in a specific sector had returned to work in the same sector. They tended to have been out of a job for personal reasons such as health or redundancy and were able to return to work when their barriers were no longer present and they found a suitable vacancy. For example, participants had returned to professions such as PE teacher and bus driver. This tended to be work which was more stable and full-time.

Self-employed participants tended to be following a vocation they were interested in but have less reliable, lower incomes overall. Self-employed participants chose this because they were passionate about it, they had prior experience in the sector, or it fitted around their barriers. There was a mix of skills and barriers among the self-employed. Those that worked as sole traders earned an hourly rate in jobs such as taxi driving, food delivery and martial arts instruction. Others had businesses and were reliant on finding clients, such as a recruitment agency, a beauty therapist, personal trainer, and event administrator. This group reported that their income fluctuated frequently, but that overall, they preferred to be in self-employment.

Impact of being in work

In the qualitative strand, in-work participants experienced benefits of working both financially and in their lives overall. They wanted to stay in work, either in their current job or progress into higher paid work.

Overall, participants were clear that they were financially better off in work. Those who had used a benefits calculator with their Employment Advisor were also clear that being in work, even on a low number of hours, increased their income overall.

Participants who had moved into a job consistently reported improved wellbeing and this was more pronounced among those who had barriers to work which had been accommodated or addressed. Participants spoke positively of work bringing a regular routine, structure, opportunities to socialise, and the feeling of doing something

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worthwhile. Those with families expressed pride at being able to provide for their families.

> "I feel even more happy and confident and better because of the job, because I can help contribute to the household. I am feeling useful." (In work, Low skill, High barriers)

The financial and wellbeing benefits were experienced particularly by those who had moved into full-time work.

> "As much as I am tired all the time. I feel really proud of myself. A couple of years ago, I was really in a dark place. Now look at me, I am working" (In work, Low skill, High barriers)

Despite the overall positive impact, those in work did experience challenges or identified areas where their experiences of work could be improved. Low pay, too few hours (for those both employed or self-employed), inconsistent hours or part-time or zero-hours contracts remained barriers to financial independence. Lack of consistent hours combined with low hours overall made household budgeting difficult. These participants tended to still be claiming Universal Credit and did not have a clear plan of how to increase their income further. There were also participants who did not intend to come off UC and were happy to continue claiming. They felt that the hours they worked meant they had a good work-life balance.

Participants working inconsistent hours reported that their monthly income changed, while their outgoings remained consistent.

Those who were working and claiming UC also reported experiencing financial challenges arising from the rising cost of living and the cost of transport as difficult to manage. This increased for those who relied on paid childcare.

Job related outcomes

As shown in Figure 2.29, over a quarter of follow-up participants (27%) found a job by wave 2 due to actions taken since starting the Restart Scheme. A quarter (25%) had gained a new qualification and one in ten (10%) had done voluntary work as a result of the Restart Scheme.

Figure 2.29 Results of actions taken since starting the Restart Scheme
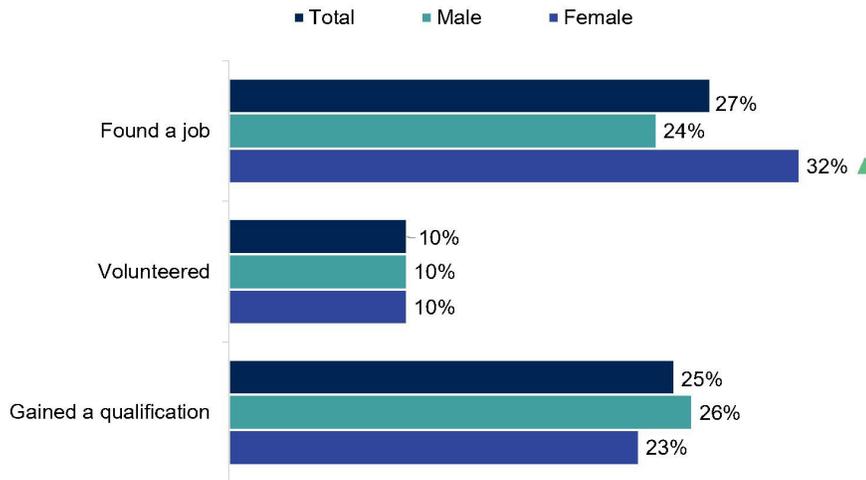
Legend: ■ Total ■ Male ■ Female

Category	Total	Male	Female
Found a job	27%	24%	32% ▲
Volunteered	10%	10%	10%
Gained a qualification	25%	26%	23%

D2. Have any of the following happened as a result of the actions you have taken since you started on the Restart Scheme?

Unweighted base, all follow-up participants at wave 2 (1,541)

The groups who were significantly more likely than others to have found a job which they attributed to actions taken since starting the Restart Scheme followed a similar pattern to those who had moved into work overall. These were: females (32% vs. 24% males); those aged 49 years old and under (30% vs. 21% 50+); those with children (35% vs. 24% without); those without a health condition (33% vs. 24% with); those who speak English as a second language (32% vs. 26%) and those with level 3 qualifications (34% vs 24% of those with level 2 or 25% of those with level 1).

Those on IWS for less than 6 months prior to the scheme were more likely than those who had been in IWS for longer to find a job due to actions taken since joining the Restart Scheme, by wave 1 (13% vs. 9%), or wave 2 (36% vs. 27%). Those on IWS for 24 months and over were less likely to have found a job at wave 1 (5%) or 2 (22%).

Restart participants were more likely to achieve an outcome than non-participants. For example, Restart participants were more likely to have found a job (24% vs 19%) and achieved a qualification (24% vs 13%). Both Restart participants and non-participants were similarly likely to have taken up volunteering.

Outcomes for participants with level 4 qualifications

More Restart participants with level 4 qualifications were in work at wave 2 (43%) than the average (33%). However, the proportion of follow-up participants in this group who moved into work between wave 1 and wave 2 (26%) was not significantly different to the average (22%). This shows that this group moved into work more quickly than the Restart population overall but that after 3 months on the scheme, they were no more likely than the rest of the cohort to move into work. There were no differences in employment outcomes by socio-economic grade, which was based on the participant's most recent job.

This group had a higher than average 'Job-Search Self-Efficacy' score (4.15, compared with 4.05 overall), suggesting they perceived themselves to be less in need of job-searching support. This was reflected in the qualitative findings, in which participants felt that the job-searching support provided through the Restart Scheme was less relevant for them. These participants wanted tailored support including suggestions for sector-specific jobs, networking events, and specific learning courses aimed at people with their skills and work history or in their sector. They felt their Employment Advisors were not equipped to support them effectively.

> "Over time it felt like we were just repeating what we had done already... not sure what else they could do for me" (Not working, High skill, Low barriers)

Restart participants out of work at wave 2 with level 4 qualifications were more likely to report their age as a barrier to work compared to the average (33% vs. 28%).

Barriers to work identified in the qualitative research included being over-qualified, which was another reason they had not yet found employment. They felt that even if they responded to their Employment Advisor's suggestions to look in new sectors or consider lower paid jobs and accept reduced pay, they experienced resistance from employers to hiring them.

> "Employers are thinking 'why is a CEO applying for customer services manager?'" (Not working, High skill, Low barriers)

2.4.2 Other outcomes

This section provides findings on wider impacts of the Restart which have not been explored in previous sections. Some wider impacts have already been explored earlier in this report, such as attitudes to work have in section 2.2.1, and confidence with job searching in section 2.2.3.

Impact of the Restart Scheme on the sectors participants considered for work
Unemployed participants in the survey were asked which sectors they were looking for work in at wave 2. This was compared to the sectors they reported they were looking for work in at wave 1 to understand if they were looking for work in any new sectors at wave 2. Over half (54%) of unemployed follow-up participants were looking for work in new sectors that they had not worked in before. Customer service and retail (13%) and Administration (8%) were the most common new sectors participants were considering. This information on the proportion of unemployed follow-up participants who looked in new sectors is shown in Figure 2.30 and information on the sectors looked in is shown in Figure 2.31.

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Figure 2.30 Proportions of respondents looking for work in new sectors
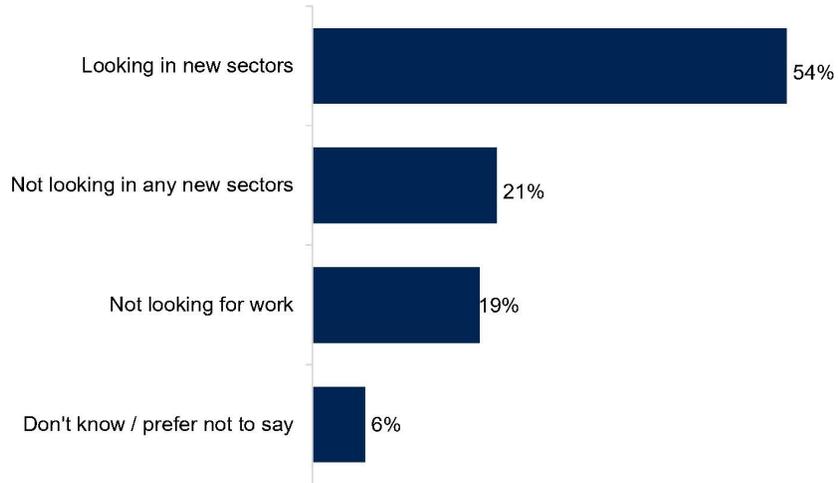
A6. Thinking about your past jobs, which industries or sectors did you work in? A7. Which sector/sectors are you now looking for work in?

Top answers shown, excludes other.

Unweighted base, all follow-up participants out of work at wave 2 (913). Figures calculated by comparing which sectors participants reported they were looking for work in that they did not report they had previously worked in

Figure 2.31 New sectors most commonly considered
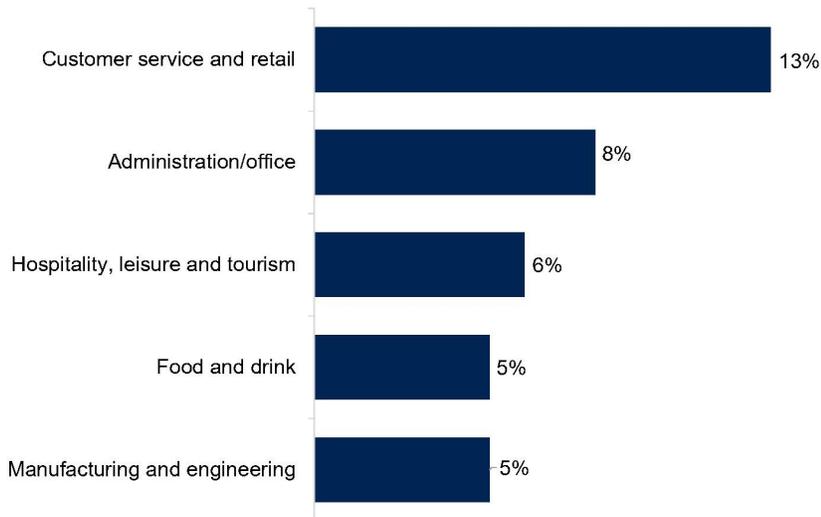
A6. Thinking about your past jobs, which industries or sectors did you work in? A7. Which sector/sectors are you now looking for work in?

Top answers shown, excludes other.

Unweighted base, all follow-up participants out of work (913). Figures calculated by comparing which sectors participants reported they were looking for work in that they did not report they had previously worked in before

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In the qualitative research, looking for vacancies in a wider range of sectors and roles that they had previously not considered helped to broaden participants' perception of what was possible for them. This helped them feel encouraged about being able to find work.

Restart Scheme completion status

As shown in Figure 2.32 nearly two thirds (65%) of follow-up participants had moved off the Restart Scheme by wave 2. Just over three in ten (31%) of those who were no longer on the Restart Scheme had found a job.

Among those who had completed the Restart Scheme either due to finding a job or completing the scheme, more than half (55%) no longer received regular support from JCP, as shown in Figure 2.33. From those who had completed the Restart Scheme and were in work, nearly fourth fifths (78%) no longer received support from JCP.

Figure 2.32 The Restart Scheme status change over waves
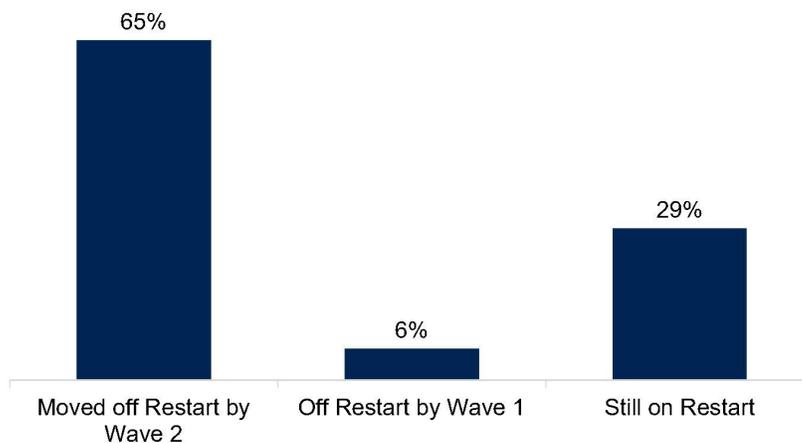
S3. Are you currently on the Restart Scheme?

Unweighted base, all follow-up participants (1541). Calculated by comparing Restart Scheme participation status at wave 1 with their status wave 2

Figure 2.33 Jobcentre Plus support status
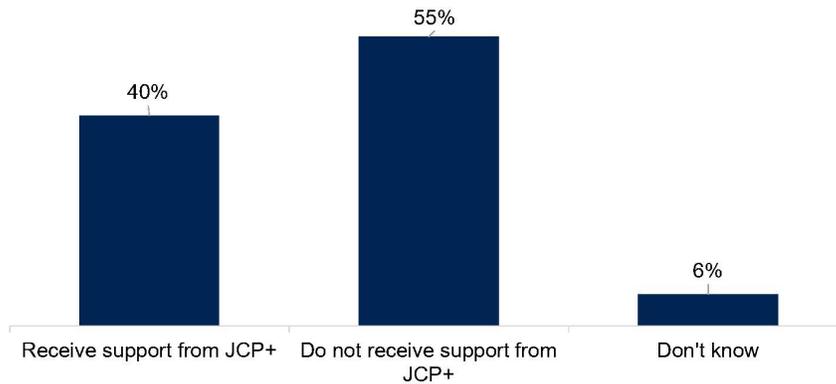
A1b. Do you currently receive any regular support from Jobcentre Plus staff?

Unweighted base, all follow-up participants who have completed Restart Scheme and found a job / finished the 12-month Scheme (636). Calculated from answers at wave 2

Mirroring the results of those more likely to find work, females (52% vs. 38%), those with children (53% vs. 39%) and those with no health condition (47% vs. 39%) were more likely to have finished the Restart Scheme due to finding a job.

Universal Credit claim status

Eight in ten (81%) follow-up participants had stayed on Universal Credit (UC) across waves, and around one in six (16%) had moved off UC. Those who remained unemployed between wave 1 and 2 were more likely to have stayed on UC (93%). Participants who had moved into employment between wave 1 and 2 were more likely to have moved off UC (43%). This is shown in Figure 2.34.

Figure 2.34 Universal Credit claim status by change in employment between waves
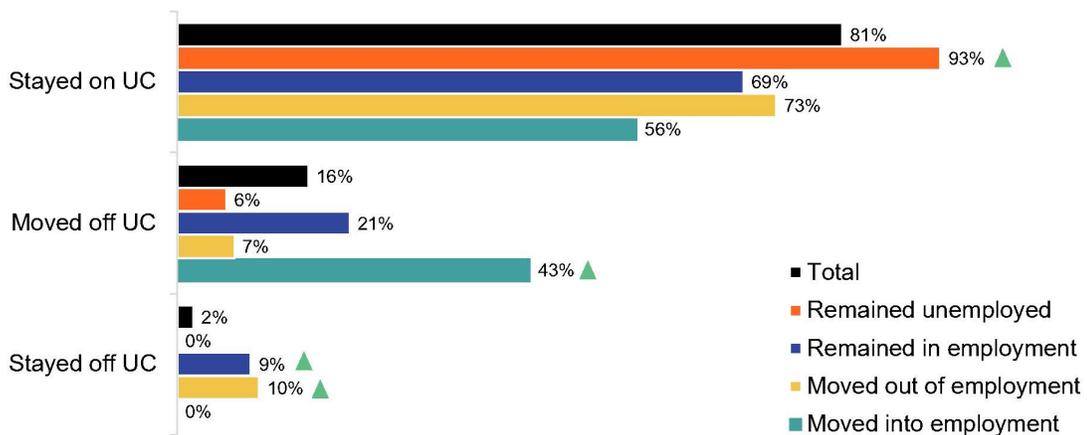
S2. Are you currently receiving Universal Credit payments? Unweighted base, all follow-up participants at wave 2 (1541). Figures calculated from answers at wave 1 and wave 2

Although females were more likely to move into work, more males (20% vs.11% females) moved off UC. Otherwise, the profile of those who moved off UC mirrored that of those who moved into work: participants with children (21%) were more likely to achieve this than those without (6%). Those on IWS for less than 3 months prior to joining the Restart Scheme were more likely to have moved off UC (24% vs. 16%). This suggests that these groups were closer to the labour market.

Subgroup patterns among those continuing to claim UC were also similar to those who were less likely to enter work. Specifically, more participants with health conditions (82%) stayed on UC than those without (78%).

Life satisfaction

Participants were asked to rate their life satisfaction on a scale from 0-10, with 0 being not at all satisfied and 10 being completely satisfied. At wave 2, over two fifths (44%) of participants reported a high life satisfaction, with over one fifth (22%) reporting low life satisfaction. Longitudinal analysis showed that life satisfaction increased for over a third (37%) of participants between wave 1 and 2. Just under a third (28%) of follow-up participants had a lower life satisfaction than at wave 1 compared to wave 2. This change in life satisfaction between waves is shown in Figure 2.35.

Figure 2.35 Life satisfaction and change between waves

Life satisfaction at wave 2

■ High   ■ Medium   ■ Low   ■ Don't know/Refused

| 44% | 29% | 22% | 6% |

Life satisfaction across waves

■ Improved   ■ Stayed high   ■ Stayed medium   ■ Stayed low   ■ Declined

| 37% | 12% | 7% | 4% | 28% |
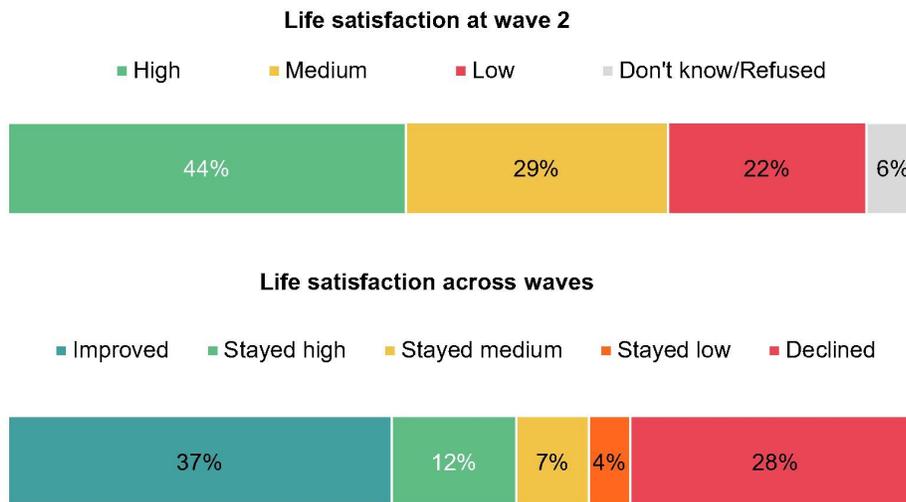
D5. Thinking about all aspects of your life, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays? (Excludes "don't know")

Unweighted base, all follow-up participants at wave 2 (1541) (current satisfaction) and calculated by comparing reported life satisfaction at wave 1 with life satisfaction wave 2 (change in satisfaction)

The following groups of participants were more likely to experience increased life satisfaction:

- Moved into employment (54% vs. 34% who remained unemployed)

- Moved off Universal Credit at wave 2 (55% vs. 34% who stayed on UC)

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- Male (40% vs. 33% Female)

- Had a health condition (40% vs. 32% without)

The following groups of participants were more likely to report reduced life satisfaction:

- Those who moved out of employment (54%) compared to those who moved into employment (16%), remained in employment (31%) or remained unemployed (32%)

- Female (32% vs. 25% Male).

2.4.3 Comparing participants and non-participants

Participants were more likely to be employed or self-employed than non-participants (35% vs. 26%) at wave 2. They were also more likely to have moved into work more recently than non-participants (85% a year or less vs. 73%).

The following groups of participants were more likely than the corresponding group of non-participants to be in work at wave 2:

- Male participants (31% vs. 21%)

- Those with a health condition (30% vs. 17%)

- Those with children (45% vs. 32%)

- White participants (33% vs. 23% all other ethnic groups combined excluding white ethnic minorities)

- Those with no qualifications (29% vs. 15%)

- ESOL (32% vs. 23%)

More participants found a job due to actions taken since starting the Restart Scheme than non-participants had in the prior 12 months through their own job searching or support from JCP or elsewhere (24% vs. 19%). Participants were more likely than non-participants to gain a job through actions taken on Restart across a number of sub-groups:

- Male participants (21% vs. 14%)

- Participants aged 50 and over (19% vs. 8%)

- Participants with children (32% vs. 25%)

- Participants with health conditions (21% vs. 13%)

Participants at wave 2 compared to non-participants were more likely to report high life satisfaction between 7-10 on a 10 point scale (41% vs. 31%).

Considering the support offered by Jobcentre Plus compared to the Restart Scheme, non-participants reported that their Work Coach was not invested in understanding them and was focused on encouraging a high volume of job applications rather than necessarily appropriate ones. Non-participants did not tend to attribute any wellbeing gains to support from Jobcentre Plus.

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"[JCP] were okay, but if you don't agree, they said 'you could do this could do that'. They just check that you were applying for jobs, they don't try to understand your living situation" (In work, High skill, Low barriers)

2.4.4   Qualitative findings on outcomes

The extent to which participants attributed any outcomes to Restart support varied by their specific experience of support, as well as their own work-related skills, experience, and barriers. For example, low skilled participants, with low barriers, who engaged with the support were more likely to attribute outcomes to the support they received on Restart. This was true of both those who had found a job and those who reported any improvements in moving closer to the labour market (soft outcomes).

For both in work and unemployed participants, their relationship with their Employment Advisor was a key factor in whether they felt the Restart Scheme had made a positive contribution to these outcomes.

In-work participants

Among lower skilled participants who had found a job, consistent meetings with an Employment Advisor who was able to suggest CV improvements and help practise interview skills was seen as helpful in improving their prospects of securing a role. They were more confident in filling in job applications and attending interviews. In the most positive cases they attributed their success in finding and securing their role almost entirely to the Restart Scheme.

For those with low selectivity about job roles, their Employment Advisor had also been a useful source of job opportunities that they could do with little or no experience. However, their advisor tended to be just one source of job searching, with engaged participants also finding job vacancies themselves online or through contacts.

"Restart will help you do some courses, and will help you with a C , and find some jobs online, they are the key to starting a job." (In work, Low skill, Low barriers)

Participants were also positive about the scheme's contribution if Employment Advisors had helped identify appropriate jobs which fit around their barriers. Examples of this included:

* helping identify roles with hours which fit around childcare, such as work in schools

* identifying roles in locations accessible by public transport

* providing financial support for travel to and from Restart or job interviews, as well as clothing for work or interviews

* identifying and enrolling participants in courses which matched their skills needs, including first aid, CSCS, confidence courses, and transferable skills courses

- suggesting roles that could be performed with health conditions

In-work participants who felt the Restart Scheme had not contributed much to their success in finding a job included higher skilled participants, those returning to work in the same sector, and self-employed participants who had not received the support they wanted.

Highly skilled participants and those who returned to a previous sector were more likely to attribute their success in finding a job to their own efforts. This group felt that Employment Advisors did not have the skill level to help them improve in their job finding abilities. For example, the advice provided to improve CVs was seen as too generic to help secure roles that required sector specific skills or more experience. Although unwilling to attribute their success to the Restart Scheme, those that had a good relationship with their Employment Advisor were nonetheless positive about the experience of being on the Restart Scheme while searching for a job in terms of having someone to discuss things with.

> "It s just not a service that is geared towards that sort of higher-level, higher-skilled work." (In work, High skill, High barriers)

Participant illustration:
Maria, 50-65 years old, high skill, low barriers

Maria is a single parent of two school-age children who had a law degree. She was referred to the Restart Scheme as her income from self-employment was not high enough.

aria's barriers to having sufficient income were childcare, which limited the hours she could work, and a reduction in custom for her business due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. She had previously applied for jobs for an employer but was told she was over-qualified, which gave her the perception that it would be difficult for her to find work for an employer. She also believes that her age is a barrier to finding another job as employers may not hire someone they believe may retire in a few years.

The Restart Scheme offered her CV writing and interview support, but she wanted support with growing her business. For example, help finding customers and improving her business' website. She remained self-employed in logistics and administration for clients in the music industry and did not want to consider working for an employer.

> "I would say the main challenges are being a single parent with no family and friends around."

> "They [the Restart Scheme] only offered C writing and help with interviews… what I need is help getting clients and someone to develop me a website."

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2.4.5 Next steps for those in work

Follow-up in-work participants were asked about barriers to progressing at work. Barriers were widely dispersed among this group. The most common barrier was a physical or mental health issue or learning difficulty (22%). Lack of opportunities was also a common barrier, either in their areas of interest (15%), in terms of training and development in their current role (15%) or for promotion and increased pay (13%). Figure 2.36 shows this information on the types of barriers to progressing at work. The broad spread of barriers among the population suggests that supporting progression for this group will require a multi-pronged approach.

Figure 2.36 Barriers to progressing at work

Barrier	%
Disability, health condition or learning difficulty	22%
Lack of opportunities in skills/ area interested in	15%
Lack of opportunities for development in current job	15%
Caring responsibilities limit the number of hours I can work	14%
Lack of opportunities to increase pay / hours / promotion	13%
Age	12%
Transport difficulties	11%
Having to pay more for childcare if I do more hours	11%
Not having certificate/licences required for jobs	10%
Poor employment record/ lack of work experience	8%
Benefits would go down / not worth it financially	7%

B3a. Is there anything that makes it difficult for you to progress in work?

Unweighted base, all currently working Restart follow-up participants at wave 2 (562).

In-work participants and non-participants identified similar barriers to progressing at work. Non-participants were more likely to feel that progressing in work would not be financially worthwhile or their benefits would go down (14% vs 8%).

Follow up in-work participants were also asked about what support would help them to progress at work. The following information about support preferences is shown in Figure 2.37. The most common answer was help with the cost of travel (24%), followed by support managing a health condition (18%) or to continue higher education (18%). Participants also frequently wanted more support with childcare or caring responsibilities (17%). This suggests that there are practical barriers preventing this group from progressing but that they are also ambitious to study further, if these barriers can be addressed.

Figure 2.37 Support preferences for those in work

Support preference	%
Help with cost of travel to and from work	24%
Support to manage health condition	18%
Support starting or continuing higher education	18%
Support & training with work related skills	16%
Support and training around finding or getting a new job	16%
Net: Caring support (childcare, caring responsibilities)	17%
Net: Support using /accessing technology	12%
None	34%
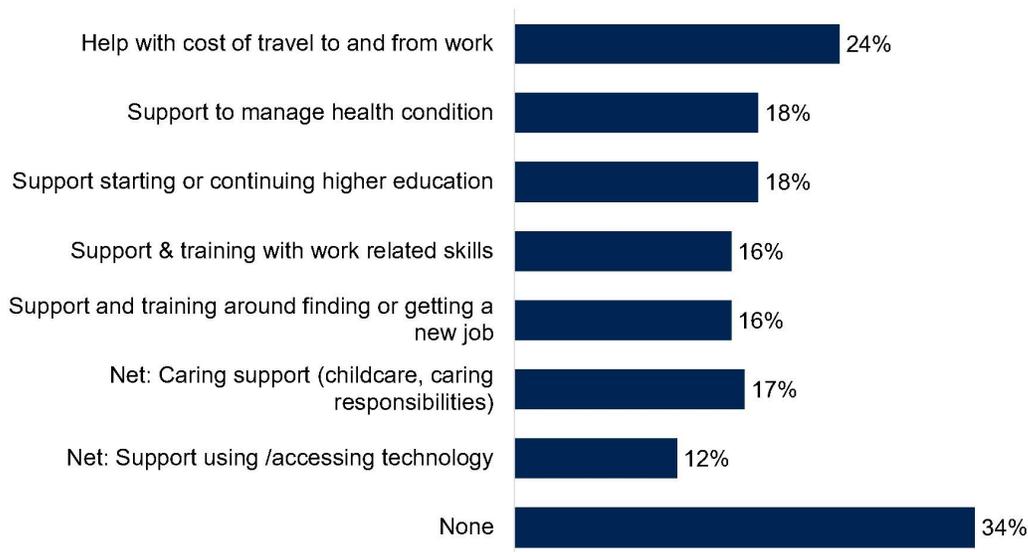
B4. What, if anything would help you progress at work?

Unweighted base, in work follow-up participants at wave 2 (562)

NET: Caring support (childcare, caring responsibilities) included the following answers: Access to affordable/ good quality childcare and Support to manage other caring responsibilities

NET: Support /accessing technology included the following answers: Support with using technology/internet and Access to digital technology and/or the internet

Females in work were more likely to identify support preferences to help them address barriers relating to family responsibilities.

In-work participants and non-participants identified similar types of support to help them progress.

- Qualitatively, in-work participants consistently reported that their priority was to stay in work. Those who were content with their current job aimed to stay long-term in the same role, and this was more common among older workers.

- Those who saw their job as a 'stepping-stone' wanted to move to their desired career or a job with better pay and hours. This included those who had a long-term goal to become self-employed. Others wanted to achieve this through further study which they felt would be a personal accomplishment and increase their employability.

- Lower-skilled participants felt they needed qualifications to enable them to progress. For example, more advanced English-language and painting and decorating qualifications. Participants who wanted to be self-employed or work in specific industries wanted more tailored and knowledgeable support from Employment Advisors.

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Out of work participants

In the qualitative research, unemployed participants who wanted to find work believed that being in work would increase their wellbeing by providing structure to their lives, increasing their income and improving their self-esteem.

Participants with low barriers and low selectivity for the jobs they were willing to take had often gained confidence in their job search through the Restart Scheme and felt positive that they would get a job in the near future.

Those who had not found a job and did not feel they had become closer to doing so were disheartened by this. This was the case for those who were low-skilled and had high barriers and for highly skilled participants who had experienced little progress in their job search.

2.5 Summary of findings

Experiences of the Restart Scheme were strongly determined by the quality of interactions with the Employment Advisor. High quality interactions were characterised by a consistent advisor, who offered tailored support and made additional support available to participants who needed it. Poor quality interactions were characterised by poor relationships with advisors who offered little beyond support with CVs or job-searching skills, as well as changing advisors. The interaction with the advisor determined how receptive participants were to their suggestions, for example, on the types of jobs to consider.

Participants who were unemployed after 12 months on the Restart Scheme found that the scheme content did not sufficiently progress over this time, which led to repetitive interactions with their Employment Advisor.

There is evidence that support was tailored to address participants' needs, although highly skilled participants were less likely to feel adequately supported. Around 1 in 5 follow-up participants no longer identified skills as a barrier to work at wave 2 when they had at wave 1. The qualitative research found that low-skill, low-confidence participants, with few barriers, reported the support offered through the Restart Scheme was suitable and helped improve their job-searching skills and confidence. Highly skilled participants with substantial work experience were less likely to feel adequately supported. They felt that the CV development and job-search support provided by the Restart Scheme was not sufficient to meet their needs.

Participants were likely to feel more confident in their job seeking skills, to be looking in a greater number of sectors and to have more positive attitudes towards work than non-participants. At wave 2 of the survey, participants felt their job seeking skills had improved. For half of follow-up participants their rating of these improved between wave 1 and 2. They also identified fewer barriers to work and the barriers they reported indicated they were closer to the labour market than non-participants.

The Restart Scheme supported participants with barriers such as low confidence, but other barriers were less well served. Findings from the qualitative research found that the Restart Scheme supported participants to overcome barriers

to employment such as ESOL and that positive interactions with a supportive Employment Advisor could help to address confidence barriers. However, the Restart Scheme was less able to support participants with barriers such as health, age, or very long-term unemployment.

In the survey, the majority of follow-up participants who were unemployed at wave 2 felt positively towards work. A positive attitude was most commonly maintained over both waves. Qualitative evidence suggests unemployed participants who wanted to be in work believed that this would increase their wellbeing by providing structure to their lives.

Participants were more likely to be in work than non-participants. At wave 2, 4 in 10 follow-up participants were in work, an increase of 21% from wave 1. Employment outcomes cannot be solely attributed to participation in the Restart Scheme, given the multiple intersecting factors which lead to an employment outcome. Regression modelling found that, controlling for other variables, those with a more consistent work history, women, those with a child of any age, those with English as a second language and those with higher qualifications were more likely to be employed at wave 2.[8] Those with health conditions or caring responsibilities were less likely to achieve an employment outcome. This suggests that while there have been positive job outcomes for Restart participants, this may be more likely among those with less significant barriers.

While a greater proportion of Restart participants were in work than non-participants, similar proportions of participants and non-participants were claiming UC. This suggests that the outcomes achieved were not always sufficient to enable participants to earn enough to move off UC altogether.

The qualitative research found that working participants were happy with their jobs and saw them as sustainable and in some cases a stepping-stone to a better job. This included participants who had started working in a new sector.

In the qualitative research, working participants who reported receiving high quality support from the Restart Scheme, linked improvements they had experienced in wellbeing and mental health with the support they had received from the scheme and the benefits of moving into work. Out of work participants who had a strong relationship with their Employment Advisor reported that this relationship helped to sustain their motivation and improve their overall wellbeing. Out of work participants with a poor relationship with their advisor did not experience this benefit.

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[8] Evidence from the case study research suggests that there is an important distinction between those participants who spoke English as another language and those participants who reported English as a barrier to employment.

3. Provider survey

This chapter reports findings from a survey of providers on their insights into how the Restart Scheme is being delivered at their site. The findings outline providers' views on delivery models; their processes in relation to referrals, onboarding and mandation; their relationship with Jobcentre Plus (JCP), the mechanisms of support they can provide; their partnerships and employer engagement; and the outcomes of participants at their site.

3.1 Delivery models

The provider survey provides evidence on the changes providers made to delivery to improve ways of working and respond to contexts such as reduced referral volumes or challenges in staff recruitment. Since the Restart Scheme began, 98% of providers reported they had made changes to delivery, with a large majority (84%) making changes to staff training. Providers were also more likely to increase recruitment of staff (56%) than decrease (43%). However, prime contractors were significantly more likely to decrease staff recruitment than subcontractors (51%, compared to 34%).

The overall increase in staff recruitment does not reflect the overall trend that referrals were lower than expected or case study interviewees' general perceptions of recruitment. It may however reflect the high turnover of staff identified in the case study research. Some interviewees also suggested that they recruited additional staff despite lower referral numbers to support participants with higher-than-expected needs.

Around half (47%) of providers implemented additional or alternative IT systems and nearly two fifths (38%) made other site/premise changes. A minority of providers changed the number of Restart sites and were much more likely to increase the number of sites (23%) than decrease (5%). In contrast, case study interviewees were more likely to describe reducing or combining sites after the initial set up stage. The changes described by case study interviewees may therefore not be reflective of Restart provision as a whole. (Figure 3.1)

Figure 3.1 Operational changes that providers' sites have made to the delivery of the Restart Scheme since the scheme began
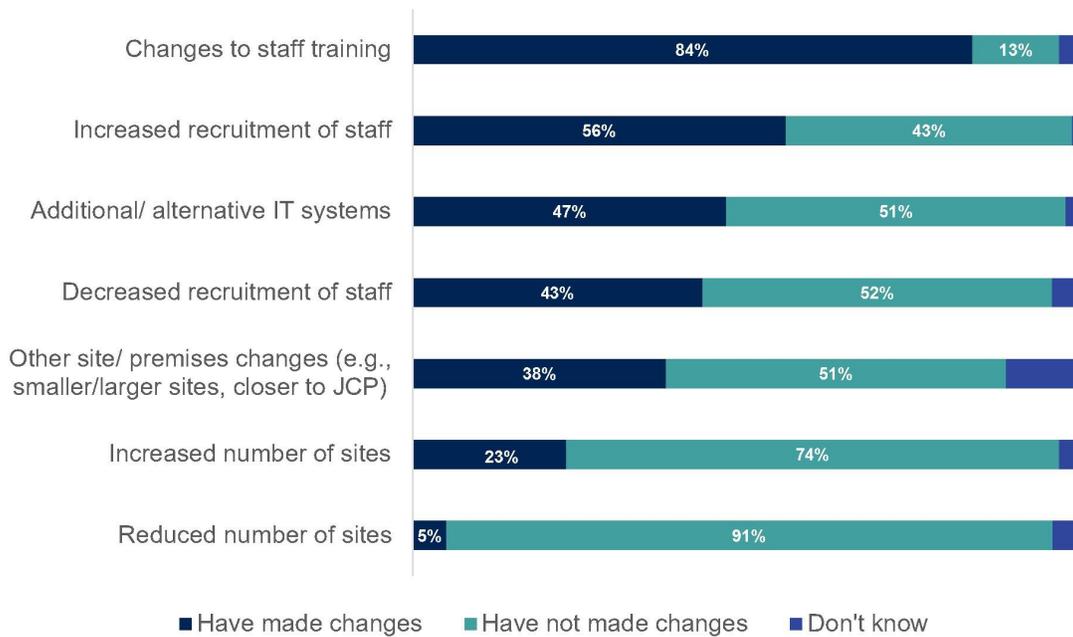
Horizontal stacked bar chart. Legend: Have made changes (dark navy), Have not made changes (teal), Don't know (blue).

- Changes to staff training: 84%, 13%
- Increased recruitment of staff: 56%, 43%
- Additional/ alternative IT systems: 47%, 51%
- Decreased recruitment of staff: 43%, 52%
- Other site/ premises changes (e.g., smaller/larger sites, closer to JCP): 38%, 51%
- Increased number of sites: 23%, 74%
- Reduced number of sites: 5%, 91%

Q1. Has your site made any of the following operational changes to the delivery of Restart since the scheme began?

Base: All respondents (138)

Providers generally felt that changes made positively impacted on their delivery of the Restart Scheme. A large majority (89%) of providers reported the positive impact of staff training, additional or alternative IT systems (86%), increased recruitment of staff (83%), and other site/premise changes (81%) on delivery of the scheme. Three quarters (75%) of providers said that an increased number of sites positively impacted their delivery.

The changes to staff training and the positive impact this was perceived to have is significant in the context of the challenges providers experienced in recruiting and retaining staff. In combination with the evidence from the case study research, it suggests that providers were trying to address these challenges by changing their approach to staff training with some measure of success. It is also significant in the context of the importance of the Employment Advisor relationship in determining participant experience.

Two changes implemented were perceived by providers as more likely to make no difference to the delivery of the Restart Scheme. Most providers (71%) reported that reducing the number of sites had no impact on delivery, and any impacts reported were negative (14%) rather than positive. Almost two thirds (63%) of providers reported that decreasing staff recruitment had little impact on delivery, and more reported that it had a negative impact (30%) than a positive one (7%). The perceived negative impact of decreased staff recruitment can be related to the case study

research where there was evidence of staff in specialist roles having to work across several sites to cover vacant posts. (Figure 3.2)

Figure 3.2 The impact of changes made by providers on delivery of the Restart Scheme
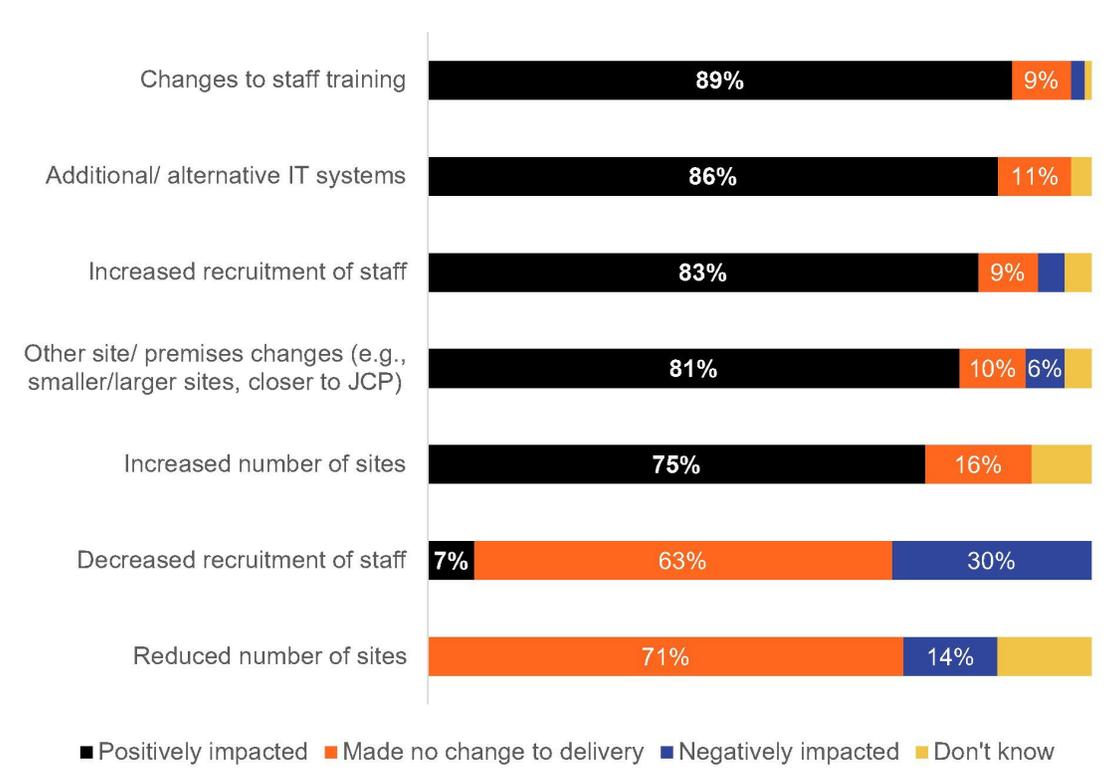
Q2. How have these changes impacted your site's delivery of Restart?

Base: All respondents who made operational changes to the delivery of the Restart Scheme (135)

3.2 Referrals

An overwhelming majority (98%) of providers reported receiving what they deemed as unsuitable referrals. This was most commonly because participants had highly complex needs or barriers which the Restart Scheme could not support effectively (66%).[9] Over half of providers also reported having unsuitable referrals because participants were identified as not meeting the formal eligibility criteria (54%), or because they were more suited to another programme (53%). Other reasons that participants were deemed unsuitable included: the participant's age or being near retirement (7%), or that the participant was highly skilled or highly qualified and the scheme could not provide effective support (7%). It is important to note that these are provider views on what constitutes unsuitable referrals. (Figure 3.3)

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[9] Complex needs or barriers are those that would inhibit participants from being able to participate on the Restart Scheme. This includes barriers such as severe mental health conditions or homelessness as well as multiple needs or barriers.(Committee of Public Accounts, 2023. *The Restart Scheme for long-term unemployed people*, para.6.)

Figure 3.3 The main reasons given by providers for why they would deem a participant an unsuitable referral

Reason	Percentage
Barriers/needs are highly complex, and Restart cannot provide effective support	66%
Doesn't meet the formal eligibility criteria	54%
Better suited to another programme	53%
Age / near retirement	7%
Highly skilled or highly qualified and Restart cannot provide effective support	7%
Lack of desire to participate in interviews or meet employers	2%
There are no unsuitable referrals	2%
Other	1%

Percentage of providers
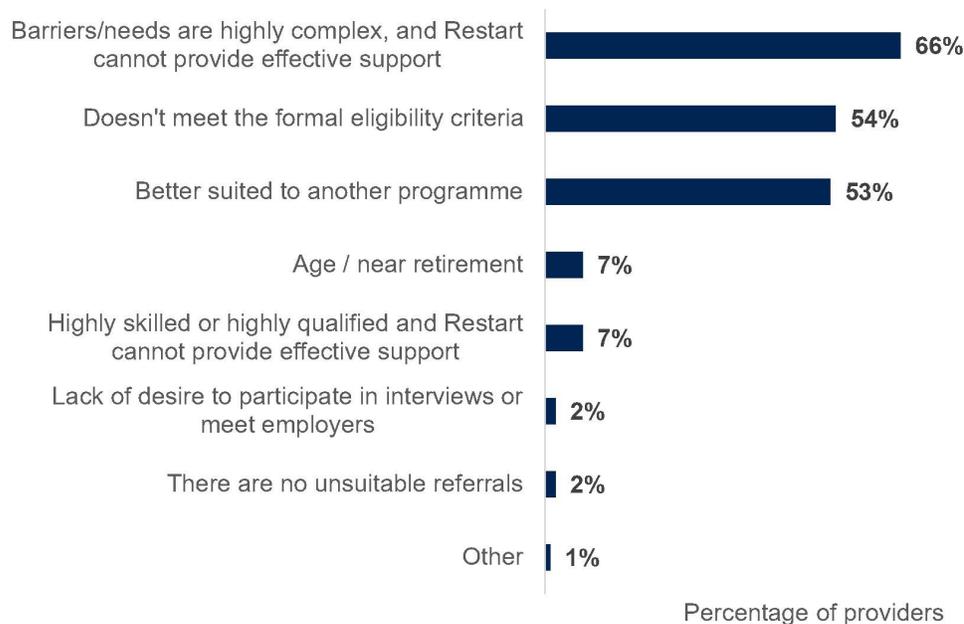
Q3. What are the main reasons why you would deem a participant an unsuitable referral?

Base: All respondents who reported having unsuitable referrals (135)

Most providers (88%) reported that the proportion of unsuitable referrals had changed over time; nearly half (47%) of providers said that the proportion of unsuitable referrals had increased, while under one third said that it had fluctuated (31%). A minority of providers experienced a decrease in unsuitable referrals (10%) or found that rates stayed the same (9%). (Figure 3.4)

Providers in the case study research expressed similar concerns which are considered in more depth in chapter four. Evidence from the longitudinal cohort study confirms that participants are further from work than the Restart Scheme's original eligibility criteria with a third of participants in Intensive Work Scheme (IWS) regime for more than two years.

Figure 3.4 Percentage of providers who reported changes in the proportion of unsuitable referrals over time

- Yes, it has increased
- Yes, it has decreased
- Yes, it has fluctuated over time
- No, it has stayed the same
- Don't know
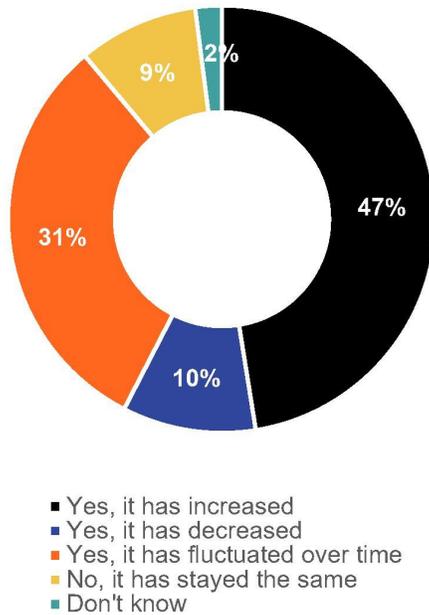
Q4. Has the proportion of unsuitable referrals changed since the beginning of Restart?

Base: All respondents (138)

3.3 Participant barriers

Providers selected from a list the five most common barriers/needs that had been identified at their site. These barriers/needs were identified as mental health (84%), physical health (64%), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) needs (51%), attitudinal barriers (50%), and access to childcare (45%). (Figure 3.5)

Figure 3.5 Five most common participant barriers identified by providers
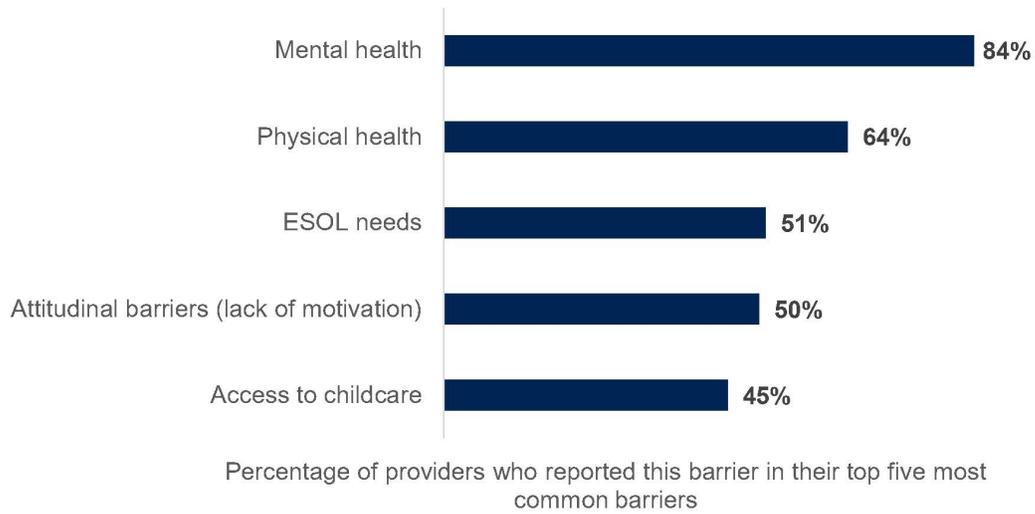
Mental health — 84%
Physical health — 64%
ESOL needs — 51%
Attitudinal barriers (lack of motivation) — 50%
Access to childcare — 45%

Percentage of providers who reported this barrier in their top five most common barriers

Q13. What are the five most common barriers/needs that have been identified in your site?

Base: All respondents (138)

Other relatively common barriers included: caring responsibilities (38%), participants lacking relevant skills or qualifications (31%), lacking work experience (25%), substance or alcohol abuse (22%), age related barriers such as being close to retirement (22%), commuting challenges (21%), and being an ex-offender presenting as a barrier (15%). Less frequent barriers mentioned included: learning difficulties (11%), accommodation or housing issues (1%) and a lack of CV or appropriate CV (1%). (Figure 3.6)

Figure 3.6 Additional common participant barriers/needs identified by providers
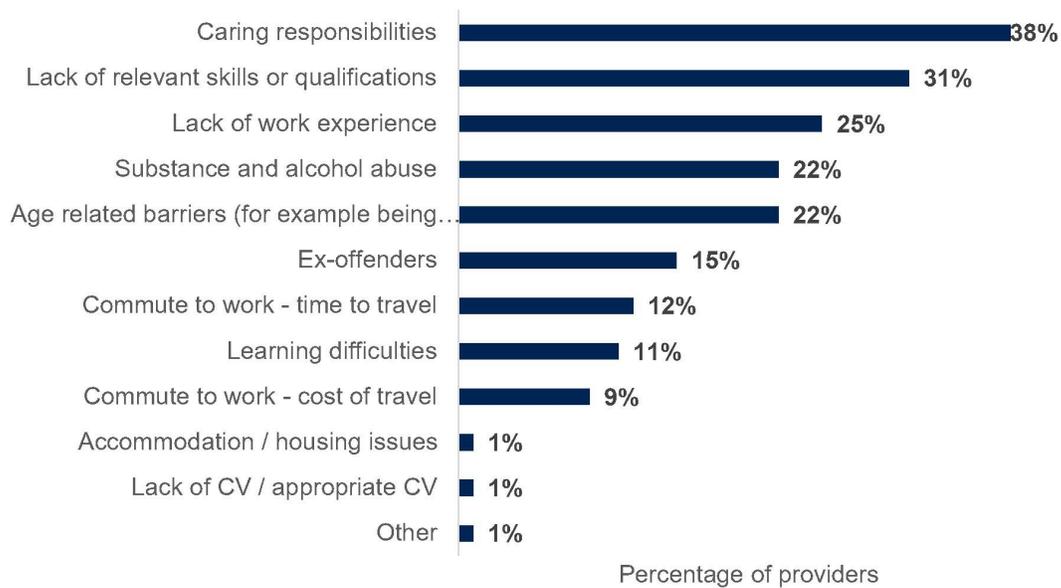
Q13. What are the five most common barriers/needs that have been identified in your site?

Base: All respondents (138)

Providers identified the participant barriers/needs that the Restart Scheme enabled them to support with most effectively. A large majority of providers felt they were able to support participants with barriers related to a lack of relevant skills and qualifications (93%), costs of travel to work (91%), and individuals unemployed for less than nine months (89%). A large majority of providers also felt they could support participants with attitudinal barriers (86%), those who lacked work experience (85%), individuals unemployed for longer than two years (84%), time to commute to work (80%), and highly skilled/qualified individuals (79%). (Figure 3.7)

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Figure 3.7 Participant barriers/needs that the Restart Scheme is most effective in enabling providers to support

Q17. How effective is the Restart Scheme in enabling you to support people with the following needs?

Base: All respondents (138)

Nearly three quarters (73%) of providers said that the Restart Scheme enabled them to effectively address barriers related to childcare access, and many also said that they were able to effectively support mental health (71%), ESOL needs (68%) and ex-offenders (68%). Around two thirds of providers said that they could effectively support participants with age-related barriers such as being close to retirement (65%) and with caring responsibilities (63%).

The barriers/needs which providers most often report that they are ineffective at supporting are physical health barriers (43% report ineffective), substance and alcohol abuse (43%), learning difficulties (38%), caring responsibilities (36%) and age-related barriers (34%). Despite this, over half of all providers believe they are more effective than ineffective at addressing each of these barriers. (Figure 3.8)

Survey findings suggest that most providers are confident to support most participant barriers. However, findings from the longitudinal cohort study and the case study research suggest a more complex picture, with less evidence that participants such as the highly skilled, those with more severe mental or physical health conditions, or the long-term unemployed can be effectively supported.

Further analysis showed that:

- Providers who reported effective mental and physical health support were more likely to engage with local authorities (85%, compared to 81% total average), LEPs (77%, compared to 71%), chambers of commerce (57%,

compared to 49%), other charities and support services (92%, compared to 86%), and other employment programmes (79%, compared to 58%).[10]

- Providers who reported ineffective support for those with physical or mental health barriers were more likely to lack external support services (49%) for participants than those with effective support (37%), as well as lack internal capacity to deliver training or support (36%, compared to 23%).

These findings suggest the importance of partnership working in enabling providers to respond to participant needs. This is supported by the case study research where external referrals were particularly important for those participants with more complex barriers and needs.

Figure 3.8 Barriers/needs that providers report they are less able to effectively address
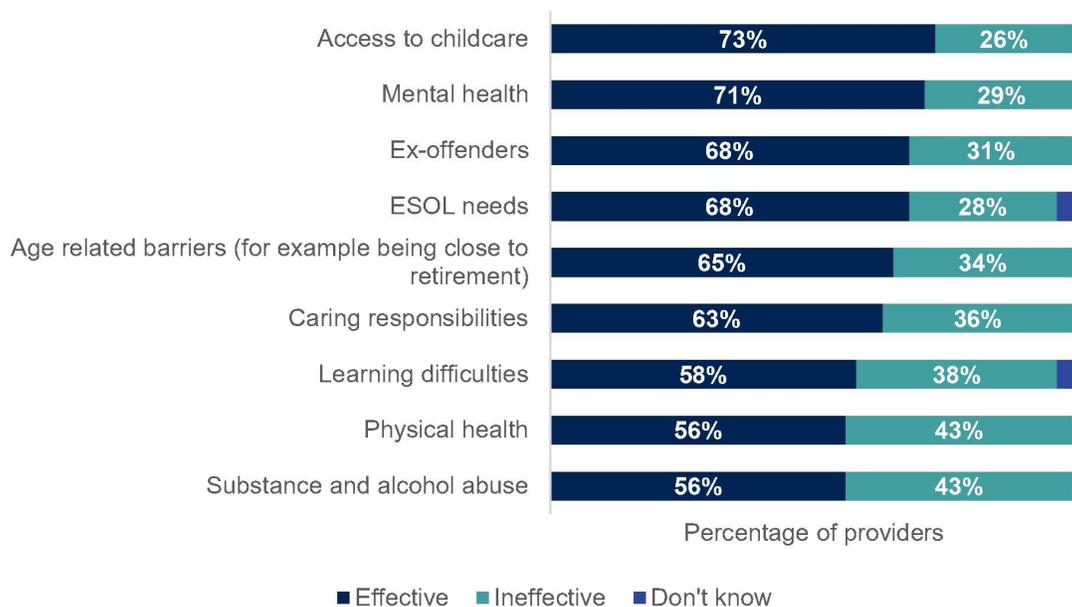
Barrier/need	Effective	Ineffective	Don't know
Access to childcare	73%	26%	
Mental health	71%	29%	
Ex-offenders	68%	31%	
ESOL needs	68%	28%	
Age related barriers (for example being close to retirement)	65%	34%	
Caring responsibilities	63%	36%	
Learning difficulties	58%	38%	
Physical health	56%	43%	
Substance and alcohol abuse	56%	43%	

Percentage of providers

■ Effective   ■ Ineffective   ■ Don't know

Q17. How effective is the Restart Scheme in enabling you to support people with the following needs?

Base: All respondents (138)

According to providers, the two key reasons why providers were unable to support participants with certain barriers needs related to participants' personal circumstances. Over three quarters (77%) of providers said that they were unable to support participants due to participants' motivation or circumstances e.g., not being able to commit to training, and just under three quarters (73%) said they cannot support because of limited participant interest. These findings should be considered alongside Restart participant views in the case study research where they felt training did not meet their needs as it was often too basic or conflicted with other responsibilities, such as childcare.

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[10] The base size was not large enough to establish significant effects for types of support other than mental and physical health support.

Over two fifths (46%) of providers said that they were unable to support participants due to a lack of external support services for participants, and around two fifths (39%) were unable to because of the limited time that participants have on the scheme. Some providers reference reasons related to delivery, including lack of internal capacity to deliver training or support (27%), and limited budget (20%). A similar number (23%) report they cannot support due to the lack of external training available for participants. A small minority of providers acknowledged poor or disjointed communication between departments (2%) or something else (1%). (Figure 3.9)

Figure 3.9 Reasons why providers are unable to support participants with needs
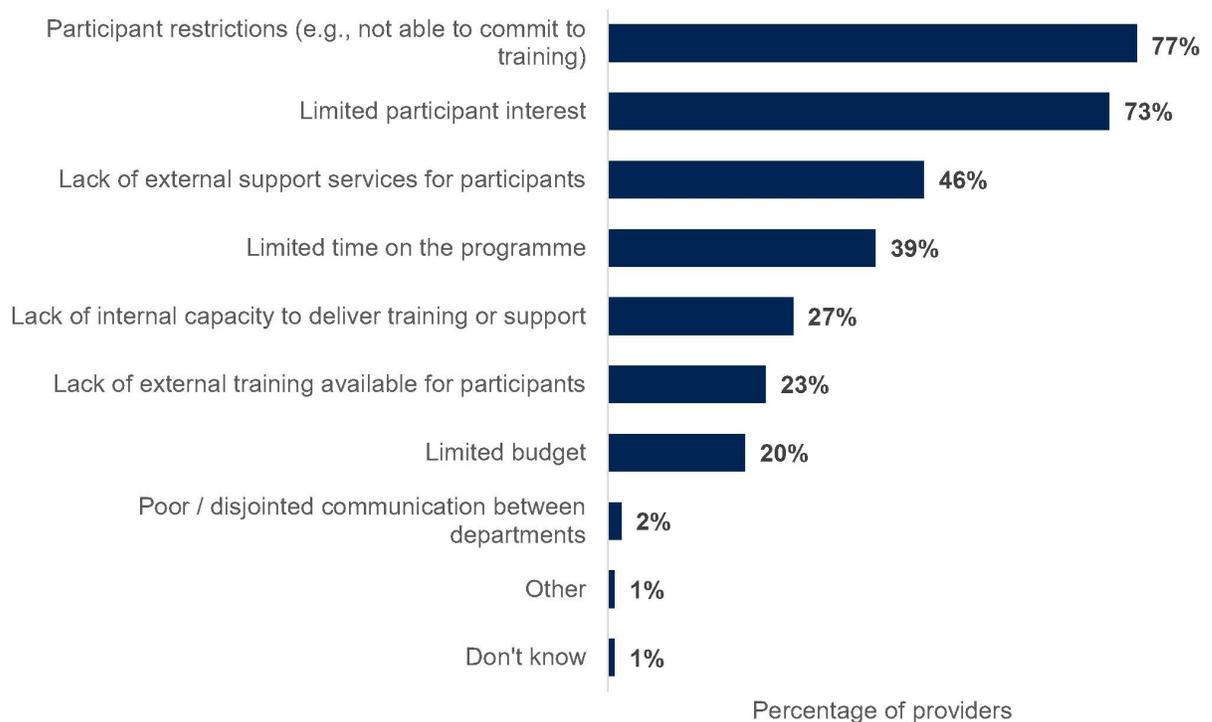
Q.18. What are the reasons for not being able to support people with these needs?

Base: All respondents who report the Restart Scheme is ineffective in allowing them to address at least one need (103)

3.4 Relationship between providers and JCP

Providers generally felt they had a positive relationship with Jobcentre Plus (JCP), although they also identified that communication could be improved.

Providers were asked to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with statements regarding their communication and relationship with JCP staff. A large majority (93%) of providers agreed that they had a positive relationship with JCP staff, driven by those that strongly agree (54%) compared to slightly agree (39%).

While around half (52%) of providers agreed that JCP staff respond to them in a timely manner, a majority (87%) agreed that they would like to have more frequent communication with JCP staff, which is driven by those that strongly agree (64% compared to 22% who slightly agree). (Figure 3.10)

Figure 3.10 The extent to which providers agree with statements regarding their communication and relationship with JCP
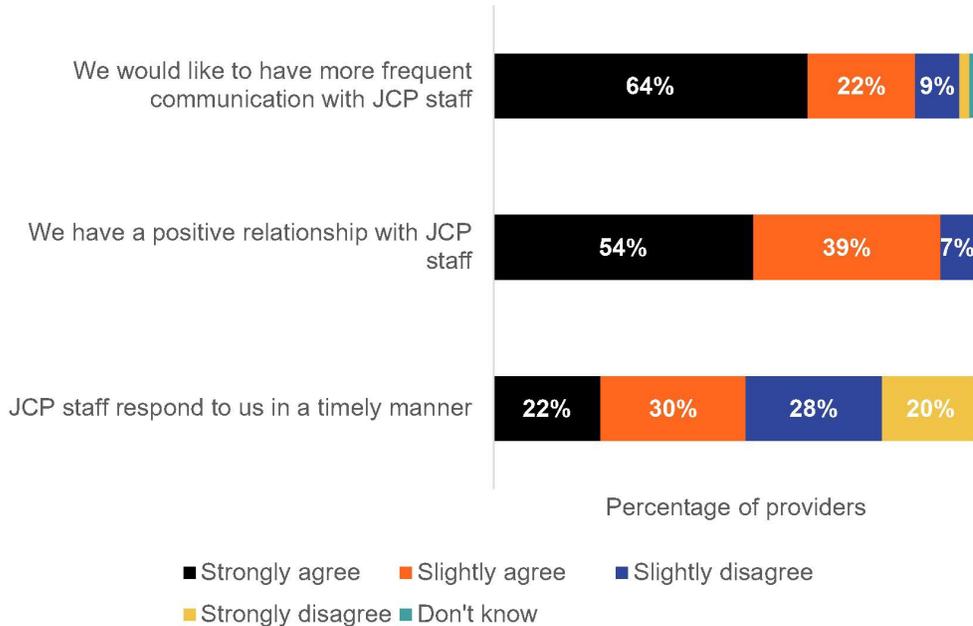
Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your communications and relationship with JCP staff?

Base: All respondents (138)

Providers used various modes to communicate with JCP staff about the Restart Scheme. Most providers preferred communicating with JCP via emails (79%), via Restart Employment Advisors when they visit the JCP site (78%) and via telephone calls/meetings (74%). Three fifths (60%) of providers also preferred communications when JCP staff visit the Restart site, which is significantly more likely to be preferred by prime contractors (69%) than subcontractors (50%).

Only a small number of respondents preferred Restart participants passing on information between providers and JCP staff; 16% prefer participants to pass on information to JCP staff, and 14% prefer participants to provide information from JCP staff. (Figure 3.11)

These findings should be considered alongside evidence from the case study research which also suggests that the approach where providers and JCP staff relied on Restart participants to share information about their progress on the scheme was sometimes not effective.

Figure 3.11 Providers' preferred modes of communicating with JCP about the Restart Scheme
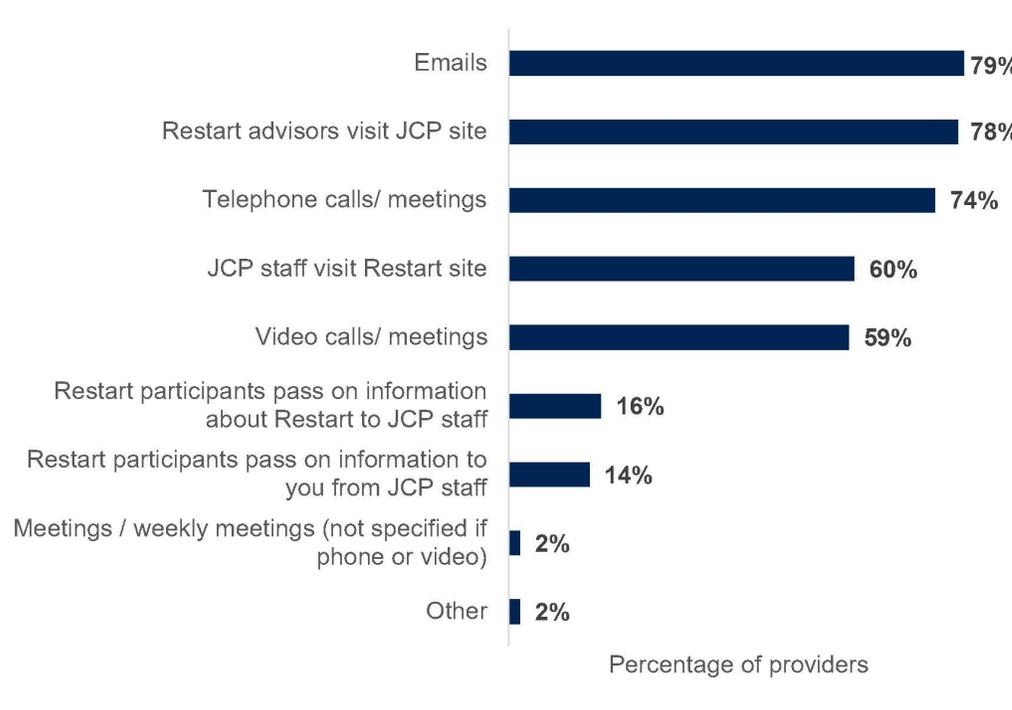
Q9. What are your preferred modes of communicating with JCP about Restart?

Base: All respondents (138)

3.5 The mandation process[11]

Providers were asked to estimate the proportion of Restart participants where they requested mandation as a last resort after failure to attend a Restart activity, using percentage groups (<10%, 11-20% etc.). Overall, a large majority (91%) of providers reported that they request participants are mandated after they fail to attend a Restart activity. However, responses varied considerably, with a relatively even split of providers across percentage groups (Figure 3.12).

Eight per cent of providers were unsure how often mandation was requested and just one per cent said that mandation was never requested.

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[11] The mandation process refers to the process whereby a provider requires a participant to attend an activity, and then if they fail to attend, raises a compliance doubt with DWP. This could lead to DWP sanctioning that person through a reduction or suspension of their benefits.

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Figure 3.12 Estimated proportion of Restart participants where mandation is requested after failure to attend a Restart activity
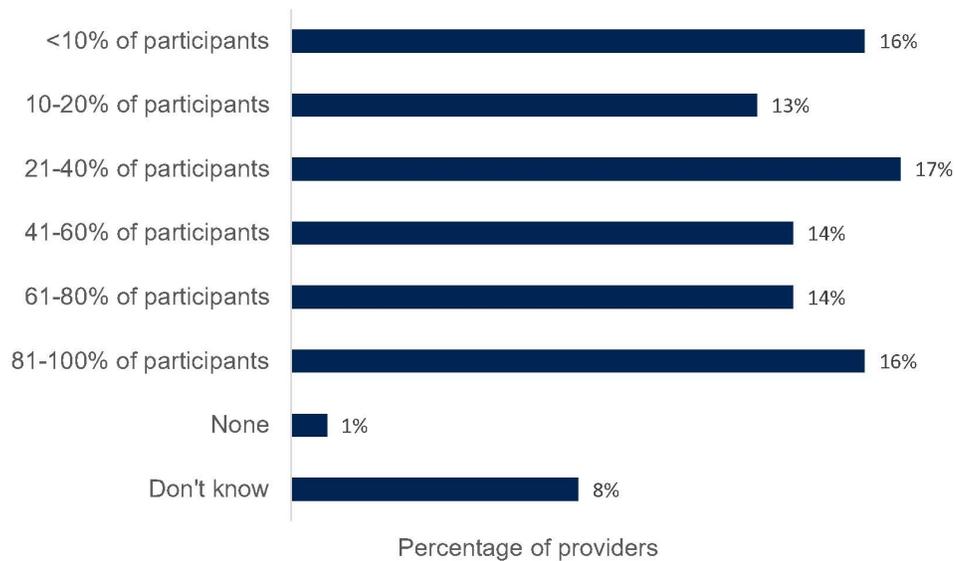
Q6. Of those Restart Scheme participants who fail to attend a Restart activity, what proportion are mandated as a last resort?

Base: All respondents (138)

Providers provided reasons for why they did not engage with the mandation process. The most common reason was that they experienced poor/slow communication with JCP staff (51% of providers). One in five (20%) did not request mandation because it was not required e.g., there was high participant engagement, and over one in six (17%) did not mandate because they did not fully understand what the process is to request participant mandation.

Other reasons given by providers included that their organisations prefer to avoid mandation (16%) and participants have mitigating or reasonable circumstances (10%). Sometimes providers requested mandation, but the participant was not sanctioned or was not followed up (8%), or there was no need to if the participant was already on a sanction or it would make little difference (4%). (Figure 3.13)

Figure 3.13 Reasons why providers choose not to engage with the mandation process

Reason	Percentage
Poor/slow communication with JCP staff	51%
Mandation hasn't been required (e.g. high participant engagement)	20%
Don't fully understand what the process is to request participants are mandated	17%
My organisation prefers to avoid mandation	16%
If participant has mitigating / reasonable circumstances	10%
We do mandate, but participant is not sanctioned / no follow up	8%
No need if already on a sanction / makes little difference	4%
Other	2%
N/A - not our choice / option not there	2%
Don't know	4%

Percentage of providers

Q7. What are the main reasons your organisation chooses not to request that participants are mandated by JCP?

Base: All respondents (138)

Providers were asked to reflect on how well mandation or raising compliance doubts is communicated between themselves, JCP staff, and Restart participants. A large majority of providers felt that there was room for improvement regarding JCP staff communicating with their organisation (85%) as well as with Restart participants (82%). Around two thirds (65%) thought that their organisation could improve communications with JCP staff and just under half (46%) felt the same about their communications with participants. Three quarters (75%) also felt that DWP could improve communication of guidance around mandation with their organisation. (Figure 3.14)

These findings on mandation considered alongside similar provider and JCP views in the case study research suggest that clearer guidance or simpler procedures are needed if mandation is to work effectively.

Figure 3.14 Providers' views on how well mandation is communicated between themselves, JCP staff, DWP and participants

Q8. Which of the following options best describes how well mandation is communicated between the following?

Base: All respondents (138)

3.6 Mechanisms of support

Overall, a large majority (94%) of providers say that participants engage at least fortnightly with Employment Advisors, as outlined in the Customer Service Standards (CSS). Over half (55%) of providers say that Restart participants engage with advisors on a fortnightly basis, and under a third (28%) say they do so weekly. A few (7%) providers report that participants engage with advisors a few times a week, and others suggest either daily (4%), monthly (4%), or less than once a month (1%). Evidence from participants in the longitudinal cohort study is more mixed, with nearly one in five participants reporting they had a meeting with an advisor less than every two weeks. (Figure 3.15)

Figure 3.15 Average frequency that individual Restart participants engage with Employment Advisors at providers' sites
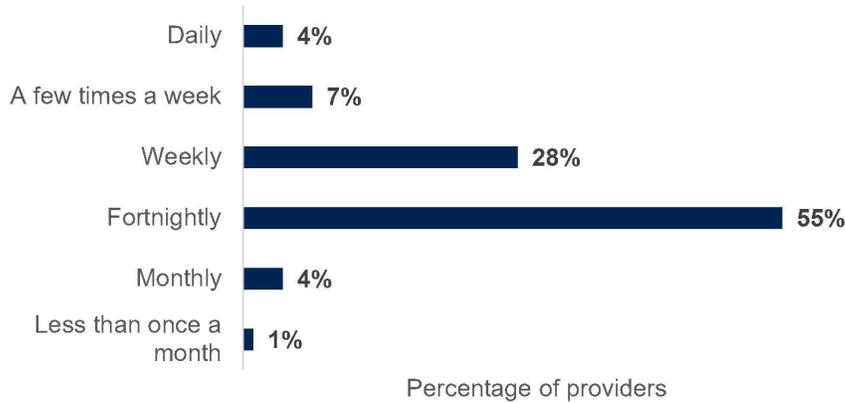
Percentage of providers

Q11. On average, how frequently do individual participants engage with advisors at your site?

Base: All respondents (138)

Providers were asked to estimate the proportion of participants that keep the same Employment Advisor. While responses varied, providers typically estimated mid-higher proportions. For example, over half (54%) of providers estimated that over 60% of participants kept the same advisor throughout their time on the Restart Scheme, and nearly three quarters (74%) estimated more than 40% kept the same advisors. 1 in 10 providers estimated that less than 20% of participants kept the same advisor, while 6% of providers said that they didn't know how many participants keep the same advisor (Figure 3.16).

There is evidence across the three strands of research that it is relatively common for participants to change Employment Advisor, and evidence from the case study research and longitudinal cohort study states that this impacts negatively on participant experience and outcomes. However, it should be noted that while consistency of advisor was important for participant experience, some staff changes could also be due to participants being transferred to a specialist advisor or one who met their needs better.

Figure 3.16 Average frequency that individual Restart participants keep the same Employment Advisor
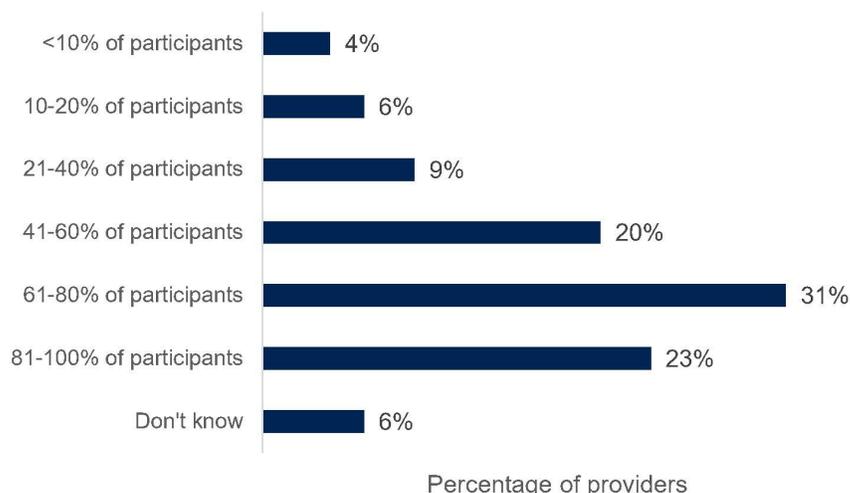
Percentage of providers

Q12. What estimated proportion of Restart participants keep the same Restart advisor throughout their time on the scheme?

Base: All respondents (138)

Providers estimated the proportion of Restart participants that accessed training and development opportunities at their sites. According to providers, the most frequently accessed training and development opportunities included support to develop CVs or cover letters and help to find job opportunities, and the least accessed were skills assessments and training or courses to develop skills or qualifications. While responses varied, over half of providers said that:

- Over 75% of participants access support to develop CVs or cover letters (64% of providers)

- Over 75% of participants access help to find job opportunities (60%)

- Over 50% of participants access support with interview preparation (71%)

- Over 50% of participants access support with writing personal career action plans (Job Finding Actions Plans) (67%)

- Over 50% of participants access skills assessments (61%)

- Over 50% of participants access support training or courses to develop skills or qualifications (60%) (Figure 3.17)

Figure 3.17 Estimated proportion of Restart participants who access different training and development opportunities through the scheme
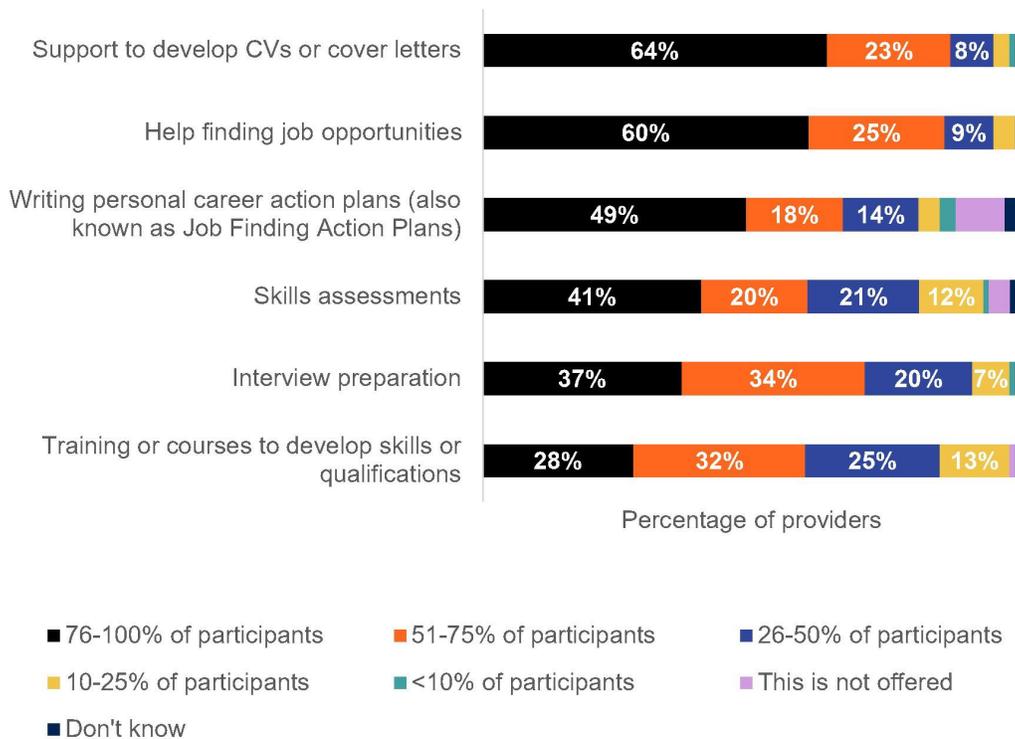
Support to develop CVs or cover letters — 64% — 23% — 8%
Help finding job opportunities — 60% — 25% — 9%
Writing personal career action plans (also known as Job Finding Action Plans) — 49% — 18% — 14%
Skills assessments — 41% — 20% — 21% — 12%
Interview preparation — 37% — 34% — 20% — 7%
Training or courses to develop skills or qualifications — 28% — 32% — 25% — 13%

Percentage of providers

- 76-100% of participants
- 51-75% of participants
- 26-50% of participants
- 10-25% of participants
- <10% of participants
- This is not offered
- Don't know

Q14. Approximately what proportion of Restart participants access the following training and development opportunities through your site?

Base: All respondents (138)

Providers estimated the proportion of Restart participants that access wider support either internally or via an external referral. According to providers, the most common types of support accessed by Restart participants included ongoing support after starting a new job, and support to improve confidence. Support least accessed by Restart participants included support to find housing and support to manage caring responsibilities. While responses varied, over half of providers said that:

- Over 50% of participants access ongoing support after starting a new job (76% of providers)

- Over 50% of participants access support to improve confidence (64%)

- Over 50% of participants access support to manage their mental health (53%)

Around half (49%) of providers also said that over 50% of participants access support with digital technology. (Figure 3.18)

Findings from the case study research and longitudinal cohort study outline Restart participant views on the kinds of support on offer they had received. While the kinds of support on offer and relative frequency align with provider views, it is important to

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note that some participants reported receiving very little or no support beyond their advisor appointments.

Figure 3.18 Estimated proportion of Restart participants who access different kinds of internal or external support

	76-100% of participants	51-75% of participants	26-50% of participants	10-25% of participants	<10% of participants	This is not offered	Don't know
Ongoing support after participant has started a new job	49%	27%	13%	8%			
Support to improve confidence	32%	32%	22%	11%			
Support with digital technology	20%	28%	34%	14%			
Support with ESOL needs	18%	10%	24%	22%	20%		
Support to manage a mental health condition	14%	39%	24%	15%			
Support to manage a physical health condition	12%	15%	30%	25%	10%		
Support to access affordable/ good quality childcare	9%	9%	24%	29%	19%		
Support to access specialised training for higher skilled/ qualified participants	9%	17%	20%	24%	21%		
Support to find suitable housing	7%	7%	21%	31%	27%		
Support to manage other caring responsibilities	7%	11%	27%	24%	20%		

Q15. Approximately what proportion of Restart participants access the following support either internally or via an external referral?

Base: All respondents (138)

Providers estimated the proportion of Restart participants that access employer activities through their site. According to providers, employer activities most typically accessed by Restart participants included providers talking to employers on behalf of participants, and participants attending a job fair. Restart participants were least likely to access job placements or shadowing. Around half of providers said that:

- Over 50% of Restart participants have providers talk to employers and other sites on their behalf, to e.g., help arrange interviews (54% of providers)

- Over 50% of Restart participants attend job fairs (51%)

Around three quarters of providers say that:

- Less than 50% of Restart participants access job placements or shadowing (74%)

- Less than 50% of Restart participants access information or support to become self-employed (72%) (Figure 3.19)

Both the case study research and the provider survey suggest that, while providers were regularly engaging with employers through activities such as job fairs and sharing CVs, there was less evidence of more in-depth engagement such as job placements or shadowing.

Figure 3.19 Estimated proportion of Restart participants who access different kinds of employer engagement activities through the scheme
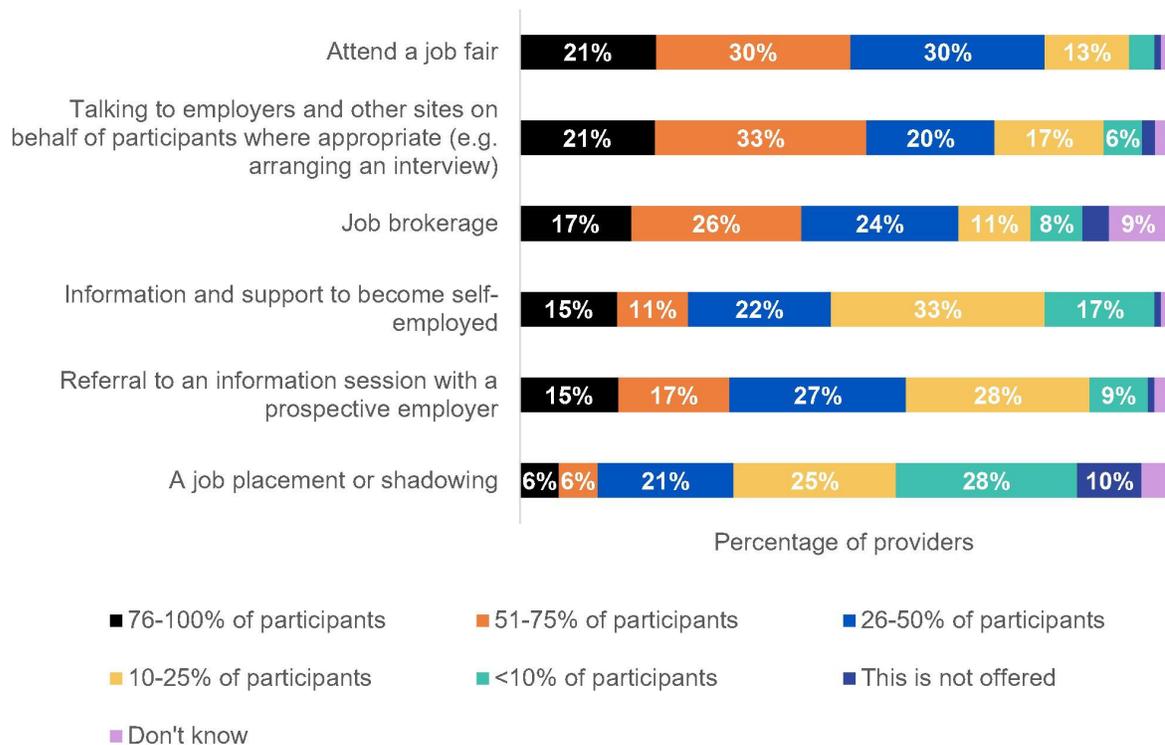
Q16. Approximately what proportion of Restart participants access the following employer activities through your site?

Base: All respondents (138)

Providers were asked about the funding that participants receive while on the Restart Scheme, both internally and externally.[12] Most providers (82%) said that some participants receive externally funded training while on the scheme. Participants were more likely to receive funding from other programmes (according to 37% of providers) than they are from JCP, though around one in seven (14%) still receive

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[12] External funding refers to support received that is not funded as part of the Restart Scheme (for example through JCP)

JCP funding. This suggests that there may be a lack of clarity around what additional funding participants are entitled to receive while on the scheme. (Figure 3.20)

Figure 3.20 Participant experiences in relation to training and/or funding, according to providers
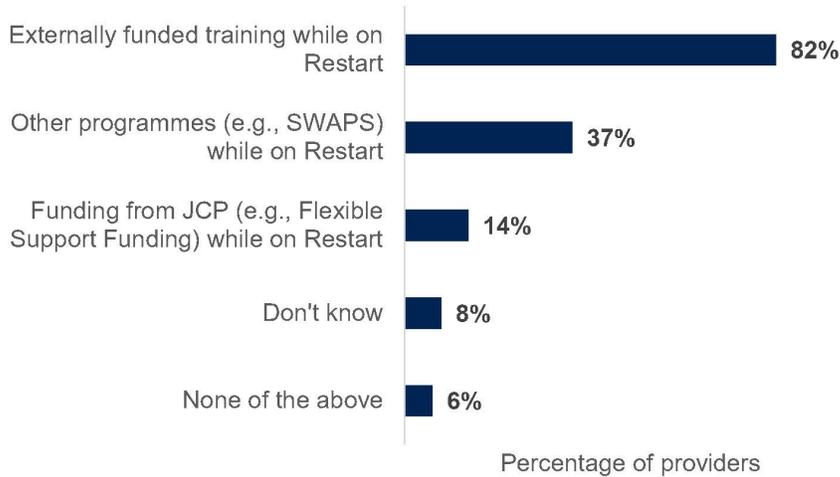
Category	Percentage
Externally funded training while on Restart	82%
Other programmes (e.g., SWAPS) while on Restart	37%
Funding from JCP (e.g., Flexible Support Funding) while on Restart	14%
Don't know	8%
None of the above	6%

Percentage of providers

Q19. Which of the following, if any, have participants experienced in relation to training and/or funding?

Base: All respondents (138)

All providers (100%) reported that participants accessed internal funding to travel to the Restart Scheme, internal funding for costs associated with work (transport or uniform) and internal funding for materials required to find work (interview clothing, travel to interviews, IT devices). Most providers (94%) provided at least some advice or support around managing debt, although 5% do not and 1% are unsure. This suggests that financial support is widely available to Restart participants across providers. (Figure 3.21)

Figure 3.21 Estimated proportion of Restart participants that access financial support, according to providers
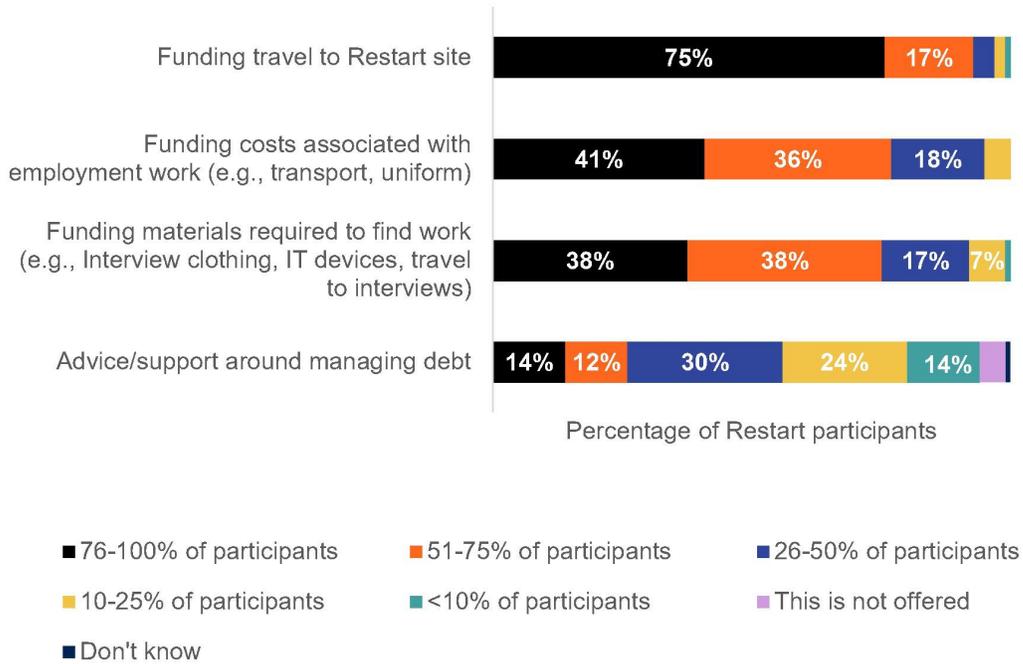
Percentage of Restart participants

- ■ 76-100% of participants
- ■ 51-75% of participants
- ■ 26-50% of participants
- ■ 10-25% of participants
- ■ <10% of participants
- ■ This is not offered
- ■ Don't know

Q20. Approximately what proportion of Restart participants supported by your site access the following financial support?

Base: All respondents (138)

A majority (82%) of providers have a Customer Exit Plan in place to help transition participants back to JCP support. A breakdown according to CPAs showed that every provider in South Central and Greater Manchester had a customer exit plan at their site. Providers in South and East London (25% without customer exit plan) and in South and West Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Nottinghamshire (22%) were least likely to have a customer exit plan. This suggests a lack of consistency across providers in different areas, potentially impacting on participant experience. This is reflected in the case study research, where providers and JCP report different approaches to participants finishing the Restart Scheme. (Figure 3.22)

Figure 3.22 Providers in each CPA who report having a Customer Exit Plan in place
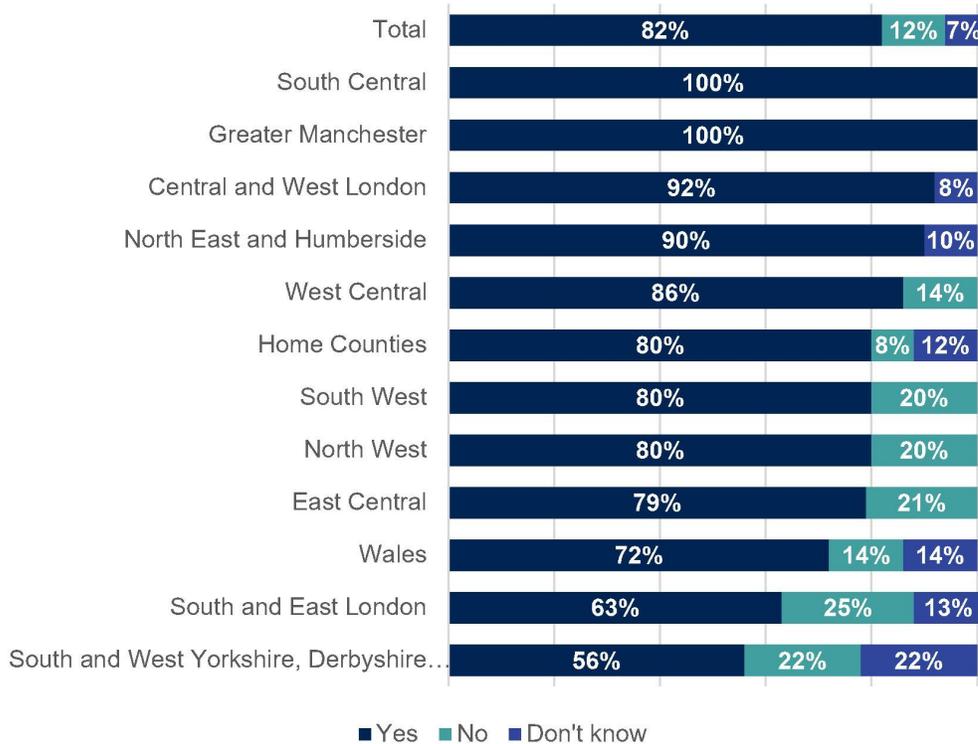
	Yes	No	Don't know
Total	82%	12%	7%
South Central	100%		
Greater Manchester	100%		
Central and West London	92%		8%
North East and Humberside	90%		10%
West Central	86%	14%	
Home Counties	80%	8%	12%
South West	80%	20%	
North West	80%	20%	
East Central	79%	21%	
Wales	72%	14%	14%
South and East London	63%	25%	13%
South and West Yorkshire, Derbyshire…	56%	22%	22%

■Yes ■No ■Don't know

Q25. Does your site have a Customer Exit Plan in place to help transition participants back to JCP support if they complete their time on the Restart Scheme without getting a job?

Base: All respondents (138)

3.7 Partnerships and employer engagement

A large majority (88%) of providers reported that they have a specialist role or team at their site which is dedicated to employer engagement. Providers in sites with a specialist team were significantly more likely to report that participants turned down job offers because they lacked the desire to participate in interviews or meet employers (77%) than the total average (73%). Within the case study research, some interviewees reported that national employer engagement teams had referred them to job roles outside their local area. This may suggest that these teams were less effective in identifying vacancies that met participants' individual needs. (Figure 3.23)

Figure 3.23 Proportion of providers with a specialist role or team dedicated to employer engagement according to CPA
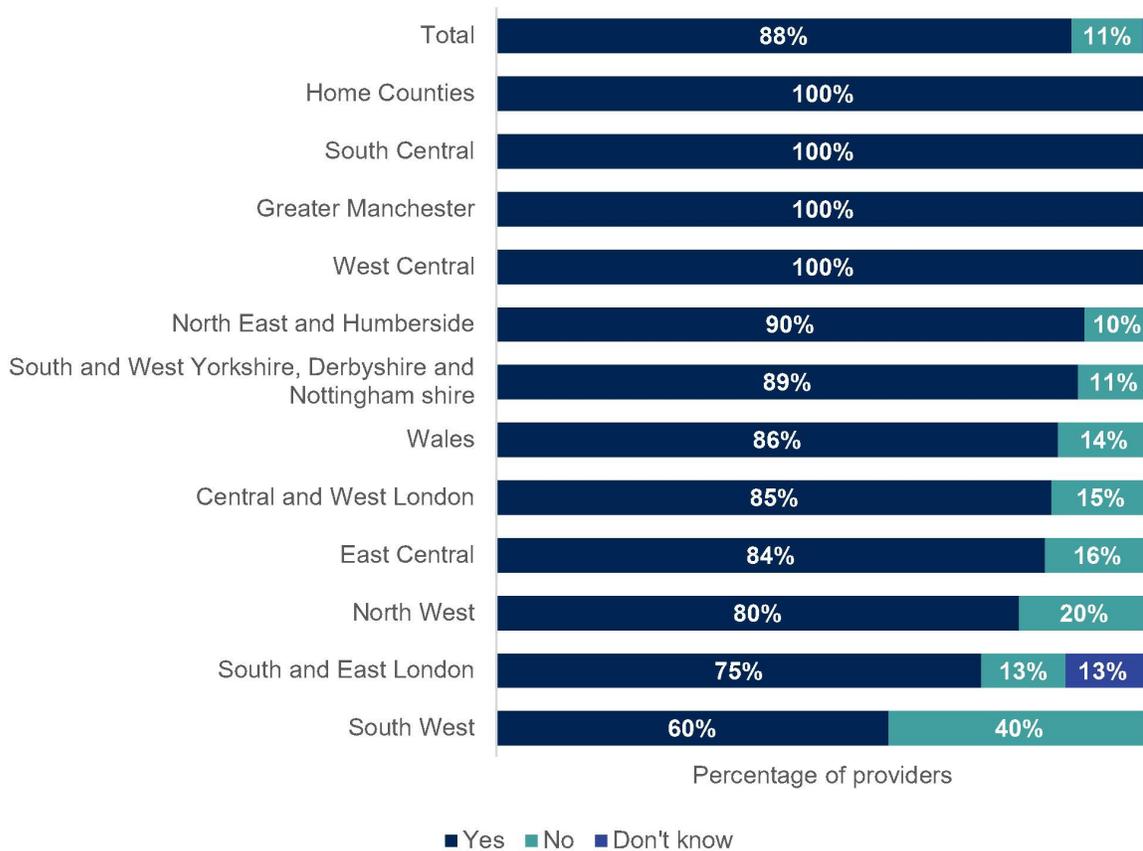
	Yes	No	Don't know
Total	88%	11%	
Home Counties	100%		
South Central	100%		
Greater Manchester	100%		
West Central	100%		
North East and Humberside	90%	10%	
South and West Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottingham shire	89%	11%	
Wales	86%	14%	
Central and West London	85%	15%	
East Central	84%	16%	
North West	80%	20%	
South and East London	75%	13%	13%
South West	60%	40%	

Percentage of providers

Q21. Is there a specialist role or team at your site that is dedicated to employer engagement?

Base: All respondents (138)

Providers stated that they engaged with a range of partners, however the number of partnerships and how often they engaged with partners varied substantially. Nearly all providers engaged with employers (98% of providers), and a large majority engaged with training and education providers (94%) and referral partners (90%). Other common partners included other charities and support services such as housing support (86%), local or combined authorities (81%), other employment programmes (72%), and local enterprise partnerships (LEPs; 71%). Around half of providers engage with chambers of commerce (49%), and 26% report engaging in other partnerships. (Figure 3.24)

Figure 3.24 How frequently providers engage with different partners

Partner	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Less than once a month	Never	Don't know
Employers	56%	28%	9%			
Referral partners	28%	36%	19%	7%		9%
Training/ education providers	16%	43%	25%	11%		6%
Other charities and support services (e.g. housing support)	14%	28%	31%	13%	6%	8%
Other employment programmes		18%	25%	24%	11%	17%
Local or Combined Authorities	7%	13%	30%	31%	7%	12%
Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)		12%	26%	30%	7%	22%
Chambers of Commerce		17%	29%	23%		28%
Other	8%	9%	6%		11%	63%

Percentage of providers

■ Daily ■ Weekly ■ Monthly ■ Less than once a month ■ Never ■ Don't know

Q22. How frequently does your site engage with the following partners?

Base: All respondents (138)

3.8 Job offers

Providers estimated the proportion of participants that turn down job offers. While responses varied, they typically estimated mid-lower proportions, with more than half of providers (55%) reporting that less than one in five Restart participants turn jobs down. Only 4% said that more than 60% of participants turned down jobs. One per cent of providers also said they did not know. (Figure 3.25)

Figure 3.25 Estimated proportion of Restart participants who typically turn down a job that they have been offered, according to providers
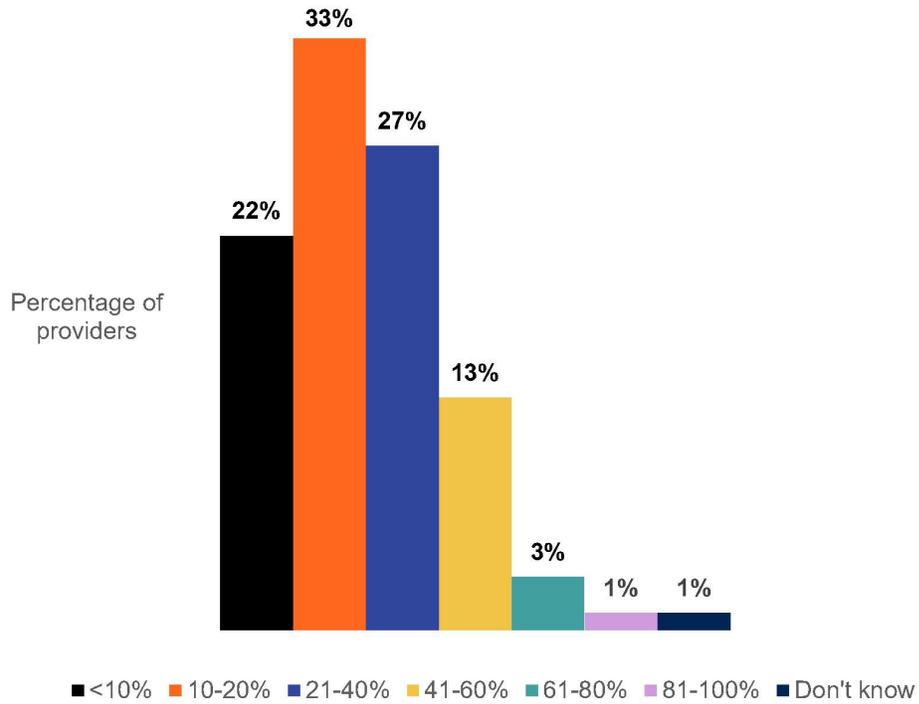
Q23. What estimated proportion of Restart participants who have been offered a job typically turn it down?

Base: All respondents (138)

Providers were most likely to say that participants turned down job offers because they were not motivated to work as indicated by a lack of desire to participate in interviews or meet employers (73% of providers). Providers also felt that participants turned down job offers due to personal barriers such as childcare (67%), concerns about universal credit cuts (62%) and inflexibility of the job role, such as unwanted hours (62%). Just over half of providers (52%) reported that jobs were turned down due to concerns about losing wider support and under half (47%) reported logistical issues such as transport. Fewer providers believed that participants were likely to turn down jobs because they were not aligned with their desired role (26%), because of the salary (25%) or because the role did not align with their skillset (10%). (Figure 3.26)

Providers and JCP staff interviewed for the case study research also commonly reported that participants turned down jobs because they lacked the motivation to work. However, Restart participants in both the longitudinal cohort study and the case study research were much more likely to report turning down jobs because of practical barriers, such as transport and childcare.

Figure 3.26 Reasons suggested by providers for why participants typically turn down a job that they have been offered

Reason	Percentage
Lack of desire to participate in interviews or meet employers	73%
Personal barriers (e.g., childcare)	67%
Concerns about Universal Credit cuts	62%
Inflexibility of role (e.g., unwanted hours)	62%
Concerns about losing wider support (e.g., unable to have extra energy bill support)	52%
Logistical issues (e.g., transport)	47%
Not aligned with desired role	26%
Undesirable salary	25%
Not aligned with participant's skillset	10%
Don't know	1%

Percentage of providers

Q24. Why do participants typically turn down job offers?

Base: All respondents (138)

3.9 Summary of findings

One of the key findings from the provider survey was that delivery of the Restart Scheme was inconsistent for different participants. The scheme's model of local tailoring means that variation is to be expected in terms of the kind of support that participants receive. However, variation in, for example, when and whether mandation is requested and the kinds of employer engagement activities provided may suggest that not all participants received a minimum level of service. The relatively small sample size of the provider survey means it is not possible to identify whether there were statistically significant differences between areas, however, evidence from the case study research suggests there was variation within as well as between areas. Evidence from the longitudinal cohort study and case study research suggests a key driver in this variation is the individual Employment Advisor relationship.

Providers were concerned about what they saw as high levels of 'unsuitable' referrals, reporting that some participants' needs were too challenging to be addressed through the support on offer, and they would be better suited to another programme. Their general view was also that the number of unsuitable referrals increased over time. Evidence from the longitudinal cohort study confirms that participants were further from work than the Restart Scheme's original eligibility

criteria, with a third of participants on IWS for more than two years. This had implications for the kinds of support that providers could offer, as well as participants' experiences of the scheme.

Providers generally reported that they have a positive relationship and good communication with JCP staff. However, there was a clear preference for direct contact with JCP through email, telephone and in person meetings rather than communicating through participants. Some would also have preferred more timely and frequent communication with JCP. There was evidence from the provider survey that not all providers fully understood the mandation process, applied it consistently or were convinced of its value.

The evidence from the provider survey suggests that most participants attended appointments regularly, in line with expected customer service standards. However, despite clear evidence from both the longitudinal cohort study and the case study research of the importance of a consistent Employment Advisor relationship, a significant number of participants did not keep the same advisor for their time on the Restart Scheme.

Providers reported delivering a range of support activities, most commonly CV writing and support with job search. Participants were also reported to have access to a range of wider support and training, including contact with employers, referral to external partners and funding to support with costs. This suggests that most participants were accessing a minimum level of support however, the longitudinal cohort study and the case study research suggest there is more variation in how much wider support is available.

Providers identified the most common barriers presenting at their Restart site as mental health, physical health, ESOL needs, attitudinal barriers, and access to childcare. **They were generally confident they could support the barriers experienced by most participants,** particularly those related to a lack of relevant skills and qualifications, costs of travel to work, and individuals who were unemployed for less than nine months. However, they were less confident in supporting participants with learning difficulties, physical health barriers, and substance and alcohol abuse. **When providers were unable to support participants with particular needs or barriers, they often attributed this to participants' own restrictions suc   as not bein s ufficiently interested in employment**. Other reasons included a lack of wider support systems or the limited time frame of the Restart Scheme.

The survey indicates that providers engaged with a range of partners, including employers, training providers, support services and stakeholders. However, the type and frequency of engagement varied. Some survey respondents were not engaging frequently or at all with a full range of partners.

All providers identified that some participants were turning down jobs and attributed this to a range of reasons. The most frequently cited reasons were that participants were not motivated to work, but also included practical barriers such as a lack of flexibility, or concerns about childcare, transport, or losing financial support.

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They were less likely to cite jobs not being aligned with participants' ambitions or skillsets as a reason.

4. Case study research findings

This chapter reports findings from the three waves of case study research. It includes the views of different interviewee groups including Restart participants, providers, Jobcentre Plus (JCP) staff, employers and stakeholders on delivery models, the referral process, communication between JCP and providers, the support offer, local partnerships, and employer engagement. The chapter is organised thematically with changes over time highlighted and examines how far support was tailored to individual participants, as well as to different local areas.

4.1 Set up and delivery models

This section provides an overview of how the Restart Scheme was implemented and delivered across 12 selected case study areas. It covers delivery models, delivery sites, staff recruitment, and staff training. Further details of the 12 case study areas are included in Appendix 6.4.7.

4.1.1 Delivery models

There were several different models for the Restart Scheme observed in the case studies. In some, the provision was managed and delivered by a prime contractor only, in some it was managed by a prime contractor with one or more subcontractors delivering all the provision, while in others the prime contractor managed and delivered provision alongside one or more subcontractors. It was most common for one subcontractor to deliver provision, although one area had four subcontractors and one had six.

There was no clear evidence on whether any model provided an overall better participant experience. However, there was some evidence that having multiple subcontractors could present challenges. Where there was more than one subcontractor, there often appeared to be little collaboration between them in terms of the support offer and employer engagement.

Another issue mentioned by a Restart provider, in an area where six other subcontractors were also delivering the scheme, was the difficulty in promoting a consistent offer to potential participants. The provider had commissioned self-

employment support for its participants, whereas other providers within the city had not.

> "We can't say 'We're now delivering this for self-employed people; we guarantee you'll get this service', because they've got a 1 in 7 chance in some areas of getting that service." (Restart provider)

Number of providers delivering the Restart Scheme

Seven different providers delivered the Restart Scheme contract in CPA 1a. The high number of providers and the complexity of relationships potentially impacted on the delivery of the scheme, particularly staff recruitment and retention, and the providers' relationships with JCP and employers.

Competition from other providers meant it was more difficult to recruit staff. There was also a risk that an underperforming Employment Advisor could work on the Restart Scheme for the lifetime of the contract by moving between providers.

Providers also believed that it was more difficult to build a strong relationship with JCP staff as they would also be referring to other subcontractors who, in turn, had to maintain relationships with several different JCP sites.

Another challenge was that multiple providers may attempt to contact the same employer, creating duplication and inefficiency in their resourcing and a lack of clarity for local companies.

Providers suggested that reducing the number of subcontractors each JCP site referred to, could enable increased outreach and engagement activity and a clearer support offer for participants.

Prime contractors and subcontractors sometimes held the contract for other employment programmes within a local area, such as Job Entry Targeted Support (JETS) or the Work and Health programme or had done in the past. Where they were running more than one programme, there were examples of resource sharing – often a combined employer engagement team sourcing vacancies and interviews for participants whichever programme they were on. Providers already running employment programmes also benefited from having one or more existing sites to work from and could also build upon established relationships with local organisations.

In the early days of the Restart Scheme, many appointments took place online due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, or through a mix of online and in-person meetings. The IT connection in some rural settings caused problems for local providers, as breaks in service disrupted online meetings. As the scheme progressed, more appointments were held in-person with some providers requiring Restart participants to attend all their appointments on site. While some participants preferred in-person meetings, others found them difficult to attend due to childcare, transport, or health challenges.

4.1.2 Delivery sites

If they were not already running one or more employment programmes in a Restart Scheme area, providers needed to find new premises and had limited time to do so before delivery commenced. Some providers found it difficult to find suitable premises within the timescale and this was apparent in city, town, and rural settings.

Site requirements were difficult to meet in some areas due to factors such as size, proximity to public transport, accessibility, and letting agents being reluctant to commit to a short-term lease or being concerned by the number of people who would be accessing the property. Therefore, when the Restart Scheme commenced, some providers were working from temporary locations and planned to find more suitable sites. Some providers thought they would require additional space as they expected large referral volumes, and started in sites that were smaller than intended, planning to move into larger settings. However, a reduction in Restart Scheme referrals put those plans on hold in some areas.

Some providers changed their premises over the delivery period to find a more suitable location for transport routes, relocate to a larger and more welcoming premises, and/or to be closer to the local JCP site. Proximity to the local JCP site was perceived to make providers more accessible to participants and aid communication between the organisations.

Most of those who anticipated a move to larger and more suitable premises had done so by the end of the first year of the Restart Scheme. Within case study areas, there was a trend away from using smaller community hubs across the area, to having a single, more centralised Restart Scheme site where a wider range of support could be provided. However, these findings differed to responses given on the provider survey which, rather than a more centralised approach, with fewer sites, indicated that the number of delivery sites had increased. The wider sample of the provider survey suggests that the move to centralised sites was not a trend across all Restart providers.

Some areas continued to report challenges in finding an appropriate site, meaning that some participants had an extended travel time for their nearest Restart Scheme appointments. This was particularly the case in some of the more rural locations. However, no participants were expected to travel for more than 90 minutes to their appointments.

Across the case study research, some participants reported challenges in accessing their Restart Scheme site for appointments. This was particularly the case where participants had health needs that made travel difficult, or where they felt support was limited and they were travelling a long way for a short appointment. One participant mentioned her access to local Restart Scheme hubs – there was a part-time one in her local town, but she preferred to visit the main site.

> "I like to go into the city centre, where people can go in and use a laptop and do courses…Knowing that courses are available is good, and that you can go into that centre in your own time as well, not just when you're booked to." (Participant)

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4.1.3 Staff recruitment

In the initial stages of the Restart Scheme, providers in many areas (city, town, and rural) found it difficult to recruit the number of Employment Advisors required by the contract. They recruited staff from other employment support contracts, both from within their organisation and externally, with additional staff recruited from outside the sector. Some providers said they had specifically sought out staff with customer service skills, rather than previous experience in employment support, as they thought a more diverse range of skills would enhance their Restart Scheme provision.

A few providers recruited via an agency in the early stages, with one continuing to employ agency staff to maintain its Employment Advisor numbers. Due to recruitment challenges, some providers said they had recruited staff who they might not otherwise have considered suited to the Employment Advisor role, with these people often leaving quite quickly.

> "There were people that perhaps wouldn't pass probation, or people we had concerns over…Because we had to hit that FTE [full-time-equivalent] staff target or face quite significant penalties it drives [recruiting] these people to fill your head count." (Subcontractor)

Competition from other employment programmes and/or other Restart providers in the area, as well as an increase in JCP Work Coach recruitment, were cited as reasons for these difficulties.

> "Anybody that had worked in the sector, they were snapped up months ago because you've got JETS, Kickstart, and then JCP doubled their Work Coaches. Then you've got ESFA provision and stuff like that." (Subcontractor)

There was also high staff turnover within many case study areas. This was attributed to the challenging nature of the role, the recruitment of staff who did not have the requisite skills and experience, and the complexity of issues faced by many participants.

One provider believed that the Restart Scheme was a less attractive contract than other programmes for experienced employability professionals to work on due to the mandatory nature of the contract, whereby some people were mandated to attend, and because many participants had complex needs.

After the initial set up stage, most Restart providers found it easier to recruit Employment Advisors and could be more selective in the hiring process. This was sustained in the second and third waves, although recruiting experienced staff remained a challenge in some areas. In wave 3, a few providers had not filled staff vacancies due to lower-than-expected referral volumes.

In response to high staff turnover, some providers amended their managerial structures to provide further support to remaining staff and additional progression opportunities for Employment Advisors. One Restart Scheme provider (1b) had created a Senior Employment Advisor role, and another (2b) mentioned the appointment of additional Advisor Managers – these staff not only had their own

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participant caseload, but also provided support for Restart Scheme colleagues. However, it could not be determined within the research whether these changes had improved retention.

One provider noted that high turnover led to remaining staff having higher caseloads than intended, thereby reducing the level of support delivered to participants. Staff turnover also meant some participants had multiple advisors during their time on the scheme.

4.1.4   New staff roles

There was a trend over time for providers to introduce new job roles to support specific participant cohorts, or stages of the participant journey through the Restart Scheme. In one area, an Employment Advisor focused on disengaged participants – they contacted participants, and rescheduled appointments for those who had not turned up for their last one. This freed up other advisors who could spend more time with their wider caseload.

For participants who had only just fallen out of work, some providers created a specialist 'rapid responder' role. This role had the flexibility to provide tailored, intensive support to keep this group closer to the workplace and allowed Employment Advisors to focus on the needs of the remaining participants who had been out of work for longer.

> "Our advisor managers deal with rapid response, so those participants who ve had a job and fallen out of it, these people are responsible for getting them back into work. That gives Employment Advisors clear line of sight that they're dealing with participants who've not worked for good period of time and they need to give them more help to get into the job market." (Provider)

Other areas employed staff to provide dedicated self-employment advice and support, while others offered this through external contractors. Many also employed In-work Support Advisors, along with Skills Trainers who delivered workshops such as CV writing, interview skills, and confidence building activities. It was common for individuals in these specialist roles to work across multiple sites thereby limiting the number of participants they could support.

Although providers considered these specialist roles to be effective, there was a lack of evidence around participant experiences of this type of support.

4.1.5   Staff training

Providers in the case study research discussed staff training primarily in terms of inducting new staff. In both the case study research and the provider survey, most providers said they had changed their staff training programmes over the course of the Restart Scheme. These changes were often initiated to respond to high staff turnover, and an increased awareness of the need for additional elements such as job shadowing.

By wave 2 and 3, providers generally reported increasing the length of induction training, with some saying they had increased this training by 25-50% (for example

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from two to four weeks) since the Restart Scheme commenced. However, one city-based area had decreased it slightly to enable new Employment Advisors to start working within their team more quickly so they could learn from their colleagues, and bond with them.

As some staff were recruited from outside the employment sector, their induction training needed to include a broader range of information than that required by those with prior knowledge and experience. This included more basic insights into the Employment Advisor role, the employment context, the local labour market and support services available within the area.

> "With new people…they'll need a lot more support, a lot more handholding, even for basic things like…If this job isn't available, what alternative things can [a customer] do. It's their lack of knowledge around what support services are available. It's not just about training, it's more [a case that] you need that time in the job for you to actually learn what you need to do." (Prime contractor)

One prime contractor initially led induction training but, as staff numbers increased, it delegated this role to its six subcontractors. The prime contractor instead ran 'train the trainer' events for subcontractors who then trained their new staff members.

Due to high staff turnover, one area initiated a pre-induction call for newly recruited staff to enable an in-depth discussion about the role. Most case study areas also introduced, or increased, the amount of job shadowing during the induction period as this enabled new Employment Advisors to better understand the role, participant needs, and company processes. This on-the-job experience was seen as increasingly important, with one area scheduling job shadowing before other aspects of induction training.

Two areas also mentioned a requirement for staff to study for an Institute of Employability Professionals (IEP) qualification during the early months of their employment. However, there was no evidence whether this qualification led to improved participant experience.

4.2 Referrals, participant needs and onboarding

This section provides an overview of how participants were referred to the Restart Scheme, sets out provider and Jobcentre Plus views of the suitability of referrals, and discusses referral volumes and participants needs and how these changed over time. It concludes with a discussion of the onboarding process.

4.2.1   Referral processes

The way in which JCP sites identified suitable referrals for the Restart Scheme varied between locations and over time. When the scheme first started JCP sites were making high volumes of discretionary referrals because their system was not identifying eligible participants. By waves 2 and 3 of the research, discretionary

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referrals were very rare, with nearly all participants identified by an automated process ("the autodrop").

Some JCP staff who took part in the research discussed having to make decisions about which participants to refer to the Restart Scheme and which to refer to a range of other contracted employment provision. These included the Work and Health Programme (for those with health conditions and disabilities) and until September 2022, the JETS programme which supported the more recently unemployed.

Some JCP sites were more cautious than others in screening participants identified by the autodrop. This was particularly evident for participants with a high level of ESOL needs. Some JCP sites were keen to refer to the Restart Scheme so that they could access ESOL provision, while others felt those with very limited English would not benefit from the scheme. This suggests there may have been a lack of clarity in the suitability criteria, which in combination with the range of referral routes available to JCP, created a potential challenge in ensuring participants are placed on the right programme of support.

4.2.2   Suitability of referrals

There was a difference of view between providers and JCP sites over what constitutes an unsuitable referral, with most providers viewing some participants referred by JCP as not 'suitable' for the Restart Scheme even if they were eligible. Participants deemed by providers to be unsuitable included those with high-level ESOL needs, who are pregnant, approaching retirement, awaiting a work health diagnosis, with a severe mental or physical health condition, and with serious substance use issues and addictions. One provider reported that they had received referrals for people who had been sectioned or were in hospital even though this should not have happened as part of the Restart Scheme.

> "There are people that are signed off sick, for about six months, and it would be pointless. We've had a couple that, when we rang them, they were actually in the hospital, or they were sectioned... obviously, if somebody is on a 28-day section, first of all, they're not going to be able to come in, second of all, are they going to be in a fit enough state to actually be able to engage with us?" (Provider)

Some providers felt that participants with more intensive health needs should have been referred to the Work and Health programme, as the Restart Scheme was not originally intended to support those with such complex needs.

> "What we re seeing is that participants are coming through that possibly should be on other programmes that would be more suitable because of their health barriers, but because they hit the eligibility, they can come to us." (Provider)

These findings echo the provider survey with 98% reporting what they saw as unsuitable referrals due to the complexity of barriers some individuals faced, participants not meeting the formal eligibility criteria, or being better suited to another programme.

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There was a view among providers that the number of referrals with high needs had a significant impact on their performance outcomes and ability to meet their Customer Service Standards (CSS) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

> "When you have a significant portion of your participants who are on a sick note who need support or need specific health-related support, it becomes a challenge to properly develop your KPI at the level of expectation needed. So, it's more challenging to reach your targets in terms of getting people to a proper, sustainable job outcome if you start with, like, three quarters of them being on sick note." (Provider)

However, there were JCP staff who disagreed with the view that such referrals were unsuitable. They saw the purpose of the Restart Scheme as helping those with serious barriers to work and felt that providers should be able to support these participants.

4.2.3   Referral volumes

Views on referral volumes varied over time and between areas. At wave 2 of the evaluation, referral volumes were generally noted by providers as having been high in areas where the claimant count was higher than the national average. The areas that experienced lower than expected referral rates all had lower claimant rates than the national average. However, an anomaly was some providers within CPA 3a, who reported lower referral rates despite having a significantly higher claimant count than the national average.

By wave 3 of the research, providers in many areas reported that referral volumes had continued to drop, alongside an increase in the proportion of referrals with high levels of need. In some areas, this drop in referral volumes had been expected due to contract renegotiations and discussions with local JCP sites. However, in one area where referral volumes had been in decline, the provider took steps to increase referrals by delivering presentations at JCP sites to promote their provision.

Providers in some areas reported that referral volumes had fluctuated significantly from month to month. This variation had created challenges in maintaining appropriate levels of staffing. Providers that took referrals from multiple JCP sites reported that referral volumes could vary considerably between different sites. Furthermore, in some areas, views on referral volumes differed between providers in the area, with one provider reporting much lower demand. This suggests that referral volumes cannot be directly correlated to employment rates, claimant counts, or the local labour market context.

4.2.4   Participant needs

This section sets out provider and JCP views on participant needs. Information about how far the Restart Scheme was able to meet these needs is discussed in section 4.5.3.

The changes to eligibility criteria meant that Restart participants had sometimes been out of work for more or less time than providers had anticipated. As indicated in the

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longitudinal cohort study, a third of participants had been in IWS for more than two years. Providers sometimes felt that this group of longer-term unemployed (those who had been out of the labour market for more than two years) were difficult to effectively support within the scheme.

By wave 2 of the research, providers were finding that participants were generally much further away from the labour market and had often been unemployed for much longer than they initially had expected. This had intensified again by wave 3 with providers and JCP staff across all areas reporting that participant needs were greater than they had been the previous year. JCP and providers attributed this to participants with COVID-19 related issues and those closer to the labour market having found work, leaving those with more complex barriers behind.

> "The participants that we are now dealing with are the hardest to help. The people who were work ready are now in work, so you are looking at people with health conditions and single mums, they seem to be the two groups. Or very long-term unemployed, but they generally have health conditions as well." (JCP staff)

The cost-of-living crisis and its impact on unemployment and poverty was also cited by JCP and providers as having created more barriers for participants in wave 3 than wave 2. This correlates with findings from the longitudinal cohort study which identified that more participants wanted support with transport costs in wave 2 than wave 1.

Physical and mental health was the most significant barrier identified by providers consistently across all areas, exacerbated by NHS waiting times and a lack of appointment availability. Another significant barrier for many participants across all areas was a lack of confidence, which was linked to high levels of mental health needs including depression and anxiety. This mirrors findings from the longitudinal survey.

> "I ve got anxiety, I overthink a lot of things, so applying for jobs was really hard, the overthinking, like how am I going to get there, what if it doesn't go to plan? I'm not the best at talking to people face-to-face so that definitely impacted it." (Participant)

ESOL needs were more common than expected and providers saw this as a barrier to individuals' engagement with the Restart Scheme. ESOL needs were identified as a barrier to engagement with the scheme in towns and cities with a higher migrant population. Some areas reported specific immigrant groups, such as Ukrainian refugees, coming onto the scheme and driving demand for ESOL support.

Both providers and JCP staff identified housing and homelessness issues as becoming a more prevalent barrier over the three waves of research. This related to both the attitudes of some employers towards hiring homeless or ex-homeless people, and wider financial barriers connected to the increasing cost of living and the housing crisis. This was identified as a particular issue in areas where housing costs were higher, typically the larger cities.

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Lone parents were consistently identified by providers as a group that needed support. Finding work for participants that fitted around school hours was seen as a challenge which limited opportunities for this group. Some lone parents also found it difficult to attend their Restart Scheme appointments because of childcare commitments.

Transport was another significant barrier to work identified by providers. Many participants were unable to drive, and public transport was not always available and reliable, particularly to access shift work such as in the warehousing sector. This was a more common barrier in rural areas.

> "You need the transportation route or the transportation hubs, buses to be there. And it's usually not the case. So, for our participants to travel to a working site which is beyond a couple of miles from where they live, it can be a challenge." (Provider)

Attitudinal barriers to entering employment were also identified for some participants. Providers saw participants with a lack of motivation or willingness to engage with the Restart Scheme as having a significant impact on Employment Advisors' time and resources. Other attitudinal barriers included participants who were not interested in any employment opportunities, participants who did not believe it was possible for them to find a job, and participants with more specific barriers such as only being interested in one sector, or not wanting to travel out of their local area to find work.

Attitudinal barriers crosscut with other barriers, for example the longer-term unemployed were seen to lack motivation to work, the highly skilled were seen as being selective about employment, while those with health conditions were more likely to feel it was not possible for them to work because of their health condition.

It is important to contextualise this discussion of attitudinal barriers with the views of Restart participants in the longitudinal cohort study where the majority of those who were unemployed at wave 2 still held largely positive attitudes towards work.

4.2.5   Onboarding process

Across all areas, JCP staff set up a warm handover call with the participant, a Work Coach, and the provider. Depending on the structure of Restart Scheme delivery in the area, the provider who joined the warm handover call was either the prime or subcontractor. Warm handovers were typically performed by a dedicated team or outsourced to an advisor at a call centre site operated by the provider. The warm handover was designed by DWP as an opportunity for the provider to gather some preliminary details about the participant, explain what the Restart Scheme would involve, how it could benefit them, and to build rapport with the participant to encourage them to engage with the scheme.

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Observations of warm handover calls

Warm handovers were observed in CPA 5c and 3a. Both calls observed lasted under ten minutes. It was noted in both observations that the explanation around the Restart Scheme's support offer lacked detail and was relatively brief.

During one of the calls, the provider asked about any additional support the participant might require and when they were last in employment, before booking them in for an initial appointment with a subcontractor. However, there was limited time available for discussion of these areas.

During the other call, the provider asked more questions, such as whether the participant had a driving licence or access to internet, the type of work they were looking for and what experience they had. They also asked about the participant's training and education experience, whether they had a CV and how job-ready they felt on a scale of 1-10.

In both areas, some elements of the warm handover call felt scripted. On one call in particular there was limited effort made by the provider to engage with the participant and make it clear why the Restart Scheme was an attractive offer for them. In both areas it appeared that the purpose of the call was to collect the participant's details rather than to build rapport and encourage their attendance.

During both calls, the JCP staff members made little contribution beyond confirming factual information.

In the first wave of research, providers identified some challenges around the warm handover. Some providers were under the impression that the purpose of the warm handover call was to capture participants' needs and understand the barriers they face and felt this did not always happen. Moreover, there was also a view among some providers that the warm handover did not always provide participants with sufficient information about the scheme. This was based on their experiences of first appointments with participants which took place after the handover call, in which some participants were found to lack understanding of the Restart Scheme.

> "When we make the call, it seems we're almost doing a warm handover again and explaining everything… it's almost like you're unaware that anything was done prior, i.e., a warm handover. We really are starting again, there seems to be a real lack of understanding as to what they've been referred into, why, and what it entails… there's still quite a bit of work to do at that initial call to get them onboard, which was the idea of the warm handover." (Provider)

In the earlier stages of the scheme, there were significant issues with participants failing to attend warm handovers or the first appointment with their Employment Advisor. There were also instances where JCP staff had failed to attend the warm handover meeting on time. These issues caused delays to the referral and onboarding process. There were also challenges with booking in the initial meeting within the time frame set out by the CSS, due to either a lack of available booking slots with the provider and/or a lack of participant availability. Arranging calls where

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an interpreter was needed was an additional challenge for those participants with ESOL needs.

By wave 2 of the research, changes had been made to the warm handover process to try to overcome these challenges. This included improving the logistics of arranging and conducting the call. These changes typically involved a more centralised approach within local areas, which had increased the efficiency of the process. For example, in some areas, any available Work Coach could attend a warm handover call to make it more likely one could join. Some providers liked that this reduced the risk of the calls being missed by JCP staff, but others thought that this devalued the process and contribution of the Work Coach.

Views among JCP staff and providers on the effectiveness of warm handovers were more mixed by this point. Some felt the calls set important boundaries about what is expected of participants, while others felt they lacked value as they mainly focused on collecting participant details. Some JCP staff felt there was no value in them attending warm handover calls as they made no contribution to the conversation. However, other JCP staff felt their presence was valuable, as they were able to ensure that participants were completely honest with providers on the call. Such views differed between individual JCP staff rather than by area. Some JCP staff also suggested that it would be better if the warm handover call was conducted by the member of staff who was assigned to be the participant's Employment Advisor, so that the participant knew who they would be working with and could start to build a relationship with them.

By wave 3 of the research, some providers and JCP staff remained ambivalent about the value of the warm handover and whether it drives engagement with the Restart Scheme. Challenges with arranging interpreters for calls, scheduling appointments and high numbers of participants failing to attend remained.

Participants had mixed views about the warm handovers. Some found it useful to have an introductory call prior to the initial meeting with the provider. The call gave them a positive first impression of the Restart Scheme and made them feel more prepared to engage with the scheme.

> "They explained what the Restart programme was, what they expected to be doing, they gave me examples of certain things that they would offer to help me. They talked me a bit more through the process of what I would do." (Participant)

However, participants often had weak recall of their warm handover, and it was therefore difficult to identify the impact of the call on their experience.[13] Others had not found the call helpful or informative as it repeated information about the Restart Scheme already shared by their Work Coach. In addition, they did not feel the call had any impact on their engagement with the scheme.

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[13] Participants were interviewed between 4 months and 12 months after they started on the scheme so recall for some participants is likely to be limited.

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"I didn t necessarily dislike the fact that I was speaking with someone that wouldn't be an advisor but ideally everyone would save their own time if you were just dealing directly with them. It was like I had another middleman or another layer that's not necessary…They could have told me I was starting it and then I would've been happy to just physically go there directly right off the bat." (Participant)

The participant views expressed here were similar to those expressed in the longitudinal cohort study where they generally reported receiving limited information about the Restart Scheme prior to starting.

4.3 Communication between JCP and providers

This section starts with an overview of the relationship between JCP and Restart providers, explores some of the facilitators and barriers for a positive relationship and concludes with the benefits of a good relationship between both organisations.

4.3.1 Overview of the relationship

The relationship between JCP staff and providers was generally good across most areas and tended to improve over the duration of the Restart Scheme contract. In most cases, it started from a positive base in areas where there was an existing relationship between both parties: this was usually developed because the Restart Scheme provider had delivered an earlier employment programme in the area, or because the Restart Scheme provider had employed staff from one or more of those existing programmes. However, during each wave of Restart Scheme interviews, it was apparent that more two-way communication would be welcomed by JCP staff and Restart Employment Advisors in many areas. This was similar to views from the provider survey which were generally positive about their relationship with JCP staff but thought that the timeliness and frequency of communication could be improved. The advantages of more two-way communication are discussed in section 4.3.4

Providers and JCP staff reported engaging with each other in a range of ways. Most JCP sites and providers held regular (weekly or fortnightly) meetings, and many also engaged in day-to-day communication with one another via email and/or telephone calls to discuss participants and to update each other. In several cases, providers visited the JCP sites in person, with the proximity of JCP sites and provider locations a factor in how frequently such visits took place. The provider survey also showed that preferred methods of communication were email, Employment Advisors visiting the JCP site, and telephone calls/meetings.

Where there was more than one provider in an area, JCP staff often highlighted differences in their relationship with each one – this appeared to be influenced by the level of provider engagement with the JCP site, or an existing positive relationship developed through an earlier employment programme with one or more providers.

> "We worked with them prior to Restart so that relationship was already there.... whereas [the new provider] just came out of absolutely nowhere."
> (JCP staff)

4.3.2 Communication about Restart participants

There was no requirement for a provider to inform JCP about a participant's progress on the Restart Scheme. JCP Work Coaches could request an update if they thought it necessary, although this does not appear to have happened on a regular basis other than via the Single Point of Contact (SPoC) role in areas where this role was in place. Restart participants continued to meet with JCP throughout the Restart Scheme, and Work Coaches generally relied on the participant to communicate their Restart Scheme activities, and exit, to them.

There was little communication in many areas between providers and JCP when a participant left the Restart Scheme, whether they had found employment part way through the year or had completed the scheme with no job to move into. More than four-fifths (82%) of contractors responding to the provider survey said their Employment Advisors created a customer exit plan to help transition participants back to JCP support. This exit plan was agreed between the Restart Scheme participant and their Employment Advisor, and then given to the participant who could decide whether they wanted to share it, or not, with their JCP Work Coach. Based on interviews with JCP staff and participants, it seemed it was seldom shared by the participant.

If a participant found work and told their Restart Scheme Employment Advisor or JCP Work Coach, they might communicate this to their contact in the other organisation, but this did not seem to happen consistently. Some JCP staff suggested that a system giving live updates on participants, shared between their offices and local Restart providers, would be helpful.

> "At the moment, you just complete the final appointment and make sure their CV is up-to-date and things like that... there isn't any warm handover at the end of it, or exit report that goes out... If I had enough time, I probably would sit down and go [to JCP staff], 'Look, these have finished, this is what has happened. " (Provider)

However, others disagreed, saying that JCP Work Coaches should know this information from their ongoing appointments with each participant.

Very few Restart participants mentioned liaison between their JCP Work Coach and Restart Scheme Employment Advisor other than during the warm handover. Some explained how they kept their JCP Work Coach up to date on their Restart Scheme activities as they realised that there was no communication between their Work Coach and their Employment Advisor.

A few Restart participants mentioned a desire for greater communication between JCP and the Restart Scheme as they had been asked to share the same information with both organisations. This was particularly the case during the warm handover phase when the participant said they had to repeat their personal information to the

Restart Scheme and would have preferred these details to be shared by JCP rather than having to tell their story again.

4.3.3 Enablers and challenges for communication

Some providers based a member of staff at their local JCP site for part of the working week. Providers and JCP staff highlighted the positive impact this had upon their relationship and upon the sharing of information, enabling queries and other matters to be discussed and resolved.

Communication between JCP and a Restart Scheme provider (Good practice example: 4a)

In 4a, a member of staff from the prime contractor visited the local JCP three times each week and had their own desk. This person was known as 'the liaison' - she consulted with JCP staff during each visit, providing support for activities such as warm handovers. If someone failed to attend a mandation meeting, JCP would book in a meeting with the Restart Scheme liaison at the JCP site.

> "Because she comes in 3 days a week, she's just like one of our staff. We all get on famously with her, and we have that real exchange of information about our customers…Because it's done in quite an informal way, and she very much fits around us, it absolutely works. It's great." (JCP staff)

Communication between the organisations was regarded as more efficient due to the liaison role – for example, the provider's staff could call 'the liaison' at the JCP site to seek their help with resolving issues and discussing topics with their JCP staff. She was also able to identify and resolve any appointment clashes between the Restart Scheme and JCP as she had access to both sets of diaries.

After a warm handover call, a new participant could have their initial Restart Scheme meetings at the JCP site if this made them feel more comfortable.

The Restart Scheme liaison person, and a JCP staff member, also hosted small group meetings for participants to encourage commitment to the scheme and to show that there was regular communication between both organisations. They also enabled current participants to meet people who had gained job outcomes through the scheme.

Some providers highlighted the importance of the JCP SPoC role as it helped maintain an ongoing relationship between JCP and providers – a relationship that JCP Work Coaches would struggle to develop and maintain due to time constraints. Areas utilised the SPoC role in different ways: some providers channelled all communication to the JCP through them, while others used them as a conduit for chasing responses from Work Coaches or solely for higher level queries.

Despite positive feedback on the SPoC role, some providers thought that channelling all communication through one person had its limitations. It was thought, by some, to impede the development of relationships with a wider range of JCP staff. However,

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JCP sites said their Work Coaches would be unable to respond to individual queries due to time constraints, with some saying that this was already causing them problems.

In addition to the SPoC role, some JCPs had a dedicated Restart Scheme team which could lead to more streamlined communications and improved understanding.

Where communication was not channelled through one person (such as the SPoC) or through a team, or was not proving to be effective, providers said that JCP staff could take a long time to respond to their queries. Some providers also thought that JCP staff did not understand the purpose of the Restart Scheme, nor its potential impact.

Communication between JCP and Restart Scheme staff was reported to have improved through the return of in-person conversations rather than online meetings or via a hybrid model. This enabled the building of rapport between colleagues in different organisations and encouraged closer liaison.

Consistency of staff was important for ensuring good relationships. In areas where there was more than one subcontractor, some of these providers said they would prefer to receive referrals from fewer JCP sites, rather than each JCP working with several providers. They felt that this could result in a more positive relationship between both organisations as there would be fewer staff to liaise with.

> "The links just aren't the same when you share a Jobcentre with so many [others]. You don't have the same one-to-one relationship because they must be overwhelmed with all of us asking stuff all the time. Their capacity to be able to support you is reduced, and I think that's had a detrimental effect." (Subcontractor)

Some JCP staff said that the high turnover of Restart Scheme staff had made it difficult for them to maintain relationships and to know who to contact for specific information.

JCP Work Coaches also said they would like to receive more information from providers. This information could be shared with the SPoC, another named contact, or a shared email inbox. For example, one provider in CPA 6 distributed a monthly 'good news' letter to its local JCP sites, so that Work Coaches could see the outcomes being achieved by Restart participants.

Where they did not already receive local brochures/other information from local Restart providers, some JCP staff said they would welcome more information as this would enhance their understanding of the support local Restart Scheme provider(s) could offer and clarify the eligibility criteria. Many JCP staff mentioned this confusion during case study interviews, with a few saying there was a "grey area" in terms of the eligibility criteria for the Restart Scheme, the Work and Health Programme, and JETS. The additional information would also help JCP staff to provide a more accurate picture to their participants and engage their interest.

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4.3.4   Benefits of a positive relationship

Better communication between JCP and providers meant they were more likely to be able to support participants effectively. This was particularly important when a participant's disengagement was causing concern to their Employment Advisor.

Examples shared by providers and JCP Work Coaches focused on participants at risk of disengaging from the Restart Scheme who could be jointly supported at an early stage where a three-way meeting between the participant, their JCP Work Coach, and the Employment Advisor would be scheduled. If the participant attended, their needs were discussed, and actions agreed. The participant would also see that JCP and Restart providers were working together to support them.

> "Customers will play us off against each other; it s a bit of 'mum and dad', so they will tell the Jobcentre one thing and tell us another. The fact that we are communicating so well cuts that out, so then we can challenge that customer if we need to, if they are telling us different stories." (Subcontractor)

4.4 Mandation

This section outlines what worked well and what was challenging in terms of the mandation process. This refers to the provider requiring a participant to attend a meeting or event, and then if they fail to attend, raising a compliance doubt with DWP. This could lead to DWP sanctioning that person through a reduction or suspension of their benefits if they fail to attend.

4.4.1   Provider views of the mandation process

Providers across all areas were generally reluctant to engage with the mandation process. This was primarily due to concerns with the administrative process of raising a compliance doubt. Some providers also had more general concerns about whether the mandation process was likely to have any impact upon a participant's attendance.

Most providers sought to boost engagement in other ways, and only started the formal process when nothing else had worked. They would organise activities such as coffee mornings, incentive schemes, and calling participants from different devices at varying times (as sometimes the participant did not answer a call from their Restart Scheme Employment Advisor's telephone number but would answer if it was from an unknown number). Some providers mandated a three-way appointment between the participant, JCP, and themselves to encourage re-engagement, although participant attendance at these appointments was often poor.

However, one Restart Scheme provider saw the mandation process as the key means of engaging its participants.

> "We had a jobs fair and invited 2,000 participants – 200 attended. When we mandated participants to attend a jobs fair, we mandated 2,000 to attend and 1,500-1,600 attended..." (Provider)

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There was a lack of consistent understanding about when mandation should be requested. The point at which mandation was requested varied between areas, and sometimes within an area. It was generally triggered after the participant missed three Employment Advisor appointments, but other timescales mentioned were after six missed appointments, and after eight weeks of non-attendance. All three timescales were mentioned by provider staff in one area.

Raising a compliance doubt was seen as a laborious, lengthy process, involving a lot of complicated paperwork, taking up a significant amount of provider and JCP time. Any subcontractor who wanted to raise a compliance doubt would also first have to email their prime who would then, if they approved the request, send the form to DWP.

Response rates could be slow, and requests were generally turned down, which caused frustration among providers. Many providers said that they did not receive a response for a month or more, and they had to repeatedly chase JCP to see if a decision had been made by DWP or not. Then, once the provider received the 'accept' or 'reject' outcome, few explanatory details were provided by the DWP decision maker. They reported that requests were often rejected for 'minor' paperwork errors, while outdated evidence (as so much time had passed since the compliance doubt had been raised), could also lead to a refusal. This led to doubts about its worth and validity.

> "If we were to mandate 100 customers, we'd get one or two sanctions. The hours spent doing it, sending the letter to the customer, filling in the relevant forms, knowing nothing's coming back. Then you have to mandate again, and nothing will happen again. And maybe the third time something might happen, but the timeline would be six to seven months for you to get a response, so you've lost the time on the programme…There's no stick. We're trying to offer lots of carrots but there is no stick at all." (Provider)

Another person within the same area said that about 10% of their compliance doubts led to a sanction, and commented:

> "The process is there, we're following it, and nothing's happening. It's a bit of a mockery of the whole system – ultimately, some stuff needs to be upheld." (Provider)

This caused significant frustration and deterred some staff from requesting mandation. They were frustrated that there were no consequences for a disengaged participant, and the mandatory nature of the Restart Scheme was undermined.

Some providers noted that while they could encourage a participant to attend a meeting or event, they could not mandate another appointment until they had received the compliance doubt outcome from DWP. This could result in significant amounts of time passing with no engagement between the participant and the Restart Scheme.

Some providers said their participants knew what to say to ensure they were not sanctioned, mentioning a list of reasons they could give, such as mental health difficulties, which would ensure the compliance doubt was rejected. If the participant

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had something on their record that was on this list, even from three to four years ago, that would also be a reason for DWP to reject the request. Some providers said they would like DWP to review this list.

One provider said it had 'bypassed' the DWP process by appointing Fail to Attend Advisors with allocated time for re-engaging their disengaged Restart participants.

The provider views expressed in the case study research are similar to views expressed in the provider survey with a significant majority of respondents thinking that communication about mandation processes could be improved.

JCP staff had varying views of how well the mandation process was working. Some reported that very few cases resulted in re-engagement with the Restart Scheme, or even a sanction, while others thought that it was the only way to effectively re-engage a disengaged participant.

Providers had mixed views about the impact the mandation process had upon participant engagement, with many reporting that it did not re-engage many participants – in part because of the process delays, and in part because so many requests were turned down. One Employment Advisor said they had to be careful how they talked to their participants about it and always made it clear that it was not their decision but that of the DWP. They were concerned that the welcoming and supportive nature of their Restart Scheme provision could be undermined by being responsible for stopping or reducing a participant's benefits.

4.4.2   Participant views of the mandation process

Participants' views on mandation were mixed. Most participants were informed that the Restart Scheme was a mandatory scheme from the point at which they were enrolled. Some said they had not been informed about this when first told about the scheme but had assumed that it was mandatory or thought its mandatory nature had somehow been implied to them.

The Restart Scheme's mandatory nature meant that some participants felt negatively about the scheme – they felt that being made to attend both JCP and Restart appointments was too much, particularly for people who did not think that it could help them to find work.

Many participants felt that mandation stimulated their engagement with the scheme, as they did not want to risk being sanctioned. Some admitted that they would not have attended the Restart Scheme if this had not been the case.

However, some said that the risk of being sanctioned had no effect on their engagement as their experience with Restart Scheme had been a positive one, and they would have engaged with the scheme regardless of mandation. Some felt that mandation was a distraction from the friendly, personal approach that Restart Scheme staff sought to build with its participants.

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4.4.3 Enablers and challenges for the mandation process

Most providers and JCP staff said they would like the mandation process to be more streamlined, with DWP decision-making swifter and less opaque.

However, a key factor in determining whether the mandation and compliance doubt processes worked well or not, and whether they were viewed as a positive means of engagement, was the relationship between JCP and provider staff. Close communication between JCP and Restart providers could address some of the challenges identified above. For example, JCP could keep providers informed if they were already in the process of mandating a participant preventing duplication.

The SPoC role could play a valuable role in ensuring the mandation process worked effectively. The SPoC provided a central point of contact for provider queries and for discussing participants not engaging with the Restart Scheme. However, one provider reported that some SPoC Work Coaches within their local JCP sites had been made redundant. This had had a negative impact on scheme provision in this site as the SPoC had substantial knowledge of the compliance doubt process and had been able to swiftly respond to the Employment Advisor queries.

Mandation (Good practice example: 4a)

In 4a, JCP and provider staff worked hard to build a strong relationship with each other, and to understand the process for raising a compliance doubt.

This process was managed by the Single Point of Contact (SPoC) at the JCP site: this person understood the process and dedicated time each week to dealing with provider requests. They worked with a Restart Scheme staff member – called 'the liaison' – who visited the JCP site three times each week – they had informal and open communication about participants to better understand their situations, attendance, and any other relevant matters.

Restart participants' JCP Work Coach meetings took place when the liaison person was on site, so that they could join these meetings to promote engagement and resolve any issues which could lead to the provider raising a compliance doubt.

Prior to submitting any mandation request forms to the JCP, the provider issued a re-engagement letter to the participant in the hope that this would negate a requirement for the formal procedure to be followed.

However, JCP and provider staff identified some continuing challenges: guidance needed clarification, the process could be more straightforward, a decision should be made within a shorter timeframe, and reasons for the decision should be shared with the organisation making the request.

4.5 Support offer

This section explores the nature of the Restart Scheme support offer considering the types of support provided. It examines the views of participants, JCP staff, and

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providers on the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of support received. This includes an exploration of participants' relationships with their Employment Advisors. The section then explores how support was tailored to the needs of individual participants as well as how far tailoring reflected local area needs and profiles. Finally, it examines views on CSS and payment by results, and the impact the CSS potentially had on support provision and participant experience.

4.5.1 Overview of support offer

Across all areas, providers explained that they offered in-depth, one-to-one support from Employment Advisors to participants on a fortnightly basis, with participants also able to access a range of other support activities alongside these appointments.

Support with CV writing, interview skills, job applications, and job fairs were key elements of the support offer. Other common examples of support included: providing details of publicly advertised job vacancies; browsing job websites together during an appointment; workshops on practical or softer skills such as confidence building and wellbeing; referrals to external training provision and support, such as ESOL and support with issues such as debt management or housing. Participants were also provided with opportunities to link with employers, including through direct job matching and sector routeways. Once they had entered employment, Restart participants were offered in-work support. The nature of in-work support varied according to participant need but could include the Employment Advisor liaising with an employer on behalf of a participant to help the participant communicate their needs to their employer.

Providers interviewed for the case study research generally believed their support offer was comprehensive. If they were unable to support participants, they often felt this was because they were unsuitable for the scheme or because the scheme was not long enough. They suggested that 12 months might not be long enough to support participants who were furthest from the labour market to overcome significant barriers and enter employment. This contrasted with the views of some participants in the longitudinal cohort study who felt the scheme was too long for the kinds of support that were offered.

JCP staff views on the Restart Scheme support offer were more mixed. Some were positive, feeling that providers could spend more time with participants and could provide more focused support than they were able to within standard Work Coach appointments. It was noted that CV and interview support was beneficial for participants even if they did not obtain employment at the end of the 12 months as it moved them closer to the labour market. However, there were also views among some JCP staff that Restart providers struggled to support participants with substantial barriers to work, such as those with ESOL needs, health conditions and the longer-term unemployed. This view was also shared by some wider stakeholders who felt that the scheme was not designed for those with more complex barriers.

Participant views on the Restart Scheme support offer also varied within and between areas. Some were positive, and appreciated the guidance, motivation, and confidence that the scheme had provided them with.

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"It's been brilliant, I can't fault it. On the first day I had to go, I was a bag of nerves, I cried all the way there, I bit all my nails off. Now, I love to get there, it's just like one big happy family, they're so friendly and polite." (Participant)

However, others felt that the Restart Scheme had done little to help them. This variation in experience is reflected in participant views as expressed in the longitudinal cohort study.

Support with CV-writing was most commonly highlighted by participants as support that they had received. Some found this useful and felt this had improved their success in applying for jobs. However, while some were offered CV workshops and in-depth one-to-one CV writing support, others had only been offered the opportunity to upload their CV to an online platform, which they did not see as sufficient. Participants also reported receiving useful support with interview skills and advice about tailoring applications and cover letters for different jobs. However, some felt they would have benefitted from further support to develop their interview or application writing skills, and some felt the support they had received was not useful because it had not met their needs. These were typically more highly skilled participants or those with more extensive employment histories.

There was generally limited evidence of participants attending workshops. Participant views of workshops were more likely to be negative than other forms of support. Some stated that they had not been offered any workshops. Those who had attended workshops often reported mixed experiences, some feeling that workshops were too general and not tailored to their needs. This was reflected in some observations undertaken as part of the case study research; where, for example, a workshop on transferable skills was attended by participants with substantial recent work histories and those who were very long-term unemployed meaning that the support offered was too basic for some.

Participant views on access to training courses were also mixed. Some described receiving training which had helped them progress towards employment. This was often vocational training and most commonly at a lower level. However, some found that they were unable to attend the courses due to childcare responsibilities or reported that funding for the course took too long to come through, or that the course content was too basic for their needs.

Participant experiences of in-work support were similarly mixed. The majority of participants interviewed who had found work had not wanted any form of in-work support. However, some participants who had found work but were underemployed – either in a temporary, part-time or agency job – would have preferred more support from the Restart Scheme to help them find more sustainable employment.

Participants who had been out of work for a longer period were generally more positive about the support they received. This suggests that the Restart Scheme worked more effectively with those requiring basic support with job applications, than those with more recent experience of employment.

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4.5.2 Participant relationships with Employment Advisors

Participants' views of their Employment Advisor were again varied but more commonly positive. Participant views varied within areas, with no consistent pattern of more positive relationships in any case study area.

Positive views of an Employment Advisor often related to their personal qualities such as their ability to demonstrate empathy, or simply come across as a pleasant and supportive person. Participants who had low levels of confidence were particularly likely to report that their advisor understood their needs and was supportive of them. Participants who felt that their support was well suited to their needs often had a positive relationship with their advisor, indicating that this was a key factor in successful tailoring of support. The informal nature of the relationship with their advisor was also highlighted by participants as a positive, and this was contrasted by many participants with their relationship with their JCP Work Coach.

In addition to personal qualities, other facilitators of a positive advisor-participant relationship included the advisor demonstrating that they understood the participant's individual needs, barriers and the types of roles they would be interested in due to an effective diagnostic process. In addition, participants who reported their Employment Advisor was proactive in helping them access suitable opportunities, including training and employment, also reported a positive relationship with their advisor.

Conversely, participants who had a poor relationship with their Employment Advisor attributed this to negative personal characteristics of their advisor, such as a lack of empathy or professionalism. Participants also tended to be more negative about their advisor if they felt they did not understand their needs, barriers, and the types of work that were suitable for them and were trying to get them into *any* job rather than the right job for them. Among this group, there were participants who felt they needed to demonstrate a willingness to engage with employment opportunities presented by their advisor, even if the participant deemed them unsuitable, because they feared that if they did not it would be reported back to DWP, with possible benefit sanctions.

One of the challenges to interactions with Employment Advisors was high staff turnover throughout the scheme, with many participants changing advisor and some having several different advisors during their 12 months on the scheme. Participants who kept the same advisor described this positively, explaining it was important to receive consistent support from someone who understood them. Some participants who changed advisor reported that this was difficult because they had to explain their situation again.

JCP staff felt too many changes to Employment Advisors led to a lack of consistency in the relationship between participants and advisors. Supporting this view, participants often reported very different experiences of the scheme when their advisor changed, with some participants having much better relationships with some advisors than others.

However, the impact of changing Employment Advisor could be mitigated. Strategies that appeared to have reduced the impact of a change in advisor included a handover process between the outgoing and incoming advisor, so that the new

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advisor understood the background and needs of the new participant who they were taking onto their caseload. Participants who had experience of this reported that it had been helpful that their new advisor appeared to understand their situation as soon as they took over. In addition, clear communication between the outgoing advisor and participant before the changeover, to explain that their advisor would be changing, was also reported by participants to have been helpful in making the changeover smooth. It is also important to note that some providers changed participant's advisors in order to better meet individual needs. This could include, for example, moving someone to a specialist advisor if they were nearing the end of their time on the Restart Scheme or matching someone who was interested in self-employment with an advisor who was knowledgeable in this area.

4.5.3 Tailoring of support

Individual tailoring

Where participants had achieved positive employment outcomes or stated that they felt closer to securing long-term employment, a tailored approach to support was often cited as a significant contributing factor. This involved Employment Advisors taking a holistic approach to addressing the multiple, particular barriers that an individual experienced.

Overall, providers were positive about their approach to tailoring individual support. They explained that support was tailored through regularly updated SMART action plans which were discussed and updated during one-to-one appointments between Employment Advisors and participants.

Some providers had a formal process for categorising participants based on their needs. Providers in CPA 3a reported that their participants were divided into groups based on their proximity to the labour market. This was described as a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) Pathway, with participants engaging in different activities based on their grouping. Another example was found in CPA 1a, where the prime contractor used a model called the '3 Ts' to help tailor support to specific participants. Participants were placed into one of three categories; 'transactional' meaning those closest to the labour market, 'transformational' meaning those participants were those furthest away, and 'transitional' for participants in between. The nature of the support received varied according to which 'T' group the participant was in. For example, all participants received help with interview skills, but for those closest to the labour market this would involve practising competency-based questions, whereas those furthest away would receive more basic support such as what to wear. However, there was no indication from interviews with participants in this area that they were more satisfied that the Restart Scheme support was tailored to their needs than participants in other areas.

> "We have a T1 interview support and then we've got a T3 interview support. So, you might go through competency-based questions and the STAR method versus what's suitable attire for an interview, what's an interview like, [designed] for someone who's never been on an interview before… it's all based on the needs of the participants at the time." (Provider)

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Overall, participant views on the extent to which their support had been tailored to their needs were mixed. Some felt that the support had been well suited to their needs, but others felt it was too general, with workshops in particular highlighted as lacking sufficient tailoring.

Tailoring of support to local areas

A key design element of the Restart Scheme was that delivery should be tailored to the local area as well as individual needs. This meant that providers should adapt their support offer in response to local labour market conditions. However, there was limited evidence of this local tailoring observed in the case study research. For example, where providers had developed specialist roles, these were often put in place across their provision rather than targeted on local need. This is discussed in this section as well as in the sections on employer and partner engagement.

The following sections outline some of the ways that providers sought to provide tailored support. It is important to note that some barriers are not discussed in detail here, particularly age, learning disabilities and caring responsibilities. These were cited by providers and noted in the longitudinal cohort study as significant barriers but were not observed consistently within the case study research.

ESOL needs

Providers in all areas reported supporting some participants with ESOL needs, however, there were some areas which reported significantly higher demand. These were typically urban areas, although one rural area with historically high migration from the European Union also identified high levels of ESOL need.

It is important to distinguish between participants who spoke English as another language and participants who experienced communication challenges. The case study research focuses on this second group. The longitudinal cohort study found that 22% of participants had English as another language and a third of these said they needed support with their English language skills to find or progress in work.

ESOL courses were the most consistent support offered to these participants. This included internal training and referrals to external provision. While these courses improved participants' English language skills, providers noted that their progress was inevitably slow. For those participants who had little or no English or limited literacy in any language, the 12 months they spent on the Restart Scheme was not long enough to fully address their ESOL barriers.

In areas where ESOL support needs were identified as particularly high, some providers offered more tailored support. This included internal ESOL training with an employability focus for Restart participants, designed to help them progress into particular sectors or access vocational training. One area ran ESOL employability courses which identified the barriers for this cohort and linked them with employers that were willing to hire people with limited English skills. This included matching with employers, where for example, community languages were spoken so that limited English was not a barrier to employment. In another area, an ESOL support provider came into the Restart Scheme provider's office to make it easier for participants to engage with the support. Other forms of support for this group included multilingual

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Restart Scheme staff who enabled participants with little spoken English to communicate their barriers and support needs more effectively. However, such types of tailored provision were not provided uniformly across all the areas where high levels of ESOL support needs were identified.

Longer-term unemployment

A discussion of longer-term unemployment is complicated because there was no agreed definition of longer-term unemployed. More than two years was one common definition, but providers also identified the particular challenges of working with those who had been unemployed for more than 10 years. The longitudinal cohort study identified that those unemployed for more than 10 years were likely to have poorer outcomes.

Providers identified that motivational barriers; with participants either not interested in work, or not prepared to engage with the Restart Scheme was the key challenge for this group.

There were some areas where long-term unemployment was identified as a particular challenge, typically post-industrial coastal areas. In some of these areas, providers had developed tailored support to address this group's barriers to work. This included motivational workshops that focused on changing mindsets and tackling attitudinal barriers. An observation of one of these workshops showed they were delivered by a specialist advisor who focused on addressing individual barriers across a wide range of areas such as transport and benefit calculations.

These providers were also keen to distinguish the Restart Scheme from JCP in participants' minds, so that it was seen as a new, different opportunity to find employment. To help achieve this, providers tried to make Restart Scheme offices look and appear welcoming and distinct from JCP offices, with comfy sofas and areas to have coffee or tea and held coffee mornings to encourage participants to chat in a relaxed environment.

Some providers created a role with the specific remit of re-engaging participants who had disengaged, to ensure that this cohort were given the intensive and tailored support they needed. This role was located in JCP sites in some instances, which was found to be effective in engaging and encouraging participants to attend Restart Scheme appointments. Although evidence on the effectiveness of these roles was limited, feedback from providers was typically positive that the provision of such targeted, dedicated resource had been effective in re-engaging participants.

However, there was a lack of evidence within the case study research of the effectiveness of these examples of tailored support, and of whether it was offered across all areas where long-term unemployment barriers were identified as particularly high.

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Tailored support for long-term unemployed participants (Good practice example: 2a)

The Restart provider runs workshops on changing mindsets, increasing motivation and identifying transferable skills. The workshops are available to any participant who is identified as having a relevant need, but the provider considered them to be particularly helpful for those who had been out of work for a long time.

The workshops can be run in groups or on a one-to-one basis, depending on the preference of the participant and their confidence to participate in a group workshop.

The provider reported that the workshops were successful in helping the long-term unemployed think about how they could change their mindset and identify actions they can take to finding employment.

After the workshops have taken place, the workshop facilitator discusses how each participant found the workshop with their Employment Advisor, so that the advisor is aware of useful next steps to take with supporting the participant. Workshop facilitators also liaise with the Employer Engagement Lead to identify potential employment opportunities for individuals. Efforts are made to place longer-term unemployed participants in volunteering roles to bridge the gap between their current situation and entering employment.

Participants who were interviewed and who took part in the workshops were generally positive about their experience and had found it helpful to understand how changing their mindset could help them with both looking for employment and in their personal lives.

Physical health needs
Providers in all areas reported a high level of physical health needs, with labour market information suggesting these were particularly high in CPAs 2a, 3a, and 5c. However, there was no evidence that these areas were particularly effective in addressing these needs. Tailored support for physical health needs was typically offered via a referral to an external provider, this included NHS services, including dentists and GPs as well as charities and other support services.

Providers in all areas acknowledged that the level of support they could provide participants with physical health needs was limited, and echoing this, participants interviewed reported receiving little support with physical health conditions. These participants typically suggested that their problems were too severe for the Restart Scheme, and they instead needed medical support. While in some cases, this may be suggestive that these participants had health conditions that prevented them from working, it may also suggest that Employment Advisors were not working effectively with this group to address both attitudinal and practical barriers. This is further supported by the fact that there was no evidence of people with health conditions being supported by the Restart Scheme to seek reasonable adjustments from employers such as changes to working hours or job roles.

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Mental health needs

Interviewees in all areas felt that there were high levels of mental health need in their local area, supporting this was ONS data that mental health needs were particularly prevalent in CPAs 2a, 2b, 3a and 5c. However, as with physical health, there was no evidence that these areas were particularly effective in addressing these needs. There was some evidence that one provider was particularly effective in providing wellbeing support, however, this was part of their national offer rather than arising from local need.

Tailoring of support to mental health needs typically included one-to-one wellbeing support from a wellbeing coach, wellbeing workshops and referrals to external specialist providers, such as NHS mental health services and organisations that provide psychological therapies. A typical example of tailored support from a wellbeing coach is where the wellbeing role provided participants with a number of sessions, which could be tailored to individual needs. The sessions covered topics such as managing self-esteem, stress, relationships, resilience, motivation and adapting to change. There were some positive experiences of support with mental health needs, either provided by the Restart Scheme or external providers which they had been referred to, among participants interviewed.

However, positive experiences were typically improvements to participants' general wellbeing or addressing a low or moderate level of mental health conditions. Providers and external stakeholders perceived the Restart Scheme to be less able to support people with more severe mental health conditions. This was reflected in the views of participants with more severe mental health conditions, who as with those experiencing physical health conditions, felt they needed medical rather than employment support.

Transport barriers

Transport barriers were a particular challenge in rural and coastal areas. Providers in these areas provided a range of support. This included providing participants with a bus pass for a limited period of time, paying for fuel costs for participants to drive to work for their first month in employment, and in one area, delivering the Restart Scheme at the JCP site as it was easier for participants to access. In another area, the provider also subsidised taxi fares, and worked in partnership with an organisation which offered participants mopeds for hire, and another local organisation that provided refurbished bikes. Participants interviewed who had been supported with travel costs had found it very useful.

However, while Restart providers could support with transport costs, they were much less able to support where public transport was very limited, or where journey times were too long. In one rural area, Employment Advisors carried out 'territory mapping' to identify the geographical area which participants who faced barriers to travel could access to get to work. However, evidence of this more strategic approach to transport barriers was limited. Equally, there was no evidence of providers negotiating with employers, for example, to change shift times to accommodate public transports needs. This meant that participants with more complex transport barriers were less likely to get the support they needed.

Childcare

Childcare responsibilities, including those of lone parents, was another type of barrier which Restart providers across all areas supported participants to overcome. However, they noted that they sometimes found it difficult to support lone parents to find suitable work. There were several areas where the proportion of the working age population who are economically inactive due to looking after family or the home is higher (CPAs 5a, 5b and 4b) or with a higher number of lone parent households with dependent children (CPAs 1b and 5b).

One of these areas, 5b, provided workshops on childcare giving information about childcare available in the area and how to access it. This was particularly well-attended by the local Bengali population, who had previously lacked awareness of government funding for childcare and how to access it. In CPA 4b, the provider offered networking opportunities for lone parents. Other support included information about childcare availability and funding (both for when in work and not in work) provided by Employment Advisors, and support with finding vacancies and employers that offered working hours that participants could fit around their caring commitments. However, there was no evidence of working directly with employers to negotiate flexible working. There was limited evidence from participants interviewed of how their childcare needs had been supported.

Higher skilled participants

Across all Restart areas, highly qualified participants were less likely to be satisfied by the support offered from the scheme. They often felt the scheme was not designed for somebody 'like them'.

> "He [the Employment Advisor] did tell me the majority of the roles that come into [Restart] are very generic roles like cleaners and simple jobs. He said that 'you're quite qualified and we don't have many roles like that, but I'm going to look for you.'" *(Participant)*

Participants who were looking for more specialised job roles were also less likely to believe that their Employment Advisor understood their needs. Some of these individuals managed to secure employment, but typically did not attribute this to any support received from the Restart Scheme.

This cohort of participants also reported that providers were not typically able to provide them with opportunities for training that were suitable, relevant to their needs and at a sufficiently high level. Some wanted to retrain in a new area, but the Restart Scheme could not support this. For example, a participant who wanted to move into bookkeeping work was told that the scheme could not support this and was instead steered towards local jobs that did not require training. Many in this group felt that they already had a good level of employability skills, and so perceived the support offered by the Restart Scheme as not meeting their needs or offering any additional knowledge or skills. Some of these more experienced and highly skilled participants felt the jobs they were recommended by their Employment Advisor were too generic or did not reflect their experience and qualifications.

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In contrast, providers perceived that this cohort of participants faced particular barriers which they could and did help them overcome. Providers reported that highly skilled participants often lacked confidence having lost their previous job and reported that confidence-building workshops and encouragement by their Employment Advisor in one-to-one sessions was helpful for this group. Support with increasing motivation and identifying participants' transferable skills so that they could identify a wider range of suitable roles that they could apply for, were other forms of tailored support which providers saw as particularly effective for highly skilled and specialised participants. Providers felt this group often needed such support to understand that there were more opportunities for employment than the relatively niche roles which they had previously held.

Labour market information shows that the population of CPA 5a was more highly qualified than that in other Restart Scheme case study areas. Reflecting this trend, providers in the area noted that higher-skilled participants were particularly prevalent among their caseloads. In response to this demand, the provider put in place an executive coaching service which delivered career coaching sessions and liaised with the employer engagement team to identify higher-skilled roles suitable for their more highly skilled participants.

As illustrated in the case study, this specialist role had the potential to support highly skilled participants more effectively. A similar model was adopted in another area but the provider reported it had limited success due to a lack of demand and a lack of suitable vacancies.

Tailored support for participants with higher skill levels (Good practice example: 5a)

An executive career coach provided tailored support to people with specialist skills who had previously earned more than £50,000. Support included individual career coaching sessions, networking events, and liaison with the employer engagement team to identify suitable vacancies.

The career coach had been in post for two years and was given autonomy to develop their role based on local needs. An observation of a career coaching session suggested that the support was tailored for customers with specialist needs and was effective in motivating, building confidence and suggesting alternative career pathways.

However, the coach did not have capacity to support everyone in need of specialist support, as they worked across 14 sites. Moreover, participants who were interviewed were not aware that this support was offered and did not feel that they had received a tailored service.

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Support for self-employment

Support for participants who wanted to be self-employed included workshops or courses with tailored information and support with self-employment. In several areas, providers referred participants to an external provider which specialised in support to become gainfully self-employed, and this was reported to have led to some successful outcomes as participants had set up as self-employed barbers, gardeners, plumbers, roofers and travel agents. Some providers also had a specialist self-employment lead role among their Employment Advisors which was also reported to have led to positive self-employment outcomes for some participants. In addition, providers offered financial support for those starting in self-employment to purchase tools or equipment they would need for their business, such as gardening tools or business insurance.

Among the participants interviewed, there were some positive experiences of the Restart Scheme supporting them with self-employment, particularly some useful learning they had gained from attending self-employment workshops, such as how to manage finances and tax obligations and marketing as a self-employed person. However, other participants reported that support with self-employment was not available to them. Participants in the longitudinal cohort study who were interested in self-employment were generally less satisfied with the support received.

In-work support

Providers reported that they kept in touch with Restart participants who moved into employment, with this support varying depending on the area and the participant's situation. It often took the form of their Employment Advisor keeping in touch, through phone calls or emails, to check how they were getting on in their new job and whether they had any support needs.

In CPA 2a, the provider had a dedicated staff member who provided in-work support. However, participants in this area said they had either received no support since moving into employment through the Restart Scheme, and/or felt they did not require any. In CPA 3b, one provider had a dedicated rapid response team supporting those who had progressed into work through the Restart Scheme but who then dropped out of employment.

Some of the participants interviewed who had entered employment did not want any form of in-work support or further contact from the Restart Scheme, partly due to their negative opinion of the scheme and not believing that the provider had helped them to find employment. Those who had received support suggested it had been light-touch, with an advisor getting in touch from time-to-time. In cases where more extensive in-work support had been provided, it was typically in the form of financial support, such as paying for travel costs in the first few weeks of a job. Some had found work but were underemployed – either in a temporary, part-time or agency job – and would have preferred more support from the Restart Scheme to help them find different or additional employment.

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4.5.4 Customer service standards and payment by results

There were mixed views from both JCP staff and providers on the effectiveness of Customer Service Standards (CSS) and payment by results. One provider noted that meeting all CSS should ensure that all participants are receiving a minimum standard of service. However, a few participants in the case study research indicated that they had received limited to no support from the Restart Scheme, including infrequent appointments with their Employment Advisor and appointments not being useful.

> "It was just a case of going somewhere, it was no different to a Jobcentre appointment. I would go and sit down for about four minutes and then leave again, and that took two hours out of my day." (Participant)

Some providers reflected that the targets were too high, given the changes to eligibility criteria and the increased number of participants with complex and high-level needs. They felt this could make it difficult to meet the payment by results targets, and that the pressure of these targets could lead Employment Advisors to encourage participants into any job, rather than one that was right for them. Supporting this view, there were participants across areas who complained that their Employment Advisor provided them with details of job vacancies that were not suitable for them.

Some providers also felt that CSS could limit provider innovation when considering how to support a participant. Some providers reflected that the Restart Scheme was more focused on compliance with the CSS than getting people into work.

It was suggested that payment by results should include more of a focus on soft outcomes, to reflect the work that providers do, and the significant progress participants were reported to make in moving closer to the job market. Similarly, providers suggested that if they could give more nuanced reporting on participant outcomes, they could also provide DWP with more accurate insight into why outcomes were not achieved. For example, one provider said they would like to be able to explain cases to DWP where the participant turned down a suitable job offer.

Providers also suggested that the CSS could be tailored to individual participants' circumstances to reduce the administrative burden on providers. For example, in the small number of cases where a participant moved from mandatory to voluntary status, for example if they had been awarded Personal Independence Payment while on the Restart Scheme, providers suggested it was not productive to book in appointments for them for the rest of the year just to meet CSS when the participant would not attend the appointments because they were no longer mandated to.

> "I personally have never seen standards this high. For example… if someone is on easement, they still have to book their appointments in to meet the CSS, not the needs of the participants, even though they're on easements, so you still have to put those appointments in. Because otherwise, the system will say 'This person has not been booked in for their diagnostics. This person has not been booked for their two weeklies.'" (Provider)

4.6 Employer engagement

This section covers employer engagement. It outlines how providers used labour market intelligence (LMI), the kinds of employer activities undertaken as part of the Restart Scheme, and what helped and hindered employer engagement.

4.6.1 Labour market intelligence

There was limited evidence of Restart providers' use of labour market intelligence (LMI) to inform local tailoring. While the prime contractor, or one or more subcontractors, were sometimes members of a local employability and skills forum, other members of these groups were not clear how the Restart Scheme provider used LMI to inform its work and thought better use could be made of this data.

LMI was seldom mentioned during case study interviews with Restart providers, other than to state which sectors were most and least buoyant in the area and the type of job vacancies available. One exception to this was a subcontractor whose staff were working with partners to identify opportunities linked to a £25m investment town centre renovation.

> "The whole team will listen out for local opportunities, such as new developments or employers coming in. Might be larger scale or might just be a new shop. If there are opportunities, we can link in with our skills team." (Subcontractor)

One employer suggested that Restart providers should engage more effectively with local skills and employability groups as these often shared information around the local labour market, including projections which Restart providers could use to identify employers to approach, understand where job growth would come from, and explore the skills required by local companies.

There was some evidence of providers tailoring some employer engagement activities in line with an analysis of participants' needs, usually gathering these insights from Restart Employment Advisors and their participants' C s. This included liaising to support particular participant groups such as those with ESOL needs or the long-term unemployed.

Restart Employment Advisors and employer engagement activities (Good practice example: 2b)

The subcontractor in the area, as well as having an employer engagement team that consulted with employers and developed partnerships with local businesses, required each Restart Employment Advisor to spend a few hours each fortnight on employer engagement activities.

They spoke with local employers about individual participants, the type of work they were seeking, and their support needs. ESOL speakers were assigned to a multilingual Employment Advisor who would contact employers fluent in that language with the aim of sourcing suitable opportunities for their participants.

4.6.2   Specialist teams

Most providers had specialist job roles, or employer engagement teams, dedicated to establishing and maintaining links with local employers and actively seeking jobs for participants. There were examples of these roles and teams within prime contractors and some subcontractors. Where the provider had held the contract for several employment programmes, this person/ team would generally work across all programmes.

Some Restart providers were also part of an organisation with a recruitment agency arm, potentially giving the provider greater access to a pool of employers and vacancies. However, there was no evidence that employer engagement was more effective in these areas.

These teams were valuable in that they had specialist skills in employer engagement. However, as employer engagement teams generally worked across several Restart Scheme areas, if not nationally, they often worked mostly with larger companies who had multiple UK locations. This focus on a national rather than local offer was a consistent feature for employment engagement and may be a contributing factor to a reduced focus on individual participant need.

4.6.3   Employer engagement activities

A range of employer engagement activities were mentioned by providers, including:

- Sending CVs to employers when appropriate candidates were identified (some employers had limited involvement with the Restart Scheme beyond this)

- job fairs

- taster or information sessions delivered by an employer

- sector routeways, whereby employer-led training was offered to participants usually concluding with a guaranteed job interview (examples included security, programming, teaching assistants, warehousing, and hospitality)

- inviting employers to conduct interviews at the Restart Scheme site.

Jobs fair

A job fair was held at the Restart Scheme site in CPA 2a, attended by ten employers including recruitment agencies, a major retail store, the local council, plus companies offering roles within construction, social care, and teaching. It was organised by the provider's employer services team, who had invited companies they had links with and who were therefore potentially more receptive to attending.

It was attended by 112 participants: 80% were from the Restart Scheme, with the remainder from the JETS and Work and Health programmes, demonstrating that resource was shared across different contracts.

Provider staff were proactive in offering advice and support to those attending. They spotted people who seemed disengaged, asking if they needed help and doing their best to ensure people got the most they could from the event.

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> Participants gave their CV and/ or an application form to employers whose vacancies were of interest, and they typically offered to review them in the following week and to have follow-up contact with applicants by telephone.
>
> The employer representatives were positive about job fairs, regarding them as a useful way to reach potential jobseekers who they might not have contact with through other means. Many said they were facing challenges in recruiting enough staff, and therefore welcomed the scheme's support.

However, some Restart participants said the job fairs they had attended had not matched their needs, as the employers were not in the sectors they were interested in and/or were not offering the vacancies they sought. A few Restart providers also thought that job fairs provided a poor return on investment, but most were still running them. In one area where there were multiple Restart providers, a lack of coordination between subcontractors led to concerns that employers were receiving job fair invitations from multiple organisations.

Smaller-scale events were often initiated by Restart providers, sometimes in place of job fairs. Examples included training sessions for participants interested in a particular sector, with an employer guaranteeing a job interview for all attendees at the end of the course, and speed-dating style events between employers and potential recruits. One provider mentioned a speed-dating style event, involving four hospitality employers, led to fifteen Restart participants being offered jobs.

There were some examples within the case study research of effective engagement of national employers leading to successful local recruitment events and subsequent employment outcomes.

> **Recruitment support for a nationwide retail store (Good practice example)**
>
> When a nationwide retail company opened a new store, Restart providers helped it to recruit new staff members.
>
> The company contacted a named person within one large prime contractor, who then put them in touch with the most appropriate person involved in local Restart delivery whether it was their organisation or not. The employer then dealt directly with the local scheme provider, who liaised with any supply chain partners as required.
>
> The Restart Scheme screened potential candidates and arranged interview days whereby 20 or 30 candidates were interviewed in 15-minute slots. The employer was positive about this recruitment channel, saying that the Restart Scheme delivered the volume and quality of candidates it needed.
>
> Approximately 70% of those interviewed were offered a position; the company recruited most of its staff through this route because the Restart Scheme screened potential candidates (thereby saving the company a lot of time).
>
> The company also sought the scheme's help with its ongoing recruitment needs, such as recruiting potential candidates and organising interview days.

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4.6.4 Participants' contact with employers

Many participants said their Employment Advisor contacted them about job vacancies and encouraged them to apply, and some said their Employment Advisor had forwarded their CV directly to employers.

However, there was much less evidence of providers 'selling' individual candidates to employers or negotiating flexible working and other adjustments. This meant that sometimes participants were referred to vacancies that were unsuitable. This was sometimes due to working hours or conditions, but Employment Advisors did not try to negotiate changes to these roles.

In some cases, participants thought their Employment Advisor had instead encouraged them to consider roles they deemed unsuitable.

> "You had to be on a live [telephone system] between 8am and 6pm. I'd still have to do the school run, so I was just worried about that. But you don't like to say no because you don't want to show that you're not willing." (Participant)

In a few cases, participants described being contacted by the provider's central employer engagement team about suitable roles, but these were outside a reasonable travel-to-work area.

> "It was someone from [city] phoning to talk about jobs over there – it would have been too far to do every day and too expensive. They were appropriate jobs but in the wrong area." (Participant)

4.6.5 Employer views of the Restart Scheme

When employers spoke positively about the Restart Scheme, companies were typically recruiting across a range of Restart Scheme locations, across a range of employment programmes, and/or to entry level roles. Employer engagement and job matching operated more effectively with employers who had substantial recruitment needs. Larger employers, along with recruitment agencies, appeared more motivated to create stronger links with the Restart Scheme and participated in a wider range of activities.

These employers identified features that they saw as particularly useful including a shared spreadsheet of potential candidates; screening to ensure that only suitable candidates were referred for interview; being invited on-site to interview a range of participants; and support with pre-employment requirements, such as Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

> "You can put an advert in a window and get 100 C s, but when you start ringing people, a lot have been handed in for them by their parents…and they're not really into it. For people to have been on Restart, to have gone through the vetting process, to have gone through all the stuff with the Work Coaches, they're aware of what we want and what we need, and they want to join us." (Employer)

Working with a large regeneration site (Good practice example: 5a)

The prime contractor in 5a worked with a large regeneration site that attracted various retail, leisure, and hospitality employers – it had an existing relationship with the site, developed through its earlier employment programmes. Many of the companies struggled to fill their vacancies, having previously relied on workers from the European Union (EU).

The prime contractor sent details of suitable participants to their contact at the regeneration site who then contacted the candidates to explain the jobs available and invited them in for an interview or assessment day run by the employer. It also ran 'meet the employer' recruitment open days, and Restart participants were invited to come along.

The prime contractor arranged a monthly catch-up review with the site to discuss what was working well, and to find out which Restart participants had obtained work. This regular contact helped provider staff to understand what the companies were looking for.

The regeneration site was satisfied with both the quality, and the volume, of candidates recommended by the Restart Scheme.

Employers also described how the Restart Scheme had been useful in helping them fill vacancies and were able to identify clear success stories:

- A woman who had not worked for twenty years, and had seven children, had been recruited via the Restart Scheme and was a "most reliable person and always offering to do extra work. Customers are very positive about the support they receive from her." (Employer)

- A recruitment agency stated that some Restart Scheme candidates had been taken on temporarily by a school and were then transferred onto permanent contracts as they proved to be good employees. (Recruitment agency)

Recruiting to National Health Service (NHS) vacancies (Good practice example: 1a)

An NHS trust was one of the largest employers in case study 1a, with about 23,000 staff. It offered a wide range of roles such as healthcare assistant, porter, housekeeping, security, theatre support workers, and administrative staff, which did not require a professional qualification.

Recruitment had become more difficult over recent years due to the strength of the local labour market and the increased choice available to local jobseekers. The trust had longstanding links with the DWP and had worked with various employment programmes over the years.

The trust liaised with the prime contractor to find suitable candidates for its NHS Learning Hub programme, which provided intensive training to support people into

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> NHS roles. The prime contractor sent CVs of candidates they considered suitable, and these were booked into the next available Discovery Workshops through which the trust gave them more information about the scheme. These workshops took place each week, via Teams, and were held once a month at Restart Scheme sites to engage additional participants. The trust was satisfied with the volume and suitability of Restart participants referred to them.
>
> The trust sent a list of vacant posts, and the number required, to Restart providers, along with further information on the training programmes. At one point it was seeking up to three hundred healthcare assistants.

Smaller employers reported less sustained engagement and generally less positive views. The engagement of smaller employers was more likely to focus around receiving CVs from suitable candidates. During case study interviews, it also became apparent that some smaller employers had initiated contact with the Restart Scheme and were questioning why the local provider had not been more proactive with local employers.

A few employers, from different sized companies, mentioned examples of unsuitable candidates being sent to them and/ or said that the Restart Scheme was unable to provide them with the type of candidate they were seeking. This included specific requirements such as English or maths qualifications but was more often a perception that scheme participants were not motivated to work and might fail to attend an interview or sustain an employment outcome. One employer wanted to know whether the Restart Scheme worked with candidates with higher level qualifications as they were keen to fill a management position.

Some Restart providers suggested that there was still a stigma attached to welfare to work programmes, and some employers had negative perceptions of the Restart Scheme in particular, or welfare to work programmes in general.

4.6.6 Enablers and challenges for employer engagement

With recruitment becoming more difficult for some sectors, and in some locations, Restart providers were able to effectively market themselves to employers and recruitment agencies as a source of candidates who might not otherwise present themselves for interview. This worked well with larger employers who either had significant recruitment needs or worked across a range of areas. Providers often drew on their existing relationships with employers to make these connections.

However, some employer engagement teams covered a wide geographical area and therefore had little detailed knowledge of the local job market. There was therefore a concern that some Restart providers did not have established links within, or an understanding of, the local labour market as mentioned earlier.

In some areas with multiple Restart Scheme subcontractors, there was also still work to be done to streamline employer engagement across the contract. Employers interviewed often wanted a single point of contact across employment support programmes.

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Many providers targeted a limited range of employers, tending to focus on sectors with high recruitment needs and lower qualification requirements. These employers were seen as strategically easier to target.

> "The employers we bring on, I would say, is for more entry level stuff. The entry level jobs, if you're looking at a packing and production line, they're looking for numbers which we can provide…we're not going to be able to get someone like Lloyds Bank or RBS. You've got to know where your market is…you've got to approach organisations that you think you can engage with. We've got an independent little shop on the corner that sells bikes – we're not going to go and approach them." (Subcontractor)

The decision to focus on a more limited range of employers meant that participants potentially had more limited employment opportunities available to them, particularly those seeking more specialist roles, and is reflective of an approach that may not focus enough on the needs of individual participants and matching them with suitable employers.

4.7 Local partnerships

This section explores the nature of partnership working between Restart providers and strategic partners, and views on its effectiveness. It then examines facilitators of and barriers to effective partnership working, both extrinsic and intrinsic to the Restart Scheme. The chapter then considers how local partnerships were utilised to provide participants with integrated support for their individual needs, how well this worked, and facilitators and barriers to effective partnership working to support participants.

4.7.1   Strategic partnerships

Restart providers worked with a range of strategic stakeholders including DWP, local or combined authorities, local enterprise partnerships and chambers of commerce. However, as indicated in the provider survey not all providers engaged with all these partners; with providers least likely to engage with chambers of commerce.

Overall, providers were typically more positive about partnership working than other stakeholders, although some providers said they could be doing more in this area, and one noted that they could benefit from partnership working being a more prominent part of the Restart Scheme model. Most stakeholders were also positive about their relationship with Restart, reporting that they held good lines of communication and met regularly to discuss how they could best work together.

In some areas, stakeholders felt that relationships with providers had strengthened over time. However, across the case studies the depth, frequency and intensity of partnership working was similar in waves two and three of the research. Moreover, a few of the stakeholders interviewed reported that they had little or no contact with the Restart Scheme in their area, and some stakeholders identified missed opportunities for Restart providers to engage with local forums.

Most stakeholders noted the existence of Local Engagement Meetings (LEMs) and various employability and skills partnerships, such as Adult Skills Forums, that facilitated partnership working and were generally positive about them. These meetings were found to be helpful for networking, data gathering, sharing best practice, and understanding initiatives that were being undertaken by partners in the area and how to align skills and support provision with local needs. However, some stakeholders noted that they did not find the information shared at LEMs particularly useful, mainly because of the large geographical areas these cover, which inhibited discussion of specific local issues.

> "The 'L' [stands for] local, but they're across the entire contract package area, which for [this area], goes down as far as [local town]… The LE s, quite frankly, aren't an awful lot of use… it would be much better to engage on a proper local level." (Stakeholder)

Providers generally noted that such forums for partnership working provided opportunities for networking with employers and finding out about training and employment opportunities in the area which could be suitable for participants. For example, a provider in one area noted that the monthly Local Enterprise Partnership meetings made them aware of events and new ventures in the area that would in turn help them to identify employment opportunities for participants.

However, stakeholder feedback on provider attendance at local partnership meetings varied. Indeed, some providers had no knowledge of partnerships other than those with employers, although this was rare. From those providers who did attend partnership meetings, there was limited evidence of how far they actively engaged.

Strategic partnerships in CPA 3b appeared to be stronger than in most other areas. The provider noted that this was due to the nature of partnership working in a particular local forum which had been established over several years.

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Local partnerships (Good practice example: 3b)

Across all interviewee groups it was noted that partnership working was highly effective in this area. This was attributed to the existence of a local strategic partnership that met four times a year. The partnership focused on skills, training and employment opportunities within the local area and included the local university, college, DWP, JCP, the Restart Local Integration Lead, Connexions, the Public Health team, and apprenticeship providers.

The Local Integration Lead represented the Restart provider at these meetings. This role was important in enabling Restart to build successful relationships within the community. The role was dedicated to building relationships with and between support services, employers, training organisations, providers and JCP to support positive employment outcomes for Restart participants. An example of this was engagement which took place between Restart and employers at a large logistics site in the area through this partnership, which ensured Restart participants were accessing employment opportunities at the site.

The success of the provider's partnership working in the area was partly attributed to their longstanding presence in the community as a result of delivering other provision previously. Prior to Restart, the provider had been delivering provision in the area for over seven years, and this experience enabled them to utilise their already-established links with local partners for delivery of Restart. A local stakeholder noted that in their experience, support programmes work best when the provider is local and already trusted by the community.

> "I think [the provider] and [the] council as the sub-provider locally, is very good for us because they've already got those connections locally, so in terms of integration and making sure that, even though I don't know how the programme is performing, I would hope that they're having good results because they're already well-connected within the town and have a good understanding of what our needs are in the town." (Stakeholder)

Enablers and challenges of strategic partnerships

The success of partnership working was heavily dependent on the strength of existing networks in the local area. Conversely, a challenge to partnership working was where organisations operated in silos. This was identified as a particular challenge in two of the case study areas by both providers and wider stakeholders. In one of these areas, the council had also declared bankruptcy which impacted their capacity to engage with partners. In some areas, providers had good relationships with local stakeholders due to having delivered other provision previously. Their presence in the local area over an extended period meant partnerships were already in place, facilitating a more joined-up approach across the area. Similarly, another enabler of successful partnership working was identified as individual provider staff having previously been involved in delivering successful provision in their local area.

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Nevertheless, stakeholders felt that staff who were newer to the area could still be effective partners if they had a local focus and understood the local context. Similarly, consistent provider staff teams, so that meetings had the same regular attendees, was seen as an important enabler of effective partnership working. Some stakeholders also perceived that a return to in-person meetings after the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic had helped to improve relationships between providers in their area.

Although rare, some stakeholders held a negative view of Restart providers in their area due to the perception that they delivered poor quality support and observed poor internal communication within those providers that had led to problems within their partnership. One stakeholder in another area highlighted that this had deterred them from partnering with the provider in the future and felt that partnership working depended on individuals and their level of commitment, rather than an established and collective approach.

> "There s just absolute disconnect and lack of communication." (Stakeholder)

Other challenges that were intrinsic to how the Restart Scheme was operating were identified by stakeholders. Some felt that the relationship with the Restart Scheme was not mutually beneficial; although they supported the scheme, they did not feel they benefited from the relationship in any way. This was due largely to a lack of engagement and a lack of information shared by the scheme. Strategic partners consistently wanted the Restart Scheme to share more data about outcomes, as this could help local partners to better tailor their provision to the needs of the local area as well as enable them to promote the scheme better. Stakeholders suggested that capturing and sharing examples of best practice at LEMs could further enable partnership working in their local areas.

> "What I want to do is make sure that everything works together to support all people in [the area]. I always ask 'what are the gaps? What are the areas where they can't reach? What are the types of people where they can't provide as much support?' Then, as a local authority, we can add value and reduce those gaps. There's no way of getting any sort of data... I don't even know the number of people [the Restart Scheme] support in [the area]." (Stakeholder)

One stakeholder contrasted the Restart Scheme with the Work and Health programme, as they felt that strategic involvement from DWP and more comprehensive data sharing enabled partners to work together more effectively on the Work and Health programme than they did on the Restart Scheme.

4.7.2 Partnerships used to support participant needs

Across case study areas there was extensive evidence of partnerships being utilised to provide support to individual participants. Providers generally had good networks with local support provision which they could access to offer participants a range of support. Participants were generally positive about the support they had received from such external organisations, although there was variation in how much support they were offered.

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Although providers could also offer participants a range of support, they appreciated that partner organisations could fill in any gaps which made the support offer more comprehensive.

> "There s a lot of skills we don t have and it s fantastic to have these partners on board. Firstly, in terms of accredited training and also for support, knowledge. Yes, for me it's invaluable, especially in the market that we're in, collaboration and working together with other partners is key." (Provider)

Providers often used external partners to provide health and wellbeing support, particularly around mental health issues. One case study area liaised effectively with both local and national specialist organisations that provided support with mental health and wellbeing. Participants were referred to an external programme of support. An interview with one of these organisations suggested they had a positive relationship with the providers and were able to support effectively. However, they also noted that it may be beneficial for providers to have more internal expertise to support with mental health issues.

Providers often engaged external partners for those participants who were further from the labour market with more complex barriers. This included their employability skills and personal skills such as confidence, which participants found helpful in moving them closer to the labour market. Stakeholders interviewed felt this was a positive relationship.

> "We work with people a bit further away from the labour market, build up their confidence, skills etc, and then hand them back to Restart when they're in a better place - that worked well." (Stakeholder)

Providers also utilised a range of different training providers to support participants to gain skills. This was most commonly to gain practical, vocational qualifications such as obtaining SIA badges and CSCS cards, or for specific areas of skills development such as ESOL, digital skills, or numeracy. For example, one prime contractor used multiple external organisations to deliver a wide range of formal and informal ESOL support.

Some providers also drew on external providers for support with self-employment, with this often provided by the same national organisation. One provider had found it helpful to structure support for participants who wanted to be self-employed along a progression pathway. Participants who were aiming to find self-employment first attended a business workshop facilitated by the Restart Scheme provider before being referred to an external partner organisation which provided further support for people who wanted to become self-employed.

Partnerships with charities to provide wider support to participants were also common. This included charities that provided equipment and clothes for work, as well as support with debt issues and help to manage the cost-of-living crisis, such as food banks and organisations that provided essential household items.

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"They gave me everything, I said I was struggling with budget, so I need help, so they bought me beddings, they bought me a kettle, during winter they bought me pillows, you know, everything for the children." (Participant)

Participant receiving integrated support (Good practice example: 5c)

A 27 year old Restart Scheme participant wanted part-time work in a helping role, and to do some self-employment work. However, she lacked self-confidence and had experienced homelessness and domestic abuse in the past. She had already been provided with counselling support by JCP and received a range of further support from Restart Scheme partner organisations to meet her needs.

This included support from an organisation which offered the participant a part-time voluntary role, which had the potential to lead to a permanent role. The organisation also provided the participant with level 2 peer-to-peer support training. The Restart Scheme also connected with other partner organisations to enable the participant to receive a food parcel when she was struggling financially, and some training in becoming self-employed. She found the training helpful in learning about how to use social media and online platforms to advertise and sell products.

There were also some examples of providers playing a role in organising support networks. A provider in one area was planning to hold a cost-of-living crisis support event involving multiple support organisations in the area who would speak to participants about support they could offer with budgeting and personal finances.

Participant receiving integrated support (Good practice example: 6)

A Restart Scheme participant faced barriers to employment that included a lack of self-confidence, a long history of unemployment, and childcare responsibilities. In addition to a confidence building course that the Restart Scheme provided, the scheme signposted her to a local organisation that provided wellbeing support. With this organisation, the participant did a course in first aid and another in cookery. She also got involved in the work that the organisation carried out distributing food to homeless people.

The participant found that attending these courses and becoming involved in voluntary work helped to increase her confidence in social situations and in her ability to work with other people in a job role. The Restart Scheme signposted her to a job opportunity in a school which the participant secured. She attributed her success in securing employment to the support that the scheme and their partners had provided her with building her self-confidence.

Enablers and challenges

Facilitators of good partnership working to support participants centred around maximising opportunity for contact and communication between partners, providers and participants. For example, providers invited partner organisations to Restart Scheme sites to meet with participants or offer a 'taster' session of their support offer.

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This enabled participants to learn about the support the organisation could provide and increased the likelihood of participants engaging with the support.

> "We say come into our centres, talk to our Employment Advisors about your provision and we ll give you a room if you need to speak to participants'. You need to facilitate those relationships at the beginning." (Provider)

Co-location in the same building as partner organisations was identified as another facilitator of partnership working. For example, the provider in CPA 6 was located in the same building as the Samaritans, a charity supporting asylum seekers, and a mental health and substance abuse charity, all of which the Restart Scheme referred participants to if relevant to their needs.

Good communication between partners and providers on the nature of the partner organisations' support offer enabled providers to more easily identify participants who could benefit from the support. A provider in one area explained how local organisations were invited to speak at their weekly meetings about how they could support participants, which they found helpful to disseminate to their teams and participants. Providers in other areas similarly reported how they gained useful information about support available for participants by attending partnership meetings.

> "I sit on the [local] Cost-of-Living roup as well…that group was set up to try and manage the cost-of-living crisis, so that's good, so I feed all of that back to my team. For example, this week I may have mentioned about children's free support and free lunches over the summer, that kind of support I feed back to the team." (Provider)

Providers also noted that referral pathways were better established with some organisations than others, and that more established pathways supported a greater volume of participant referrals.

> "We need to slick up our internal processes to make referrals as easy as possible. Where we've got good processes, repeat referrals are made smoothly." (Provider)

However, there were some challenges that prevented effective partnership working. This centred around a lack of a systematic and formalised structure for mapping provision available from external providers, overseeing the referral pathway and ensuring participants engaged with support.

> "We've got a really good network. Our failing is actually utilising it as effectively as we could. We do not make enough referrals, or our referrals are made, and the person doesn't turn up and nothing is really done about it. We're still working through our process of actually getting someone across all of that support rather than just giving them a leaflet…instead guiding them through because we know the drop-off rate is massive." (Provider)

Although many providers gathered information on the different types of support provision in their area, this was often an iterative and organic process, and some providers felt that a more formalised, comprehensive mapping of the full range of

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support provision available in their local area would increase their awareness of support available to participants. A provider in one area noted how challenging it could be to find information on support offered by external organisations.

"It's trying to find a needle in a haystack at times." (Provider)

Providers also identified partners who they were not working with as closely as they could, because they had not yet been able to resource relationship building with all partner organisations to explore how they could support participants.

The target of moving participants into employment within 12 months, which did not always align with the timescale of support provided by partner organisations was seen by providers as another barrier to working with partners to support Restart participants. Providers were unable to refer participants to support that would not help them overcome barriers to employment within the timescale of the Restart Scheme.

"One provider, who offers teaching assistant training…They say they ll get a teaching assistant qualification in eight weeks but didn't mention that they then have another three months online. [We have to] have an idea when the participant will complete the course and be able to look for jobs. It messes up our targets." (Provider)

A more extrinsic barrier to partnership working was limited availability of support from partner organisations in local areas. For example, in one levelling up town, providers identified a lack of suitable external provision of ESOL or health support. External funding constraints were reported to make it difficult to sustain partnerships in some instances. For example, a provider in one area reported that the end of ESFA funding had limited other organisations' capacity to engage with the Restart Scheme.

4.8 Outcomes

This section summarises the key findings around the challenges and enablers for positive employment outcomes. This includes consideration of particular barriers that participants faced which made it more challenging for them to achieve positive employment outcomes, and the aspects of support which facilitated positive employment outcomes for participants. Similar findings around challenges to achieving employment outcomes are reported in the longitudinal cohort study and the provider survey.

4.8.1 Challenges in achieving positive employment outcomes

A number of factors, both extrinsic and intrinsic to the Restart Scheme, were identified as barriers to participants entering employment.

Health needs
Providers identified a high proportion of participants with health barriers to employment. These participants were seen as less likely to achieve positive

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employment outcomes, as also indicated in the longitudinal cohort study. There was a view among participants, providers, and some stakeholders that in some cases this was because the participant's health needs were too severe for Restart Scheme support to be effective, and they were either not fit for work, or needed more intensive or longer support than the Restart Scheme could provide.

However, there was also some evidence that participants with health needs did not receive the targeted support they needed to progress towards employment. Indeed, for participants with physical health needs, there was no observed evidence of Employment Advisors working with employers to identify suitable roles for individuals or negotiate changes to working conditions. Similarly, for participants with more severe mental health issues, there was a general lack of support available from providers beyond basic wellbeing advice.

ESOL needs

As observed in the longitudinal cohort study, participants who were ESOL speakers had better outcomes than those whose first language was English. Evidence from the qualitative interviews in the longitudinal cohort study also suggested that outcomes can be achieved for those with more limited English.

In contrast to this within the case study research, providers identified some participants whose English was a barrier to them engaging in the scheme. For these participants, who typically needed interpreters to access support, they felt that 12 months on the scheme was not long enough to sufficiently improve their English. This meant their time on the Restart Scheme was limited to attending ESOL provision rather than engaging with the full range of support. As noted, some JCP staff took the decision to not refer this group to the Restart Scheme.

Attitudinal barriers

Attitudinal barriers related to lacking motivation for employment in general as well as selectivity barriers related to limitations around the kind of roles participants would consider.

For many providers, the most challenging attitudinal barriers were related to those who would not engage with the Restart Scheme, as well as those who turned down job offers or did not take the necessary steps to find work such as by applying for jobs. These were typically described as participants who were the very long-term unemployed. There was a view among some providers that 12 months was not long enough to support those who were furthest from the labour market to first address these barriers and then move onto more work focused support.

However, it is important to note that participants interviewed did not share the view that they lacked motivation to work. Instead, they reported being sent by their provider to job roles that they were unable to do, were not interested in, or were unsuitable for other reasons such as lack of suitable childcare or access to suitable transport.

There was some evidence of effective practice in addressing attitudinal barriers, for example, concerns about coming off Universal Credit, or improving awareness of

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transferable skills. However, support to address motivational issues associated with long-term unemployment was less in evidence.

Participants with specialist or higher-level skills
Higher-skilled and experienced participants who wanted to work in more specialist sectors or higher-level roles were also less likely to feel that the Restart Scheme could provide the tailored support they needed to achieve a positive employment outcome. Highly skilled participants in both the case study research and the longitudinal cohort study who had moved into employment typically reported that they had found their job role themselves, rather than receiving any support from the Restart Scheme to find their specialist role.

Practical barriers
The availability, accessibility, and affordability of suitable childcare and transport were also challenges that prevented some participants accessing employment with the latter a particular barrier to positive employment outcomes in levelling up and rural areas. Although providers could support with the cost of public transport, these other barriers were seen as outside of their control. A lack of public transport to travel to work was cited by both providers and participants as a common barrier to entering employment. Findings from the longitudinal cohort study suggest that the Restart Scheme was able to support with the cost of transport but less able to support where transport intersected with other barriers such as childcare.

4.8.2   Enablers of positive employment outcomes

A relatively small number of participants interviewed for the case study research had achieved employment outcomes. This can primarily be attributed to the fact that many participants had only been on the scheme for a few months at the time they were interviewed. Of those who had achieved positive employment outcomes not all attributed these outcomes to the Restart Scheme.

Participants who did not attribute positive outcomes to the scheme typically said they had been successful in applying and finding jobs themselves. They were often the more highly qualified or skilled participants who, as identified in the longitudinal cohort study, were more likely to move into employment more quickly. Some did not feel they needed support from the Restart Scheme such as one participant who had lost their job as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Others felt that the support they received had not been useful, for example, they wanted to work in a specific sector but were referred to jobs they saw as unsuitable.

However, participants who were successful in gaining employment and attributed this to the Restart Scheme identified key enablers of positive employment outcomes, which were consistent across case study areas.

Positive relationship with Employment Advisor
Participants commonly noted that one-to-one support and a positive relationship with their Employment Advisor helped to boost their morale and their confidence in being able to secure employment and saw this as key to achieving successful outcomes. This was a key finding in both the case study research and the longitudinal cohort

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study. Some participants also reflected that their advisor had encouraged them to consider a wider range of job sectors and roles, and vacancy sources, than they had previously been aware of:

> "Normally I would look at that and go 'No way am I doing that, I'm not a plant person.' But because it's a quiet environment and there would only be 5 or 6 other people there at any one time it was suitable." (Participant)

Tailored approach and holistic support

A tailored approach to providing holistic support was often cited by participants as a significant contributing factor to them moving into employment or feeling closer to doing so. Using diagnostic assessments and individualised action plans, Employment Advisors worked with participants to design a package of tailored support to meet their individual needs. This included a wide range of holistic support, ranging from support with budgeting to wellbeing and housing. Participants found support most effective when it could help them overcome the specific, individual barriers they faced to entering employment.

Positive outcomes through holistic support (Good practice example: 4a)

A participant on the Restart Scheme had been unemployed for a long time and had been rejected by a large supermarket prior to starting the programme. This knocked the participant's confidence, and the Employment Advisor worked with them to address this. In addition, the advisor worked with the participant to help them make positive lifestyle changes, such as improving their health and personal hygiene. Following this, the Employment Advisor arranged another interview with the supermarket, and the participant was successful.

Practical support

Providers noted that being able to provide targeted financial support, such as with transport, suitable clothing or to apply for identification documentation or certificates such as CSCS cards and DBS checks, was a significant enabler for some participants to enter a particular sector or type of role. This support could be limited to a DBS check, which was nevertheless valued by participants or more targeted support such as the good practice example in 1b.

Positive outcomes through practical support (Good practice example: 1b)

In 1b, there was a participant who was living in poor housing (a caravan park), had no close family and had not worked for 15 years. The individual also struggled with their mental health, to the point that a safeguarding concern had been raised. Within two months of engaging with the programme, the Restart Scheme had supported them to find a dogsitter, found suitable transport so they could attend meetings with their Employment Advisor, and supported them into a job at a COVID-19 testing site.

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Effective partnerships

Providers who had strong and effective partnerships in the local community were more easily able to source additional support for participants, helping them to move closer to securing long-term employment. This was particularly helpful for participants with more substantial or more complex needs, such as ESOL needs. Similarly, good relationships between providers and JCP staff sometimes allowed participants who were at risk of disengaging from the scheme to be identified and supported at an earlier stage.

Positive outcomes through effective partnerships (Good practice example: 1b)

A Restart Scheme participant in 1b identified his mental health issues, primarily around anxiety, as a key barrier to entering employment. As a result, his Employment Advisor referred him to an external partner that provided psychological therapy via one-to-one telephone sessions. The participant found this support with his mental health beneficial, and it enabled him, with the support of his Employment Advisor, to apply for jobs that he would not have previously felt capable of working in. He felt that the support with his mental health increased his chances of securing long-term employment.

Strong and extensive partnerships with employers helped providers to find job opportunities that suited participants' needs, which increased their chances of securing sustainable employment. For example, one provider had developed a relationship with a recruitment agency for schools, through which many parents with childcare responsibilities had secured employment. Participants who had moved into work often explained that they had been put in touch with their employer directly through the Restart Scheme.

Positive outcomes through employer engagement (Good practice example: 5c)

In 5c, one participant had health conditions that meant they were restricted to working in a desk job. However, they also experienced mental health issues that were exacerbated around other people, meaning they needed to work from home. Due to their specific job requirements, the Employment Advisor put them in touch with the employment engagement advisor who was able to identify a suitable role, putting the participant in touch with a healthcare organisation for a customer service role. Within two days, the participant had a job interview and five days later they started work.

> "[This participant] came in in the build-up to Christmas and he said… I just wanted to let you know because of the work you guys did, there's presents under my [Christmas] tree this year, there wasn't last year or the year before that... this reminds you why you actually do it." (Provider)

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4.9 Summary of findings

Referrals volumes were generally lower than initially expected due to employment rates being higher than predicted after the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Providers also reported participants were presenting with higher needs and more substantial barriers than anticipated. This could potentially be due to the pool of claimants being unemployed for longer than expected. The referral process generally worked well after some initial challenges, but there was some evidence of a lack of clarity from both JCP and providers, particularly over which participants should be referred to which programme of support.

Communication between JCP and providers was important in determining participant experience particularly around key points such as participants joining the scheme, mandation, and when participants were at risk of disengagement. The relationship was generally good and had improved over time but varied between different providers and JCPs. There were clear factors that helped a positive relationship, including consistency of staff, single points of contact and providers regularly visiting JCP sites.

There was varied evidence on whether mandation was effective for encouraging engagement. Some participants, providers and JCP saw it as essential in ensuring engagement with the Restart Scheme while others were much less sure of its value and in some cases thought it made the Restart Scheme less attractive. Beyond these mixed views, **there was clear evidence that the administrative processes of mandation (in particular raising a compliance doubt) did not work effectively.** Providers did not understand the process, found it time consuming, and had to wait a long time for responses.

Providers all offered a wide range of support, however, there was substantial variation in the support received by individual participants.

The relationship with an Employment Advisor was a key determinant in participant experience: this was generally positive, but some participants felt their needs were not understood. Others reported that they had changed advisors several times, and this had impacted on the support received.

There was some evidence of tailoring for individual participants; some of those with ESOL or childcare needs, or those with transport barriers, as well as those seeking self-employment received targeted support. However, the Restart Scheme was less able to help those with physical health conditions or more severe mental health conditions, the longer-term unemployed (more than two years but also above 10 years), and the more highly skilled.

There was less evidence of tailoring by local area. Where this was in place it was successful; for example, there was evidence of effective employment support for ESOL participants in an area with high ESOL needs; specialist workshops to improve motivation in an area with high numbers of longer-term unemployed; and specialist support for the highly skilled in an area where the population had higher than average qualification levels. But this tailoring was not consistently observed within

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the case study research and was dependent on having good local partnerships in place and sufficient specialised staff.

The case study research evidenced that providers were engaging with employers in a range of ways and through a range of activities. There were successful examples of engaging with national employers, or employers with high recruitment needs, as well as local tailoring through sector routeways. However, there was less evidence of engaging with smaller or more specialist employers.

The case study research found evidence of good partnerships at both the strategic level and to support individual participants. However, this was not consistent across all providers or areas. Good partnership working was partly dependent on the strength of existing networks and support systems; however, providers could also enable better partnership working by ensuring that relationships were mutually beneficial, providing consistent staffing, and making good use of local intelligence.

There was no clear evidence on whether it was more effective for prime contractors to subcontract all, some, or none of the provision in a local area. However, there was a risk that too many subcontractors could lead to duplication and a lack of clarity around employer engagement, partnership working and the support offer.

Evidence from the case study research on participant outcomes was broadly in line with findings from the longitudinal cohort study. There were some barriers that the Restart Scheme was much less likely to be able to address including physical and severe mental health conditions, the longer-term unemployed and some more specific practical barriers such as childcare for lone parents. Providers and employers sometimes identified that participants' lack of motivation was a key barrier to outcomes being achieved, however this was not generally supported by the evidence from participants in both the longitudinal cohort study and the case study research.

The Restart Scheme was more likely to be able to support those who were lacking in confidence, had more limited work histories and were lower skilled rather than the more highly skilled and those seeking more specialist roles.

Where the Restart Scheme was able to support participants to positive outcomes this was due to positive interactions with Employment Advisors, a range of tailored individual support, and effective external partnerships with employers, support services, training providers, and JCP.

5. Conclusions and Implications

This chapter summarises the main findings from the evaluation and sets out the implications of the research. It brings together findings from the three strands of research; the longitudinal cohort study, the provider survey, and the case study research to consider the evidence on how the external context impacted on the scheme, what worked well, for whom and why, as well as what lessons can be learnt for future delivery.

5.1 The wider context

It is important to recognise the impact of the external context on the Restart Scheme delivery and outcomes. The Restart Scheme was designed and implemented as part of the UK government's Plan for Jobs to respond to the anticipated rise in unemployment post the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This meant that it was implemented alongside a range of other support programmes and when COVID-19 restrictions were still being experienced by individuals and organisations.

The external context was further complicated by lower than anticipated unemployment rates which meant that referrals to the Restart Scheme were lower than anticipated. Other external factors include the continuing impact of the UK leaving the European Union (for example, the ending of European Social Funding and its replacement by the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund), rises in economic inactivity due to ill health, and a cost-of-living crisis impacting on both individuals and support organisations.

There were challenges in implementing the scheme at a time of wider uncertainty, for example when labour market conditions were not as predicted. This had an impact on the number of referrals Restart providers received, on the profile of Restart participants and the needs and barriers they experienced, as well as wider challenges in areas such as partnership working.

5.2 How the scheme responded to the external context

The Restart Scheme successfully adapted to these changes to the external context. This was primarily through DWP's broadening of the eligibility criteria and

actions by providers to support a wider range of participants than anticipated. The case study research also saw evidence of a range of other adaptations, for example provider actions such as: building positive relationships with partners even though in person interactions were limited; investing additional resource to support with debt management in response to the cost-of-living crisis and building new partnerships where existing support services did not have sufficient resource.

5.3 Locally tailored support

A key element in the design of the Restart Scheme was the model of tailored support for individuals and local areas. The evidence from this research suggests that where this approach was in place, it was effective in supporting individuals and responding to local need. There were some examples of tailoring by local area, where providers could respond to those with ESOL needs by engaging with appropriate employers; motivate the longer-term unemployed with specialist workshops or cater for the higher skilled by providing dedicated staff. **However, this approach was not consistently observed in the case study areas.** Further consideration into the reasons this did not happen consistently is in section 5.5 and lessons are identified for future delivery.

5.4 Participant outcomes

The findings from this research, while not an impact assessment, suggest that **the Restart Scheme supported participants to achieve positive outcomes both in terms of sustainable employment and wider outcomes**.

Participants were more likely to be in work than non-participants. At wave 2, 4 in 10 follow-up participants were in work, an increase of 21% from wave 1. Regression modelling found that, **controlling for other variables, those with a more consistent work history, women, those with a child of any age, English as a second language and higher qualifications were more likely to be employed at wave 2.** Those with health conditions or caring responsibilities were less likely to achieve an employment outcome. This suggests while there have been positive job outcomes for Restart participants, this may be more likely among those with less significant barriers.

However, the survey showed that while a greater proportion of Restart participants were in work than non-participants, similar proportions of participants and non-participants were claiming Universal Credit (UC). This suggests that the outcomes achieved were not always sufficient to enable eligible participants to stop claiming UC. This potentially reflects that many participants were very long term unemployed, and a more incremental journey towards employment and full financial independence is expected for those who have had longer periods of labour market detachment.

Participants were more likely to be looking for work in different sectors or occupations than non-participants. Over half (54%) of unemployed follow-up participants were looking for work in new sectors that they had not worked in before.

In the qualitative research, some participants were encouraged by Restart Employment Advisors to look at sectors and roles that they had previously not considered, which helped to broaden participants' perception of what was possible for them. This helped them feel encouraged about being able to find work.

Participants were more likely to report a higher life satisfaction than non-participants. Participants compared to non-participants were more likely to report high life satisfaction between 7-10 on a 10 point scale (41% vs. 31%). Longitudinal analysis also showed an increase in life satisfaction between waves, with over a third of participants (37%) reporting an increase.

Participants were more likely than non-participants to have received different types of support over the last 12 months. There is evidence that support was tailored to address participants' needs, although highly skilled participants were less likely to feel adequately supported. The qualitative research found that low-skill, low-confidence participants, with few barriers, reported the support offered through the Restart Scheme was suitable and helped improve their job-searching skills and confidence. Participants who had been on the Restart Scheme for the full 12 months and not offered new types of support felt that **the scheme did not offer enough content for this length of time.**

Nearly two thirds (64%) of participants found the Restart Scheme useful at wave 1 (33% of survey participants found it very useful and 30% found it somewhat useful). Findings from the survey suggested that participants with higher qualifications, those who had worked more since leaving school and the self-employed were less likely to find the Restart Scheme useful. The case study research also suggested that those with higher qualifications, more extensive work histories, or more specialist skills were less likely to attribute positive outcomes to the scheme, and less likely to be satisfied with the support received.

The qualitative research identified the key factors that enabled participants to achieve intermediate outcomes including increased confidence and motivation, increased job-search self-efficacy, increased skills, and reduced job selectivity.

- The primary factor was individual participants' interactions with their Employment Advisor. High quality interactions were characterised by a consistent advisor, with appropriate skills, who understood the participant's needs and tailored support appropriately using an individual action plan.

- The second factor was a holistic tailored programme of individual support. This included a range of activities designed to meet individual needs, including activities such as wellbeing support, debt management, vocational training, support with job search and support with transport costs.

- Holistic tailored support was enabled by providers being able to access wider partnerships so that participants could be referred to suitable training programmes or external support services.

- A good relationship between Jobcentre Plus (JCP) and the provider was a key factor in ensuring that participants engaged with the Restart Scheme, particularly where there was a risk of disengagement.

The case study research identified that these intermediate outcomes enabled some participants to achieve employment outcomes. An additional driver for employment outcomes was when providers referred participants to employers by, for example, arranging interview days or forwarding CVs.

5.5 Considerations for future delivery

5.5.1 Referrals

The broadening of the Restart Scheme's eligibility criteria was necessary to ensure the scheme reached those people who needed support to find work in the context of a changing labour market. However, this research suggests that there were some people on the scheme whose needs were too challenging to be addressed through the support on offer. This was particularly the case for the longer-term unemployed and those with more serious physical and mental health conditions. **DWP should explore whether more targeted referral criteria in future programmes would allow for more effective support.**

There were particular challenges in referrals to the Restart Scheme as it was implemented alongside a range of other programmes, where it was not always clear what the best pathway was for individuals. Although DWP shared guidance setting out referral criteria and organised expert calls, this research suggested that some JCP and provider staff did not have a consistent understanding of who should be referred to the Restart Scheme. In future, **DWP should consider how to ensure that guidance on referral criteria is clearly communicated to all JCP and provider staff to ensure individuals are referred onto the right scheme for their needs.**

5.5.2 Variations in participant experience

The use of Customer Service Standards (CSS) was an important way to ensure participants received a minimum level of service. However, this research suggests that different participants on the Restart Scheme had very different experiences. The emphasis in the Restart Scheme on tailoring by local area and individual tailoring means that this is to be expected. However, while some participants were very happy with the support received, there were some participants who reported not having regular appointments as set out in CSS, or having fortnightly meetings that were quick check ins rather than in-depth support. There was no evidence from the research, that this was more likely to happen to any type of participant, for example those with more complex barriers.

DWP should further review the effectiveness of CSS and performance management to ensure future programmes meet the needs of all participants. This could include considering other dimensions of CSS to measure, for example, the duration of

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appointments as well as the frequency. DWP could also consider publishing the results of customer satisfaction surveys in addition to outcome data.

5.5.3   Participants with health needs

This research suggests that further consideration is needed on how to support people with health needs within future employment support provision. This includes earlier identification of health needs to ensure people are on the right scheme. While the Restart Scheme was designed as an employment support programme, there was a very high number of participants with both physical and mental health conditions. This research shows that while providers adapted their offer to attempt to meet the needs of participants with health needs, these participants were generally less effectively supported. **This suggests that DWP should ask providers to further improve their health offer.**

5.5.4   Highly skilled participants

Further consideration is also needed on how the more highly skilled or those with specialist qualifications can be effectively supported on contracted employment programmes. Providers identified that these participants still had substantial barriers that were preventing them accessing employment. However, these participants were much less likely to feel that the support they received was relevant or useful. Some employers also wanted candidates with higher qualifications or specialist skills so more tailored support for this group may also create further opportunity for employer engagement. **There was some evidence that deploying specialist advisors could improve the quality of support for these participants, however, the needs of these participants may need to be reviewed more widely.**

5.5.5   Recruitment, training, and retention of advisors

The quality of the Employment Advisor's relations ip wit   individual participants was central to whether outcomes were achieved. This means that it is essential to ensure that suitably qualified staff are recruited, trained, and retained on employability programmes. The context of the Restart Scheme starting at a time of high competition for experienced employment support professionals meant that there were challenges in staff recruitment and retention. There was some evidence within this research of providers responding to these challenges by, for example, creating more 'on the job' training, developing internal progression routes, and developing specialist roles. It would be valuable if this good practice could be shared by the ReAct partnership or its successor in future programmes.

5.5.6   Provider communication with JCP

Relationships between JCP and providers were generally positive and improved over time despite some concerns about the timeliness and frequency of communication. Good relationships between JCP and providers were important in ensuring a positive participant experience, enabling processes such as referrals, warm handovers, and processes to keep those participants at risk of disengagement

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on the scheme. However, some of these processes need further consideration. The approach of relying on participants to relay information between JCP and providers did not always work effectively. In particular, there is a need to consider how JCP manage participants' return from Restart or future external programmes. This could include a light touch process to share customer exit plans. Further consideration is also needed from DWP on how to effectively manage the end-to-end process when doubts are raised about participant engagement or compliance with mandatory activities.

5.5.7   Partnership working

Good partnership working between providers and stakeholders such as LEPs, combined and local authorities, education and training providers, and wider support services was important to ensuring a good participant experience. Limitations to partnership working were also a significant factor in why local tailoring was not fully developed across case study areas.

There were extrinsic factors that made partnership working more difficult as Restart providers were dependent on the quality of existing networks and support structures. However, the research also identified potential enablers for good partnership working that could be considered in future programmes. This included more consideration of partnership working at the design phase (potentially including service level agreements with providers), and more mapping of provision and use of labour market intelligence by providers. DWP may also wish to consider taking a more active role in stakeholder management, for example by sharing aggregated data or convening Local Engagement Meetings (LEMs).

5.5.8   Employer engagement

Further consideration is also needed on how providers engage with employers. There was evidence in the research of effective employer engagement, however this tended to be at a national rather than local level. Effective employer engagement also tended to focus on large scale recruitment activities. This was successful and enabled sustainable employment outcomes for some participants. It also worked well for large employers who wanted a single point of contact across different areas and different employment programmes.

There was much less evidence of successful employer engagement at a local level, with smaller or specialist employers or on behalf of individual participants. This meant that some participants, particularly the more highly skilled or those who needed adjustments for health conditions or caring responsibilities, were less likely to find suitable jobs. **Consideration needs to be given as to whether future programmes should build in a wider range of employer activities or whether those participants with more specialist needs should be directed to a different support pathway.**

5.6 Effectiveness of the Restart Scheme

In summary, we found that the Restart Scheme was generally effective in achieving its objectives of moving people into or towards sustainable employment, having a positive effect on participants' wellbeing and life satisfaction, and moving people into different sectors. The scheme was more effective for some groups, particularly people with low skills and low confidence, as well as those with less significant barriers. The most effective mechanism for support were high quality interactions between Employment Advisors and participants. There was some evidence that participants received a tailored service based on their individual needs but less evidence of tailoring by local area.

However, there are some key considerations particularly for the planning of future delivery. Firstly, this research consistently showed that the Restart Scheme was less able to support people with health conditions. This is particularly significant in the context of rising levels of economic inactivity which means that future employment support programmes will need to be equipped to support high numbers of people with health conditions. Further action is therefore needed to ensure that people with health conditions and disabilities receive effective flexible employment support where provision is joined up with health services.

Secondly, a key consideration is whether the Restart Scheme's model of payment by results, and the implementation of CSS encouraged provider innovation and equalised support across all participants. It is encouraging that there was no evidence within this research that harder to help participants were "parked" so that providers could focus on achieving easier outcomes. This may suggest that the model of payment by results broadly worked. The drive to ensure minimum service level standards through CSS is also to be welcomed, but this research suggests that further refining of the model is needed to ensure all participants receive a high-quality service tailored to their needs.

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6. Appendices

6.1 Job-search self-efficacy score statements

Job-search self-efficacy is theorised in job search literature to be linked with gaining employment, so is a useful measure for employment programmes. A job-search self-efficacy score is calculated for participants by averaging their level of reported confidence with a list of work-search skills.[14] These skills are:

- Making a good list of all the skills that you have, and which can be used to find a job

- Talking to friends and other contacts to find out about potential employers who need your skills

- Talking to friends and other contacts to discover promising job openings that are suitable for you

- Completing a good job application and CV

- Contacting and persuading potential employers to consider you for a job

- Making the best impression and getting your points across in a job interview

- Searching for jobs online (using computers, Smart phones, internet, etc.)

- Applying for jobs online (using computers, Smart phones, internet, etc.)

- Getting help in order to become familiar with a new job

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[14] Teye-Kwadjo, E. The Job-Search Self-Efficacy (JSSE) Scale: an Item Response Theory Investigation. Int J Appl Posit Psychol 6, 301–314 (2021). https://doi.org/10.1007/s41042-021-00050-2

6.2 Technical details: Longitudinal cohort study

This section sets out the design of the quantitative surveys and the qualitative research for the longitudinal cohort study.

6.2.1 Questionnaire development

The quantitative survey was developed with input from DWP and was piloted at each wave with 30 participants in order to test comprehension, length, and sample eligibility assumptions. The questionnaire was found to work well, and participants were content to answer the questions. Minor routing changes were made where necessary.

6.2.2 Sample design

The sample frame used for this research was DWP's data on those who had been referred to the Restart Scheme in the targeted period. A sample was provided by DWP, which was split between 2 groups:

- Participants who were enrolled onto the Restart Scheme between 1 January 2022 and 31 March 2022 inclusive (c. 66,329)

- People referred to the Restart Scheme between 1 December 2021 and 31 March 2022 inclusive, who did not go on to start; the 'non-participants' (c. 15,849)

6.2.3 Quantitative method and analysis

This research was conducted in two waves. Wave 1 fieldwork was conducted between 11 April and 31 May 2022 and wave 2 fieldwork was conducted between 8 February and 19 April 2023.

Two groups of participants took part in the wave 2 research. These were 'follow-up' participants, who responded to the survey at wave 1 and wave 2, and 'boost' participants who responded only at wave 2.

The quantitative survey was undertaken with a multimode approach using online surveys and Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI). The online survey was initiated first, with emails sent to participants with a link to complete the survey online. The telephone survey was then initiated to collect the responses of those who had not responded to the online survey. Emails were sent to participants at intervals throughout the fieldwork to remind them about the survey.

At wave 1, 5,285 responses were achieved, 4,282 online interviews and 1,003 Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews At wave 2, 3,698 survey responses were achieved, not including the pilot interviews: 1,957 online interviews and 1,741 Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews. This includes 1,541 'follow-up participants' who responded to the survey at wave 1 and wave 2, 1,522 'boost' participants who responded at just wave 2 and 635 non-participants who only took part at wave 2.

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The survey data was weighted to match the initial sample profile by age and gender of Restart participants and non-participants.

Table 6.1 Survey data weighting

	Gender	Unweighted	Weighted
Participants	Female	46%	42%
	Male	54%	58%
Non-participants	Female	45%	36%
	Male	55%	64%

	Age	Unweighted	Weighted
Participants	Under 25	3%	5%
	25 - 49	56%	66%
	50 - 65	40%	28%
	Over 65	1%	1%
Non-participants	Under 25	8%	10%
	25 - 49	63%	70%
	50 - 65	27%	19%
	Over 65	2%	1%

The responses from those who took part in the quantitative survey at wave 1 and wave 2 were analysed longitudinally to see the changes or similarities between their responses between waves. The responses of all those who took part at wave 1 and 2 were analysed by key subgroups to understand the differences in responses between different types of people.

6.2.4   Qualitative method and analysis

The qualitative sample was recruited from survey participants who agreed to be recontacted for further research at the end of the quantitative survey.

The qualitative interviews were conducted over the telephone, Microsoft Teams, or face-to-face by members of the Ipsos internal research team or external professional moderators. Interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes. At wave 1, 30 qualitative interviews were conducted with Restart participants, 24 single interviews and 6 couple interviews, in which the partner of the Restart participant also took part in the interview. At wave 2, 38 interviews were held with Restart participants (32) and non-participants (6), 8 of whom had also taken part in a qualitative interview at wave 1. Twenty interviews were held face-to-face and 18 virtually over the telephone or Microsoft Teams. The topic guides used in these interviews were developed with input from DWP.

The audio from qualitative interviews was recorded with informed consent from the participants. Information provided by participants in their interview was entered into an analysis grid in Excel with key research questions and points of interest as columns, and a participant's responses as rows. Analysis was then undertaken to understand the range of experiences that Restart participants and non-participants

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had and how the experiences of people with similar profiles may present the same themes.

6.2.5 Regression results

This table includes variables for types of support received and characteristics.

Table 6.2 Regression results

	Effect	Term	Description	Odds	Estimate	Std. Error	Statistics	
1	fixed	(Intercept)			-0.41	0.08	-5.45	0
2	fixed	w2c5_6_11	Skills assessment	0.9	-0.11	0.11	-0.98	0.33
3	fixed	w2c5_6_21	Training existing skills/quals	0.9	-0.11	0.13	-0.84	0.4
4	fixed	w2c5_6_31	Training new skills	0.66	-0.41	0.12	-3.48	0
5	fixed	w2c5_6_51	Help job opps	1.03	0.03	0.1	0.25	0.8
6	fixed	w2c5_6_61	Support CV/covering letter	0.76	-0.27	0.1	-2.72	0.01
7	fixed	w2c5_6_71	Interview preparation	1.26	0.23	0.11	2.07	0.04
8	fixed	w2c5_6_81	Personal career action plan	0.8	-0.23	0.11	-2.11	0.03
9	fixed	w2c5_6_91	Advisor talking to employers	0.63	-0.46	0.12	-3.85	0
10	fixed	w2c5_6_111	Referral employer information session	1.19	0.17	0.13	1.33	0.18
11	fixed	w2c5_6_121	Attended job fair	0.77	-0.26	0.1	-2.66	0.01
12	fixed	w2c5_6_131	Job Placement	1.03	0.03	0.15	0.18	0.86
13	fixed	w2c5_6_141	Information on self-employment	1.34	0.29	0.13	2.18	0.03
14	fixed	w2c5_6_151	Improve confidence/well being	0.75	-0.29	0.11	-2.61	0.01
15	fixed	w2c5_6_161	Referrals to general support	0.85	-0.17	0.11	-1.47	0.14

						Std.		
16	fixed	w2c5_6_171	Advisor providing ongoing post-employment support	5.75	1.75	0.12	14.86	0

Table 6.3 Regression results

	Effect	Term	Description	Odds	Estimate	Std. Error	Statistic	P- Value
1	fixed	(Intercept)			-1.09	0.18	-5.96	0.00
2	fixed	w2e42	Female	1.39	0.33	0.09	3.69	0.00
3	fixed	carer1	Carer	0.71	-0.34	0.11	-3.06	0.00
4	fixed	llti1	Phys or mental condition	0.81	-0.21	0.09	-2.32	0.02
5	fixed	llti_impact1	Health conditions Reduce ability a lot	0.42	-0.86	0.13	-6.71	0.00
6	fixed	child1	Has child(ren)	1.79	0.58	0.10	5.95	0.00
7	fixed	efl1	English not first language	1.37	0.31	0.11	2.97	0.00
8	fixed	educlev1	Degree+	1.53	0.43	0.15	2.88	0.00
9	fixed	educlev2	A/AS	1.29	0.25	0.14	1.82	0.07
10	fixed	educlev3	GCSE equiv	1.11	0.10	0.15	0.68	0.50
11	fixed	educlev4	Other	1.00	0.00	0.18	-0.02	0.99
12	fixed	w2c5_6_61	Training new skills	0.79	-0.24	0.09	-2.66	0.01
13	fixed	w2c5_6_141	Support CV/covering letter	1.60	0.47	0.13	3.69	0.00
14	fixed	w2c5_6_31	Information on self-employment	0.71	-0.34	0.10	-3.28	0.00
15	fixed	w2a4_rec2	About equal working/not-working	1.50	0.40	0.18	2.31	0.02
16	fixed	w2a4_rec3	Worked solidly, 1-2 breaks	2.23	0.80	0.16	5.14	0.00
17	fixed	w2a4_rec4	Worked solidly, no break	2.14	0.76	0.17	4.40	0.00
18	fixed	w2a4_rec5	Unknown work history	1.28	0.25	0.18	1.33	0.18
19	fixed	w2c5_6_121	Attended job fair	1.14	0.13	0.21	0.64	0.53

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20	fixed	NVQ4_aged_ 16_64_2021_ c	NVQ4 level qualified in local area	1.00	0.00	0.01	0.60	0.55
21	fixed	w2a4_rec2:w 2c5_6_121	About equal working/not-working	0.59	-0.52	0.29	-1.79	0.07
22	fixed	w2a4_rec3:w 2c5_6_121	Worked solidly, 1-2 breaks	0.58	-0.54	0.25	-2.15	0.03
23	fixed	w2a4_rec4:w 2c5_6_121	Worked solidly, no break	0.55	-0.59	0.29	-2.07	0.04
24	fixed	w2a4_rec5:w 2c5_6_121	Unknown work history	0.65	-0.42	0.31	-1.38	0.17

6.2.6 Additional wave 1 data

Figure 6.1 Attitudes towards work at wave 1
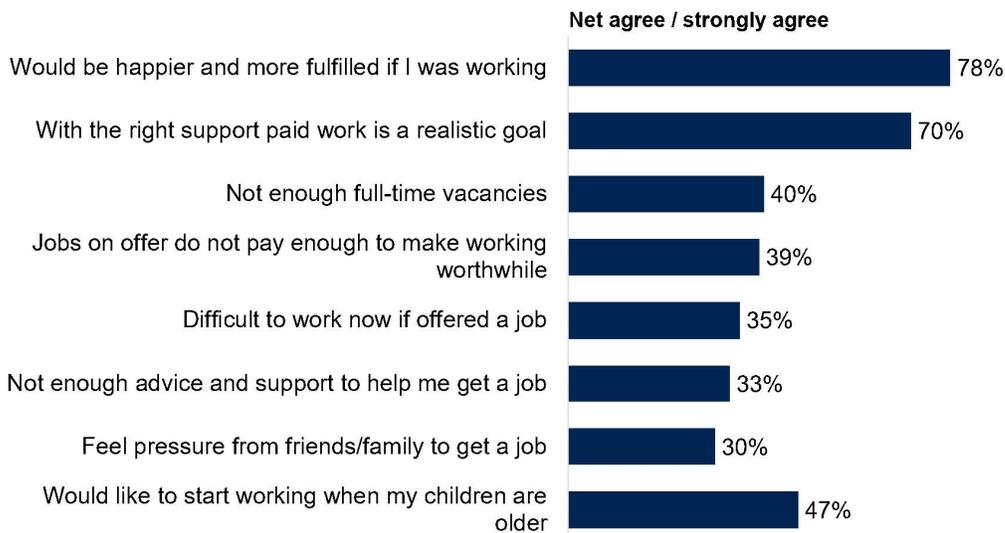
Net agree / strongly agree

Statement	%
Would be happier and more fulfilled if I was working	78%
With the right support paid work is a realistic goal	70%
Not enough full-time vacancies	40%
Jobs on offer do not pay enough to make working worthwhile	39%
Difficult to work now if offered a job	35%
Not enough advice and support to help me get a job	33%
Feel pressure from friends/family to get a job	30%
Would like to start working when my children are older	47%

B1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements?

Unweighted base, all Restart participants who are currently unemployed at wave 1 (3866), 'I would like to start working when my children are older' was only asked to those with children under 11 (762)

Percentages shown are those who strongly agree or agree with each statement.

Figure 6.2 Confidence with job searching skills at wave 1
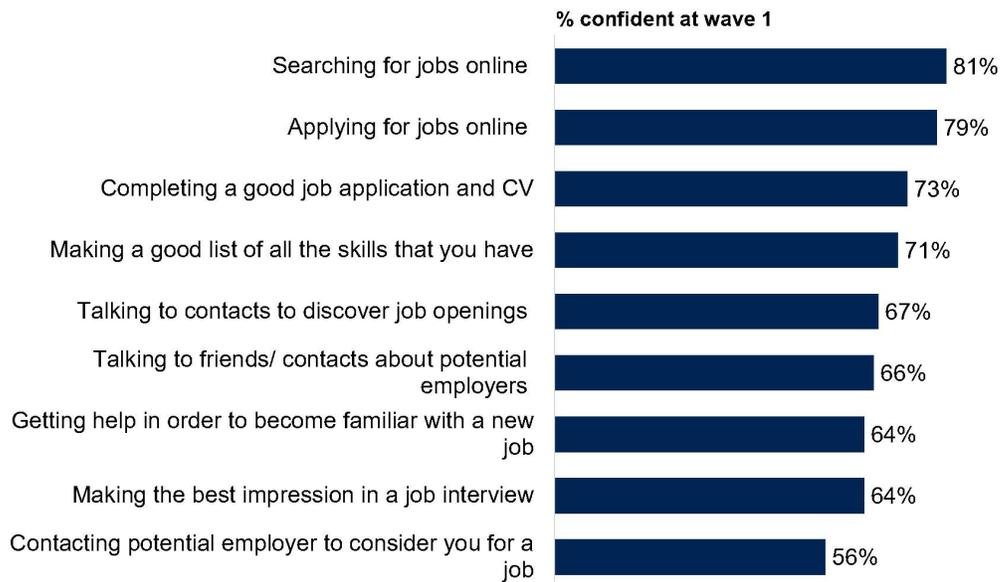
% confident at wave 1

Searching for jobs online	81%
Applying for jobs online	79%
Completing a good job application and CV	73%
Making a good list of all the skills that you have	71%
Talking to contacts to discover job openings	67%
Talking to friends/ contacts about potential employers	66%
Getting help in order to become familiar with a new job	64%
Making the best impression in a job interview	64%
Contacting potential employer to consider you for a job	56%

D1a. How confident do you feel about doing the following successfully?

Unweighted base, all Restart participants at wave 1 (5285)

Figure 6.3 Life satisfaction at wave 1

■ High　　■ Medium　　■ Low　　■ Don't know/Refused

High	Medium	Low	Don't know/Refused
36%	25%	26%	14%

D5. Thinking about all aspects of your life, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is "not at all" and 10 is "completely"
Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?

Unweighted base, all Restart participants at wave 1 (5285)

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Figure 6.4 Top sectors respondents considered moving into at wave 1

Sector	%
Administration/Office including public sector and human resources	21%
Customer Service and Retail	17%
Education / Teaching	11%
Hospitality Leisure and Tourism	10%
Care/Childcare/Social Care	10%
Information Technology and Telecoms	10%
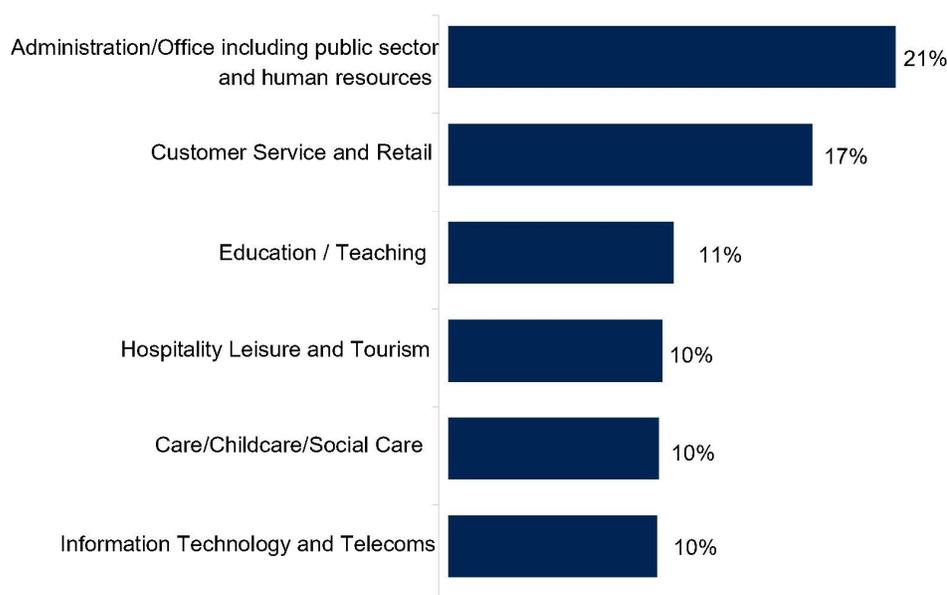
A6/A7 Sectors now looking for work in that not worked in before? Those with 10% or less are not shown on the chart but include financial services, energy and utilities industry, sports and recreation, electricians services, agriculture, beauty and therapy and chemical and nuclear industry.
Unweighted base, All respondents who have ever worked but currently unemployed and looking to work in sectors they've not worked in before (2110)

6.2.7   Research tools: Longitudinal cohort survey

Wave 1 Longitudinal cohort survey

Introduction and Consent

Ipsos is conducting a survey on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The aim is to find out more about people's experiences of looking for work and being part of the Restart Scheme. You should have received a letter or email about this survey.

It is really important for us to speak to you about your experiences whether or not you are in work or claiming Universal Credit.

Your answers will help DWP understand the experiences, circumstances, and needs of people who are looking for work and the support they need.

The survey should take about 20 minutes to complete depending on your answers.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and you can change your mind at any time. Participating will not affect your benefits in any way, now, or in the future.

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Your survey answers will be combined with the answers from other people taking part and used for research purposes only. Any feedback you give us will be entirely confidential and your responses will be treated anonymously.

If you would like to read the Privacy Notice beforehand you can access it online at
INSERT LINK

Please click 'next' if you are happy to complete the survey.

ASK ALL

mailto:**S2. Are you currently receiving Universal Credit payments?**
1. Yes [CONTINUE]
2. No, but I have in the past [CONTINUE]
3. No, I haven't received it before but I have had other interactions with DWP [CONTINUE]
4. No, I haven't received it before or had any interactions with DWP [THANK AND CLOSE]

ASK ALL

S3. Are you currently on the Restart Scheme run by the DWP?
The Restart Scheme gives Universal Credit claimants who have been out of work for at least 9 months support to find jobs in their local area.
1. Yes [CONTINUE]
2. No, but I was in the past [CONTINUE]
3. No, I have never been part of DWP's Restart Scheme [THANK AND CLOSE]

ASK IF SAMPLE=MISSING

E2. How many children aged under the age of 19 live in your household?
1. None
2. 1
3. 2
4. 3 or more

ASK ALL WITH CHILDREN E2=2-4. SINGLECODE

E3. And how old is your youngest child?
1. Under 5 years old
2. 5-10 years old
3. 11-15 years old
4. 16-18 years old
5. 19+
99. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL, MULTICODE EXCEPT 1 and 99

E10. Do you have any caring responsibilities?
By caring responsibilities, we mean caring for anyone who needs help with everyday life due to illness, disability or old age. This could include help with grocery shopping, bathing, dressing, laundry, etc.

1. No
2. Yes – for my Spouse / Civil Partner/ Partner
3. Yes – for my Parent(s)
4. Yes – for another family member
5. Yes – for a friend
6. Yes- for a child with a health condition or disability
99. Prefer not to say

Section A: Employment Status and History

ASK ALL, SINGLE CODE

The next few questions are about your work related experiences.

A . W ic of t e se best describes your current work status…?

ADD IF NECESSARY: **if you are both self-employed and work for an employer, please answer with whichever is your main source of income**
1. Self employed
2. Working for an employer in paid employment
3. Not working in paid employment
98. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL, SINGLE CODE

A2. How long have you been IF UNEMPLOYED (A1=3) [unemployed] IF EMPLOYED OR SELF-EMPLOYED (A1=1-2) [doing this job]?

1. Less than 3 months
2. Between 3 – 6 months
3. Between 7 – 12 months
4. Between 13 – 23 months
5. Between 2 – 3 years
6. Longer than 3 years
7. [UNEMPLOYED ONLY = I have never worked]
8. Not applicable
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL WHO HAVE EVER WORKED (A2 is NOT 7)
SINGLE CODE. REVERSE CODES 1-5

A4. Which of the following best describes the time you have spent doing paid work since leaving education?
1. Spent most of my time not working
2. Spent about as much time working as not working
3. Worked solidly with one or two breaks
4. Worked solidly without a break until recently
99. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL WHO HAVE EVER WORKED (A2 IS NOT 7)

A5.

[THOSE WHO ARE UNEMPLOYED =**What was your job title in the last job you had?**]

ASK ALL WHO HAVE EVER WORKED (A2 IS NOT 7)

A6. Thinking about your past jobs, which industries or sectors did you work in?
1. Customer Service and Retail
2. Food and Drink
3. Administration/Office including public sector and human resources
4. Hospitality Leisure and Tourism
5. Care/Childcare/Social Care
6. Manufacturing & Engineering
7. Voluntary, Charity & Social Enterprise
8. Education / Teaching
9. Automotive Industry, passenger Transport, and logistics
10. Manufacturing & Engineering
11. Arts and Media
12. Information Technology and Telecoms
13. Electricians and Building Services
14. Health Industry
15. Agriculture and Land-Based Services
16. Security and Safety
17. Beauty and Therapy
18. Chemical, Oil and Nuclear Industry
19. Facilities Management
20. Financial Services
21. Sports & Recreation
22. Other public sector
23. Other private sector
24. Other voluntary sector
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL WHO ARE NOT CURRENTLY WORKING

A7. And which sector/sectors are you now looking for work in?
1. Customer Service and Retail
2. Food and Drink
3. Administration/Office including public sector and human resources
4. Hospitality Leisure and Tourism
5. Care/Childcare/Social Care
6. Manufacturing & Engineering
7. Voluntary, Charity & Social Enterprise
8. Education / Teaching
9. Automotive Industry, passenger Transport, and logistics
10. Manufacturing & Engineering
11. Arts and Media
12. Information Technology and Telecoms
13. Electricians and Building Services

14. Health Industry
15. Agriculture and Land-Based Services
16. Security and Safety
17. Beauty and Therapy
18. Chemical, Oil and Nuclear Industry
19. Facilities Management
20. Financial Services
21. Sports & Recreation
22. Other public sector
23. Other private sector
24. Other voluntary sector
25. Not looking for work
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

Section B: Proximity to labour market and attitudes to work

ONLY ASK UNEMPLOYED

B1.   To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements?
1. Strongly agree
2. Somewhat agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Don't know
7. Not applicable

RANDOMISE ORDER OF STATEMENTSONLY SHOW FOR THOSE WHO ARE
UNEMPLOYED (A1=3)
1. Jobs on offer do not pay enough to make working financially worthwhile
2. I would be happier and more fulfilled if I was working
3. It would be difficult for me to work now, even if I was offered a job
4. I feel under pressure from my family and friends to get a job
5. There just aren't enough full-time vacancies for everyone at the moment
6. There isn't enough advice and support available to help me get a job
7. [CHILDREN UNDER 11 ONLY] I would like to start working when my children are older
8. With the right support paid work is a realistic goal for me within the next 6 months

ASK ALL

B3. [IF EMPLOYED **– Thinking back to before you had your current job (**A1=1 or 2**)] Can you think of anything that [**UNEMPLOYED = makes (A1=3)**] [**EMPLOYED = made**] it difficult for you to get a job?**

[EMPLOYMENT AND EXTERNAL REASONS], RANDOMISED
1. [IF HAVE CHILDREN UNDER 16] Childcare
2. My physical or mental health or learning difficulty
3. My age
4. [IF HAVE CARING RESPONSIBILITIES E10 = 2-6:] My caring responsibilities
5. Lack of relevant skills/ qualifications / experience
6. Commute to work (either distance to travel, time to travel, cost of travel, or access to transport)

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7. Something else (please specify)
8. None of these

B4. What, if anything [UNEMPLOYED = would help] [EMPLOYED = has helped] you to find paid work?
1. Support and training around finding/ getting a new job (e.g. interview skills, CV skills, communication skills)
2. Help with the cost of travel to and from work
3. Support to continue/start further or higher education
4. Support and training with work-related skills (e.g. spoken or written English; IT skills; job-specific skills)
5. Support to manage a physical or mental health condition
6. Support with using technology/internet
7. Access to digital technology and/or the internet
8. Access to affordable/ good quality childcare
9. Support to manage other caring responsibilities
10. Support to find suitable housing
11. Something else (please specify)
12. None of these
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

Section C: Interactions with Restart

The following questions are about your experiences of the Restart Scheme.

C1. Before joining the Restart Scheme did you have a telephone call / meeting with both an advisor from the Restart Scheme and your Work Coach?
1. Yes
2. No
98. Can't remember

C5. Have you received any of the following support through the <u>Restart Scheme since starting on [INSERT DATE STARTED RESTART]</u>?
1. Skills assessment
2. Help finding job opportunities
3. Support to develop your CV or cover letters
4. Interview preparation
5. Writing personal career action plan (also known as Job Finding Action Plan)
6. Referral to an information session with a prospective employer
7. Attended a job fair
8. None of the above
   98. Don't know
   99. Prefer not to say

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C6. Have you received any of the following support since starting the Restart Scheme on [INSERT DATE STARTED RESTART]?

1. Training to develop existing skills or qualifications
2. Training to develop new skills or qualifications
3. Support to improve confidence or wellbeing (e.g. digital or in person) s
4. A job placement
5. Information and support to become self-employed
6. Referrals to other types of support or organisations (e.g. mental health, housing, financial matters, English lessons)
7. The advisor talking to employers and other organisations on your behalf where appropriate (e.g. arranging an interview)
8. Advisor providing ongoing support after you had started a new job
9. Anything else (please write in)
10. None of the above
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

Section D: Outcomes

D1a. How confident do you feel about doing the following successfully?

1. Very confident
2. Fairly confident
3. Neither confident nor not confident
4. Not very confident
5. Not at all confident
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

1. Making a good list of all the skills that you have, and which can be used to find a job
2. Talking to friends and other contacts to find out about potential employers who need your skills
3. Talking to friends and other contacts to discover promising job openings that are suitable for you
4. Completing a good job application and CV
5. Contacting and persuading potential employers to consider you for a job
6. Making the best impression and getting your points across in a job interview
7. Searching for jobs online (using computers, Smart phones, internet, etc.)
8. Applying for jobs online (using computers, Smart phones, internet, etc.)
9. Getting help in order to become familiar with a new job

D2.   Have any of the following happened as a result of the actions you have taken since you started the Restart Scheme on [INSERT START DATE]?

1. You have found a job [ASK IF A1 = 1 OR 2]
2. Taken up voluntary work

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3. You have gained / will gain a qualification / certificate that will improve your job prospects
4. None of these
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

D3. How useful have the interactions you have had through the Restart Scheme been in helping you to find work?
1. Very useful
2. Somewhat useful
3. Not useful
4. Not at all useful
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

D5. Thinking about all aspects of your life, on a scale of   to   , w e re   is "not at all" and   is "completely"

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Refused
Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?													

Section E: Demographics and data linking

We are approaching the end of the survey. These final questions are to help us analyse the survey results.

All of your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and DWP will not be able to identify you from the anonymised responses that Ipsos supply.

E6. What is your highest level of qualification?
1. Degree level or above (including postgraduate qualifications)
2. 2 or more A-Levels / NVQ Level 3 / BTEC Level 3 Diploma or equivalent
3. 1 A-Level or equivalent / 5 or more GCSEs of grade A*-C or equivalent / NVQ Level 2 / BTEC level 2 diploma or equivalent
4. GCSEs of less than 5 A*-C or equivalent / NVQ Level 1
5. Something else (please specify)
6. No qualifications
98. Don't know

E7. How would you describe your ethnic background?
1. White [Expandable Header]
    - English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
    - Irish
    - Gypsy or Irish Traveller
    - Any other White background
2. Mixed / multiple ethnic groups [Expandable Header]
    - White and Black Caribbean
    - White and Black African
    - White and Asian
    - Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background
3. Asian / Asian British [Expandable Header]
    - Indian
    - Pakistani
    - Bangladeshi
    - Chinese
    - Any other Asian background
4. Black / African / Caribbean / Black British [Expandable Header]
    - African
    - Caribbean
    - Any other Black / African / Caribbean background
5. Other ethnic group [Expandable Header]
    - Arab
    - Any other ethnic group, please write in _____
99. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL, MULTI CODE WITH EXCLUSIONS

E8. Which of these best describe your living situation?
1. Living alone [EXCLUSIVE]
2. Living with partner [CANNOT COMBINE 2 AND 3]
3. Living with spouse/civil partner [CANNOT COMBINE 2 AND 3]
4. Living with parents
5. Living with friends/other adults / family (i.e. not parents)
6. Living with dependent children (under the age of 16, or under the age of 20 and still in full-time education or training, below university or equivalent level)
99.   Prefer not to say

ASK ALL, SINGLE CODE

E9. Which of these best describes the accommodation you are living in at the moment?
1. Private rented
2. Rented from a council or local authority
3. Rented from a Housing Association
4. Being bought on a mortgage/bank loan
5. Shared ownership where you pay part rent and part mortgage
6. Owned outright
7. Living with friends/relatives and paying some rent
8. Living with friends/ relatives and not paying any rent
9. Living in temporary or sheltered accommodation or rough sleeping
10. Something else (specify)
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL, SINGLE CODE

E11. Is English your first language?
1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL, MULTICODE EXCEPT 7, 98,99

E12. How, if at all, do you access the internet?
1. Using home broadband on laptop/tablet
2. Smartphone using Wi-Fi
3. Smartphone using mobile data
4. Public computer e.g. at Jobcentre Plus or library
5. Via family or friend connections
6. At work
7. I don't have access to the internet [EXCLUSIVE]
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL WHO CODE YES (E12=1-6), SINGLE CODE

E13. Would you feel able to use the internet to access government services if they were available online?
1. Yes, able to
2. Yes, able to but with help
3. No, not able
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL, SINGLE CODE

We would now like to ask you some questions about your health.

E14. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?
Please include any intermittent conditions or illnesses, lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more.
1. Yes – physical condition
2. Yes – mental health condition
3. Yes – both physical and mental health condition
4. No
99. I prefer not to say

ASK IF YES TO HEALTH CONDITIONS (E14=1-3), SINGLE CODE

E15. Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?
1. Yes, a lot
2. Yes, a little
3. Not at all
99. I prefer not to say

E16. And was there anything else that you would like to feedback about the Restart Scheme?

WRITE IN

1. Nothing to add

Section F: Thank you and data linking

On behalf of Ipsos and the Department of Work and Pensions we would like to thank you very much for your time.

F1. Ipsos and our partner research organisation may wish to contact you to take part in further research on this topic in the next 24 months. Would you be happy to take part in further research? You do not have to commit to anything now, just indicate a willingness to be contacted again.

1. Yes – Ipsos can contact me
2. Yes – Another research organisation can contact me
3. No

F2. For research and statistical purposes only, the Department of Work and Pensions would like to link your answers to other information they hold so they can further analyse the survey.

Your responses will remain completely confidential, and your dealings with DWP will not be affected in any way. The linking is done with a unique survey ID number that retains your anonymity. Are you happy to let DWP link your survey responses to benefit claim information they have about you for survey analysis? You can change your mind at any time by contacting Ipsos at: UK-PA-DWP-Restart-Evaluation@ipsos.com
1. Yes
2. No

That is the end of the interview. Thank you very much for giving us your time today.

Wave 2 Longitudinal cohort survey

Sample Type	Name	
S_type=1	Follow up participants	Restart participants who also took part at wave 1
S_type=2	Boost participants	Restart participants only taking part at wave 2
S_type=3	Non-participants	Non-participants not on the Restart Scheme

Introduction and Consent

Boost (S_type=2): Ipsos is conducting a survey on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The aim is to find out more about peoples' experiences of looking for work and being part of the Restart Scheme. You should have received a letter or email about this survey.

Non-parts (S_type=3): Ipsos is conducting a survey on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The aim is to find out more about peoples' experiences of looking for work. You should have received a letter or email about this survey.

Follow-up (S_type=1): You previously took part in a survey about your experience of looking for work and being on the Restart Scheme. We would like to invite you to take part in another survey about your experiences.

SHOW TO ALL
It is really important for us to speak to you about your experiences whether or not you are in work or claiming Universal Credit.

Your answers will help DWP understand the experiences, circumstances, and needs of people who are looking for work and the support they need.

The survey should take about [FOLLOW-UP (S_TYPE=1) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) 20 minutes] [BOOST (S_TYPE=2) 25 minutes] to complete depending on your answers.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and you can change your mind at any time. Participating will not affect your benefits in any way, now, or in the future.

Your survey answers will be combined with the answers from other people taking part and used for research purposes only. Any feedback you give us will be entirely confidential and your responses will be treated anonymously.

If you would like to read the Privacy Notice beforehand you can access it online at
INSERT LINK

Please click 'next' if you are happy to complete the survey
ASK ALL

S2. Are you currently receiving Universal Credit payments?
1. Yes [CONTINUE]
2. No, but I have in the past [CONTINUE]
3. No, I haven't received it before but I have had other interactions with DWP [CONTINUE]
4. [BOOST (S_TYPE=2) / NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) ONLY] No, I haven't received it before or had any interactions with DWP [THANK AND CLOSE]

ASK ALL

S3. Are you currently on the Restart Scheme run by the DWP?
The Restart Scheme gives Universal Credit claimants who have been out of work for at least 9 months support to find jobs in their local area.

1. Yes [CONTINUE IF FOLLOW-UP (S_TYPE=1) OR BOOST (S_TYPE=2)] [CLOSE IF NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3)]
2. No, but I was in the past [CONTINUE IF FOLLOW-UP (S_TYPE=1) OR BOOST (S_TYPE=2)] [CLOSE IF NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3)]
3. [BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3)] ONLY] No, I have never been part of DWP's Restart Scheme [THANK AND CLOSE IF BOOST (S_TYPE=2)] [CONTINUE IF NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3)]
4. 98. [BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3)] ONLY] Don't know [THANK AND CLOSE IF BOOST (S_TYPE=2)] [CONTINUE IF NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3)]

ASK IF S3=2

S4. When did you finish or leave the Restart Scheme?
Select a month and year.
98. Don't Know

ASK BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) ONLY

E2. How many children aged under the age of 19 live in your household?
1. None
2. 1
3. 2
4. 3 or more

ASK ALL WITH CHILDREN E2=2-4. SINGLECODE

E3. And how old is your youngest child?
1. Under 5 years old
2. 5-10 years old
3. 11-15 years old
4. 16-18 years old
99. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL MULTICODE EXCEPT 1 and 99

E10. Do you have any caring responsibilities?
By caring responsibilities, we mean caring for anyone who needs help with everyday life due to illness, disability or old age. This could include help with grocery shopping, bathing, dressing, laundry, etc.

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1. No
2. Yes – for my Spouse / Civil Partner/ Partner
3. Yes – for my Parent(s)
4. Yes – for another family member
5. Yes – for a friend
6. Yes- for a child with a health condition or disability
99. Prefer not to say

Section A: Employment Status and History

The next few questions are about your work related experiences.

A . W ic of t e se best describes your current work status…?

ADD IF NECESSARY: **if you are both self-employed and work for an employer, please answer with whichever is your main source of income**
1. Self employed
2. Working for an employer in paid employment
3. Not working in paid employment
99. Prefer not to say

A1A. Earlier you told us you are no longer on the Restart programme. Why did you finish or leave the Restart Scheme ?
1. I found a job
2. I came to the end of the 12-month programme
3. Another reason (e.g. personal circumstances)
98. Don't know

A1B. And do you currently receive any regular support from Jobcentre Plus staff?
1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know

A2. How long have you been IF UNEMPLOYED (A1=3) [unemployed] IF EMPLOYED OR SELF-EMPLOYED (A1=1-2) [doing your current job]?
1. Less than 3 months
2. Between 3 – 6 months
3. Between 7 – 12 months
4. Between 13 – 23 months [SHOW IF W1_EMP_STATUS = A1]Between 2 – 3 years [SHOW IF W1_EMP_STATUS = A1]
5. Longer than 3 years [SHOW IF W1_EMP_STATUS = A1]
6. [UNEMPLOYED ONLY = I have never worked] [SHOW IF W1_EMP_STATUS = A1]
7. Not applicable
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

A2A. And how long were you unemployed before starting your current job?
1. Less than 3 months

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2. Between 3 – 6 months
3. Between 7 – 12 months
4. Between 13 – 23 months
5. Between 2 – 3 years
6. Longer than 3 years
7. Not applicable
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

ASK BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) WHO HAVE EVER WORKED (A2 is NOT 7)
SINGLE CODE. REVERSE CODES 1-5

A4. Which of the following best describes the time you have spent doing paid work since leaving education?
1. Spent most of my time not working
2. Spent about as much time working as not working
3. Worked solidly with one or two breaks
4. Worked solidly without a break until recently
99. Prefer not to say

ASK BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) WHO HAVE EVER WORKED (A2 is NOT 7)

A5.

[THOSE WHO ARE UNEMPLOYED =**What was your job title in the last job you had?**]

[THOSE WHO ARE CURRENTLY WORKING = **Please type in your job title e.g. Salesperson**]

ASK BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) WHO HAVE EVER WORKED (A2 IS NOT 7)

A6. Thinking about your past jobs, which industries or sectors did you work in?
1. Customer Service and Retail
2. Food and Drink
3. Administration/Office including public sector and human resources
4. Hospitality Leisure and Tourism
5. Care/Childcare/Social Care
6. Voluntary, Charity & Social Enterprise
7. Education / Teaching
8. Automotive Industry, passenger Transport, and logistics
9. Manufacturing & Engineering
10. Arts and Media
11. Information Technology and Telecoms
12. Electricians and Building Services
13. Health Industry
14. Security and Safety
15. Beauty and Therapy
16. Facilities Management
17. Financial Services
18. Sports & Recreation

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19. Other public sector
20. Other private sector
21. Other voluntary sector
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

A7. And which sector/sectors are you now looking for work in?
1. Customer Service and Retail
2. Food and Drink
3. Administration/Office including public sector and human resources
4. Hospitality Leisure and Tourism
5. Care/Childcare/Social Care
6. Voluntary, Charity & Social Enterprise
7. Education / Teaching
8. Automotive Industry, passenger Transport, and logistics
9. Manufacturing & Engineering
10. Arts and Media
11. Information Technology and Telecoms
12. Electricians and Building Services
13. Health Industry
14. Security and Safety
15. Beauty and Therapy
16. Facilities Management
17. Financial Services
18. Sports & Recreation
19. Other public sector
20. Other private sector
21. Other voluntary sector
22. Not looking for work
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

Section B: Proximity to labour market and attitudes to work

B1.   To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements?
1. Strongly agree
2. Somewhat agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Don't know
7. Not applicable

1. Jobs on offer do not pay enough to make working financially worthwhile
2. I would be happier and more fulfilled if I was working
3. It would be difficult for me to work now, even if I was offered a job

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4. I feel under pressure from my family and friends to get a job
5. There just aren't enough full-time vacancies for everyone at the moment
6. There isn't enough advice and support available to help me get a job
7. [CHILDREN UNDER 11 ONLY] I would like to start working when my children are older
8. With the right support paid work is a realistic goal for me within the next 6 months

ASK ALL WHO ARE UNEMPLOYED (A1=3)

B3. Can you think of anything that makes it difficult for you to get a job?

[EMPLOYMENT AND EXTERNAL REASONS], RANDOMISED
1. [IF HAVE CHILDREN UNDER 16] Childcare
2. My physical or mental health or learning difficulty
3. My age
4. [IF HAVE CARING RESPONSIBILITIES E10 = 2-6:] My caring responsibilities
5. Lack of relevant skills/ qualifications / experience
6. Commute to work (either distance to travel, time to travel, cost of travel, or access to transport)
7. Something else (please specify)
8. None of these

ASK ALL WHO ARE EMPLOYED OR SELF EMPLOYED (A1=1 OR 2)

B3a. Is there anything that makes it difficult for you to progress in work?
By progress we mean an increase in your pay, hours and/or taking on more responsibilities.
1. Need to wait until probationary period ends
2. Lack of opportunities matching my skills and qualifications/ in the sector/area I am interested in
3. Not having certificate/licences required for available jobs
4. Lack of opportunities for training/ development in current job
5. Lack of opportunities to increase pay or hours or gain promotion
6. Transport difficulties
7. Having to pay more for childcare if I do more hours
8. My benefits/tax credits would go down / it would not be worth it financially
9. Poor employment record/ lack of work experience
10. My physical or mental health issues
11. My age
12. Housing problems (in temporary accommodation such as with friends, shelters, or hostels)
13. Caring responsibilities which limit the number of hours I can work
14. No access to internet or technology
15. Language difficulties/English is my second language
16. No, there is nothing that makes it difficult for me to progress in work.[EXCLUSIVE]
17. No, I am happy with my work situation as it is and not looking to progress [EXCLUSIVE]
18. Other (specify)
19. None of these

ASK ALL, MULTICODE 1-10,

B4. What, if anything [UNEMPLOYED = would help you to find paid work] [EMPLOYED = would help you progress at work]?
1. Support and training around finding/ getting a new job (e.g. interview skills, CV skills, communication skills)
2. Help with the cost of travel to and from work
3. Support to continue/start further or higher education

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4. Support and training with work-related skills (e.g. spoken or written English; IT skills; job-specific skills)
5. Support to manage a physical or mental health condition
6. Support with using technology/internet
7. Access to digital technology and/or the internet
8. Access to affordable/ good quality childcare
9. Support to manage other caring responsibilities
10. Support to find suitable housing
11. Something else (please specify)
12. None of these
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

Section C: Interactions with Restart/ other job related support

READ OUT TO FOLLOW-UP (S_TYPE=1) AND BOOST (S_TYPE=2) ONLY
The following questions are about your experiences of the Restart Scheme.

FOLLOW-UP (S_TYPE=1) AND BOOST (S_TYPE=2) ONLY
C1a Which of the following best describes how often you received some form of contact or support from Restart or its associated partners? This does not include contact with Jobcentre Plus staff
1. Less than every two weeks
2. Only meetings with an advisor every two weeks, with no other contact
3. Meetings with an advisor every two weeks, and other support between these meetings
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

ROTATE C5 AND C6
ASK ALL, MULTICODE 1-15

C5. [BOOST SAMPLE Have you received any of the following support through the Restart Scheme?

[FOLLOW UP (S_TYPE=1) **Have you received any of the following support through the Restart Scheme? Please include any support you have received, including anything you may have told us about last time you took part in the survey**

[NON-PARTS SAMPLE **Have you received any of the following support in the last 12 months]?**
1. Skills assessment
2. Help finding job opportunities
3. Support to develop your CV or cover letters
4. Interview preparation
5. Writing personal career action plan (also known as Job Finding Action Plan)
6. Referral to an information session with a prospective employer
7. Attended a job fair
8. None of the above
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

ROTATE C5 AND C6

C6. [BOOST SAMPLE **Have you received any of the following support through the Restart Scheme]?**

[FOLLOW UP (S_TYPE=1) **Have you received any of the following support through the Restart Scheme? Please include any support you have received, including anything you may have told us about last time you took part in the survey**

[NON-PARTS SAMPLE **Have you received any of the following support in the last 12 months]?**

1. Training to develop existing skills or qualifications
2. Training to develop new skills or qualifications
3. Support to improve confidence or wellbeing (e.g. digital or in person)
4. A job placement
5. Information and support to become self-employed
6. Referrals to other types of support or organisations (e.g. mental health, housing, financial matters, English lessons)
7. The advisor talking to employers and other organisations on your behalf where appropriate (e.g. arranging an interview)
8. Advisor providing ongoing support after you had started a new job
9. Anything else (please write in)
10. None of the above
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

Section D: Outcomes

D1a. How confident do you feel about doing the following successfully?
1. Very confident
2. Fairly confident
3. Neither confident nor not confident
4. Not very confident
5. Not at all confident
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

1. Making a good list of all the skills that you have, and which can be used to find a job
2. Talking to friends and other contacts to find out about potential employers who need your skills
3. Talking to friends and other contacts to discover promising job openings that are suitable for you
4. Completing a good job application and CV
5. Contacting and persuading potential employers to consider you for a job
6. Making the best impression and getting your points across in a job interview
7. Searching for jobs online (using computers, Smart phones, internet, etc.)
8. Applying for jobs online (using computers, Smart phones, internet, etc.)
9. Getting help in order to become familiar with a new job

D2. [BOOST (S_TYPE=2) or FOLLOW UP (S_TYPE=1)] **Have any of the following happened as a result of the actions you have taken since you started the Restart Scheme on [INSERT START DATE]?**

[NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3)] **Have any of the following happened to you in the last 12 months?**

1. You have found a job [ASK IF A1 = 1 OR 2]
2. Taken up voluntary work
3. You have gained / will gain a qualification / certificate that will improve your job prospects
4. None of these
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

D2a. Have you been offered a job in the last six months and decided to turn it down?

1. Yes
2. No
99. Prefer not to say

D2b. Why did you decide to turn it down?

1. The pay was too low
2. I was worried about changes to my benefit payments/ payments going down
3. I was worried about losing access to other types of support (CATI = DO NOT READ OUT ALL, PROMPT:) WEB = such as: free school meals, school uniform purchases, Healthy Start vouchers, free prescriptions, free dental treatment, Sure Start maternity grant, Warm Home Discount, help with energy costs
4. It was a temporary or zero hours contract
5. I didn't want to do that type of work
6. I didn't want to work for that employer
7. The hours didn't fit around my other commitments
8. Travel/difficulty getting there
9. Difficulties with childcare
10. My health condition or disability
11. I am over-qualified
12. Other personal reasons
13. Something else (please specify)
99. Prefer not to say

D . T ink in about all aspects of your life, on a scale of to , w e re is "not at all" and is "completely"

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Refused

Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?											

Section E: Demographics and data linking

ASK BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) ONLY
We are approaching the end of the survey. These final questions are to help us analyse the survey results.

All of your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and DWP will not be able to identify you from the anonymised responses that Ipsos supply.

ASK BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) ONLY, SINGLE CODE

E6. What is your highest level of qualification?
1. Degree level or above (including postgraduate qualifications)
2. 2 or more A-Levels / NVQ Level 3 / BTEC Level 3 Diploma or equivalent
3. 1 A-Level or equivalent / 5 or more GCSEs of grade A*-C or equivalent / NVQ Level 2 / BTEC level 2 diploma or equivalent
4. GCSEs of less than 5 A*-C or equivalent / NVQ Level 1
5. Something else (please specify)
6. No qualifications
98. Don't know

ASK BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) ONLY, SINGLE CODE

E7. How would you describe your ethnic background?
1. White [Expandable Header]
   o English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
   o Irish
   o Gypsy or Irish Traveller
   o Any other White background
2. Mixed / multiple ethnic groups [Expandable Header]
   o White and Black Caribbean
   o White and Black African
   o White and Asian
   o Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background
3. Asian / Asian British [Expandable Header]
   o Indian
   o Pakistani
   o Bangladeshi
   o Chinese
   o Any other Asian background
4. Black / African / Caribbean / Black British [Expandable Header]
   o African
   o Caribbean
   o Any other Black / African / Caribbean background
5. Other ethnic group [Expandable Header]
   o Arab
   o Any other ethnic group, please write in _____
99. Prefer not to say

ASK BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) ONLY, , MULTI CODE WITH EXCLUSIONS

E8. Which of these best describe your living situation?
1. Living alone [EXCLUSIVE]
2. Living with partner [CANNOT COMBINE 2 AND 3]
3. Living with spouse/civil partner [CANNOT COMBINE 2 AND 3]
4. Living with parents
5. Living with friends/other adults / family (i.e. not parents)
6. Living with dependent children (under the age of 16, or under the age of 20 and still in full-time education or training, below university or equivalent level)
99.   Prefer not to say

ASK BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) ONLY,, SINGLE CODE

E9. Which of these best describes the accommodation you are living in at the moment?
1. Private rented
2. Rented from a council or local authority
3. Rented from a Housing Association
4. Being bought on a mortgage/bank loan
5. Shared ownership where you pay part rent and part mortgage
6. Owned outright
7. Living with friends/relatives and paying some rent
8. Living with friends/ relatives and not paying any rent
9. Living in temporary or sheltered accommodation or rough sleeping
10. Something else (specify)
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

ASK BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) ONLY, SINGLE CODE

E11. Is English your first language?
1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

ASK IF English not first language (E11=2 OR WAVE1_EAL=2)
E11a. Do you need support with your English language skills to [IF UNEMPLOYED = find] [IF WORKING = progress in] work?
1.   Yes
2.   No
98.   Don't know
99.   Prefer not to say

ASK BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) ONLY, MULTICODE EXCEPT 7, 98,99

E12. How, if at all, do you access the internet?
1. Using home broadband on laptop/tablet
2. Smartphone using Wi-Fi
3. Smartphone using mobile data
4. Public computer e.g. at Jobcentre Plus or library

5. Via family or friend connections
6. At work
7. I don't have access to the internet [EXCLUSI E]
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL WHO CODE YES (E12=1-6), SINGLE CODE

E13. Would you feel able to use the internet to access government services if they were available online?
1. Yes, able to
2. Yes, able to but with help
3. No, not able
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to say

ASK BOOST (S_TYPE=2) AND NON-PARTS (S_TYPE=3) ONLY, SINGLE CODE
We would now like to ask you some questions about your health.

E14. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?
Please include any intermittent conditions or illnesses, lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more.
1. Yes – physical condition
2. Yes – mental health condition
3. Yes – both physical and mental health condition
4. No
99. I prefer not to say

ASK IF YES TO HEALTH CONDITIONS (E14=1-3), SINGLE CODE

E15. Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?
1. Yes, a lot
2. Yes, a little
3. Not at all
99. I prefer not to say

ASK FOLLOW UP (S_TYPE=1) AND BOOST (S_TYPE=2)
E16. And was there anything else that you would like to feedback about the Restart Scheme?

WRITE IN

2. Nothing to add

Section F: Thank you and data linking

On behalf of Ipsos and the Department of Work and Pensions we would like to thank you very much for your time.

F2. For research and statistical purposes only, the Department of Work and Pensions would like to link your answers to other information they hold so they can further analyse the survey.

Your responses will remain completely confidential, and your dealings with DWP will not be affected in any way. The linking is done with a unique survey ID number that retains your anonymity. Are you happy to let DWP link your survey responses to benefit claim information they have about you for survey analysis? You can change your mind at any time by contacting Ipsos at: UK-PA-DWP-Restart-Evaluation@ipsos.com
3. Yes
4. No

That is the end of the interview. Thank you very much for giving us your time today

6.2.8   Research tools: Topic guides

Wave 1 Topic guides

Aims and objectives

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has commissioned Ipsos to conduct qualitative research to understand people's experience of the Restart Scheme. The Restart Scheme aims to get Universal Credit claimants who are long term unemployed closer to the labour market and into employment.

This research will explore the support Restart participants have received, responses to this support and soft and hard outcomes.

This research consists of two stages, the first being a quantitative survey. At the end of this survey, respondents were asked if they would like to take part in follow-up qualitative research to further explore the topics covered in the quantitative survey:

- Background
- Current situation- marital status, work history, children, living situation, caring responsibilities
- Understanding experience of and attitudes towards work
- Experience of the Restart Scheme – what support people have been offered
- Rating of the Restart Scheme – how Restart participants would rate the support they have received
- Outcomes – both hard and soft outcomes

NOTE TO MODERATOR: Before conducting interviews, please read through respondent's survey responses in detail to understand individual participant circumstances. Some questions in the topic guide refer specifically to responses in the survey (these are highlighted in blue).

1. Introduction	2-3 mins
▪ **Thank participant for taking part**. Introduce self, and explain nature of interview: informal conversation; gather all opinions; all opinions valid. Interviews should take around 60 minutes. ▪ **Introduce research and topic** – The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has commissioned Ipsos to conduct research to understand your experience of the Restart Scheme. ▪ **Role of Ipsos** – Independent research organisation (i.e. independent of government), we adhere to the MRS Code of Conduct. ▪ **Confidentiality** – reassure all responses anonymous and that identifiable information about them will not be passed on to anyone, including back to DWP or any other government department. Reassure them that participation will have no impact on their Universal Credit claim or any dealings with DWP now or in the future. ▪ **Consent** – check that they are happy to take part in the interview and understand their participation is voluntary (they can withdraw at any time during the interview).	*Orientates interviewee, prepares them to take part in the interview.* *Outlines the 'rules' of the interview (including those we are required to tell them about under MRS and GDPR guidelines).*

- **Ask for permission to digitally record** – when recording starts - GDPR requires a legal basis to process your data. Our legal basis is your consent which you are free to withdraw at any point during or after the research (up until the 4th July after this time the data would have been analysed and cannot be removed). Are you happy to continue?
- **Any questions before we begin?**

2. Background and context	5 mins

To start off with, I'm going to ask a few questions about yourself. (Refer to survey data.)
Cover *briefly*:
Can you tell me a bit about you? Probe:
- **Family and home life (E2, E3)** – who you live with (partner, children), any other caring responsibilities, how long they have lived there, partner's employment status, area they live in, availability of jobs in their area, types of jobs available
- **Work history (A4, A5)** – any previous employment – when / what, Length of time claiming Universal Credit?
- **Typical day** Can you tell me briefly about a typical day in your life at the moment? Talk me through a typical day. What are your habits and routines? *Explore briefly: work routines, activities with children, usual childcare arrangements, activities of others in HH.*

Provides contextual background information about the participant and their lifestyle.

3. Experiences of, and attitudes, towards work	15 mins

I'd like to talk a bit about work in general.
***Ask if they have ever worked** (A2)*
Can you start by telling me a bit more about your work history?
If unemployed:
- How long have you been unemployed?
- Can you tell me a bit about any jobs / volunteering you have done in the past? What was your most recent job? Why did this end?
- *If working before March 2020:* how did the Covid-19 pandemic affect your work? *Probe on whether they were made redundant / furloughed.*

If working:
- How long have you been in your current job? How is it going?
- What was the last job you had before this one? Why did your last job end?
- How long were you unemployed between jobs? During that time how long were you actively job searching?
- *If working before March 2020:* how did the Covid-19 pandemic have on your work? *Probe on whether they were made redundant / furloughed.*
- What different types of jobs / volunteering have you done in the past? *Probe on whether similar / different sectors and whether current job is in a different sector?*
- Do you want to increase your hours or earnings?
- Is this the sector you are interested in working in or would you be interested in other jobs?

Collect information on their work history and attitudes towards work?

- Do you have the skills to progress or can you get the skills you need to progress?

Moderator: Amend language accordingly depending on if they are working / not working:

Can you tell me a little bit about your experience of job searching <u>before</u> being on the Restart Scheme?

- How long were you looking for a job before starting on the Restart Scheme?
- How did you find the process of job searching before the Restart Scheme?
- How confident did you feel about your ability to look for and find a job? How much help and support did you want in finding a job?
- Which sectors were you looking for jobs in?
- What were the challenges you faced in finding a job before the Restart Scheme? *Probe on: transport (availability, distance and cost), health conditions, digital skills / lack of. Probe fully to understand specifics and implications of each barrier.* Has COVID-19 contributed to these barriers in anyway?
- Have you received any support from an organisation while looking for a job before the Restart Scheme? *Probe on DWP, the Jobcentre, charity, note down for reference later*
- Have you used any other support to help you look for a job? *Probe on any digital support tools.*

Ask if not currently working: (A1)
How do you feel about starting work in the near future?

- What are the main factors that make you to want to work at the moment? What else? *Moderator: ensure you understand all the elements that make people feel motivated e.g. role model for the children, work ethic, earning own income, social aspect, cost of living.*
- Are there any factors that put you off working / would make this difficult for you at the moment? *Probe fully: health, family responsibilities, availability / types of work, education and training needs, housing, transport –cost and availability, confidence in ability to work. Probe if this changed before and during the pandemic. Probe on areas mentioned in the survey at B3.*
- How important are these factors in your decisions about working? Why / why not? *Explore.*

Ask if currently working (A1):
Before starting your current job what challenges did you face that prevented you from working / getting back in to work?

- What steps did you take to overcome these barriers? *Probe on areas mentioned in the survey at B3. Probe on: health, family responsibilities, availability / types of work, education and training needs, housing, transport – probe cost and availability. Probe if this changed before and during the pandemic.*
- What changed that meant you could overcome these challenges?

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- Who or what helped you overcome these challenges? *Probe on role of DWP / Jobcentre / Restart to explore later.*

Ask all:
What would you say are your goals in terms of work, these could be short term or long term?
- What do you want to achieve in relation to work? What would you say motivates you? How would ideally you like to progress or develop at work?
- How would you ideally achieve this; what steps would/do you intend to take?
- How likely do you think you are to achieve your goals; what are the barriers to doing so? Do you feel that you have the skills to achieve these aims?

4. Experience of the Restart Scheme	**15 mins**

In this section I'd like to ask you about your experience on Restart so far.
Firstly, can you tell me a little bit about how you came to be on the Restart Scheme?
- How did you first hear about Restart?
- How long have you been on the scheme so far?
- How did you feel about being put on Restart?

What did you know about Restart before joining?
- What did you know about the support you would be offered on Restart?
- What did you think about the support you were going to be offered?
- How well did you think that Restart would meet your support needs when looking for a job?
- What impact did you think this could have on getting (back) into work/ on your job search?
- How similar / different did Restart seem to any other DWP / Jobcentre Plus employment support schemes you have been on or have heard of?

Since starting on the Restart Scheme what support/help have you received?
- *Probe on: what support they have had: support to improve their skills for work, help with job searching and applying for jobs, help with digital job-seeking tools, if relevant- support with mental or physical health conditions, contacts with employers and general support to help with all aspects of their lives*
- Who has provided this support/help? *E.g. Restart advisor, external agencies, employers, JCP*
- What has your experience of accessing the support been – *how often have you had contact with someone; has it been in-person/ digital/other; how easy / difficult has it been to access?*
- How <u>relevant</u> and <u>tailored</u> has the support been to you?

Collect information about the support they have received from Restart so far.

5. Rating of the Restart Scheme	**10 mins**

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So far, how would you rate your experience of the Restart Scheme? • Why do you say that? • What would you say has worked well for you? *Probe: type of contact, nature of contact, frequency of contact, support offered, length of time support was offered and when the support was offered* • What would you say has worked less well? *Probe: type of contact, nature of contact, frequency of contact, support/advice offered, challenges faced, length of time support was offered and when the support was offered, adaptions of support for physical or mental health conditions* • Would you recommend Restart to someone else in a similar situation to you?	*Explore how they have found their experience of Restart so far and what improvements could be made.*

Have you faced any challenges with the Restart Scheme that have prevented you from developing your skills / getting into work?
- What kind of challenges have you faced? Probe on if support has been tailored to their mental or physical health condition
- How has this challenge prevented you from making progress?

For those who have received other work related support from DWP / JCP in the past:
How does Restart compare to other support you have received?
- *Probe on support offered from Jobcentre Plus, employment support schemes or a charity*
- How has the support offered through Restart similar to / different from this support?
- Is Restart more or less helpful than other work related support you have received? Why do you say that?

What improvements do you think could be made to Restart to help you get into work?
- What other support or help could be offered that you have not been offered yet?
- What changes could be made to how the support is delivered to improve your experiences?
- How would this improvement to Restart help you into work?

6. Outcomes of the Restart Scheme	**20 mins**

Moderator: tailor language to whether participant is currently in or out of work

What impact is being on the Restart Scheme having on how you feel about work?
- *Probe on: changes in attitude towards work, motivation, confidence, how you would like to progress at work and health and wellbeing in general. How has this change impacted you? Ask for examples*
- If experienced a change in attitude what has triggered this? *Probe on what specific support has led to them feeling more positive*

Can you tell me about any new skills you have gained, or skills you have developed further as a result of the Restart Scheme?

- *Probe on CV writing, job searching, interview prep, technology skills, gaining qualifications, speaking with employers, developed skills in a specific sector, social / emotional skills*
- How have you used or plan to use this skill?
- What impact do you think this will / has had on helping you to get a job?
- *Those in work:* Do you think you will use the skills you have gained to keep or progress in your current job?

Has Restart helped you overcome any of the barriers you mentioned earlier, or come closer to overcoming them?

- *Probe: on barriers previously mentioned earlier on in the interview*
- How has Restart helped you overcome the barrier

Have you taken any actions because of t e interactions you've ad on Restart?

- *Probe: looking for other jobs, training, development opportunities, started a new job, other; what triggered this*
- Have you faced any challenges while carrying out these actions? How have you overcome them? What role has Restart had in helping you to do this?

How do you feel about applying for a job and going through the job application process now, compared to before you started Restart?

- How do you feel about looking for jobs now e.g. online, job centre, friends and family, approaching businesses – how is this different to before Restart? Do you use any new sources to look for jobs?
- How do you feel about completing a job application and CV? How is this different to before Restart?
- How do you feel about attending a job interview and making a good impression?
- How do you feel about starting a new job?

If started a new job since being on Restart (D2)
What role did the support/help you received from Restart play in helping you to get a job?

- What role did Restart play in you getting a job?
- Have you used any skills you gained during Restart in your current job?
- *If help from Restart didn't help*, what did contribute to you getting a job?
- How do you feel about your job since you have started? How, if at all, has Restart impacted how you feel about your job?

Are there any challenges you still face in finding work?

- How do you think you might overcome these challenges? What support do you need?

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What impact has Restart had on your future plans in regard to looking for and moving into work?

- *Ask about both short term and long term goals*
- Any plans to work in a different sector from before? Why / what prompted this? *If no-* Is there anything that would make you consider working in a different sector to before?
- How do you think you may put these plans into practice?
- What support would help you to achieve these plans?

The Restart programme runs for 12 months, do you think this is the right amount of time to offer the support that you need?

- What impact do you think being shorter or longer would have?
- Why do you say?

What impact is being on the Restart Scheme having on your life more broadly?

- Can you tell me a little bit about your overall life satisfaction?
- How happy are you with your life at the moment? *Note for interviewer- if needed here signpost to where support is available at the end of the topic guide*

7. Summing up	2-3 mins
We are coming to the end of the interview, but I have a few final questions before we finish. Adapt language depending on whether participant is in work / not. **Overall, what impact do you think the help you have received through the Restart Scheme has had on your ability to get into work?** **If there was one thing that the Restart Scheme or DWP in general could do to best support you back into work what would it be?** **Finally, is t e re anyt in el se you would like to mention t a t we ave n't a d the opportunity to discuss?** *Thank and reiterate confidentiality. Incentives = a £40 voucher 'thank you' from Ipsos for their time and contribution.* **Signpost for further information / if any concerns about discussion: gov.uk/universal-credit, citizensadvice.org.uk**	*Brings the conversation to a close, and allows participants time to mention anything that has not already been covered.*

Wave 1 (Paired interviews only)

Aims and objectives

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has commissioned Ipsos to conduct qualitative research to understand people's experience of the Restart Scheme. The Restart

Scheme aims to get Universal Credit claimants who are long term unemployed closer to the labour market and into employment.

These paired interviews will explore the support Restart participants have received, responses to this support and soft and hard outcomes and how household dynamics influence these.

This research consists of two stages, the first being a quantitative survey. At the end of this survey, respondents were asked if they would like to take part in follow-up qualitative research to further explore the topics covered in the quantitative survey:

- Background
- Current situation- marital status, work history, children, living situation, caring responsibilities
- Understanding experience of and attitudes towards work
- Experience of the Restart Scheme – what support people have been offered
- Rating of the Restart Scheme – how Restart participants would rate the support they have received
- Outcomes – both hard and soft outcomes

NOTE TO MODERATOR: Before conducting interviews, please read through the lead respondent's survey responses in detail to understand t e ir circumstances. Some questions in the topic guide refer specifically to responses in the survey (these are highlighted in blue).

We are carrying out interviews with couples to understand the household dynamics and decision making around work. Throughout please probe on the relationship between the participants and explore how this influences the attitudes of the lead participant towards work.

1. Introduction	2-3 mins
▪ **Thank participant for taking part**. Introduce self, and explain nature of interview: informal conversation; gather all opinions; all opinions valid. Interviews should take around 60 minutes. ▪ **Introduce research and topic** – The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has commissioned Ipsos to conduct research to understand your experience of the Restart Scheme. Explain that we are carrying out interviews with couples to better understand the household dynamics and decision making around work. ▪ **Role of Ipsos** – Independent research organisation (i.e. independent of government), we adhere to the MRS Code of Conduct. ▪ **Confidentiality** – reassure all responses anonymous and that identifiable information about them will not be passed on to anyone, including back to DWP or any other government department. Reassure them that participation will have no impact on their Universal Credit claim or any dealings with DWP now or in the future.	*Orientates interviewee, prepares them to take part in the interview.* *Outlines the 'rules' of the interview (including those we are required to tell them about under MRS and GDPR guidelines).*

- **Consent** – check that they are happy to take part in the interview and understand their participation is voluntary (they can withdraw at any time during the interview).
- **Ask for permission to digitally record** – when recording starts - GDPR requires a legal basis to process your data. Our legal basis is your consent which you are free to withdraw at any point during or after the research (up until the 4th July after this time the data would have been analysed and cannot be removed). Are you happy to continue?
- **Any questions before we begin?**

2. Background and context	5 mins

To start off with, I'm going to ask a few questions about yourself. (Refer to survey data.)

Can you tell me a bit about yourselves? Probe: name, relationship between interviewees, how long they have known each other.

Cover *briefly*:
- **Family and home life for both (E2, E3)** – who you live with (partner, children), any other caring responsibilities, how long they have lived there, partner's employment status
- **Work history for both** – any previous employment – when / what, Length of time / experiences claiming Universal Credit?
- **Typical day** Can you tell me briefly about a typical day in your life at the moment? Talk me through a typical day. What are your habits and routines? *Explore briefly: work routines, activities with children, usual childcare arrangements, activities of others in HH.*

Provides contextual background information about the participant and their lifestyle.

3. Experiences of, and attitudes, towards work	15 mins

I'd like to talk a bit about work in general.

For each: Can you start by telling me a bit about your work history?
- Any time in work – what job(s) they have done, how long that was for, why that ended
- Any times out of work – when, how long
- Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on work
- *Listen out for and probe on any common themes / patterns or areas of divergence between them*
- *Explore dynamics when one / both are working and / or not working – what is the impact on their household*

If working:
- How long have you been in your current job? How is it going?
- How does this affect your household / other partner? Is it easy or difficult to work? What's easy? What's difficult?

Moderator: Amend language accordingly depending on if they are working / not working:

Collect information on their work history and attitudes towards work?

Lead participant: Can you tell me a little bit about your experiences of job searching <u>before</u> being on the Restart Scheme?

- How long were you looking for a job before starting on the Restart Scheme?
- How did you find the process of job searching before the Restart Scheme?
- What were the challenges you faced to finding a job before the Restart Scheme? *Probe on: transport, health conditions, digital skills / lack of. Probe fully to understand specifics and implications of each barrier.*

Partner / both:

- What impact did this have on you / on the household? Did [lead partner] need support / help from you?

For both:

- What are the main factors that make you to want to work at the moment? What else? *Moderator: ensure you understand all the elements that make people feel motivated e.g. role model for the children, work ethic, earning own income, social aspect, cost of living.*
- Are there any factors that put you off working / would make this difficult for you at the moment? *Probe fully: health, family responsibilities, availability / types of work, education and training needs, housing, transport –cost and availability. Probe if this changed before and during the pandemic. Probe on areas mentioned in the survey at B3.*
- How important are these factors in your decisions about working? Why / why not? *Explore.*
- What household factors do you consider when thinking about work? E.g. childcare, other family members, ability to drive
- How do you talk about work with each other / what types of things do you discuss?
- For those working: how have you been able to overcome any challenges to working? What has been the impact of this on you?

Discuss with both:

What would you say are your goals in terms of work, these could be short term or long term?

- What do you want to achieve in relation to work? What would you say motivates you? How would ideally you like to progress or develop at work?
- How would you ideally achieve this; what steps would/do you intend to take?
- How likely do you think you are to achieve your goals; what are the barriers to doing so? Do you feel that you have the skills to achieve these aims?
- Do you discuss this together? Are these goals related or independent? Does one depend on the other? What would the impact be if one of you were to achieve your goal – how would each of you feel about this?

4. Experience of the Restart Scheme	15 mins

In this section I'd like to ask you about your experience on Restart so far.	*Collect information about the support they have received from Restart so far.*
Lead participant:	
What did you know about Restart before joining?	
• What did you know about the support you would be offered on Restart?	
• What did you think about the support you were going to be offered?	
• How well did you think that Restart would meet your support needs when looking for a job?	
• What impact did you think this could have on getting (back) into work/ on your job search?	
Both:	
• What did you think about [lead participant] being on Restart? What impact did you think this could have on you as a household? How much did you discuss this?	
Since starting on the Restart Scheme what support/help have you received?	
• *Probe on: what support they have had: support to improve their skills for work, help with job searching and applying for jobs, help with digital job-seeking tools, contacts with employers and general support to help with all aspects of their lives*	
• What has your experience of accessing the support been – *how often have you had contact with someone; has it been in-person/ digital/other; how easy / difficult has it been to access?*	
• How <u>relevant</u> and <u>tailored</u> has the support been to you?	
Both:	
• How has this affected you as a household? Have there been tasks / activities you've done together as part of [lead participant] being on Restart?	

5. Rating of the Restart Scheme	**10 mins**
So far, how would you rate your experience of the Restart Scheme?	*Explore how they have found their experience of Restart so far and what improvements could be made.*
• Why do you say that?	
• What impact has the support offered had on you so far? *Probe on support mentioned above: confidence, health and well-being, skills for work*	
• **Both:** What impact has this had on home life / on partner?	
• **Partner**: have you noticed a difference? What support has [lead participant] needed from you whilst on Restart?	
• What would you say has worked well for you? *Probe: type of contact, nature of contact, frequency of contact, support offered, length of time support was offered and when the support was offered*	
• What would you say has worked less well? *Probe: type of contact, nature of contact, frequency of contact, support/advice offered, challenges faced, length of time support was offered and when the support was offered, adaptions of support for physical or mental health conditions*	
• **Partner**: how has this affected you? Has [lead partner] needed any support from you? What would you say they've found more less helpful?	

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Have you faced any challenges with the Restart Scheme that have prevented you from developing your skills / getting into work?
- What kind of challenges have you faced? *Probe on household/ family related issues.*
- How has this challenge prevented you from making progress?

For those who have received other work related support from DWP / JCP in the past:
Discuss with both: **How does Restart compare to other support you have received?**
- How has the support offered through Restart similar to / different from this support?
- Is Restart more or less helpful than other work related support you have received? Why do you say that?

6. Outcomes of the Restart Scheme	**10 mins**

Moderator: tailor language to whether participant is currently in or out of work

Discuss with both: **What impact is [lead participant] being on the Restart Scheme having on how you feel about work?**
- *Probe on: changes in attitude towards work, motivation, confidence, progressing in work. How has this change impacted you? Ask for examples*
- *Partner: have you noticed any differences? How is [lead participant] being on Restart affecting you / home life?*
- Both: If experienced a change in attitude what has triggered this? *Probe on what specific support has led to them feeling more positive*

Can you tell me about any skills you have developed as a result of the Restart Scheme?
- *Probe on CV writing, job searching, interview prep, technology skills, gaining qualifications, speaking with employers, developed skills in a specific sector, social / emotional skills*

Has Restart helped you overcome any of the barriers you mentioned earlier, or come closer to overcoming them?
- *Probe: on barriers previously mentioned earlier on in the interview*
- How has Restart helped you overcome the barrier

Have you taken any actions because of t e interactions you've ad on Restart?
- *Probe: looking for other jobs, training, development opportunities, started a new job, other; what triggered this*
- Have you faced any challenges while carrying out these actions? How have you overcome them? What role has Restart had in helping you to do this?

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Have you noticed any other impact as a result of your interactions at Restart? E.g. other aspects of their lives such as communicating with friends and family, general well-being. *Probe partner – have they noticed any changes?*
 	
How do you feel about applying for a job and going through the job application process now, compared to before you started Restart?
 	
If started a new job since being on Restart (D2)
What role did the support/help you received from Restart play in helping you to get a job?
   • What role did Restart play in you getting a job?
   • Have you used any skills you gained during Restart in your current job?
   • *If help from Restart didn't help*, what did contribute to you getting a job?
   • How do you feel about your job since you have started? What impact has this had on you and your job?
   • *Both: What impact has this had on your home-life?*
 	
Lead participant: What impact has Restart had on your future plans in regard to looking for and moving into work?
   • *Ask about both short term and long term goals*
   • Any plans to work in a different sector from before? Why / what prompted this?
 	
Partner: How has [partner] being on Restart affected you? And how you think about work?
 	
Both: **The Restart programme runs for 12 months, do you think this is the right amount of time to offer the support that you need?**
 	
Both: **What impact is being on the Restart Scheme having on your life more broadly?**
   • Can you tell me a little bit about your overall life satisfaction?
   • How happy are you with your life at the moment? *Note for interviewer- if needed here signpost to where support is available at the end of the topic guide*	

7. Summing up	**2-3 mins**
We are coming to the end of the interview, but I have a few final questions before we finish. Adapt language depending on whether participant is in work / not. **Overall, what impact do you think the help you have received through the Restart Scheme has had on your ability to get into work?** **Overall, what impact do you think the Restart Scheme has had on your household and family life?**	*Brings the conversation to a close, and allows participants time to mention anything that has not*

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Finally, is t e re anyt in el se you would like to mention t a t we ave n't a d the opportunity to discuss? *Thank and reiterate confidentiality. Incentives = a £40 voucher 'thank you' from Ipsos for their time and contribution.* **Signpost for further information / if any concerns about discussion: gov.uk/universal-credit, citizensadvice.org.uk**	*already been covered.*

Wave 2 (In work only)

Aims and objectives

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has commissioned Ipsos to conduct qualitative research to understand people's experience of the Restart Scheme. The Restart Scheme aims to get Universal Credit claimants who are long term unemployed closer to the labour market and into employment.

This research will explore the support Restart participants have received, responses to this support and soft and hard outcomes.

We have conducted two waves of research with a longitudinal sample who took part at wave 1 and wave 2, a boost sample of participants who took part at wave 2 only and a non-participant sample, acting as a control group.

This is wave 2 of this research, some participants may have taken part in wave 1 in June/July 2022 (either just the quant or quant and qual), this will be marked in the profile grid.

NOTE TO MODERATOR: Before conductin interviews, please read t rou   participant's wave one and two survey responses and interview notes (as applicable) in detail to understand individual participants circumstances. Some questions in the topic guide refer specifically to responses in the survey (these are highlighted in blue).

Check which CPA they are in and the provider which would have run Restart in their area: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/restart-scheme/restart-scheme-contract-package-areas

1. Introduction (All)	2-3 mins
▪ **Thank participant for taking part**. Introduce self, and explain nature of interview: informal conversation; gather all opinions; all opinions valid. Interviews should take around 60 minutes. ▪ **Introduce research and topic** – ▪ PARTICIPANTS ONLY: The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has commissioned Ipsos to conduct research to understand your experience of the Restart Scheme.	*Orientates interviewee, prepares them to take part in the interview.* *Outlines the 'rules' of the interview*

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- NON-PARTICIPANTS ONLY: The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has commissioned Ipsos to conduct research to understand UC claimants experience of looking for work and the support they have received
- **Role of Ipsos** – Independent research organisation (i.e. independent of government), we adhere to the MRS Code of Conduct.
- **Confidentiality** – reassure all responses anonymous and that identifiable information about them will not be passed on to anyone, including back to DWP or any other government department. The only exception to this would be if they tell you something that makes you concerned they, or someone else, is at serious risk of harm – in that case we might need to pass this on to someone else to provide help. Reassure them that participation will have no impact on their Universal Credit claim or any dealings with DWP now or in the future.
- **Consent** – check that they are happy to take part in the interview and understand their participation is voluntary (they can withdraw at any time during the interview).
- **Ask for permission to digitally record** – when recording starts - GDPR requires a legal basis to process your data. Our legal basis is your consent which you are free to withdraw at any point during or after the research (up until the 23rd June after this time the data would have been analysed and cannot be removed). Are you happy to continue?
- **Any questions before we begin?**

(including those we are required to tell them about under MRS and GDPR guidelines).

2. Background and context (All) — 5 mins

Provides contextual background information about the participant and their lifestyle.

*To start off with, I'm going to ask a few questions about yourself. (*Refer to survey data.)

NOTE FOR INTERVIEWERS: If participant took part in the wave 1 qual ask if any of the following have changed since we last spoke to them in June/July 2022.

Cover *briefly*:

Can you tell me a bit about yourself?

- **Family and home life (E2, E3)** – who you live with (partner, children), any other caring responsibilities, how long they have lived there, partner's employment status
- **Local area**: Area they live in, availability of jobs in their area, types of jobs available
- **Transport:** Whether or not they drive / have a car, what transport they rely on, what local transport is available in their area
- **Work history (A4, A5)** – any previous employment – when / what, Length of time claiming Universal Credit?
- **Typical day** Can you tell me briefly about a typical day in your life at the moment? Talk me through a typical day. What keeps you busy? *Explore briefly: work routines, activities with children, usual childcare arrangements, activities of others in HH.*

3. Work Status (In work) — 15 mins

Collect information on

To start with, I'd like to talk a bit about your current job.

If working (A1):
In the survey you said you were currently working – is that still the case?
Moderator: if not, switch to out of work topic guide

Can you tell me about your job:
- What do you do?
- How long have you been in this job?
- Is this job similar to ones you've had before or different? How? Probe on: Sector, company type, size of company.
- What do you enjoy about this job?
- Are there any challenges you experience in doing this job e.g. travel, balancing home-life. How much do they affect you? How are you overcoming them?
- *Probe on impact on health condition if they have one, how they manage their job and health condition together and impact that working has had on their health condition*

How did you get this job? *Probe on role of Restart / DWP.*
- What was the process of you getting this job? Probe on finding the job, interview stage
- What role did Restart/ JCP have on you getting this job, if at all? Probe on: job-finding skills (what specifically); job skills (what?), confidence, motivation etc
- Did you receive support from anyone to help you get this job?
- *If job is in a different sector / different type of job:* How did you prepare to find a job in a different sector / different type of job? Why did you consider this job / type of job? How did you feel about applying for this job? How did Restart / JCP support you?

How has getting this job affected you?
- *Probe on: finances, wellbeing, confidence, homelife, children*

How long do you expect to be in this job for?
- What opportunities are there for training? And progression?
- Can you foresee anything that would cause you to leave? What could you / your employer / DWP do to avoid this?

Before starting your current job what challenges did you face in getting (back) in to work?
- What steps did you take to overcome these barriers? *Probe on areas mentioned in the survey at B3. Probe on: health, family responsibilities, availability / types of work in your area (including hours and location), not meeting job requirements, education and training needs, housing, transport – probe cost and availability. For hours – probe to understand how this acts as a barrier (number of hours, shift patterns, commuting at certain times etc)*

their work history and attitudes towards work?

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- Who or what helped you overcome these challenges? *Probe on role of DWP / Jobcentre / Restart to explore later.*

What was the last job you had before this one? ***Probe on whether this was before / during / after Restart.***
- How is your current job similar to or different from your previous job? Probe on whether current job is step up / step down / similar level
- Why did this job end?
- What impact did this have on you? Probe on: home life, financial, wellbeing
- Have you had more than one job since starting Restart?

While you were job searching were you offered a job and decided to turn it down?
- Why did you decide to turn down the job? E.g. pay was too low, travel difficulties, hours didn't fit with commitments, health conditions, holding out for a better job (probe on what was 'better' or what was 'insufficient' about the job they were offered) (also probe if they accepted a job but then quit soon after)
- Is there any support you could have been given that would have meant you could have accepted the job? E.g. additional training, help with childcare

4. Experience of the Restart Scheme / DWP support (All)	**15 mins**
In this section I'd like to ask you about your experience of Restart DWP Support [moderator: tailor as appropriate if they are participant / non-participant]. Non-participants: Do you remember being invited to take part in the Restart Scheme? This would have been run by [provider]? Why didn't you take part? **What types of support were you receiving at the beginning of the Restart programme / in early 2022?** *If took part in qual wave 1- please tell us about any support even if you may have mentioned it last year* Probe for specifics: • *improving their skills for work* • *job searching and applying for jobs* • *digital job-seeking tools* • *contact with employers* • *support with mental or physical health conditions* • *support to help with other aspects of their life* • *Support to change sectors (such as gaining new skills or undertaking training)* **What other types of support did you receive on the programme / over the past 12 months?** Probe for specifics: • *improving their skills for work* • *job searching and applying for jobs*	*Collect information about the support they have received from Restart so far.*

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- *digital job-seeking tools*
- *contact with employers*
- *support with mental or physical health conditions*
- *support to help with other aspects of their life*
- *Support to change sectors (such as gaining new skills or undertaking training)*

How did the types of support you receive change over time?
- Were there any differences in the types of support you received at the beginning of the programme compared to at the end?
- Did you request any specific types of support? What? Did you receive this? How did it help you?

Who provided this support/help? E.g. Restart advisor, external agencies, employers, JCP
- How regularly did you meet with them? Probe on face to face and remote meetings
- What do you think about how regularly you met? Was this enough / too much / not enough? What impact did this frequency have on your job-searching?

How well did the support meet your needs / address your challenges to finding work? *Probe fully and ask for examples. Refer back to the challenges they previously mentioned and the support they were given.*
- Probe on each of the following if mentioned previously asking how the support has addressed this challenge: *health, family responsibilities, availability / types of work, education and training needs, housing, transport –cost and availability, hours work available, confidence in ability to work. Probe on the impact of the cost of living crisis (e.g. working not financially viable, concerns about losing benefits and support).*
- *If they are concerned about work not being financially viable:* did anyone recommend you use a benefit/better off calculator to see if this would be the case (were they better or worse off than they thought)
- Was any support unsuitable for you?
- How has Restart helped you overcome these challenges? Probe for specific forms / examples of support.

Since startin your job a ve you received any 'in work' support from Restart / JCP to help you progress in work?
- *Probe on what they have had specifically:* additional training, support with the cost of travel, help with disputes or difficulties at the job, help negotiate for adjustments e.g. if they need adjustments for a disability

Participants no longer on the Restart Scheme only (S3=2)
From your survey response you are no longer on the Restart Scheme, why did you finish or leave the Restart Scheme?

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- *Probe on the scheme ending after 12 months, finding a job, another reason*

How would you describe your relationship with your Restart advisor / Work Coach?
- What helped to build / support this relationship? *Probe on: frequency of contact, mode of contact (telephone/ in-person), length of meetings, regularity of seeing the same person, trust and confidence in advice they were providing*
- Was there anything the adviser could have done better?
- What impact has this had on you? *Probe on: wellbeing, readiness for work, ability to get in to work, starting job, sustaining employment*

What would you say has worked well for you about Restart / the support you have received from JCP / DWP?
- *Probe: type of contact, nature of contact, frequency of contact, support offered, length of time support was offered and when the support was offered, role of any in-work support*

What would you say has worked less well?
- *Probe: type of contact, nature of contact, frequency of contact, any sessions they had that worked less well, support/advice offered, challenges faced, length of time support was offered and when the support was offered, adaptions of support for physical or mental health conditions, any in-work support*
- Were there any challenges that Restart   JCP didn't help with?

Have you faced any difficulties accessing this support?
- *Probe on: travel difficulties, times of meetings, relationship with advisor, type of support offered*
- What impact did this have on how you feel about working? Your ability to get in to work? And stay in work?

[Participants only:]
Would you recommend Restart to someone else in a similar situation to you?

[Participants only:] How appropriate did the 12 month duration of the Restart programme feel to you?

Participants only: Have you received any other work related support from DWP / JCP in the past? Probe on any other programmes they have been on
If yes: **How does Restart / the support you have had from JCP over the past 12 months compare to any other support you have received in the past?**
- *Probe on support offered from Jobcentre Plus, employment support schemes or a charity*

- How has the support offered through Restart similar to / different from this support?
- Is Restart / support you have had over past 12 months more or less helpful than other work related support you have received? Why do you say that?

What improvements do you think could be made to Restart / JCP support to better help others like you?
- What other support or help could be offered that you have not been offered yet?
- What changes could be made to how the support is delivered to improve your experiences?
- How would this improvement have helped you into work?
- What support if any could be offered to help you stay in work or progress in work?

5. Outcomes (All)	20 mins

Understand soft and hard outcomes since they have started on the Restart Scheme.

Can you tell me about any new skills you have gained, or skills you have developed in the last year?
- *Probe on CV writing, job searching, interview prep, technology skills, gaining qualifications, speaking with employers, developed skills in a specific sector, social / emotional skills, volunteering or job placement experience*
- *If job placement ask:* How did you get the job placement? What sector was it in? Why were you interested in the placement?
- How have you used or do you plan to use this skill?
- What impact do you think this has had on helping you to get a job?
- *Those in work:* How do you think the skills you have gained could help you to keep or progress in your current job?

Compared to this time last year have there been any changes in terms of how you feel about work?
- *Probe on: changes in attitude towards work, motivation, confidence, health and wellbeing in general. Refer back to survey questions and probe*
- *How has this change affected you? Ask for examples*
- If experienced a change in attitude what has triggered this? *Probe on what specific support has led to them feeling differently anything outside of Restart or DWP.*
- *If not covered already:* How do you feel about progressing in work? Has this changed at all in the last year? What has impacted how you feel about progressing in work?

To what extent has Restart / JCP support helped you with the challenges you have faced getting into work?
- *Probe: on barriers previously mentioned earlier on in the interview*
- How has Restart helped you overcome these challenges? Probe for specific forms / examples of support.

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- How has Restart/ JCP helped you overcome challenges to progress in your job if at all? E.g. support to increase your hours

Have you taken any actions because of t e interactions you've ad from Restart / JCP?
- *Probe: looking for jobs, training, development opportunities, started a new job, other; what triggered this*
- Have you experienced any challenges while carrying out these actions? How have you overcome them? What role has Restart had in helping you to do this?

How do you feel about applying for a job and going through the job application process now, compared to this time last year?
- How do you feel about looking for jobs now e.g. online, job centre, friends and family, approaching businesses
- Do you use any new sources to look for jobs?
- How do you feel about completing a job application and CV now?
- How do you feel about attending a job interview and making a good impression?
- How do you feel about starting a new job?

What role did the support/help you received from Restart / JCP play in helping you to get a job?
- Probe fully even if discussed previously
- Have you used any skills (work skills or job-search skills) you gained during Restart in your current job?
- *If help from Restart JCP didn't help*: What did contribute to you getting a job?

What impact has working had on your overall wellbeing and life satisfaction?
- What role has the support you have had from Restart / JCP had on this?
- Has support from Restart/ JCP had an impact your overall wellbeing?

6. Looking ahead	**5 mins**

What are your plans for work over the next 6 months? And next 12 months?
- How would ideally you like to progress or develop at work? *Probe on increasing hours/ earnings.*
- How would you ideally achieve this; what steps would/do you intend to take?
- Would you need any support to achieve this? *Probe on needing skills support to progress – what specifically.* Who would you want to receive this from?
- Would you prefer to stay in a similar type of role to the one you are currently working in, or are you likely to consider other sectors in the future?

What are your longer term goals in relation to work? • How likely do you think you are to achieve your goals; what are the barriers to doing so? • Do you feel that you have the skills to achieve these aims?	
7. Summing up	**2-3 mins**
We are coming to the end of the interview, but I have a few final questions before we finish. **Overall, what impact do you think the help you have received through the Restart Scheme / from DWP has had on you getting a job?** **Finally, is t e re anyt in el se you would like to mention t a t we ave n't a d the opportunity to discuss?** *Thank and reiterate confidentiality. Incentives = a £40 voucher 'thank you' from Ipsos for their time and contribution.* **Signpost for further information / if any concerns about discussion: gov.uk/universal-credit, citizensadvice.org.uk**	*Brings the conversation to a close, and allows participants time to mention anything that has not already been covered.*

Wave 2 (Out of work only)

Aims and objectives

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has commissioned Ipsos to conduct qualitative research to understand people's experience of the Restart Scheme. The Restart Scheme aims to get Universal Credit claimants who are long term unemployed closer to the labour market and into employment.

This research will explore the support Restart participants have received, responses to this support and soft and hard outcomes.

We have conducted two waves of research with a longitudinal sample who took part at wave 1 and wave 2, a boost sample of participants who took part at wave 2 only and a non-participant sample, acting as a control group.

This is wave 2 of this research, some participants may have taken part in wave 1 in June/July 2022 (either just the quant or quant and qual), this will be marked in the profile grid.

NOTE TO MODERATOR: Before conductin interviews, please read t rou   participant's wave one and two survey responses and interview notes (as applicable) in detail to understand individual participant circumstances. Some questions in the topic guide refer specifically to responses in the survey (these are highlighted in blue).

Check which CPA they are in and the provider which would have run Restart in their area: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/restart-scheme/restart-scheme-contract-package-areas

1. Introduction (All)	2-3 mins
Thank participant for taking part. Introduce self, and explain nature of interview: informal conversation; gather all opinions; all opinions valid. Interviews should take around 60 minutes. **Introduce research and topic** – - PARTICIPANTS ONLY: The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has commissioned Ipsos to conduct research to understand your experience of the Restart Scheme. - NON-PARTICIPANTS ONLY: The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has commissioned Ipsos to conduct research to understand UC claimants experience of looking for work and any support they have received. **Role of Ipsos** – Independent research organisation (i.e. independent of government), we adhere to the MRS Code of Conduct. **Confidentiality** – reassure all responses anonymous and that identifiable information about them will not be passed on to anyone, including back to DWP or any other government department. The only exception to this would be if they tell you something that makes you concerned they, or someone else, is at serious risk of harm – in that case we might need to pass this on to someone else to provide help. Reassure them that participation will have no impact on their Universal Credit claim or any dealings with DWP now or in the future. **Consent** – check that they are happy to take part in the interview and understand their participation is voluntary (they can withdraw at any time during the interview). **Ask for permission to digitally record** – when recording starts - GDPR requires a legal basis to process your data. Our legal basis is your consent which you are free to withdraw at any point during or after the research (up until the 23rd June after this time the data would have been analysed and cannot be removed). Are you happy to continue? **Any questions before we begin?**	*Orientates interviewee, prepares them to take part in the interview.* *Outlines the 'rules' of the interview (including those we are required to tell them about under MRS and GDPR guidelines).*
2. Background and context (All)	5 mins
*To start off with, I'm going to ask a few questions about yourself. (*Refer to survey data.) NOTE FOR INTERVIEWERS: If participant took part in the wave 1 qual ask if any of the following have changed since we last spoke to them in June/July 2022. **Cover** *briefly*: **Can you tell me a bit about yourself**? **Family and home life (E2, E3)** – who you live with (partner, children), any other caring responsibilities, how long they have lived there, partner's employment status **Local area**: Area they live in, availability of jobs in their area, types of jobs available	*Provides contextual background information about the participant and their lifestyle.*

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- **Transport:** Whether or not they drive / have a car, what transport they rely on, what local transport is available in their area
- **Work history (A4, A5)** – any previous employment – when / what, Length of time claiming Universal Credit?
- **Typical day** Can you tell me briefly about a typical day in your life at the moment? Talk me through a typical day. What keeps you busy? *Explore briefly: work routines, activities with children, usual childcare arrangements, activities of others in HH.*

3. Experiences of, and attitudes, towards work (out of work)	15 mins

To start with, I'd like to talk a bit about work in general.

Ask if they have ever worked (A2)
Can you start by telling me a bit more about your work history?
- Have you worked in similar types of jobs / sectors or different sectors?

In the survey you said you were out of work – is that still the case? *Moderator: if not, switch to in work topic guide*

- How long have you been out of work? *If on Restart* probe on if they have had a job since being on Restart and why this job/these jobs ended
- What was your most recent job? When was this?
- IF in past year: How did you find this job? E.g. online, word of mouth, support from JCP
- Why did this job end?
- Have you had more than one job since starting Restart / since early 2022?

Can you tell me a little bit about your experience of job searching?
- How long have you been looking for a job?
- How do you find job searching? What methods do you use to look for work?
- How confident do you feel about your ability to look for and find a job?

Which sectors are you looking for jobs in?
- Is this similar to work you have done in the past or different?
- While looking for jobs have you broadened your search to include jobs you may not have considered before? What prompted you to do this? *Probe on role of Restart / DWP support*
- How do you feel about looking for jobs in different sectors / different types of work? Are you doing this? What prompted you to do this? *Probe on role of Restart / DWP support*

What are the challenges you experience when looking for a job? *Probe on: transport (availability, distance and cost), health conditions, digital skills / lack of, cost of living crisis, debt, types of job available (including location and hours) For hours – probe to understand how this acts as a barrier (number of hours, shift patterns, commuting at certain times etc) Probe fully to understand specifics and implications of each barrier.*

Collect information on their work history and attitudes towards work?

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Have you received any support while looking for a job? *Probe on DWP, the Jobcentre, charity, note down for reference later*
- Have you used any other support to help you look for a job? *Probe on any digital support tools.*

While you have been job searching have you been offered a job but decided to turn it down?
- Why did you decide to turn down the job? E.g. pay was too low, travel difficulties, hours didn't fit with commitments, health conditions (also probe if they accepted a job but then quit soon after)
- Is there any support you could have been given that would have meant you could have accepted the job? E.g. additional training, help with childcare

How do you feel about starting work in the next three months? And next 6 months?
- What are the main factors that make you to want to work at the moment?
- What else? *Moderator: ensure you understand all the elements that make people feel motivated e.g. role model for the children, work ethic, earning own income, social aspect, cost of living.*

Are there any factors that would make it difficult for you to work at the moment?
- *Probe fully: health, family responsibilities, availability / types of work, education and training needs, housing, transport –cost and availability, confidence in ability to work. Probe on the impact of the cost of living crisis (e.g. working not financially viable, concerns about losing benefits and support – probe on specific elements and which are most valuable important to them). Probe on areas mentioned in the survey at B3.*
- *Probe on why these are a barrier to work*
- Has (insert barrier from above) always made it difficult for you to or has this become a challenge more recently?
- How important are these factors in your decisions about working? Why / why not? *Explore.*

4. Experience of the Restart Scheme / DWP support (All)	15 mins
In this section I'd like to ask you about your experience of Restart DWP Support [moderator: tailor as appropriate if they are participant / non-participant]. Non-participants: Do you remember being invited to take part in the Restart Scheme? This would have been run by [provider]? Why didn't you take part? Do you recall being invited to any other DWP support programmes in the past 12 months? **What types of support were you receiving at the beginning of the Restart programme / in early 2022?** *If took part in qual wave 1- please tell us about any support even if you may have mentioned it last year* Probe for specifics:	*Collect information about the support they have received from Restart so far.*

- *improving their skills for work*
- *job searching and applying for jobs*
- *digital job-seeking tools*
- *contact with employers*
- *support with mental or physical health conditions*
- *support to help with other aspects of their life*
- *Support to change sectors (such as gaining new skills or undertaking training)*

What other types of support did you receive on the programme / over the past 12 months?
Probe for specifics:
- *improving their skills for work*
- *job searching and applying for jobs*
- *digital job-seeking tools*
- *contact with employers*
- *support with mental or physical health conditions*
- *support to help with other aspects of their life*
- *Support to change sectors (such as gaining new skills or undertaking training)*

How did the types of support you receive change over time?
- Were there any differences in the types of support you received at the beginning of the programme compared to at the end?

Who provided this support/help? E.g. Restart advisor, external agencies, employers, JCP
- How regularly did you meet with them? Probe on face to face and remote meetings
- What do you think about how regularly you met? Was this regular enough to provide the support you needed?

How well did the support meet your needs / address your challenges to work? *Probe fully and ask for examples. Refer back to the challenges they previously mentioned and the support they were given.*
- Probe on each of the following if mentioned previously asking how the support has addressed this challenge: *health, family responsibilities, availability / types of work, education and training needs, housing, transport –cost and availability, confidence in ability to work. Probe on the impact of the cost of living crisis (e.g. working not financially viable, concerns about losing benefits and support).*
- If they are concerned about work not being financially viable did anyone recommend they use a benefit/better off calculator to see if this would be the case (were they better or worse off than they thought)
- How has Restart helped you overcome these challenges? Probe for specific forms / examples of support.

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Participants no longer on the Restart Scheme only (S3=2)
From your survey response it looks like you are no longer on the Restart Scheme, why did you finish or leave the Restart Scheme?
- *Probe on the scheme ending after 12 months, finding a job, another reason*

How would you describe your relationship with your Restart advisor / Work Coach?
- What helped to build / support this relationship? *Probe on: frequency of contact, mode of contact (telephone/ in-person), length of meetings, regularity of seeing the same person, trust and confidence in advice they were providing, skill and helpfulness of the advisor/WC*
- Were there any challenges in your relationship?
- What impact has this had on you? *Probe on: wellbeing, readiness for work, ability to get in to work, starting job, sustaining employment*

What would you say has worked well for you about Restart / the support you have received from JCP / DWP?
- *Probe: type of contact, nature of contact, frequency of contact, support offered, length of time support was offered and when the support was offered*

What would you say has worked less well?
- *Probe: type of contact, nature of contact, frequency of contact, any sessions they had that worked less well, support/advice offered, challenges faced, length of time support was offered and when the support was offered, adaptions of support for physical or mental health conditions*
- Were there any challenges that Restart / JCP didn't help with?

Have you faced any difficulties accessing this support?
- *Probe on: travel difficulties, times of meetings, relationship with advisor, type of support offered*
- What impact did this have on how you feel about working? Your ability to get in to work? And stay in work?

[Participants only:] Would you recommend Restart to someone else in a similar situation to you?

[Participants only:] How appropriate did the 12-month duration of the Restart programme feel to you?

Participants only: Have you received any other work-related support from DWP / JCP in the past? Probe on any other programmes they have been on
If yes: **How does Restart / the support you have had from JCP over the past 12 months compare to any other support you have received in the past?**
- *Probe on support offered from Jobcentre Plus, employment support schemes or a charity*

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- How has the support offered through Restart similar to / different from this support?
- Is Restart / support you have had over past 12 months more or less helpful than other work-related support you have received? Why do you say that?

What improvements do you think could be made to Restart / JCP support to help you get into work?

- Was there any specific support that could have been improved? *Probe on the types of support they were offered* e.g. job searching, training
- What changes could be made to how the support is delivered to improve your experiences?
- How would this improvement have helped you into work?
- Can you think of any other types of support which would help you get into work? *Note to moderator: encourage creative thinking and solutions here*

5. Outcomes (Out of work)	15 mins
Moderator: explain you'd now like to discuss any outcomes of the support **Can you tell me about any new skills you have gained, or skills you have developed in the last year?** - *Probe on CV writing, job searching, interview prep, technology skills, gaining qualifications, speaking with employers, developed skills in a specific sector, social / emotional skills, volunteering or job placement experience* - *If job placement ask:* How did you get the job placement? What sector was it in? Why were you interested in the placement? - How have you used or plan to use this skill? - What impact do you think this will / has had on helping you to get a job? **Compared to this time last year have there been any changes in terms of how you feel about work?** - *Probe on: changes in attitude towards work, motivation, confidence, how you would like to progress at work and health and wellbeing in general. Refer back to survey questions and probe* - *How has this change affected you? Ask for examples* - If experienced a change in attitude what has triggered this? *Probe on what specific support has led to them feeling differently, including anything outside of Restart or DWP* - Overall, do you feel you are closer to finding work now than 12 months ago? **To what extent has Restart / JCP support helped you with the challenges you have faced getting into work?** - *Probe: on barriers previously mentioned earlier on in the interview* How has Restart/ JCP helped you overcome these challenges? Probe for specific forms / examples of support. **Have you taken any actions because of t e interactions you've ad from Restart / JCP?**	*Understand soft and hard outcomes since they have started on the Restart Scheme.*

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- *Probe: looking for jobs (new ways of job searching), changed sectors you are applying for jobs in, training, development opportunities, started a new job, other; what triggered this*
- Have you experienced any challenges while carrying out these actions? How have you overcome them? What role has Restart had in helping you to do this?

How do you feel about applying for a job and going through the job application process now, compared to this time last year?
- *Interviewers note: probe on how this differs from this time last year compared to now*
- How has support from Restart / JCP made you feel about applying for jobs and starting work?
- How do you feel about looking for jobs now e.g. online, job centre, friends and family, approaching businesses
- Do you use any new sources to look for jobs?
- How do you feel about completing a job application and CV now?
- How do you feel about attending a job interview and making a good impression?
- How do you feel about starting a new job?

Can you tell me a little bit about your overall life satisfaction?
- How happy are you with your life at the moment? *Note for interviewer- if needed here signpost to where support is available at the end of the topic guide*
- Has this changed compared to how you felt this time last year?
- Has Restart /JCP had an impact on how you feel about your life now?
- Have your feelings towards your job prospects had an impact on how you feel about your life in general?

6. Looking ahead	5 mins
	Understand claimants goals for the future.

What are your plans over the next 6 months in terms of job searching and started work? And next 12 months?
- Is starting work in the next 6-12 months realistic for you with the right support?
- Would you need any support to achieve this? *Probe on needing skills support to progress – what specifically.* Who would you want to receive this from? Probe on DWP, JCP or an outside provider (e.g. Restart)

What are your longer-term goals in relation to work?
- *Probe on working in a certain role or industry, training, courses, progressing in work when they get a job,*
- Are these the same goals you had this time last year? How have they changed if at all?
- How likely do you think you are to achieve your goals; what are the barriers to doing so?

• Do you feel that you have the skills to achieve these aims?	
7. Summing up	**2-3 mins**
We are coming to the end of the interview, but I have a few final questions before we finish. Adapt language depending on whether participant is in work / not. **Overall, what impact do you think the help you have received through the Restart Scheme / from DWP has had on your ability to get into work?** **Finally, is t e re anyt in el se you would like to mention t a t we ave n't a d the opportunity to discuss?** *Thank and reiterate confidentiality. Incentives = a £40 voucher 'thank you' from Ipsos for their time and contribution.* **Signpost for further information / if any concerns about discussion: gov.uk/universal-credit, citizensadvice.org.uk**	*Brings the conversation to a close, and allows participants time to mention anything that has not already been covered.*

6.3 Technical details: Provider survey

6.3.1 Provider survey sample and development

DWP provided contact details for 282 prime and subcontractor sites across the 12 Contract Package Areas. Invited respondents were typically employed in junior management roles.

The information about Restart delivery sites was the most accurate available. However, it was not possible to weigh the survey as we could not externally verify whether the sample was representative.

From a base of 138 respondents, just over half were prime contractors (54%) and just under half were subcontractors (46%). There was a relatively broad spread of respondents across CPAs: Home Counties (18%) and East Central (14%) are most common, and Wales (5%), Greater Manchester (5%) and West Central (5%) are least common.

Significantly more prime contractors responded from Central and West London (16% compared to 2% of subcontractors), whereas significantly more subcontractors responded from West Central (11% compared to 0% of prime contractors) and North West (14% compared to 1% of prime contractors).

Table 6.4 Distribution of respondents according to CPA

CPA	Overall sample	% of total	Achieved sample	% of total
1a: West Central	22	8%	7	5%
1b: East Central	46	16%	19	14%
2a: North East and Humberside	21	7%	10	7%
2b: South and West Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire	13	5%	9	7%
3a: North West	24	9%	10	7%
3b: Greater Manchester	16	6%	7	5%
4a: South West	26	9%	10	7%
4b: South Central	31	11%	13	9%
5a: Central and West London	18	6%	13	9%
5b: South and East London	16	6%	8	6%
5c: Home Counties	36	13%	25	18%

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6: Wales	13	5%	7	5%
Grand Total	282	100%	138	100%

The quantitative survey was undertaken with a multimode approach using online surveys and Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI). The online survey was initiated first, with emails sent to respondents with a link to complete the survey online. The telephone survey was then initiated to collect the responses of those who had not responded to the online survey. Emails were sent to respondents at intervals throughout the fieldwork to remind them about the survey.

The multimodal survey was open between 26 January and 15 February 2023 and received 138 responses: 110 online and 28 by telephone. The overall response rate was 49%.

6.3.2   Research tools: Provider survey

Thank you for taking part in this survey.

Learning and Work Institute (L&W) and Ipsos are conducting this survey on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), as part of their evaluation of Restart. The survey is being conducted to understand what is working well in the delivery of Restart, and where any improvements can be made. The purpose of the evaluation is not to scrutinise or an isations or individuals' performance.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and you can choose to withdraw at any time. All of your answers will be treated as entirely confidential and no identifiable information will be used in the final report or in any other output.

This survey should take around 20 minutes to complete depending on your answers.

If you would like to read the Privacy Notice beforehand you can access it online at

INSERT LINK
CATI ONLY INSTRUCTIONS IN RED

WEB INSTRUCTIONS IN GRAY

WEB: **Please click 'next' if you are a ppy to complete t e survey.**
CATI: **Are you happy to proceed with the interview?**
  1. Yes
  2. No [THANK AND CLOSE]
OPERATIONAL READINESS AND DELIVERY
This set of questions focuses on the operational delivery of the Restart Scheme.

If you work in or have responsibility for more than one site. Please answer the following questions for the site where you spend the highest proportion of your time. If you spend an equal amount of time at multiple sites, please answer the following questions for one site only.

Q1. Has your site made any of the following operational changes to the delivery of Restart since the Scheme began?

RANDOMISE STATEMENTS A – H

READ OUT

A. Additional/ alternative IT systems
B. Changes to staff training
C. Increased recruitment of staff
D. Decreased recruitment of staff
E. Reduced number of sites
F. Increased number of sites
G. Other site/premises changes (e.g., smaller/larger sites, closer to JCP)
WEB: **Please select one answer only**

1. Have made changes
2. Have not made changes
99. Don't know

ASK IF SELECTED CODE 1 for ANY STATEMENT A – J at Q8

SINGE CODE PER STATEMENT

Q . How a ve t e se c an e s impacted your site's delivery of Restart?

RANDOMISE STATEMENTS A - J

SHOW STATEMENTS if they have made these changes (Q8 = 1 for each statement)

READ OUT

A. Additional/alternative IT systems
B. Changes to staff training
C. Increased recruitment of staff
D. Decreased recruitment of staff
E. Reduced number of sites
F. Increased number of sites
G. Other site/premises changes (e.g., smaller/larger sites, closer to JCP)]
WEB: **Please select one answer only**

REVERSE SCALE FOR HALF OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Negatively impacted
2. Made no change to delivery
3. Positively impacted
99. Don't know

ASK ALL

SINGLE CODE PER ROW

REFERRALS, ONBOARDING, AND MANDATION
This set of questions focuses on the participant referrals that your site receives, as well as the process of mandation in the Restart Scheme.

Q3. What are the main reasons why you would deem a participant an unsuitable referral?

WEB: **Please select all that apply**

RANDOMISE

PROMPT TO CODES, PROBE FULLY

1. Doesn't meet the formal eligibility criteria
2. Barriers/needs are highly complex, and Restart cannot provide effective support
3. Better suited to another programme
4. Highly skilled or highly qualified and Restart cannot provide effective support
5. Other (please specify) OPEN BOX, FIX
6. There are no unsuitable referrals EXCLUSIVE, FIX
99. Don't know EXCLUSIVE, FIX

ASK ALL

SINGLE CODE

Q4. Has the proportion of unsuitable referrals changed since the beginning of Restart?

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WEB: Please select one answer only

READ OUT

1. Yes, it has increased
2. Yes, it has decreased
3. Yes, it has fluctuated over time
4. No, it has stayed the same
99. Don't know

ASK ALL

SINGLE CODE

Q5. What typically happens to participants that are deemed unsuitable?

WEB: Please select one answer only

READ OUT

1. Stay on the Restart Scheme
2. Referred to an alternative Scheme with my organisation and removed from the Restart Scheme
3. Referred to an alternative Scheme with another organisation and removed from the Restart Scheme
4. Removed from the Restart Scheme without being referred to an alternative Scheme
5. Other (please specify) [OPEN TEXT BOX]

ASK ALL

SINGLE CODE

Q6. Of those Restart Scheme participants who fail to attend a Restart activity, what proportion are mandated as a last resort?

WEB: Please select one answer only

READ OUT

1. None
2. <10%
3. 11-20%
4. 21-40%
5. 41-60%
6. 61-80%
7. 81-100%
99. Don't know [DO NOT READ OUT]

ASK ALL

MULTI CODE

Q7. What are the main reasons your organisation chooses not to request that participants are mandated by Jobcentre Plus?

WEB: Please select all that apply

RANDOMISE

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PROMPT TO CODE

1. andation hasn't been required (e.g., high participant engagement)
2. My organisation prefers to avoid mandation
3. Poor/slow communication with Jobcentre Plus Staff
4. Don't fully understand what the process is to request participants are mandated
5. Other, *please specify* OPEN BOX, FIX
99. Don't know EXCLUSIVE, FIX

ASK ALL

SINGLE CODE

Q8. Which of the following options best describes how well mandation is communicated between the following?

READ OUT

A. Your organisation communicating with JCP staff
B. JCP staff communicating with your organisation
C. JCP staff communicating with participants
D. DWP communicating guidance around mandation with your organisation
E. Your organisation communicating with participants
WEB: **Please select one answer only**

REVERSE STATEMENTS 1 – 3 FOR HALF OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Completely satisfactory
2. Some room for improvement
3. Significant room for improvement
99. Don't know

RELATIONSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT WITH JOBCENTRE PLUS (JCP)
This set of questions focuses on your relationship with Jobcentre Plus (JCP).

Q9. What are your preferred modes of communicating with JCP about Restart?

WEB: **Please select all that apply**

PROMPT TO CODE

RANDOMISE

1. Emails
2. Video calls/ meetings
3. Telephone calls/ meetings
4. Restart advisors visit JCP site
5. JCP staff visit Restart site
6. Restart participants pass on information about Restart to JCP staff
7. Restart participants pass on information to you from JCP staff
8. Other, *please specify* OPEN BOX, FIX
99. Don't know EXCLUSIVE, FIX

ASK ALL

SINGLE CODE PER STATEMENT

Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your communications and relationship with JCP staff?

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READ OUT

A. We have a positive relationship with JCP staff
B. JCP staff respond to us in a timely manner
C. We would like to have more frequent communication with JCP staff
WEB: **Please select one answer only**

REVERSE SCALE FOR HALF OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Strongly disagree
2. Slightly disagree
3. Slightly agree
4. Strongly agree
99. Don't know

MECHANISMS OF SUPPORT
This set of questions focuses on the mechanisms of support that are provided to Restart participants and their suitability for the different participant groups.

Q11. On average, how frequently do individual participants engage with advisors at your site?

WEB: **Please select one answer only**

PROMPT TO CODE

1. Daily
2. A few times a week
3. Weekly
4. Fortnightly
5. Monthly
6. Less than once a month
99. Don't know

ASK ALL

SINGLE CODE

Q12. What estimated proportion of Restart participants keep the same Restart advisor throughout their time on the Scheme?

WEB: **Please select one answer only**

PROMPT TO CODE

1. None
2. <10%
3. 10-20%
4. 21-40%
5. 41-60%
6. 61-80%
7. 81-100%
99. Don't know

Q13. What are the five most common barriers/needs that have been identified in your site?

WEB: **Please select all that apply**

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RANDOMISE

1. Access to childcare
2. Physical health
3. Mental health
4. Learning difficulties
5. Attitudinal barriers (lack of motivation)
6. Age related barriers (for example being close to retirement)
7. Caring responsibilities
8. Lack of relevant skills or qualifications
9. Lack of work experience
10. Commute to work - time to travel
11. Commute to work - cost of travel
12. ESOL needs
13. Ex-offenders
14. Substance and alcohol abuse
15. Other (please specify) OPEN BOX, FIX

ASK ALL

SINGLE CODE PER STATEMENT

Q14. Approximately what proportion of Restart participants access the following training and development opportunities through your site?

RANDOMISE

READ OUT

A. Skills assessments
B. Help finding job opportunities
C. Support to develop CVs or cover letters
D. Interview preparation
E. Writing personal career action plans (also known as Job Finding Action Plans)
F. Training or courses to develop skills or qualifications
WEB**: Please select one answer only**

1. <10%
2. 10-25%
3. 26-50%
4. 51-75%
5. 76-100%
6. This is not offered but might be beneficial
7. This is not offered because it isn't necessary

99. Don't know

ASK ALL

SINGLE CODE PER STATEMENT

Q15. Approximately what proportion of Restart participants access the following support either internally or via an external referral?

RANDOMISE

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A. Support to improve confidence
B. Support with digital technology
C. Ongoing support after participant has started a new job
D. Support to manage a physical health condition
E. Support to manage a mental health condition
F. Support to access affordable/ good quality childcare
G. Support to manage other caring responsibilities
H. Support to find suitable housing
I. Support to access specialised training for higher skilled/ qualified participants
J. Support with ESOL needs

WEB: **Please select one answer only**

1. <10%
2. 10-25%
3. 26-50%
4. 51-75%
5. 76-100%
6. This is not offered but might be beneficial
7. This is not offered because it isn't necessary

99. Don't know

ASK ALL

SINGLE CODE PER ROW

Q16. Approximately what proportion of Restart participants access the following employer activities through your site?

RANDOMISE

A. A job placement or shadowing
B. Attend a job fair
C. Referral to an information session with a prospective employer
D. Talking to employers and other sites on behalf of participants where appropriate (e.g., arranging an interview)
E. Information and support to become self-employed
F. Job brokerage

WEB: **Please select one answer only**

1. <10%
2. 10-25%
3. 26-50%
4. 51-75%
5. 76-100%
6. This is not offered but might be beneficial
7. This is not offered because it isn't necessary

99. Don't know

ASK ALL

SINGLE CODE PER STATEMENT

Q17. How effective is the Restart Scheme in enabling you to support people with the following needs?

RANDOMISE

READ OUT

A. Access to childcare
B. Physical health
C. Mental health
D. Learning difficulties
E. Attitudinal barriers (lack of motivation)
F. Age related barriers (for example being close to retirement)
G. Caring responsibilities
H. Lack of relevant skills or qualifications
I. Lack of work experience
J. Commute to work - time to travel
K. Commute to work - cost of travel
L. ESOL needs
M. Ex-offenders
N. Substance and alcohol abuse
O. Highly skilled / qualified individuals
P. Individuals unemployed for longer than two years
Q. Individuals unemployed for less than nine months
WEB: **Please select one answer only**

REVERSE SCALE 1 – 4 FOR HALF OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Very ineffective
2. Fairly ineffective
3. Fairly effective
4. Very effective
99. Don't know [FIX]

ASK ALL WHO ANSWERED INEFFECTIVE (Q33 = CODE 1 (Very ineffective) or CODE 2 (Fairly ineffective))

MULTI CODE

Q.18. What are the reasons for not being able to support people with these needs?

WEB: **Please select all that apply**

RANDOMISE ANSWER OPTIONS 1 – 8

PROMPT TO CODE, PROBE FULLY

1. Limited budget
2. Lack of external training available for participants
3. Lack of external support services for participants
4. Lack of internal capacity to deliver training or support
5. Limited time on the programme
6. Limited participant interest
7. Participant restrictions (e.g., not able to commit to training)
8. Other (please specify) OPEN TEXT BOX, FIX

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99. Don't know EXCLUSIVE, FIX

ASK ALL

MULTI CODE

Q19. Which of the following, if any, have participants experienced in relation to training and/or funding?

WEB**: Please select all that apply**

READ OUT

1. Externally funded training while on Restart
2. Other programmes (e.g., SWAPS) while on Restart
3. Funding from JCP (e.g., Flexible Support Funding) while on Restart
4. None of the above EXCLUSIVE, FIX
99. Don't know EXCLUSIVE, FIX

ASK ALL

SINGLE CODE PER STATEMENT

Q20. Approximately what proportion of Restart participants supported by your site access the following financial support?

RANDOMISE

READ OUT

A. Funding travel to Restart site
B. Funding costs associated with employment work (e.g., transport, uniform)
C. Funding materials required to find work (e.g., Interview clothing, IT devices, travel to interviews)
D. Advice/support around managing debt
WEB**: Please select one answer only**

1. <10%
2. 10-25%
3. 26-50%
4. 51-75%
5. 76-100%
6. This is not offered but might be beneficial
7. This is not offered because it isn't necessary

99. Don't know

PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT
This set of questions focuses on local partnerships and engagement with employers and stakeholders.

Q21. Is there a specialist role or team at your site that is dedicated to employer engagement?

WEB**: Please select one answer only**

1. Yes
2. No

99. Don't know

Q22. How frequently does your site engage with the following partners?

RANDOMISE STATEMENTS A – E

READ OUT

A. Employers
B. Local or Combined Authorities
C. Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)
D. Chambers of Commerce
E. Training/ education providers
F. Referral partners
G. Other charities and support services (e.g., housing support)
H. Other employment programmes
I.   Other (please specify) OPEN TEXT BOX, FIX
WEB: **Please select one answer only**

1. Daily
2. Weekly
3. Monthly
4. Less than once a month
5. Never
99. Don't know

RESTART PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES
This set of questions focuses on the outcomes for participants on the Restart Scheme.

Q23. What estimated proportion of Restart participants who have been offered a job typically turn it down?

WEB: **Please select one answer only**

READ OUT

1. <10%
2. 10-20%
3. 21-40%
4. 41-60%
5. 61-80%
6. 81-100%
99. Don't know

ASK ALL

MULTI CODE

Q24. Why do participants typically turn down job offers?

WEB: **Please select all that apply**

RANDOMISE STATEMENTS 1 – 9

READ OUT

1. Not aligned with desired role
2. Not aligned with participant's skillset
3. Inflexibility of role (e.g., unwanted hours)
4. Lack of desire to participate in interviews or meet employers
5. Undesirable salary
6. Concerns about Universal Credit cuts
7. Personal barriers (e.g., childcare)
8. Logistical issues (e.g., transport)
9. Concerns about losing wider support (e.g., unable to have extra energy bill support)
10. Other (please specify) OPEN TEXT BOX, FIX
99. Don't know EXCLUSIVE, FIX

Q25. Does your site have a Customer Exit Plan in place to help transition participants back to JCP support if they complete their time on the Restart Scheme without getting a job?

WEB: Please select one answer only

1. Yes
2. No
99. Don't know

ASK ALL

SINGLE CODE

END SCREEN

Thank and close survey

6.4 Technical details: Case study research

6.4.1 Selection of case studies

The 12 areas were purposively selected so that they covered a diverse range of operational and local labour market contexts. There is one case study for each CPA. At least one case study area for every prime contractor was also selected. The selection of areas is not intended to be representative but to capture variation across a range of contexts including geography, demographics, and labour market conditions.

6.4.2 Desk research and Labour market information (LMI)

Four rounds of Management Information (MI) data and desk research were collected and analysed to inform the case study research. The MI data included data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) annual population survey, ONS NOMIS data, the ONS census, the ONS annual survey of hours and earnings, the ONS health index, Public Health England data, and Statistic Wales.

6.4.3 Interviews

The case study research included a total of 346 interviews with Restart participants, Restart providers, wider stakeholders, JCP staff and employers.

Table 6.5 Case study interviewees

Interviewee group	Number of interviews
Restart participants	114
Providers	80
Stakeholders	49
JCP staff	72
Employers	31

Restart participants were selected from contacts supplied by DWP. Participants had completed between 4 and 12 months on the scheme at their time of interview. No demographic information was received about participants, so they were not purposively selected for interviews.

Restart providers were contacted using a list of prime contractors supplied by DWP. These contacts were asked to provide a list of provider staff, employers, and wider stakeholders who could be contacted for interview. There were challenges in recruiting the full quota of employers and stakeholders. Additional interviewees were therefore contacted through desk research, snowballing of contacts and wider networks.

Providers selected for interview were in a range of roles including advisors and managers and represented the range of delivery organisations in each area.

JCP staff were contacted using a list supplied by DWP. Staff interviewed were in a range of roles including Work Coaches, Team Leaders, and specialist staff.

Interviewees were asked their views and experiences of the Restart Scheme, how effective they thought it was and for any suggested improvements. Interviews were semi-structured and lasted between 30 and 90 minutes. Topic guides were developed and refined for the different interviewee groups, for each wave of the research and for each case study area.

The audio from qualitative interviews was recorded with informed consent from the interviewees. Information provided in interviews was analysed using a framework analysis approach. This involved gridding each interview in Excel to identify the key themes across and within the areas, and across the different groups of participants.

6.4.4   Observations

Twenty-two observations of Restart delivery were conducted alongside the wave 2 and 3 interviews. These were mainly conducted in person through a site visit although some online and telephone activities were also conducted.

Observations included the autodrop process, warm handover calls, participant appointments with Employment Advisors, individual and group support sessions on topics such as CV writing and job search, meetings between JCP and providers, local stakeholder meetings, workshops on topics including wellbeing, transferable skills, improving motivation, and improving mindset, an ESOL class, and a job fair. Notes were taken during the observation and short narrative accounts were written to draw out key themes and interactions.

6.4.5   Deep dives

In wave 3 of the case study research, a deep dive was conducted in each case study area to focus on a particular theme. These included: partnership working, wellbeing support, health needs, highly skilled/qualified, mandation (covered in two areas), employer engagement, longer-term unemployed, workshops, ESOL needs, rural areas, and referrals.

The themes were identified based on emerging evidence from the research, such as a high level of participant need within a local area, or evidence of good practice where key learnings could be identified. The focus of the deep dive informed the research in terms of which participants were selected for interview, the focus of the interview and the selection of the observation.

6.4.6   Area profiles

The LMI, desk research analysis grids, and observation notes were used to create a profile for each area which was updated after each wave of research. An abbreviated version of these is included in 6.4.7.

6.4.7 Case study area profiles
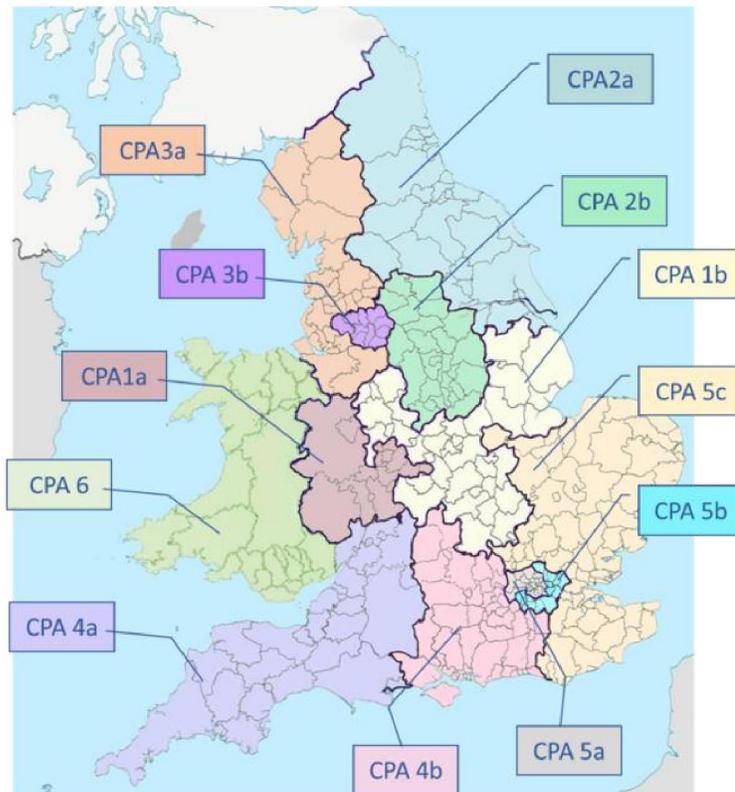
West Central (CPA 1a) [15]
Area profile context
This profile refers to the case study area within CPA 1a. The information is not intended to be representative of the CPA as a whole.

Geographical and political context
This area is a large city with a working age population of around 745,100. It is a mayoral combined authority and has good transport links to the rest of England. Local labour market context

Demographics: The working age population is younger than the UK average, with 16–24-year-olds a larger proportion (24.4%) of the working age population than the UK average of 16.5%. The working age population is also a larger proportion (89.5%) of the population aged 16+ than the UK average of 77.1%. The area has a much more ethnically diverse population than the UK average, with 53.4% describing themselves as white compared to the UK average of 83.5%. The area also has a higher-than-average number of lone parent households at 9.8% compared to 8.6%.

Employment rates: The local labour market has a high claimant count with claimants making up 8.5% of residents aged 16-64 compared to the UK average of 3.7%. Employment rates are lower than the UK average for all 16+ age groups, with 7.8% of working age adults unemployed compared with a national average of 3.6%. There is also a higher rate of economic inactivity in this area, with 29.0% of working age adults economically inactive compared with a UK average of 21.7%.

Qualifications and health conditions: The population is less well qualified than the UK average, with 10.9% of the working population with no qualifications at level 1 or above, compared to a UK average of 6.8%. People's health conditions, including mental health, MSK conditions and rates of disability are close to national averages.

Occupational profiles: The gross weekly median pay of full-time workers is £591.50, which is lower than the UK average of £640. There is a higher proportion of people in the area working in professional and elementary occupations and a lower percentage of people working as managers, directors or senior officials or in caring, leisure and other service occupations. A higher proportion of people work in the transport, communications, public administration, education and health sectors than the UK average.

Interviewees reported that although the labour market is buoyant, it is also highly competitive, and that higher paid jobs require significant training and experience to enter.

Restart Scheme delivery
The Restart Scheme is delivered by six different subcontractors, with the prime contractor managing referrals and delivering a small proportion of the contract directly. The high number of subcontractors was reported to have presented

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[15] The area profiles were created using data from the ONS annual population survey, ONS NOMIS data, the ONS census, the ONS annual survey of hours and earnings, the ONS health index, Public Health England data, and Statistic Wales in combination with data collected as part of the case study research. The data used was the latest available in September 2023.

challenges with recruitment, retention and staff performance; increasing competition for staff recruitment while under-performing individuals could move from one subcontractor to work for another in the area. Some interviewees felt that high turnover of provider staff also undermined relationship-building and tailoring of support for participants.

Restart providers receive referrals from a number of different JCP sites in the area, which adds complexity to the JCP relationship and the referral process. The prime contractor reports high variability in referral volumes, creating challenges for managing delivery. Throughout the scheme, customers have presented with more complex needs than originally anticipated, with higher levels of long-term unemployed, and those with ESOL needs, a lack of confidence, and mental health difficulties.

Providers perform a diagnostic assessment of each participant to categorise them in to one of three groups, with the support provided tailored to the needs of each group. For example, one group of customers may be seen more regularly, and for longer, while activities for another group may be more light touch.

There was a view among participants and stakeholders that the Restart Scheme had focused on low-paid employment opportunities for participants, and not provided sufficient support to find suitable opportunities to higher-qualified participants with a career background.

Through the prime contractor's employer outreach programme, they share vacancy details and opportunities for employer engagement across the supply chain. The prime contractor also hosts bi-monthly engagement meetings with partners, although there is a lack of evidence of how this has shaped delivery of the Restart Scheme in the area.

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East Central (CPA 1b)
Area profile context
This profile refers to the case study area within CPA 1b. The information is not intended to be representative of the CPA as a whole.

Geographical and political context
This area is a market town with a working age population of around 40,100. It is a non-metropolitan district.

Local labour market context
Demographics: The working age population is younger than the UK average, with 16–24-year-olds a larger proportion (22.9%) of the working age population than the UK average of 16.5%. The population is also less ethnically diverse, with 95.0% describing themselves as white compared with a UK average of 83.5%. At 12.3%, the area has a higher-than-average number of lone parent households than the UK average of 8.6%.

Employment rates: A lower percentage of those aged 50+ (63%) are in employment compared with the UK average of 70.8%. In the past, the area has relied heavily on European labour and many businesses have struggled to fill some vacancies.

Qualifications and health conditions: At 13.0%, the proportion of working age people with no qualifications is almost double the UK average. There is also a significantly lower percentage (26.1%) with an NVQ level 4 or above compared with the UK (43.5%).

A high percentage of working age residents who are economically inactive have a health condition or illness that has lasted more than 12 months (60.9%) compared with the national average of 48.8%, and fewer people with such conditions are in employment (39.1%) compared with the UK average of 48.8%.

Occupational profiles: The average weekly salary is £559.60, below the national average of £640.00.

A higher-than-average proportion of residents are managers, directors, or senior officials (15.3% compared with 10.7%), and significantly fewer work in professional occupations (8.9% compared with 26.2%).

Agrifood is an important sector in the area, combining farming, food processing, and manufacturing. Many companies make ready meals for supermarkets. A significantly higher proportion of people work in manufacturing, distribution, hotels, and restaurants, with a lower proportion in banking, finance, and insurance than the UK average.

Restart Scheme delivery
A prime contractor delivers the Restart Scheme and there are no subcontractors.

Many Restart participants have significant barriers to employment, in particular severe and complex health conditions. In the final wave of research, the provider reported that around one-half of Restart participants had a 'fit note.' There is also a significant number of customers from Eastern Europe, with the provider reporting that many do not speak English and are not at entry level in their own language, meaning

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they do not have the reading, writing or communication skills required to function well in everyday life. The provider accesses interpreter services on a regular basis.

A positive relationship exists between the provider and local JCP staff, and previous issues regarding warm handover wait times have been resolved through regular communication between both parties.

As well as employability and health support, the provider offers activities that are not solely work-focused to help participants learn how to engage with others and to build their self-confidence. They also offer transferable skills training linked to sectors with vacancies in the local area, helping people to see that even if they have not worked in that sector before, they have skills which an employer would find attractive. Participants spoke positively about their relationship with provider staff, particularly in terms of their commitment to them, the tailored support, and their efforts to motivate and help access work.

A major barrier to employment is a shortage of public transport, with some locations only having two buses a day. Many vacancies involve shift work, and the transport infrastructure is not in place to enable people to access them without their own vehicle.

North East and Humberside (CPA 2a)
Area profile context
This profile refers to the case study area within CPA 2a. The information is not intended to be representative of the CPA as a whole.

Geographical and political context
This area is a coastal town and seaport with a working age population of around 57,300. It is a unitary authority.

Local labour market context
Demographics: The area is less ethnically diverse than other areas in the UK with 96.8% describing themselves as white compared with the UK average of 83.5%. The area also has a higher-than-average number of lone parent households at 10.5% compared to 8.6%.

Employment rates: Although claimant counts in the area are lower than the UK average, the unemployment rate at 5.1% is higher than the UK average of 3.6%. Employment rates are higher than the UK average for 16–24-year-olds but lower than average for those aged 25-49 and 50-64. There is a higher proportion of people who are economically inactive in the area (26.1%) than the UK average of 21.7%.

Qualifications and health conditions: The population is less well qualified than the UK average, with 7.6% of the working age population having no qualifications at level 1 or above compared with a UK average of 6.8%, and 30.2% holding a NVQ level 4 or above qualification compared with the UK average of 43.5%. People in CPA 2a are also typically less healthy than elsewhere in the UK; with a higher proportion economically inactive due to long-term sickness (41.9% compared with a national average of 26.8%), as well as reporting higher-than-average musculoskeletal conditions (25.8% compared with a national average of 17.6%). There is also a higher level of households with someone deemed disabled under the Equality Act (39.6% compared with the England and Wales average of 32.3%)

Occupational profiles: Although it is an urban area, job density is lower at 0.64 jobs available in the area per person of working age compared with 0.85 as a UK average. Gross weekly median pay for full-time workers is also lower at £593.70 than the UK average of £640. There is a higher proportion of people working in elementary, sales and customer service occupations and as process, plant and machine operatives, and a lower percentage of people working in managerial or professional occupations. A higher proportion of people work in jobs connected with distribution, hotels and restaurants, manufacturing, energy and water industries than the UK average.

Case study research found that, compared to the CPA as whole much available work in the area is insecure agency work, and there are several large employers – particularly in waste and recycling – known for poor working conditions, insecure work, and a high turnover of staff.

Restart Scheme delivery
Restart Scheme is delivered by one subcontractor while the prime contractor carries out the warm handover and books in the first appointment with the subcontractor.

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The subcontractor also delivers the Work and Health programme and previously, Job Entry Targeted Support (JETS), in the area. This means they can share resources between programmes and run joint events as appropriate, and that they are well-known in the area and have strong links with local partners. However, negative experiences of the subcontractor on a previous programme were reported to potentially inhibit participant engagement and motivation on the Restart Scheme.

Referral rates have been higher than the provider expected. Although customer needs vary considerably, common barriers they face include childcare responsibilities, physical and mental health conditions, and low confidence levels. The support offer includes workshops, a sector routeways programme for popular employment routes, and a specialist Self-Employment Advisor. Although the provider reported success in getting customers in to work, they expected sustainability of employment could be poor, due to the local labour market context of high prevalence of insecure and agency work.

Participants' experiences of the support offer were mixed, and negative experiences stemmed from the view that they had not been provided with tailored support and had been signposted to unsuitable job vacancies.

The subcontractor is part of an employability network group of providers, as well as the Local Enterprise Partnership. However, the combined authority believed the size of the region limits the usefulness of these meetings as they are not able to discuss local performance and issues. Furthermore, there appeared to be no formal communication mechanism between the subcontractor and the local council.

South and West Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire (CPA 2b)
Area profile context
This profile refers to the case study area within CPA 2b. The information is not intended to be representative of the CPA as a whole.

Geographical and political context
This is a largely rural area with a working age population of around 42,000.

Local labour market context
Demographics: The working age population is a smaller proportion of the population aged 16+ (68.1%) than the UK average of 77.1%. The working age population is older than the UK average, with a larger proportion aged 50-64 than the (62.9% compared with 31.8%) and a smaller proportion aged 25-49 (16.9% compared with 51.8%). The area is less ethnically diverse than other areas in the UK with 93.9% describing themselves as white compared to the UK average of 83.5%.

Employment rates: The local labour market has a lower employment rate than the UK average for the working age population, which is skewed by the 16-24 age group, in which 35.7% of the population are employed, compared with a UK average of 54.7%. Employment rates are higher than the UK average in the older age groups. This area also has a higher proportion of the working age population who are economically inactive than the UK average.

Qualifications and health conditions: Qualification levels in the area are similar to the UK average. Of those aged 16+ in the area, there are higher proportions reporting musculoskeletal problems (20.7% compared with an average in England of 17.6%) but lower than average levels of mental health conditions (6.7% compared with an average in England of 16.9%) and households with someone deemed disabled under the Equality Act (31.9% compared with the England and Wales average of 32.3%).

Occupational profiles: The weekly median pay for full-time workers is £671.40, which is just higher than the UK figure of £640. A higher proportion of people work as managers, director and senior officials and in professional occupations and a lower percentage of people work in skilled trade and associate professional occupations. A higher proportion of people work in services, public administration, education and health than the UK average.

Restart Scheme delivery
The Restart Scheme is delivered by a prime contractor and one subcontractor who are located across five sites in the area. The prime contractor receives all referrals and carries out the warm handover call before arranging a first appointment with the subcontractor.

The support offer is typical for case study areas, with participants expressing a range of views on how useful and tailored they found the support on offer. Participants identified a need for increased support for those who want to become self-employed.

The subcontractor explained that although a mental health and wellbeing specialist was recruited to support participants, health issues were a more common and challenging barrier for participants than expected. Similarly, ESOL needs were found

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to be a particular barrier for some participants, and advisors had provided participants with English language workbooks to work through at home. The provider has multi-lingual advisors to work with participants with whom they share a language.

External training providers offer participants training in areas including literacy, numeracy, and gaining CSCS cards and SIA licences. Two local training providers attend the Restart Scheme site on a weekly basis to engage participants who would benefit from training. The provider also runs weekly sector routeways which are three-day programmes attended by employers.

The subcontractor has an in-house recruitment team which they consider has excellent links with local employers. There is also a partnership manager role who is responsible for building relationships with partners who can support participants with additional needs, such as housing providers. Local stakeholders generally felt that the subcontractor is proactive in finding ways in which partnership working can help them collectively meet the needs of Restart participants.

North West (CPA 3a)
Area profile context
This profile refers to the case study area within CPA 3a. The information is not intended to be representative of the CPA as a whole.

Geographical and political context
This area is a coastal town and holiday resort with a working age population of around 81,000. It is a unitary authority.

Labour market context
Demographics: The working age population is older than the UK average with 37.4% aged 50-64 compared to the average of 31.8%. The area is also less ethnically diverse than other areas in the UK with 94.5% describing themselves as white compared to the UK average of 83.5%. The area has a higher-than-average number of lone parent households at 11.2% compared to the UK average of 8.6 %.

Employment rates: The local labour market has a high claimant count with claimants making up 7.2% of residents aged 16-64 compared to the UK average of 3.7%. Employment rates are also lower than the UK average for those aged 25-49 and 50-64. In contrast, 16–24-year-olds have a higher rate of employment than the UK average due to lower numbers being in full-time study. Rates of economic inactivity (23.7% are higher than the UK average of 21.7% %), and much higher for those who are long-term sick (44.5% compared with 26.8%).

Qualifications and health conditions: The working age population is less well qualified than the UK average; 10.2% have no qualifications above level 1 compared to the UK average of 8.6%, and 28.6% have a qualification at level 4 or above compared to the UK average of 43.5%. People are also typically less healthy than elsewhere; with 26.1% reporting MSK conditions compared to 17.6% in the rest of England. In addition, 41.3% of households have someone deemed disabled under the Equality Act compared to the England and Wales average of 32.3%.

Occupational profiles: The average weekly salary is £486 (significantly lower than the UK average of £640) with a higher proportion of people working in elementary occupations (14.0% compared with the UK average of 9.5%) and a lower percentage of people working in professional occupations (17.4% compared with 26.2%). A higher proportion of people work in caring, leisure and other service occupations (11.6%) than the UK average of 8.1%.

Much available work is seasonal and based on tourism, which can inhibit sustainable employment. Interviewees also report that the labour market is characterised by a high level of cash-in-hand work.

Restart Scheme delivery
The Restart Scheme is delivered by three subcontractors with the prime contractor managing referrals and monitoring progress. Views and experiences of the Restart Scheme vary substantially between the three subcontractors in the area.

Providers report that referrals to the Scheme have been consistently lower than expected, and not in line with the high rates of unemployment in the area. They also report high levels of disengagement with the Restart Scheme which they attribute to

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the prevalence of cash-in-hand work and issues associated with long-term unemployment (typically described as over 10 years or generational). This is supported by some interviewees within JCP who also report high levels of disengagement. Poor health and childcare are also reported as significant barriers.

Providers work with a range of partners to support individual participant needs, including some good links with training providers. There is a need for further support for some customer groups, such as childcare for lone parents and mental health support including suicide prevention. Restart providers engage strategically with the LEP and local skills forums, although there is less evidence on how this has shaped the delivery of the Scheme.

Customers typically find work in tourism and care with limited evidence of wider employer engagement in a full range of sectors.

Greater Manchester (CPA 3b)
Area profile context
This profile refers to the case study area within CPA 3b. The information is not intended to be representative of the CPA as a whole.

Geographical and political context
This is a metropolitan borough on the outskirts of a large city with a working age population of around 176,800.

Local labour market context
Demographics: The working age population is broadly similar to the national average in terms of the proportion of the adult population, and how it is spread across age groups. The area is more ethnically diverse than other areas in the UK with 71.8% describing themselves as white compared to the national average of 83.5%.

Employment rates: The local labour market has a high claimant count with claimants making up 5.7% of residents aged 16-64 compared to the UK average of 3.7%. Employment rates are lower than the UK average and particularly so for those aged 16-24 (40.8% compared with 53.7%) and 25-49 (80.4% compared with 85.1%). The proportion of the working age population who are economically inactive (27.9%) is also higher than the UK average of 21.7%.

Qualifications and health conditions: The population is less well qualified than the UK average. Of the working age population, a higher proportion (8.9%) have no qualifications at level 1 or above than the UK average of 6.8%, and a lower proportion (33.0%) have qualifications at NVQ level 4 and above than the UK average of 43.5%. People in CPA 3a are also typically slightly less healthy than elsewhere in the UK; with slightly higher levels of households with someone deemed disabled under the Equality Act (35.2% compared with the England and Wales average of 32.3%) and those reporting musculoskeletal conditions (18.1% compared with England average of 17.6%), as well as a higher-than-average proportion of adults who are economically inactive with health conditions or illnesses lasting more than 12 months and on long-term sick absence (53.4% compared with UK average of 48.8%).

Occupational profiles: The gross weekly median pay for full-time workers is lower at £574.10 than the UK average of £640, with a higher proportion of people working in administrative occupations (11.7% compared with 9.6%) and a lower percentage of people working in managerial (8.7% compared with 10.7%) or associate professional occupations (9.9% compared with 14.1%). A higher proportion of people work in jobs in the construction industry (9.3%) than the UK average of 6.6%.

Restart Scheme delivery
The Restart Scheme is delivered by a subcontractor and prime contractor, who share delivery and warm handover calls between them.

It was noted that one of the most significant barriers among Restart participants in the area is ESOL needs, with the provider estimating that around a third of their participants have ESOL needs. To support this group, the provider works with all

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types of ESOL provision in the local community, as well as running ESOL assessment days, offering conversational ESOL classes and working with employers that are willing to employ non-English-speaking customers. Other prevalent barriers include mental and physical health conditions, and participants who are near to retirement age.

The support offer includes in-house events run by the prime contractor, including events focusing on employability, fuel poverty and wellbeing, which were reported as successful.

The prime contractor has an effective Local Integration Lead whose role is dedicated to connecting participants with wider support services in the community. It was highlighted that partners in the area are well connected, with all parties keen to work with each other and share best practice. This was largely attributed to a strategic partnership that includes the Restart providers and has been working together for over seven years to focus on delivering the area's skills strategy. Customer interviewees reported being signposted to external providers for wider support needs.

The subcontractor has a rapid response service for participants who fall out of employment gained while on the Restart Scheme, to help them get back into another role.

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South West (CPA 4a)
Area profile context
This profile refers to the case study area within CPA 4a. The information is not intended to be representative of the CPA as a whole.

Geographical and political context
This area has coastal and inland towns. The local authority has a working age population of just over 326,000.

Local labour market context
Demographics: The percentage of the area population that is of working age (68.0%), is smaller than that of the UK as a whole (77.1%). The area is significantly less ethnically diverse than the UK with 99% of residents describing themselves as white compared to the UK figure of 83.5%.

Employment rates: At 1.9%, the claimant level is almost half that of the UK average (3.7%), and the unemployment rate is also slightly lower (2.8% compared with 3.6%). A slightly higher percentage of the working age population is economically inactive due to long-term sickness (33.0% compared with the UK average of 26.8%) or due to early retirement (15.8% compared with 13.2%).

Qualifications and health conditions: The population is less qualified at NVQ level 4 or above than the UK average (36.4% compared with 43.5%). 15.9% of the working age population has a mental health condition, just below the England average of 16.9%, and there is a higher percentage of households with someone deemed disabled under the Equality Act (36.8%) compared with the England and Wales average of 32.3%.

Occupational profiles: At £571.40, the average weekly wage is below that of the UK as a whole (£640.00).

A higher proportion of people work in skilled trades (12.4% compared to the UK average of 9.1%), and in jobs connected with distribution, hotels, and restaurants (24.4% compared with 16.1%). Lower proportions than the UK average are in professional occupations (20.4% compared with 26.2%), or work in transport and communications (4.8% compared with 9.9%).

Both the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and Brexit are reported to have changed the local labour market, with more vacancies available than potential recruits within, for example, the NHS, hospitality, distribution, and warehousing.

There is a shortage of public transport, which is a significant barrier to employment for jobseekers without their own vehicle.

Restart Scheme delivery
The prime contractor manages the Restart Scheme contract, with delivery undertaken by one subcontractor. Referral numbers are low, due in part to the regional launch of other programmes with the same intended outcomes as the Restart Scheme. JCP staff report that JSA referrals to the Restart Scheme are limited to four per month, which leads to a waiting list of people wanting to join the Scheme. The low number of referrals has led to a reduction in Scheme staffing.

The provider suggests there are a high number of inappropriate referrals and participants have more complex needs than anticipated, including health issues, substance abuse, and caring responsibilities.

Warm handovers are conducted by the prime through a regional call centre. There is a positive relationship between the provider and JCP, although there may be more potential for information sharing.

A range of support is available, with referral to external partners if the provider cannot meet a customer's needs. However, there are some barriers created by eligibility issues – for example, someone referred by JCP to one health programme cannot then access the Restart Scheme, but the Scheme can refer someone to the health programme. There are also challenges in accessing some funding sources for people in specific postcodes.

The prime contractor uses employer data to align Restart Scheme training to local labour market needs. The provider also facilitates fortnightly job clubs, which enable employer and participant contact, and run job fairs. However, participant attendance has been low. Some employers express the view that the provider requires a better understanding of the local labour market.

There is a positive relationship between the local authority and the Restart Scheme, and they are in the process of signing an agreement to enable greater data sharing.

South Central (CPA 4b)
Area profile context
This profile refers to the case study area within CPA 4b. The information is not intended to be representative of the CPA as a whole.

Geographical and political context

This is a unitary authority with a working age population of around 96,500. The local authority declared itself bankrupt in 2021.

Local labour market context
Demographics: The working age population is significantly more ethnically diverse than other parts of the UK, with 38.6% describing themselves as white compared to the UK average of 83.5%.

Employment rates: At 22.8%, the employment rate for 16–24-year-olds is significantly lower than the UK average of 53.7%, and a higher percentage of those aged 50-64 are in employment (78.9% compared with 70.8%). A significant proportion (34.3%) of those who are economically inactive and of working age are students, higher than for the UK as a whole (26.3%).

Qualifications and health conditions: The working age population is less qualified than the UK average, with 9.2% having no qualifications compared with 6.8%. The percentage of working age people reporting a musculoskeletal problem (11.8%) is below that of England as a whole (17.6%), and those with a mental health condition is almost one-half (8.9% compared with 16.9%). In terms of those experiencing a health condition or illness lasting twelve months or more, a lower percentage of the local working age population is inactive for this reason (32.2% compared with the UK average of 48.8%). A higher proportion (62.8%) of those in work have a long-term health condition than the UK average of 48.8%.

Occupational profiles: The average weekly wage is £657.50, slightly above the UK average of £640.00. A higher proportion of people are in transport and communications roles (18.8% compared with the UK average of 9.9%), or in administrative and secretarial roles (14% compared with 9.6%). Lower proportions are working in associate professional roles (8.3% compared with 14.1%), or in the distribution, hotels, and restaurants sectors (12% compared with 16.1%).

Case study interviewees reported that there are high levels of unskilled work in the area, and that many jobseekers are seeking such roles.

Restart delivery
The Restart Scheme is delivered by a prime contractor.

The provider has tried to improve staff retention at its delivery site as they have had difficulties with high turnover. In response, the provider has provided applicants with more details about the role and increased the time spent on inducting new advisors.

There is a high 'failure to attend' rate among people referred to the programme. Many are further from work than anticipated, with some unemployed for 2-5 years. Staff report that many of those referred have mental health and/or physical health difficulties, and/or are lone parents.

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The provider reports that there have been inappropriate referrals, such as those who are pregnant or approaching retirement. Closer liaison between JCP and the provider would be welcomed but is hindered by time constraints. The participant view of warm handovers is more positive than that expressed by JCP and provider staff.

There has been a high level of demand for health and wellbeing support, and more staff are being recruited to meet demand. A programme has been created for those on the Restart Scheme for 4+ months and who have not progressed – content includes employability sessions, and links with the employer engagement team to seek jobs.

The provider employs a sector lead team which engages with employers and works with advisors to match participants to vacancies. An executive recruiter assists qualified participants seeking higher level roles.

Central and West London (CPA 5a)
Area profile context
This profile refers to the case study area within CPA 5a. The information is not intended to be representative of the CPA as a whole.

Geographical and political context
This area is a London borough with a working age population of around 232,200.

Local labour market context
Demographics: The proportion of people aged 16+ in this area who are of working age (90.8%) is higher than the UK average of 77.1%. The area has a higher-than-average proportion of the population aged 25-49 (72.6% compared with the UK average of 51.8%), but lower than average proportions aged 16-24 (11.8% compared with 16.5%) or 50-64 (15.6% compared with 31.8%). The area is more ethnically diverse than other areas in the UK with 77% describing themselves as white compared to the UK average of 83.5%.

Employment rates: The local labour market has a higher employment rate (88.3% compared with the UK average of 75.4%), which is higher than average across all age groups of the working age population. The proportion of working age adults who are economically inactive (9.4%) is also lower than the UK average of 21.7%. However, the proportion of those who are economically inactive who are inactive due to looking after family or the home is higher at 34.2% than the UK average of 19.6%.

Qualifications and health conditions: The population is more qualified than the UK average, with lower-than-average proportions of working age people who do not have at least level 2 qualifications (1.4% compared with 6.8%), and a higher proportion who have NVQ level 4 or above (70.3% compared with 43.5%). People in this area are also typically healthier than elsewhere in the UK; with lower-than-average proportions of households with someone deemed disabled under the Equality Act (21.5% compared with the England and Wales average of 32.3%), inactive with health conditions lasting more than 12 months (22.8% compared with 48.8%), and who report musculoskeletal conditions (10.3% compared with 17.6%).

Occupational profiles: The gross weekly median pay of full-time workers is £942.60, significantly higher than the UK average of £640.00, with a higher proportion of people working in professional (39.7% compared with UK average of 26.2%), associate professional (18.3% compared with 14.1%) and managerial (16.3% compared with 10.7%) occupations and a lower percentage of people working in administrative (4.1% compared with 9.6%), skilled trades (4.9% compared with 9.1%), elementary and process (5.4% compared with 9.5%), and plant and machine operative roles (1.8% compared with 5.8%). A higher proportion of people work in jobs in banking, finance, and insurance (29.8% compared with 18.5%), and transport and communications (14.7% compared with 9.9%) than the UK average.

Restart Scheme delivery
The Restart Scheme is delivered by four subcontractors in addition to the prime contractor, who also manages referrals and monitors performance.

The prime contractor reported referral volumes having reduced over time, and as they opened the scheme up to voluntary referrals, has found that referrals include customers with a higher level and broader range of needs than expected. This includes a higher proportion of customers with no qualifications, health conditions and who are long-term unemployed. Providers also reported that participants often struggle with personal finance and budgeting due to the cost-of-living crisis.

In addition to the typical support offer of case study areas, there is an offer of support with financial management, technology, employment psychologists, and business management. Due to the higher volumes of participants who are highly skilled and experienced in the area, there is also an offer of specialist support from executive career coaches for this cohort. However, participant interviews suggested there was a need for more support for those with higher-level career backgrounds who needed more specialist training or support.

There was a need identified by providers for further support for neurodiverse individuals. Further, some customers reported the support they had been offered by the Restart Scheme had not been followed up on, so that they had not been able to access the support after it had been initially offered by their advisor.

The prime contractor engages strategically with councils, local government partnerships and education and training provider forums, and has good working relationships with training providers, although the council believes the Restart Scheme could be more linked in with their networks.

South and East London (CPA 5b)
Area profile context
This profile refers to the case study area within CPA 5b. The information is not intended to be representative of the CPA as a whole.

Geographical and political context
This area is an inner London borough with a working age population of just over 250,000.

Local labour market context
Demographics: The working age population is younger than the UK average (13.1% aged 50-64 compared with 31.8%), and more ethnically diverse than other CPAs with 66.2% of people describing themselves as ethnic minorities (excluding white ethnic minorities) compared with a UK average of 16.4%. The area has a higher-than-average number of lone parent households at 12.6% compared to the UK average of 8.6%.

Employment rates: There is above average unemployment (5.3% compared to the UK average of 3.6%). A significantly lower percentage of those aged 50-64 (55.0%) are in employment compared with the UK average of 70.8%. White residents are more likely to be employed (83.6%) than other ethnic groups (70.2%), and less likely to be economically inactive (13.0% compared to 26.4%).

When compared with the UK average, there is a higher percentage of economically inactive students (40.1% compared with 26.3%) and people who are economically inactive because they are looking after their family/home (35.8% compared to 19.6%).

Qualifications and health conditions: A higher proportion of residents have an NVQ level 4 or above (57.4%) compared to the UK average of 43.5%.

A lower percentage of residents have a longstanding musculoskeletal condition (12.5% compared with the UK average of 17.6%), or mental health condition (7.9% compared with 16.9%), with a higher percentage of people economically inactive due to a health condition or illness lasting twelve months or more (58.2% compared with 48.8%).

Occupational profiles: The average weekly salary is £710.30, higher than the UK average of £640.00.

A significantly higher proportion of people work in transport and communications (16.3% compared with UK average of 9.9%), or banking, finance, and insurance (26.9% compared with 18.5%), with lower proportions in manufacturing (2.1% compared with 8.1%), or in public administration, education, and health (25.1% compared with 32.1%).

The area is characterised by a high number of small businesses: 89% of registered businesses are micro businesses in that they employ fewer than nine people. In 2022, it had the fastest growing business base of all London boroughs with an annual growth of 11.1%.

Restart Scheme delivery

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There is one prime contractor within the area and no subcontractors.

A significant proportion of those referred to the Restart Scheme have ESOL needs, and interpreter support is often required. The provider reports that a higher proportion of more recent referrals require more support to access work due to their complex issues and/ or lack of motivation to work. Warm handovers are conducted by the provider's call centre team, and the provider has a specific team which works with participants who have three months or less remaining on the Restart Scheme.

A positive relationship exists between the provider and local JCP staff, enhanced through the proximity of some sites and regular face-to-face contact.

The support offer includes a wide range of provision that is tailored to the participant. This includes an employment support package via an online portal, covering topics such as interview techniques, debt and finance, and health and wellbeing. Health coaches offer interventions for people experiencing a range of health problems, including anxiety and back pain. The provider also offers resources to help people overcome barriers to work – examples include work clothing, digital equipment, and subsidised childcare.

The provider has a division which engages with employers on behalf of its DWP-funded programmes. Provider staff can access a 'live' jobs spreadsheet and refer eligible participants to the linked Account Manager who vets the applicant, ensures they meet the job specification, and then forwards their CV to the employer.

Employers regard the provider as a positive source of potential recruits and speak highly of their internal contacts and of the people employed through them. Around twice a month, a Sales Day takes place when employers come into the Restart Scheme location and showcase their vacancies.

Home Counties (CPA 5c)
Area profile context
This profile refers to the case study area within CPA 5c. The information is not intended to be representative of the CPA as a whole.

Geographical and political context
This area is a coastal and port town with a working age population of around 68,300 in the district.

Local labour market context
Demographics: The working age population is a smaller proportion (69.7%) of those aged 16+ than the UK average of 77.1%. The working age population is also older than the UK average, with 42.3% of the working age population aged 50-64 and 11.4% aged 16-24 compared with UK averages of 31.8% and 16.5% respectively. The area is less ethnically diverse than other areas in the UK with 99.4% describing themselves as white compared to the UK average of 83.5%.

Employment rates: The local labour market has a high claimant count with claimants making up 5.3% of residents aged 16-64 compared to the UK average of 3.7%. The proportion of working age people who are economically inactive (24.4%) is higher than the UK average of 21.7%.

Qualifications and health conditions: The population is less well qualified than the UK average, with a higher proportion of the working age population with no qualifications at level 2 or higher (7.7% compared with 6.8%) and a lower proportion with NVQ level 4 and above qualifications (34.6% compared with 43.5%). People in the area are also typically less healthy than elsewhere in the UK; with higher levels of people aged 16+ who are inactive with health conditions or illnesses lasting more than 12 months (57.6% compared with UK average of 48.8%), as well as a higher-than average proportion reporting a long-term musculoskeletal problem (21.3% compared with 18.0%). The area also has a higher proportion of those who are economically inactive who are inactive due to long-term sickness, at 44.4% compared with the UK average of 26.8%.

Occupational profiles: Job density is lower at 0.66 jobs available in the area per person of working age than the UK average of 0.85. The area has a higher proportion of people working in skilled trades (12.7% compared with UK average of 9.1%) and elementary occupations (17.1% compared with 9.5%) and a lower percentage of people working in sales and customer service occupations (1.7% compared with 6.3%) and as managers, directors and senior officials (7.5% compared with 10.7%). A higher proportion of people work in jobs connected with transport and communication (14.7% compared with UK average of 9.9%) and construction (13.5% compared with 6.6%).

Much available work is shift work in logistics, warehousing and agricultural sectors, with interviewees reporting that shift work is not accessible by public transport. Interviewees report that there a few nearby towns in a commutable distance from this coastal town which increases the availability of employment opportunities.

Restart Scheme delivery

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The Restart Scheme is delivered by a subcontractor with the prime contractor managing referrals and monitoring progress.

The number of referrals has fluctuated but generally increased over time. However, providers report low rates of attendance at the first appointment, suggesting the warm handover was not successfully engaging participants. The provider reports a higher proportion of referrals with more complex barriers and needs than expected, including those around mental health, housing and debt. Many participants were looking to switch sectors due to challenges of finding work in the sectors in which they used to work.

Providers work with a range of partners to support participants' wider needs. Participants report having benefitted from a varied support offer, including wellbeing courses. However, there is a need for further support for some customer groups, including mental health support, particularly for the bereaved, and support with debt and money management. The provider's partnership and engagement manager engages strategically with the LEP and local skills forums, although stakeholder interviewees express a desire for a closer working relationship with the provider.

One challenge raised by participants was that the Restart Scheme provider site is located in a neighbouring area, as it was not possible for the provider to secure a site in the area itself. This makes it more challenging, particularly for those in more rural areas, to travel to the Restart Scheme site for appointments.

Wales (CPA 6)
Area profile context
This profile refers to the case study area within CPA 6 (this is made up of two local authorities). The information is not intended to be representative of the CPA as a whole.

Geographical and political context
This area profile combines a coastal city with a county borough – they have a combined working age population of 242,600.

Local labour market context
Demographics: Working age populations are broadly in line with UK averages, although the city has a higher proportion of 16–24-year-olds (at 21% of the working compared to UK average of 16.5%. Both the county borough and the city are less ethnically diverse than the UK as a whole: 95.6% of those in the county borough describe themselves as white and 90% of those in the city, compared to a UK average of 83.5%.

Employment rates: The city's local labour market has a high claimant count with claimants making up 6.5% of residents aged 16-64 compared with the UK average of 3.7%. The figure is lower for the county borough which, in line with the national average, has a claimant count of 3.7%. The county borough's employment rates for 25–49-year-olds (76.8%) and 50–64-year-olds (62.1%) are significantly below the UK averages of 85.1% and 70.8%, and 26.8% of the white working age population is economically inactive, compared to 20.8% in the UK.

Qualifications and health conditions: Both the city (39.2%) and the county borough (28.9%) have lower levels than the UK average (43.5%) of working age people qualified to NVQ4 or above.

The city (38.8%) and county borough (43.1%) both have a higher percentage than the England and Wales average (32.3%) of households with someone deemed disabled under the Equality Act. Of those who are economically inactive within the county borough, 42.8% are inactive due to long-term sickness, above the UK average of 26.8%, and there is a very low percentage of economic inactivity due to being a student: 7% within the county borough compared to the UK average of 26.3%.

Occupational profiles: The city's average weekly wage is £593.10, and the county borough's is slightly higher at £611.00: both are below the UK average of £640.00.

Within the county borough, a higher proportion of people work in jobs connected with manufacturing (13.8% compared with the UK average of 8.1%) and in skilled trades (13.0% compared with 9.1%). A lower proportion in both the city and the county borough are employed within banking, finance, or insurance (13.7% and 11.1%, respectively, compared with the UK average of 18.5%) or describe themselves as a manager, director, or senior official (6.4% and 7.8%, respectively, compared with 10.7%).

The city's job market is reported to be thriving, with the major employment sectors described as healthcare, public administration and defence, and education.

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Restart Scheme delivery

The Restart Scheme is delivered by three subcontractors, covering the coastal city and the county borough, with the prime contractor managing referrals and monitoring progress. Referrals to the Restart Scheme have decreased over time. Even though the number of referrals to the Scheme have decreased, one provider has increased its staffing due to the complexity of participants' needs. It has also increased the length of its induction period for new staff members.

Providers report that a considerable number of those referred are further away from the labour market than was previously the case: many have mental health issues, physical disabilities, are lone parents, have substance misuse issues, and/or are ESOL speakers. A sizeable number have a 'fit note'. One provider reported an increased number of inappropriate referrals, and JCP staff expressed difficulties with identifying whether someone with mental and/or physical health conditions was suitable for the Scheme or not.

One provider has employed an ESOL tutor and runs a popular CSCS workshop. Another provider has set up coffee afternoons for Ukrainian participants, helping them to gain sector insights and identify potential roles.

Employers are positive about the Restart Scheme in terms of providing them with potential recruits and having responsive staff. JCP staff would welcome more feedback from local Restart providers on customer progress.

The city has an Employability Network which gathers providers together for quarterly meetings to share best practice and share local labour market intelligence. Restart providers also attend other employment-focused network meetings within the city.

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6.4.8   Research tools: Topic guides

Wave 1

L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

Restart Evaluation

PROVIDER TOPIC GUIDE

This document is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered.
Questions can be modified and followed up in more detail where necessary.
Not all questions will be relevant to all respondents and the interview should focus on questions of relevance to the experience of the interviewee

Introduction

- Introduce yourself and thank interviewee for agreeing to interview.
- Explain that Learning and Work Institute is evaluating the Restart Scheme programme on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions.
- This evaluation is being conducted to understand whether any improvements need to be made and to inform future decisions regarding the Restart Scheme. It must be noted the purpose of the evaluation is not to scrutinise individuals' performance.
- We have contacted them to participate, as part of the first wave of interviews, which includes interviews with providers and local stakeholders.
- We want to ask about their role in delivering Restart and their thoughts on the scheme so far.
- The interview will last around 45 minutes.
- No right or wrong answers, we are just trying to get an accurate picture of Restart Scheme activities so far. It may be that there are some topic areas which they do not have much insight into, inform participants that we can skip past any questions they are less sure about.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific questions at any time, should they wish, without giving a reason.

Confidentiality and consent

- Explain that interview findings will be included in outputs for the Department for Work and Pensions and may be published.
- Any direct quotes used in the report will not refer to the individual's name, just the area, therefore ensuring as much anonymity as possible.
- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what is said. Recordings will be deleted once the project has been completed. Ensure interviewee is comfortable with recording. (Note: if an interviewee refuses to be recorded detailed

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notes should be taken and the interviewer would be responsible for charting the data into the grid.)
- **Ask interviewee to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part. Ask participant to reconfirm this once the interview is being recorded.**
- Ask if they have any questions.

Section 1: Background information and understanding of Restart Scheme

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to gain some background information on the interviewee and discuss their understanding of the scheme.

1. Firstly, please could you tell me a little bit about the organisation that you work for?
   - What is your role within the organisation?
   - How long have you been in this role?

2. What role does your organisation play in the Restart Scheme?
   - What areas do you / your organisation cover? *Probe: An entire CPA? Or a specific area?*
   - What role do you play in the Restart Scheme? *Probe: What else do they work on?*

3. How would you describe the purpose and aims of the Restart Scheme? *Probe: Which customer groups does the scheme aim to target? Who has communicated this to them? Anything they need clarity on?*

Section 2: Delivery model

Aim: Section 2 will look at provider's delivery models, including staffing, delivery sites and implementation.

4. Please could you give me an overview of how your organisation went about setting up the Restart Scheme in your area?
   - How did you select the sites which are used to deliver the scheme?
   - Could you provide some examples of these sites?
   - Did you make contact with local partners as part the set-up? *Probe: Who did this involve? How were they approached?*
   - How well is delivery at these sites going? *Probe: Any issues with IT? Accessibility? Covid secure policies?*

5. What has been the approach to staffing and recruitment?
   - What types of training have been implemented?

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o How has staff performance been managed?
o Has this changed over time?

6. In general, how well do you think implementation has gone since the launch of the programme? *Probe: What has worked well / less well?*

7. To date, have you needed to make changes to your original delivery model?
   o If yes, what were these changes? Why were they needed?
   o If no, do you expect that any changes will need to be made in the future?

Note to researc e r: For section   and , usin t e   contractor's customer journey information to guide the conversation. Please clarify anything that does not align to this and explore reasons for this.

Section 3: Referral process

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to understand what their referral process looks like, what is working well / not so well and which customers are participating in the scheme.

8. What is the referral process?
   o What role do you play in this? Who else is involved?

9. Please could you describe the warm handover process?
   o Who is involved in this? What does it look like in practice?
   o What is working well?
   o To what extent is the warm handover process effectively achieving its aims? Why / why not?
   o Have you experienced any challenges with the referral process? *Probe: examples of complex cases?*
   o How have cases of failing to attend the warm handover / cancellations dealt with? *Probe: Are they notified of this?*
   o What feedback, if any, have you received from participants about the warm handover process? Any other feedback received i.e. from Work Coaches?
   o Do you think any improvements need to be made to the warm handover process?

10. What types of people are currently being referred to the Restart Scheme? *Probe: Older vs. younger groups? Were these customer types expected? If not, what's different?*
    o What type of needs do they have / what barriers do they face?

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- o How much do participants vary in terms of their barriers / needs?
  Probe: Was this expected? If not, what is different?
- o Have there been cases where an individual's needs are more complex than initially believed? *Probe: How has this been managed? Outcomes?*
- o Have there been referrals which have not been appropriate for the Restart Scheme? *Probe: Who are they? How is this managed? Is this a frequent occurrence?*

Section 4: Support offered via the Restart Scheme

Aim: Section 4 will focus on customers journeys, including any changes which have been made and what has worked well / less well.

11. Please can you provide an overview of the customer journey?
    - o How long does/should each stage take?
    - o What channels are used? Who for?
    - o How do participants move between activities?
    - o Who is involved at each stage?

Note to researcher: It is vital that we collect as much detail as possible on expected customer journeys.

12. What is included within the support offer?
    - o What do you think are the best parts of the offer? *Probe: Do they have a USP?*
    - o What do you think is making the most difference to participants?
    - o Have you needed to make any changes to the support on offer? If yes, why? If no, do you expect any changes will need to be made in the future?
    - o To what extent have you / your organisation had freedom to develop the offer? *Probe: In what ways have you used the provider guidance? Was this un/helpful? How does this differ from other provisions?*

13. How has support been tailored to meet the needs of individuals?
    - o Which customer types / needs have been considered? *Probe: individuals with disabilities / long-term health conditions*
    - o Any examples of this?
    - o Are there any customer types / groups of participants where this individual tailoring is easier / more difficult to achieve? Why?

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14. How has support been tailored to ensure that participants are presented with relevant job opportunities? *Probe: Analysis of job vacancies / the local labour market?*
    o How are you working with employers to achieve this? *Probe: Who are they? What is involved?*
    o How well are partnerships with employers going?
    o Have employers been receptive to these claimants?
    o Which occupations are we seeing claimants move into?

15. What do you do when people are not engaging? *Probe: How often does this occur? Are there certain groups who are more / less likely to be engaged?*
    o Has your approach to this changed over time?
    o Where applicable, have you found mandation to improve engagement?
    o Are you aware of the triage service for raising a doubt? *Probe: If yes, how well is this working? Do they have any feedback?*

16. Reflecting on the support you have delivered so far, what has worked well / less well? Why is this?
    o Have you experienced any barriers or challenges (internal or external) that have affected the support you offer?
    o Have you received feedback from participants? If so, what kind of feedback have you received?
    o Any other feedback received?
    o What would you do to improve the service?

Section 5: Communication and partnerships

Aim: This final section will focus on communication with DWP and others, provider guidance, and relationships with local partners.

Note to researcher: Not all of these questions will be relevant to all participants, depending on their role and experiences.

17. What partners have you had contact with as part of the Restart Scheme? *Probe:*

    o *DWP?*
    o *JCP?*
    o *Performance Managers?*
    o *Any others?*

Note to researcher: For each partner they mention, cover questions 18 for each.

18. Can you describe how you have kept in contact with [insert partner]?

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- o *Why are/were you in contact with them?*
- o *Frequency?*
- o *Method?*
- o *Consistency of point-of-contact?*
- o *How effective has this relationship been?*
- o *Any challenges?*
- o *Any ways you feel communication could be improved?*

19. Lastly, what local partners are you working with as part of the Restart Scheme? *Probe: Local employers, training providers, local chambers of commerce, LEPs, local authorities?*
    - o When and how are they involved?
    - o How well are these partnerships working? Probe: enablers vs. barriers to developing these relationships?
    - o Have there been any challenges? Probe: with specific services? Or particular locations?
    - o How do these partnerships feed into the wider strategic needs of the area / growth sectors? *Probe: Are they part of any local strategic partnership forums / knowledge sharing groups? How does this help to inform the delivery of the Restart Scheme?*

Thank you and close

- Do you have anything else to add about your experiences of delivering Restart Scheme?

Thank interviewee for their time and explain next steps. Also, remind them to get in touch if they have anything else they would like to add.

L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

Restart Evaluation

STAKEHOLDER TOPIC GUIDE

> This document is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered.
> Questions can be modified and followed up in more detail where necessary.
> Not all questions will be relevant to all respondents and the interview should focus on questions of relevance to the experience of the interviewee

Introduction
- Introduce yourself and thank interviewee for agreeing to interview.
- Explain that Learning and Work Institute is evaluating a national employment programme on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions.
- This evaluation is being conducted to understand whether any improvements need to be made and to inform future decisions regarding the national employment programme. It must be noted the purpose of the evaluation is not to scrutinise individuals' performance.
- We have contacted them to participate, as part of the first wave of interviews, which includes interviews with providers and local stakeholders.
- We want to find out more about their role in delivering government employment programmes, such as Restart.
- The interview will last around 45 minutes.
- There are no right or wrong answers. It may be that there are some topic areas which they do not have much insight into, inform participants that we can skip past any questions they are less sure about.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific questions at any time, should they wish, without giving a reason.

Confidentiality and consent
- Explain that interview findings will be included in outputs for the Department for Work and Pensions and may be published.
- Any direct quotes used in the report will not refer to the individual's name, just the area, therefore ensuring as much anonymity as possible.
- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what is said. Recordings will be deleted once the project has been completed. Ensure interviewee is comfortable with recording. (Note: if an interviewee refuses to be recorded detailed notes should be taken and the interviewer would be responsible for charting the data into the grid.)
- **Ask interviewee to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part. Ask participant to reconfirm this once the interview is being recorded.**
- Ask if they have any questions.

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Section 1: Introduction

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to gain some background information on the interviewee and the organisation that they work for.

Note to researcher: Roles and organisations will vary so it will be important to gauge in this section what their role is and what their organisation does. This can be used to inform the rest of the interview, in particular, whether it is likely that they will have some insight into Restart.

1. Firstly, please could you tell me a little bit about the organisation that you work for?
   - What is the overall purpose of the organisation?
   - What local area(s) does it cover?
   - What involvement do they have in local employment / adult training?

2. What is your role within the organisation?
   - How long have you been in this role?
   - What involvement do you have in local employment / adult training?

Section 2: Local strategic partnerships and the economic landscape

Aim: This section will look at the local intelligence sharing as well as the local economic landscape.

3. In what ways is intelligence regarding the local labour market shared? E.g. local engagement meetings?
   - Who has involvement in these? *Probe: Charities? JCP? LEPs? Chamber of Commerce?*
   - Frequency?
   - Method of contact?
   - What topics are covered? E.g. travel, job vacancies, local support
   - Are there any gaps? How could this information sharing be improved?

4. In [case study area], what are the most common sectors?
   - In which sectors are there the most vacancies? *Probe: What roles? What level of seniority?*
   - What types of skills are in demand?
   - Why are these skills in demand? *Probe: local programmes / initiatives that require certain workers?*

5. How does this correspond to the types of employment that people are looking for? *Probe: What sectors? Roles? Working hours?*

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Section 3: Local employment programmes

Aim: This section will look at the local employment programmes, with a focus on the Restart Scheme.

6. In [case study area], what, if any, government employment programmes are in place?
   - What are they? *Probe: Does this include the Restart Scheme?*
   - How long have they been running for? When are the due to complete?

7. What is your involvement in these programmes?
   - Advisory vs. involvement in delivery?
   - What does this look like?
   - Who else is involved in this?
   - Any challenges managing these relationships?

Note to researcher: At question 8, if they have had involvement in the Restart Scheme, make sure to predominantly keep the focus on this.

8. Have you had any involvement with local providers?
   - Why are/were you in contact with them?
   - Frequency?
   - Method?
   - Consistency of point-of-contact?
   - How effective have these relationships been? Any challenges?
   - Have you given providers any feedback? If yes, how receptive have providers been to this feedback?
   - Any ways you these relationships could be improved?

9. [If they are aware of the Restart Scheme] What is your understanding of the purpose and aims of the Restart Scheme?
   - What role does your organisation / you play in the Restart Scheme?
   - What is your understanding of how the scheme is delivered in practice?
   - Do you know what types of customers are currently being referred to the Restart Scheme?

10. [If they are aware of the Restart Scheme] Are you aware of how support has been tailored to ensure that participants are presented with relevant job opportunities? *Probe: Analysis of job vacancies / the local labour market?*
    - Are you / is your organisation involved in local tailoring?
    - Which occupations are you seeing claimants move into?
    - Do you feel that the Restart Scheme is meeting local needs / the needs of the local economy? *Probe: Do they feel providers are offering the type of support needed by local jobseekers / employers?*
    - What are your thoughts on how well this is working? Improvements?

11. [If they are aware of the Restart Scheme] To your knowledge, how well do you think the scheme is working?
    o What is working well / less well?
    o How is the Restart Scheme impacting on existing provision?
    o Have you heard any feedback regarding the scheme? Who has this been from?
    o Do you think any changes should be made?

Thank you and close

- Do you have anything else to add that we haven't covered already?

Thank interviewee for their time and explain next steps. Also, remind them to get in touch if they have anything else they would like to add.

Wave 2

L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

Restart Sc e me Evaluation: Wave

Provider interview guide

> **Interviewer note:** This is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered and questions can be modified. Follow up and probe in more detail as appropriate.

Introduction

- Introduce yourself and thank interviewee for agreeing to interview.
- Explain that Learning and Work Institute is evaluating the Restart Scheme programme on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions.
- This evaluation is being conducted to understand whether any improvements need to be made and to inform future decisions regarding the Restart Scheme. It must be noted the purpose of the evaluation is not to scrutinise individuals' performance.
- We have contacted them to participate, as part of the second wave of interviews, which includes interviews with providers, claimants, JCP staff, local stakeholders and employers.
- We want to ask about their role in delivering Restart and their thoughts on the scheme so far. No right or wrong answers, we are just trying to get an accurate picture of Restart Scheme activities so far. It may be that there are some topic areas which they do not have much insight into, inform participants that we can skip past any questions they are less sure about.
- The interview will last around one hour.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific questions at any time, should they wish, without giving a reason.

Confidentiality and consent

- Explain that interview findings will be included in outputs for the Department for Work and Pensions and may be published.
- Any direct quotes used in the report will not refer to the individual's name, just the area, therefore ensuring as much anonymity as possible.
- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what is said. Recordings will be deleted once the project has been completed. Ensure interviewee is comfortable with recording. (Note: if an interviewee refuses to be recorded detailed notes should be taken and the interviewer would be responsible for charting the data into the grid.)
- **Ask interviewee to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part. Ask participant to reconfirm this once the interview is being recorded.**

- Ask if they have any questions.

Section 1: Background information (5 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to gain some background information on the interviewee.

Note to researcher: If the participant took part in the wave one interview, we only need to recap these questions.

1. **Firstly, please could you tell me a little bit about the organisation that you work for?**
   o What is your role within the organisation?
   o How long have you been in this role?

2. **What role does your organisation play in the Restart Scheme? [Note to researcher:** use wave one responses as prompts and assess whether anything has changed**]**
   o What areas do you / your organisation cover? *Probe: An entire CPA? Or a specific area?*
   o What role do you play in the Restart Scheme? *Probe: What else do they work on?*

Section 2: Delivery model (10 minutes)

Aim: Section 2 will assess any changes that have been made to their delivery model since wave, including staffing, training and sites.

Note to researcher: Provide interviewee with an overview of what was discussed at the wave one interview around their delivery model (regardless of whether or not you are speaking to the same individual)

3. **Since the last interview, has your organisation made any changes to the way your teams are structured?**
   o If yes, what were these changes? Why were they needed?
   o Have any changes been made to the way you approach recruitment? If yes, what are these?
   o How do you ensure that new staff are brought up to speed?
   o Have any changes been made to your approach to training? If yes, what are these?
   o If no, do you expect any changes to be made to staffing and recruitment in the future? Probe: What are these? Why?
   o How, if at all, have these changes impacted on the delivery of the Restart Scheme? Probe: What has worked well / less well?

4. **Since the last interview, have you made any changes to the sites where you deliver the Restart Scheme?**

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- o Probe: Change in location, changes to accessibility, more than one site, changes to IT systems
- o If yes, why were these changes made?
- o If no, do you expect any changes to be made to the delivery sites in the future? Probe: What are these? Why?
- o How, if at all, have these changes impacted on the delivery of the Restart Scheme?

Section 3: Experiences of delivering the Restart Scheme (25 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to understand the interviewee's experience of delivering the Restart Scheme, including the types of people participating, whether changes have been made to the support offer, and what is working well/less well.

5. **Note to researcher:** Provide interviewee with an overview of what was discussed at the wave one interview around the warm handover process (regardless of whether or not you are speaking to the same individual)

Does this still reflect your experiences/views of the Warm Handover?
- o Has anything changed?
- o Do you have anything additional to add about your experiences based on more recent feedback or changes implemented since the last interview?
- o Are there any plans to make changes to the Warm Handover process in the future?

6. **What types of people are being referred to the Restart Scheme?**
- o What type of needs / barriers do they face?
- o Do you think that the scheme is targeted at the right people? Have there been referrals which have not been appropriate for the
  Restart Scheme? Probe: Who are they? How is this managed? Are they given different support? Is this a frequent occurrence?
- o Were these customer types expected? If not, what's different?
- o Have there been cases where an individual's needs are more complex than initially believed? Probe: How has this been managed? Outcomes?

7. **Note to researcher:** Provide interviewee with an overview of what was discussed at the wave one interview around their support offer (regardless of whether or not you are speaking to the same individual)

Does this still reflect your current support offer?
- o Have you introduced any additional activities? Why?
- o Or have any activities been removed?

8. **How well is the support offer working?**

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- o Which activities are working well / less well?
- o Any challenges faced with delivering the support offer?
- o Have you received feedback from participants? If so, what kind of feedback have you received?
- o Who does this support have the biggest and least impact on? For the latter, what is missing?

9. **What do you do when people are not engaging?** Probe: How often does this occur? Are there certain groups who are more / less likely to be engaged?
   - o Has your approach to this changed over time?
   - o Where applicable, have you found mandation to improve engagement?
   - o Are you aware of the triage service for raising a doubt? Probe: If yes, how well is this working? Do they have any feedback?

10. **Have you made any changes to the ways that activities are tailored to individuals?**
    - o Which customer types / needs have been considered? Probe: individuals with disabilities / long-term health conditions
    - o Any examples of this?
    - o Are there any customer types / groups of participants where this individual tailoring is easier / more difficult to achieve? Why?

11. **How has support been tailored to ensure that participants are presented with relevant job opportunities?** Probe: Analysis of job vacancies / the local labour market
    - o Which occupations are you seeing claimants move into?
    - o To what extent are these opportunities suited to participants needs and wants?
    - o How are you working with employers to achieve this? How well is this working?

12. **Do you have any success stories to share?**
    - o What was the participant's starting point before starting the Restart Scheme?
    - o What were their needs/barriers?
    - o What support activities did they access?
    - o Outcome?
    - o What do you think made the most difference to this individual?

Section 4: Communication and partnerships (10 minutes)

Aim: This section will focus on communication with local partners and how they support the delivery of the Restart Scheme.

13. **Note to researcher:** Provide interviewee with an overview of what was discussed at the wave one interview around the partners they have had contact with (regardless of whether or not you are speaking to the same individual)

How are your relationships with these partners going?

- o When did these partners get involved?
- o How are they involved?
- o How well are these partnerships working? Probe: enablers vs. barriers to developing these relationships?
- o Have there been any challenges with these partnerships? Probe: with specific services? Or particular locations?
- o How do these partnerships feed into the wider strategic needs of the area / growth sectors? Probe: Are they part of any local strategic partnership forums / knowledge sharing groups? How does this help to inform the delivery of the Restart Scheme?
- o In what ways have these partnerships benefited Restart Scheme participants? Probe: job opportunities; access to specialist services
- o Any ways that you feel the partnership could be improved further?
- o How effective are communications with the JCP? E.g. working with Disability Employment Advisors (DEAs), dealing with Single Points of Contact (SPoCs) or site leads for any issues and organising and arranging a three-way call
- o [If applicable] How do you monitor performance and doubts raised by sub-contractors?

Section 5: Summary (10 minutes)

Aim: This final section will summarise the interviewees' views on how effective the delivery of the Restart Scheme has been so far in their area, in addition to lessons learned.

14. **Overall, how effective is the Restart Scheme in your area?**

15. **What lessons have you learned about how to deliver the Restart Scheme effectively in your area?**
    - o (Apart from those already mentioned) Has your organisation taken steps to improve the delivery of the Restart Scheme?
    - o Do you have any ideas for further improving the way you deliver the Restart Scheme?

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16. **Do you think one year is enough time to support claimants into sustainable employment?**
    - o   Why/why not? Probe: Does this vary by individual? In what way?
    - o   If not, how much time is needed?

17. **Do you have anything else to add about your experiences of delivering Restart Scheme?**

Ask participant about suggestions / options for a local area observation:
- The purpose of these will be to verify qualitative data gathered from the qualitative interviews and support further explanation and themes emerging.
- Undertaking ethnography offers a key opportunity to examine behaviours of key stakeholders and claimants within 'natural environments'.
- Examples of where observations could be conducted include:
    - o   In JobCentre Plus, shadowing Work Coaches identifying, referring and working with Restart claimants
    - o   Shadowing provider and claimant meetings
    - o   Attending work related training delivered by providers and/or partners
- These will take place in summer 2022

We want to know if they have ideas for this, who would be involved, when they would take place, who we would need permission from. Explain that these are due to take place in September.

Thank interviewee for their time and explain next steps. Also, remind them to get in touch if they have anything else they would like to add.

L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

Restart Sc e me Evaluation: Wave

Local stakeholder interview guide

Interviewer note: This is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered and questions can be modified. Follow up and probe in more detail as appropriate.

Introduction
- Introduce yourself and thank interviewee for agreeing to interview.
- Explain that Learning and Work Institute is evaluating a national employment programme on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions.
- This evaluation is being conducted to understand whether any improvements need to be made and to inform future decisions regarding the national employment programme. It must be noted the purpose of the evaluation is not to scrutinise individuals' performance.
- We have contacted them to participate, as part of the second wave of interviews, which includes interviews with providers and local stakeholders.
- We want to find out more about their role in delivering government employment programmes, such as Restart. No right or wrong answers, we are just trying to get an accurate picture of Restart Scheme activities so far. It may be that there are some topic areas which they do not have much insight into, inform participants that we can skip past any questions they are less sure about.
- The interview will last around 45 minutes.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific questions at any time, should they wish, without giving a reason.

Confidentiality and consent
- Explain that interview findings will be included in outputs for the Department for Work and Pensions and may be published.
- Any direct quotes used in the report will not refer to the individual's name, just the area, therefore ensuring as much anonymity as possible.
- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what is said. Recordings will be deleted once the project has been completed. Ensure interviewee is comfortable with recording. (Note: if an interviewee refuses to be recorded detailed notes should be taken and the interviewer would be responsible for charting the data into the grid.)
- **Ask interviewee to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part. Ask participant to reconfirm this once the interview is being recorded.**
- Ask if they have any questions.

Section 1: Background information (5 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to gain some background information on the interviewee and the organisation that they work for.

Note to researcher: Roles and organisations will vary so it will be important to gage in this section what their role is and what their organisation does. This can be used to inform the rest of the interview, in particular, whether it is likely that they will have some insight into Restart.

1. **Firstly, please could you tell me a little bit about the organisation that you work for?**
   - What is the overall purpose of the organisation?
   - What local area(s) does it cover?
   - What involvement do they have in local employment / adult training?

2. **What is your role within the organisation?**
   - How long have you been in this role?
   - What involvement do you have in local employment / adult training?

Section 2: Local strategic partnerships and the economic landscape

Aim: This section will look at the local intelligence sharing as well as the local economic landscape.

3. **In what ways is intelligence regarding the local labour market gathered and shared amongst local stakeholders? E.g. local engagement meetings?**
   - Who has involvement in these? Probe: Charities? JCP? LEPs? Chamber of Commerce?
   - Are the Restart providers involved in this? If not, should they be?
   - Frequency?
   - Method of contact?
   - What topics are covered? E.g. travel, job vacancies, local support
   - Are there any gaps? How could this information sharing be improved?

4. **What trends have you noticed in the labour and skills market in [area name] over the last year?**
   - Any particular new opportunities coming up – new construction projects, events, businesses moving in etc?
   - New sectors growing?
   - Any changes due to the pandemic?
   - Particular challenges?
   - What types of skills are in demand?
   - Why are these skills in demand? Probe: local programmes / initiatives that require certain workers?

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5. **How does this correspond to the types of employment that people are looking for? And the skills they have?** Probe: What sectors? Roles? Working hours?

6. **What are the main challenges in supporting people into work in [area name] in particular?** Probe: Specific difficulties compared to other areas? Poor transport links, seasonality of work, significant mental health challenges, ESOL needs etc.

Section 3: Local employment programmes

Aim: This section will look at the local employment programmes, with a focus on the Restart Scheme.

7. **In [case study area], what, if any, government employment programmes are in place?**
   o What are they? Probe: Does this include the Restart Scheme?
   o How long have they been running for? When are the due to complete?
   o From your perspective, how effective are these programmes?
   o From your perspective, to what extent is there value in nationally commissioned employment support programmes?
   o [If not] From your perspective, what should the employment support provision landscape look like?

8. **What is your involvement in these programmes?**
   o Advisory vs. involvement in delivery?
   o What does this look like?
   o Who else is involved in this?
   o Any challenges managing these relationships?

9. **[If they are aware of the Restart Scheme] What is your understanding of the purpose and aims of the Restart Scheme?**
   o In your opinion, who is it targeted at?
   o What do you know about how it is delivered in practice?
   o Did you have any involvement in the design or implementation of the Restart Scheme in your local area?

Note to researcher: At question 9, if they have had involvement in the Restart Scheme, make sure to predominantly keep the focus on this.

10. **Have you had any involvement with local providers?**
    o Why are/were you in contact with them?
    o Any forums or groups the providers are involved in?

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o Frequency?
o Method?
o Consistency of point-of-contact?
o How effective have these relationships been? Any challenges?
o Have you given providers any feedback? If yes, how receptive have providers been to this feedback?
o Any ways you think these relationships could be improved?

11. Have you had any involvement with the JCP?
o *Probe: in relation to Restart, or otherwise*
o What has this looked like – frequency, method, Consistency?
o How effective have these relationships been? Any challenges?
o Any ways you think these relationships could be improved?
o From your perspective, to what extent are JCP and providers working cohesively?

12. [If they are aware of the Restart Scheme] How, if at all, do you share information about the local labour market or new opportunities with the Restart providers in [area name]?
o Examples of information have you shared with them?
o Any involvement in LEMs? How useful are these?
o How effective has this been?
o Any challenges or points for development?

13. [If they are aware of the Restart Scheme] How well would you say the Restart Scheme has been working so far in [area name] generally?
o What is it achieving?
o Any challenges or difficulties you are aware of?
o How does it compare to other, similar schemes?
o Any suggestions for improvement? Probe: Relationships with provider or JCP staff, support offer, delivery model, partnerships with local stakeholders and employers

14. [If they are aware of the Restart Scheme] How effectively is the Restart Scheme able to meet the specific needs of [area name]?
o How does it tailor its offer to meet the challenges and opportunities in the local economy? And to claimants?
o How is it responding to the local labour market trends you identified earlier?
o How effective is targeting of the scheme? Is it helping the right people?
o Has your organisation been able to influence local tailoring?
o How does the Restart Scheme work together with other relevant local stakeholders?

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15. **[If they are aware of the Restart Scheme] Do you think any improvements could be made to the Restart Scheme so that it can more effectively meet the needs of the area?**
    - Other sectors to focus on?
    - Other groups of claimants to focus on?
    - Ways to improve intelligence sharing?
    - Other partners to engage with?

16. **[If they are aware of the Restart Scheme] Apart from your own organisation, do you know of any other local stakeholders that play a role in the Restart Scheme?**
    - Who does it have good links with? Probe: Combined Authority, local authority, colleges, support services, Chamber of Commerce
    - Do you think any local stakeholders are missing who should play a role?

Section 3: Summary (5 minutes)

17. **Do you a ve anyt in else to add t a t we av en't covered already?**

Thank interviewee for their time and explain next steps. Also, remind them to get in touch if they have anything else they would like to add.

L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

Restart Sc e me Evaluation: Wave

JCP staff interview guide

Interviewer note: This is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered and questions can be modified. Follow up and probe in more detail as appropriate.

Introduction
- Introduce yourself and thank interviewee for agreeing to interview.
- Explain that Learning and Work Institute is an independent research organisation and are carrying out research on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions to evaluate the Restart Scheme.
- This interview will cover:
  - Their thoughts on the referral process, as well as the overall Scheme
  - The effectiveness of their relationships with providers
  - Any suggestions for improvement
- The interview will last around 40-50 minutes.
- There's no 'right' or 'wrong' answers, we are interested in their experience and honest opinions.

Confidentiality and consent
- Everything that we discuss in this interview will remain confidential and taking part is voluntary. If at any point you would like to stop the interview or decline to answer a specific question, please feel free to do so. Similarly, if there are any questions that you do not feel able to answer, we can move on from these.
- Explain that interview findings will be included in outputs for the Department for Work and Pensions and may or may not be published.
- Any direct quotes used in the report will not refer to the individual's name, just the area they are based in, therefore ensuring as much anonymity as possible.
- With permission, we would like to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. The recording will be made on an encrypted recorder and uploaded onto our secure server. Recordings will be transcribed, then analysed by the L&W project team and deleted three months after the project ends.
- You can change your mind and withdraw your consent at any time by contacting us and we will delete the recording and transcript of your interview.
- Ask if they have any questions. **START RECORDER**
  - Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and the confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part and be recorded?

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Section 1: Background and context (5 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to gain some background information on the interviewee, including what their role is and where they are based.

1. **Firstly, please could you tell me a little bit about the JCP that you work for?**
   - Where are you based? What area does the JCP cover?
   - What is your role within the organisation? Probe: Work Coach, Work Coach Team Leader or Partnership Manager
   - How long have you been in this role?
   - What does your role involve?

2. **What, if any, challenges do you think your local area is facing?**
   - Probe: High rates of unemployment, low educational attainment, lack of job opportunities, debt/poverty, addiction
   - How has the Covid pandemic impacted on your local area / local labour market?
   - How have these challenges changed overtime?

Section 2: Involvement in the Restart Scheme (15 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to explore their and the JCP's involvement in the Restart Scheme.

3. **How would you describe the purpose and aims of the Restart Scheme?** Probe: Who does it aim to target?

4. **What involvement do you have with the Restart Scheme?**
   - What responsibilities do you have? Have your responsibilities changed over time? If yes, how?
   - How does this fit in with your day-to-day role? Probe: What proportion of your time do you spend on this? What else do you work on?
   - What, if any, training / information have you been given on the Restart Scheme?
   - Are you aware of any changes that have been made to Restart since the roll-out? If so, how were you made aware of these?
   - Were you involved in any conversations about the design or implementation of the scheme in your local area?

5. **What other personnel have been allocated to the delivery of the Restart Scheme at your JCP?**
   - What role do they play? Probe: How involved are they?
   - Are there plans for this to change in the future?

6. **Have you been given the support and information you need to carry out all the tasks you are involved with as part of the Restart Scheme?**
   - Probe [if applicable to job roles]: Support to make referrals / identify eligible participants? Complete tasks expected of them?

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- o Who do you receive support from? Probe: managers, Restart Scheme SPoCs, others?
- o Is there any support which is missing that would help you?
- o What about the support available to other staff members who play a role in delivering the Restart Scheme? Probe: What does this entail? Is there any support missing that would help them?

7. **Are you aware of any guidance on the delivery of the Restart Scheme?**
   - o If yes, have you used this guidance? How did you access this?
   - o Has this guidance changed over time?
   - o Has this support been useful? Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

Section 3: Referral process (15 minutes) <u>Note to researchers: This section is only to be asked of Work Coaches and Work Coach team leaders.</u>

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to understand how they identify suitable participants for the Scheme, what their referral process looks like and the effectiveness of the relationships between those involved.

8. **How are eligible participants identified?**
   - o How well is this working? (Note to researcher: Any mention of targets? If yes, what are these and when were they put in place?
   - o Are the automated 'To Dos' helpful in identifying suitable claimants?
   - o To what extent is the eligibility criteria for referrals clear? And appropriate for your claimants?
   - o Have you noticed any changes to the eligibility criteria over time? What? And what impact do you think this has had?
   - o Have you experienced any challenges or barriers that have made it difficult to identify suitable participants? (Probe: understanding of Restart eligibility criteria and how this compares to other government funded programmes)
   - o Have you received any feedback from providers on this process?
   - o If you were to deem a participant *not suitable for Restart*, what other actions might you take with that claimant? (Probe: would you refer to other provision? What?)
   - o How often do you complete discretionary referrals?
   - o Have ever referred someone who does not strictly meet the eligibility criteria? Or kept someone on the scheme when they are no longer eligible? If so, why? (Probe: What / who is influencing this?)
   - o [If not covered already] Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

9. **After you have identified a suitable participant, what are the next steps?**
Probe: Does the warm handover take place immediately, or are there other steps before this?

10. **Please could you describe the warm handover process?**
    o What is your role in this? And who else is involved?
    o What is covered?
    o To what extent is the warm handover process effectively achieving its aims? Why / why not?
    o Do you think any changes need to be made to this process?
    o What steps are taken if a participant fails to attend the warm handover? Who is responsible? Probe: Do you tell claimants that the scheme is mandatory? At any point have you had to enforce mandation?

11. **In addition to the warm handover, do you have any other contact with the provider? Why?**
    o How would you describe your relationship with the provider?
    o How does your relationship with the provider impact your role on the Restart Scheme?
    o Any suggestions for how this working relationship could be improved?

12. **Following the warm handover call, do you have further contact with the participant or the provider?** Probe: any ad-hoc calls with the provider and participant to discuss any issues?
    o If yes, what is this about?
    o If no, would an opportunity for further follow-up be helpful?

13. **Do you have contact with any external partners such as, training providers, local authorities or employers?**
    o Why are you in contact with these partners?
    o How do they help to deliver the Restart Scheme?
    o How would you describe your relationship with these partners?

Section 4: Partnerships (5 minutes) Note to researchers: This section is only to be asked of partnership managers.

Aim: To understand the partnerships that Partnership Managers have in place, as well as how they work.

14. **What partnerships are in place as part of the Restart Scheme?**
    o Who are they with? Probe: Employers, local initiatives?
    o How were these partnerships established? Probe: What role did you

play in this?
- o How were decisions made about which partners to include? Probe: Did these relationships already exist? Legacy from older programmes?

15. How do these partnerships work?
- o How do you maintain contact with partners? How effective is this?
- o How, if at all, have these partnerships influenced the implementation and delivery of Restart?
- o Are you working towards any targets or to any future goals together?
- o What is working well about these partnerships?
- o Have you faced any challenges?
- o Do you think there are any organisations that are missing that you could partner with? If yes, how would this benefit the Restart Scheme?

Section 5: Views on the impact of the Restart Scheme (10 minutes)

Aim: To understand overall views on the progress of the Restart Scheme so far in their local area.

16. At the start of the interview, you mentioned that your local area is facing various challenges, including [REFERENCE RESPONSE FROM Q2].

In what way do you think the Restart Scheme is helping to address those challenges?
- o Who do you think the Restart Scheme is benefiting the most?
- o Is the Restart Scheme appropriate for its target group of claimants? Or would it be more appropriate for another group?
- o What other support is needed to address these challenges?
- o Are there other local initiatives tackling these challenges?

17. Is there anything that you think could negatively affect the delivery or performance of the Restart Scheme in your area?
- o Probe: Cost of living increases, lack of job opportunities (inc. seasonality, impact of the pandemic, lack of engagement from employers), poor transport links to jobs / to JCP or the Restart Scheme site, Way to Work Scheme

18. Overall, how well do you think the Restart Scheme is being delivered in your local area?
- o Any challenges or anything working particularly well?
- o Do you have any suggestions for how the design or delivery of the Restart Scheme could be improved in your area?

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Summary (5 minutes)

Aim: To summarise the interview and thank them for their participation.

Is t e re anyt in   else t a t you would like to add t a t we ave n't a d t e opportunity to cover today?

Ask participant about suggestions / options for a local area observation:
- The purpose of these will be to verify qualitative data gathered from the qualitative interviews and support further explanation and themes emerging.
- Undertaking ethnography offers a key opportunity to examine behaviours of key stakeholders and claimants within 'natural environments'.
- Examples of where observations could be conducted include:
    - In JobCentre Plus, shadowing Work Coaches identifying, referring and working with Restart claimants
    - Shadowing provider and claimant meetings
    - Attending work related training delivered by providers and/or partners
- These will take place in summer 2022

We want to know if they have ideas for this, who would be involved, when they would take place, who we would need permission from. Explain that we are in the initial stages of deciding how to approach these observations, and do not need any urgent action from them, though we will be in touch in due course.

Remind participant of confidentiality, next steps, and request they get in touch if they have any further thoughts.

Thank and close.

L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

Restart Sc e me Evaluation: Wave

Employers interview guide

> **Interviewer note:** This is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered and questions can be modified. Follow up and probe in more detail as appropriate.

Introduction

- Introduce yourself and thank interviewee for agreeing to interview.
- Explain that Learning and Work Institute is an independent research organisation and are carrying out research on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions to evaluate the Restart Scheme.
- This interview will cover:
  - o Your contact with Restart and the activities you have been involved with
  - o The effectiveness of your relationship with the Restart provider and the participants
  - o Any suggestions for improvement
- The interview will last around 45 minutes.
- There's no 'right' or 'wrong' answers, we are interested in their experience and honest opinions.

Confidentiality and consent

- Everything that we discuss in this interview will remain confidential and taking part is voluntary. If at any point you would like to stop the interview or decline to answer a specific question, please feel free to do so. Similarly, if there are any questions that you do not feel able to answer, we can move on from these.
- Explain that interview findings will be included in outputs for the Department for Work and Pensions and may or may not be published.
- Any direct quotes used in the report will not refer to the individual or organisation's name, just the area they are based in, therefore ensuring as much anonymity as possible.
- With permission, we would like to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. The recording will be made on an encrypted recorder and uploaded onto our secure server. Recordings will be transcribed, then analysed by the L&W project team and deleted three months after the project ends.
- You can change your mind and withdraw your consent at any time by contacting us and we will delete the recording and transcript of your interview.
- Ask if they have any questions. **START RECORDER**
- **Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and the confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part and be recorded?**

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Section 1: Background and context (5 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to gain some background information on the interviewee and the organisation they work for

1. **Firstly, please could you tell me a little bit about your organisation?**
    - Sector?
    - Approximate number of employees? How many of these are locally?
    - Geographical extent of operations – local / national / international?

2. **Could you give me an overview of your job role?**
    - What are your main duties?
    - Which site are you based at? Geographical coverage of the role?
    - Does your role relate to recruitment or training?
    - To what extent are you involved with the Restart Scheme? Probe: What portion of your role is this?

3. **What, if any, challenges do you think your local area is facing?**
    - *Probe: High rates of unemployment, low educational attainment, lack of job opportunities, debt/poverty, addiction*
    - How has the Covid pandemic impacted on your local area / local labour market?
    - How have these challenges changed overtime?

Section 2: Initial contact with the Restart Scheme (10 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to explore their involvement in the Restart Scheme.

4. **How did you first become engaged with the Restart Scheme in [your area]?**
    - How were you contacted?
    - Were you aware of the scheme previously?
    - Did you already have any links with the provider?

5. **Did you have any involvement in the design of the scheme by providers, JCP staff or any other parties?**
    - *Probe: did anyone get in touch with you when the idea was first being developed, were you made aware of it*
    - [If yes] What involvement did you have?
    - When you were first contacted, what did you want to get out of your involvement with Restart?
    - What was the benefit   appeal from your organisation's perspective?
    - Did you have any concerns at this stage?
    - [If not] Would you have wanted to be?

6. **Has your organisation previously been involved in other programmes similar to the Restart Scheme?**
    - When did this take place?

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- o What did this look like? Probe: Activities offered?
- o How was this both similar and different to the Restart Scheme?

Section 3: Engagement with Restart (15 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to understand which activities they have been involved with, what engagement looks like, how successful this has been, and any challenges.

7. **Can you describe your engagement with the Restart provider?**
   - o Are there regular meetings/calls?
   - o Who is this with?
   - o What do you cover?
   - o How well does this work?
   - o Any suggestions for improvement?

8. **How have you engaged with participants on the Restart Scheme in [area name] so far?**
   - o Placing a participant into a role within your company
   - o Offering guaranteed interviews or job brokering
   - o Specialist 'sector routeways' programmes
   - o Attending job fairs supported by the Restart provider
   - o Providing training to participants
   - o Offering work placements
   - o Offering trial shifts
   - o Visiting the site to provide a talk to participants

9. **[Probe for each activity mentioned above, as appropriate] Could you tell me more about this?**
   - o How commonly have you engaged with this activity?
   - o How many participants have you engaged this way?

10. **[Probe for the above, as appropriate] Which types of roles have been offered to Restart participants or were you hoping to fill?**
    - o How easy or difficult is it to find opportunities for Restart participants?

11. **[Probe for each activity mentioned above, as appropriate] How successful has this been so far in [area name], from your perspective?**
    - o What does successful look like?
    - o How does this compare with your initial expectations?
    - o [If recruited Restart participants] How do Restart participants you have recruited sustain on the job?

12. **How effective has engagement with Restart participants in [area name] been more generally?**
    - o What are the reasons for this?

- o   [If any challenges noted] How have you attempted to rectify this?
- o   Have you discussed this with the provider? What was their response?

13. **Going forward, what are you expecting your engagement with the Restart Scheme to look like?**
    - o   Will this be much the same as before?
    - o   Anything in addition to what you have done so far?
    - o   Any particular events or next steps in place at the moment?

Section 4: Partnerships (5 minutes)

Aim: To understand how the employer engages with other relevant local partners within employability and explore whether Restart is adding to existing contact.

14. **Do you have any other contact with the Restart provider, other than what we have already discussed?**

15. **Other than Restart, do you engage with any other local partners in [area name] to discuss recruitment needs, skills, training etc?**
    - o   Engagement with DWP/JCP, local authority, other employment programmes, local colleges etc
    - o   What format does this take?
    - o   How do you make and maintain contact with these partners?
    - o   What is the purpose of this?
    - o   How does this fit in with their engagement on Restart?
    - o   Any suggestions for improvement?

16. **How effective have those partnerships been in supporting your organisation?**
    - o   What have the key successes been?
    - o   How have these partnerships contributed?

Section 5: Perceptions and improvements (5 minutes)

Aim: To understand overall views on the progress of the Restart Scheme so far in their local area and pick up any additional areas for improvement.

17. **Based on your experience, how well do you think the Restart Scheme is operating in [area name]?**

    - o   How well does it engage with local employers generally?

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o Does it reflect the needs of the local community?
o How does it reflect your particular sector?

18. **How effectively has the Restart Scheme in [area name] engaged with your organisation?**
o *Probe: engagement with the Restart provider vs JCP, coherence between two or differentiation*
o Key success points
o Key challenges or difficulties
o Comparison to any other employability schemes currently or previously?
o Comparison to other local areas?

19. **What else could the Restart Scheme in [area name] do to engage with and support your organisation?**
o *Probe: support offered to employer / claimants, relationships with provider / JCP staff, structure of programme*
o Anything they can build on?
o What else could the Restart Scheme in [area name] do to engage with and support employers more generally?
o *Probe: support offered to employer / claimants, relationships with provider / JCP staff, structure of programme*
o Anything they can build on?

Summary (5 minutes)

Aim: To summarise the interview and thank them for their participation.

20. **Is t e re anyt in   else t a t you would like to add t a t we ave n't a d t e opportunity to cover today?**

Remind participant of confidentiality, next steps, and request they get in touch if they have any further thoughts.

Thank and close.

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L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

Restart Sc e me Evaluation: Wave

Claimant interview guide

Interviewer note: This is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered and questions can be modified. Follow up and probe in more detail as appropriate.

Introduction
- Introduce yourself and thank interviewee for agreeing to interview.
- Explain that Learning and Work Institute is an independent research organisation and are carrying out research on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions to evaluate the Restart Scheme.
- This interview will cover:
  o How they were referred to the Restart Scheme
  o Their experiences on the scheme, including any activities they have done
  o Their relationship with their advisor, and suggested improvements
- The interview will last around 1 hour.
- There's no 'right' or 'wrong' answers, we are interested in their experience and honest opinions.
- They will receive a voucher £40 as a thank you for taking part.

Confidentiality and consent
- Everything that we discuss in this interview will remain confidential and taking part is voluntary.
- Participating in this interview will not impact any benefits you are receiving in any way.
- Throughout this interview we will discuss your life circumstances, including your employment. If at any point you would like to stop the interview or decline to answer a specific question, please feel free to do so.
- Explain that interview findings will be included in outputs for the Department for Work and Pensions and may or may not be published.
- Any direct quotes used in the report will not refer to the individual's name, just their gender, age and [INSERT AREA], therefore ensuring as much anonymity as possible.
- With permission, we would like to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. The recording will be made on an encrypted recorder and uploaded onto our secure server. Recordings will be transcribed, then analysed by the L&W project team and deleted three months after the project ends.
- You can change your mind and withdraw your consent at any time by contacting us and we will delete the recording and transcript of your interview.
- Ask if they have any questions. **START RECORDER**

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- **Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and the confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part and be recorded?**

Section 1: Introduction (2-3 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this section is to understand the participant's background and provide a warm-up to the interview.

1. **To begin, please could you start by telling me a bit more about yourself?**
   - Your age?
   - Your household? Probe: Who do you live with? Do you have any children or caring responsibilities?
   - Where do you live? How long have you lived there for?
   - What qualifications do you have?

Section 2: Previous employment (10 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this section is to understand the participant's previous employment, as well as what other support they have received. This should help us to gain an understanding of the local area context also.

2. **When were you last in work?**
   - What sector?
   - How many hours did you work per week? Probe: Full-time, part-time?
   - Did you have an employment contract or were you self-employed? If applicable, what type of contract were you on? Probe: permanent, temporary
   - How long did you work there for / how long did you do that for?
   - When did this work end and why?

3. **Prior to starting the Restart Scheme, had you been searching for work?**
   - If yes, how long have you been looking for work?
   - If yes, what kinds of work were you looking for?
   - If yes, what steps were you taking? Probe: Applying for jobs? Attending interviews?
   - If no, why? Probe: Mental or physical health conditions? Unsure of what jobs to apply for? Unsure of how to apply for roles?

4. **What difficulties have you experienced in finding work?**
   - Lack of opportunities in the sectors you wanted to work in / have experience or qualifications or lack of roles that suit your lifestyle in your local area?
   - If yes, have you had to extend where you are looking for work? How far?
   - Have you had to / do you feel you need to retrain or move sectors due to job availability?
   - How has this been impacted by Covid?
   - How has this changed overtime? Probe: In your local area?

5. **Prior to starting the Restart Scheme, have you received any other types of support to help you find work?**
   - Have you received support previously from your local JobCentre Plus? How helpful was this?
   - Have you received any support from charities, your local council or other local organisations?
   - [If specific difficulties to finding work mentioned] Have you received other types of support to help you overcome any challenges you have faced that have prevented you from finding work?

Section 3: Referral to Restart Scheme (5 minutes)

Aim: This purpose of this section is to understand how they were referred to the Restart Scheme and how effective this process was.

6. **According to our records, you were enrolled in the Restart Scheme on [INSERT MONTH AND YEAR], does that sound about right?**
7. **When did you first find out about the Restart Scheme?**
   - How did you find out about it? Probe: via JCP
   - What information were you given? Probe: How useful was this?

8. **After you were first told about the scheme, what happened next?**
[Note to researcher: The purpose of this is to understand their perception of the warm handover]
   - Did you have a call / meeting? Who was involved?
   - When did this take place?
   - Did you find this meeting useful? Why?
   - Did you understand why you were referred onto Restart?
   - Do you have any suggestions for improvement? Probe: Method of contact? Attendees? Time of meeting? Topics covered?

9. **[If relevant] Following this call, what happened next?**
   - Did you have any further calls or meetings which involved your Work Coach / your JCP adviser and the Restart adviser?

10. **Have you remained in contact with your Work Coach?**
   - What is the main way you keep in contact with your Work Coach? Probe: F2F, phone, through their journal
   - How would you describe your relationship with them?

Section 4: Relationship with Restart adviser (15 minutes)

Aim: This section has a specific focus on the relationship with the Restart adviser.

The next set of questions will be around your provider Restart adviser. This is the individual who you are dealing with as part of the Restart Scheme. This is separate to your Work Coach.

11. When were you first put in touch with your Restart adviser?
- Did this take place over the phone or in person, or in another way?
- What was covered?

12. How often are you in contact with your Restart adviser?
- How do you stay in contact with your adviser? Probe: F2F? Phone? Email?
- Have you always had the same Restart adviser, or have they changed?
- Has your contact been scheduled, or have they got in contact with you outside of that?

13. How would you describe your relationship with your Restart adviser?
- How does this compare to your relationship with the Work Coach at the JobCentre?
- To what extent do you think they understand your needs? Including any barriers to work e.g. childcare or health conditions
- To what extent do you think they understand what type of job you are looking for? E.g. sector, working hours, level

14. Has your Restart adviser carried out a diagnostic (or needs) assessment for you?
- Following this, have you and your Restart advisor put together an action plan? [If needed: A strategy for how you will find work, and the types of support you will need]
- [If they have an action plan] How useful is this?
- [If they are not aware of either a diagnostic assessment or action plan] Is this something you expect your Restart advisor to draw up? Or that you think would be helpful?

Section 5: The support received (15 minutes)

Aim: This section will look at the support the participant has received, what has worked well / less well, plus suggestions for improvement.

15. For this section of the interview, we will discuss the support you have received since starting the Restart Scheme. This includes any activities

you have been enrolled in, outside of any regular catch-up discussions you have with your advisor.

So, since starting the Restart Scheme, what types of support have you received?

Probe:

- Help with writing a CV / job applications
- Support to understand what jobs / sectors are appropriate for you
- Support to develop soft skills e.g. confidence
- Access to a 'jobs portal' or other job vacancy tools
- Being put in touch with employers, including for work placements / experience or trial shifts or 'sector routeways'
- ESOL support
- Access to training courses (or identifying which would be suitable)
- Employment workshops or job fairs
- Help managing a mental or physical health condition
- Support with childcare or caring responsibilities
- Support with finding housing
- Financial support for rent/mortgage, bills/utilities, debt
- Referrals to appropriate agencies to help with any other issues e.g. addiction or rehabilitation
- Support with obtaining relevant licences or paperwork etc.

16. And which of these have been most helpful?
[Note to researcher: Here we need to focus on the details of what has made the most difference and why. It is also important to understand, if possible, what local partners are involved in the delivery of these activities]

- What did they include?
- What was helpful about these activities? Probe: Was it suited to your needs?
- Who provided this support? Probe: local delivery?
- What format did this take? E.g. online or face to face

17. Have you found any of the activities you mentioned unhelpful?
- Why? Probe: Not suited to individual needs?
- What could have been done differently?

18. Overall, do you think that the support you have been enrolled in has been suited to your needs and goals?
- What more could the Restart adviser do to ensure you are receiving support which is appropriate for your specific needs?

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19. Since starting on the Restart Scheme, as well as the activities you mentioned, has your Restart adviser signposted you to any job vacancies?
   o What has been the outcome?
   o Do you think these job vacancies have been suited to you and your needs?

Section 6: Next steps (5 minutes)

Aim: To understand what the participant expects to happen going forward.

20. As part of the Restart Scheme, what are your next steps? Probe: Any activities or meetings expected?
   o Are there intermediary objectives or steps along the way?
   o Timescales?

21. What support do you think you need next to help you find work?
Probe:

   o Help with writing a CV / job applications
   o Support to understand what jobs / sectors are appropriate for you
   o Support to develop soft skills e.g. confidence
   o Access to a 'jobs portal' or other job vacancy tools
   o Being put in touch with employers, including for work placements / experience or trial shifts or 'sector routeways'
   o ESOL support
   o Access to training courses (or identifying which would be suitable)
   o Employment workshops or job fairs
   o Help managing a mental or physical health condition
   o Support with childcare or caring responsibilities
   o Support with finding housing
   o Financial support for rent/mortgage, bills/utilities, debt
   o Referrals to appropriate agencies to help with any other issues e.g. addiction or rehabilitation
   o Support with obtaining relevant licences or paperwork etc.

   Probe:

   o Why would this be helpful?
   o How would you want this support to be delivered? By who? Why?
   o Do you expect this support to be delivered in the future through Restart? [Note to researcher: If this does not match their next steps for Restart, probe around why]

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Summary (5 minutes)

Aim: To summarise the interview and thank them for their participation.

22. **To finish off, to what extent do you feel that Restart has or is increasing your chances of securing long term employment? Note to researcher: probe on responses to Q4**
    - Probe: Has it helped to address the difficulties you have had securing work in your local area?
    - Why/why not?

Is t e re anyt in   else t a t you would like to add t a t we ave n't a d t e opportunity to cover today? Or are there any other improvements you would like to suggest?

Remind participant of confidentiality and of their incentive.

Thank and close.

Wave 3

L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

Restart Sc e me Evaluation: Wave

Provider interview guide

Interviewer note: This is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered and questions can be modified. Follow up and probe in more detail as appropriate. The general questions for all case study areas are highlighted in yellow. The questions that will need be adapted depending on the focus of deep dives/type of interviewee are in grey.

Introduction
- Introduce yourself and thank interviewee for agreeing to interview.
- Explain that Learning and Work Institute is evaluating the Restart Scheme programme on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions.
- This evaluation is being conducted to understand whether any improvements need to be made and to inform future decisions regarding the Restart Scheme. It must be noted the purpose of the evaluation is not to scrutinise individuals' performance.
- We have contacted them to participate, as part of the third wave of interviews, which includes interviews with providers, claimants, JCP staff, local stakeholders and employers.
- We want to ask about their role in delivering Restart and their thoughts on the scheme so far. No right or wrong answers, we are just trying to get an accurate picture of Restart Scheme activities so far. It may be that there are some topic areas which they do not have much insight into, inform participants that we can skip past any questions they are less sure about.
- The interview will last around one hour.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific questions at any time, should they wish, without giving a reason.
- During Wave 2, we spoke about a wide range of different topics. Whilst we still want to get your views around various subjects, we would like to focus more specifically on [insert nature of the deep dive] for this discussion.
- This is the final wave of interviews for the Restart evaluation.

Confidentiality and consent
- Explain that interview findings will be included in outputs for the Department for Work and Pensions and may be published.
- Any direct quotes used in the report will not refer to the individual's name, just the area, therefore ensuring as much anonymity as possible.

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- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what is said. Recordings will be deleted once the project has been completed. Ensure interviewee is comfortable with recording. (Note: if an interviewee refuses to be recorded detailed notes should be taken and the interviewer would be responsible for charting the data into the grid.)
- **Ask interviewee to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part. Ask participant to reconfirm this once the interview is being recorded.**
- Ask if they have any questions.

Section 1: Background information (5 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to gain some background information on the interviewee.

Note to researcher: If the participant took part in the wave one interview, we only need to recap these questions.

1. **Firstly, could you give me an overview of your role?**
   - Formal job title?
   - Responsibilities?
   - Geographical focus?
   - How long have you been in this role?
   - [If a contact interviewed in Wave 2] Has anything changed in relation to your role since we spoke to you last time?
   - Have there been any changes to the role your organisation plays in Restart since we last spoke?

Section 2: Staffing (5 minutes)

Aim: Section 2 will assess any changes that have been made to their delivery model since wave 2, particularly staffing.

Note to researcher: Provide interviewee with an overview of what was discussed in the previous interviews around their delivery model (regardless of whether or not you are speaking to the same individual)

2. **[If a new provider] Could you please give me an overview of how you have staffed Restart?**
   - How many staff are in place?
   - Which specific roles are there?
   - How has the approach to staffing changed over time? Why?
   - How has recruitment gone so far?
   - How are staff trained?
   - Is any staffing or resource shared with other areas, or other contracts you may run?

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3. **[If appropriate] When we spoke last time, you had recently introduced a new role dedicated to [insert specific details]. How has that progressed since then?**
   - o Is this role still in place?
   - o What did you hope to achieve by making this change? Did this work?
   - o What feedback have you had related to this change (e.g. from a prime contractor, from JCP, from participants)?
   - o What challenges have come up related to this?
   - o Do you expect this role to remain in place going forward?
   - o How did you approach recruitment and training for this role in particular?

4. **Since the last interview, has your organisation made any (other) changes to the way your teams are structured?**
   - o If yes, what were these changes? Why were they needed? Probe where relevant to deep dive focus
   - o Have any changes been made to the way you approach recruitment? If yes, what are these?
   - o How do you ensure that new staff are brought up to speed?
   - o Have any changes been made to your approach to staff training? If yes, what are these?
   - o If no, do you expect any changes to be made to staffing and recruitment in the future? Probe: What are these? Why?
   - o How, if at all, have these changes impacted on the delivery of the Restart Scheme? What has worked well / less well?

Section 3: Participant needs and referral process (10 minutes)

Aim: This section discusses the context of the local area, the referral process, and the types of individuals being referred onto Restart

5. **What would you say are the particular challenges for [area name] generally?**
   - o What have been the trends in the local economy and skills landscape over the last year?
   - o What are the challenges in the local labour market?
   - o What challenges are more apparent here than in other areas? (e.g. key sectors in decline, geographical factors, substance abuse, ageing population)

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- o Are there particular challenges in this area around a lack of wider support provision generally? (e.g. GPs, primary care, mental health services)
- o [If appropriate] What are the challenges related to being a rural area?
- o How do these challenges affect the way you deliver Restart?
- o How have you attempted to overcome or adapt to these challenges?

6. **Note to researcher:** Provide interviewee with an overview of what was discussed last time about the types of people being referred onto Restart **Has anything in particular changed since then?**

- o Are there other types of needs/ barriers coming up?
- o Has anything become more or less common over time?
- o Do the types of people you are seeing typically require more or less extensive support compared to earlier on in the programme? What impact does this have?
- o How common are ESOL needs?
- o How many more highly skilled or qualified participants are you seeing?
- o How common are health needs? What types of things?
- o How many participants are longer-term unemployed?
- o Older participants?

7. **Are there particular referrals that you believe are unsuitable for Restart?**
Probe in more detail where relevant to deep dive

- o How common is this? How has this changed over time?
- o What would make them 'unsuitable'? (Probe: language difficulties, health needs too great, more suited for another programme, very close to retirement)
- o Do any of these not meet the eligibility criteria?
- o Why do you think these cases are being referred to you? (e.g. are these discretionary referrals?)

8. **What happens if you receive a referral you deem unsuitable? What happens to these cases?**
- o Do they stay on Restart regardless?
- o Are they referred to an alternative scheme within the organisation and removed from Restart?
- o Are they referred to an alternative scheme with another organisation and removed from Restart?
- o Are they removed from Restart without a referral? How do you deal with these?
- o [If referred onto other provision] How does this work?
- o What impact does this have on the outcomes you are able to achieve?

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9. W a t impact do t e 'unsuitable' referrals a ve on t e outcomes you are able to achieve? Probe for deep dive where appropriate

10. **How have you found the referral volumes, relative to expectations?**
    o Has this changed over time? Why?
    o What are the patterns in this area relative to other areas?
    o What difficulties does this create for Restart? How does that impact on outcomes?
    o How have you adapted to differing levels of referrals over time?

11. **Note to researcher:** Provide interviewee with an overview of what was discussed in the previous interview around the warm handover process (regardless of whether or not you are speaking to the same individual)

Does this still reflect your experiences/views of the Warm Handover?
    o Has anything changed?
    o Do you have anything additional to add about your experiences based on more recent feedback or changes implemented since the last interview?
    o Are there any plans to make changes to the Warm Handover process in the future?
    o How has the warm handover been working for people with ESOL or other communication needs?

Section 4: Support offer

Aim: This section discusses the support offer, what is working well/less well about this, and how this is tailored to specific needs.

12. **Note to researcher:** Provide interviewee with an overview of what was discussed at the wave two interview around their support offer (regardless of whether or not you are speaking to the same individual)

Does this still reflect your current support offer?
    o Have you introduced any additional activities? Why?
    o Or have any activities been removed?

13. **How well is the support offer working generally?**
    o Which activities are working well / less well?
    o Any challenges faced with delivering the support offer? (Probe: any issues around participants not committing? Why?)
    o Have you received feedback from participants? If so, what kind of feedback have you received?

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o Who does this support have the biggest and least impact on? For the latter, what is missing?

o How well does the support improve wellbeing more generally? Does this go far enough?

14. How do you ensure these activities are tailored to specific individuals?

o Is there a formal process for tailoring support?

o Are participants provided with SMART action plans? Why/ why not?

o How are SMART action plans developed?

o What is working well/ less well about SMART action plans

o Which customer types / needs have been considered? Probe: individuals with disabilities / long-term health conditions

o Any examples of this?

o Are there any customer types / groups of participants where this individual tailoring is easier / more difficult to achieve? Why?

o How does the support vary for those with ESOL needs?

o How do you reflect the needs of those with health issues?

o How does the support offer match those who are more highly skilled or qualified?

o How does the support offer work for those who are long-term unemployed, or with very limited work history?

o How does the support reflect the needs of older participants?

15. How effective has the workshop offer been so far? Probe in more detail where workshops are a focus of the deep dive

o Which types of sessions are offered?

o How regularly does this run?

o How are participants booked onto these?

o What benefits have participants experienced because of these?

o What is working well? Why?

o What changes have been made to this over time? Why?

o What challenges have come up? How do you address these?

o What feedback do you get from participants?

o Are there particular workshops that receive better feedback than others? Why?

o How do you ensure the workshops offered meet participant demand?

o How do you ensure the workshops are suitable for those with specific health conditions?

o How do you ensure the workshops are suitable for those with ESOL needs?

o How do you ensure the workshops are suitable for more highly skilled or qualified participants?

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16. **We've just discussed t e ways t at y ou tailor support to different individuals. How do you balance this with the need for all participants to receive an appropriate level of support?**
    - How do you ensure everyone gets at least a basic level of support?
    - Has your approach to this changed over time?
    - What are the benefits of this approach?
    - What challenges come up in ensuring this?
    - How does the 'payment by results' system fit into this? How could this be done better?

17. **What do you do when people are not engaging?**
    - Are certain groups more/less likely to be engaged
    - Has your approach to this changed over time?
    - How commonly do you decide to go through the process of requesting to mandate participants?
    - How do you decide whether to go through the process of requesting to mandate participants? *Probe on reasons why*
    - How does this process work internally? Are you personally involved in this? Who is involved?
    - How do you make the decision whether to go through the process of requesting to mandate participants or not in a specific case?
    - If you choose not to go through that process in a specific case, why would that be?
    - How does the decision around whether or not to go through the process of requesting to mandate vary depending on types of participants? (e.g. does it vary for those 'unsuitable' referrals?)

18. **How well has the formal mandation process been working?** Probe in more detail where mandation is the focus of the deep dive
    - How do you liaise with JCP about these cases?
    - Does this improve engagement?
    - How could this be improved?
    - Has the effectiveness of this changed over time?
    - [If applicable] How do you monitor performance and doubts raised by sub-contractors?
    - [If applicable] How do you discuss and raise these issues with the prime contractor?
    - Do you have any particular examples of good practice? Or a case where this has not been effective?
    - Do you have any insight as to how well it is working here relative to other areas? What explains this difference?

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   o Do you receive guidance on the process of requesting to mandate participants (e.g. from JCP, the prime contractor, another team in your organisation)
   o How clear is the guidance you receive around the process of requesting to mandate participants? What could be improved?

19. **What response do you get from JCP about the result of mandation cases?**
   o Is action taken? Is this appropriate?
   o How quickly are cases resolved?
   o If you disagree with a decision taken, how do you communicate and resolve this with JCP?

Section 4: Communication and partnerships (10-20 minutes)

Aim: This section will focus on communication with local partners and how they support the delivery of the Restart Scheme.

Note to researcher: Provide interviewee with an overview of what was discussed at the wave one interview around the partners they have had contact with (regardless of whether or not you are speaking to the same individual)

1. **How would you describe your relationship with JCP?**

   o How do you and your staff communicate with them?
   o Are there particular, regular meetings?
   o What enables this to work well?
   o What issues are discussed with them?
   o How does this work in your area compared with others?
   o What challenges come up in the relationship with JCP?
   o What could be improved about this?

2. **How do you communicate with JCP about individuals who have completed their time on Restart without obtaining a job offer?**

   o What information do you provide about these individuals?
   o Have you had any feedback from JCP about what else they would like to know?
   o How could this be improved?

3. How do you communicate with JCP about individuals who have secured a job offer?

   o What information do you provide about these individuals?
   o Have you had any feedback from JCP about what else they would like to know?
   o How could this be improved?

4. **Outside of JCP, which other partners do you engage with on Restart?** Probe in more detail where partnership working is the focus of the deep dive

- The local authority?
- [If relevant] The Combined Authority?
- Training providers?
- The LEP?
- Chamber of Commerce or similar?
- Industry bodies?
- Anyone else?

5. **How effective are these relationships?**

- What tends to be discussed?
- Is there a set pattern for communication?
- How does this relationship assist your organisation in delivering Restart?
- What is working well about this relationship?
- What enables this relationship to work well?
- What could be improved or developed about this relationship?
- What challenges have come up with this partner?
- What would you say are the main lessons learned about partnership working based on how effective these relationships are?

Researcher note: Use the below probes selectively, depending on the type of organisation they are discussing

- How does this contribute to understanding the context of the local labour market?
- How does this partnership help you to understand local support requirements?
- How do you use this relationship to signpost participants to appropriate support?

6. **Are there any organisations or types of organisations that you would like to develop stronger links with?**

- Probe for training providers, other support services, CVS organisations, etc
- Who are these partners? What do they do?
- How would this improve delivery of Restart?
- What have been the issues in working with this organisation (or type of organisation) so far?

7. **How effectively have the LEMs been working?**

- Do you personally have any input into this?
- Do you receive any feedback on these?
- Are these helpful?

- o Who else contributes to this?
- o How does this help you to deliver Restart? (e.g. building partnerships, sharing labour market intelligence etc.?)
- o How could the LEMs be improved?

8. Are there any other relevant skills forums or formal networks that your organisation contributes to?

- o Are you personally involved in these? If not, what feedback do you get?
- o What are these?
- o How regularly do they meet?
- o What is the geographical focus of these?
- o What tends to be discussed in these?
- o How does your organisation contribute?
- o How does this help you to deliver Restart? How do you apply what you have learned? (e.g. use of labour market intelligence)
- o How does this help wider partnership working?
- o What is positive about this?
- o How useful are these?
- o What are the limitations of this? How could it run better?

9. **Do you have any oversight as to how effective these links with partners are in [this area] compared with other areas?**

- o What are the differences?
- o Are certain types of partners more or less involved with Restart in this area compared with other areas?
- o What enables partnership working to work effectively in this area?
- o Are there any difficulties in working with partners in this area compared with other areas? Why?

10. [If relevant] How does the prime/sub-contractor in this area contribute to these relationships?

- o Are they involved in any of the formal structures or forums you have mentioned?
- o How do they communicate with wider partners?
- o How do you work together to ensure the other Restart contractors are engaged with the relevant partners?

11. [If relevant] How do you share insight from these partnership links with sub-contractors?

- o What information do you pass over to them?
- o Is there a set structure for sharing wider labour market intelligence with them?
- o How useful is this?

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12. How does the process of engaging with employers work? Probe in more detail where employer engagement is the focus of the deep dive

- o Is there a specific team for this?
- o How do you work with other Restart providers on employer engagement?
- o Is there a particular geographic focus?
- o How does the team approach national employers who may have vacancies in various areas?
- o Are there particular forums or partners you work with to liaise with employers?
- o How does labour market intelligence feed into this?
- o Do you have any particular examples of employers you have a strong relationship with? What enables this to work?
- o Are there particular types of employers you target? (By sector, size, area etc.)
- o Are any particular types of employers easier or more difficult to engage with? Why? How do you attempt to resolve this?

13. Which types of activities would employers engage with?
- o Job fairs?
- o Sector routeways?
- o Job matching? If so, how do you ensure these are appropriate links?
- o Sending over details of jobs they have?
- o Proactive contact about participants you feel may be suitable for them?
- o Anything else?
- o For each, how does this work? What's working well about it? What's working less well? Do you have any examples?
- o What has enabled you to build strong links with employers (or specific types of employers)
- o What else could be done to engage with employers?

14. How do you ensure participants are matched to suitable jobs for them?
- o How do you determine their requirements compared with the jobs on offer?
- o How well is this working?
- o What feedback do you get from employers about suitability of candidates?
- o Are there particular jobs or requirements from employers which are more difficult to fill?
- o How do you go about finding suitable employers or vacancies for higher skilled individuals, or those with more specific requirements?

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Section 5: Summary (5 minutes)

Aim: This final section will summarise the interviewees' views on how effective the delivery of the Restart Scheme has been so far in their area, in addition to lessons learned.

15. **Overall, how effective is the Restart Scheme in your area?**
    o How well does it meet the specific needs of [this area]?
    o How effective is it in terms of securing sustainable job outcomes for participants?
    o How well does it serve the needs of highly skilled or more qualified participants?
    o How effectively does it support those with health needs into employment?
    o How well does it support those with ESOL needs
    o How does it improve wellbeing for participants?
    o How well does it support the long-term unemployed?

16. **What lessons have you learned about how to deliver the Restart Scheme effectively in your area?**
    o Has your organisation taken steps to improve the delivery of the Restart Scheme?
    o What lessons have been learned in terms of supporting [the specific focus for this deep dive: more highly qualified participants; those with ESOL needs; those with health conditions etc.]
    o Do you have any ideas for further improving the way you deliver the Restart Scheme?

17. **Do you have anything else to add about your experiences of delivering Restart Scheme?**

Thank interviewee for their time and explain next steps. Also, remind them to get in touch if they have anything else they would like to add.

L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

Restart Sc e me Evaluation: Wave

Local stakeholder interview guide

> **Interviewer note:** This is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered and questions can be modified. Follow up and probe in more detail as appropriate. Bear in mind the specific focus of the case study and adapt this for local area, and ask questions relevant to the type of stakeholder.

Introduction

- Introduce yourself and thank interviewee for agreeing to interview.
- Explain that Learning and Work Institute is evaluating a national employment programme on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions.
- This evaluation is being conducted to understand whether any improvements need to be made and to inform future decisions regarding the national employment programme. It must be noted the purpose of the evaluation is not to scrutinise individuals' performance.
- We have contacted them to participate, as part of the second wave of interviews, which includes interviews with providers and local stakeholders.
- We want to find out more about their role in delivering government employment programmes, such as Restart. No right or wrong answers, we are just trying to get an accurate picture of Restart Scheme activities so far. It may be that there are some topic areas which they do not have much insight into, inform participants that we can skip past any questions they are less sure about.
- The interview will last around 45 minutes.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific questions at any time, should they wish, without giving a reason.

Confidentiality and consent

- Explain that interview findings will be included in outputs for the Department for Work and Pensions and may be published.
- Any direct quotes used in the report will not refer to the individual's name, just the area, therefore ensuring as much anonymity as possible.
- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what is said. Recordings will be deleted once the project has been completed. Ensure interviewee is comfortable with recording. (Note: if an interviewee refuses to be recorded detailed notes should be taken and the interviewer would be responsible for charting the data into the grid.)
- **Ask interviewee to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part. Ask participant to reconfirm this once the interview is being recorded.**
- Ask if they have any questions.

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Section 1: Background information (5 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to gain some background information on the interviewee and the organisation that they work for.

Note to researcher: Roles and organisations will vary so it will be important to gage in this section what their role is and what their organisation does. This can be used to inform the rest of the interview, in particular, whether it is likely that they will have some insight into Restart.

1. **Firstly, please could you tell me a little bit about the organisation that you work for?**
   - What is the overall purpose of the organisation?
   - What local area(s) does it cover?
   - What involvement do they have in local employment / adult training?

   [If relevant] Which types of individuals does your organisation support? **Probe around particular focus of deep dive**

2. **What is your role within the organisation?**
   - How long have you been in this role?
   - What involvement do you have in local employment / adult training?

Section 2: The local area context (10 minutes)

Aim: This section will look at the local context, the trends and challenges involved.

3. **What trends have you noticed in the labour market in [area name] over the last year?**
   - Any particular new opportunities coming up – new construction projects, events, businesses moving in etc?
   - New sectors growing?
   - Any changes due to the pandemic?
   - Particular challenges?
   - What types of skills are in demand?
   - Why are these skills in demand? Probe: local programmes / initiatives that require certain workers?

4. **How does this correspond to the types of employment that people are looking for? And the skills they have?** Probe: What sectors? Roles? Working hours?

5. **What are the main challenges in supporting people into work in [area name] in particular?** Probe around particular focus of deep dive
   - [If relevant] What are the challenges for those you work with?
   - What is difficult here compared to other areas?

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- Transport links?
- Seasonal work?
- A depressed labour market more generally?
- Issues in specific sectors?
- ESOL needs?
- Health challenges?
- Issues such as low confidence?
- Substance abuse?
- Lack of wider support provision?

Section 3: Partnership working/ forums more generally

6. **Does your organisation attend the LEMs? If so, how useful are these?**
   - Do you personally attend these?
   - What tends to be discussed?
   - How does this link to what your organisation is doing?
   - What is the value to you of attending these?
   - How does this help in the delivery of Restart?
   - How could these be improved?
   - If not, would this be useful? What could you get from this?

7. **In what (other) ways is intelligence regarding the local labour market gathered and shared amongst local stakeholders?**
   - Who is involved in these? Probe: Charities? JCP? LEPs? Chamber of Commerce?
   - Are the Restart providers involved in this? If not, should they be?
   - Frequency?
   - Method of contact?
   - What topics are covered? E.g. travel, job vacancies, local support
   - Are there any gaps? How could this information sharing be improved?

8. **Are there any other relevant forums for knowledge sharing around skills, the labour market and employability in [area name] that we have not discussed? What are these?**
   - Who is involved in these?
   - What tends to be discussed?
   - How does this link to what your organisation is doing?
   - What is the value to you of attending these?
   - How does this help in the delivery of Restart?
   - How could these be improved?

9. **How effective is partnership working in your local area?**
   - Are there specific partnerships which are particularly effective? Why?
   - What do you think enables good partnership working?

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- Communication
- Meeting attendees e.g. from all relevant sectors
- Meeting regularity
- Collaboration
- Clearly defined aims
- Personal relationships between staff
- Long-term partnerships e.g. organizations existing in a local area for a long time
  - o What do you think prevents good partnership working?
    - Probes as above
  - o How effective is partnership working in this area compared to others? Why the difference?
    - Use same probes as above

Section 4: Contact with Restart providers

Aim: This section takes a more specific look at any contact they have with Restart providers, other than the more general forums discussed above

10. Other than what we have already discussed, do you have any involvement in the Restart Scheme or contact with the providers?
  - o What is the nature of your contact with them? What is discussed?
  - o When did this relationship start?
  - o How effective is this contact?
  - o How could this partnership be improved?
  - o [If relevant] Is other intelligence passed over to the providers?
  - o [If relevant] Are Restart participants able to access any support your organisation offers? If yes, probe on how effectively this works. If not, why not? Would this be useful? purpose of it?

11. How effective is your relationship with the Restart Scheme?
  - o What works well about it?
  - o Are there any challenges?
  - o Do you have any oversight as to how the relationship with Restart in [this area] is working compared to other areas? Why is this?
  - o How could this relationship be improved?
  - o How does, or how could, the partnership with your organisation help them to deliver Restart?

12. [If not already covered] How, if at all, do you share information about the local labour market, new opportunities or any other relevant intelligence with the Restart providers in [area name]?
  - o Examples of information you have shared with them?
  - o How effective has this been?

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o Any challenges or points for development?

13. **[If no contact] Would there be a benefit in your organisation engaging with Restart?**
   o What would be the benefits for you? And for Restart?
   o How could you work to make this happen?
   o What have been the difficulties in building a relationship so far?

Section 5: Perceptions of Restart (IF AWARE)

Aim: This section explores general perceptions of the effectiveness of the Restart Scheme in their area.

14. **What is your understanding of the Restart Scheme in particular?**
   o What is the purpose of it?
   o Who does it support? Probe around particular focus of deep dive
   o How does it fit in with other provision?

15. **[If they are aware of the Restart Scheme] How well would you say the Restart Scheme has been working so far in [area name] generally?**
   o What is it achieving?
   o Any challenges or difficulties you are aware of?
   o How does it compare to other, similar schemes?
   o Any suggestions for improvement? Probe: Relationships with provider or JCP staff, support offer, delivery model, partnerships with local stakeholders and employers
   o What enables this to work well?

16. **[If they are aware of the Restart Scheme] How effectively is the Restart Scheme able to meet the specific needs of [area name]?**
   o How does it tailor its offer to meet the challenges and opportunities in the local economy? And to claimants?
   o How is it responding to the local labour market trends you identified earlier?
   o How effective is the targeting of the scheme? Is it helping the right people?
   o Has your organisation been able to influence local tailoring?
   o How does the Restart Scheme work together with other relevant local stakeholders?

17. **[If they are aware of the Restart Scheme] Do you think any improvements could be made to the Restart Scheme so that it can more effectively meet the needs of the area?**
   o Other sectors to focus on?
   o Other groups of claimants to focus on? Probe around particular focus of deep dive
   o Other ways to work with your organisation?

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- o Ways to improve intelligence sharing?
- o Other partners to engage with?

18. **[If they are aware of the Restart Scheme] Apart from your own organisation, do you know of any other local stakeholders that play a role in the Restart Scheme?**
   - o Who does it have good links with? Probe: Combined Authority, local authority, colleges, support services, Chamber of Commerce
   - o Do you think any local stakeholders are missing who should play a role?

Section 6: Other local employment programmes and support provision

Aim: This section will look at the local employment programmes, with a focus on the Restart Scheme.

19. **[If relevant] What other support provision exists to support those with [specific focus of case study, or their organisation] in this area?**
   - o Is this sufficient? Why/why not?
   - o How does this differ in this area compared to others?
   - o Are there particular challenges for this in this area?
   - o How do you work with these support providers?
   - o How should Restart liaise with this support?

20. **In [case study area], what other government employability programmes are in place?**
   - o Can you tell us more about [name of programme]?
   - o How long have they been running for? When are they due to complete?
   - o From your perspective, how effective are these programmes?
   - o From your perspective to what extent is there value in nationally commissioned employment support programmes?
   - o Who do these programmes support? Probe around particular focus of deep dive
   - o [If not] From your perspective, what should the employment support provision landscape look like?

21. **How do you liaise with these other programmes?**
   - o Advisory vs. involvement in delivery?
   - o What does this look like?
   - o Who else is involved in this?
   - o Any challenges managing these relationships?
   - o Is there anything from these relationships that Restart providers could learn from?

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22. Have you had any involvement with the JCP?
- o *Probe: in relation to Restart, or otherwise*
- o What has this looked like – frequency, method, Consistency?
- o How effective have these relationships been? Any challenges?
- o Any ways you think these relationships could be improved?
- o From your perspective to what extent are JCP and providers working cohesively?

Section 7: Summary (5 minutes)

23. Do you a ve anyt in else to add t a t we av en't covered already?

Thank interviewee for their time and explain next steps. Also, remind them to get in touch if they have anything else they would like to add.

-

L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

Restart Sc e me Evaluation: Wave

JCP staff interview guide

Interviewer note: This is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered and questions can be modified. Follow up and probe in more detail as appropriate. Bear in mind the specific context of the area and the deep dive, and adapt questioning accordingly.

Introduction

- Introduce yourself and thank interviewee for agreeing to interview.
- Explain that Learning and Work Institute is an independent research organisation and are carrying out research on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions to evaluate the Restart Scheme.
- This interview will cover:
  - Their thoughts on the referral process, as well as the overall Scheme
  - The effectiveness of their relationships with providers
  - Any suggestions for improvement
- The interview will last around 40-50 minutes.
- There's no 'right' or 'wrong' answers, we are interested in their experience and honest opinions.

Confidentiality and consent

- Everything that we discuss in this interview will remain confidential and taking part is voluntary. If at any point you would like to stop the interview or decline to answer a specific question, please feel free to do so. Similarly, if there are any questions that you do not feel able to answer, we can move on from these.
- Explain that interview findings will be included in outputs for the Department for Work and Pensions and may or may not be published.
- Any direct quotes used in the report will not refer to the individual's name, just the area they are based in, therefore ensuring as much anonymity as possible.
- With permission, we would like to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. The recording will be made on an encrypted recorder and uploaded onto our secure server. Recordings will be transcribed, then analysed by the L&W project team and deleted three months after the project ends.
- You can change your mind and withdraw your consent at any time by contacting us and we will delete the recording and transcript of your interview.
- Ask if they have any questions. **START RECORDER**
- **Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and the confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part and be recorded?**

Section 1: Background and context (5 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to gain some background information on the interviewee, including what their role is and where they are based.

1. **Firstly, please could you tell me a little bit about the JCP that you work for?**
   - Where are you based? What area does the JCP cover?
   - What is your role within the organisation? Probe: Work Coach, Work Coach Team Leader, or Partnership Manager
   - How long have you been in this role?
   - What does your role involve?

2. **What, if any, challenges do you think your local area is facing?** Probe around particular focus of deep dive
   - Probe: High rates of unemployment, low educational attainment, lack of job opportunities, debt/poverty, addiction
   - How has the Covid pandemic impacted on your local area / local labour market?
   - How have these challenges changed over time?

Section 2: Involvement in the Restart Scheme (5 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to explore their and the JCP's involvement in the Restart Scheme.

3. **How would you describe the purpose and aims of the Restart Scheme?** Probe: Who does it aim to target?

4. **What involvement do you have with the Restart Scheme?**
   - What responsibilities do you have? Have your responsibilities changed over time? If yes, how?
   - How does this fit in with your day-to-day role? Probe: What proportion of your time do you spend on this? What else do you work on?

Section 3: Referral process (15 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to understand how they identify suitable participants for the Scheme, what their referral process looks like and the effectiveness of the relationships between those involved.

5. **How well do you think the process of identifying eligible participants is working?**
   - Have you ever referred an individual who does not strictly meet the eligibility criteria? If so, why? *(Probe: What/who is influencing this?)*
   - Do you think the eligibility criteria ensures that suitable participants are referred to Restart?

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- If not, why?
  - Have you received feedback from providers on the suitability of the participants being referred?
  - If yes, what has this feedback been?

6. **How have the volumes of individuals referred over to Restart varied since the scheme started?**
   - How does this compare to expectations?
   - Why is this high or low?
   - What impact has this had?
   - What has the provider said about this?

7. **How effectively has the warm handover process been working?**
   - Who is involved?
   - Are you involved in this? Just for your own caseload or for others?
   - What is covered?
   - To what extent is the warm handover process effectively achieving its aims? Why / why not?
   - Have any changes been made to it over the last year? Why? How effective have these been?
   - Do you think any changes need to be made to this process?

Section 4: Once participants are enrolled on the Restart Scheme (15 minutes)

Aim: This section covers ongoing contact with claimant and provider, mandation, and the process once someone completes their time on Restart

8. **How do you maintain contact with participants once they are enrolled on Restart?**
   - Face-to-face meetings? Phone calls? Video calls?
   - How regular is this contact?
   - How long do these meetings last?
   - What is the purpose of these meetings?
   - What is covered during these meetings?
   - Do you think these meetings serve their purpose?
   - Do you have any suggestions for improvement in relation to these meetings?

9. **Once participants are enrolled on Restart, do you have any further contact with the provider?**
   - **If yes**, what is this about?

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o **If no**, do you think continued contact would be beneficial? What form should this contact take?

10. How would you describe your relationship with the provider?
o How does your relationship impact your involvement/engagement in the Restart Scheme?
o What elements of your relationship work well?
o What elements of your relationship don't work so well?
o Do you have any suggestions for how your relationship could be improved?

11. Please could you tell me about the mandation process for participants who fail to engage with Restart?
o Please could you explain the steps that are taken in this process?
o Who initiates this process?
o Who are the decision makers on the final outcome of this process? What is your personal involvement?
o How long does it take to receive a decision?
o How is the outcome of a decision communicated to the provider?
o How is the outcome of a decision communicated to the claimant?
o What happens after a decision is made?
o Have any changes been made to the process over time? Why?

12. How effective has the mandation process been so far on Restart?
o What works well about this process? Why?
o What doesn't work so well about this process?
o Do you have any suggestions for improvement?
o Does it stimulate engagement?
o Has the effectiveness of mandation varied over time? Why?
o Do you have any thoughts on how mandation works on Restart in comparison to other programmes? Why is there a difference?
o What feedback do you get from the provider(s) about this?

13. What guidance have you received in relation to this mandation process?
o How did you access this guidance? E.g. independently, or was it circulated by senior members of staff?
o Have you found this guidance to be sufficient?
o Is there any additional information you would have liked to have received in relation to mandation?
o Do you have any suggestions for improvement in relation to this guidance or the way it is communicated?

14. What guidance have you given to the provider about the mandation process?

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- How did you provide this guidance? E.g. independently, or was it circulated by senior members of staff?
- Who at JCP is involved in providing guidance, either formally or informally? How does this work?
- Why was providing this guidance necessary?
- Are there particular issues the provider(s) required guidance on?
- Have you received any feedback on this?
- Do you have any suggestions for improvement in relation to how the provider(s) is supported in navigating the mandation process?

15. **What happens once a participant finishes Restart after having found employment?**
    - Who contacts you about this? The provider or the participant?
    - Do you think this information is sufficient?
    - Is there any additional information you think it would be beneficial to receive? Why?
    - Are there cases where you would keep in touch with that participant? Why?
    - Where you remain in touch, how does this process work? What do you discuss?
    - What works well about this overall process?
    - What doesn't work so well?
    - Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

16. **What happens once a participant finishes Restart after having completed 12 months on the programme, without finding a job?**
    - Could you please describe the process for this?
    - What information do you receive in these cases? Does this come from the provider, or the participant themselves?
    - Is there a formalised process for this, such as a customer exit plan? How does this work?
    - Is the information you receive sufficient? Why/why not?
    - What other information would you like to receive?
    - Once an individual completes Restart, does this affect the amount/regularity of support they will then receive from JCP? Why?
    - Is there a process of discussing support needs with the participant once they have completed Restart? What are the first meetings like?

Section 5: Views on the impact of the Restart Scheme (10 minutes)

Aim: To understand overall views on the progress of the Restart Scheme so far in their local area.

17. **At the start of the interview, you mentioned that your local area is facing**

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various challenges, including [REFERENCE RESPONSE FROM Q2].

In what way do you think the Restart Scheme is helping to address those challenges?
- o Who do you think the Restart Scheme is benefiting the most?
- o Is the Restart Scheme appropriate for its target group of claimants?
- o What other support is needed to address these challenges?
- o Are there other local initiatives tackling these challenges?

18. **Is there anything that you think could negatively affect the delivery or performance of the Restart Scheme in your area?**
    - o Probe: Cost of living increases, lack of job opportunities (inc. seasonality, impact of the pandemic, lack of engagement from employers), poor transport links to jobs / to JCP or the Restart Scheme site,
    - o How does the types of individuals being referred onto Restart affect outcomes?

19. **Are there specific types of customer, or specific types of barrier, where Restart seems to be more or less effective at providing appropriate support?** Probe around particular focus of deep dive
    - o How well does Restart support those with physical health issues?
    - o How well does Restart support those with mental health issues, or issues around low confidence etc?
    - o How well does Restart support the longer-term unemployed, or those with limited work histories?
    - o How well does Restart support those with higher levels of experience, skills or qualifications?
    - o How well does Restart support those with ESOL needs?
    - o How well does Restart support older participants?
    - o How well does Restart support those with childcare and caring responsibilities
    - o How well does Restart address a lack of motivation to find work?
    - o How well does Restart support those with a lack of relevant skills or qualifications?
    - o How well does Restart support those with a lack of work experience?
    - o How well does Restart support ex-offenders?
    - o How well does Restart support those with substance or alcohol abuse problems?

20. **Overall, how well do you think the Restart Scheme is being delivered in your local area?**
    - o Any challenges or anything working particularly well?

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- o Do you have any suggestions for how the design or delivery of the Restart Scheme could be improved in your area?
- o [If relevant] Does this vary depending on the provider?
- o [If relevant] Probe for any specific reflections related to the focus of the deep dive

21. Where individuals have secured a job outcome while on Restart, what is your perception on how sustainable those jobs are?
- o What enables these jobs to be sustainable?
- o How commonly do these participants end up back with JCP?
- o What are the difficulties in achieving sustainable work instead?
- o What caused these jobs to be unsustainable? (Probe: temporary work, unsuitable working hours, health issues, generally a poor fit for their skills and experience etc.)
- o Do you have any specific examples of individuals securing job outcomes through Restart which were unsustainable?

22. Where individuals have their 12 months on Restart and do not obtain a job outcome, to what extent have they benefitted from being on Restart?
- o What have been the advantages of going onto Restart?
- o Do you get the sense that these individuals are closer to the labour market as a result? Why/why not?

23. Where individuals have their 12 months on Restart and do not obtain a job outcome, why do you believe that is?
- o What are the barriers or issues not being addressed?
- o How does the local area context fit into this? Are there particular reasons why this would be the case in this area?
- o Is the eligibility criteria suitable? Why/why not?
- o Probe for specific difficulties to do with the focus of the deep dive

Summary (5 minutes)

Aim: To summarise the interview and thank them for their participation.

Is t e re anyt in   else t a t you would like to add t a t we ave n't a d t e opportunity to cover today?

Remind participant of confidentiality, next steps, and request they get in touch if they have any further thoughts.

Thank and close.

L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

Restart Sc e me Evaluation: Wave

Employers interview guide

> **Interviewer note:** This is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered and questions can be modified. Follow up and probe in more detail as appropriate. Adapt this to the specific focus of the case study areas as appropriate.

Introduction
- Introduce yourself and thank interviewee for agreeing to interview.
- Explain that Learning and Work Institute is an independent research organisation and are carrying out research on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions to evaluate the Restart Scheme.
- This interview will cover:
    - o Your contact with Restart and the activities you have been involved with
    - o The effectiveness of your relationship with the Restart provider and the participants
    - o Any suggestions for improvement
- The interview will last around 30 minutes.
- There's no 'right' or 'wrong' answers, we are interested in their experience and honest opinions.

Confidentiality and consent
- Everything that we discuss in this interview will remain confidential and taking part is voluntary. If at any point you would like to stop the interview or decline to answer a specific question, please feel free to do so. Similarly, if there are any questions that you do not feel able to answer, we can move on from these.
- Explain that interview findings will be included in outputs for the Department for Work and Pensions and may or may not be published.
- Any direct quotes used in the report will not refer to the individual or organisation's name, just the area they are based in, therefore ensuring as much anonymity as possible.
- With permission, we would like to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. The recording will be made on an encrypted recorder and uploaded onto our secure server. Recordings will be transcribed, then analysed by the L&W project team and deleted three months after the project ends.
- You can change your mind and withdraw your consent at any time by contacting us and we will delete the recording and transcript of your interview.
- Ask if they have any questions. **START RECORDER**

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- **Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and the confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part and be recorded?**

Section 1: Background and context (5 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to gain some background information on the interviewee and the organisation they work for

1. **Firstly, please could you tell me a little bit about your organisation?**
   - Sector?
   - Approximate number of employees? How many of these are local?
   - Geographical extent of operations – local / national / international?

2. **Could you give me an overview of your job role?**
   - What are your main duties?
   - Which site are you based at? Geographical coverage of the role?
   - Does your role relate to recruitment or training?
   - To what extent are you involved with the Restart Scheme? Probe: What portion of your role is this?

3. **[If a recruitment agency] Which types of clients do you tend to support with recruitment?**
   - Which sectors?
   - Any particular large contracts?
   - Which roles?
   - Geographical focus?

4. **What, if any, challenges do you think your local area is facing?**
   - *Probe: High/low rates of unemployment, low educational attainment, lack of job opportunities, debt/poverty, addiction, high rates of economic inactivity*
   - How has the Covid pandemic impacted on your local area / local labour market?
   - How have these challenges changed overtime?

5. **What, if any, challenges do you tend to face in recruiting staff?**
   - Are there particular roles that are difficult to recruit for?
   - Is there a general lack of suitable candidates?
   - Any particular skills or qualities that are difficult to find?
   - [If relevant] How does this vary between [this area] and other areas?
   - How have these challenges changed over time?

6. **Have you changed or modified any of your recruitment strategies to reflect these challenges?**
   - Changing the job description?
   - Changing the levels of experience or qualifications required?
   - Offering transport to the site?
   - Adjusting working hours (for example to reflect childcare commitments)?

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Section 2: Initial contact with the Restart Scheme (10 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to explore their involvement in the Restart Scheme.

7. **How did you first become engaged with the Restart Scheme in [your area]?**
   - How were you contacted?
   - Were you aware of the scheme previously?
   - Did you already have any links with the provider?

8. **Did you have any involvement in the design of the scheme by providers, JCP staff or any other parties?**
   - *Probe: did anyone get in touch with you when the idea was first being developed, were you made aware of it*
   - [If yes] What involvement did you have?
   - When you were first contacted, what did you want to get out of your involvement with Restart?
   - What was the benefit   appeal from your organisation's perspective?
   - Did you have any concerns at this stage?
   - [If not] Would you have wanted to be?

9. **Has your organisation previously been involved in other programmes similar to the Restart Scheme?**
   - When did this take place?
   - What did this look like? Probe: Activities offered?
   - How was this both similar and different to the Restart Scheme?

Section 3: Engagement with Restart (15 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this stage of the interview is to understand which activities they have been involved with, what engagement looks like, how successful this has been, and any challenges.

10. **Can you describe your engagement with the Restart provider?**
    - Who is this? The prime/sub-contractor?
    - Are there regular meetings/calls?
    - Is there a specific job role/team within that organisation that you work with? (e.g. are they specifically for employer engagement?
    - What do you cover?
    - How well does this work?
    - Any suggestions for improvement?

11. **How have you engaged with participants on the Restart Scheme in [area name] so far?**
    - Placing a participant into a role within your company
    - Offering guaranteed interviews or job brokering

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- o Specialist 'sector routeways' programmes
- o Attending job fairs supported by the Restart provider
- o Providing training to participants
- o Offering work placements
- o Offering trial shifts
- o Visiting the site to provide a talk to participants

12. **[Probe for each activity mentioned above, as appropriate] Could you tell me more about this?**
    - o How commonly have you engaged with this activity?
    - o How many participants have you engaged this way?

13. **[Probe for the above, as appropriate] Which types of roles have been offered to Restart participants or were you hoping to fill?**
    - o How easy or difficult is it to find opportunities for Restart participants?
    - o How satisfied have you generally been with participants referred by Restart?
    - o [If a recruitment agency] Which types of companies or roles would this be?

14. **[Probe for each activity mentioned above, as appropriate] How successful has this been so far in [area name], from your perspective?**
    - o What does successful look like?
    - o How does this compare with your initial expectations?
    - o [If recruited Restart participants] How do Restart participants you have recruited sustain on the job?

15. **[If a recruitment agency] How do you put Restart participants in contact with the ultimate employer? What does the process look like?**
    - o Do you do any of the assessment/interview stage?
    - o Is the process different for different employers?

16. **How effective has engagement with Restart participants in [area name] been more generally?**
    - o What are the reasons for this?
    - o [If any challenges noted] How have you attempted to rectify this?
    - o Have you discussed this with the provider? What was their response?

17. **Going forward, what are you expecting your engagement with the Restart Scheme to look like?**
    - o Will this be much the same as before?
    - o Anything in addition to what you have done so far?
    - o Any particular events or next steps in place at the moment?
    - o [If a recruitment agency] Are there any other contracts or companies you work with where you will seek help from Restart?

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Section 4: Partnerships (5 minutes)

Aim: To understand how the employer engages with other relevant local partners within employability and explore whether Restart is adding to existing contact.

18. **Do you have any other contact with the Restart provider, other than what we have already discussed?**

19. **Other than Restart, do you engage with any other local partners in [area name] to discuss recruitment needs, skills, training etc?**
    o Engagement with DWP/JCP, local authority, other employment programmes, local colleges etc
    o What format does this take?
    o How do you make and maintain contact with these partners?
    o What is the purpose of this?
    o How does this fit in with their engagement on Restart?
    o Any suggestions for improvement?

20. **How effective have those partnerships been in supporting your organisation?**
    o What have the key successes been?
    o How have these partnerships contributed?

Section 5: Perceptions and improvements (5 minutes)

Aim: To understand overall views on the progress of the Restart Scheme so far in their local area and pick up any additional areas for improvement.

21. **Based on your experience, how well do you think the Restart Scheme is operating in [area name]?**

    o How well does it engage with local employers generally?
    o Does it reflect the needs of the local community?
    o How does it reflect your particular sector?

22. **What outcomes have you achieved as a result of engaging with the Restart provider?**

    o Numbers of job starts?
    o Which specific roles do these individuals tend to go into?
    o Are there specific types of roles or contracts that achieve more or fewer outcomes?

o What has been the benefit to your organisation of working with them? (e.g. in comparison to just trying to recruit independently)

23. Do you have any particular success stories of individuals from the Restart Scheme being supported into jobs?

o How did you make contact with this person?
o What was their background?
o How have they settled into their role?
o What made them suitable for the role they have?
o [If a recruitment agency] What does that company do?

24. How effectively has the Restart Scheme in [area name] engaged with your organisation?
o *Probe: engagement with the Restart provider vs JCP, coherence between two or differentiation*
o Key success points
o Key challenges or difficulties
o Comparison to any other employability schemes currently or previously?
o Comparison to other local areas?

25. What worked well about the way the Restart provider in [area name] engaged with you?

o What worked well about the way they got in contact with you?
o What worked well in terms of understanding your requirements?
o Good practice around ongoing communication?
o How did they ensure they understood the types of candidate you wanted?

26. What else could the Restart Scheme in [area name] do to engage with and support your organisation?
o *Probe: support offered to employer / claimants, relationships with provider / JCP staff, structure of programme*
o Anything they can build on?
o What else could the Restart Scheme in [area name] do to engage with and support employers more generally?
o *Probe: support offered to employer / claimants, relationships with provider / JCP staff, structure of programme*
o Anything they can build on?

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Summary (5 minutes)

Aim: To summarise the interview and thank them for their participation.

27. Is t e re anyt in   else t a t you would like to add t a t we ave n't a d t e opportunity to cover today?

Remind participant of confidentiality, next steps, and request they get in touch if they have any further thoughts.

Thank and close.

L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

Restart Sc e me Evaluation: Wave

Claimant interview guide

Interviewer note: This is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered and questions can be modified. Follow up and probe in more detail as appropriate. Adapt based on the focus of the deep dive.

Introduction
- Introduce yourself and thank interviewee for agreeing to interview.
- Explain that Learning and Work Institute is an independent research organisation and are carrying out research on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions to evaluate the Restart Scheme.
- This interview will cover:
    - How they were referred to the Restart Scheme
    - Their experiences on the scheme, including any activities they have done
    - Their relationship with their advisor, and suggested improvements
- The interview will last around 1 hour.
- There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers, we are interested in their experience and honest opinions.
- They will receive a voucher £40 as a thank you for taking part.

Confidentiality and consent
- Everything that we discuss in this interview will remain confidential and taking part is voluntary. We would only consider disclosing information if you indicate that your own or someone else's safety is at risk.
- Participating in this interview will not impact any benefits you are receiving in any way.

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- Throughout this interview we will discuss your life circumstances, including your employment. If at any point you would like to stop the interview or decline to answer a specific question, please feel free to do so.
- Explain that interview findings will be included in outputs for the Department for Work and Pensions and may or may not be published.
- Any direct quotes used in the report will not refer to the individual's name, just their gender, age and [INSERT AREA], therefore ensuring as much anonymity as possible.
- With permission, we would like to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. The recording will be made on an encrypted recorder and uploaded onto our secure server. Recordings will be transcribed, then analysed by the L&W project team and deleted three months after the project ends.
- You can change your mind and withdraw your consent at any time by contacting us and we will delete the recording and transcript of your interview.
- Ask if they have any questions. **START RECORDER**
- **Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and the confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part and be recorded?**

Section 1: Introduction (2-3 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this section is to understand the participant's background and provide a warm-up to the interview.

1. **To begin, please could you start by telling me a bit more about yourself?**
   - Your age?
   - Your household? Probe: Who do you live with? Do you have any children or caring responsibilities?
   - Where do you live? How long have you lived in this area for?
   - What qualifications do you have?
   - What do you do in a typical day? What keeps you busy?

Section 2: Previous employment (10 minutes)

Aim: The purpose of this section is to understand the participant's previous employment, as well as what other support they have received. This should help us to gain an understanding of the local area context also.

2. **Before you started on the Restart Scheme, when were you last in work?**
   - What sector?
   - How many hours did you work per week? Probe: Full-time, part-time?
   - Did you have an employment contract or were you self-employed? If applicable, what type of contract were you on? Probe: permanent, temporary
   - How long did you work there for / how long did you do that for?
   - When did this work end and why?
   - Other than that job, what else had you been doing in your career? (Probe: have you always worked in a similar sector?)

3. **Prior to starting the Restart Scheme, had you been searching for work?**

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- o   If yes, how long have you been looking for work?
- o   If yes, what kinds of work were you looking for?
- o   If yes, what steps were you taking? Probe: Applying for jobs? Attending interviews?
- o   If no, why? Probe: Lack of interest? Mental or physical health conditions? Unsure of what jobs to apply for? Unsure of how to apply for roles?

4. **What difficulties have you experienced in finding work?** Probe around particular focus of deep dive

- o   Lack of opportunities in the sectors you wanted to work in / have experience or qualifications in?
- o   Lack of skills or qualifications in general?
- o   Lack of work experience?
- o   Lack of roles that suit you in your local area? (Probe: what types of roles are available locally that may be of interest; (if relevant) how does this compare to where you lived previously?)
- o   Accessibility barriers? E.g. suitable working hours around childcare or other caring commitments
- o   Health issues or disabilities? (Probe: mental health, physical health, learning difficulties)
- o   General lack of interest in work
- o   Age-related barriers?
- o   ESOL needs?
- o   Difficulties in travelling to work (probe whether this is time, practicality or cost of travel)
- o   Financial concerns (e.g. about debt or leaving benefits?)
- o   Difficulties accessing training provision in your local area?
- o   Have you had to extend where you are looking for work due to any of these barriers? How far?
- o   Have you had to / do you feel you need to retrain or move sectors due to job availability?
- o   How has this been impacted by Covid?
- o   How has this changed overtime? Probe: In your local area?

5. **Prior to starting the Restart Scheme, have you received any other types of support to help you find work?**

- o   Have you received support previously from your local JobCentre Plus? How helpful was this?
- o   Have you received any support from charities, your local council, or other local organisations?
- o   [If specific difficulties to finding work mentioned] Have you received other types of support to help you overcome any challenges you have faced that have prevented you from finding work?

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Section 3: Referral to Restart Scheme (5 minutes)

Aim: This purpose of this section is to understand how they were referred to the Restart Scheme and how effective this process was.

6. **According to our records, you were enrolled in the Restart Scheme on [INSERT MONTH AND YEAR], does that sound about right?**
7. **When did you first find out about the Restart Scheme?**
   o How did you find out about it? Probe: via JCP
   o What information were you given? Probe: How useful was this?
   o Were you told that this is a compulsory requirement? Did this have any impact on you?

8. **After you were first told about the scheme, what happened next?**
[Note to researcher: The purpose of this is to understand their perception of the warm handover]
   o Did you have a call / meeting? Who was involved?
   o When did this take place?
   o Did you find this meeting useful? Why?
   o Did you find you needed to repeat information about yourself to different people?
   o Did you understand why you were referred onto Restart?
   o Do you have any suggestions for improvement? Probe: Method of contact? Attendees? Time of meeting? Topics covered? Information sharing between Restart and JCP?

9. **[If relevant] Following this call, what happened next?**
   o Did you have any further calls or meetings which involved your Work Coach / your JCP adviser and the Restart adviser?

Section 4: Relationship with Restart adviser (15 minutes)

Aim: This section has a specific focus on the relationship with the Restart adviser.

The next set of questions will be around your provider Restart adviser. This is the individual who you are dealing with as part of the Restart Scheme. This is separate to your Work Coach.

10. **When were you first put in touch with your Restart adviser?**
   o Did this take place over the phone or in person, or in another way?
   o What was covered?

11. **How often are you in contact with your Restart adviser?**

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- How do you stay in contact with your adviser? Probe: F2F? Phone? Email?
- Have you always had the same Restart adviser, or have they changed?
- Has your contact been scheduled, or have they got in contact with you outside of that?

12. How would you describe your relationship with your Restart adviser?

- How does this compare to your relationship with the Work Coach at the JobCentre?
- To what extent do you think they understand your needs? Including any barriers to work e.g. childcare or health conditions
- To what extent do you think they understand what type of job you are looking for? E.g. sector, working hours, level
- [If relevant] How does this differ between different advisers you have had?

13. Has your Restart adviser carried out a diagnostic (or needs) assessment for you?

[To read if needed]: This might have involved your Restart advisor asking you questions about you, your situation and what help you needed. This might take the form of a questionnaire for them to go through with you. This is usually something that would be done when you first start speaking to them.

- Following this, have you and your Restart advisor put together an action plan? [If needed: A strategy for how you will find work, and the types of support you will need]
- [If they have an action plan] How useful is this?
- [If they are not aware of either a diagnostic assessment or action plan] Is this something you expect your Restart advisor to draw up? Or that you think would be helpful?
- How has/would this help you based on the specific difficulties you have? [Probe for deep dive focus as appropriate]

Section 5: The support received (15 minutes)

Aim: This section will look at the support the participant has received, what has worked well / less well, plus suggestions for improvement.

14. For this section of the interview, we will discuss the support you have received since starting the Restart Scheme. This includes any activities you have been enrolled in, outside of any regular catch-up discussions you have with your advisor.

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So, since starting the Restart Scheme, what types of support have you received? Probe around particular focus of deep dive

Interviewer note: In this section, you should bear in mind the barriers reported at Q4, adapt questioning and probe on how support helped to overcome those barriers as appropriate.

Probe:

- Help with writing a CV / job applications
- Support to understand what jobs / sectors are appropriate for you
- Support to develop soft skills e.g. confidence
- Access to a 'jobs portal' or other job vacancy tools
- Being put in touch with employers, including for work placements / experience or trial shifts or 'sector routeways'
- ESOL support
- Access to training courses (or identifying which would be suitable)
- Employment workshops or job fairs
- Help managing a mental or physical health condition
- Support with childcare or caring responsibilities
- Support with finding housing
- Financial support for rent/mortgage, bills/utilities, debt
- Referrals to appropriate agencies to help with any other issues e.g. addiction or rehabilitation
- Support with obtaining relevant licences or paperwork etc.

15. And which of these have been most helpful?

[Note to researcher: Here we need to focus on the details of what has made the most difference and why. Refer back to the specific difficulties in finding work that participants noted to understand what works well for specific groups. It is also important to understand, if possible, what local partners are involved in the delivery of these activities]

- What did they include?
- What was helpful about these activities? Probe: Was it suited to your needs?
- Who provided this support? Probe: local delivery?
- What format did this take? E.g. online or face to face

16. Have you found any of the activities you mentioned unhelpful?

- Why? Probe: Not suited to individual needs?
- What could have been done differently?

17. **Overall, do you think that the support you have been enrolled in has been suited to your needs and goals?** Probe around particular focus of deep dive

- o What more could the Restart adviser do to ensure you are receiving support which is appropriate for your specific needs?
- o How well does the support overcome the barriers you mentioned earlier?
- o Have any of these barriers not been addressed? Why?
- o How do they ensure they are providing support which is relevant for you?
- o How does this support match your requirements to learn more English?
- o Has this been the right support to help you with your wellbeing?
- o How does this support help in overcoming your health conditions?

18. **Since starting on the Restart Scheme, as well as the activities you mentioned, has your Restart adviser signposted you to any job vacancies?**
- o What has been the outcome?
- o Do you think these job vacancies have been suited to you and your needs?
- o Have they put you in contact with any employers?

19. **[If not already covered] Have you managed to find work since joining the Restart Scheme?**
- o Could you tell me more about what this is? (Probe: job title, company name, responsibilities etc)
- o When did/will you start this job?
- o How well does this align with what you want to do?
- o Is this full-time or part-time?
- o Where is this job located? Does that suit you?
- o How did this come about? Did Restart help you to secure this?
- o What did Restart do well to support you in achieving this job offer?

[IF PARTICIPANT FOUND EMPLOYMENT, ASK IF THEY ARE RECEIVING IN-WORK SUPPORT]

20. **What does the in-work support look like?**
- o How regularly are you contacted by Restart?
- o What do you cover during these calls/sessions?
- o How is the support personalised to your circumstances/needs?
- o Do you find the in-work support useful?
- o What is working well? What is working not so well? What would you change?

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Section 6: Next steps (5 minutes)

Aim: To understand what the participant expects to happen going forward.

21. **[If still on Restart] As part of the Restart Scheme, what are your next steps? Probe: Any activities or meetings expected?**
    o Are there intermediary objectives or steps along the way?
    o Timescales?

22. **[If still on Restart] What support do you think you need next to help you find work?** Probe around particular focus of deep dive if appropriate

Probe:

  o Help with writing a CV / job applications
  o Support to understand what jobs / sectors are appropriate for you
  o Support to develop soft skills e.g. confidence
  o Access to a 'jobs portal' or other job vacancy tools
  o Being put in touch with employers, including for work placements / experience or trial shifts or 'sector routeways'
  o ESOL support
  o Access to training courses (or identifying which would be suitable)
  o Employment workshops or job fairs
  o Help managing a mental or physical health condition
  o Support with childcare or caring responsibilities
  o Support with finding housing
  o Financial support for rent/mortgage, bills/utilities, debt
  o Referrals to appropriate agencies to help with any other issues e.g. addiction or rehabilitation
  o Support with obtaining relevant licences or paperwork etc.

Probe:

  o Why would this be helpful?
  o How would you want this support to be delivered? By who? Why?
  o Do you expect this support to be delivered in the future through Restart? [Note to researcher: If this does not match their next steps for Restart, probe around why]

23. **[If completed Restart with no job outcome] When you finished Restart, what happened next?**
    o What did they tell you about the next steps for you?
    o Did JCP ask you about your experiences on Restart? What did they want to know?

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o Were you aware of your Restart provider sharing information about your time on Restart with JCP?

o Have there been any changes to the support you receive from JCP since coming off Restart?

o What (additional) support do you feel you need to help you find work?

Read to participant: As you may know, JobCentre Plus requires individuals taking part in the Restart process to engage with their advisor and attend meetin s w en asked. You may know t i s as t e 'mandation' process. We're an independent research organisation and one of the issues we wanted to talk to you about is this process. And just to reiterate that participation in this research is completely optional and confidential, so nothing said today will be passed to Restart or affect your benefits or engagement with Restart in any way.

24. **Did someone at JCP or Restart tell you that Restart is a mandatory programme, and that JCP may consider imposing benefit sanctions if you do not attend scheduled meetings or otherwise engage with them?**

o When did you get told about this?

o Was that information clear?

o Did this make a difference to you?

o Did this make you more likely to engage with Restart?

25. **As you may know, if you fail to attend appointments then Restart and J P may inform you t at t e y were 'mandatin ' y ou to attend a particular appointment, and that you could face benefit sanctions if you failed to attend. Did this happen to you at any point?**

Researcher note: If necessary, reiterate that we're an independent research organisation, that taking part in our research is entirely confidential and voluntary, and that we're not given any details about what different people are expected to attend. If you are unclear what is expected of you, it's best to ask your JCP Work Coach or the Restart adviser next time you speak to them.

o What information were you given? (e.g. a letter, told in person?)

o What was the outcome of this?

o Did this encourage you to come along to a meeting?

o How many times has this happened?

o Were there any (other) meetings that you couldn't attend for any reason? How did you communicate this to your advisor?

Summary (5 minutes)

Aim: To summarise the interview and thank them for their participation.

[ASK IF PARTICIPANT HAS NOT FOUND EMPLOYMENT OR IS IN SHORT-TERM EMPLOYMENT]

26. **Finally, to what extent do you feel that Restart has or is increasing your chances of securing long term employment? Note to researcher: probe on responses to Q4**
    - o Probe: Has it helped to address the difficulties you have had securing work in your local area?
    - o Why/why not?

Is t e re anyt in else t a t you would like to add t a t we ave n't a d t e opportunity to cover today? Or are there any other improvements you would like to suggest?

Remind participant of confidentiality and of their incentive.

Thank and close.

Glossary of terms

Autodrop: The automated process run by Jobcentres to identify participants who are eligible for the Restart Scheme.

Complex needs or barriers: Complex needs or barriers are those that would inhibit participants from being able to participate on the Restart Scheme. This includes barriers such as severe mental health conditions or homelessness, as well as multiple needs or barriers.

Customer Service Standards: Restart providers were required to deliver Customer Service Standards, designed to ensure that all participants receive a quality service during their time on provision.

Employment Advisor: A member of staff working for a Restart provider who provides one-to-one support to participants.

Intensive Work Search: Universal Credit regime for customers who are not working, or working but earning very low amounts, and are expected to take intensive action to secure work or more work.

Health condition: A mental or physical health condition lasting or expected to last 12 months or more. This includes intermittent conditions or illnesses, lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more.

Labour Market Information/Labour Market Intelligence: Labour market information is data about the current economic and employment situation. Labour market intelligence is labour market information that has been interpreted so it is accessible for a general audience.

Mandation process: The process whereby a provider requires a participant to attend an activity, and then if they fail to attend, raises a compliance doubt with DWP. This could lead to DWP sanctioning that person through a reduction or suspension of their benefits.

Non-participant: An individual who claimed Universal Credit and was referred to the Restart Scheme but did not start it.

NRS social grade: A classification system used in the United Kingdom based on occupation:

- **A** comprises those with higher managerial, administrative or professional roles
- **B** includes intermediate managerial, administrative or professional role
- **C1** refers to occupations classed as supervisory or clerical and junior managerial, administrative or professional
- **C2** is skilled manual workers
- **D** is semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers

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- **E** is State pensioners, casual and lowest grade workers, or those who are unemployed with state benefits as their only income.

Participant with ESOL needs: Someone who experiences communication challenges due to their English.

Prime contractor: An organisation which held a contract with DWP to manage the Restart Scheme in one or more areas. This could include delivering some or all of the provision and contracting some or all of the provision to a subcontractor.

Provider: An organisation involved in the management and/or delivery of the Restart Scheme.

Restart participant: An individual who took part in the Restart Scheme.

Subcontractor: An organisation that delivered all or some of the Restart Scheme in an area under the management of the prime contractor.

Sustainable employment: Sustainable employment is defined as a job which a participant remains in for an extended period. In the context of the Restart Scheme, an employed person must accumulate earnings equal to or above the equivalent of someone working for 16 hours per week for 26 weeks at National Living Wage. A self-employed person must achieve 6 months of gainful self-employment.

Warm handover: The initial meeting between the Work Coach, the provider and the Restart participant to enrol participants on the scheme.

Work Coaches: Front line Department for Work and Pensions staff based in Jobcentres.

List of abbreviations

CPA: Contract Package Area

CSS: Customer Service Standards

CSCS: Construction Skills Certification Scheme (card)

ESOL: English for Speakers of Other Languages

IWS: Intensive Work Search

JCP: Jobcentre Plus

JSSE: Job-Search Self-Efficacy Score

JETS: Job Entry Targeted Support

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

LEP: Local Enterprise Partnership

LEM: Local Engagement Meeting

LMI: Labour Market Information/Intelligence

SPoC: Single Point of Contact

SIA: Security Industry Authority (badge or license)

UC: Universal Credit

WHO: Warm Handover

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