

Government commits to 80,000 new SWAPs opportunities

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has today given a further boost to jobseekers by increasing the number of retraining places on the Sector-based Work Academy Programme (SWAP) to 80,000 for the next financial year – building on the 40,000 already successfully delivered over the last eight months.

SWAPs offer jobseekers across England and Scotland a six-week training programme, where they learn new skills, gain hands-on work experience and build their contacts in a new line of work. Whether it's from aviation to care, or finance to logistics, every SWAP participant is guaranteed an interview at the end of their course for a live job vacancy.

Already, the £30bn Plan for Jobs investment is helping people across Britain find new employment and upskill in key growth sectors – with the DWP on track to be able to help over 1.8 million people into work.

Work and Pensions Secretary Therese Coffey said:

More people are looking at ways to apply their skills in new industries and many are interested in retraining in sectors such as care. That's why we're increasing the number of SWAPs on offer – giving jobseekers a vital chance to get back on their feet, through our Plan for Jobs.

The Sector-based Work Academy Programme gave Grace Simpson from the West Midlands the skills and confidence she needed to move into work in care.

Grace said:

The most valuable thing about SWAPs was giving me the knowledge and experience that I needed to be able to work in the care sector.

With the Kickstart Scheme creating hundreds of thousands of new opportunities for young people, Job Finding Support offering 160,000 newly unemployed jobseekers online help, and the JETS Programme supporting a quarter of a million people to fire up their work search – the two million helped will include people of all ages and abilities.

Deputy CEO of the Recruitment & Employment Confederation, Kate Shoesmith, said:

The Plan for Jobs should be at the heart of the recovery –

focussing on how to get people into work quickly is fundamental. REC is proud to be a Kickstart Gateway employer and why so many of our recruiters are providing places on the scheme.

Help with practical job finding tools, like CV writing and interview practice, is a great support to jobseekers. Recruiters do this every day – last year 1 million people found a new permanent job with the help of a recruiter. Employment businesses are ready to work with government and play their part as job experts in building back the labour market to full strength.

Other work to level up the country and build back better includes green jobs, apprenticeships and traineeships, as well as the bespoke support each and every Universal Credit claimant receives from Work Coaches located throughout the country.

To help spearhead efforts to get Brits back in work the DWP is continuing to hire an additional 13,500 new dedicated Work Coaches with 8,500 already in post, and later this year the new Restart Scheme will help over a million people out of work for more than a year.

The announcement comes as the vaccine continues to roll out across the country with millions already receiving the vital shot in the arm, and recent employment figures reporting an uptick in vacancies on the quarter.

For more information on Plan for Jobs, visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/plan-for-jobs>.

Further information

Scheme Estimated number of people supported – –

Work Coaches 13,500 recruited by March

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

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