

# Face-to-face assessments to resume for health and disability benefits

Press release

In line with the latest public health guidance and adhering to strict safety protocols, the department plans to begin reintroducing face-to-face assessments for health and disability benefits.



Face-to-face assessments for Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) claimants in England will resume from 12 April 2021. Face-to-face assessments for Work Capability Assessments (WCAs) (for claims for the additional health amount of Universal Credit and Employment and Support Allowance) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP), will resume from May. Initially, this will only be for those who we are unable to fully assess by other channels.

People will be invited for their appointments by letter, which will clearly set out what to expect at their appointment.

Face-to-face assessments will take place alongside existing paper-based assessments, and telephone assessments (for WCAs and PIP), which will continue to take place where suitable.

The Department for Work and Pensions has worked with its assessment providers to ensure that assessment centres are fully compliant with COVID-19 safety measures and on 29 March 2021 published detailed guidance on gov.uk for [claimants](#) and [assessment providers](#) to support the safe resumption of face-to-face assessments. This covers measures such as social distancing requirements, sanitisation, PPE and face coverings.

Our approach and guidance will be kept under review to ensure the department's approach remains aligned with the latest public health guidance.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

Follow DWP on:

## Government delivers 13,500 Work Coaches to boost Britain's Jobs Army

- Government meets its recruitment pledge – putting in place the country's biggest ever Jobs Army.
- In one of the fastest ever Government recruitment rounds – the DWP signs up 13,500 new Work Coaches to help people back into work.
- The Jobs Army will ensure jobseekers get more personalised support to help find their next role, or upskill to expanding sectors.

In one of the government's fastest and largest ever recruitment rounds, the government has met its pledge to recruit 13,500 new Work Coaches which will boost jobseeker support in towns and cities across Britain, from Aberdeen to St Austell. Work Coaches are providing jobseekers with tailored support to build their skills, develop CVs and find new jobs in expanding sectors.

The milestone comes as the government's Plan for Jobs goes from strength to strength, already creating 150,000 Kickstart jobs for young people, and support for 80,000 jobseekers through the sector-based work academy programme which helps people find work in new sectors.

Thérèse Coffey, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions said:

Britain's Jobs Army is ready to support people back into work and every jobseeker in the country will have the help they need, whatever their circumstances. With our Plan for Jobs in action we are building back better, helping families everywhere get back on their feet.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, said:

I have met many of our incredible work coaches this year and seen first-hand the integral role they play in our Plan for Jobs – helping people back into work right across the country. That's why I am delighted that we have reached this important milestone today – helping more jobseekers find new opportunities, protecting livelihoods, and supporting our economic recovery.

Eugene Williams, Work Coach based in Blackburn said:

What drives me as a Work Coach is knowing the positive difference I'm making to people's lives – and most importantly, getting it right for my customers. It's so satisfying seeing how I've helped that person secure their next opportunity in life and onto a path of even more prospects.

Throughout the pandemic, Work Coaches have been providing online support. With the boosted Jobs Army now in place, and ahead of restrictions easing, the Department for Work and Pensions is also investing in temporary jobcentres for the new recruits, ensuring as many people as possible can access the right support.

Along with helping people improve their CV, interview chances and job searches, Work Coaches also improve jobseekers' chances of success through the government's Plan for Jobs:

The £2 billion Kickstart scheme puts young people receiving benefits first in line for new, high quality, six-month roles provided by employers from all sectors. The job placements give them a wage for the duration and the chance to build their experience and professional networks.

The £238 million JETS programme targets those out of work for three months with a range of help from expert providers, including specialist advice on how people can move into growing sectors.

Increased support for 80,000 jobseekers of all ages through the Sector-based Work Academy Programme will help people learn new skills through a mixture of work experience and training, followed by a guaranteed interview for a real job.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

Follow DWP on:

---

## **MOD launches film to urge public to Respect the Range**

Featuring the views of regular users of military training areas, the hard-hitting [film](#) is part of Respect the Range, a public safety campaign to protect the public and soldiers, and limit disruption to military training.

The campaign, which is targeting Salisbury Plain and Aldershot before being rolled out further, aims to raise the public's awareness and understanding of the very real risks to personal safety when using military land.

It is also being supported by Julia Bradbury, the TV presenter and outdoor

walking enthusiast, who was not aware of the potential risks of accessing military training areas until watching the [Respect the Range film](#).

Read the full [Respect The Range film transcript](#) (ODT, 8.09KB).

The new film features visitors discussing how they use the land, as well as military personnel and DIO training safety staff sharing the, sometimes unseen, dangers they can face. These risks include live firing, unexploded ordnance and fast-moving military vehicles. In recent years training estate staff have reported an increase in visitors straying from public footpaths and rights of way on military training areas, endangering their own lives as well as anyone who is with them, including children and pets.

Accessing the military estate when and where it is not safe to also puts Service personnel at risk, and often interrupts vital training exercises, impacting on the armed forces' ability to prepare to deploy in real-life situations.

The recent COVID-19 restrictions have made it more likely that people are exploring their local area, including military land, for the first time. As new visitors to the land, it is vitally important that they understand and appreciate the risks to their personal safety.

To protect themselves and stay safe, visitors are being asked to make sure they check training times before they travel and to observe safety information including red flags, signs and byelaws while they are there.

Brigadier Jonathan Bartholomew, DIO's Head of Overseas Region and the Defence Training Estate, said:

The MOD supports access to military land and respects the public's enthusiasm for wanting to explore it. In return, this campaign asks everyone to respect the very real dangers associated with doing so. Whether they're dog walkers, mountain bikers or rambles, everyone must stick to access routes and check live training and firing times before heading out.

If a red flag is flying then access to that area is prohibited, as some form of training will be taking place. By abiding by these simple rules, everyone has a part to play in helping to ensure that we can all enjoy the land safely, and the military can train uninterrupted.

Julia Bradbury, TV personality and outdoor walking enthusiast, said:

While I love being in nature and exploring different landscapes, there are always things to be aware of: It's not just about shutting gates and having a map, because some walking trails can take you through potentially dangerous military training areas.

DIO oversees beautiful countryside that's worth exploring. The

Respect the Range film shows the risks and it's important to check training times and observe safety information to avoid possible harm.

[View the Respect the Range film](#)

For more information on accessing the training estate safely, visit the GOV,UK site on [Accessing the training estate safely](#).

---

## [Speak up and help beat coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)



The study is now closed to new participants.

The study team would like to thank everyone who chose to take part in this research.

We have been exploring how algorithms can use voice data, including cough recordings, to detect coronavirus (COVID-19).

Using voice sounds to identify if someone is more likely to need a test could help us find more cases, and help slow the spread of COVID-19 as we follow the roadmap of easing lockdown restrictions.

The results of this study will be published in due course.

### **Taking part**

Anyone over the age of 18 was eligible to take part in the study within 72 hours of taking a COVID-19 test (lateral flow or PCR) through one of the following routes:

- Test and Trace COVID-19 testing programme
- Office for National Statistics COVID-19 infection survey (ONS CIS)

- COVID-19 challenge study (COV-CHIM01)
- REACT COVID-19 testing research study

To take part, participants needed:

- access to a smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop computer connected to the internet
- either their COVID-19 NHS test kit barcode number, test ID, study ID or REACT unique access code

The study did not offer any medical advice. The sole purpose of the study was to collect research data.

## **Information for previous participants**

### **Changing your mind**

It was up to you to decide if you wanted to take part in this study. If you decided to take part but changed your mind when completing the form, you could exit the website at any stage. Voice recordings and information that were not submitted were not retained.

To withdraw from the study, contact [ciab2021@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:ciab2021@dhsc.gov.uk) and quote your NHS test barcode number, or equivalent test/study ID if you are taking part in another study. You must keep your NHS test barcode number or study ID as this is the only way we will be able to identify your data. All data collected will have the NHS test barcode number or study ID deleted from the record no later than September 2023. This means it will not be possible to locate individual submissions once this has happened.

### **Benefitting from taking part in the study**

There were no monetary or other direct benefits to you from taking part in this study. However, your participation was a valuable contribution to research for the COVID-19 pandemic response.

### **If something goes wrong or you wish to complain**

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of the study, would like to report an adverse event or if you wish to complain formally, you can email [ciab2021@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:ciab2021@dhsc.gov.uk)

### **How the information will be used**

We will use the information that you submitted on the website for research purposes only. Researchers will process audio files from your recordings and the information that you provide.

## **Review of the study**

The National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee and the Cambridge South and Nottingham NHS Research Ethics Committee have approved this study.

Findings of the study will be published in due course.

Published 9 March 2021

Last updated 8 March 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 8 March 2022

Updated with information on the study closing to new participants.

2. 8 September 2021

Page updated to include new study hyperlinks and updated guidance for participants from other COVID-19 research studies.

3. 1 September 2021

Updated with information for ONS COVID-19 infection survey (CIS) participants.

4. 12 August 2021

Updated to include new study hyperlinks and updated guidance.

5. 19 July 2021

Updated to remove REACT study section and add information for the COVID-19 challenge study.

6. 28 June 2021

Updated to add a section on the REACT study.

7. 14 May 2021

Updated to reflect the time for submitting your information after a test has been extended from 48 hours to 72 hours.

8. 29 March 2021

Added information on how to withdraw from the study.

9. 9 March 2021

First published.

---

[\*\*Full Ofsted inspections expected from\*\*](#)

# September

The Education Secretary has today (29 March) confirmed his request that Ofsted step up its inspection programme over the summer term, with a view to returning to a full programme of inspections from September 2021.

During the summer term, the majority of Ofsted's activity will continue to be lighter-touch monitoring inspections, as have been in place since January, with a fuller inspection only taking place where there has been a clear improvement from a current Inadequate or Requires Improvement rating, or where there are serious concerns, particularly in relation to safeguarding.

This approach balances the needs of parents and carers to have confidence that standards are being met, alongside schools' and the wider education sector's continued prioritisation of their students' recovery from the impact of the pandemic.

Ofsted has set out further detail of its plans for the summer term [here](#), covering the full range of its inspection activity, including state and independent schools, further education providers, early years and initial teacher training.

Ofsted is currently running pilot inspections, as it finalises its approach to making sure inspections and judgements over the summer term are sensitive to the context of the pandemic. Ofsted will publish its updated inspection handbooks next month.

The Department is expecting schools and other settings to be returning as quickly as possible to a full breadth and depth of provision, whilst considering additional interventions that need to be put in place to meet students' needs in light of the pandemic, for example around attendance or behaviour policies that support young people to quickly re-engage with education. This will be particularly important in helping students who have fallen behind to receive academic and pastoral support, which can only happen when students are in regular attendance at school or college.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

I have asked Ofsted to resume inspections in the summer term in a way that is fair and proportionate to schools and other settings that we know are still emerging from the immediate impact of the pandemic, whilst making sure parents have the necessary reassurance that only Ofsted can bring.

I will continue working closely with HM Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman, to make sure plans are in place as we work towards the inspection regime returning in full from September.