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**Online appendix** for A step too far: employer perspectives on in-work conditionality (Katy Jones and Calum Carson): Supplementary sample detail and topic guides

Full details and data have been deposited in the UK Data Service, see: Jones, K. (2023). Universal Credit and Employers: Exploring the Demand Side of UK Active Labour Market Policy, 2021-2022. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 856757, DOI: 10.5255/UKDA-SN-856757

<b>UC and Employers project: employer sample detail</b>				
<b>Employers</b>				
<b>Interview code [Employer-Geog- Sector-number]</b>	<b>Business size</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Sector (A)</b>	<b>Sector (B)</b>
E-GM-SC-01	Small	Greater Manchester	Social care	Private
E-GM-SC-02	Small	Greater Manchester	Social care	Private
E-GM-SC-03	Small	Greater Manchester	Social care	Private
E-GM-SC-04	Large	Greater Manchester	Social care	Private
E-GM-SC-05	Small	Greater Manchester	Social care	Private
E-GM-SC-06	Medium	Greater Manchester	Social care	Private
E-GM-SC-07	Large	Greater Manchester	Social care	Private
E-GM-SC-08	Small	Greater Manchester	Social care	Private
E-GM-SC-09	Medium	Greater Manchester	Social care	Private
E-GM-SC-10	Medium	Greater Manchester	Social care	Private
E-GM-H-01	Small	Greater Manchester	Hospitality	Social Enterprise
E-GM-H-02	Medium	Greater Manchester	Hospitality	Private
E-GM-H-03	Large	Greater Manchester	Hospitality	Private

E-GM-H-04	Medium	Greater Manchester	Hospitality	Private
E-GM-H-05	Large	Greater Manchester	Hospitality	Private
E-GM-H-06	Medium	Greater Manchester	Hospitality	Private
E-GM-H-07	Medium	Greater Manchester	Hospitality	Private
E-GM-H-08	Medium	Greater Manchester	Hospitality	Private
E-GM-H-09	Large	Greater Manchester	Hospitality	Private
E-GM-H-10	Medium	Greater Manchester	Hospitality and tourism	Public/private
E-GM-R-01	Micro	Greater Manchester	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-GM-R-02	Medium	Greater Manchester	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-GM-R-03	Micro	Greater Manchester	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-GM-R-04	Small	Greater Manchester	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-GM-R-05	Large	Greater Manchester	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-GM-R-06	Large	Greater Manchester	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-GM-R-07	Medium	Greater Manchester	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-GM-R-08	Micro	Greater Manchester	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-GM-R-09	Micro	Greater Manchester	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-GM-R-10	Large	Greater Manchester	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-GM-R-11	Large	Greater Manchester	Retail/Warehousing	Private

E-GM-O-01	Medium	Greater Manchester	Childcare	Private
E-GM-O-02	Large	Greater Manchester	Charity	Third sector
E-GM-O-03	Large	Greater Manchester	Construction	Private
E-GM-O-04	Large	Greater Manchester	Higher Education	Third sector
E-GM-O-05	Medium	Greater Manchester	Childcare	Private
E-GM-O-06	micro	Greater Manchester	Removals	Private
E-GM-O-07	Large	Greater Manchester	Catering	Public
E-GM-O-08	Small	Greater Manchester	EDUCATION CHARITY	Third sector
E-GM-O-09	Micro	Greater Manchester	Chimney Sweep	Private
E-GM-O-10	Small	Greater Manchester	Security	Private
E-WY-SC-01	Medium	West Yorkshire	Social Care	Private
E-WY-SC-02	Medium	West Yorkshire	Social Care	Third sector
E-WY-SC-03	Medium	West Yorkshire	Social Care	Private
E-WY-SC-04	Medium	West Yorkshire	Social Care	Private
E-WY-SC-05	Medium	West Yorkshire	Social Care	Private
E-WY-SC-06	Medium	West Yorkshire	Social Care	Private
E-WY-SC-07	Medium	West Yorkshire	Social Care	Private
E-WY-SC-08	Large	West Yorkshire	Social Care	Third Sector
E-WY-SC-09	Medium	West Yorkshire	Social Care	Public
E-WY-SC-10	Medium	West Yorkshire	Social care	private
E-WY-H-01	Large	West Yorkshire	Hospitality/leisure	Private
E-WY-H-02	Micro	West Yorkshire	Hospitality/leisure	Private

E-WY-H-03	Small	West Yorkshire	Hospitality/leisure	Private
E-WY-H-04	Large	West Yorkshire	Hospitality/leisure	Private
E-WY-H-05	Large	West Yorkshire	Hospitality/leisure	Private
E-WY-H-06	Micro	West Yorkshire	Hospitality/leisure	Private
E-WY-H-07	Large	West Yorkshire	Hospitality/leisure	Private
E-WY-H-08	medium	West Yorkshire	Hospitality/leisure	private/third sector
E-WY-H-09	Large	West Yorkshire	Hospitality/leisure	Private
E-WY-H-10	Large	West Yorkshire	Hospitality/leisure	Private
E-WY-H-11	Large	West Yorkshire	Hospitality/leisure	Private
E-WY-R-01	Large	West Yorkshire	Retail/Warehousing	Third sector
E-WY-R-02	Large	West Yorkshire	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-WY-R-03	Large	West Yorkshire	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-WY-R-04	Large	West Yorkshire	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-WY-R-05	Large	West Yorkshire	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-WY-R-06	Large	West Yorkshire	Retail/Warehousing	Third sector
E-WY-R-07	Large	West Yorkshire	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-WY-R-08	Micro	West Yorkshire	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-WY-R-09	Large	West Yorkshire	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-WY-R-10	Medium	West Yorkshire	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-WY-R-11	Medium	West Yorkshire	Retail/Warehousing	Private
E-WY-O-01	Small	West Yorkshire	Boiler installation	Private
E-WY-O-02	Micro	West Yorkshire	Consultancy	Private
E-WY-O-03	Large	West Yorkshire	Higher Education Provider	Third sector
E-WY-O-04	Medium	West Yorkshire	Third sector employment provider	Third sector
E-WY-O-05	Large	West Yorkshire	Council	Public
E-WY-O-06	Medium	West Yorkshire	Training provider	Third sector

E-WY-O-07	Large	West Yorkshire	Housing provider	Third sector
E-WY-O-08	Large	West Yorkshire	Utilities company	Private
E-WY-O-09	Medium	West Yorkshire	Survey research	Private
E-WY-O-10	Large	West Yorkshire	Facilities management	Public
E-WY-O-11	Small	West Yorkshire	Environment Charity	Third sector

## Universal Credit and Employers project: Employer topic guide

### **General background**

Firstly, could you tell me a little bit about your organisation. [Prompts: Firm size, Public/private, Sector]

Could you tell be a bit about the nature of contracts you offer? (part-time, full-time, on flexible contracts, permanent / temporary contracts?) [distinguish pre/post-pandemic]

What is your position in the organisation? Have you always worked in this sector?

What involvement do you have in relation to recruitment and/or line management?

Could you summarise your organisations' general approach to

a) recruitment?

b) retention?

c) progression?

Does this vary by role/position? [i.e. formal/informal processes] [distinguish pre/post-pandemic]

Are you facing any particular challenges at the moment in relation to a) recruitment, b) retention, c) progression d) skills gaps?

In terms of recruitment, is increasing workforce diversity a priority? If yes, how are you trying to address this?

Is progression for your lowest paid staff something you are thinking about?

Where do you get information and support from in relation to recruitment, retention and progression? (e.g. govt websites, local business networks)

### **RQ1) How is UK Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP) understood and experienced by employers?**

What do you know about Universal Credit? (ask as general, open ended question)

Are you aware if many of your staff are in receipt of Universal Credit? (probe: if yes, how many (estimate) and how do they become aware?)

If aware that staff are claiming UC, have you noticed it having any impact on your staff? (probe: ask about actual examples e.g. asking for more hours). Is this a change from what it was like under the tax credit system?

Are you aware of any specific programmes for people who are unemployed or on a low income [e.g. Kickstart, Restart, Work Programme, Work and Health Programme, Working Well (GM)]?

Have you had any involvement with any of these programmes? [if yes, ask to summarise]

**RQ 2) How does ALMP impact on UK businesses, including how they recruit, retain and progress their staff?**

***[Prompt: Universal Credit is the main benefit for people who are out of work or on a low income. It requires claimants to engage in job seeking and other work-related activities. It may also involve new expectations for people in work to increase their pay through progressing and/or taking on additional hours of work (UC replaces Working Tax Credits). It is underpinned by a 'Work First' approach, which emphasises moving people into jobs quickly]***

Does Universal Credit, and the expectations it places on claimants impact on your business? [ask as open question]

How does it impact on your approach to:

- a) Recruitment (are Jobcentres/other providers a recruitment channel? How does it impact on quality/quantity of applications you receive? Do candidates ever state that they were applying because they were told to by the Jobcentre?)
- b) staff retention (impact on job fit and sustained employment?)
- c) progressing your staff

[for each probe positives and negatives]

Have you ever made changes to the way your business is run, as a result of issues relating to Universal Credit/ tax credits (e.g. 16 hour rule)?

If so, how have these impacted on your firm? (and your relationship with your employees)

**RQ 3) How does the impact of ALMP on employers vary in different low pay sectors?**

In what ways do you think Universal Credit impacts on/influences other employers in your sector [social care/hospitality/retail/other]?

Do you think this is specific your sector [retail/hospitality/social care/other]?

Does the requirement to apply for a high volume of jobs, and take any job, impacts on the quality of jobs offered by employers in [sector]/more broadly? If so, in what ways?

**RQ 4) How can the public employment service work effectively with employers, and lead to better outcomes for individuals and the wider economy?**

Could you summarise your interactions with Jobcentre Plus to date? [probe reasons for engagement, positives/negatives, outcomes]

Are you likely to engage with them in the future? Why/why not?

Could you summarise your interactions with other employment and skills providers?

Are you likely to engage with them in the future? Why/why not?

Do you think Jobcentres/other providers currently work effectively with employers?

Are any specific changes needed to the way Jobcentres work with employers?

**5) Views on UK Active Labour Market Policy**

Thinking first about expectations for unemployed claimants [i.e. job-search/other work-related activities]...

From your perspective as an employer, do you think there are any benefits to the UK's Work First approach (i.e. emphasis on moving people into jobs quickly)?

From your perspective as an employer, do you think there are any downsides to the UK's Work First approach?

Do you think the UK's Work First approach is the best way to organise support for unemployed people?

Why/why not?

In your view, what might a more effective approach look like?

What role should/could employers play in supporting unemployed people to move into work?

**Thinking second about expectations for working claimants... [re-cap:UC may involve new expectations for people in work to increase their pay through progressing and/or taking on additional hours of work/additional or alternative jobs (UC replaces Working Tax Credits) [note, these may not yet be introduced].**

Are you aware of the new expectations that may be placed on working UC claimants? (e.g. via DWP consultation etc)

What impact would these new expectations have on your firm?

How do you think this might impact on your relationship with your employees/potential candidates?

How do you think you will respond to this new policy context? (probe re ability to offer more hours/pay etc)

How do you think other employers in your sector might respond?

What do you think of the idea that job search expectations may be extended to those in work? Do you think engaging with in-work support should be voluntary or mandatory?

What role should/could employers play in supporting people on a low income to progress?

### ***Views on ALMP - future***

What do you think is the best way to support people who are unemployed or on a low income? Does you think this varies in different economic contexts? (e.g. at times of high/low unemployment – current crisis vs future).

To what extent are employers involved in policy development in this area? (probe: reasons behind lack of involvement)

Do the DWP/Jobcentres do enough to engage with businesses in this area?

Do the employer representatives (e.g. local Chambers of Commerce) do enough to engage with businesses in this area?

Do you think employers should be more/less involved? How could policymakers involve employers more?



How well does UC/Active labour market policy link up with other employer-focused initiatives (e.g. Good Work agenda, Employment Charter in GM)?

**Wrap up**

Those are all my questions, do you have anything else you would like to add?