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Volunteering and availability for jobseekers

The following text is an extract from Job Centre Plus guidance

A Jobseeker who wishes to undertake volunteering must be available for work for at least 40 hours each week, unless they have restricted their availability for some other reason, for example caring responsibilities. Availability can be accepted providing the jobseeker is willing and able to:

- attend a job interview on being given 48 hours notice; or
- start work on being given a weeks notice; or
- rearrange their voluntary work to start a job if it overlaps with their pattern of availability ; or
- attend an interview in connection with their jobsearch;

The jobseeker may be participating in training as part of a volunteer's programme, for example, working towards an NVQ. Providing the training does not exceed 16 hours per week on average it can be accepted as part time training within a volunteers programme.

The jobseeker must remain available and actively seeking employment and attend fortnightly wherever possible. In exceptional circumstances postal declarations may be appropriate.

Example:

- a jobseeker states that he is participating in the Princes Trust 12 week team challenge;
- the training element to this programme when averaged out over the 12 weeks totals 10 hours per week;
- the jobseeker states/produces a letter stating that he is available and actively seeking work and if a suitable job opportunity arises he will leave the programme;
- this case would **not** need to be referred to a Decision Maker;
- any weeks where the jobseeker is at a residential establishment as can be treated as employment related training.