

Question: Is there any intel on whether the Government will proceed with the Universal Support programme?

Answer: There has been no information from the new Government regarding the future of the Universal Support Programme.

The Government will set out its vision for employment support in due course in the forthcoming White Paper, trailed in an announcement by Liz Kendall on 23rd July. This may include further details relating the Party's previous commitments, outlined in its [manifesto](#), to support disabled people and those experiencing complex barriers to work. These included:

- Tackling the backlog of Access to Work claims
- Give disabled people the confidence to start work without the fear of an immediate benefit reassessment if it does not work out
- Reforming or replacing the Work Capability Assessment

However, no formal update on the future of Universal Support has been made at this point.

Question: Having had a meeting this morning with an organisation who provide accommodation services amongst many things for Ex-Offenders on release, they are really fearful of ongoing funding for this (due to end mid next year), especially with potential increase of releases against a backdrop of Financial challenges and already underfunded area especially over next 12 months, how do you see the approach to square this off?

Answer: Working within the challenging fiscal constraints identified by the Chancellor last week, - including a £22bn black hole in government spending for the 2024/5 financial year - and the need to relieve pressure across the prison estate, it is likely that uncertainty around funding will remain at least until the Autumn Budget, scheduled for 30th October. At the Budget the Government will announce a multi-year spending review and the departmental spending allocated to the MoJ for the next 3 years.

Question: Labour Government's position on the use of AI and upskilling - *question asked by member of the webinar, DGA agreed to follow up*

Answer: The Government's manifesto committed to supporting the AI sector in the UK, with a view to supporting the delivery of data-driven public services and ensuring public benefit.

While there is no specific indication that AI will be utilised to address upskilling challenges specifically, the Government has recently published the [terms of](#)

[reference for its AI Action Plan](#). This will form the development and delivery of a recommended plan of action for the Secretary of State at the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, to help grow and support the adoption of AI in the UK.

The Action Plan will consider how the United Kingdom can:

(a) build an artificial intelligence sector that can scale and be competitive globally

(b) adopt artificial intelligence to enhance growth and productivity, and support the delivery across government of the government's five stated missions

(c) use artificial intelligence in government to transform citizens' experiences of interacting with the state and boosting take-up in all parts of the public sector and the wider economy

(d) strengthen the enablers of artificial intelligence adoption, such as data, infrastructure, public procurement processes and policy, and regulatory reforms

Given its focus on supporting the overarching growth mission, it may be the case that forthcoming action plan will contain further detail relating to the use of AI in upskilling in the UK.