WestminsterResearch
http://www.wmin.ac.uk/westminsterresearch

Employment Retention and Advancement demonstration project and Pathways to Work for Incapacity Benefit customers costing for staff time - ERA and IB cost studies

Sandra Vegeris
Karen MacKinnon
Genevieve Knight
David Greenberg
Jennifer Carrino
Karl Olsen
Maria Strudwick

Department for Work and Pensions and the Policy Studies Institute

Department for Work and Pensions

Working Paper No 32

Employment Retention and Advancement demonstration project and Pathways to Work for Incapacity Benefit customers

Costing for staff time – ERA and IB cost studies

Sandra Vegeris, Karen MacKinnon, Genevieve Knight, David Greenberg, Jennifer Carrino, Karl Olsen and Maria Strudwick

Corporate Document Services

Contents

List of tables

List of figures

Acknowledgements

A number of individuals were key in the conduct of the research. We would like to thank all of the researchers and project team who volunteered to travel around the UK to take part during the Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) Wave 1 fieldwork. In particular we would like to thank Ellenor Brooks who managed the fieldwork in two of the sites and experienced all of the difficulties possible during fieldwork.

For help with conducting the Incapacity Benefit (IB) and ERA Wave 2 research, we wish to thank the fieldwork team at PSI: Lesley Hoggart, Darren Packer, Joan Phillips, Kathryn Ray, Rebecca Taylor and Johanna Walter from MDRC.

Thanks also go to all of the ERA Technical Adviser (TAs) without whom we would not have been able to conduct this piece of work; to the Jobcentre Plus staff who completed diaries, answered our questions and put up with people hanging around and observing them for extended periods of time; and to Jobcentre Plus customers who consented to being observed.

The Authors

Sandra Vegeris is a Senior Research Fellow at the Policy Studies Institute. She is contributing to the process study and cost study strands of the ERA evaluation. Her research interests include labour market disadvantage and mixed methods approaches to policy and evaluation research.

Karen MacKinnon is a Research Fellow specialising in data preparation, analysis and large-scale data management. She has considerable experience of handling complex data sets. She joined PSI in 1984 and has worked on many of PSI's major national surveys.

Genevieve Knight is a Principal Research Fellow at the Policy Studies Institute. She completed her PhD in 2003 with the University of Sydney, Australia, with a thesis examining the issues in applied evaluation of active labour market programmes. She has worked with PSI on evaluation projects since 1998, and has undertaken a broad range of evaluation and cost-benefit research.

David Greenberg is Professor Emeritus of Economics at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). Much of his research focuses on the evaluation of government programs that are targeted at the low-income population, especially public assistance, employment, and training programs.

Jennifer Carrino is a Senior Research Officer at the Department for Work and Pensions. She is currently the project manager for the qualitative strand of the ERA evaluation. Jenny has worked at the Department for six years and her research interests include 'place' and youth unemployment.

Karl Olsen is a Senior Research Officer at the Department for Work and Pensions responsible for the impact, cost and cost benefit analysis of ERA. Karl has worked in central government as a researcher for five years and prior to this worked as a researcher in the National Health Service researching a variety of mental health issues.

Maria Strudwick is a Senior Research at the Department for Work and Pensions currently working on the evaluation of Pathways to Work.

Abbreviations and acronyms

ASA	Advancement Support Adviser
AO	All Other Tasks
ABS	Appointment Booking System
ASO	Administrative Support Officer
BIF	Basic Information Form
CBF	Cost Benefit Framework
DEA	Disability Employment Adviser
DEL	Departmental Expenditure Limit
DIM	District Implementation Manager
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
ERA	Employment Retention and Advancement project
FA	Financial Adviser
FAO	Financial Accounting Operations
FTA	Failure to Attend
IBPA	Incapacity Benefit Personal Adviser
IB	Incapacity Benefit
INCAP	Incapacity Benefits
IS	Income Support
JSA	Jobseeker's Allowance

LMS	Labour Market System
MDRC	US-based research organisation
ND25+	New Deal 25 Plus
NDDP	New Deal for Disabled People
NDLP	New Deal for Lone Parents
NIR	Non-Interview Related Administrative Tasks
PA	Personal Adviser
PCA	Personal Capability Assessment
PSA	Public Service Agreement
PSI	Policy Studies Institute
RM	Resource Management
TA	Technical Adviser
WFI	Work Focused Interview
WP	Work Psychologist
WTC	Working Tax Credit

1   Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the background for the work contained in this report, a brief outline of the methodologies and the structure of the remaining report.

1.1   Background

Extensive evaluations are currently being conducted of two recently introduced programmes that are intended to increase the connection to the workforce of several disadvantaged target groups. One of these programmes, the Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) Demonstration , is aimed at helping lone parents and the long-term unemployed find jobs and retain and advance in employment once they are working. Pathways to Work for Incapacity Benefit (IB), attempts to prepare disabled persons for unsubsidised employment so that they can reduce their dependence on government transfer payments. Both programmes are being operated out of selected Jobcentre Plus offices.[1]

As part of the evaluations of these two programmes, cost-benefit analyses are being undertaken. Cost-benefit analysis is a policy assessment method that quantifies in monetary terms the value of all the consequences of a programme to participants, the Government and society as a whole. It has been widely used to help determine whether the monetary benefits of social programmes outweigh their monetary costs from a social point of view, whether they improve the wellbeing of those who participate in the programmes, and what their net effect is on the Government budget. To obtain this information, it is necessary to measure the cost of the evaluated programmes.

In the case of both ERA and IB, it is especially important to measure the costs of Personal Advisers at Jobcentre Plus offices who constitute a major part of the cost of operating the programmes because they conduct interviews with programme

---

[1] Further details on the programmes are available in Chapter 3 for ERA and Chapter 8 for the IB Pathways Pilots.

participants and perform administrative duties on their behalf. However, for a variety of reasons, many of the advisers also serve Jobcentre Plus customers who are not participating in these programmes, as well as those who are participating. To determine the cost of advisers to ERA and IB, it is necessary to first determine the proportion of total work time that they devote to the ERA and IB programmes and the proportion that they devote to serving other customers. Moreover, ERA is targeted at three separate customer groups, for whom the proportions also need to be established: participants in the New Deal 25 Plus (ND25+), the New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP), and employed lone parents who receive Working Tax Credits (WTC).

IB serves both disabled persons who were already receiving benefits at the time the Pathways programme began (the 'existing') and those that began receiving benefits afterwards (the 'new/repeat'). It is highly desirable to determine the separate cost of serving each of the three ERA groups and each of the two IB groups. However, many advisers serve more than one of these groups. For these advisers, it is therefore necessary to determine the proportion of their total work time that they devote to each group.

This report describes three different methods that were used to determine how ERA and IB advisers allocated their work time among different groups of Jobcentre Plus customers and presents findings based on these methods. The three methods were: observational studies, diaries, and interviews. Each method has its strengths and weaknesses.

In an observational or time study, a researcher follows or 'shadows' an adviser during their work day, recording each new activity in which the adviser engages, the nature of the activity, the type of customer for whom it was performed, and the time spent in doing the activity. A major advantage of the observational approach is its accuracy and the level of detailed data that it is possible to obtain. For example, in the ERA and IB studies, the researchers recorded the time advisers spent on different topics during interviews with customers. Thus, later in the report, we present interview content analyses. A disadvantage of the observational approach is that it is very resource intensive (and hence costly); a researcher must spend the entire day with an adviser. Also, while both ERA and IB involve substantial numbers of advisers, observational data could be collected for only a small subset of them.

Diaries or time sheets are similar to observational studies, except that the advisers themselves are responsible for keeping track of the time they spend on each activity, the nature of the activity and the type of customer for whom it was performed. As compared to observational studies, the advantage of diaries is that data can be obtained for a larger number of advisers and for a longer period of time. However, the data in the diaries are unlikely to be as accurate as information obtained through observational studies. Moreover, it is difficult to ensure that all the advisers who are asked to complete diaries actually fill them in.

In interviews, which can be done either in person or on the telephone, advisers are asked about the proportion of their time that they devote to each type of customer. Although this approach is inexpensive, it is generally inferior to observational studies and diaries because it must be limited to less detailed information. Moreover, it relies on advisers' ability to recall how they allocated their time retrospectively, which is likely to result in errors (Greenberg & Appenzeller, 1998).

1.2   Structure of the report

Staff from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Policy Studies Institute (PSI) carried out research on ERA and IB Pathways staff time during September 2004 and June 2005. This report presents the findings from this research, considers the implications of these findings for the separate policy interventions and, more broadly, for future staff time research within the Department. The remainder of the report is outlined below:

Chapter 2   Introduction to cost benefit analysis as it is applied at DWP, including the recently developed framework. The chapter outlines the processes required when costing staff time, profiling staff in post, different ways to measure adviser time, and issues around costing for staff time and overhead costs in 2006. The methodologies used for the ERA and IB cost studies are described.

PART 1   ERA Studies

Chapter 3   Provides background to the ERA programme and outlines components to the ERA cost study.

Chapter 4   Details methods used in the ERA Wave 1 research.

Chapter 5   Presents ERA Wave 1 results.

Chapter 6   Details methods used in the ERA Wave 2 research.

Chapter 7   Presents ERA Wave 2 results and compares diary findings from the two waves of research.

PART 2   The IB Study

Chapter 8   Provides background to the IB Pathways pilot and outlines the steps involved in the IB cost study.

Chapter 9   Details the methods used in the IB study of staff time.

Chapter 10   Presents results from the IB cost study, including adviser time and interview content.

2   Cost benefit analysis in DWP

Chapter 2 describes the aims of cost benefit analysis and the approaches currently used in Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to cost labour market programmes. Firstly, the broad goals of cost benefit analysis are examined, followed by the advantages and disadvantages of four approaches to costing a programme in DWP, including a discussion of staff overhead costs and factors influencing decisions on which approach to use.

2.1   Aim of cost benefit analysis

The aim of cost benefit analysis is to compare the costs of a particular programme in monetary terms and the benefits to a particular target group (such as unemployed benefit recipients) on a range of outcomes which may include income and social indicators such as health. A cost benefit evaluation can assist in the policy making process by presenting an economic assessment of a programme which is an important factor in decision making.

The DWP has a cost benefit framework (CBF) which ensures that Departmental analyst's use, where possible, a consistent set of factors when looking at the relative and actual cost effectiveness of labour market programmes and interventions. This is intended to assist policy makers to move beyond the 'what works?' question to 'what is cost effective?'.

The CBF identifies three core measures consisting of resource spent, direct employment effects and overall assessment of effectiveness which has gross cost per job, fiscal effectiveness and economic effectiveness as sub measures along with supplementary measures. Supplementary measures include contextual information on specific programmes, target groups, wider employment effects, contribution to Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets and whether the programme is meeting its core policy objectives.

2.2   Costing a DWP labour market programme

The CBF does not currently offer a detailed approach for identifying actual costs of policy initiatives, especially at the sub group level. The CBF is designed as a tool to compare the cost effectiveness of all active labour market programmes on a consistent basis, rather than analyse the impacts on specific sub groups within programmes, as a result of this the CBF uses aggregate programme fissures. Prior to, Employment Retention and Advancement project (ERA) and Incapacity Benefit (IB) the impacts on specific sub groups within an intervention such as New Deal programmes was not possible and so it has not been investigated through internal analysis.

During the planning stage of the cost study within ERA and IB it was necessary to liase with various parts of the Department such as Jobcentre Plus finance to identify sources of cost information. It is from this work that four conceptual ways to cost a particular programme (which previous cost studies have used to various degrees) were identified in DWP which are explored and examined below.

2.2.1   Allocated programme budget (DEL[2])

This is the total money allocated from either HM Treasury or by DWP finance during a spending review to deliver a particular national or piloted programme. These costs are usually an amount which the Jobcentre Plus implementation manager has authority to spend, rather than an actual amount given to the delivery agents, and can often include costs for DWP central staff and evaluation budgets. The project manager then allocates the amount they believe is necessary to deliver the programme which may or may not be up to the full stated amount. Using this allocation as the actual programme spend would be inaccurate and either overestimate or underestimate the costs to the programme relative to the actual final amount spent which would remain unknown.

Box 2.1   Ways to determine DWP programme spend

1 DWP allocated programme budget

Taking the total amount allocated centrally or from Treasury for a pilot or programme without examining any of the alternatives below.

2 Region or district allocated budget

Taking the allocated budget to the district/region for each financial year of interest and using this figure.

3 Accounting spend

Taking recorded actual spend on elements of the programme through the Departmental financial accounting system.

4 Cost study

A detailed examination of actual spend on a programme which may include additional primary research.

---

[2] Departmental Expenditure Limit.

2.2.2 Region or district allocation

Once an overall programme budget has been agreed it is the project manager's responsibility to allocate the necessary money to the Jobcentre Plus districts that will deliver the services. In conjunction with Jobcentre Plus, the programme cost estimates are based on standard calculations. Using ERA as an example, a series of cost estimates and district allocations were estimated based on the following:

1 number of customers expected to participate by averaging the previous year's participation rates in New Deal programmes.

2 staff numbers required to serve this expected customer number, based on the recommended adviser caseload and additional training required.

3 expected number of customers that would take up the additional services using past estimates of other similar programmes of services with similar customer groups.

This was calculated for the duration of the programme and used in subsequent planning and financial monitoring. For the purposes of cost studies, using this estimate is problematic as it does not represent the actual spend on a programme. Districts may overspend or underspend on a budget: this would be shown in accounting expenditure records but would be inaccurate for the final cost benefit analysis if the allocated amount was used. On ERA, the amount of customers projected to take up the additional services was lower than occurred and, therefore not all funds were spent on these elements of the programme. Using allocated figures would have adversely affected the final cost by overestimating the actual costs on certain aspects of the programme.

2.2.3 Accounting spend

A common way to cost a programme is to do so retrospectively by accessing the financial information from the Departmental Financial Accounting Operations (FAO) system[3] which is currently being replaced by the Resource Management System (RM). This enables the analyst to use actual costs spent on different programmes or elements of programmes in specific regions, districts and even offices over different periods of time. An example of these for IB pilots are in Box 2.2. To cost the programme, all expenditures on the programme, the relevant account codes along with adviser costs and overheads, will be taken to be the total programme costs.

---

[3] This is a Departmental wide accounting system which allows reporting on programme spend by account and cost centre code. It is possible to obtain FAO account information by selecting cost codes which are the identifier's for the areas or offices you want and cross reference with them on specific account code which a project team put in place to allow spend on specific elements of a programme.

Despite the general accuracy of the account codes there can be user error as some costs may be paid from other account codes by mistake, or to balance yearly overall expenditure the allocation could be utilised to assist in the delivery of other programmes within a district. This makes calculating expenditure on pilots from account codes less accurate. However, recent changes to the use of pilot funding mean that Jobcentre Plus project teams can keep the money centrally, and districts can then charge programme costs against the codes which are subsequently monitored. This may lead to an improvement of the costing of pilot programmes in the future.

Box 2.2   Account code examples from IB

46901 – IB Reforms – Customer Travel Expenses

Used to capture customers' travel reimbursement costs where they enter one of the IB Reforms Programmes in the IB Reforms Pilot Districts between October 2003 and March 2006 inclusive.

46903 – IB Reforms – Rehabilitation Development

Used to account for the cost of developing Rehabilitation Programmes in the IB Reforms Pilot Districts between October 2003 and March 2006 inclusive.

46905 – IB Reforms – Return to Work Credit

Used when Return to Work credit is awarded to eligible customers in the IB Reforms Pilot Districts between October 2003 and March 2006 inclusive.

2.2.4   Actual costs

The final way of costing a programme is the most resource intensive and combines account code information with primary data collection. A cost study aims to identify all the actual costs of an ongoing programme using as few approximations as possible. For example Employment Retention and Advancement project (ERA) funding assumptions allocated a specific number of full-time staff to the delivery of services to the programme group exclusively. However, through liaising with the project team and districts, it was apparent that many of the staff never worked full-time with ERA programme customers. Therefore, ERA allocated money and resource went towards the performance of other programmes which may be acceptable to DWP if it delivers core business but is not acceptable for an accurate cost study. Using approaches one to three from Box 2.1 would have assumed that new staff costs were all attributable to ERA resulting in an over-estimate of programme costs.

Identifying this issue has resulted in the development of a series of new primary data collection research projects to address the bias in the other methods of costing the programme. In the ERA and IB instance this resulted in diary, observations and stakeholder interviews, however, each programme requires a fresh approach to ensure the methodology meets the needs of the cost study.

2.2.5 What approach to use?

To decide what is the most appropriate, the specifics of each programme need to be examined and, if any of the following are occurring, it may be appropriate to consider conducting a detailed cost study:

- a new programme is being implemented;

- if elements of programme provision are contracted to external organisations;

- new job roles are developed;

- assumptions of expenditure or allocation are based on old delivery models;

- partnership working is required.

Differing levels of resource are required to conduct the varying depths of analysis and the detail and accuracy required of the cost study estimate should be considered in conjunction with the following factors:

- How important is the decision which the cost analysis may influence?

- How much money will be spent based on this decision?

- Is the cost information required to implement a new programme?

- Is the information needed to assist with the reduction of programme costs?

- Is the information required for allocating funds when planning to roll out the programme?

- Is there any evidence to believe the allocated money to the districts is not being spent on the programme you are costing?

- Are you expecting small positive impacts on your outcome variables? If so then overestimating the costs may mask the effects.

2.2.6 DWP salary costs

Each year the Finance Division of DWP releases the current average staff costs in the costing guidance which can be found on the Finance Divisions intranet page. Each part of the Department has grade specific information which gives average salaries, National Insurance Contributions and pensions contributions allowing a total Departmental staff cost to be calculated. To identify staffing costs for a programme, the allocations developed by Jobcentre Plus programme teams and costs using current Department salary and overhead estimates can be used. However, it is important to be aware that these allocations may not always directly translate into staff in the districts. Depending on the programme and requirements of the cost benefit analysis it may be worth contacting Jobcentre Plus staff in each relevant district to complete a staffing form to check the accuracy of the allocations.

2.2.7   Staff overhead costs

In addition to using average salaries the following average overhead costs per staff member provided by the Finance Division have been used (Table 2.1). These costs are based on a fully equipped, trained member of staff sitting in a Jobcentre Plus Office to deliver a given activity on a full-time equivalent post regardless of grade, for what may be loosely termed infrastructure costs.

Table 2.1   Example of average DWP staff costs

Travel and subsistence	£1,000
Discrete training	£1,000
Communications	£1,335
Accommodation	£5,600
Desks and pedestals	£1,000
PCs	£1,500
IT services	£1,700
Total	£13,135

It is understood that these figures were originally derived from actual expenditures on the account codes from 2003 and, while they are now out of date, they are the most useful overhead projection within the Department at present. Within DWP the PCs, IT services, desks and pedestals are seen as ongoing yearly costs as the ownership, supply and management rests with an external organisation under contract to the Department. This is why these are classed as an ongoing cost and need to be included for each year of the cost study. There may be other overheads for a new programme which need to be factored in. These need to be examined at the design stage and monitored throughout a programme to ensure changes in delivery are monitored. In the ERA design it was intended that all Advancement Support Adviser (ASAs) would be provided with laptops to ensure they could serve customers outside of the office. However, this was later considered impractical and so less were provided therefore reducing the overall costs. Without monitoring the programme this could not have been factored into the final cost estimates.

> **Research opportunity**
>
> The production of new overhead costs using key overhead expenditure across a selection of regions would allow a more accurate estimate for future cost and cost benefit studies.
>
> This could include looking at different areas in the country ensuring higher costs in London for example are factored into future estimates.

2.3 Understanding policy and implementation

As stated earlier, the first step in the costing of a programme is to identify all of the components of a programme so a monetary value can be assigned to them. There are two ways of doing this, the choice of which depends on the stage the programme has reached. If the programme has yet to be delivered then the Jobcentre Plus project team will work out delivery plans which often include high level process maps which form a useful template for seeing how customers move through a programme and often identify the specific stages to be costed. If the programme is already implemented then it is useful to consult guidance used by advisers as this will outline the programme and its key elements.

2.3.1 ERA

There are two additional points to be addressed. The first is that a programme may be delivered differently from the original plan if local discretion is allowed on how to integrate new programmes and in particular, pilots, into the existing structure. This should not be underestimated because in two ERA districts circumstances dictated that the process of post employment contact (a key element of the programme) was altered considerably from the original design and, at this point, the changes caused to costs and impacts are not known. The second point is that programme delivery may change over time so it is important to identify the level of maturity of the programme at the time of costing, as this may influence the results. Information on these issues are best identified by Jobcentre Plus project teams who may have useful information such as process maps, implementation plans, and performance monitoring results while attendance at key management meetings can also provide valuable information to assess these factors.

With the ERA programme the original design plan was used as the basis of the cost study along with regular updates from districts as to how the implementation progressed. This allowed us to identify changes from the original design, particularly around the use of 'intake clerks' who were used variably through the districts but who were factored into the original district allocation budgets.

2.3.2 IB

To identify the process of implementation and the key components of the programme, the IB evaluation team within DWP used the Costed Business Case (which set out additional resources for staff in Pathways areas), process maps and the guidance for local office staff available on the Jobcentre Plus intranet to obtain a sense of the structure of the programme. From these it was possible to gain insights into the key roles. This was verified during discussions with the District Implementation Managers (DIM's) where the first topic was confirmation of the key roles within that district. It is important to understand the IB programme district by district since there are different patterns of implementation: some of the difference being due to managers' discretion and some due to historical staffing patterns. This is covered in more detail in Chapter 8.

2.4   Identifying staff in post

Identifying staff in post poses similar issues to those raised under using allocated expenditure from the Jobcentre Plus programme teams. It is possible to use the allocated staff profile as a starting base but this should be confirmed with the Project Team or districts to update the information.

2.4.1   ERA

Within the ERA evaluation, provision was made for a full-time Technical Adviser (TA) in each district whose role it was to assist with the implementation and evaluation. During their period of employment the TA was able to send in monthly staffing forms, highlighting the current staff in post and any changes from the previous month. These were collected by the Policy Studies Institute (PSI) research team into a database. (Refer to Appendix A for the Staffing Form template.) As special training was provided to ERA staff, this allows turnover costs related to training to be assessed. It also facilitated details about staff when the workstudy was to be implemented.

2.4.2   IB

Unlike ERA, the IB evaluation had no district provision available. However, the template for the ERA staffing form was used to identify current staff in post. The DWP research manager collected this information from each district manager. This information was not collected monthly and so the same level of staff costs will not be reproduced. However, there is less concern with these pilots that staff will be utilised for other programmes due to clear *'ring fencing'* of staff and also because districts are expected to achieve targets which motivates managers to ensure IB staff concentrate on their core functions.

Part 1
ERA studies

3 Background

The Employment Retention and Advancement project (ERA) is a demonstration project for a new policy to help lone parents and long-term unemployed people improve their labour market position. ERA members who get jobs continue to receive help from their Advancement Support Adviser (ASA) at their local Jobcentre Plus office for 33 months. ASAs help their customers into suitable work, and also to avoid early pitfalls in work and to advance in their jobs. Those working 30 hours a week or more may receive a retention bonus for which instalments can amount to £2,400 during their time in ERA and can also receive a bonus for time in training. Those entering work of 16 hours or more have access to funding for training.

This intervention was conceived as a 'next step' in welfare-to-work policy in Britain, building on the dual strengths of providing personal advice to jobseekers and making work pay when they find it. ERA was designed specifically to interrupt the 'low-pay-no-pay cycle' that has frustrated some of the success of the New Deal. Though many unemployed people are placed into work, some New Deal customers fail to thrive in work or soon return to out-of-work benefits. Three groups with difficulties in getting and keeping full-time work are eligible for ERA:

- Out-of-work lone parents entering the New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP);

- Lone parents working 16-29 hours a week and receiving Working Tax Credits (WTC);

- Long-term unemployed people entering the New Deal 25Plus (ND25+).

ERA became available in 2003 in six Jobcentre Plus Districts in England, Scotland, and Wales. The aim of the ERA demonstration is to show that, after those 33 months or longer, these three kinds of ERA participants have spent longer in paid work, on average, and enjoy better pay and conditions compared to their circumstances had ERA not been available to them.

Pilot schemes in labour market policy have typically made new services like ERA available in some areas and compared these with similar people in similar areas elsewhere for evidence of improvement. ERA differs in being a demonstration project, which randomly assigns eligible participants into a programme or control

group, modelled on similar projects in the United States. In this case the programme group receives ERA services and the control group receives only their normal New Deal services or no services, as appropriate. Thus, the circumstances of the control group will give valid measures of what would have happened to the programme group had they never been offered ERA or received any of its services and incentives. In addition, a demonstration project involves the researchers more closely in the implementation of the new services. In each district, a Technical Adviser (TA) assisted Jobcentre Plus staff in their work, supervised and assisted random assignment and generally helped ensure that the programme was delivered to specification.

3.1.1   Evaluating ERA: the research plan

The evaluation of ERA consists of four research strands:

A Process Study – to show how ERA operated and why the observed outcomes may have arisen. This study will draw on a wide range of data, including both qualitative and quantitative surveys of staff and customers and observational data from offices. A summary of the first year of operations is available in Hall *et al.* (2005).

An Impact Study – to count the effects of ERA upon its customers both in terms of work outcomes such as incomes, terms and conditions of service and non-work outcomes such as housing, family formation and so on. The impact study will also use multiple sources, including large quantitative face-to-face surveys of programme and control group members and the analysis of administrative data.

A Cost Study – to find out what ERA cost to operate, including information based on site observations and adviser diaries of the time spent delivering services.

A Cost-benefit Study – to find out whether the outcomes are worth the cost. Refer to Appendix B for details on the ten step plan to completing the ERA cost benefit analysis. Note that the current evaluation plan for ERA to the end of 2007 does not include the cost-benefit analysis, although this may occur in the evaluation plan after 2008.

4 Wave 1 methodology

Chapter 4 outlines the key questions this initial stage of the Employment Retention and Advancement project (ERA) cost study research aimed to address, including the rationale for the methodological approaches selected together with the sampling techniques used, the research tools, the results from piloting and the anticipated methods for validating the data. Jobcentre Plus advisers completed the diaries and researchers used a quantitative methodology to time and code the contents of adviser interviews over a two-week period.

4.1 Adviser diaries

4.1.1 Key research questions

The central aim of this research is to determine total staff costs for delivering the ERA programme. The following key research questions need to be answered:

1) What is the average amount of time advisers spend conducting face-to-face/ telephone interviews with ERA programme/control group customers overall/for each of the three ERA customer groups?

2) What is the amount of time advisers spend completing interview related administrative tasks?

3) What amount of time do advisers spend completing administrative and other tasks not directly relating to customer interviews?

4) How many face-to-face interviews are conducted in an average day by an adviser?

5) How many pre/post employment interviews do Advancement Support Adviser (ASAs) and Personal Adviser (PAs) conduct?

6) Do PAs conduct fewer post-employment interviews than ASAs for each target group?

7) Do ASA contacts with customers last, on average, longer than PA contacts with customers?

8) Are ASA contacts with customers, compared to PA contacts with customers, more likely to occur outside of standard Jobcentre Plus office hours?

Answers to these questions will help complete the matrix of information for ERA costs, outlined in Table E1 Appendix B.

4.1.2   Diary methodology

To achieve an estimation of adviser time spent on delivering ERA services, a diary methodology was chosen. This approach was selected for its benefits both in terms of practicalities and methodologically. The content of the adviser diary was driven by the outputs required for the cost study. Diary methods provide a rich source of information on respondents' activities and behaviour on a daily basis. In terms of cost-effectiveness they are far cheaper than researchers observing and recording adviser activities throughout the day which was originally considered during the design stage.

Data collection stencils were designed to be simple and easy to use to ensure the impact on adviser workloads was minimal and that the diaries would be completed. They also had to be relatively self-explanatory as not all advisers in a district could realistically be released for training on how to complete the research tool.

While considering these practical issues, the main data collection objective is the production of an accurate and complete dataset that records the main activities in an adviser's day, derived from the diaries. The methodological debates and key issues surrounding the utility of diary methods are outlined below.

Concerns around the use of diary methodologies often relate to bias and that leaving the data collection solely in the hands of the respondent can result in some levels of distortion. For this piece of work it was felt that this could take two forms: the respondent wanting to please the researcher and therefore positively misreporting activities, or the respondent wanting to appear favourable in terms of the task being reported and completing the diaries accordingly. Both of these issues were important because during the fieldwork period reductions of personnel in Jobcentre Plus were announced and some advisers were confused as to what the research would be used for. To overcome these concerns letters were issued to all advisers outlining that the diaries were anonymous, for research purposes only and they would not influence any human resource issues. Relevant trade unions were informed of the research and given copies of the research tools, as were managers in Jobcentres.

Another technique used to ensure bias was kept to a minimum was through the use of the six Technical Advisers (TA's) who provided full-time ERA implementation and evaluation support within each district where ERA was delivered (see Section 2.4.1 earlier). This ensured that advisers could be reassured by familiar personnel that the diary work had nothing to do with the reorganisation of Jobcentre Plus. Similarly the TAs were available in each of their districts throughout the fieldwork stage to provide support and assistance.

To ensure the diaries were not capturing atypical information, advisers were asked to complete a diary sheet on a daily basis over a two-week period. A ten-day period of diary completion was chosen because it was felt this was long enough to gather sufficient data for a clear understanding of an adviser's day, whilst not too long to become burdensome and therefore result in incompletion.

The diary stencil

The literature on diary methodologies raises concerns relating to incomplete recording of events, under/over-recording and misinterpretation of the data collection tool. To overcome these issues, the diaries were highly structured with all activities pre-coded. The number of codes was also kept to an absolute minimum and only included the categories necessary to answer the key research questions. Advisers were asked to complete the start and end times for the following main categories:

1) Interviews (either caseload or initial)

2) Interview-related administrative tasks

3) Non-interview related administrative tasks

4) All other tasks (this includes breaks, meetings, training)

The full diary stencil is included at Appendix C (see instrument 1).

Piloting

A pilot of the staff diaries was conducted to test the pre-coded categories and ensure they were understood and completed correctly. The pilot took place in one ERA office in August 2004 and five advisers completed the diary stencil over the course of two days providing feedback and recommendations for amendments. As a result of pilot feedback, an introductory example of a fully completed diary sheet was included in the diary packs to make it clearer to advisers as to how each category should be completed.

Sampling

All ERA ASAs in the six ERA districts were issued with diaries to complete over the specified two-week period. In each of these districts Personal Advisers (PAs) working with New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP) and New Deal 25 Plus (ND25+) customers were also issued with diaries.

Validity

To overcome some of the above issues the diary approach was also combined with direct observation, an approach adopted by Bourgue and Back (1982). This method increases confidence in relation to the reliability and validity of the diaries. Even with these provisions in place unforeseen problems were identified during the analysis stage when using the observational research as a validation for the adviser diaries. These difficulties and how they have been addressed in the analysis are discussed in Chapter 5.

Fieldwork

The adviser diary work took place over a two-week period starting on the 20 September 2004 and ending on 1 October 2004. Throughout the fieldwork period the TAs offered support and advice to those completing the diaries as well as acting as an evaluation advocate reminding advisers to complete the diaries each day and monitoring their accuracy.

4.2   Observational work

The observational work was developed with the broad aims of validating the adviser diaries and to get an indication of any differentials in treatment between the programme and control groups. Similar work has been conducted by MDRC in the United States (US) using staff diaries and both pieces of work will inform analysts and policy makers in the UK and the US. Early discussions established that it was implausible to determine any separation of costs such as on retention or advancement activities in the calculations using these observations. See Instrument 2, Appendix C for the codes used.

4.2.1   Key research aims

The observational work had the following aims:

1) To validate interview length in the adviser diaries.

2) To identify any significant differences between customer and ERA groups on the specific activities being performed within interviews.

3) To determine average interview content for each New Deal group.

4) To look for patterns in content

Diary validation

As previously discussed there can be reliability problems with self-completion diaries so to improve the accuracy of cost calculations additional estimates were produced. It was felt that advisers were unlikely to record incorrectly the number of interviews they conduct each day but that the exact length of interviews was the most likely source of error. Therefore an additional estimate of interview length was also obtained through direct observation. This was produced by recording the length of interviews with the target populations and averaged over those populations. As the observations were in the same offices and time periods that the diaries were completed, the comparability is high and reliable.

Continuous improvement

To inform the continuous improvement of the ERA programme and to highlight the specific activities being performed within interviews, additional information on the content of ERA programme and control group interviews was collected using stencils. The subsequent information was used by the project team to tailor training and inform future improvement to delivery of ERA within a sound evidence base.

The findings were used to inform policy colleagues of the content of New Deal interviews, for which only qualitative information was previously available.

Differential in treatment

Information from other parts of the ERA evaluation and feedback from TAs indicated that there was minimal post-employment work going on in offices. Structured quantitative observational work was chosen to examine the content of interviews with the programme and control group to see if there were any significant differences in the approach and information advisers gave to their customers. Statistical analysis was then used to find any differences between the programme and control group interventions that could effect outcomes.

4.2.2   Methodology

Analysts from Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) collected the information using the quantitative observation methodology with stencils which required each observer to code what took place within an interview during a one minute period. Additionally, observers recorded the most common theme for each five minute period from a list of topics. This provided two time breakdowns for analysing the content of interviews, measured at one minute and five minute intervals, depending on the level of detail required.

Sampling

The collection of interview observations used an opportunistic strategy based on achieving as many observations as possible within offices where adviser work diaries were also being completed. Observations took place in both large and medium sized offices[4] to capture any differences in interview work loads that might relate to the dynamics of office size. The final amount of interviews observed were dependant on factors such as the actual amount of interviews each day and the willingness of staff and customers to be observed. The aim was to obtain an even spread of programme and control interview observations divided as equally as possible by customer group over the two week period.

Sampling bias

It is possible that there was some selection bias in the interviews observed during the fieldwork for a couple of reasons noted below.

• It was not always possible to negotiate access to interviews where customers arrived without an appointment. Advisers often saw customers before they could alert the observer or they may not have considered a drop-in appointment a suitable interview to observe. As a result of this there may have been differences between drop-in interviews and booked interviews which were not identified Despite this, many of the drop-in interviews (anecdotally) appeared to be either following up actions from previous interviews (such as providing receipts) or the result of a customer arriving late for a booked meeting.

---

[4] Office size was determined by the volume of customer flow and the number of office staff as reported by the TAs on a monthly Staffing Form.

- Advisers may have influenced the type of interviews that were observed. This is due to advisers being 'the gatekeepers' to observing interviews and therefore they may have guided researchers towards what they perceived to be the most appropriate interviews to observe. As advisers were the first to gain verbal consent from customers and because they have the right to choose not be observed, it is unlikely that this process of selection bias could be overcome.

Development of observational stencils

In the development of the research instrument (see Instrument 1 Appendix C) a variety of background documents were used to created the categories on the observational sheet, including time study research from the US ERA, Jobcentre Plus guidance for ND25+ and NDLP advisers and ERA guidance and training materials. Feedback on drafts were collected from district TAs and the project team.

The stencil aimed to capture activities associated with the following broad categories:

- Initial customer engagement.

- Benefits.

- Pre employment supportive services.

- Referral to services.

- Providing counselling or other services.

- Participation or sanctioning issues.

- Discussion of retention.

- Discussion of advancement.

- Payment of incentives.

Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted to ensure that the drafted stencils would produce the information required but also to test the proposed fieldwork process. The main concern to be addressed in the pilot fieldwork was the coding of activities by separate individuals who may have different ideas of what activities consist of and how to code them. For example, what one person identifies as a retention related activity another person may regard as advancement related.

To increase the accuracy of the observations, a one-day training event was held for all those staff who were going to be conducting observations. This covered the background to the ERA programme, introduction to the cost work, information on observational work, discussion of concepts such as advancement, expected content of interviews, practice with the data collection tool and mock interviews to practice coding.

During the pilot phase, researchers were doubled up for interview observations to test for consistency of coding. The inter-observer reliability (Cohen's Kappa) of 15 paired observations was estimated at 0.70. A score of 0.6 to 0.75 is interpreted as meaning that there is good agreement on the codes used during the observations (Fleiss, 1981). This result gave confidence to proceed with the observational fieldwork.

5 Wave 1 results

This chapter discusses the results from both the observational and adviser diary work of the Employment Retention and Advancement project (ERA) Wave 1 fieldwork. The findings are presented in detail, together with discussion on how they relate to the original research questions.

5.1 Background statistics

In total, 127 adviser diaries were returned (30 for advisers working with New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP) ERA control customers, 27 working with NDLP ERA programme customers, 31 for ND25+ control staff, 30 ND25+ programme staff and nine 'peripatetic'[5] advisers). This reflected a response rate of 65 per cent for ASAs and 26 per cent for Personal Advisers (PA). The latter response rate should be treated with some caution as it is unclear how many PAs were approached at the time to complete a diary and this response rate has simply been calculated using the total number of ND25+ and NDLP PAs that were in post in the districts during the fieldwork period. The data covered 1,270 adviser days and produced a dataset of 11,067 cases/activities. For all advisers, full days recorded as 'out of the office' have been excluded from the dataset.

There were a total of 421 customer interview observations over the two week fieldwork period.

5.2 Customer interview time

A key component in calculating staff costs for the delivery of ERA involves the estimation of adviser time spent interviewing customers. Comparisons between PA time and Advancement Support Adviser (ASA) time with customers should then indicate any additional costs incurred in the delivery of ERA services.

Both the diary and observational work can produce estimates for advisers' mean interview duration. Comparison of the means from both research instruments then

---

[5] Staff move from one office to another in the course of a week.

provides a robust source of validation. When designing the study, calculating adviser time was broken down into the following research questions:

Addressed by both methods:

1 What is the average amount of time advisers spend conducting face-to-face/ telephone interviews with ERA programme/control group customers overall/for each of the three ERA customer groups?

2 Do ASA contacts with customers last, on average, longer than PA contacts with customers?

Addressed by the diaries only:

3 How many face-to-face interviews are conducted in an average day by an adviser?

4 How many pre/post employment interviews do ASAs and PAs conduct?

5 Do PAs conduct fewer post-employment interviews than ASAs for each target group?

6 What is the amount of time advisers spend completing interview related administrative tasks?

7 What amount of time do advisers spend completing administrative and other tasks not directly relating to customer interviews?

5.2.1 Interview length

From the adviser diaries 4,664 interviews were recorded. For the observational work, all 421 cases in the dataset related to interviews. For both datasets the data on interview durations was graphically plotted to show their distribution against the normal curve. Figure 5.1 shows the distribution of interview duration from the adviser diaries and Figure 5.2 from the observational work.

Figure 5.1   Distribution of interview duration from observations

Mean = 31.3124
Std. Dev. = 17.60392
N = 4,965
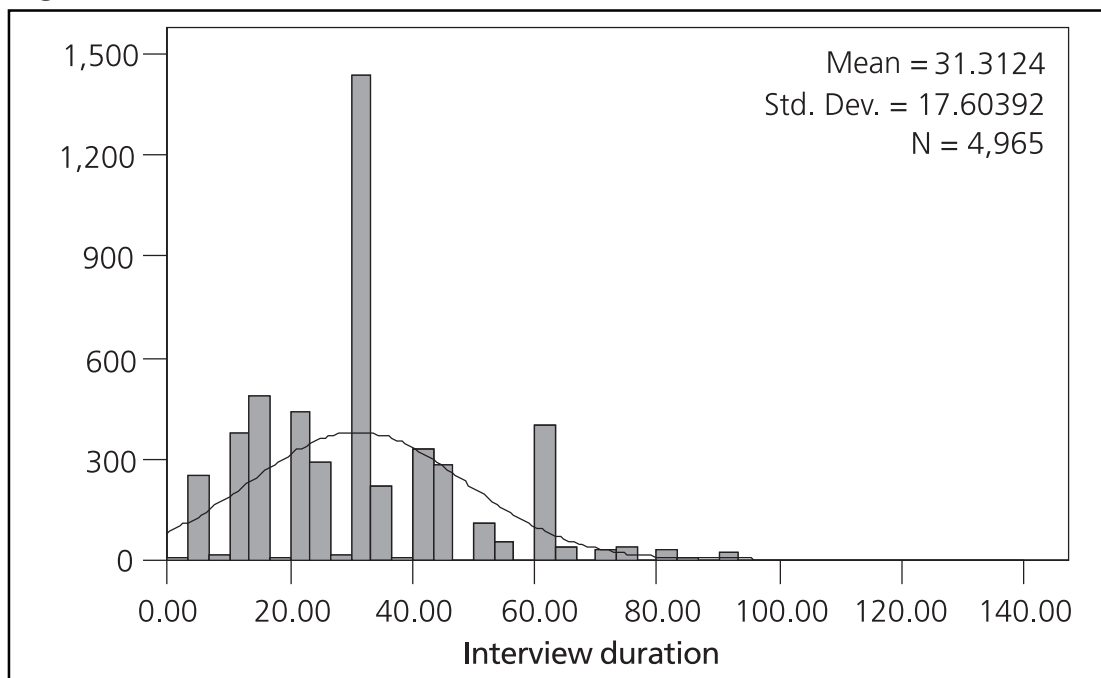
Figure 5.1 highlights that the distribution for the interviews recorded in the adviser diaries is 'spiky'. This is because many of the interviews appear to be rounded to the nearest ten minutes. There are definite peaks at 30 and 60 minutes as well as the 20 minute point, although the latter may be due to telephone interviews. Figure 5.2 shows the distribution for the observational research and this clearly follows a much smoother curve reflecting the enhanced accuracy with which this data was collected. Researchers were recording exact start and finish times for each interview while advisers completed the diaries as an addition to their daily work and therefore were less likely to have the capacity to exactly time their activities.

Figure 5.2   Distribution of interview duration from observations

Mean = 28.1945
Std. Dev. = 16.50177
N = 437
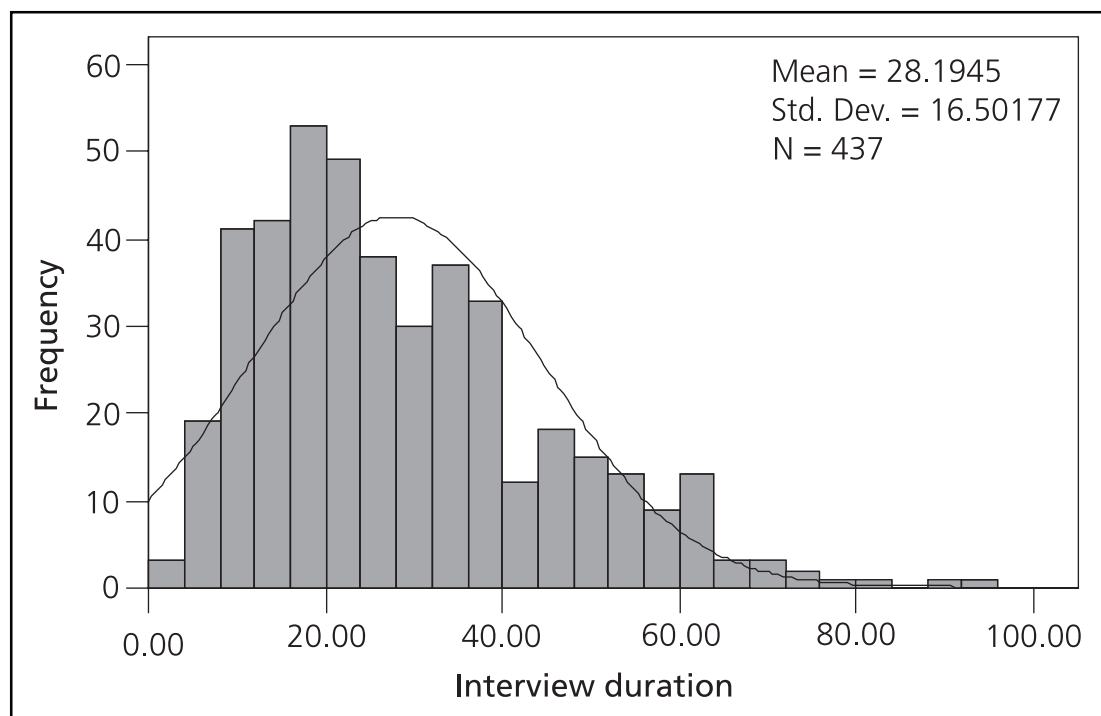
To investigate the differences in the distributions, it is helpful to compare the mean interview lengths produced by the diary and observational work analysis. This provides an indication of the impact of rounding that seems to be occurring in the diaries. A central aim of the observational work was validation of interview lengths reported in the adviser diaries. This finding clearly reinforced the value of data validation using the observations.

Table 5.1 presents the average length of interviews by customer group, ERA group and whether the interview was an initial or caseload interview. A statistical test was performed which enables comparison of the difference in means from two sources, the outcome of the test is to highlight any significant differences between the two sources of data. Figures with an asterisk are those where the difference between the two estimates is statistically significant at the five per cent level of significance, with two asterisks marking results which satisfy the test at the one per cent level of

significance. Shaded rows show results for advisers dealing with ND25+ customers, and unshaded rows are for advisers working with lone parents. The first half of Table 5.1 (rows 1 to 4) reflects information for initial interviews, while the second half of the table (rows 5-8) shows caseload interviews.

Table 5.1   Comparison of diary and observational face-to-face interview times

Interview	Observation N	Observation mean	Observation SD	Diary N	Diary mean	Diary SD	significance
Initial							
LP program	19	**52.16**	22.15	48	**59.02**	22.36	.2522
ND25+program	25	**34.68**	14.26	141	**42.13**	15.43	.0182*
LP control	41	**36.95**	18.61	55	**59.78**	21.60	.000**
ND25+ control	28	**31.79**	15.69	89	**40.28**	17.16	.015*
Caseload							
LP program	53	**31.74**	14.87	293	**40.14**	20.67	.002*
ND25+ program	109	**23.06**	13.46	587	**30.33**	13.76	.000**
LP control	38	**27.18**	16.14	171	**35.50**	15.71	.004*
ND25+ control	99	**21.83**	12.27	438	**30.87**	11.75	.000**

** Significant at the 0.001 level * Significant at the 0.05 level . LP=lone parent, ND25+=New Deal 25 plus, program=ERA programme group, control=ERA control group. Caseload or initial = interview type.

As shown in Table 5.1, there are significant differences between the average length of interviews reported by advisers in the diaries when compared to those observed by the researchers in the field during the same period. The diary means are higher than the durations recorded by the observational work and it seems the diaries are a consistent over-estimation of actual interview times. It is worth reflecting on why this over-estimation may have occurred.

5.2.2   Differences in mean lengths of interviews

It is important to consider the dual process of how an adviser's available interviewing time with a customer is determined: either by the adviser themselves or through the automatic booking system (ABS). There are two ways for a customer to get an appointment with an adviser. Firstly, if it is a new claim for benefits then a customer may telephone a contact centre and staff will identify their nearest Jobcentre Plus office and, using the Labour Market System (LMS), allocate them an interview with an adviser with available space. Depending on the type of interview (which relates to the customer group), the contact centre staff will allocate a standard amount of time, usually either 30 or 60 minutes. An adviser will access their record of booked appointments diaries each day and plan accordingly. Advisers may also book interviews with existing customers themselves using LMS and the same standardised allocated time frames.

The diaries completed by advisers seem to over-estimate interview duration and the 'spiky' distribution indicates that this could be due to rounding to the nearest ten minutes. Before disregarding the diary figures as inaccurate it is important to review why this may have occurred. When completing the diaries, advisers may have included in their interview time activities such as opening up the customer's record, going to collect the customer from reception and completing paper work after the customer had left. Whilst in contrast the observers started timing the interviews from the point at which the customer sat down with their adviser and finished timing them when the customer got up to leave. Also, if an adviser had booked an interview to last 30 minutes and the actual face-to-face contact lasted 25 minutes, the remaining five minutes could have been spent doing activities relating to the interview. This time could arguably be classed as 'interview administrative time' and therefore would need to be factored into any cost estimations because this is a 'normal' part of adviser interviewing.

Although the means from the two data sets are different, it may not be necessary to determine which is more accurate. This is because from an interpretivist perspective[6] both sets of data are derived from perceptions of the social world seen by those conducting the research. Therefore, adviser perception could be a valid reason for the differences in the means. In this case, adviser perception could mean a variety of scenarios.

Firstly, adviser's diaries are shared electronically and managers, other advisers and call centres have access rights to book in interviews. There are standard interview lengths for each type of interview, for example 30 minutes is the standard for caseload interviews. Having these distinct time categories for interviews may be how advisers perceive interview length and therefore when filling out the research diaries they simply allotted the standard length of time depending on the interview type. This would result in both under and over-estimations occurring.

Secondly, anecdotal evidence suggests that the diaries were issued during a period of uncertainty with regards to job security. Advisers may have been concerned about the use of the data from the diaries and wanted to appear productive by making full use of the allocated interview time. This would mean interviews finishing early would be over-recorded.

Finally, a related issue is the perception about how long particular tasks take. For example, early problems with the Basic Information Form (BIF)[7] resulted in lengthy completion times and initial ERA interviews taking far longer than they were booked in for. The fieldwork for the diary research did not take place until ERA had been

---

[6] Theoretical view of research which would emphasise that people filling in the diaries would have their own interpretation of what the categories mean in the diaries and fill them in accordingly.

[7] The BIF is an online data collection device accessed by advisers to randomly assign customers to a programme or control group.

running for 11 months and therefore these early teething problems had significantly reduced. However, at the time of fieldwork, advisers would continually discuss the length of time the BIF took to complete. When this task was timed it averaged 30 minutes, significantly less than advisers were suggesting. It may be the case that the timings recorded in the diaries from memory are heavily influenced by these perceptions rather than actual timings which would again result in over-estimations.

Of course all of the above issues will be heavily affected by when the diaries were completed in relation to the work tasks. If the diary stencils were completed after each task they are likely to be more accurate than if they were written up from memory at the end of each day.

Research recommendation

When conducting diaries it may be worth asking advisers to complete a short questionnaire at the end of the diary reviewing whether the two week period was typical, when they had recorded their activities and their interpretation of what should be included in the categories.

5.2.3   Outcome

Having considered the above issues and reviewed the analysis, the Wave 1 research analysts concluded that the optimum approach would be to use the mean interview lengths from the observational work. These timings were gathered by independent observers, were accurately recorded using stop watches and followed a structured consistent approach. The good inter-observer reliability found from both the pilot study and training sessions reinforces the consistency between observers, whilst in contrast it is likely that there is variation in diary completion among advisers.

It is important to note that the main concern about the diaries involves the accuracy of timings **not** their content. The authors believe that advisers are likely to have recorded accurately the interviews that they conducted each day even if they were unable to accurately time their length or interpreted interview start and finish times differently.

Accordingly, the Wave 1 analyses **derive mean interview lengths from the observational work** but **frequencies of activities from the adviser diaries** (which had higher observation points, and included other activities than interviews). For all other activities outside of interviews that were not recorded by the observational work, the timings from the diaries were used. From this perspective, the optimum position would be to use all timings of activities from the observational work, which have a higher degree of accuracy.

5.3   Results

5.3.1   Do ASA contacts with customers last longer than PA contacts?

A key hypothesis is that as ERA programme customers are supposed to receive additional services including advice about retention and advancement, it is expected that more time is spent with the ERA programme customer in interviews. Table 5.2 examines the observational data to see if there are any significant differences between the durations of programme and control group interviews. Lone parents are shown in the first four rows, and ND25+ customers in rows five to eight. There are no statistically significant observable differences between the mean length of programme and control group interviews in the pre-employment stage *except* for the length of NDLP initial interviews. This information is also shown below in Table 5.2 for ease of interpretation.

Table 5.2   Difference between observed programme and control interview lengths

Interview type	Mean	SD	Cases	Significance
Lone parents				
Programme initial	52.2	22.2	19	.007*
Control initial	37	19	41	
Programme caseload	32	15	53	.168
Control caseload	27.2	16.1	38	
ND25+				
Programme initial	35	14.2	25	.487
Control initial	32	16	28	
Programme caseload	23.1	14	109	.491
Control caseload	22	12.3	99	

* Significant at .05 level analyses derive mean interview lengths from the observational work

This increase in length for the lone parent ERA programme group customers likely reflects the additional information that an adviser has to give to the customer with regard to the post employment services. It is also likely that if an ASA has performed the random assignment then they may begin to complete ERA specific documentation or discuss the benefits of the programme resulting in a longer interview. However, it is unclear why the ND25+ customers don't show a similar increase.

Figure 5.3   Programme and control customer interview lengths
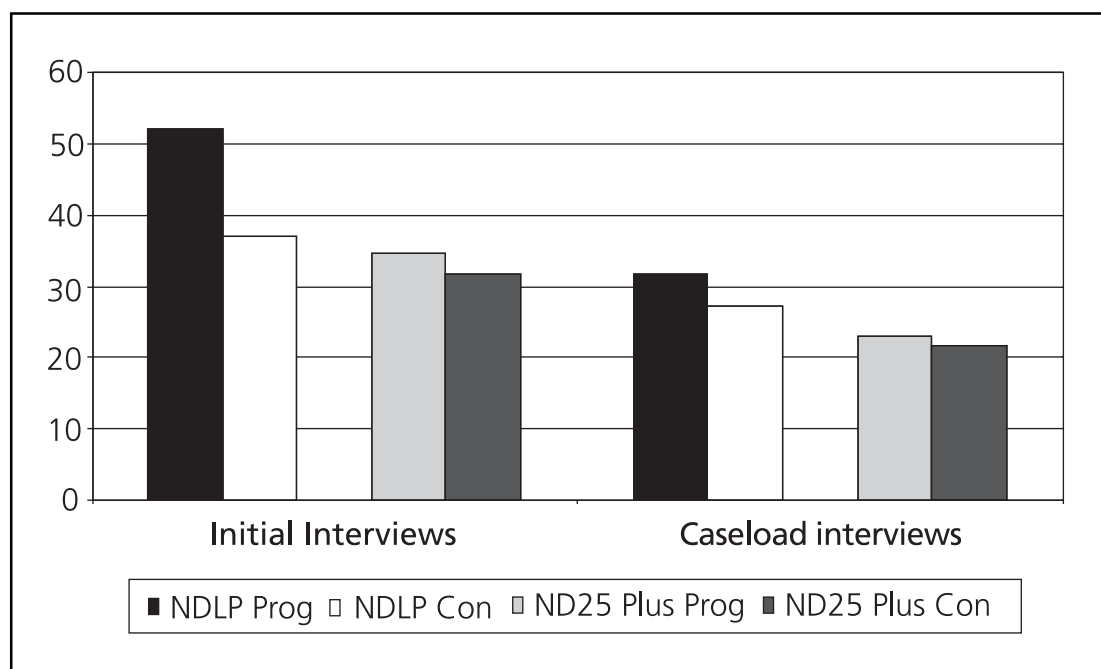
5.3.2   How long do advisers spend conducting interviews with ERA customers?

Table 5.3   Percentage of day interviewing by adviser type

Adviser type	% of day interviewing control customers	% of day interviewing programme customers	% of day telephone interviewing	Total % of day interviewing	Sig.
NDLP					
Control	24.00%	0.84%	3.73%	28.57%	.086
Programme	13.69%	12.17%	6.19%	32.04%	
ND25+					
Control	25.14%	0.91%	0.78%	26.82%	.001*
Programme	11.87%	17.40%	3.46%	32.72%	
All advisers		30.04%			

* Significant at the .001 level Note: Analyses derive mean interview lengths from the observational work but frequencies of activities from the adviser diaries.

Table 5.3 shows that for all advisers, 30 per cent of their day is spent conducting interviews. The difference between the percentage of interviewing time in a day for ND25+ control advisers and ERA programme advisers is statistically significant, with ERA programme advisers spending more time interviewing. The difference between the percentages of time conducting telephone interviews is not statistically significant for either NDLP or ND25+ advisers.

It is important to note that the percentages in Table 5.3 do not take into account any timings for adviser interview preparation, which is a necessary and essential part of

an adviser's day. Interview preparation includes, for example, reading case notes prior to the interview, meeting the customer at reception and closing away customer files at the end of the interview.

Diary data

The longer interview durations recorded in the adviser diaries suggest that advisers were either including interview preparation in their interview timings or overestimating interview time. Using the mean interview lengths from the diaries, for all advisers approximately 38 per cent of their day is spent interviewing. At present there is very little available published evidence in relation to how much time advisers spend interviewing customers on a daily basis. This makes it difficult to interpret the findings further.

The observational work did not measure time spent on interview preparation to add to the mean interview durations. Therefore when reviewing the timings in Table 5.3 this should be taken into account.

Research suggestion

A detailed observational analysis of adviser time could try to differentiate between actual interview time and preparatory work for interviews as this is currently not reliable in diary work.

5.3.3   How many interviews are conducted in an average day by an adviser?

Jobcentre Plus Internal Assurance produced a report in May 2004 that outlined all advisers have a 'target of 40 interviews per week' (p.3). However, the same report found that out of the five Jobcentre Plus districts involved in the audit none of the offices were achieving this target, with the best performing office only achieving 34 interviews per week.

Table 5.4 reports the analysis from the adviser diaries on the mean number of interviews conducted by each adviser type, lone parent or ND25+. The significance column indicates the results of the test of the difference between the means for the control and ERA programme for each adviser type.

Observational and diary data

Table 5.4 combines the mean interview lengths from the observations with interview frequencies recorded in the adviser diaries (see discussion section 5.2.2 regarding the reasons for this). The table shows the percentage of time per day different adviser groups spend in face-to-face interviews with customers and in turn answers the research question: *what is the average number of face-to-face interviews conducted each day by adviser type?*

Table 5.4   Average number of interviews by adviser type

Adviser type	Mean number of interviews per week	Significance
NDLP		
Control	23.61	.054
Programme	27.31	
ND25+		
Control	26.08	.053
Programme	29.49	
Mean average for all advisers	**26.62**	

Note: Analyses derive frequencies of activities from the adviser diaries

The ND25+ ASAs recorded the highest number of interviews per week (29), with NDLP PAs the lowest (24). Although NDLP control advisers recorded the lowest number of mean interviews per week, in Table 5.2 it can be seen that NDLP interviews lasted longer than their equivalent ND25+ interviews. Accordingly, there were fewer interviews per week conducted by NDLP advisers but they still had a higher percentage of time interviewing than ND25+ control advisers. The highest performing adviser achieved 72 interviews per week (39 telephone interviews and 33 face-to-face interviews). The lowest number of interviews achieved in a week was 10 (two telephone and eight face-to-face interviews).

In Table 5.4, it is important to remember that advisers were only recording interviews that took place and it is known that many more interviews would have been scheduled but customers failed to attend. Research conducted by Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Operational Researchers from January 2004 until July 2004 found for all advisers an average fail to attend rate of 20 per cent[8]. Assuming this same Failure to Attend (FTA) rate for the advisers in this study would adjust the figures to suggest a schedule of 29 interviews per week for NDLP PAs and 37 interviews per week for ND25+ ASAs, which is more in line with the national target of 40 interviews per week.

Similarly, this national target of 40 interviews per week appears to be treated as the absolute maximum expected. Advisers undertaking New Deal training are specifically taught that they are expected to conduct a minimum of 30 interviews per week[9]. This figure compares favourably to the findings from the adviser diary analysis which has a mean average of 27 interviews per week. It may well be that advisers are working towards the original targets set out in their training rather than the 40 interviews a week in guidance.

---

[8] Internal unpublished document.

[9] Internal Jobcentre Plus adviser guidance from intranet.

5.3.4 How many pre/post employment interviews do ASAs and PAs conduct?

The diary stencil included a column for recording whether the customer was in the control or programme group. However, during the analysis it was evident that records in this column were incomplete. The assumption has therefore been made that where a customer was in the Programme group, advisers were likely to complete this column. However, for customers in the control group or who had not volunteered for ERA and therefore were not assigned to a group, advisers were less likely to have entered data in this column because their group was not part of ERA. For the observational work any customers not in ERA were also taken as a proxy for the control group and this then applies the same assumption to the diaries. Thus where no data has been entered into the Programme/Control group column on the diary stencil this has been taken to mean the customer is in the control group or proxy control group.

Similarly whether the interview was pre- or post employment was often incompletely recorded by advisers. The assumption has been made that where the data is missing this would be a 'normal' Jobcentre Plus customer (unemployed and in the pre-employment stage). This assumption was deemed acceptable for wave 1 work but was altered for wave 2. Therefore improvements in the design are incorporated into wave 1 and 2 comparisons producing lower estimates and users of this report should take this into consideration.

Table 5.5 shows the mean number of pre- and post-employment interviews per week conducted by each adviser type.

Table 5.5   Average pre- and post-employment interviews by adviser type

	NDLP ASA	Number	NDLP PA	Number	Diff.	ND25 + ASA	Number	ND25+ PA	Number	Diff.
Number **pre-**employment interviews/wk	22.49	925	23.51	960	1.02	26.91	1186	26.01	1281	0.90
Number **post-**employment interviews/wk	4.82	193	0.10	6	4.72	2.58	109	0.06	3	2.52
Mean Number of Interviews per week	27.31		23.61			29.49		26.07		

Note: Analyses derive frequencies of activities from the adviser diaries

Table 5.6 shows that, on average, ASAs conduct more post employment interviews than PAs regardless of customer group. However, in the whole dataset of 4,664 interviews there were very few cases where PAs actually conducted post employment interviews (six for NDLP and three for ND25+). Therefore it is assumed that the majority of PAs do not conduct any post-employment interviews.

The average number of post employment interviews per week for NDLP ASAs was five out of 27 interviews a week (18.5 per cent). For ND25+ ASAs it was three out of 29 interviews a week (10.3 per cent). This indicates that at this early stage in ERA, after only 11 months of the intake period, advisers were already conducting post employment interviews with customers. Therefore one can reasonably hypothesise that this number will increase as the programme matures and more customers move into work.

5.3.5   How much time do advisers spend completing interview related administrative tasks?

Advisers were asked to record periods in the day when they were performing administrative tasks that related directly to a customer interview. This did not include administrative tasks taking place within interviews only tasks after the customer had left, for example, organising work placements or contacting a provider in relation to an individual. Administrative tasks that were not specific to a customer were recorded in the 'Non-interview related administration' category which is discussed in section 5.3.7.

Table 5.6 uses data from the adviser diaries only. It shows that, on average, advisers spend 14 per cent of their day performing interview related administrative tasks. If this figure is factored into the time spent interviewing customers it shows that 44 per cent of an average adviser day is spent conducting interview related tasks.

Table 5.6   Average duration of interview related administration

Adviser type	Percentage of day spent on interview related administration	Total % of day interviewing	Total % of day on interview related tasks
NDLP			
Control	14.94	28.57	43.51
Programme	15.85	32.04	47.89
ND25+			
Control	16.94	26.82	43.76
Programme	9.87	32.72	42.59
Mean average for all advisers	14.40	30.04	44.44

Note: Analyses derive from the adviser diaries

5.3.6   How long do advisers spend completing administrative and other tasks not directly related to customer interviews?

For the purposes of the ERA cost study the essential task was to calculate the amount of time advisers spend in interview related tasks for each adviser type. This analysis has been shown in Table 5.7 above.

As discussed in the methodology section, too many categories can result in varied completion strategies and problematic analysis. The diary stencil for this research was kept as simple as possible with only eight categories. For tasks not relating to interviews, there were only two categories to select between: 'Non-Interview Related Administrative Tasks' (NIR) and 'All Other Tasks' (AO) (see Appendix C, instrument 1, for the diary stencil). The latter category included for example meetings, training, sick or annual leave. The former category included administrative tasks that related to general Jobcentre Plus business and were not specific to a customer or an interview.

Table 5.8 shows the percentage of an adviser's day spent on NIR. It shows that, on average, 13 per cent of an adviser day was spent performing these tasks, with the ERA programme advisers spending a slightly greater share of their day on these tasks.

Table 5.7   Average duration of non-interview related administration

Adviser type	Percentage of day spent on non interview related administration
NDLP control	8.21
ND25+ control	13.34
NDLP ERA programme	11.83
ND25+ ERA programme	17.90
Mean average for all advisers	12.82

Note: Analyses derive mean lengths from the adviser diaries

It is important to note that the interpretation of the AO and NIR categories seems to vary between advisers. Some advisers did not record any NIR, but only AO activity and vice-versa.

Table 5.8 provides the final breakdown of an adviser's day into the categories analysed and reported throughout this chapter. It also includes AO. Due to the problematic recording of this variable, *an assumption has been made that all remaining time in the day is attributed to AO.*

Table 5.8   Average breakdown of an adviser day

Adviser type	% of day interviewing	% of day on interview related administration	% of day on NIR	% of day on AO
NDLP Control	28.57	14.94	8.21	48.28
ND25+ Control	26.82	16.94	13.34	42.90
NDLP ERA Programme	32.04	15.85	11.83	40.28
ND25+ ERA Programme	32.72	9.87	17.90	39.51
Mean Average for all advisers	30.04	14.40	12.82	42.74

Note: Analyses derive mean interview lengths from the observational work but frequencies of activities from the adviser diaries

5.3.7   Peripatetic advisers

There was a very small group of ASA advisers in this sample (nine) that worked with ND25+, NDLP and WTC customers. They were not included in the analysis above because their working days were atypical of most advisers. All of the nine peripatetic advisers returning diaries worked in the two most rural locations for ERA and their job involved a great deal of travelling between offices.

5.4   Observational analysis

The remainder of this chapter relates to the observational analysis only. One of the central aims of the observational work was to identify the content of interviews and whether this differed for the programme and control groups. A key aim of the observations was to look at the content of interviews to determine if there were any differences, to check the assumption that there would be more retention and advancement activity with the programme group. It was not ruled out that some of the retention and advancement activity would also be observed in the control group, as some ASAs served both the programme and control group, PAs also attended some related training and some customers return to the Jobcentre after they are in work to receive help from their adviser.

5.4.1   Determining average interview content and differences between programme and control group interviews

To determine the average content of the different interviews observed, the primary activity in each 5 minute period was taken and frequencies examined within the time period making up the average length of each interview. The 5 minute code was judged to better make clear the flow of tasks during each interview.

The mode was chosen as this measure represents the most common occurrence, although this also means that there can be multiple modes which can make the interpretation confusing. Where this is the case we have attempted to explain why this may occur. The main reason is that different types of interviews have been combined to create an average interview, so for example an intake interview which

consists of completing an on screen data collection tool (BIF) is combined with other interviews such as a back-to-work interviews which can then create multiple modes in the output. Another source of difference is when an adviser is doing more than one task but the stencil only allows one code. Interviews involve complex interactions, but the methodology imposed a linear two dimensional structure onto them. Previous work has looked at the qualitative content of interviews (Thomas & Griffiths 2002) but until this study a quantitative structured approach had not been tested and future work will need to address the problems faced in this work.

Table 5.9   Modal average for NDLP programme group initial interviews

0-5MIN	5-10MIN	10-15MIN	15-20MIN	20-25MIN	25-30MIN	30-35MIN	35-40MIN	40-45MIN	45-50MIN	50-55MIN
Introducing ERA	Completion of BIF	Introducing ERA	Completion of BIF	Completion of BIF	Completion of BIF	Completion of BIF	Conducts in work benefit	Conducts in work benefit	Conducts in work benefit	Conducts in work benefit
					Conducts in work benefit	Conducts in work benefit				

*Multiple mode. Note: Analyses derive from the observational work.

5.4.2   New Deal for Lone Parents ERA programme group

As can be seen from Table 5.10, observed customers were initially entering the programme and being randomly assigned. Then the interview moves onto conducting a better-off calculation. Generally advisers initially spent time introducing ERA (and NDLP) and then began completing parts of the BIF once initial verbal consent was gained. Advisers then moved on to talk more about the random assignment and parts of the ERA programme before completing the BIF. The BIF took between 30 to 35 minutes to complete although during this process advisers were often talking about other parts of the programme if the web based delivery system was taking longer than expected. It is also important to recall that the length of the ERA programme group interviews were *almost* significantly longer than the control group interviews (which is likely to be due to the additional ERA information needed to be given to the programme group).

Once the customer moved into the programme group (or was already in it) advisers then spent another 30 minutes completing the better off calculation, which is a key feature of the NDLP programme. It was usually after this that the interview was terminated and a follow up interview booked. Table 5.11 shows the mean content of the follow up interview which began with a familiarisation session, discussion of current circumstances including job goals and then the adviser would help the customer look for employment opportunities using LMS.

No differences between the programme and control group caseload interviews were identified, supporting the view that, at the time of the research, there was no discernable difference in pre-employment treatment for ERA and non-ERA customers.

Table 5.10   Modal average content of NDLP programme group caseload interviews

0-5 min	5-10 min	10-15 min	15-20 min	20-25 min	25-30 min	30-35 min
Discussion of current circumstances	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy

Note: Analyses derive from the observational work.

5.4.3   New Deal for Lone Parents control group

The customers who are included in this group of observations are those having their first interview with their NDLP adviser after being randomly assigned either in a previous interview or with another adviser. This differs with the programme group data which is more likely to include ERA customers during the random assignment stage. Note that the implementation of intake varied in each district and this may have had an influence on the initial and caseload interview outcomes. Tables 5.12 and 5.13 show results.

During the observations with the control group, interviews began with either an introduction of what was available in the programme or an initial chat about a customer's circumstances, then an in-work benefit calculation and finally looking for vacancies on LMS.

Table 5.11 Modal average content of NDLP control group *initial* interviews

0-5 min*	5-10 min	10-15 min	15-20 min	20-25 min	25-30 min	30-35 min	35-40 min
Introduction of NDLP	Introduction of NDLP	Conducts in work benefit	Conducts in work benefit	Conducts in work benefit	Conducts in work benefit	Conducts in work benefit	Help looking for job or vacancy
Discussion of current circumstances							

*Multiple mode. Note: Analyses derive from the observational work.

Subsequent case loading interviews then focused on looking for job vacancies. Advisers had a variety of options in assisting lone parents such as looking for and referring customers to training, however, a major component of observed lone parent interviews was a focus on vacancy searching.

Table 5.12   NDLP control group caseload interview

0-5 min	5-10 min	10-15 min	15-20 min	20-25 min	25-30 min	30-35 min
Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy

Note: Analyses derive from the observational work.

5.4.4   New Deal 25 Plus ERA programme group

Tables 5.14 and 5.15 reflect the ND25+ interview content. The ND25+ interviews were generally shorter than those observed for lone parents, although they followed a similar pattern of topics during the initial interview. The first interview tended to focus on the random assignment with a brief introduction. The case load interviews then focused on vacancy searching on LMS.

Table 5.13   Modal average content of ND25+ programme group initial interviews

0-5 min	5-10 min	10-15 min	15-20 min	20-25 min	25-30 min	30-35 min
Discussion of current circumstances	Completion of BIF	Completion of BIF	Completion of BIF	Completion of BIF	Completion of BIF	Completion of BIF

Note: Analyses derive from the observational work.

Table 5.14   Modal average content of ND25+ programme group caseload interviews

0-5 min	5-10 min	10-15 min	15-20 min	20-25 min	25-30 min	30-35 min
Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy

Note: Analyses derive from the observational work.

> **Research opportunity**
>
> The observations confirm that ND25+ advisers are successfully delivering the work first message to customers.
>
> However to see if this message changes over a customer spell on the New Deal programme would require longitudinal follow up observations with customers and access to their New Deal database information recording the phase of New Deal they have reached.

5.4.5 New Deal 25 Plus control group

The control group initial interviews were very similar to the programme group as were the caseload interviews which focused solely on looking for vacancies (see Tables 5.16 and 5.17). However this reflects the first stage of ND25+ which intends to match customers to current vacancies. The majority of customers who had case load interviews would experience an intensive job matching period and those who were referred for training would not be required to come into the office until the training was completed and thereby would not be in the sample.

Table 5.15   Modal average content of ND25+ control group initial interviews

0-5 min	5-10 min	10-15 min	15-20 min	20-25 min	25-30 min	30-35 min
Completion of BIF	Completion of BIF	Completion of BIF	Completion of BIF	Completion of BIF	Discussion of ND25+	Help looking for job or vacancy

Note: Analyses derive from the observational work.

Table 5.16   Modal average content of ND25+ control group caseload interview

0-5 min	5-10 min	10-15 min	15-20 min	20-25 min	25-30 min	30-35 min
Discussion of current circumstances	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Help looking for job or vacancy	Discussion of current circumstances	Help looking for job or vacancy

Note: Analyses derive from the observational work.

5.5   Occurrences of retention and advancement

Due to the design of the programme, it was expected that a high number of programme group observations would contain content on retention and advancement. In addition, members of the control group were also expected to receive post employment advice as anecdotal evidence suggested that advisers keep in touch with their customers after they have moved into work.

During the observations, anecdotal feedback suggested that a portion of lone parents meet with Lone Parent (LP) advisers for the first time after they have secured employment. The customer enters Jobcentre Plus with the specific aim of signing off benefits. Having found employment the adviser then assists them with Working Tax Credit (WTC) applications and encourages them to visit Jobcentre Plus if there are any work related problems. All of these tasks could be classified as post-employment work.

Table 5.18 shows the post-employment activity recorded during the observations with the ERA programme group. There was a comparatively low frequency of recorded occurrences of retention or advancement at the time of the observations. Where there were discussions of ERA, they centred on payment of financial incentives and advancement issues rather than assisting people with retention issues.

Table 5.17   Percentage of all primary activities in interviews which contained retention or advancement

Primary activity	Retention	Advancement	Financial incentives
1	2.4%	4.3%	6.2
2	2.5%	5%	7.3%
3	1.1%	6.5%	4.9%
4	1.2%	1.2%	5%
5	0%	3.8%	5.5%

Note: Analyses derive from the observational work.

However, the modal content of the interviews containing retention or advancement observations (shown in Table 5.19) indicates interviews are centred on payment of incentives which includes the payment of the pre-employment adviser discretion fund and discussing a customer's career goals. The modal interview was derived by selecting only the retention and advancement observations in the dataset and running frequencies of the primary activity. This explains the difference in the observations in each time period as some of the interviews will have also contained non ERA related activities.

Due to the small amount of data points for retention and advancement activities it was not possible to perform the planned time series analysis on the data set and therefore it was not possible to answer the other research questions relating to these activities.

Table 5.18   Modal content of programme group retention and advancement interview

Time period	PA 1	PA 2	PA 3*	PA 4	PA 5	PA6	PA7
Number of Obs	30	34	24	17	13	9	11
Activity	Retention bonus paid	Retention bonus paid	Discussion of career goals Retention bonus paid	Retention bonus paid	Payment of ADF	Discussion of career goals	Payment of ADF

* Multiple modes exist. Note: Analyses derive from the observational work.

6 Wave 2 methodology

Chapter 6 describes the purpose, research methods and instruments used in the second wave of ERA staff time observations. In contrast to the first wave, second wave methods did not include any large-scale observational work, just some validation observations, and no content analysis for interviews.

6.1 Purpose of study

The purposes of the ERA Wave 2 work study were to:

• establish an average ERA programme adviser's day through the use of diaries and interviews;

• identify the type and extent of post employment contacts with programme group customers.

The study was to include triangulation of various data collection methods to assess their relative value for future work study observations.

6.1.1 Key research questions

Wave 2 research was designed to inform the following key questions for the ERA cost study:

1) What is the average amount of time advisers spend conducting face-to-face/ telephone interviews with ERA programme group customers overall and for each of the three ERA customer groups?

2) What is the amount of time advisers spend completing interview related administrative tasks?

3) What amount of time do advisers spend completing administrative and other tasks not directly related to customer interviews?

4) How many pre/post-employment interviews do Advancement Support Adviser (ASAs) conduct?

5) Do Personal Adviser (PAs) conduct fewer post-employment interviews than ASAs for each target group? (using data on PAs from Wave 1)

6) Do ASA contacts with customers last, on average, longer than PA contacts with customers? (using data on PAs from Wave 1)

7) How has ASA activity changed from Wave 1 to Wave 2?

6.2   Method

The ERA Wave 2 fieldwork was designed to enhance estimates of staff time that were collected in Wave 1 and, because it was conducted nine months later, it would provide additional information on changes in staff activity over time. The tasks of a PA were expected to remain relatively stable over this time, thus, as a resource saving measure, the Wave 2 work time study was restricted to ASAs.

This ERA Wave 2 fieldwork took place during a two-week period (6 to 17 June 2005) for on-site observational work and during a four-week period (6 June to 1 July 2005) for remote data collection. Observational work was carried out in three Jobcentre Plus districts and entailed two office visits per district, including one relatively large and one relatively small office, totalling six offices in all. Office size was determined by the number of staff and the number of customers served. This balance was considered important because it is generally believed that the types of tasks staff perform are partly determined by the dynamics resulting from the office size. Offices were selected in consultation with district Technical Adviser (TA's) and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) project staff.

For practical and logistical reasons, ERA observational fieldwork was co-ordinated with the Incapacity Benefit (IB) study fieldwork so data collection for the two studies was occurring concurrently in shared Jobcentre Plus districts.

Data collection for the ERA Wave 2 study involved:

• ASA self-reported diaries for a ten day work period;

• work shadowing of ASAs;

• Labour Market System (LMS) validation of booked customer appointments.

6.2.1   ASA diaries

Ideal estimates for the ERA Cost Study would be based on information gathered from all ERA advisers, however, it was not practically feasible to occupy all ASA staff on the diary task during the two-week fieldwork period. Instead, a quota sample of advisers was selected, informed by the contemporary District Staffing Forms and in consultation with district TA. The sample framework aimed to achieve ten advisers in each ERA district (60 cases in total). This sample target meant that diaries would be received from approximately half of the ASA staff from each district but this proportion was substantially higher for smaller districts, approaching 100 per cent. Staff who had booked annual leave during the data capture period were excluded from the sample. Diary returns were received from 53 ASAs (88 per cent of the sample target) and these accounted for 430 working days. As shown in Table 6.1, the diary response was not evenly distributed across the six participating districts. It

is not clear why the return rate from one district was lower; however, because the findings are reported at the aggregate level, any resulting bias is expected to be minimal.

ERA TAs provided vital support during the design and conduct of the diary exercise. TAs advised on the content and layout of the diaries. They were also responsible for distributing the diaries, providing instructions for completion and collecting the diaries at the end of the exercise. TAs also made spot checks during the diary recording period to ensure advisers were filling in the template correctly and to encourage their continued participation.

The diary exercise required that ASAs account for their work tasks over a ten day period (6 to 17 June 2005) using pen-and-paper stencils – one for recording customer contacts and one for recording administrative tasks – for each day. Advisers were instructed to record start and end times for each customer contact or administrative activity, referring to a wrist watch or wall clock. (Refer to Appendix E for the diary templates.) The information advisers were asked to record included:

- start and end times of the working day;
- start and end times of interviews;
- type of interview;
- type of contact;
- customer group served;
- programme or control group (ERA customers only);
- customer related administrative tasks, divided by customer and ERA groups;
- all other administration.

6.2.2   Differences between Wave 1 and Wave 2 diaries

The diary stencil was designed from the basic instrument used in the previous ERA Wave 1 fieldwork but it differed in some important ways. First, the instrument layout allowed for the information to be electronically scanned. Second, records for customer contacts and administrative tasks were collected on separate sheets. Third, Wave 2 diaries did not account for an entire work day. ASAs were instructed to omit breaks, lunch, training and leave time. Essentially, this meant that recorded tasks would not sum to the total work day, as indicated by the period between the start and end times. In contrast, this information was recorded in the Wave 1 diary collection under 'other tasks'. In addition, the record of administrative tasks in Wave 2 was refined into two categories: 'customer related administration' and 'all other administration'. Advisers were also asked to specify the customer group for the former category. This detail was not collected in Wave 1. However, analysis from Wave 1 indicated that these changes would be an improvement.

Although these differences limit the cross wave diary comparisons on administrative tasks, they targeted weaknesses in the original diary stencil and aimed to make the instrument more user friendly.

6.2.3   Shadow diaries

As a validation exercise to confirm the content of self-reported records, 'shadow' diaries were collected (refer to Appendix E for the instrument). Concurrent to the diary recording period, one-to-one, full day observations were carried out with two advisers in three of the ERA districts. Two advisers were shadowed in each district – one working in a relatively large office and one working in a relatively small office. This design was selected to produce a validity check for a minimum of ten per cent of cases (six out of 60 cases)[10].

The shadow diary was identical to the ASA diary except that the researchers were instructed to account for the entire work day, including lunch and breaks. Researchers also noted the nature of items included in 'all other admin'. Note that this level of detail was not required in the ASA diaries and this difference limits the comparisons that can be made between the data from the two data collection methods.

The shadow diary process was somewhat interactive because the researcher occasionally needed to clarify with the adviser the exact nature of the task they were performing. However, observations were as unobtrusive as possible. Times were recorded by wrist watch and researchers and advisers synchronised their time pieces to improve the accuracy of recording.

6.2.4   ASA interviews and LMS appointment checks

Close to the end of a work day, brief interviews were carried out with select ASAs who were also participating in the diary fieldwork. Researchers used a structured instrument to collect information on an adviser's 'typical' day. (Refer to Appendix E for the instrument: 'ERA – LMS Electronic Interview Diary Validation').

Advisers were asked to estimate the proportion of a work day they typically spend with customers and the proportion of time performing customer administration, separately for their ERA and non-ERA customers. They were also asked to clarify what they do when a scheduled interview is cancelled in advance or when a customer fails to attend a booked interview. ASAs were then asked to refer to their printed LMS record and compare this to their diary entries for the day to account for all customer contacts that occurred during the day. The researcher recorded the duration of customer contacts in minutes, accounting for bookings that did not show as well as unscheduled customer contacts (face-to-face and telephone). Customer groups and ERA random assignment groups were also noted.

---

[10] A third adviser was shadowed in one of the districts. However, the data produced in this instance was not usable as the ASA diary for the shadow day was not received.

A total of 31 ASA interviews were completed over all six ERA districts. Some of these were conducted in person while researchers were in the field but most of this information was collected by telephone.

A summary of the data capture for the ERA Wave 2 fieldwork is presented in Table 6.1. Wave 2 adopted all three techniques for estimating staff time that were discussed in Chapter 1 – diaries, interviews and observations. Methodologically, Wave 2 differed from Wave 1 in some important ways: It expanded the data collection to include staff interviews but, to save on research costs, staff observations were substantially reduced (from 421 observed interviews to seven work days).

Table 6.1   ERA Wave 2 fieldwork

District	ASA diaries		Shadow ASA diaries	LMS comparisons
	Customer contacts	Administration tasks		
A	10	10	3	5
B	10	10	2	6
C	8	8	2	5
D	10	10	-	5
E	9	8	-	5
F	6	6	-	5
Projected total	60	60	6	30
Achieved total	53	52	7	31

6.3   Analysis

Instruments were scanned and verified. Separate EXCEL spreadsheets were created for data captured from each instrument. Data were then translated into SPSS for analyses. Both manual and computer 'force editing' were carried out on the separate data sets. (Refer to Appendix D for a record of data cleaning performed on each data set.)

6.3.1   Aggregation of the data sets

1 ASA diary data. The ASA diaries consisted of two data sets: 2,341 customer interview observations for 53 advisers and 2,483 administrative tasks for 52 advisers. To report on average adviser administrative time for key groups, each recorded duration was allocated to one of 12 analysis categories. For example the category variable 'NDLP - P' recorded all administrative time spent with New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP) ERA Programme customers. The observation level data was then aggregated across each of these categories to create summed durations for each adviser. Mean durations for each of the 12 categories could then be calculated for the 52 advisers. These means represent the amount of administrative time advisers spent in a 'typical day' with each type of customer.

To report on average adviser interview time for key groups each recorded duration was allocated to one of 22 analysis categories. For example the category variable 'NDLP - P - pre - Face' recorded all face-to-face pre-employment interview durations with NDLP Programme customers. The observation level data was then aggregated across each of these categories to create summed durations for each adviser. Mean durations for each of the 22 categories were then calculated for the 53 advisers. These means represent the amount of time advisers spent in a 'typical day' with each type of customer contact.

The day level data for administration and customer interviews were matched and accounted for 430 ASA days. Re-groupings of the aggregated analysis categories enabled a 'typical day' summary to be produced. For example 'Total time spent on ERA customer administration' was created by summing together 1) 'Admin time spent with NDLP- P' 2) 'Admin time spent with ND25+ - P' and 3) 'Admin time spent with WTC - P' customers.

In summary, the advisers' typical day was broken down into 34 time units covering all administrative time and customer interviews. These could be summed and re-grouped as the analysis required.

The same aggregation method was used to analyse the shadow diary data.

2 *ERA LMS validation data.* The LMS validation data consisted of 264 interview observations for 31 advisers.

To report on average adviser interview time for key groups, each recorded duration was allocated to one of 44 analysis categories. For example the category variable 'NDLP - P - pre - Face' recorded all face-to-face pre-employment interview durations with NDLP Programme customers. A set of analysis variables was created for both booked and reported interview durations. The observation level data was then aggregated across each of these categories to create summed durations for each adviser. Mean durations for each of the 44 categories could then be calculated for the 31 advisers interviewed. These means represent the amount of time advisers spent in a 'typical day' with each type of customer contact.

7 Wave 2 results

In this chapter, the major findings from the collection of information on how much time Advancement Support Adviser (ASAs) spend supporting their customers are described. The recent Wave 2 diary collection effort is the initial focus, which, as previously discussed, was limited to ASAs. The Wave 2 diary information is then compared to data obtained from the Wave1 diaries. Section 7.2 contains the findings of the comparison between Wave 1 and Wave 2 information. The latter, as previously indicated, covers both ASAs and Personal Adviser (PAs) and therefore relates to staff working with control customers, as well as those who were randomly assigned to Employment Retention and Advancement project (ERA). Finally, Sections 7.3 to 7.5 compare findings from the Wave 2 diaries with information obtained at the same time from observational studies and interviews.

7.1 ASA diaries

Table 7.1 provides an overview of a typical ASA work day as recorded in the adviser diaries. Table 7.1 indicates that, for a day that is just under eight hours long, ASAs devoted over two and a half hours (or 34 per cent of their day) on communication with customers and over three and a half hours (or 46 per cent of their day) performing administrative work on behalf of customers. Their remaining time, an hour and 35 minutes (or 20 per cent of an ASAs day), was spent on such other activities as meetings, breaks, and lunch.[11]

Somewhat surprisingly, ASAs spent a considerably smaller part of customer time working for members of the ERA programme group (28 per cent) than for other types of customers (52 per cent). Other types of customers included New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP) and New Deal 25 Plus (ND25+) customers who were randomly

---

[11] ASAs did not record meetings, lunch or breaks in their diaries. The 'other' category was the remaining time computed by subtracting the sums of the customer contact and administrative times from the total length of time in the office for each diary day. The 'other' category combines this unallocated time with customer contact time and administrative time for customers where there was insufficient information to identify a customer group on either of these activities. Table 7.4 apportions out unallocated customer time from 'other' office activities.

assigned to the control group, persons in the same two New Deal programs who were not randomly assigned, and Jobcentre Plus customers who are not in these two New Deal programs. Most of the difference in time devoted to ERA and non-ERA customers was attributable to differences in administrative activities during a typical day – 13 per cent on ERA customer administration versus 33 per cent on non-ERA customer administration. Although ASAs typically spent less time in contact with ERA customers than non-ERA customers, the difference in contact time was much smaller (14 per cent of their day versus 20 per cent) than is true of administrative time. Thus, ASAs devoted only a little more than an hour of their work day interacting with ERA customers and about the same amount of time to administrative work on behalf of ERA customers, two hours and nine minutes in total.

Table 7.1   Average ASA day – customer contacts and customer administration

Activity	Duration (hr : min : sec)	Percentage of total day
Customer contacts	2:37:48	34
Customer administration	3:33:00	46
Other	1:35:13	20
Total day	7:46:01	100
ERA customer contacts	1:07:11	14
non-ERA customer contacts	1:30:36	20
ERA customer administration	1:02:00	13
non-ERA customer administration	2:31:00	33
Other	1:35:13	20
Total day	7:46:01	100
All ERA	2:09:11	28
All non-ERA	4:01:36	52
Other	1:35:13	20
Total day	7:46:01	100

Base: 430 ASA days for 53 ASAs

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Note: 'Other' is the time not allocated by ASAs.

Table 7.2 indicates how ASA customer contact time was allocated among the three ERA programme groups and Table 7.3 shows the same division for ASA administrative time. While interpreting these tables, note that these estimates are *averaged over all 53 ASAs* in the sample, many of whom serve customers in only one or two of the three ERA programme groups. Table 7.2 shows that nearly half of the total contact time was dedicated to ERA customers in the ND25+ group (about half an hour in all),

a bit less time was devoted to ERA customers in the NDLP group (24 minutes), and by far the least amount of time was allocated to customers in the Working Tax Credit (WTC) group (13 minutes). The 14 per cent of work time that was devoted to ERA customer contacts, as shown in Table 7.1, was divided among ERA customer subgroups as follows: five per cent of the day to NDLP customers; seven per cent to the ND25+ group and the remaining three per cent to WTC customers.

Table 7.2 breaks down contact time into pre-employment time and post-employment time. Focusing first on the post-employment period, slightly more time was devoted to the WTC group than to either of the other two customer groups. No pre-employment category is devoted to the WTC group because these customers by definition all had jobs at the time they were randomly assigned. The fact that over twice as much contact time for the ERA ND25+ group occurred in the pre-employment period than in the post-employment period is probably attributable to the relatively small proportion of ERA ND25+ customers who were employed at the time the diary information was collected. Thus, considerably more pre-employment contact time was devoted to this group than to NDLP customers, but a bit less post-employment contact time was dedicated to ND25+ customers.

Table 7.2   Average ASA day – ERA customer contacts

Customer group	Duration (min:sec)	Within customer group	Percentage of total day
NDLP pre	13:54	58	3
NDLP post	10:03	42	2
All NDLP	23:57	100	5
ND25+ pre	20:28	68	5
ND25+ post	9:38	32	2
All ND25+	30:06	100	7
WTC post	12:52	100	3
All pre	34:22	51	7
All post	32:33	48	8
All ERA customer contacts	1:07:11	100	14

Base: 430 ASA days for 53 ASAs

Percentages may not add to exactly 100 due to rounding.

Table 7.3 suggests that, of the hour spent each day in performing administrative work for ERA customers, just over half this time was devoted to customers in the ERA NDLP group, with the remaining time split approximately equally among the other two programme groups.[12] The time required for contact and administrative time

[12] ASAs were not asked to distinguish their ERA customer administration time for pre- and post-employment customers.

with the WTC group was presumably relatively small because the total number of persons in this group was small in comparison to the other two groups. (Refer to Table 7.5 for the base numbers.) It is not entirely clear why the administrative time allocated to the ND25+ group was so low. One possibility is that less time is required for administrative work for customers who do not have jobs than for customers who do and, as shown later, in the case of the ND25+ group, relatively few customers were employed at the time of data capture.

Table 7.3 Average ASA day – ERA customer administration

Customer group	Duration (min:sec)	Percentage of customer administration	Percentage of total day
NDLP ERA	31:41	51	7
ND25+ ERA	14:30	23	3
WTC ERA	15:48	26	3
ERA customer administration	1:02:00	100	13

Base: 430 ASA days for 53 ASAs

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 7.4 covers the entire ten day period over which ASAs filled in diaries during Wave 2 and compares the ERA programme group customers with the non-ERA customers that ASAs support. The table indicates, in raw terms, that over the ten days, the average ASA had fewer contacts with ERA customers than with non-ERA customers (21 versus 24) and, thus, spent less total time with the former than with the latter (nine hours and 49 minutes versus 11 hours and 49 minutes). However, the average duration of a contact was very similar for the two types of customers (about 29 minutes each).

Table 7.4   Comparison of ERA and other customer contacts over the ten day observation period

| | *Customer contacts* | | |
	ERA	non-ERA	All
Total number of contacts per ASA	21	24	45
Total contact time with customers per ASA (hr:min:sec)	9:48:44	11:48:44	21:20:18
Average contact duration (min:sec)	28:42	29:13	28:59
Types of contact			
Total number of contacts per ASA			
Face-to-face	10.5	17.5	28.0
Telephone	7.5	3.7	11.1
Other	0.8	0.0	0.8
Unallocated contacts	1.7	2.5	4.2
Average contact durations (min:sec)			
Face-to-face	37:29	32.01	34:04
Telephone	18:55	14:47	17:33
Other	10:57	—	10:57
Unallocated contacts			28:34

Base: Diaries for 53 ASAs over a ten day observation period

There are some interesting differences among the two types of customers regarding the types of contacts made. As indicated in Table 7.4, most contacts involving non-ERA customers were made face-to-face, rather than by telephone (17.5 for a typical ASA over the ten days versus 3.7), while telephone contacts were more frequent among ERA customers and occurred nearly as frequently as face-to-face contacts (7.5 compared to 10.5 contacts on average). In addition, ASAs reported a greater variety on the method of contacts used with their ERA customers —for example, by email or text messages.[13] A probable reason face-to-face contacts were less frequent among ERA customers than among non-ERA customers is that many more of them were employed when they made contact and couldn't get away from their jobs for sufficiently long periods to meet with their ASAs in person. Notice that both face-to-face and telephone contacts among ERA customers were of longer duration than those with non-ERA customers, but telephone contacts were roughly half as long as face-to-face contacts for both types of customers. Thus, the reason the overall contact duration was similar for the two types of customers (about 29 minutes) is that ERA customers were more likely to make the shorter telephone contacts than non-ERA customers, but this was offset by the fact that both their face-to-face and telephone contacts lasted longer.

---

[13] About ten per cent of the contacts could not be allocated as to type of contact because the necessary information was not provided.

Tables 7.5, 7.6, and 7.7 provide additional detail about each type of contact – face-to-face, telephone, and other[14] – by dividing ERA contacts by pre-employment and post-employment customers. The column labelled 'base' in each table indicates the total number of contacts of each type for all 53 ASAs in the sample over the ten days during which they filled in their diaries. For example, as shown in Table 7.5, the 53 ASAs made a total of 1,486 face-to-face contacts with all their customers (i.e., ERA and non-ERA) over the ten days; and, of these, 97 were with ERA/NDLP customers who were not employed and 75 were with ERA/NDLP customers who were employed.

Table 7.5   Face-to-face customer contacts

Customer group	Ave duration (min:sec)	Base
ERA customers		
NDLP pre-employment	43:00	*97*
NDLP post-employment	46:23	*75*
NDLP all	44:28	*172*
ND25+ pre-employment	29:00	*257*
ND25+ post-employment	38:13	*55*
ND25+ all	30:37	*312*
WTC post-employment	49:57	*75*
Non-ERA customers	32:01	*927*
All customers	34:04	*1486*

Base: Diaries for 53 ASAs over a ten day observation period

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Most of the additional costs incurred by ERA in providing specialist advisers, as compared to the regular New Deal and WTC, are likely to occur during the post-employment period because, as documented later, contacts with regular New Deal and WTC customers become infrequent once they are working. As indicated by the 'base' columns in Tables 7.5 and 7.6, post-employment contacts occur with considerable frequency among ERA customers. Thus, it is interesting to note, from Table 7.5, that face-to-face contacts were longer during the post-employment period than during the pre-employment period for both ERA NDLP and ERA ND25+ customers and Table 7.6 shows that telephone contacts were also longer for the latter group of customers.

---

[14] Other types of contacts were comprised of emails and mobile phone text messages.

Table 7.6 Telephone customer contacts

Customer group	Ave duration (min:sec)	Base
ERA customers		
NDLP pre-employment	16:24	*107*
NDLP post-employment	12:35	*66*
NDLP all	14:57	*173*
ND25+ pre-employment	25:38	*52*
ND25+ post-employment	28:14	*71*
ND25+ all	27:08	*123*
WTC post-employment	15:44	*95*
Non-ERA customers	14:47	*194*
All customers	17:33	*590*

Base: Diaries for 53 ASAs over a ten day observation period

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 7.7 All other customer contacts

Customer group	Ave duration (min:sec)	Base
ERA Customers		
NDLP pre-employment	10:36	*5*
NDLP post-employment	06:15	*4*
NDLP all	08:40	*9*
ND25+ pre-employment	24:00	*1*
ND25+ post-employment	07:10	*6*
ND25+ all	09:34	*7*
WTC post-employment	12:09	*25*
Non-ERA customers	-	*0*
All customers	10:57	*41*

Base: Diaries for 53 ASAs over a ten day observation period

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

7.2 Wave 1 and Wave 2 diary comparisons

This section compares the diary information collected during Waves 1 and 2 of the ERA work study. This allows a comparison of how PAs during Wave 1 allocated their time with how ASAs spent their time during each of the two waves. In addition, ASA diaries can be compared across the two waves to assess how the nature of their work

changed over time. It is important to keep in mind, however, that differences that appear between the two waves may either reflect true differences or apparent differences that result from the divergence in study methodologies. However, the data have been comparably defined, using the same types of refinements as much as possible. This problem obviously does not occur in comparing PAs and ASAs during the first wave.

Table 7.8 shows how ASAs and PAs allocate their time over a typical day. The table is similar to Table 7.1, except that data collected during Wave 1 has been added. Thus, Table 7.8 provides comparisons along the lines mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Regarding the Wave 1 diaries, the work days of ASAs and PAs were very similar; both adviser groups spent a balance of time seeing customers and attending to customer administration. The only major difference in how the two groups of Wave 1 advisers allocated their work day is that, as would be expected, very little of the contact time of PAs was spent with ERA customers (only one per cent of a typical day). Although ASAs dedicated less contact time to ERA customers than to non-ERA customers during Wave 1, the amount of time devoted to the former was still appreciable (19 per cent of a typical day).

The separate diary methodologies only allow for direct comparisons between customer contacts for Wave 1 and Wave 2 ASAs. Unfortunately, administrative time was collected differently during Wave 1 and cannot be separated into the amounts devoted to ERA and non-ERA customers. In Wave 1, ASAs typically spent three hours and 50 minutes in contact with their customers. This was over one hour higher than for Wave 2 ASAs. However, the lower rate of Wave 2 customer contact can be partly explained when accounting for contact time with ERA and non-ERA customers. As shown in Table 7.8, the majority of Wave 1 ASA customer time was allocated to non-ERA customers – two hours and 18 minutes versus one hour and 30 minutes, or about 50 per cent more time. But this difference was not as pronounced in the case of Wave 2 ASAs (one hour and 30 minutes of non-ERA customer contact time versus one hour and seven minutes of ERA customer time) as the time with non-ERA customers in Wave 2 was only about a third greater than that for ERA customers. Less time with non-ERA customers during the Wave 2 diary data collection was probably due to the fact that some ASAs were 'ring-fenced' and their work activities confined to ERA while other efforts were made to reduce other ASA non-ERA caseloads.

Table 7.8   Wave 1 and Wave 2 diary comparisons for ASAs and PAs

Activity	Average duration per day (hr:min:sec)			Percentage of total day		
	ASA Wave 2	PA Wave 1	ASA Wave 1	ASA Wave 2	PA Wave 1	ASA Wave 1
Customer contacts	2:37:48	3:31:46	3:49:58	34%	44%	48%
Customer administration	3:33:00	3:54:08	3:42:20	46	49	46
Other	1:35:13	0:34:06	0:27:43	20	7	6
Total day	7:46:01	8:00:00	8:00:00	100	100	100
ERA customer contacts	1:07:11	0:4:59	1:31:52	14	1	19
non-ERA customer contacts	1:30:36	3:26:49	2:18:06	20	43	29
ERA customer administration	1:02:00	-	-	13	-	-
non-ERA customer administration	2:31:00	-	-	33	-	-
Other	1:35:13	0:34:06	0:27:43	20	7	6
Total day	7:46:01	8:00:00	8:00:00	100	100	100
All ERA	2:09:11	-	-	28	-	-
All non-ERA	4:01:36	-	-	52	-	-
Other	1:35:13	0:34:06	0:27:43	20	7	6
Total day	7:46:01	8:00:00	8:00:00	100	100	100

Base: (W2): 430 ASA days for 53 ASAs. (W1):): 415 PA days for 61 PAs ; 471 ASA days for 66 ASAs

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 7.9 details how customer contact time was allocated among each of the three ERA target groups during of the two waves of diary collection, elaborating on the figures presented in Table 7.8. Between wave comparisons reveal that total time dedicated to pre-employment contacts during a typical day fell from one hour and 15 minutes to just 34 minutes while time devoted to post-employment contacts increased from 17 minutes to 32 minutes. This is not surprising because relatively more customers in ERA caseloads had found jobs by the second wave of research. As mentioned in the preceding paragraph, total contact time with ERA customers diminished from one hour and 32 minutes to one hour and seven minutes between the two waves. The reasons for this are not entirely clear. However, one likely reason is that contacts with ASAs became less frequent over time as more ERA customers found jobs, despite the fact that the programme was intended to encourage post-employment contact. In addition, some ERA customers undoubtedly underwent other important life style changes that may have reduced their contact with ASAs.

Table 7.9   ERA customer contacts – Wave 1 and Wave 2 ASA diary comparisons

Activity	Average duration per day (min:sec)		Percentage of total day	
	Wave 2	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 1
NDLP pre	13:54	28:22	3	6
NDLP post	10:03	6:37	2	1
All NDLP	23:57	34:59	5	7
ND25+ pre	20:28	46:27	5	10
ND25+ post	9:38	5:02	2	1
All ND25+	30:06	51:29	7	11
WTC post	12:52	5:17	3	1
All pre	34:22	1:14:55	7	16
All post	32:33	16:57	8	3
All ERA customer contacts	1:07:11	1:31:52	14	19

Base: (W2): 430 ASA days for 53 ASAs; (W1): 471 ASA days for 66 ASAs

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Tables 7.10 and 7.11 are respectively analogous to Tables 7.5 and 7.6 but include data from Wave 1, as well as from Wave 2.[15] A number of conclusions can be drawn from these two tables. First, as expected, the base column for PAs indicates that these advisers reported relatively little contact with ERA customers. Almost all of their contacts were with non-ERA customers (including controls – NDLP and ND25+ customers who were not randomly assigned – and Jobcentre Plus customers from other programmes). Second, the total number of pre-employment contacts with ERA customers fell considerably between Waves 1 and 2 as ERA customers either found jobs or dropped out of ERA. Third, post-employment contacts increased as a proportion of total contacts with ERA customers between the two waves as an increasing number of ERA customers found jobs. However, post-employment contacts did not increase sufficiently to offset the decrease in pre-employment contacts. Thus, as suggested in the previous paragraph, total contacts with ERA customers fell. Fourth, because post-employment contacts were more likely than pre-employment contacts to take place by telephone, the number of telephone contacts between ASAs and ERA customers increased slightly between the two waves, while the number of face-to-face contacts fell considerably. Fifth, as previously mentioned, the duration of telephone contacts was considerably shorter, on average, than the duration of face-to-face contacts. Sixth, there were no consistent differences between the two waves in the average duration of either face-to-face or telephone contacts with ERA customers.

---

[15] There was insufficient data for Wave2-Wave1 comparisons among 'other' forms of customer contact.

Table 7.10   Face-to-face customer contacts – Wave 1 and Wave 2

| Customer group | Wave 2 | | Wave 1 | | | |
| | ASA | | PA | | ASA | |
	Average duration per contact (min:sec)	Base	Average duration per contact (min:sec)	Base	Average duration per contact (min:sec)	Base
ERA customers						
NDLP pre-employment	43:00	97	43:08	16	43:46	265
NDLP post-employment	46:23	75	38:40	3	35:54	51
NDLP all	44:28	172	42:25	19	42:38	316
ND25+ pre-employment	29:00	257	34:51	33	31:54	639
ND25+ post-employment	38:13	55	0	0	37:26	42
ND25+ all	30:37	312	34:51	33	32:15	681
WTC post-employment	49:57	75	0	0	36:01	53
non-ERA customers	32:01	927	34:31	1852	33:12	996
All customers	34:04	1486	34:26	1904	34:25	2047

Base: (W2): 53 ASA diaries; (W1PA): 61 diaries; (W1ASA): 66 diaries all over a ten day observation period.

Table 7.11   Telephone customer contacts – Wave 1 and Wave 2

| Customer group | Wave 2 | | Wave 1 | | | |
| | ASA | | PA | | ASA | |
	Average duration per contact (min:sec)	Base	Average duration per contact (min:sec)	Base	Average duration per contact (min:sec)	Base
ERA customers						
NDLP pre-employment	16:24	107	34:40	3	16:10	105
NDLP post-employment	12:35	66	10:00	1	17:06	74
NDLP all	14:57	173	28:30	4	16:33	179
ND25+ pre-employment	25:38	52	-	0	16:59	87
ND25+ post-employment	28:14	71	-	0	16:57	47
ND25+ all	27:08	123	-	0	16:59	134
WTC post-employment*	15:44	95	-	0	17:58	31
non-ERA customers	14:47	194	14:44	271	15:53	186
All customers	17:33	590	14:56	275	16:31	530

Base: (W2): 53 ASA diaries; (W1PA): 61 diaries; (W1ASA): 66 diaries all over a ten day observation period

Table 7.12 provides information on the average duration of customer contacts during the pre-employment period. WTC customers are omitted from this table because virtually all contacts between advisers and these persons occurred during the post-employment period. The major purpose of the table is to see if the length of pre-employment contacts with NDLP and ND25+ customers who were randomly assigned to the ERA programme is similar to the length of pre-employment contacts with NDLP and ND25+ customers who were not randomly assigned to the programme. If they are similar, then the figures support the assertion that ERA is not demanding more time of advisers before customers enter work, and that they are not devoting more time to supporting typical ERA/NDLP or ERA/ND25+ customers during the pre-employment period than typical non-ERA/NDLP or non-ERA/ND25+ customers. Consequently, all or at least most of the additional cost of ERA that involves advisers would occur during the post-employment period when few non-ERA customers are served by advisers. It is important to recognise, however, that such evidence would be suggestive, not definitive. For example, it is possible that advisers are more frequently in contact with ERA customers during the pre-employment period than with non-ERA customers. It is also possible that they spend more time in administrative work on behalf of ERA customers than non-ERA customers. Unfortunately, the Wave 1 data do not provide the information necessary to determine whether this was the case.

Table 7.12 Average duration of all customer contacts during the pre-employment period

| | Wave 2 | | Wave 1 | | | |
| | ASA | | PA | | ASA | |
Customer group	Average duration (min:sec)	*Base*	Average duration (min:sec)	*Base*	Average duration (min:sec)	*Base*
NDLP/programme	28:36	*209*	41:47	*19*	35:44	*374*
NDLP/control	30:00	*21*	38:17	*93*	36:05	*190*
NDLP/not randomly assigned[a]	32:36	*283*	32:12	*775*	25:49	*459*
ND25+/programme	28:25	*310*	38:51	*33*	30:05	*727*
ND25+/control	15:33	*9*	31:21	*388*	32:32	*160*
ND25+/not randomly assigned[a]	31:45	*379*	29:12	*359*	33:44	*174*

[a] In Wave 1, this includes some customers who were, in fact, randomly assigned, but not specified by PAs and ASAs as either programme or control customers. Such individuals are probably relatively few in number. Moreover, in the case of PAs, almost all such persons were control customers.

The figures in Table 7.12 combine face-to-face interviews, telephone contacts, and other types of contacts such as emails and text messages because the focus is on the overall length of typical contacts, regardless of the form they take. Note that the table includes a substantial number of contacts with NDLP and ND25+ customers who were not randomly assigned to either programme or control status. These contacts are differentiated because they provide additional information about the typical length of contacts. In the Wave 1 diaries, however, some NDLP and ND25+ customers who were, in fact, randomly assigned were not specifically designated by PAs and ASAs as either programme or control customers. These customers, who were probably relatively few in numbers, cannot be distinguished from customers who were not randomly assigned and, hence, are included in the 'not randomly assigned' category in Table 7.12. This problem did not occur during the Wave 2 diary collection.

Focusing on the estimates in Table 7.12 for which the base (i.e., the number of contacts) exceeds 25, it appears that, with one exception, contacts were between 28 minutes and 39 minutes in length, on average. The exception occurred in the case of NDLP customers who were not randomly assigned, where their contacts averaged about 26 minutes in length. Within this fairly narrow range, it is not evident that the length of contacts with ERA customers was either systematically longer or consistently shorter than contacts with control customers or customers who were not randomly assigned. Thus, there seems to be some evidence to support the assertion that advisers generally do not devote more time to a typical ERA customer than to a typical non-ERA customer during the pre-employment period.

7.3   Self-reported allocation of a work day

Table 7.13 provides two alternative estimates of how an average ASA spends a typical day. The first column (self-reported) draws from interviews with ASAs who were asked about how a typical day was allocated among customer and administrative tasks, separated by ERA and non-ERA customer groups. The second column is based on the diaries that ASAs filled out in Wave 2 and is therefore identical to the second column of Table 7.1. As indicated in the table, 53 ASAs filled out diaries, but only a subset of 31 of these ASAs were interviewed. Unfortunately, the data do not allow for comparisons between diaries and interviews for those 31 ASAs who were interviewed as these data sources could not be adequately matched.

Table 7.13   Allocation of the work day: ASA diaries compared to interviews

	Percentage of total day	
Activity	**Self-reported**	**Diary**
Customer contacts	56%	34%
Customer administration	32	46
Other	13	20
Total day	100	100
ERA customer contacts	33	14
non-ERA customer contacts	23	20
ERA customer administration	23	13
non-ERA customer administration	9	33
Other	13	20
Total day	100	100
All ERA	56	28
All non-ERA	32	52
Other	13	20
Total day	100	100
Number of ASAs in sample:		

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

It is evident from Table 7.13 that the interview and diary data diverge considerably. For example, the interviews indicate that ASAs spend more of their day in contact with customers than in performing administrative duties (56 per cent versus 32 per cent), while the diary information suggests exactly the opposite conclusion (34 per cent versus 46 per cent). Perhaps more importantly, ASAs indicated in the interviews that they devoted more of their day to serving ERA customers than non-ERA customers (56 per cent versus 32), while the diaries that they completed again imply the opposite (28 per cent versus 52 per cent).

As discussed in the introduction to the report, time allocation information collected through diaries is considered more trustworthy than time allocation data obtained from interviews because recall errors are less likely to occur – see also the earlier discussion on the differences found for observational work and diaries at Wave 1 in Section 5.2.2. The fact that the two data sources suggest such great differences in the way in which ASAs allocate their day implies that recall errors are probably substantial in the case of the interviews with ASAs. This is of concern because staff time estimates for IB Pathways to Work pilots, which are presented later in the report, rely almost exclusively on interviews.

7.4   Shadow diary comparisons

The Wave 2 study included 'shadowing' ASAs for an entire work day. Researchers filled in a diary template identical to the ASA diary. The purpose of this exercise was to compare observations to self-reported accounts of the work day.

Table 7.14 shows matched ASA and Shadow diaries, averaged across six advisers. Because this analysis is based on few cases, caution should be exercised when interpreting the figures.

As explained in Chapter 6, ASAs were not instructed to account for all the time in their work day while shadow researchers were. This is accounted for in Table 7.14 as nearly 100 per cent of the ASA day is accounted for in the Shadow diaries (leaving only two per cent in the 'other' category) while ASAs typically recorded only 80 per cent of their day (leaving 20 per cent in the 'other' category). Thus it is only fair to compare times devoted to customer contacts and customer related administration as recorded in the ASA and Shadow diaries.

As shown in Table 7.14, the six ASAs tended to slightly over-account for the time they spent on both their customers and their customer related administration. On average, the ASAs recorded 28 more minutes on customer contacts and approximately 32 more minutes on customer administration. This pattern was evident for both ERA and non-ERA customer contacts, however; there were inconsistencies in the times ASAs recorded for customer administration. Compared to the Shadow diaries, the ASAs tended to underestimate administrative time for ERA customers, on average, but they overestimated their time on non-ERA customer administration.

It is not clear why differences between the ASA and Shadow diaries occurred. It may be an artefact of the sample or it may be due to temporal differences as to when activities were recorded. Researchers were able to record activities as they occurred, whereas ASAs were busy performing the activities and were more likely to rely on memory and record timings retrospectively. In conclusion, this exercise supports the assertion that self-reported and observational accounts of work behaviours do not necessarily correspond. Also, as discussed above, advisers tend to overestimate the time they spend with their customers.

Table 7.14   ASA diaries compared to shadow diaries

	ASA diaries		Shadow diaries	
Activity	**Duration (hr:min:sec)**	**% Total day**	**Duration (hr:min:sec)**	**% Total day**
Customer contacts	2:43:20	33%	2:15:20	27%
Customer administration	2:55:30	47	2:23:10	71
All other administration	54:10	12	3:22:40	41
Other	1:30:20	20	10:30	2
Total day	8:03:20	100	8:11:40	100
ERA customer contacts	2:03:50	24	1:49:40	22
non-ERA customer contacts	39:30	9	25:40	5
ERA customer administration	1:09:50	15	2:03:30	26
non-ERA customer administration	1:45:40	20	19:40	4
All other administration	54:10	12	3:22:40	41
Other	1:30:20	20	10:30	2
Total day	8:03:20	100	8:11:40	100
All ERA	3:13:40	39	3:53:10	48
All non-ERA	3:19:20	41	4:08:00	50
Other	1:30:20	20	10:30	2
Total day	8:03:20	100	8:11:40	100

Base: Six ASA days for six ASAs

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

7.5   Booked (LMS) versus reported customer interviews

Customer interview appointments are typically structured and pre-booked for Jobcentre Plus advisers through the computerised Labour Market System (LMS). It is useful to see if reliable information about the time advisers actually spend in contact with customers can be obtained from the LMS. Table 7.15 provides some sense of this by comparing the average number of minutes the 31 interviewed ASAs reported that they *spent* with different types of customers during the day to the average number of minutes that were *booked* for these customers on the LMS.

Altogether, there were 113 booked appointments among the 31 advisers. But, for a substantial number of these (21 cases or 19 per cent) the customer cancelled or failed to show and in the case of four advisers, no booked appointments showed on the day. Among the 92 pre-booked interviews that were carried out, the total duration of interviews that occurred was slightly lower on average compared to the matched booked time (108 versus 123 minutes). It would seem then that the LMS tends to overestimate time spent with customers on a matched interview by interview basis.

However, taking into account the additional 251 customer contacts (both face-to-face and telephone) that were not booked through the LMS, Table 7.14 suggests that the LMS tracked actual time spent with customers fairly well. That is, the additional, unplanned, customer time makes up for the short-fall when pre-booked interviews do not take place. The LMS does tend to consistently overstate face-to-face time spent with customers but not by large amounts. For example, average time booked with ERA customers on the LMS was 50 minutes, while actual face-to-face time spent with ERA customers was 47 minutes (a six per cent discrepancy). The difference for non-ERA customers was somewhat greater: an hour and 24 minutes versus one hour and two minutes (a discrepancy of 26 per cent). The gap between booked and actual face-to-face time mainly results because some booked customers fail to show up for their appointments. Thus, as indicated in Table 7.15, total booked time was two hours and 16 minutes and actual total contact time (including telephone contacts) was two hours and 22 minutes (four per cent discrepancy).

ASA reports on how they fill in the time when customers fail to show for interviews help to clarify these results. All ASAs stated that, in addition to attempting to contact those customers who failed to show, they see other waiting customers or they attend to administrative work.

Table 7.15   Booked (LMS) versus actual ASA customer contacts

	LMS		Actual	
Customer group	**Average duration (min)**	**% customer time**	**Average Duration (min)**	**% customer time**
Face-to-face interviews				
ERA NDLP	12.09	9	11.16	8
ERA ND25+	29.84	22	26.49	19
ERA WTC	8.55	6	9.07	6
All ERA customers	50.48	37	46.72	33
All other customers	84.36	62	62.26	44
Total face-to-face	135.32	100	112.05	79
Telephone contacts ~	–	0	30.63	21
Total all contacts	135.32	100	142.68	100

Base: 31 ASAs

~ includes text messages

Part 2
IB study

8 Background

8.1 IB Pathways policy

The Green Paper, '*Pathways to Work: Helping people into employment*' (2002), set out proposals for piloting new services for Incapacity Benefit (IB) customers. The aim of the pilots is to increase the proportion of IB recipients returning to work (and in turn contribute to the increasing proportion of disabled people in employment). The pilots are intended to build on the support provided through New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP) and the roll-out of Jobcentre Plus.

In October 2003, based on proposals outlined in the Green Paper, changes to IB were introduced on a pilot basis in three Jobcentre Plus districts (phase one) while a further four districts (phase two) began piloting Pathways to Work in April 2004. Further expansions of the pilot occurred in October 2005 and April 2006 and are planned for October 2006. These changes will eventually affect a third of the country.

The recent Green Paper: '*A New Deal for Welfare: Empowering people to work*' (Cm6730, January 2006) announced the intention to incorporate Pathways to Work provision to the full country by 2008.

Initially the pilot was aimed at new and repeat IB customers, i.e., those who had made a claim to IB after October 2003 (Phase 1) or after April 2004 (Phase 2). An extension to existing customers occurred from 7 February 2005, and Pilot districts began to call in existing customers with a benefit claim duration of approximately one to three years for a series of three mandatory Work Focused Interviews (WFIs) to take place at six week intervals. From April 2006, the provision was extended to a further group of existing IB recipients, those with a benefit duration of three to six years.

New/repeat customers are required to attend an initial WFI (as is standard across Jobcentre Plus) after eight weeks of making their initial claim for IB[16], except in cases where the WFI is deferred or waived. Non-attendance at this or any subsequent mandatory interviews can result in deductions from benefit (sanctions). Many new/repeat customers then go on to attend a further five mandatory WFIs at roughly four-week intervals. The customers who are not mandated into the further WFI process are: a) those who are exempted as a result of the Personal Capability Assessment (PCA) (see below); and b) those judged as being most likely to return to work without additional help (assessed using a Screening Tool, see also below). For existing customers, a series of three mandatory WFIs take place at six weekly intervals for all those except the PCA exempt (there is no screening).

To satisfy the requirements for receiving IB, a customer must undergo a PCA. In most cases in the Pathways Pilot areas, this process is fast-tracked so that the results will be available in time for the second compulsory WFI. In cases where the customer is assessed as having a severe illness or disability, they will be exempted from participation in the further mandatory WFI process. In cases of the most extreme illness or disability, the customer is exempted from participation in the PCA process and also from the mandatory WFI process.

The first WFI undertaken by a specially trained IB Personal Adviser (PA) includes a series of questions about health, work history and the likelihood of working in the future. The questions are part of the Screening Tool (a Web-based questionnaire into which PAs input claimants' answers). These answers are then converted into a score that estimates the probability that the customer would still be out of work in 12 months time (without further mandatory activity). This screening test is applied to everyone except those who have been exempted as a result of their PCA. Those who are screened out by the Screening Tool have no further mandatory involvement with the Pathways process as they are deemed least likely to need additional help, but they may participate on a voluntary basis. Those new/repeat claimants who are not screened out must go on to attend a further five WFIs at roughly four-week intervals (if they remain on IB), or three WFIs at six week intervals if they are existing claimants. Those who are deemed likely to return to work anyway are not required to undertake additional interviews, thus saving the staff resource to focus on those who need the most help. It was anticipated in the design of the test that 30 per cent of new/repeat customers would be screened out.

For those not mandated to attend further WFIs, all are eligible to volunteer to meet with an adviser and participate in the Choices elements of the pilot. Specially trained staff, including Personal Advisers (IBPAs) working alongside Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs) and work psychologists, can give the customer access to the Choices menu.

---

[16] Initially a feature of the Pathways pilots this move to hold WFIs at week eight for IB customers became established practice across all Jobcentre Plus Districts from October 2005. Previously non-Pathways areas had held their initial WFI for IB customers in the first few days of making a claim.

To aid the customer in return to work PAs and customers are able to choose from the **Choices** Package, which includes:

- **Return to Work Credit** – £40 per week paid for a maximum of 52 weeks for those entering work of 16 hours or more per week, who are also earning less than the equivalent of £15,000 a year;

- **Condition Management Programme** – individually tailored sessions devised by health professionals, such as occupational therapists designed to help people better manage their condition and prepare for work.

- **Job Preparation Premium** – for those customers who have been claiming for at least nine months a premium of £20 a week (for a maximum of 26 weeks) is available to those who can demonstrate they are undertaking work related activity, e.g. NDDP, as set out and monitored through the action plan.

Customers can also be offered the existing support services for those with disabilities and health conditions: NDDP, Workstep, Work Preparation, Access to Work. A DEA would normally be involved if referral to Workstep, Work Preparation or Access to Work is likely. Customers are also eligible for the support available to all Jobcentre Plus customers: Work Based Learning for Adults and the Adviser Discretion Fund.

In addition to the team of advisers, Administrative Support Officers (ASOs) undertake checks for eligibility, process forms and liaise between different parts of the benefit and support services. Financial Advisers (FAs) are involved in checking benefit eligibility and have contact with an IB customer prior to the first WFI.

8.1.1   Evaluation of Pathways

The evaluation of IB Pathways for new/repeat customers and extensions to existing customers includes the following:

- *An impact assessment* – to examine job entry, benefit off-flows, employability (measured separately for existing and new customers);

- *Qualitative research* – to examine experiences of key stakeholders, PAs, customers, and providers;

- *Quantitative surveys* – to quantify the qualitative experiences and to provide information for the impact and cost benefit studies;

- *A cost benefit assessment* – to assess the total costs versus benefits for Pathways to Work (measured separately for new and existing customers).

Refer to Appendix B for details of the cost benefit analysis for the IB Pathways to Work pilot.

9 IB methodology

Chapter 9 outlines the methods that were used in the study of staff time in the Incapacity Benefit (IB) Pathways pilot.

9.1 Purpose of study

The IB work study was designed to address a number of objectives:

• establish a typical adviser's day, divided into customer and non-customer time;

• compare actual customer contacts to customer interviews pre-booked through the Labour Market System (LMS);

• establish a typical day for Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs), work psychologists, Financial Advisers (FAs) and Administrative Support Officer (ASO);

• establish an average length of initial and repeat Work Focused Interview (WFIs);

• provide information about the content of the WFIs;

• provide some contextual information about how advisers manage their time and in particular how they deal with fail-to-attends.

There was particular interest in determining the proportion of time the various staff spend with existing and new/repeat customers.

9.2 Method

For practical and logistical reasons, the Employment Retention and Advancement project (ERA) and Incapacity Benefit (IB) fieldwork was co-ordinated in those Jobcentre Plus districts where both ERA and IB pilots are implemented. Fieldwork took place during a four-week period commencing 6 June 2005 and ending 1 July 2005. The fieldwork involved observational work in seven IB pilots districts.

Observational fieldwork included two offices per district – one relatively large and one relatively small office – totalling 14 offices in all. Office size was determined by the number of staff and the number of customers served. This balance was

considered important because it is generally believed that the types of tasks staff perform are partly determined by the dynamics of the office size. Offices were selected in consultation with IB District Implementation Managers and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) project staff.

Data collection for the IB study involved:

• brief interviews with Incapacity Benefit Personal Advisers (IBPAs), DEAs, work psychologists, FAs and Administrative Support Staff;

• LMS validation of booked customer WFIs;

• observations of IB Pathways customer WFIs.

The majority of the fieldwork occurred at Jobcentre Plus offices but some interviews with staff were conducted by telephone.

9.2.1   Site observations

Following advice from IB District Implementation Managers and from researchers who had interviewed ERA advisers, it was decided that, rather than collecting information through adviser diaries, the IB study would use LMS bookings of interviews combined with interviews/observations to determine a typical adviser day.

One field researcher was assigned to an office for a day of observations. Within offices, the selection of IBPAs for observation was dependent on the LMS activity scheduled for the day and other information obtained from IBPA Managers/Office Managers, to include staff who were performing a 'typical' day and who were not off site (e.g., training, annual leave) for a portion of the day.

At the start of the work day, the researcher met briefly with the IBPA Manager/Office Manager to review LMS bookings among staff and identify customer interviews for possible observation. Four customer interview observations were targeted per office. The intention was to achieve a mix of initial and repeat interviews for both existing and new/repeat customers. Depending on the size of office and the amount of scheduled activity for the day, these observations ranged from one to three advisers per office.

Next, the researcher met with identified IBPAs to confirm their interview schedules and to arrange permission to observe the selected customer interview(s). If an interview schedule had changed or if a targeted interview observation was cancelled, a similar interview observation was substituted whenever possible. Advisers were also asked their permission to participate in a personal interview later in the day. In preparation, they were asked to keep a timed log of their contacts with customers during the day and to include telephone contacts. They were also asked to record actual durations of customer interviews as well as interview cancellations and fail-to-shows.

When possible, during the office visit and in-between customer interview observations, the researcher met with other available IB Pathways staff (DEAs, work psychologists, FAs and ASOs) and recorded their responses to a structured questionnaire. Refer to Section 9.2.2.

Adviser observations and LMS comparisons

Researchers used a structured instrument to collect information on an adviser's 'typical' day. In this, advisers were asked to estimate the amount of time they typically spend on new/repeat, existing and other (non-IB Pathways) customer groups. They were asked how their time is allocated when a scheduled interview is cancelled in advance or when a customer fails to attend an interview. They were also asked to rank, from a provided list, the proportion of time they typically spend on other work activities outside of customer interview time. Refer to the instrument, 'IB Pilots – LMS Electronic Interview Diary Validation' in Appendix F.

An important component to the IBPA observations was to ascertain how closely the LMS schedule of customer interviews corresponds to actual time with customers. Drawing from the adviser's log of customer contacts during the day, the adviser was asked to report details on each of the LMS scheduled customer interviews and to account for any additional, unscheduled, customer contacts. These details were recorded on the interview proforma.

A total of 27 advisers were interviewed, averaging four per district. All adviser interviews occurred on site and towards the end of a working day and lasted approximately 20 minutes.

WFI observations

Observations of WFIs were used to supply information on the typical length and content of customer contacts. A total of 52 WFIs were observed across the seven districts, representing a mix of initial and repeat interviews for existing and new/repeat customers. Customer participants were provided with a one page summary of the research and verbally consented to be part of the study. Refer to Appendix F for the 'Customer Interview Observation' instrument and coding framework.

Researchers recorded the start and end times of interviews and, referring to a pre-coded list of topics, recorded the topic being discussed at one minute intervals. Times were measured by wristwatch. Researchers also recorded the interview outcome and whether or not the customer was a volunteer to the pilot.

9.2.2 Off site observations

As well as PAs other Jobcentre Plus personnel and specialists involved in delivering the Pathways pilot were interviewed ascertain the proportion of time they typically spend with IB Pathways and non-IB Pathways customers. The majority of this information was collected via telephone (some of the interviews were conducted on site, see Section 9.2.). This methodology was justified on the grounds of practical

reasons, as a cost saving measure and because some of these staff work across multiple sites so they would be more accessible by telephone (Refer to Appendix F for the instruments for these staff).

Four other types of staff were interviewed: DEAs, work psychologists, FAs and ASOs. A total of 43 interviews were conducted (refer to Table 9.1 for the achieved samples). Informants were asked to estimate the amount of time (as a proportion of a typical day) they typically spent with new/repeat, existing and other (non-IB Pathways) customers and to briefly describe the types of help they provide to these customer groups.

Staff informants were selected in consultation with district managers and the DWP project team. Whenever possible, once research interviews were scheduled, informants were sent a letter of confirmation listing the types of information they would be asked to provide. Interviews were approximately ten minutes in length.

A summary of the sample for the IB Pathways fieldwork is presented in Table 9.1. This study of staff time included interviews and observations, although observations were limited to the time IB personal advisers spent (face-to-face) with customers.

Table 9.1   IB Pathways fieldwork

| District | Site observations | | | Telephone interviews | | |
	LMS validation	Customer WFIs	DEAs	Work psychologists	Financial Advisers	Administrative Support Officers
A	4	8	2		1	2
B	4	7	2	1	2	2
C	4	8	2		1	2
D	4	8	2	1	2	2
E	4	8	2		2	2
F	3	5	2	1	1	2
G	4	9	2	1	2	2
Projected total	28	56	14	7	7	14
Achieved total	27	52	14	4	11	14

9.3   Analysis

The research instruments were scanned and verified. Separate EXCEL spreadsheets were created for data captured from each instrument. Data were then translated into SPSS for analyses. No data cleaning was required.

Analysis of comparisons between booked (LMS) and reported interviews was by far the most intricate operation. To report an average adviser interview time for key groups, each recorded duration was allocated to one of 32 analysis categories. For

example, the category variable 'New/repeat – initial – Face' recorded all face-to-face initial interview durations with new/repeat IB customers. Sets of parallel analysis variables were created for both booked and reported interview durations.

The observation level data was then aggregated across each of these categories to create summed durations for each adviser. Mean durations for each of the 32 categories were then calculated for the 27 advisers who were interviewed. These means represent the amount of time advisers spent with each type of customer contact on a 'typical' day.

10 IB results

Chapter 10 presents results from the Incapacity Benefit (IB) Pathways work time study, including data from interviews with IB personal advisers and other pilots staff. In addition, the chapter provides comparisons of Labour Market System (LMS) booked times with actual interview durations and results from Work Focused Interview (WFI) observations.

10.1 IB Personal Adviser time

During a researcher led face-to-face interview, IB Personal Advisers (IBPAs) were asked to account for a 'typical' work day. They were to report the proportion of time they spent with different customer groups, as well as for customer administration, non-customer administration and any remaining time (Refer to Appendix F for the instrument: 'IB Pilots – LMS Electronic Interview Diary Validation'.)

Results are reported for 27 IBPA interviews. Table 10.1 displays the breakdown of a typical IBPA day averaged for the sample. Advisers reported that they spend 82 per cent of their day on IB Pathways customer related tasks. At the time of fieldwork, advisers also reported they were spending more than twice as much time with new/repeat customers (56 per cent of a typical day) than existing customers (26 per cent). Advisers indicated that they devoted a relatively small proportion of a day (11 per cent) to other (non-IB pilots) customers, while the remaining eight per cent of their time was spent on other tasks.[17] It should be noted that findings from the Employment Retention and Advancement project (ERA) staff time study (refer to Section 7.4) suggest that interviews give an inaccurate estimate of time distribution.

Table 10.1 further breaks down the typical IBPA day into customer interview and customer administration tasks. In total, advisers estimated they spent approximately two-thirds (64 per cent) of their day performing customer interviews, a further 29 per cent of their time on customer administration, and the remaining eight per cent on other tasks. Similar to all customer related tasks, advisers estimated they spent more than twice as much of their interview time with new/repeat customers as with existing customers (40 versus 17 per cent). The proportion of time spent on

---

[17] The IB study did not collect diary information from personal advisers.

customer administration was typically estimated to be less than half of the time spent with customers, and this applied to all customer groups.

Table 10.1   Self-reported time allocation by IBPAs

Customer group	*Column percentages ~*
IB new/repeat customer related tasks	56
IB existing customer related tasks	26
All other customer related tasks	11
All other tasks	8
Total	100
IB Pathways new/repeat customer interviews	40
IB Pathways existing customer interviews	17
All other customer interviews	7
Administration for IB new/repeat customers	16
Administration for IB existing customers	9
Administration for all other customers	4
All other tasks	8
Total	100
All IB Pathways customer related tasks	82
All other customer related tasks	11
All other tasks	8
Total	100
Base:	27

Base: All IBPA respondents.

~ Totals do not add to 100% due to rounding.

Advisers were also asked what they typically do when a customer fails to attend a scheduled interview. Respondents most frequently stated that they use this time to contact the missing customer by telephone and/or letter in order to re-book the appointment. Advisers said they also use the time to catch up on administration, book other interviews or see drop-in customers.

To get an indication of the prevalence of work tasks performed outside of customer interview time, IBPAs were asked to rank (from one to nine) items presented in a list of common work tasks according to the amount of time they devote to each task on a typical day, with a lower number indicating a higher frequency of occurrence during the day. The average ranking of these tasks is shown in Table 10.2.

Overall, 'WFI administration' was reported to be the most time consuming task advisers performed outside of customer interview time. Indeed, this was ranked as the primary task by 18 out of the 27 respondents (67 per cent). This was followed by

'Referrals to Choices Package, Disability Employment Adviser (DEAs) and professionals' and 'RTWC/JPP form completion'. Advisers said they spent the least amount of time on their own 'Training', followed by 'Contact with employers' and 'Case conferences'.

Table 10.2 Average rank of non-customer contact tasks performed by IBPAs

Tasks in order of prevalence	Average Rank
WFI administration	1.89
Referrals to Choices Package, DEAs, professionals	3.04
RTWC/JPP form completion	3.37
Contact with other Jobcentre staff	4.30
Job vacancy search	4.48
Staff meetings	6.96
Case conferences	7.11
Contact with employers	7.15
Training	8.07
Base:	27

Base: All IBPA respondents. A lower number indicates a higher frequency of occurrence (ie.one is highest).

10.2 Other IB staff time

Other specialist staff who deal with IB Pathways customers were asked to estimate proportions of time they spend with different customer groups and any remaining time, for a 'typical' day. Unlike the IBPAs, these staff were not asked to account separately for customer administration time (refer to Appendix F for instruments). This breakdown is shown in Table 10.3 for DEAs, work psychologists, Financial Advisers (FAs) and Administrative Support Officers (ASOs).

Reported customer time included all customer related tasks, time interviewing customers and time performing customer administration. All staff reported that most of their work time was spent on customer related tasks. This ranged from 70 per cent of the day among WPs to 91 per cent of the day among FAs. Both WPs and ASOs reported they typically spent substantially more of their day dealing with IB Pathways customers than other customer groups (44 and 76 per cent of the day respectively). In contrast, DEAs and FAs reported they spend a relatively smaller part of their day dealing with IB Pathways customers (31 per cent and 38 per cent respectively).

With the exception of FAs, all staff groups reported they spent the majority of their customer time with Incapacity Benefit recipients. Most staff estimated that they typically spent more time with new/repeat customers than with existing customers.

This was particularly the case for FAs who reported they spent almost all of their IB Pathways time with new/repeat customers (35 per cent new/repeat versus three per cent existing customers) and ASOs who reported they spent twice as much time with new/repeat than existing customers (51 per cent versus 25 per cent). Only the four work psychologists in the study said they devoted more time to existing customers than to new/repeat customers (27 against 17 per cent).

Table 10.3   Proportion of time other staff spend on IB Pathways

				Column percentages
	Staff Roles			
Customer group	**Disability Employment Advisers**	**Work psychologists**	**Financial Advisers**	**Administrative Support Officers**
All IB Pathways customers	31	44	38	76
All other customers	53	27	54	14
All other tasks	16	30	9	10
Total	100	100	100	100
IB Pathways new/repeat	18	17	35	51
IB Pathways existing	13	27	3	25
Non-Pathways IB	23	10	6	8
All other customers	30	17	48	6
All other tasks	16	30	9	10
Total	100	100	100	100
Base:	*14*	*4*	*11*	*13~*

Base: All other staff respondents.

~ One ASO felt they could not allocate proportions of time to specific customer groups.

Staff were also asked about the types of tasks they typically perform for new/repeat and existing customers participating in the pilot. The answers are reported below, separately for each staff group.

10.2.1   Disability Employment Advisers

All but two DEAs (of a total of 14) reported that they support both new/repeat and existing IB Pathways customers. In addition, their caseloads included other customers with a disability or health problem, both jobseekers and those in work. They specifically mentioned Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), IB and young people and advising employers. Most respondents (11 of the 14) stated that the nature of their work had changed since the introduction of IB Pathways. Some DEAs mentioned that the time they spent with IB customers in an advisory capacity had increased; this included the volume of their caseload, as well as the variety of customer types (including the severity of problems). They stressed, however, that they continue to support and work closely with IBPAs.

Most (11 of the 14) DEAs could distinguish the types of support they provided to IB Pathways customers from other customers they helped, but almost half (six of the 14) felt these tasks differed for new/repeat and existing customers. Work tasks specific to the pilot included support that was not being offered to JSA customers such as specific types of referrals, training courses and work benefits/credits. In general, DEAs felt they were able to offer more to pilot customers. Those who said they could distinguish the support they provide to new/repeat and existing customers referred to differences among the customer groups. New/repeat customers were seen as more work ready while existing customers were thought to have more severe problems or to need more emotional support and encouragement.

10.2.2   Work psychologists

Only four work psychologists were interviewed in the study. All reported that they deal with both new/repeat and existing customers and all indicated that the nature of their work had changed since the introduction of the pilot. Two respondents had previously performed a DEA role; one reported an increase in customer volume, while the other reported performing more counselling and vocational support than before.

The work psychologists reported they gave a supportive role to advisers, DEAs and management, particularly focusing on case conferencing and interpretation of customer assessments. They typically spent less direct time with customers. Two WPs said they could distinguish the types of work tasks undertaken for pilot customers, but these did not differ for new/repeat and existing customers. One reported seeing more pilot customers for counselling, while the other reported that their counselling role had lessened because it was being shared with the Condition Management Programme.

10.2.3   Financial Advisers

All but two of the 11 FAs who were interviewed reported that their work involved customers from outside of the pilot. They mentioned processing other benefit claims including Income Support (IS), Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Incapacity Benefits (INCAP) and Carer's Allowance. With regards to the Pathways pilot, all the FAs reported that they worked with new/repeat customers but only two said they worked with existing customers. The FAs indicated that they typically processed application forms and dispensed financial advice to customers. Only four respondents said that their pilot related work was distinguishable from their work with other customer groups, indicating that this work centred on raising awareness about pilot services to eligible customers.

10.2.4   Administrative Support Officers

All but one of the 14 ASOs who were interviewed said they work exclusively on the IB Pathways pilot. ASOs reported that they typically booked WFI appointments, administered claim forms and liaised with IBPAs and customers. More than half (9/14) said they could differentiate between the tasks they perform for new/repeat

and existing customers. For new/repeat customers, this work entailed initial form filling and booking WFIs. For existing customers, ASOs mentioned processing work flow updates as the key task.

10.3   LMS versus reported customer contact times

LMS pre-booked appointments were compared to actual IBPA customer contacts to assess if the pre-booked system might serve as a reasonable proxy for the time advisers spend with their customers. This comparison was undertaken for 27 IBPA days.

Records of booked and actual interviews for the day were totalled and averaged. Altogether, there were 149 booked appointments among the 27 advisers. For a substantial number of these (56 cases or 38 per cent) the customer cancelled or failed to show. For the 93 booked interviews that were carried out, the reported total average duration of interviews during the day was lower than that depicted in the LMS (120 minutes versus 147 minutes for the same interviews). Therefore, the LMS tended to over-represent total customer appointment time by approximately 22 per cent, on an average day.

However, advisers also spent time with drop-in customers and spoke with customers by telephone during the observation day. These unanticipated customer contacts were not recorded on the LMS. Table 10.4 shows that, on average, IBPAs had 239 minutes (approximately four hours) of face-to-face customer interviews booked on the LMS compared to the 146 minutes (approximately 2½ hours) of interviews that occurred on the observation day. This means there were actually 1½ fewer hours (93 minutes) of face-to-face interview time than that recorded by the LMS, or 1¼ fewer hours (75 minutes) of customer contact time if telephone calls are factored in.

These discrepancies were also evident when comparing total booked and reported contact times for specific types of customers (new/repeat and existing) and interview (initial and repeat) types. Average total booked times on the day of observation tended to be substantially longer for all of these.

It would seem, therefore, that the IBPAs spend less time with customers than is depicted by the LMS system. Essentially, the LMS system does not appear to be an accurate proxy for estimating IBPA time with customers.

**Table 10.4   Booked (LMS) versus reported customer contacts –
averaged**

Customer contacts	LMS		Reported	
	Average duration/day (min)	% customer time	Average duration/day (min)	% customer time
Face-to-face interviews				
By customer type				
New/repeat initial	81	34	41	25
New/repeat repeat	50	21	35	21
All new/repeat	131	55	76	46
Existing initial	57	24	30	18
Existing repeat	10	4	11	7
All existing	67	28	41	25
By interview type				
New/repeat initial	81	34	41	25
Existing initial	57	24	30	18
All initial	138	58	71	43
New/repeat repeat	50	21	35	21
Existing repeat	10	4	11	7
All repeat	60	25	46	28
All other customers	40	17	31	19
Total face-to-face	239	100	146	89
Telephone contacts ~	–	0	18	11
Total: all contacts	239	100	164	100

Base: 27 IBPAs

~ includes text messages

10.4   Customer interview observations

In total, 52 customer interviews were observed over seven IB Pathways districts. The composition of these observations is presented in Table 10.5. Although the methodology strived for a balance between existing and new/repeat customers, slightly more new/repeat interviews took place (56 per cent). Similarly, a targeted mix of initial and repeat interview types was dominated by initial interviews (65 per cent). This was particularly the case for existing customers and probably reflects the early stages of the pilot for this group. There were only eight observations involving volunteers to the pilot. Because there were few repeat interview observations (a total of 18), these cases are grouped in the subsequent analyses.

Table 10.5   Customer interview observations – interview types

		Column percentages
	%	Base
New/repeat customer	56	*29*
Existing customer	44	*23*
Total	100	*52*
Initial interview	65	*34*
First repeat	12	*6*
Second repeat	14	*7*
Third repeat	2	*1*
Fourth repeat	6	*3*
Fifth repeat	2	*1*
Total	100	*52*
New/repeat customer initial interview	55	*16*
New/repeat customer repeat interviews	45	*13*
Total	100	*29*
Existing customer initial interview	78	*18*
Existing customer repeat interviews	22	*5*
Total	100	*23*
Volunteer to IB Pathways	15	*8*
non-volunteer	73	*38*
NA	12	*6*
Total	100	*52*

Base: All interview observations.

Table 10.6 summarises the recorded outcome(s) for the interviews and allows for multiple outcomes. By far the most common outcome was the booking of another interview, particularly for repeat interviews. Referrals to services occurred in a quarter of the initial interviews and in a third of the repeat interviews. One-fifth of the initial interviewees were 'screened out'. There were no differences in outcomes for new/repeat and existing customers. 'Other' interview outcomes included: arranging an Advisers Discretion Fund (ADF) loan for commencing employment, deferral of subsequent interviews and the offer of voluntary appointments.

Table 10.6   Recorded outcomes of observed interviews

			Multiple response percentages
Outcome *(in order of prevalence)*	**Initial** **interview**	**Repeat** **interviews**	**All**
Arrange next interview	50	72	58
Referral to services	24	33	27
Customer screened out	21	NA	14
Other	15	11	14
Base:	34	18	52

Base: All interview observations.

Observed interviews ranged from five minutes to one hour in length. Average interview durations are shown in Table 10.7. The average length of an interview was 29½ minutes. Average interview durations were very similar for new/repeat and existing customers. Initial interviews tended to be approximately 50 per cent longer than repeat interviews. The table also breaks down initial and repeat interview durations by customer groups. However, caution should be used when interpreting the average duration of existing repeat interviews due to the low number of observed cases.

Table 10.7   Length of observed interviews

		Average times
Interview type	**Mean time** **(minutes : seconds)**	*Base*
All new/repeat	29:31	*29*
All existing	29:26	*23*
All initial	33:49	*34*
All repeat	21:16	*18*
New/repeat initial	34:29	*16*
New/repeat repeat	23:23	*13*
Existing initial	33:13	*18*
Existing repeat	15:48	*5*
All	29:28	*52*

Base: All WFI observations.

10.4.1   Customer interview content

Interview topics were recorded at one minute intervals. Topics were pre-coded into six main themes and further broken down within themes into 52 sub-topics. (Refer to Appendix F for the instrument and coding sheet.) Two different approaches are used to describe the content of the interviews, examining: i) the sequencing of interview topics and ii) the proportion of interview time devoted to specific topics.

Table 10.8 presents the typical sequencing of content by showing the modal topic that was recorded within five minute interval bands. Eighty per cent of the observed interviews lasted less than 40 minutes, so the analysis ends at this point. Interviews tended to open with a discussion of customers' current circumstances. The body of a typical interview then tended to cover discussion of the customer's physical health, referral to the Condition Management Programme (CMP) and discussion of the Work Focused Action Plan. Monitoring customer participation in the pilot tended to be covered towards the end of an interview. There was no clear modal topic during the 36 to 45 minute interval of the interviews. Note that these main topics in this sequencing analysis also dominated in the breakdown of sub-topics presented in Table 10.9, discussed below.

Table 10.8   Modal interview topics by five minute increments

Min	1 - 5	6 - 10	11 – 15	16 - 20	21 - 25	26 - 30	31 - 35	36 - 40
Topic	current circumstances	physical health	refer to CMP	refer to CMP	physical health	discuss WFAP	monitor participation	–

Another way to describe customer interview content is to measure the frequency of topics and sub-topics recorded across all observations. There were a total of 1,484 observed interview minutes and Table 10.9 presents the proportion of time the main topics were discussed, averaged across all interviews.

Overall, similar proportions of time (about one-fifth of the interview) were given to discussing topics that relate to 'action planning and job matching'; 'initial interview engagement' and 'counselling and other services'. 'Initial customer engagement' occurred in every interview. 'Participation and sanction issues' were covered in just over half of the interviews but were given relatively little time (five per cent of interview time).

The 'other' category of recorded interview activity mainly comprised of topics that were not pre-coded, such as booking another interview or general friendly discussions, or instances in which the interview was interrupted by the PA or the customer briefly leaving the area.

**Table 10.9   Customer interview content – prevalence of main
topics**

		Column percentages
Topics – in order of prevalence	**% of interview time**	**% of interviews** (multiple response)
Action planning & job matching	23	85
Initial customer engagement	22	100
Counselling & other services	20	78
Referrals for services	14	67
Benefits & tax credits	12	54
Participation & sanction issues	5	56
Other	4	39

Base: 1,484 interview minutes for 52 customer interviews.

A breakdown of the main interview topics by customer and interview types appears similar (refer to Tables 10.10 and 10.11), although the distribution of time across the most prevalent topics differs slightly between the groups. As shown in Table 10.10, advisers spent more time on 'action planning and job matching' (29 per cent) with their new/repeat customers while they spent relatively little time discussing 'benefits and tax credits' with them (six per cent). Partly this can be explained by the fact that most (78 per cent) existing customers in the study were participating in initial interviews.

**Table 10.10   Customer interview content – main topics by customer
type**

		Column percentages
Topics – in order of prevalence	**New/repeat customer**	**Existing customer**
Action planning & job matching	29	17
Initial customer engagement	23	21
Counselling & other services	19	22
Referrals for services	10	16
Participation & sanction issues	7	4
Benefits & tax credits	6	19
Other	5	2
Base:	823	661

Base: Interview minutes.

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

A comparison of initial and repeat interviews (Table 10.11) reveals that, understandably, advisers spent more time on initial engagement and discussion of benefits/tax credits during an initial interview than during a repeat interview. Slightly

more repeat interview time was spent on referrals to services, as compared to initial interviews.

Table 10.11   Customer interview content – main topics by interview type

		Column percentages
Topics – in order of prevalence	**Initial interview**	**Further interviews**
Action planning & job matching	22	25
Initial customer engagement	24	16
Counselling & other services	20	21
Referrals for services	12	17
Participation & sanction issues	4	9
Benefits & tax credits	14	5
Other	2	7
Base:	1,114	370

Base: Interview minutes.

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 10.12 provides further detail on the specific interview topics that were discussed. These are presented in order of prevalence for main groups and for sub-topics within main groups. Overall, the observational findings suggest that a minority of sub-topics predominated within main topic groups.

Table 10.12   Customer interview content – prevalence of specific topics

		Column percentages
Topics within groups	**% of coverage (within main groups)**	**% of coverage (total interview time)**
Action planning & job matching		23
Discussion of WFAP	23	5
Discussion of job goal	16	4
Help looking for work/job matching	15	4
Discussion of barriers to work	6	1
Other specific	15	4
All other	25	6
Initial customer engagement		22
Discussion of current circumstances	58	13
Completion of screening tool	23	5
Introduction to Pathways – CHOICES	10	2
Introduction to Pathways – mandatory interviews	4	1
Introduction to Pathways – RTWC	4	1
All other	1	*
Counselling & other services		20
Discussion of physical health	39	8
Discussion of mental health issues	22	4
Discussion of personal or family issues	11	2
Discussion of Adviser Discretion Fund	7	1
Other specific	10	2
All other	11	2
Referrals for services		14
Refer to NHS CMP	47	6
Discuss Return to Work Credit	11	2
Refer to Job Broker	11	2
Other specific	11	1
Other referral	20	3
Benefits & tax credits		12
Other disability benefits	31	4
In-work benefit calculation	23	3
Incapacity Benefit	13	1
Income Support	7	*
Other specific	17	2
All other	9	1
Participation & sanction issues		5
Monitoring participation in activities/services	91	5
Other specific	9	*
Other		4
Total		100

Base: 1,484 interview minutes for 52 customer interviews

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

Part 3 - Evaluation

11 Discussion

11.1 The ERA staff time study

The mix of Employment Retention and Advancement project (ERA) clients who were working and not working at the time of each wave of diary collection may differ from what it would be in an on going program that had reached a steady state. The mix problem for the cost study analysis could be addressed by estimating the total cost of pre-employment and post-employment work by Advancement Support Adviser (ASAs) separately.

The comparisons between the diary collections, showed that the total number of pre-employment contacts with ERA customers had fallen considerably, and post-employment contacts had increased, although not enough to counteract the fall and so total ERA client contact fell.

In the Wave 1 ERA study, face-to-face contacts between advisers and customers during the pre-employment stage were found to be similar for both programme and control groups, except in the case of the New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP) initial interview, where ERA customers received, on average, an extra 15 minutes more contact time. This indicates that no more time was spent for ERA New Deal 25 Plus (ND25+) customers in the pre-employment stage, and therefore, it is possible that the employment and advancement focus was not delivered, or if it was, the time needed was substituted for other topics that would normally be covered in discussions. ERA process study information indicates that the former is the case. In addition, the observational analysis showed that there was very low frequency of retention and advancement topics in observed interviews, usually less than five per cent, which was mostly related to the payment of post-employment bonuses (these probably took place during the post-employment stage). However, for telephone contacts, more time was spent with ERA ND25+ customers, on average, with almost twice as much time (20 minutes compared to 12). Yet, most customer contact is face-to-face, with only 0 to three per cent of the day being spent on all telephone contact[18] by advisers (with the exception of NDLP ERA customers, where telephone contact was six per cent). Finally, for ND25+ customers, the ERA ASAs spent about five per cent more of their day interviewing than did general Personal Advisers (PAs).

---

[18] Pre or post employment.

Analyses of the pre-employment period found no strong customer time differences between programme and control groups. These findings support the existence of no, or very small, additional ERA pre-employment costs for adviser time. The overall amount of time with customers was also quite similar for ASAs and PAs, on average. The Wave 2 diary collection also found no systematic differences in the time spent with programme or control customers during the pre-employment period.

Most of the additional staffing costs for ERA must then relate to the post-employment contact with customers. The Wave 2 diary collection showed that post-employment customer contacts were longer in duration than pre-employment contacts. This finding held for all customer types, and for both face-to-face and telephone contacts. The average duration of face-to-face post-employment contacts varied by customer type, however, with the Working Tax Credit (WTC) group receiving the longest time, on average, with an adviser (50 minutes), followed by the New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP) group (44 minutes) and the New Deal 25 Plus (ND25+) group (31 minutes). Telephone post-employment contact time was much lower, and the variation by customer type was altered, with the ND25+ receiving the most time, on average (28 minutes), close to twice as long as for the other two customer groups. Other types of post-employment customer contact (text and email) could also be time consuming, with a duration of 12 minutes devoted to WTC customers during an average day. The evidence from the Wave 1 diary collection suggests that PAs spend little post-employment contact time with customers in the control groups. This finding highlights the additional time ASAs devote to supporting customers who are in work.

The other mix issue in attributing staff time costs in the cost study analysis is that ASAs did not spend all their time working exclusively with ERA customers, but only a proportion of their time. Regular PAs, in contrast, have little contact with ERA customers. In the Wave 2 diary collection, ASAs were found to spend only 28 per cent of their day, on average, with ERA programme customers, while 52 per cent of their day was spent with other types of customers. Much of the time devoted to non-ERA customers was made up of customer administration.

11.2   The IB staff time study

For the cost study estimates of staffing time for this project, a key observation is the mix of new/repeat and existing customers, and the time devoted to Pathways programme customers. In developing the study measures, it was asserted that potentially all IBPA time with customers would be spent on Pathway programme customers. This is because the Incapacity Benefit Personal Adviser (IBPA) role was developed specifically for the programme, with very few adviser services delivered to IB customers previously. The assumption was largely supported in the study finding that 82 per cent of an average IBPA day was devoted to Pathways customer related tasks. Only 11 per cent of a day was devoted to other customers. The remaining eight per cent of work time was devoted to other non-customer related tasks.

The analysis found that slightly more than twice as much of an average IBPA day was spent with new/repeat as with existing customers (56 per cent versus 26 per cent). This pattern was repeated in the breakdown of customer tasks, where approximately twice as much of the day was spent with new/repeat as with existing customers regarding both average interview times (40 per cent against 17 per cent) and customer related administration (16 per cent against nine per cent).

Other specialist staff that work with the Pathways programme spent varying proportions of their average day with the Pathways customers. Administrative Support Officers (ASOs) spent three-quarters of their average day with Pathways clients, almost as much time as IBPAs. However, Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs), Work Psychologists and Financial Advisers (FAs) spent substantially less time with programme customers. On average DEAs devoted approximately a third of their day (31 per cent) to Pathways customers, FAs devoted 38 per cent and work psychologists spent 44 per cent of their day.[19] The breakdown between new/repeat and existing clients was quite variable, possibly reflecting the differing work roles these staff have. The breakdown of programme customers for ASOs and IBPAs was quite similar, with roughly twice as much time spent with new/repeat than with existing customers (51 per cent to 25 per cent). In contrast, work psychologists reported spending more time with existing than new/repeat customers (27 per cent against 17 per cent), while DEA's spent only slightly more time with new/repeat than with existing customers (18 versus 13 per cent). Finally, Financial Advisers spent almost all their time with new/repeat customers, very rarely seeing existing customers (35 per cent against three per cent).

The Incapacity Benefit (IB) study used self-reported interview data instead of diary or observational methods. As discussed in the next section, the findings should be interpreted with caution because the interview method was found to be biased.

11.3 The work study methodological findings

There is some evidence from the two ERA work studies to suggest that customer interview durations are overstated in self-recorded diaries as compared to observational data and shadowing data. These direct observations by another party are believed to be more accurate, partly because they reduced subjectivity. In the Wave 1 ERA work study, the diary data on interview durations were overstated when compared to the observational data. Similarly, in the Wave 2 ERA work study, the diary data were overstated when compared to the shadowing data. However, the shadow diary findings were based on relatively few cases. In the Wave 1 work study, in contrast, quite a reasonable sample of customer interview observations were collected. However, in general, this type of research is expensive to undertake due to the large number of staffing days required to complete a sample. Inevitably

---

[19] It should be noted that the number of cases on which these estimates are based is small, ranging from four work psychologists to 14 (DEAs).

there is a trade-off between data validity and research costs. Hence, when sufficient study resources exist, and a sufficient sample can be constructed, direct observation or shadowing techniques should be the preferred methods, with self-recorded diaries the best alternative when study resources are limited.

Comparisons between the diary and interview data in the ERA studies indicate that the interview data are not entirely reliable. For example, staff interviews lead to the exact opposite conclusion about the share of the ASA day spent on customer contacts as compared to customer administration. More fundamentally, when using interview data, rather than diary data, the opposite conclusion was reached regarding the proportions of time spent with ERA and non-ERA customers.

These methodological findings have strong implications for the interpretation of the IB work study reported in Chapter 10, which relied on interviews as the primary data source. To improve the robustness of the IB cost study, it is recommended that further estimates of staff time be obtained by using one of the observational or diary methods, but with the same caveat on tradeoffs as above.

Finally, it was found that the Labour Market System (LMS) appointment booking system substantially overstates actual face-to-face interview time for both ERA and IB Pathway customers, especially the latter. This is largely, but not entirely, due to no-shows. But the conclusions for ERA and IB Pathways diverge when the LMS bookings are compared to all customer contacts during the day. This suggests that future studies need to verify the use of the LMS as a proxy for adviser time with customers. Its validity may vary from programme to programme (or customer groups) and with the maturity of the programme. More research is needed in this area.

12   Lessons learnt

12.1   Adviser perceptions of in-house research

The Wave 1 Employment Retention and Advancement project (ERA) research was carried out by Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) researchers. A key problem with conducting research using DWP researchers and other staff it is that is not possible to maintain an image of being independent. Even though it is clear to the DWP researcher that we are conducting research and this will not be used as feedback on the individual performance of advisers, it can be difficult to reassure advisers and managers of this. Consequently, we do not know how this is represented in any raw data that was collected and therefore the bias in our results.

Many advisers felt that this piece of research was actually a time and motion study and were confused as to who the researchers were and where they fitted into DWP. This was not aided by the short fieldwork period for each researcher making it difficult in some cases to get to know staff in any great depth. There was a general sense that we were checking up on the advisers and in some instances advisers would request feedback on their performance in the interview, particularly if they were inexperienced.

Advisers were also unsure what the data would be used for as there was not enough explanation in advance, and the training was also perceived to be far in advance of the fieldwork. However, once researchers explained the situation and the anonymous nature of the work, there was a general easing of advisers' attitudes.

Jobcentre Plus research tip

Liaise with the relevant programme project team to ensure you send the correct information and letter to Jobcentres you are visiting in advance and take copies of the letters with you during the fieldwork.

12.2   Consent and access to interviews

To access interviews, in particular, the issue of consent became a tricky concept. There was no requirement to ask advisers or customers for written consent as we did not intend to merge the data to other existing DWP data sources and therefore verbal consent was the approach used in the research.

However, the advisers essentially gained proxy consent for us to sit in on interviews often explaining to the customer that we were there to check up on the adviser which would generally place the customer at ease. This approach worked well in that there were few refusals from customers although some advisers did not wish to take part from the beginning and so were not observed. However, this also means that the adviser was selecting who may participate and effectively filtered in or out certain types of interviews or customers as they saw appropriate. Ultimately, this could impact on the final sample and results.

> **Jobcentre Plus research tip**
>
> To ensure a consistent approach regarding consent and access to interviews, make sure that you specify a script in advance to ensure all customers and advisers are given the same facts. It is good practice to provide a leaflet containing the key facts.

12.3   Anticipating inflow

It was difficult to get an understanding of the level of customer flow in advance to guide the planning of the fieldwork. This meant that some researchers found it difficult to achieve a reasonable volume of interview observations as sometimes there were few customers in the office they were in on the day.

A technique which may have helped this would have been to obtain adviser electronic LMS diaries the week before fieldwork to identify the best offices to visit. But there are also problems with this approach as the adviser diary does not give the best indication of customer levels, due to the failure to attend rates and drop-in interviews. When not sitting in on pre-booked interviews it can be difficult to predict drop-ins and gain access to these In some offices, for example, due to space issues the offices only dealt with customers who have appointments in advance. This practice may be helpful to planning fieldwork.

> **Jobcentre Plus research tip**
>
> When planning interview observations you can use adviser diaries as a guide. However, always ensure that you get the relevant manager to print off the report which identifies interviews being conducted in the office each day rather than individual adviser's daily diaries. This way it will be easier to plan which interview to sit in on.

12.4   Observer effects

Researchers reported instances where they felt that their presence had altered the interview in either a positive or negative sense. This means that an adviser may have been stricter with a customer than they perhaps would have been normally or the customer and adviser did not discuss certain issues due to a third party being involved. Advisers were also visibly nervous about being observed during some of the interviews, particularly if they were new or inexperienced. It is good practice to talk through the observational template after an interview to reassure advisers. Some were interested in what they had spoken about and for how long.

Jobcentre Plus research tip

It is good practice and a legal right for the adviser and customer to be shown the information collected about them even if it is anonymous. Therefore you should not record anything that you would not be happy to share with research participants.

12.5   Improvement to stencils

Additional space was required on observational forms to add qualitative notes to provide context to interviews and results. This extra information must be taken into account when interpreting any quantitative analysis. It was felt that the observational form did not capture all activity and could be improved and refined. Perhaps a larger pilot with more researchers would have assisted.

Researchers conducting observations of interview content found it difficult during interviews to identify codes to accurately describe occurrences and there were specific problems differentiating between code 1.8 and all of code 3. (Refer to Appendix C for the observational tool.) There were often a wide range of benefits discussed during a one minute period which we may not have captured but we did ask researchers to use their discretion when choosing the primary code and so have to accept the limitations of the research design.

12.6   Adviser skills

During an interview, advisers often moved from one topic to another without an apparent simple structure. However they were very good at talking about the jobs and the training that was on offer in their area along with a high level of knowledge of the benefit system. Advisers were seen as being able to highlight the most important messages for a customer. Anecdotally, researchers spoke about how the adviser support was bound by the customer's own motivation to move into work and that they were generally receptive to customer's problems.

Also important to engaging customers was an adviser's ability to make formal processes seem less formal. This can happen despite the fact that advisers are expected to perform a large amount of administrative tasks which often can get in the way of dealing with customer needs. One problem mentioned was how advisers could often assume what the customer needs without fully exploring what the customer would like or need.

DWP researchers lessons learnt

DWP researchers found the research experience useful as it helps in familiarising and understanding the difficulties in delivering new programmes or pilots.

Researchers felt that they had refreshed their primary data collection skills and learnt some of the practicalities of observing advisers in Jobcentre Plus. This experience should prove useful when designing and commissioning research with external contractors.

It was useful to see how random assignment can be delivered in Jobcentre Plus on a large scale.

Appendix A
ERA staffing form

A.1 Instructions for filling in the staffing form

The Employment Retention and Advancement project (ERA) Technical Adviser is to complete a staffing form for all offices in their district **on the last Friday of each month**. Please send the form in within a week after this.

The objective is to describe fully the number of staff, their grade and how staff in each office work with various types of customers. Be sure to enter the district name at the head of each form, and the date. Also enter the Advancement Support Adviser (ASA) turnover details. All staff that deal with ERA customers should be included in the list—that is, the staff member who deals with Working Tax Credit (WTC), New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP) or New Deal for 25 Plus (ND25+) customers, regardless of whether they are in ERA programme groups or the control group or not part of the research sample.

All levels and types of staff should be included—that is, all ASAs and Personal Adviser (PAs), their supervisors, any clerical staff that support them, any clerical intake staff that deal with members of the target groups, and any other staff that deal with customers in the target groups.

Ideally, fill out a computerised version of the form. That way you can start out with the previous month's form, and only make the modifications that are necessary.

If it is done that way, only the first time you do it should involve a lot of time, but be careful all updates have been added.

NOTES:

Staff designation
Indicate the job title for their role, e.g. **ASA**, **PA**, **clerical**, **supervisor**, etc.

Grade
Indicate the grade of their appointment e.g. **Band B administrative officer**.

Percentage of FTE
Use a fraction to indicate whether the staff member works full-time or less, e.g. fulltime = **1**, half time = **0.5**

Customer group
Enter a **P** if the staff member works only with the customers in the ERA **programme group**, **C** if the staff member works only with customers in the control group and/or customers who are not in the research sample, **B** if the staff member works with customers in both the programme and control groups.

Use only **one** customer group code, the one that best describes the customer group with which the staff member works.

Customer target category

Please state customer groups in full in the column entry, that best describes the customer mix with which with which the staff member works. Examples are shown below.

Office

If the staff member is 'peripatetic', please list **all** offices they work at e.g. **Abergavenny/Monmouth**

Examples of 'Customer target category'

Please state customer groups in full in the column   Use the groups ND25+, NDLP, WTC, other New Deals.
ND25+ only
ND25+ and other New Deals (except NDLP)
NDLP and WTC
NDLP only
WTC only
ND25+, NDLP, and other New Deals
ND25+, NDLP, other New Deals, and WTC
ND25+ and WTC
ND25+ and NDLP only

Please record on **sheet 2 (Overview)** overall staffing details and then detail on **sheet 3 (Detail)** all staff in post on the last Friday of the month who deal with ERA customers.

Please record overall staffing details

DISTRICT NAME	DATE	Record of ASA turnover	How many ASA left their post in the last month?	How many new ASA staff started in the last month?

Please detail in the list all staff in post on the last Friday of the month, who deal with ERA customers.

Staff Designation/JobTitle	Staff member name	Grade and level equivalent hrs	% of FT	Customer group	Customer target category	Office

Appendix B
Overview of the ERA and IB cost studies

B.1   Overview of ERA cost study

The cost analysis is an integral part of the of the Employment Retention and Advancement project (ERA) evaluation which shows how much money it takes Jobcentre Plus to deliver a pre and post employment initiative by Jobcentre Plus. As an element of the cost-benefit study, the cost analysis will offer an important set of benchmarks against which the benefits of the programme can be compared. This is essential information for assessing the cost effectiveness of separate elements of the programme and to inform future discussions on post-employment services delivered by Jobcentre Plus. It may also provide important insights into how greater efficiency and possibly enhanced cost-effectiveness might be achieved in a national programme if expenditures on some features of the programme, or in some sites, appear unreasonably high.

The key questions to be answered by the cost study are:

• How are total programme costs distributed among different programme components?

• How are total programme costs distributed among different customer groups?

• How do the costs vary by geographic area?

• What costs are incurred for ERA directly or indirectly by different government agencies?

• For how long after they enrol do participants in the programme continue to generate costs for the Government?

To answer these questions a series of steps need to be accomplished which are described below:

Step 1. Enumerate the program components. Each of the cost components of ERA needs to be enumerated and it is important to make sure that no programme activities that generate costs have been overlooked.

Step 2. Determine participation rates. The fraction of the programme group that participated in each ERA activity needs to be determined for each target category. Similar information also must be obtained for the control group when they participate in similar activities. To do this, before counting an individual as participating, it will be necessary to first define the minimum level of activity required—for example, a week of training or an hour spent with an ASA. For the purposes of the cost analysis, it is useful to define this minimum level of activity as an 'activity unit'. Much of the information needed to compute participation rates will be obtained from the customer surveys for the Impact Study and administrative records.

Step 3. Determine the number of activity units. As part of the customer and staff survey and administrative data it will be necessary to determine the number of units of each activity that each respondent received. Once data on the number of activity units are obtained, they can then be averaged over those persons who participated in the activity to determine the amount of each ERA service received by participants in the activity. This value can then be multiplied by the participation rate for the activity to determine the average number of activity units received by a typical individual (i.e. non-participants, as well as participants). These computations will all be done separately for the three target categories and for the programme and control groups.

Step 4. Compute total staff cost. The ERA programme and control group are served by intake workers and Advancement Support Adviser (ASAs) and supported by administrative and management staff associated with these roles. The total direct cost of employing these persons (i.e., their salary and fringe benefits) can be determined from wage and overhead estimations. This can then be apportioned among the three target categories and between the programme and control groups on the basis of the relative number of units of staff time they receive (see Step 3).

Due to the implementation and set up of ERA in districts, advisers who serve members of the ERA programme and control groups also serve other non-ERA customers in certain circumstances. Thus, to determine the proportion of their total costs that should be ascribed to other Jobcentre Plus customers, a diary approach is required to compute the fraction of their total caseload that is made up of non-ERA customers. This report deals with the outcomes of the diary measures in Chapters 5 and 7.

Step 5. Determine the Jobcentre Plus overhead rate. The cost estimates obtained in Step 4 will include costs that accrue to Jobcentre Plus advisers who are directly involved in serving members of the programme and control groups, but not costs associated with support staff, such as secretaries and supervisors, and the costs of various physical resources, such as furniture, telephones, and physical facilities. To take account of these latter costs, it will be necessary to multiply the values obtained in Step 4 by an overhead rate for each site.

Step 6. Determine the costs of the financial incentives; expenditures from Adviser Discretionary Funds (ADFs); the cost of training received by ASAs, and expenditures on training, childcare, transportation, etc. provided directly or paid for by Jobcentre Plus. The data necessary to compute these costs will be obtained directly from administrative records. With the exception of the cost of special training received by the ASAs, it should be possible to identify the costs incurred by each target category directly from these records. ASA training costs will be apportioned among the three target categories on the basis of the relative number of units of ASA time that they receive.

Step 7. Obtain unit cost values. The cost of one activity unit (see Step 2) is called a 'unit cost'. One way to determine the total cost of a particular activity is to multiply its unit cost by the average number of activity units received by a typical individual in the programme or the control group (see Step 3). However, estimates of unit cost values are often difficult to obtain and are somewhat problematic when they are available. Fortunately, in the case of the ERA cost analyses, unit costs values are required to compute relatively few cost components. Specifically, they are needed to estimate the cost of training and other services (such as assistance in job search and access to special services) if these services are not directly provided or paid for by Jobcentre Plus and, only then, if there are appreciable differences in the amounts of these services received by the programme and control groups.

Step 8. Compute costs per customer. In the ERA impact evaluation, outcomes such as earnings will be measured as averages for the programme and control groups. However, many of the cost components are more naturally estimated as totals for an entire group—for example, the total cost of providing ASAs to serve the programme group. For the purposes of the cost-benefit analysis, the outcome and cost estimates must be made comparable. Doing this will simply require dividing the total cost values for each group by the number of persons in the group.

Step 9. Compute total gross costs per customer. To complete this step, it will only be necessary to sum the estimates of the individual cost components that were obtained from the previous steps. This step will be done separately for the three target categories and for the programme and control groups. The result will be an estimate of the total costs incurred by each group—that is, their total gross costs.

Step 10. Compute net costs per customer for each of the three target categories. Gross costs are converted into net costs by subtracting gross cost per control group member from gross cost per programme group member. Net costs

will provide an estimate of the impact of ERA on costs and, therefore, in conducting the cost-benefit analysis, are the appropriate values to compare to estimates of ERA impacts on outcomes.

B.2   Determining ERA costs

The cost study requires a matrix of information to obtain an accurate cost for the services received by customers in the programme and control group. Table B.1 indicates what information is required to complete the individual stages of the cost work also highlighting where this will be sourced from.

Table B.1   Total ERA costs: percentage distribution by component for all districts combined[20]

Component	Sub-component	Percentage	Source
Pre-employment			
Adviser costs			
	direct interview time,	%	Staff Survey
	Administration	%	Staff Survey
	indirect interview time and unallocated[1] tasks		Staff Survey
Adviser services			
	adviser discretion fund		Administrative files
	childcare		Administrative files
	ND training courses		Administrative files
Post-employment			
Adviser costs			
	direct interview time,		Staff Survey
	administration		Staff Survey
	indirect interview time and unallocated[1] tasks		Staff Survey
Support services			
	emergency discretion fund		Administrative files
	childcare		Administrative files
	training courses		Administrative files
ERA financial incentives			
	training incentive		Administrative files
	retention/employment incentive		Administrative files
Externally sourced services	uptake of other training		Customer survey

[1] Unallocated in regard to customer group (NDLP etc) or program group (ERA/control).

---

[20] Taken from Genevieve Knights note dated 20th May 2004.

B.3   Calculating adviser costs

When introducing an initiative into existing Jobcentre Plus services, a financial estimation of costs for implementing the service needs to be calculated. This ensures the allocation of sufficient resources to the relevant Jobcentre Plus offices for the forthcoming year. These estimations are based on standard costs for a full-time adviser and then multiplied depending on the anticipated customer participation rate and average staff caseload.

For Jobcentre Plus initiatives, where dedicated advisers are assigned to the delivery of the pilot, these estimates are relatively accurate. However, in the case of ERA, the majority of advisers are multi-tasking and delivering other services as well as ERA. Therefore, to avoid over-estimating the cost of implementing ERA by simply assuming all advisers are working full-time on the service, it is necessary to gauge more accurately adviser time spent on ERA related tasks.

The key aim of the adviser diaries were to determine how the time of each member of a sample of ASAs and Personal Adviser (PAs) is apportioned among the eight ERA groups, as well as among any customers who are not part of the ERA sample. Table 3.2 distinguishes between members of the ERA research sample who are employed and not employed, rather than between pre- and post-employment, because some of these persons (including Working Tax Credit (WTC) recipients) will enter and leave each state several times during the demonstration. This distinction does not need to be made for controls, as little adviser cost will be incurred for those controls who are employed; but it is made for the ERA research sample, because the adviser cost of serving them will depend on whether they are employed.

Table B.2   Customer groups targeted in the ERA study

	ERA sample		Control sample	Non ERA customers
Target Group	Not employed	employed		
ND25+	X	X	X	
NDLP	X	X	X	
WTC	X	X		
Other				X

The findings presented in Chapters 5 and 7 provide information for determining total staff costs in delivering the ERA programme by completing all of Table B.2 and the adviser pre-and post-employment costs of Table B.1. They also provide additional information on the sub-components of adviser direct interview time such as the frequencies of face-to-face and telephone interviews.

Information highlighting content of interviews is also presented, but cannot be used to provide information on the cost of specific components of interviews. The cost analysis involves the calculation of ERA costs including expenditures on financial incentives, training for programme participants, adviser salaries, and overheads that Jobcentre Plus offices incur.

B.4   Overview of IB Pathways cost study

The cost-benefit analysis will indicate whether the monetary benefits from IB pilot measures outweigh their monetary costs from a societal point of view and, hence, whether they are economically efficient. It will also indicate whether the pilot measures improve the wellbeing of existing claimants who receive the services provided and what the net effects of the measures are on the Government's budget. Thus, it will provide information critical to any decisions concerning whether to extend some or all of the interventions to Jobcentre Plus districts beyond the pilot districts.

The impact analysis will provide estimates of the benefits resulting from the pilot measures, but before the cost-benefit analysis can be completed, it is necessary to conduct a cost analysis. The two methodologies are dealt with separately below.

The new/repeat and existing IB Pathways to Work pilots deal with different populations of the disabled and, while there are similarities in the intervention, there are also important differences. Thus, *separate* impact, cost, and cost-benefit analyses will be conducted.

Because most of the data that will be used in these analyses is at the individual-level, and individuals can be readily identified as to whether they are existing or new/ repeat customers, this generally causes little problem. However, as discussed below, there are a few cost-components where special efforts will have to be made to separate costs incurred by serving the existing from costs incurred by the new/ repeat. The possibility that new post-employment services will be provided to either existing or new/repeat customers is ignored.

B.5   The IB pilots cost study

As just indicated, the cost study will be an essential element of the Pathways to Work cost-benefit study. As such, it will offer an important set of benchmarks against which the benefits of the pilot measures can be compared. In addition, the cost study is of interest in its own right because it will show the amount of funding required in operating an initiative of this kind. This is essential information for assessing the potential government expenditures if a decision is made to expand the intervention to other Jobcentre Plus districts.

In conducting the cost study, the intention is to take account of the fact that when policymakers and administrators want to know about costs, especially for budgeting purposes, they really want to understand costs from a variety of angles, not just the aggregate cost of funding a programme of a given size. Because the Pathways to Work pilot programme consists of a number of different provisions, it will be especially important to examine how costs are distributed among these different components. It will also be of interest to learn how costs vary among the pilot sites. In addition, it will be useful to see how long participants in Pathways to Work continue to generate costs for the Government after they enrol. Such information is

essential for planning purposes if the pilot measures are to be expanded to other Jobcentre Plus districts. Findings from the cost analysis may also provide important insights into how greater efficiency and enhanced cost-effectiveness might be achieved if expenditures on some of the provisions tested by the pilots, or costs in some pilot sites, appear unreasonably high.

Cost analyses, although seemingly straightforward, are actually very challenging because the data requirements are stringent, data are needed from diverse sources, and some of these data are difficult to obtain.

Steps in estimating the costs of the Pathways to Work existing extension

The cost analyses can be viewed as involving the following steps:[21]

Step 1. Enumerate the program components. Each of the cost components of the Pathways to Work existing extension needs to be enumerated to ensure that no programme activities that generate costs are overlooked. Much of this work will be accomplished by the qualitative research. However, members of the cost analysis team have already made visits to several of the pilot sites for the purposes of determining the cost of Pathways to Work for new/repeat claimants and will continue to make such visits after the extension to existing customers begins. One purpose of these visits is to ensure that they fully understand how the provisions being tested actually operate in the field.

Step 2. Determine staff costs at the pilot sites. For the existing claimants, three Work Focused Interviews (WFIs) are currently planned and a pre-WFI contact process may be introduced. New/repeat claimants are required to attend an initial WFI eight weeks after their initial claim is made, and then a series of five mandatory interviews if screened into taking part in the pilot (see Section 8.2.2 describing the Pathways provision).

The cost analysis will require information on the number of interviews that actually take place for each customer and the length of the interviews. The first WFI will probably be longer than the next two and a pre-WFI would almost certainly differ in length from the others. Consequently, separate information will be needed on the length of each interview in the sequence. Getting the necessary data is complicated by the fact that the same PAs will probably conduct Work Focused Interview (WFI) for both the existing and the new/repeat. Moreover, some PAs may serve both Incapacity Benefit (IB) customers and other customer groups. It is not clear whether the Labour Market System (LMS) provides accurate information on the number of interviews. However, even if it does, it provides no information on the length of interviews.

[21] The procedures necessary to conduct a cost analysis of a pilot programme are described in greater detail in Chapter 2 of David Greenberg and Ute Appenzeller, Cost Analysis Step by Step: A How-to-Guide for Planners and Providers of Welfare-to-Work and Employment and Training Programs, New York: MDRC, 1998.

A useful approach to determining staff costs associated with the WFIs is to have the PAs keep diaries of all their work activities for (say) a two-week period each year during the evaluation period. Ideally, similar diary information will be collected for PAs serving members of the comparison group as for PAs serving members of the intervention group. The work study reported subsequently in this chapter reflects a different approach however, and no information is collected in non-pilot areas, so there is no comparison group information.

The data from the diaries would be used in combination with information on the average salaries of the PAs. Data on PA salaries are available from Jobcentre Plus financial records. Data on the number and type of staff involved at each pilot office would need to be collected, for those dealing with the pilot with similar information gained for control areas.

Step 3. Determine the costs of the components of Choices Package. Determining the costs resulting from the use of various components of the Choices package will involve a three step procedure.

Step A. Determine participation rates. The fraction of the customer group that participates in each of the pilot activities needs to be determined. Similar information also must be obtained for the sample of individuals used as the comparison group when they participate in similar activities. To the extent possible, participation rates should be computed for those activities that currently exist for the pre-pilot period, as well as for the period after the pilots are initiated. This will allow the same difference-in-differences methodology that will be used in the impact analysis to be applied in estimating the effects of the pilots on costs. To determine participation rates, it will first be necessary to define the minimum level of activity required to count an individual as participating—for example, a day of work preparation or a week of Work-Based Learning or a week of conditioned management. For the purposes of the cost analysis, it is useful to define this minimum level of activity as an 'activity unit'.

Much of the information needed to compute participation rates will be obtained from the quantitative surveys. Indeed, many of the required questions have already been developed for purposes of the ongoing evaluation of how Pathways to Work affects IB new/repeat customers. However, data from the IB Reform Pilots Evaluation Database will also be used to the extent possible. For example, information on the number of existing customers that receive conditioned management is supposed to be available from this database. Hence, the database can be used to help assess the reliability of the survey data and to make adjustments to it. Importantly, administrative data for both the pre- and post-pilot periods should be available on participation in such existing programmes as New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP), Work-Based Learning for Adults and work preparation.

For the purposes of estimating participation rates, the necessary data for each activity will have to be available from either the quantitative surveys or from administrative data. Moreover, these data should be available for both those

enrolled in the pilots and for members of the comparison group. Ideally, the needed data would be available from both sources so that they can be cross checked against one another for reliability and errors can be corrected.

Step B. Determine the number of activity units. As part of the customer surveys, it will be necessary to determine the number of units of each activity that customers receive—for example, the number of weeks of conditioned management or number of days of work preparation. To the extent possible, data from the customer surveys will be backed up by information obtained by using the IB Reform Pilots Evaluation Database. This is important because although customers may have a fairly good idea of whether they ever participated in a given activity, they may not adequately recall the length of time over which they participated. Once data on the number of activity units are obtained, they can then be averaged over those persons who participated in the activity to determine the amount of each service received by participants in the activity. This value can then be multiplied by the participation rate for the activity to determine the average number of activity units received by a typical existing customer. In doing this, separate computations will be made for customers being served by the pilot programme and for members of the comparison group.

Step C. Obtain unit cost values*. The cost of one activity unit (see Step A) is called a 'unit cost'. One way to determine the total cost of a particular activity is to multiply its unit cost by the average number of activity units received by a typical Pathways to Work enrolee in the IB pilots or a typical member of the comparison group (see Step B). Unfortunately, estimates of unit cost values are sometimes difficult to obtain and are somewhat problematic when they are available. However, they will be needed only for those services for which there are appreciable differences in the number of activity units received by IB customers enrolled in the pilot programme and individuals in the comparison group. Thus, analysis of the first IB customer survey of existing customers will be used to determine the activities for which unit costs are needed and then attempt to obtain the required values. In some key instances, this should be relatively straightforward. For example, unit cost information for the NDDPs is already available from a recent cost analysis of that programme and estimates of unit costs for conditioned management appears in the proposals written by several of the pilot districts.

Step 4. Determine overhead rates*. The cost estimates obtained in Steps 2 and 3 will include salary and fringe benefit costs that accrue to staff involved in serving members of the programme and control groups. However, they may not incorporate overhead costs such as the costs of various physical resources – for example, such as furniture, telephones, and physical facilities. Thus, it will be necessary to take account of these costs by multiplying the values obtained in Steps 2 and 3 by an overhead rate, which equals total annual expenditures divided by total annual expenditures on staff salaries and fringe benefits. The values for this calculation can usually be obtained from administrative records.

Step 5. Determine the costs of the Job Preparation Premium (JPP), the Return To Work Credit (RTWC); expenditures from the Advisers' Discretion Fund; and expenditures on training, day care, transportation, etc. provided directly or paid for by Jobcentre Plus. The data necessary to compute these costs should be readily obtainable directly from Jobcentre Plus administrative records.

Step 6. Compute costs per customer. In the impact evaluation, outcomes such as earnings will be measured as averages for IB existing customers qualifying for the programme and for members of the comparison group. Programme impacts on costs will then be computed as the differences in the average values for these two groups. However, many of the cost components are more naturally estimated as totals for an entire group—for example, the total cost of providing the JPP. For purposes of the cost-benefit analysis, the outcome and cost estimates must be made comparable. Doing this simply requires dividing the total cost values for each group by the number of IB existing customers enrolled in Pathways to Work.

Step 7. Compute total gross costs per customer. To complete this step, it will only be necessary to sum the estimates of the individual cost components that were obtained from the previous steps. This step will be done separately for existing customers enrolled in Pathways to Work and for those in the comparison group. The result will be an estimate of the total costs incurred by each group—that is, their total gross costs. To the extent the necessary data exist, gross cost will be estimated for the pre-pilot period, as well as for the period after the pilots began.

Step 8. Compute net costs per customer. Gross costs are converted into net costs by subtracting gross cost per comparison group member (from matched control areas) from gross cost per existing customer enrolled in Pathways to Work. Therefore, net costs will provide estimates of the impact of the Pathways to Work pilot on costs and, therefore, in conducting the cost-benefit analysis, are the appropriate values to compare to estimates of net impacts on such outcomes as earnings and benefit receipts, as these will also be computed as differences between customers enrolled in the Pathways to Work pilot and the comparison group. In computing net costs, the difference-in-differences method will be used whenever possible.

B.6 The Cost-Benefit Study[22]

A simplified and preliminary accounting framework for use in conducting the cost-benefit analysis appears in Table B.1. The plus and minus signs indicate whether each item is expected to be a benefit (+) or cost (+) from the perspective of three groups: IB existing customers and their caretakers (if any), the Government (which is defined to include the benefits system and the National Health Service (NHS)), and the whole of society. As indicated, benefits and costs to society are simply the

---

[22] For a detailed description of cost-benefit analysis, see Anthony Boardman, David Greenberg, Aidan Vining, and David Weimer, Cost-Benefit Analysis: Concepts and Practice, 2nd edition, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2001. The third edition of this text is currently under preparation.

algebraic sum of benefits and costs to the first two groups. Values in the third column that equal zero (e.g. Jobseeker's Allowance and IB payments) are called 'transfers' because the changes in benefits to IB customers are fully offset by changes in their costs to the government. Notice that it is anticipated that customer receipt of transfers under most benefit programmes will fall, resulting in Government savings. However, this obviously will not occur in the case of the WTC or the JPP and the RTWC, both of which will be tested in the pilot sites. As implied by the exhibit, it may also not occur in the case of Job Seeker's Allowance if customers leave IB and some claim JSA instead.

The tentative framework that appears in Table B.1 will be further developed and refined during the evaluation. Part of this refinement will depend on how the pilots operate in the field and, therefore, will be informed by some of the early qualitative research, as well as by field visits to pilot sites.

Costs and benefits can only be directly compared and a bottom line net benefit estimate can only be obtained if all values are expressed in pounds. Thus, although they are listed in Exhibit 1, the value of potential indirect effects of the Pathways to Work programme on such important social problems as poverty and social exclusion, as well as any effects on the wellbeing of caretakers, partners, and children, will not be included in computing the bottom line net benefit estimate. However, based on information from the customer surveys and the qualitative research, the manner in which such effects might change the net programme benefit estimate if they could be measured in pounds will be considered in making an overall assessment success of the pilot programme.

Health status is also listed in Table B.1. However, putting a monetary value on improvements in health is obviously difficult, although it seems especially important to do so in evaluating a programme targeted at claimants of Incapacity Benefits. Fortunately, in recent years there has been much work in measuring health status changes in terms of quality-adjusted life-years (which combines information on the number of additional years of life with the quality of life during those years) and on the monetary value of an additional year of life. If it proves possible to estimate the impact of Pathways to Work on health status, this research will be examined to see if the values needed to estimate the monetary value of improvements in health status are available.

Table B.1   **Stylised Cost-Benefit Accounting Framework for the IB Pilots**

Impact of the Pilots on —	IB Customers and Caretakers	Government	Society (row sum)
Earnings	+	0	+
Fringe benefits	+	0	+
Tax payments	-	+	0
Work-related expenditures	-	0	-
Income Support	-	+	0
Jobseeker's Allowance	+	-	0
Disability Allowance	-	+	0
Attendance Allowance for carers	-	+	0
Incapacity Benefits	-	+	0
Disability Living Allowance	-	+	0
Working Tax Credit	+	-	0
Job Preparation Premium	+	-	0
Return To Work Credit	+	-	0
Housing Benefits	-	-	0
Council Tax Benefits	-	-	0
Child Tax Credit	-	-	0
Cost of administrating transfer benefit programs	0	-	-
Health status*	+	0	+
Carer, Partner and Child wellbeing*	+	0	+
Social exclusion*	+	0	+
Poverty*	+	0	+
Use of NHS services	0	+	+
Net cost of operating pilots	0	-	-
Net effect of pilots (column sum)	?	?	?

*This benefit component probably will not be measured in pounds, but will instead be assessed qualitatively.

B.7   Steps in producing the cost-benefit estimates

The cost-benefit analysis will use a cost-benefit framework that is similar to those suggested by Table B.1. The cost-benefit analysis will focus on the overall costs and benefits of the pilot programme — that is, on the total benefits and total costs resulting from the combination of services provided by the Pathways to Work existing extension. However, if it proves possible to determine the separate impacts of each element of the Choices package of interventions, the value of each of these impacts will be compared to the cost of providing that specific service. The cost-benefit analysis will involve the following six steps:

Step 1. Assemble the pertinent information produced by the impact analysis, cost analysis, and other analyses. As previously discussed, the values of most of the benefits, costs, and transfers needed for the cost-benefit analysis will be produced by other components of the evaluation that precede the cost-benefit analysis, especially the impact analysis and the cost analysis. For example, the impact analyses will produce an estimate of the effect of the Pathways to Work existing extension on earnings and on benefit payments and the saving resulting from any decreased use of NHS (and similarly for new/repeat claimants), while the cost analysis will provide an estimate of the net cost of operating the programme. Because the benefits and costs will be measured in net terms—that is, as impacts of the pilot programme — they will exclude deadweight.

Step 2. Estimate the values of those items that have not been previously estimated. The value of a few of the items listed in Exhibit 1 will need to be estimated as part of conducting the cost-benefit analysis. For example, the IFS tax and benefit model will be used to determine the proportion of any increases in earnings that result from the pilots that would be paid out as taxes. The effect of the pilot measures on the receipt of fringe benefits will be obtained by multiplying the estimated earnings impacts by the fringe benefit rate for low-wage workers. Although we have not yet attempted to find this rate, we anticipate that it will be available from existing publications. If it is not, the information necessary to develop the rate will be obtained from the customer surveys. A similar approach will be used to estimate the programme's effect on work-related expenditures such as child-care costs and transportation. In this case, the quantitative surveys will be used to determine the fraction of their earnings that working respondents spend on child-care and transportation. Separate fractions will be computed for lone parents and two-parent families and for respondents who work full-time and part-time.

Step 3. Predict how the benefit, cost, and transfer values will change over time. The values of some of the items listed in Exhibit 1 will change over time. This is particularly true of the impacts of Pathway to Work on earning and the receipt of various transfer benefits such as Incapacity Benefits and JSA. These changes must be taken into account in conducting the cost-benefit analysis. Taking account of changes in earnings impacts over time is especially important because, as mentioned above, the estimated value of a number of different items (e.g. the impacts of the programme on fringe benefits and work-related expenditures) at a particular point in time will be a function of the size of the estimated earnings impact at that point in time. To the extent program impacts at a particular point in time are directly observed, taking account of changes over time does not present a problem to the cost-benefit analysis. However, the cost-benefit analysis will be based on observed impacts for only a few years. If at the end of this observation period, the Pathways to Work programme is observed to be still having impacts on benefit payments or on earnings, as is likely, these impacts will almost surely extend into the future. However, there will be considerable uncertainty about how long they will last, whether they will grow or shrink, and the rate at which they will change. Thus, in the case of both cost-benefit analyses, it will be necessary to extrapolate impacts into the future if they are still occurring at the end of the period during which they can be observed, and assumptions will be required to do this.

Given assumptions about how gross earnings will evolve over time, the IFS tax and benefit model is a useful tool for extrapolating effects on net earnings (tax and benefit payments) to future years. Thus, the model will be used for this purpose. To develop assumptions about how gross earnings will evolve over time, we will turn to two recent US studies that examine how programme impacts change over time. The first of these studies (Greenberg, Ashworth, Cebulla, and Walker 2004) suggests that the earnings impact of a typical mandatory US welfare-to-work program for lone parents that has been evaluated by random assignment grows for two or three years and then declines, disappearing about six years after random assignment. The second study (Greenberg, Michaloupoulos, and Robins 2004) found evidence that the earnings impacts of US voluntary training programmes funded by the Government initially grew and then remained undiminished for adult women, but first grew and then diminished for adult men, reaching zero after about six years. These studies not only provide information on the timing of the changes in earnings impacts, but on the rates on growth and decline. However, they pertain to the US, not the UK, and unlike the IB pilots, they do not pertain to programmes that are targeted specifically at people with a health problem or disability, although they do focus on programmes targeted at the disadvantaged. Thus, although we plan to use findings from these studies as a starting point in making the assumptions necessary for extrapolating the impact estimates into the future, we also plan to test the sensitivity of our findings to several alternative sets of plausible assumptions.

Step 4. Adjust the benefit, cost, and transfer values for inflation. As many of the benefits, costs, and transfers that will result from the Pathways to Work existing extension will accrue at different points in time, they must be adjusted for inflation; otherwise they will not be comparable to one another. In conducting the cost-benefit analysis, we plan to convert all monetary values to 2004 pounds, the same year that will be used for the cost-benefit analysis of the Pathways to Work pilot for new/repeat customers. It is important that the same year be used so that findings from the cost-benefit analyses for the new/repeat and existing groups can be compared to one another.

Step 5. Discount the benefit, cost, and transfer values to convert them to present values. Because benefits, costs, and transfers accrue at different points in time and because amounts that will be received or expended later are valued less than similar amounts that will be received or expended sooner, it is standard practice in cost-benefit analysis to use a discount rate to convert all streams of benefits, costs, and transfers to their present value. Otherwise, values that accrue at different points in time cannot be appropriately compared. Computing present values is readily accomplished by using a formula that is built into standard computer spreadsheet software. However, the appropriate discount rate to use in doing this is contentious (for example, see Moore, Boardman, Vining, Weimer, and Greenberg 2004). Based on an extensive review of the literature on discounting for cost-benefit purposes, Moore, Boardman, Vining, Weimer and Greenberg 2004 conclude that the appropriate discount rate is between two percent and five per cent and suggest using a value of 3.5 per cent. The UK Treasury Green Book also suggests using a rate

of 3.5 per cent. Thus, we tentatively plan to use 3.5 per cent in conducting the cost-benefit analysis, but to also use two per cent and five per cent to see if the findings are sensitive to the choice of the discount rate.

Step 6. Add the benefit values from each perspective and subtract the cost values to obtain an estimate of the total net present value of the Pathways to Work existing extension from each perspective. The step is entirely mechanical and can be readily accomplished once Steps 1-5 are completed. A positive net present value from a particular perspective would indicate that the Pathways to Work existing extension is cost-beneficial from that perspective.

B.8 Methods for obtaining IB staff costs

Differences between the ERA and Pathways to Work pilots have led to different approaches to determining staff resource. This is explained below.

B.8.1 The ERA example

For the ERA project, technical advisers for each ERA pilot completed organisational charts and staff lists of the key staff delivering ERA, including office managers, PAs (for control group) and Advancement Support Advisers (for programme group). These were used as a basis to sample offices and staff to complete diaries detailing their activities over a two week period. Additional observations were undertaken by Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) staff to record the time and content of interviews with programme and control customers. Diaries and observational work were repeated to measure changes over time.

B.8.2 Differences between ERA and IB Pathways

Having established an effective methodology for ERA there was an advantage in adopting a similar approach. However, the many differences within the two programmes resulted in a decision to adopt a different approach. These differences are explained below:

1 The resource for the IB Pathways to Work programme is more complex. When thinking about resource, clearly advisers are important but there are changes within other key processes around benefits, first contact, employer engagement and supports to PAs such as Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs) and work psychologists which need capturing.

2 Pathways are not being evaluated through random assignment, but through matched comparison areas (using pre and post pilot difference in difference analysis). These matched comparison areas are not discrete areas since each local authority in Pathways has been matched against a corresponding local authority using indices of deprivation developed by ONS. The matched local authorities could be anywhere, so each Pathways district will have a series of matched comparisons across the country. The comparison areas are made of separate offices rather than complete districts. In terms of estimating resource in the absence of Pathways it was not possible to use these as they do not represent

recognisable resource units for Jobcentre Plus. Within Jobcentre Plus resource needs to be calculated within discrete districts.

3 The Pathways pilots do not employ technical assistants who are resourced to implement the evaluation and therefore, it was not possible to rely on staff locally having time to complete a template.

4 There are two separate impact and cost benefit analyses, one for new/repeat customers and one for the first stage of the extension to existing customers (those on IB for up to two years prior to the start of Pathways).

B.8.2   Estimating staff resource for the IB Pathways pilots

The first stage was to understand the different staff resource being deployed and then to measure the proportion of time spent with IB customers, differentiating between new and existing.

Visits to each of the District Implementation Managers

The first task was to understand the different staff resource, in terms of types and grade of staff, deployed within the pilot and the extent to which this differed across the pilots. For example, whilst the pilots received resource for benefit processing it may not be a key resource within the Pathways process.

Unlike the ERA project where staff completed stencils/templates indicating staff resource for Pathways to Work, researchers within the evaluation team arranged to visit and interview a representative (usually the District Implementation Manager (DIM)) and others in the local Pathways team.

The objectives for this work were to establish:

• The IB process from first contact and benefit processing through to employer engagement;

• How this process differs by pilot to establish the actual process and resource than the design process or standard operating model;

• Current resource (by grade and type of job);

• If possible, the extent to which the IB resource has changed following the introduction of Pathways;

• Whether this resource includes additional staff introduced as a result of the extension to existing customers;

• Office resource compared to district resource;

• Dedicated Pathways resource (e.g. IBPAs) compared to First Contact (spending just an additional seven minutes per call to an IB customer on Pathways).

A semi-structured questionnaire was developed to elicit the needed information. This was piloted in one district.

The outputs from this work, currently under development, are expected to be a list of all staff by job function who work on the pilot, estimated proportions of their time spent on IB and within this existing verses new/repeat.

The intention of asking for a position on staff resource allocated to IB customers prior to the pilots is to attempt to estimate additional Pathways resource. In the Cost Benefit model the costs need to be the net costs.

Staff resource in Pathways areas

The key roles within IB Pathways vary from pilot to pilot but tend to include:

Administrative Support Officers (ASOs). The role of an ASO can include: pre-WFI contact for new/repeat, checking the scan and producing MI spreadsheet for existing, providing training and guidance to PAs (admin managers only), checking RTWC, liaising between benefit processing and PAs. The way this resource is deployed differs: most had a centralised team (often within the District Office) but others used the resource across the offices.

Financial Advisers. Meetings with FAs are often the first face-to-face contact a new IB customer would have with Jobcentre Plus and provides an opportunity to record their details on Labour Market System (LMS), explain about the Personal Capability Assessment (PCA) and explain about both the mandatory and voluntary elements of the Pathways. It also reduces the chance of the initial WFI being taking up with benefit processing and financial issues. In some pilots FAs were seen as being a crucial part of benefit processing.

Incapacity Benefit Personal Advisers. IBPAs received specialised training to enable them to conduct a series of WFIs with IB customers. In most pilots each PA saw both new and existing customers rather than being allocated separately to see one customer group. In addition to the duties expected of PAs in terms of WFIs and managing caseloads there is recognition that time and support is needed in terms of training and providing support for dealing with more difficult customers.

Disability Employment Advisers. For most Districts, DEAs work with IBPAs and deal with the harder to help cases. DEAs are still seeing JSA customers as well. Some Districts use the DEA and IB role more interchangeably. Districts have worked with limited additional DEA resource by refocusing the existing DEA role.

Work Psychologists. All Districts talked about work psychologists being an under-used resource prior to Pathways. Districts were previously unsure about the role which WPs played and because it was a regional resource Districts felt unable to call on WPs for much support. The Pathways reforms have changed this and all Districts have found the extra FTE for Pathways to be useful for mentoring, training and case conferences. The extent to which WPs are part of a team with DEAs and PAs differs across the pilots and is still being developed in some.

Other staff roles. Other staff are involved, such as First Contact Officers, benefit processes, appeals staff and visiting officers but the impact of Pathways on their role is not significant enough to measure in this cost study.

For information on evidence to date, please refer to the following published reports:

In-house analysis

Incapacity Benefit reforms – Pathways to Work Pilots performance and analysis, DWP Working Paper no. 26, January 2006

Commissioned Reports

Incapacity Benefit Reforms – the Personal Adviser Role & Practices: Stage Two, National Centre for Social Research, DWP report no. 268, Sept 2005

IB Reforms Pilot: Findings from a longitudinal panel of customers, Social Policy Research Unit, DWP report no. 259, July 05

Incapacity Benefit Reforms - The Personal Adviser Role & Practices, National Centre for Social Research, DWP report no 212, Nov 04

Incapacity Benefit Reforms - Early findings from qualitative research, National Centre for Social Research, DWP report no 202, Sept 04

These are available from www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/

Appendix C
ERA Wave 1 instruments

Instrument 1: Stencil for adviser self-recording of tasks performed each day

CODES

ERA GROUP

P	ERA programme group
C	ERA control group

CUSTOMER GROUP

LP	New Deal Lone Parent
25	ND 25 +
WTC	Working Tax Credit
IB	Other customer group
50	ND50
NDYP	New Deal for Young People

INTERVIEW TYPE

IN	Initial interview
CA	Case loading
PE	Pre employment ERA Only
PO	Post Employment ERA only

TYPE OF CONTACT

F	Face to face
T	Telephone
TX	Text message
E	E-mail

ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

IR   Interview related
NIR   Not interview related
B   Completion of BIF

OTHER TASKS

AO   All others[23]

---

[23] This relates to all tasks which would include meetings, lunch breaks and general JC+ work.

Diary sheets – Day 1

START TIME	FINISH TIME	INTERVIEW TYPE	TYPE OF CONTACT	ERA GROUP	CUSTOMER GROUP	ADMINISTRATIVE	ALL OTHER TASKS

Instrument 2: ERA Wave 1 Interview Observation Coding Framework

1   **Initial Customer/Customer Engagement**

1:1   Introduction and discussion of ND25+ programme

1:2   Introduction and discussion of NDLP programme

1:3   General discussion of lone parents children

1:4   Discussion of current circumstances

1:5   Introducing ERA

1:6   Completion of BIF

1:7   Customer refuses ERA (please state why)

1:8   Discussion of pre employment services available

1:9   Discussion of post employment services available

2   **Benefits - Explanation of benefits available**

(including rights and responsibilities) or help claiming them

2:1   Conducts in work benefit calculations

2:2   Jobseeker's Allowance

2:3   Incapacity Benefit

2:4   Income Support

2:5   Housing Benefit

2:6   Working Tax Credit

2:7   Council Tax

2:8   Back To Work Bonus

2.9   Child Benefit

2.10   Travel to work scheme

3	**Pre Employment Supportive Services**
3:1	Referral to alternative New Deal
3:2	Discussion of barriers to work
3:3	Advising on local child care
3:4	Discussion ERA Advancement Action Plan
3:5	Discussion of action plan
3:6	Discussion of training
3:7	Help looking for a job or vacancy
3.8	Encourages customer to 'hold out' for a better job
3.9	Discussion of job interview outcomes
3.10	Discussion of forthcoming job interview

4	**Referrals for Services**
4:1	Refer for screening/assessment
4:2	Refer for job search class or job readiness class including motivational courses
4:3	Refer for in-work training including WBLA
4:4	Refer for basic education
4:5	Refer for help with development of CV
4:6	Refer for post-secondary education
4:7	Refer for vocational training including voluntary work
4:8	Referral to Sure Start Unit

5 **Providing Counselling or Other Services (including WFIs)**

5:1 Financial issues (including opening bank accounts)

5:2 Mental health issues

5:3 Substance misuse issues

5:4 Domestic violence issues

5:5 Other personal or family issues

5:6 Legal issues

5:7 Physical health

5:8 Child support

5:9 Housing issues (e.g., landlord/tenant)

5:10 Other

6 **Participation/Sanction Issues**

6:1 Monitoring customer/customer participation in program services/ activities

6:2 Discusses non-compliance issues

6:3 Threatens with sanctions

6:4 Applies sanction

6:5 Decision Making and Appeals decision discussed

7 **Discussion of Retention**

7:1 Discussion of customers attitude to current employment

7:2 Discussion of problems in current job

7:3 Encourages customer to learn basics about their job

7:4 Addresses transport to current job

8 **Discussion of Advancement**

8:1 Talks of increasing hours

8:2 Talks of taking on extra duties in work

8:3 Discusses asking for pay rise

8:4 Suggests looking for permanent job

8:5   Talks about taking on a part time job in another area

8:6   Discuss career goals and steps to achieve

8:7   Discussion around customers ideal job

8:8   Taking up training to advancement

8.9   Discussion of advancement relating to self employment

9   Payment of Financial Incentives

9:1   Training bonus paid

9:2   Training fee paid

9:3   Emergency discretion fund paid

9:4   Retention bonus paid

9.5   Payment of ADF

Interview Content Schedules

INTERVIEW DETAILS

Interviewer code:

Location Code:

INTERVIEW TYPE

Please circle all section below to indicate the type of interview:

ERA GROUP	CUSTOMER GROUP	INTERVIEW TYPE
P ERA programme group C ERA control group	LP New Deal Lone Parent 25 ND 25 + WTC Working Tax Credit	IN Initial interview CL Case load

Using the coding sheet provided, during each five minute period please code the activities the advisers undertook during the interview. Once you have done this please indicate in the final column which of these was the primary activity during that period.

Time		Activities observed during interview							Primary Activity
Time Interval	Actual Time								
5									
10									
15									
20									
25									
30									
35									
40									
45									
50									
55									
60									
65									
70									

Please indicate the customer's motivation to the content of the interview. 5 indicates high motivation and 1 indicates low motivation.

1	2	3	4	5

Reason for refusal:

Appendix D
ERA Wave 2 data cleaning

Data cleaning is listed instrument by instrument.

Diary template recording admin tasks

One manual 'force edit' was carried out on an end time of 5:40:00. It was assumed to be 15:40:00.

Two generic force edits were also carried out on these data.

- 22 observations with ND50 customers were recorded as being in the ERA programme group. We decided to edit these customers to be in the ND25+ target group.

- 130 observations recorded as 'All other admin tasks' and coded with an ERA group were force edited to be Customer Group 'other'.

Diary template recording **customer interviews**

Three end dates were manually edited. 11:00 was altered to 17:00, 7:25 was altered to 17:25 and 5:05 was changed to 17:05.

Several generic force edits were also carried out on these data:

- 33 observations were multiply coded on Customer Group. We edited combinations of customers to preserve the target customers groups we were interested in. For example if both **wtc** and **ndlp** were coded we kept the **wtc** code.

- Any observations with ND50 customers recorded as being in the ERA programme group were edited to be in the ND25+ target group.

- Any non-target customers (IB, ND50 etc) who were recoded as being in the ERA programme group were edited to be non-ERA and the interview type was edited to be 'Initial/other'.

- Any **initial** or **other** interviews recorded with target customers (NDLP, ND25+ or WTC) that were recorded as **ERA Programme** were edited to be **pre-employment** interviews.

- Any **pre-** or **post-employment** interviews recorded with target customers (NDLP, ND25+) that were recorded as **non-ERA**, were edited to be **initial/other** interviews.

- Any **pre-** or **post-employment** interviews recorded with target customers (NDLP, ND25+ or WTC) that were recorded as **ERA Control** were edited to be **initial/other** interviews.

After matching aggregated 'day' admin level data with 'day' level interview data further editing was carried out on the matched data.

- 79 cases where the recoded day length on the admin data did not match the recorded day length on the customer interview data were edited. The default edit was that the day length recorded on the customer interview data was used except for five cases where the admin data seemed more likely.

- 29 cases had had either a missing admin or customer record and for these cases the total day duration was set to the recorded duration set on the administrative or interview record for that ASA day.

- one day level case was completely dropped from the matched and aggregated data set. All the customer contact variables were blank on the original data and the admin record for that day (506002 15-JUN-2005) was missing.

Shadow diary template recording admin tasks

Three observations with zero durations were edited with reference to the original diaries.

These observations had end times equalling start times. For two of the tasks we added one minute to each end time to allow valid calculation. The remaining task was dropped.

No other force editing was required.

Shadow diary template recording customer interviews

- three **post-employment** interviews with **'other'** customers that were also recorded as **ERA P**rogramme group were edited to be **non-ERA**, **initial/other** interviews.

- Any **initial/other** interviews with **ND25+ P**rogramme customers were edited to be **pre-employment** interviews.

After matching aggregated 'day' admin level data with day' level interview data further editing was carried out on the matched data.

- one case where the recoded day length on the admin data did not match the recorded day length on the customer interview data was edited. The day length recorded on the customer interview data was used.

ERA LMS validation data – customer interviews

Case by case editing was carried out on this data set with reference to the original completed instruments.

> **Example**
>
> For ASA code=1202 with a booked LMS duration of 60 minutes this interview was recorded as with an **NDLP** customer, **non-ERA** and **pre-employment**. This was edited to be an initial/other interview.

Appendix E
ERA Wave 2 fieldwork instruments

Adviser Time Diaries

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION

We are asking you to fill in a diary for ten consecutive work days, 6-17 June 2005. Your diary pack includes two types of forms to be used each day – one for recording customer interviews and one for recording administrative tasks. On the Customer Interview form, please record start and finish times for all contacts with customers including interview type, contact type, customer group and ERA group. On the Administrative Tasks form please record start and finish times for administration related to customers (recording customer group and ERA group) and all other (non customer) administrative tasks (e.g., paper work, emails, meetings, etc.). If you require more space on a day, please continue recording activities on an additional Customer Interview or Administrative Tasks form, remembering to record the same date and start and end times.

Your diaries will be collected at the end of the ten day period by your ERA Technical Adviser.

NOTE: We are not asking you to account for your entire day. You do not need to record times for activities that are not covered on the forms such as lunch, training or holidays, as long as you record your start and finish times each day.

WHEN FILLING OUT THE DIARY:

• Please complete the forms in **BLACK** or **DARK BLUE** ink.

• On **both** the Customer Interview and Administrative Tasks forms please record the date (day/month/year) and the time you started and the time you ended your work day.

• Please mark the **CENTRE** of the appropriate box with a **CROSS**, like this ☒.

• If you mark the wrong box, please fill in that box completely like this ■ and make your correct selection with a cross.

If you have any questions about the research or the diary task, please contact your ERA Technical Adviser. You may also contact the research project manager, Sandra Vegeris, on 020 7468 0468 or email vegeriss@psi.org.uk

Thank you for participating in this research*.*

Diary template for recording CUSTOMER INTERVIEWS performed each day

merge code

Please enter today's date:

DAY	MONTH	YEAR
		0 5

Please enter when you started and when you ended work today:

START | : |

END | : |

CUSTOMER INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW TASKS		Interview Type				Type of Contact				ERA Group			Customer Group						
Start time	Finish time	Pre employment ERA only	Post Employment ERA only	Initial interview	Other	Face to face	Telephone	Text message	E-mail	ERA programme group	ERA control group	Non-ERA Customer	New Deal Lone Parent	New Deal 25 +	Working Tax Credit	Incapacity Benefit	New Deal 50	New Deal for Young People	Other
.	.																			
.	.																			
.	.																			
.	.																			
.	.																			
.	.																			
.	.																			
.	.																			
.	.																			
.	.																			

Diary template for recording ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS performed each day

merge code

Please enter today's date:

DAY	MONTH	YEAR
		0 5

Please enter when you started and when you ended work today:

START   END

: :   : :

ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

	CUSTOMER-RELATED ADMINISTRATION		ALL OTHER ADMIN
	Customer Group	ERA Group	

Start time	Finish time	New Deal Lone Parent	New Deal 25+	Working Tax Credit	Incapacity Benefit	New Deal 50	New Deal for Young People	Other	ERA programme group	ERA control group	Non-ERA Customer	All other administrative tasks
: :	: :											
: :	: :											
: :	: :											
: :	: :											
: :	: :											
: :	: :											
: :	: :											
: :	: :											
: :	: :											
: :	: :											

Shadow Time Diaries

Instructions for completion

This activity runs parallel to Adviser Time Diaries. There are two types of forms to be used each day – one for recording customer interviews and one for recording administrative tasks. On the Customer Interview form, please record start and finish times for all contacts with customers including interview type, contact type, customer group and ERA group. Customer interviews are to be checked against the adviser's Advanced Booking System (ABS) diary for the day. A printout of this should be with you. If you require more space on a day, continue recording activities on another Customer Interview form, recording the same date and start and end times for the day.

On the Administrative Tasks form please record start and finish times for administration related to customer interviews (recording customer group and ERA group) and all other (non-customer interview) administrative tasks. Please specify the nature of the other administrative tasks (e.g., paper work, job vacancy search, correspondence, meetings, lunch, tea break, etc.) in the space provided. If you require more space on a day, continue recording activities on another Administrative Tasks form, recording the same date and start and end times for the day.

NOTE: The aim is to account for the entire adviser day. Occasionally ask the adviser for clarification of an activity, remaining as unobtrusive as possible. Please remember to record the start and finish times.

When filling out the diary:

• Please complete the forms in **BLACK** or **DARK BLUE** ink.

• On **both** the Customer Interview and Administrative Tasks forms please record the date (day/month/year) and the time the adviser started and the time the adviser ended her/his work day.

• Please mark the **CENTRE** of the appropriate box with a **CROSS**, like this ☒.

• If you mark the wrong box, please fill in that box completely like this ■ and make your correct selection with a cross.

Shadow Diary template for recording customer interviews performed each day

CODE

Please enter today's date:

DAY	MONTH	YEAR
		0 5

Please enter when you started and when you ended work today:

START : :

END : :

CUSTOMER INTERVIEWS

Customer Group

- Other
- New Deal for Young People
- New Deal 50
- Incapacity Benefit
- Working Tax Credit
- New Deal 25 +
- New Deal Lone Parent

ERA Group

- Non-ERA Customer
- ERA control group
- ERA programme group

Type of Contact

- E-mail
- Text message
- Telephone
- Face to face

Interview Type

- Other
- Initial interview
- Post Employment ERA only
- Pre employment ERA only

INTERVIEW TASKS

Start time ..   Finish time ..

Shadow Diary template for recording administrative tasks performed each day

CODE [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]

Please enter today's date:

DAY	MONTH	YEAR
[ ]	[ ]	0 5

Please enter when you started and when you ended work today:

START	END
..	..

CUSTOMER-RELATED ADMINISTRATION / **ALL OTHER ADMIN**

Customer Group:
- New Deal Lone Parent
- New Deal 25+
- Working Tax Credit
- Incapacity Benefit
- New Deal 50
- New Deal for Young People
- Other

ERA Group:
- ERA programme group
- ERA control group
- Non-ERA Customer

ALL OTHER ADMIN:
- All other administrative tasks
- Specify

ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS — Start time / Finish time

ERA - LMS Electronic Interview Diary Validation

[To be filled in by interviewers, comparing booked customer interviews with actual customer contacts]

District:
Derby	☐
Gateshead	☐
Manchester	☐
N London	☐
Scotland (HICC)	☐
S E Wales	☐

ASA type (mark ⊠ ALL boxes that apply):
ERA New Deal LP	☐
ERA WTC LP	☐
ERA New Deal 25+	☐
ERA control customers	☐
non-ERA customers	☐

ID CODE (District | Office size | Case)

LMS / ABS diary date: Day | Mo 0 6 | Yr 0 5

Research interview date: Day | Mo 0 6 | Yr 0 5

Enter when work day started and when work day ended:

START [ ][ ] : [ ][ ]   END [ ][ ] : [ ][ ]

Questions for end of work day:

[Researcher to add up duration of actual customer contacts from LMS-to-reported comparison. Ask:] You spent approximately __ minutes with customers today or __ % of your day.

Do you consider this to be a typical day?   Yes ☐   No ☐

[Clarify] About what proportion of your typical day would you spend with: [enter zero if not at all]

ERA customers? [ ] %

non-ERA customers? [ ] %

About what proportion of your typical day would you spend on tasks related to customer administration with: [enter zero if not at all]

ERA customers? [ ] %

non-ERA customers? [ ] %

[Add up reported percentages and report difference from 100%] That means about __ % of your typical work day is spent on other tasks, that is, tasks not related to specific customers such as meetings, training, etc. (excluding lunch and tea breaks)?

Is this correct?   Yes ☐   No ☐

[Clarify % for remaining work time and enter] [ ] % remaining

IMPORTANT: Check that the 4 recorded percentages sum to 100%

One final question, if a customer fails to show for a scheduled interview [refer to today if this occurred], what do you typically do? (prompts: try to get in contact with the customer, see other drop-in customers, do paperwork, etc.)

ERA comparison of booked and reported customer contacts

CODE

Note: Mark ☒ interview/contact type, ERA & customer group for each contact. For fail-to-show, booked interviews, enter '00' for reported duration. For additional nonbooked customer contacts, enter '00' for booked duration.

12.6.1.1.1.1.1.1 CUSTOMER INTERVIEWS

Interview Type				Type of Contact				ERA Group			Customer Group							CONTACT DURATION IN MINUTES	
Pre employment ERA only	Post Employment ERA only	Initial interview	Other	Face to face	Telephone	Text message	E-mail	ERA programme group	ERA control group	Non-ERA Customer	New Deal Lone Parent	New Deal 25 +	Working Tax Credit	Incapacity Benefit	New Deal 50	New Deal for Young People	Other	LMS Booked	Reported

Appendix F
IB fieldwork instruments

IB Pilots - Telephone Interview Schedule

Administrative Officers

Instructions to researchers:
- Confirm that informant has received a summary of the research and briefly recap;
- Confirm their consent to be interviewed.

District:

Bridgend	☐
Derby	☐
East Lancashire	☐
Essex	☐
Gateshead	☐
Somerset	☐
Scotland (HICC)	☐

Staff:

Administrative Officer ☐

QUESTION 1

Can I just confirm, is all of your work time spent on IB Reforms Pathways to Work Pilots?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If NO: What other programmes or pilots do you support?

QUESTION 2

What sorts of tasks do you typically perform in your role with the IB Pilots?

QUESTION 3

Is it possible for you to distinguish between the tasks you typically do for IB Pilots 'flow' and IB Pilots 'stock' customers? [*stock* is an existing IB recipient prior to the introduction of IB Pilots; *flow* is a new entry/re-entry post IB Pilots]

Yes ☐   No ☐

If YES: What are the tasks most associated with 'flow' customers?

QUESTION 3, cont'd

If YES: What are the tasks most associated with 'stock' customers?

QUESTION 4

Thinking about a typical day, approximately what percentage of your time do you devote to each of the following customer groups and on all other tasks. We are trying to account for 100% of your work time. [Please mark ☒ one percentage category for each relevant choice, if not applicable, mark ☒ N/A.]

Customer Group [incl customer admin]	Percentage										
	N/A	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
IB Pilot s Flow (new or repeat)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
IB Pilots Stock (existing)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Non-Pilots IB Customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All other customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All other tasks [incl meetings, training, etc.]	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Note: Confirm that the table sums to 100%.

IB Pilots - Telephone Interview Schedule

Financial advisers

Instructions to researchers:
- Confirm that informant has received a summary of the research and briefly recap;
- Confirm their consent to be interviewed.

District:

Bridgend   ☐

Derby   ☐   *Staff:*

East Lancashire   ☐   Financial Adviser   ☐

Essex   ☐

Gateshead   ☐

Somerset   ☐

Scotland (HICC)   ☐

QUESTION 1

Can I just confirm, is all of your work time spent on tasks associated with IB Pathways to Work customers?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If NO: What other programmes or pilots do you support?

QUESTION 2

Do you work with IB Pilots 'flow' customers? ['flow' is a new entry into the pilot]

Yes ☐   No ☐

QUESTION 3

Do you work with IB Pilots 'stock' customers? ['stock' is a customer in receipt of IB prior to the pilot]

Yes ☐   No ☐

QUESTION 4

What sorts of tasks do you typically perform in your role?

QUESTION 5

Is it possible for you to distinguish between the tasks you typically do for IB Pilots customers from other IB recipients?

Yes ☐　　　　No ☐

If YES: What are the tasks most associated with IB Pilots customers?

```




```

QUESTION 6

[**If relevant**] Is it possible for you to distinguish between the tasks you typically do for IB Pilots 'flow' and IB Pilots 'stock' customers? [*flow* are new customers post IB Pilots; *stock* are existing customers prior to the introduction of IB Pilots]

Yes ☐　　　　No ☐　　　　Not relevant ☐

If YES: What are the tasks most associated with 'flow' customers?

```




```

If YES: What are the tasks most associated with 'stock' customers?

```




```

QUESTION 7

Thinking about a typical day, approximately what percentage of your time do you devote to each of the following customer groups and on all other tasks. We are trying to account for 100% of your work time. [Please mark ☒ one percentage category for each relevant choice, if not applicable, mark ☒ N/A.]

Customer Group [incl customer admin]	Percentage										
	N/A	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
IB Pilot s Flow (new or repeat)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
IB Pilots Stock (existing)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Non-Pilots IB Customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All other customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All other tasks [incl meetings, training, etc]	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Note: Confirm that the table sums to 100%.

IB Pilots - Telephone Interview Schedule

DEAs and Work Psychologists

Instructions to researchers:
- Confirm that informant has received a summary of the research and briefly recap;
- Confirm their consent to be interviewed.

District:

Bridgend	☐
Derby	☐
East Lancashire	☐
Essex	☐
Gateshead	☐
Somerset	☐
Scotland (HICC)	☐

Staff:

DEA	☐
Work Psychologist	☐

QUESTION 1

Can I just confirm, do you provide support for:

IB Pilots 'flow' customers ['flow' is a new entry/re-entry into IB Pilots]

     Yes ☐   No ☐

IB Pilots 'stock' customers ['stock' is a customer in receipt of IB prior to IB Pilots]

     Yes ☐   No ☐

QUESTION 2

What other customers do you support?

QUESTION 3

Has the nature of your work changed since the introduction of IB Pilots customers to your case load?

     Yes ☐   No ☐

If Yes, in what way?

QUESTION 4

What sorts of tasks do you typically perform in your role?

QUESTION 5

Is it possible for you to distinguish between the support you provide for IB Pilots customers from other customers?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If YES: What are the tasks most associated with IB Pilots customers?

```



```

QUESTION 6

[**If relevant**] Is it possible for you to distinguish between the tasks you typically do for IB Pilots 'flow' and IB Pilots 'stock' customers? [*flow* are new customers post IB Pilots; *stock* are existing customers prior to the introduction of IB Pilots]

Yes ☐   No ☐   Not relevant ☐

If YES: What are the tasks most associated with 'flow' customers?

```



```

If YES: What are the tasks most associated with 'stock' customers?

```



```

QUESTION 7

Thinking about a typical day, approximately what percentage of your time do you devote to each of the following customer groups and on all other tasks. We are trying to account for 100% of your work time. [Please mark ☒ one percentage category for each relevant choice, if not applicable, mark ☒ N/A.]

Customer Group [incl customer admin]	Percentage										
	N/A	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
IB Pilot s Flow (new or repeat)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
IB Pilots Stock (existing)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Non-Pilots IB Customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All other customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All other tasks [incl meetings, training, etc]	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Note: Confirm that the table sums to 100%.

IB Pilots - Customer Interview Observation

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION

- Please complete this questionnaire in **BLACK** or **DARK BLUE** ink.
- If a selection is required from a number of alternatives, please consider your answer carefully, then mark the **CENTRE** of the appropriate box with a **CROSS**, like this ⊠.
- If you mark the wrong box, please fill in that box completely like this ■ and make your correct selection with a cross.

CODE (district, office size, case)

Day   Mo   Yr

Enter today's date: [ ][ ][ ][ ][0][5]

Enter interview start and end times:

START   END

[ ][ ] : [ ][ ]   [ ][ ] : [ ][ ]

District:

Bridgend ☐
Derby ☐
East Lancashire ☐
Essex ☐
Gateshead ☐
Somerset ☐
Scotland (HICC) ☐

IB Customer type:
Flow (new/repeat since Pilot) ☐
Stock (existing prior to Pilot) ☐

Type of interview:
Initial ☐
First Repeat ☐
Second Repeat ☐
Third Repeat ☐
Fourth Repeat ☐
Fifth Repeat ☐

Outcome of interview (mark all that apply):
Arrange next Work Focussed Interview ☐
Arrange job interview ☐
Referral to services ☐
Customer screened out of IB Pilots ☐
Other (please specify:) ☐

Volunteer to IB Pilots:
Yes ☐
No ☐

COMMENTS:

IB Pilots - Interview Minute Observations

Min	Task code	Min	Task code	Min	Task code	Min	Task code
T1		T31		T61		T91	
T2		T32		T62		T92	
T3		T33		T63		T93	
T4		T34		T64		T94	
T5		T35		T65		T95	
T6		T36		T66		T96	
T7		T37		T67		T97	
T8		T38		T68		T98	
T9		T39		T69		T99	
T10		T40		T70		T100	
T11		T41		T71		T101	
T12		T42		T72		T102	
T13		T43		T73		T103	
T14		T44		T74		T104	
T15		T45		T75		T105	
T16		T46		T76		T106	
T17		T47		T77		T107	
T18		T48		T78		T108	
T19		T49		T79		T109	
T20		T50		T80		T110	
T21		T51		T81		T111	
T22		T52		T82		T112	
T23		T53		T83		T113	
T24		T54		T84		T114	
T25		T55		T85		T115	
T26		T56		T86		T116	
T27		T57		T87		T117	
T28		T58		T88		T118	
T29		T59		T89		T119	
T30		T60		T90		T120	

Coding framework for observing IB pilots WFI interviews

1. Initial Customer Engagement

10	Discussion of current circumstances (e.g., health condition)
11	Completion of Screening Tool
12	Introduce Pathways – Mandatory interviews/Sanctions
13	Introduce Pathways – CHOICES package
14	Introduce Pathways – Return to Work Credit (RTWC)

2. Benefits/Credits
Explanations (including rights and responsibilities) or help claiming them

20	Conducts in-work benefit calculation
21	Incapacity Benefit
22	Other Disability Benefits, e.g., DLA
23	Income Support
24	Housing benefit
25	Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)
26	Working Tax Credit/Child Tax Credit
27	Council tax
28	Personal Capability Assessment (PCA)
29	Child benefit
210	Other (note)

3. Action Planning and Job Matching

30	Discussion of Job Goal
31	Discussion of barriers to work
32	Advising on local child care
33	Discussion of Work Focussed Action Plan (WFAP)
34	Discussion of training
35	Help looking for a job including job matching
36	Discussion of forthcoming job interview
37	Discussion of recent job interview outcome
38	Discussion of Personal Capability Assessment (PCA) Report
39	Discussion of current work
310	Other (note)

4. Referrals for Services

40	Refer to New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP)
41	Referral to alternative New Deal
42	Refer to Workstep
43	Refer to Work Preparation
44	Refer to Access to Work
45	Discuss Return to Work Credit (RTWC)
46	Discuss Job Preparation Premium (JPP)
47	Refer to NHS Condition Management Programme (CMP)
48	Refer to Disability Employment Adviser (DEA)
49	Refer to Work Psychologist
410	Refer to Job Broker
411	Refer to In-Work Support provision
412	Refer to CAB / Welfare rights advice
413	Other referral (note)

5. Providing Counselling or Other Services

50	Discuss financial issues (including opening bank accounts, debt management)
51	Discuss Adviser Discretion Fund
52	Discuss mental health issues
53	Discuss substance misuse issues
54	Discuss domestic violence issues
55	Discuss other personal or family issues
56	Discuss legal issues
57	Discuss physical health
58	Discuss child support
59	Discuss housing issues (e.g., landlord/tenant)
510	Contact with other agencies during interview (e.g., employer, GP)
511	Other (note)

6. Participation/Sanction Issues – (including WFI's)

60	Monitoring customer/customer participation in program services/activities
61	Discusses non-compliance issues
62	Threatens with sanctions
63	Applies sanction
64	Discuss Decision Making and Appeals decision

IB Pilots - LMS Electronic Interview Diary Validation

[To be filled in by interviewers, comparing booked customer interviews with actual customer contacts]

ID CODE — District | Office size | Case

District:
Bridgend ☐
Derby ☐
East Lancashire ☐
Essex ☐
Gateshead ☐
Scotland (HICC) ☐
Somerset ☐

LMS / ABS diary date: Day Mo Yr 0 6 0 5

Research interview date: Day Mo Yr 0 6 0 5

Enter when work day started and when work day ended:

START ☐☐ : ☐☐   END ☐☐ : ☐☐

In consultation with the office manager, the researcher will print-out and record LMS scheduled customer interviews for at least 2 IBPAs and record the durations and interview details on the Customer Contacts sheet. The researcher will explain the cost study observations to the IBPA's and secure each IBPA's consent for participation in the study. With IBPAs, the researcher will identify approximately four interviews for observation that day (balancing stock and flow customers, initial and repeat interviews).[24] The researcher will explain that, at the end of the day, they would like to briefly go over some details on the day [arrange for a convenient place and time for this to take place]:

• how the LMS scheduled interviews compare to the actual face-to-face interviews that took place (recording interview duration, customer type and interview type);

• what additional face-to-face and other modes (e.g., telephone) of customer contacts took place (recording contact duration and customer type);

• broadly estimate what percentage of a typical day the IBPA spends with customers and what percentage of the day is spent on customer related and non-customer related administration;

Rank other (non-customer contact) work activities according to the time devoted to these tasks during a typical day.

[24] As far as possible, if a planned observed interview fails to show a substitute interview will be observed.

Questions for end of work day

[Researcher to add up duration of actual customer contacts from LMS-to-reported comparison. Ask:] You spent approximately __ minutes with customers today or __ % of your day.

QUESTION 1

Do you consider this to be a typical day?   Yes   ☐   No   ☐

[Clarify] About what proportion of your typical day would you spend with: [enter zero if not at all]

IB Pilots flow customers?	☐☐☐	%
IB Pilots stock customers?	☐☐☐	%
non-IB Pilot customers?	☐☐☐	%

About what proportion of your typical day would you spend on tasks related to customer administration with: [enter zero if not at all]

IB Pilots flow customers?	☐☐☐	%
IB Pilots stock customers?	☐☐☐	%
non-IB Pilot customers?	☐☐☐	%

[Add up reported percentages and report difference from 100%] That means about __ % of your typical work day is spent on other tasks, that is, tasks not related to specific customers such as meetings, lunch, tea breaks?

                              Is this correct?   Yes   ☐   No   ☐

    [Clarify % for remaining work time and enter]   ☐☐☐ % remaining

IMPORTANT: Check that the 4 recorded percentages sum to 100%

QUESTION 2

Can you tell me, if a customer fails to show for a scheduled interview [refer to today if this occurred], what do you typically do? (prompts: try to get in contact with the customer, see other drop-in customers, do paperwork, etc.)

QUESTION 3

Thinking about the portion of your typical day that is not spent with customers, from the following list would you please rank those other work activities that you typically spend your day on, where 1 is the activity that you spend most of your non-interview time on, where 2 is the activity that you spend the second most of your non-interview time on and so on. (Please exclude lunch and tea breaks.)

Non-interview activity	Rank
WFI administration	☐
RTWC / JPP form completion	☐
Job vacancy search	☐
Referrals to Choices Package, DEAs, professionals	☐
Contact with other Jobcentre staff	☐
Contact with employers	☐
Case conferences	☐
Staff meetings	☐
Training	☐
Other (specify:) _____	☐
Other (specify:) _____	☐

IB comparison of booked and reported customer contacts

CUSTOMER CONTACTS

CODE ☐☐☐

Note: Mark ☒ contact type, IB group & interview type for each contact. For fail-to-show, booked interviews, enter '00' for reported duration. For additional nonbooked customer contacts, enter '00' for booked duration.

Interview Type

	Initial	First Repeat	Second Repeat	Third Repeat	Fourth Repeat	Fifth Repeat	Other IB Fifth Repeat	Other Non-IB
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

IB Group

Flow	Stock	Non-IB Pilots
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐

Type of Contact

Face to face	Telephone	Text message	E-mail
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐

Notes

CONTACT DURATION IN MINUTES

LMS Booked	Reported
☐☐	☐☐
☐☐	☐☐
☐☐	☐☐
☐☐	☐☐
☐☐	☐☐
☐☐	☐☐
☐☐	☐☐
☐☐	☐☐
☐☐	☐☐
☐☐	☐☐
☐☐	☐☐