

*These notes refer to the Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland)
2007 (c.2) which received Royal Assent on 27 June 2007*

Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

PART 1: Employment and support allowance

Conditionality

Section 14: Action plans in connection with work-focused interviews

Section 14 provides that at work-focused interviews, a written action plan will be developed.

Regulations under *subsections (1) and (2)* may provide that the action plan should include a summary of the discussion that took place during the work-focused interview. In a situation where participation in work-related activity is not required under regulations, the action plan would include possible steps a claimant could consider taking to assist him in returning to work.

Where appropriate, it is intended that the action plan would include steps that, if the claimant undertook them, would satisfy the work-related activity requirement under *section 13*.

It is not intended that the claimant will be required by regulations to undertake specific steps in the action plan, even when participation in work-related activity was required. A claimant could still satisfy the work-related activity requirement by undertaking other activity.

Regulations under *subsection (4)* may provide that a claimant should be able to ask for his action plan to be reconsidered. This would be in order to resolve situations where a claimant believed the steps included were, or had become, inappropriate or that other steps, not agreed at the work-focused interview, should be included. The action plan would then be reconsidered in a set period of time. It is not intended, in a situation where a claimant asks for a reconsideration of the action plan, that requirements under regulations to undertake work-related activity would be waived or deferred.