

# Testing a job crafting intervention to help make work more manageable, engaging and enjoyable for UK workers

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<b>Registration date</b> 11/06/2026	<b>Overall study status</b> Ongoing	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 11/06/2026	<b>Condition category</b> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

Most workplace interventions focus on trying to change workers. This ignores the importance of the nature of work and workplaces. Job crafting instead involves upskilling and empowering workers themselves to make positive changes to jobs and workplaces to help them find more manageable, enjoyable and engaging ways to deliver their job requirements. This study aims to test whether job crafting can help workers to improve their employment and health outcomes. It aims to recruit 600 workers to compare how their work ability and other aspects of their employment, health and well-being are improved through a programme of job crafting support compared to just being provided a job crafting information leaflet.

### Who can participate?

Workers who live in the UK, would like to make their work more manageable, engaging and enjoyable, and who can provide informed consent and be able to complete online surveys in English.

### What does the study involve?

Participants are randomly allocated to either an intervention group (job crafting workshop support) or a control group (job crafting information leaflet). Participants provide background data before random allocation and are then surveyed 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months later. Those in the intervention group attend three workshops over about 6 weeks, with reflection and action-planning tasks between sessions.

### What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Participants will benefit from having a chance to receive support that may improve their enjoyment, engagement and performance at work. It is a low-risk intervention. Some participants may feel uncomfortable when discussing work or health challenges. If so, they are free not to disclose anything they don't wish to or to pause their activity.

Where is the study run from?

The study is being managed by the University of Strathclyde and takes place through participating employers in the UK. Participation may be in-person or online.

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

June 2026 to May 2028.

Who is funding the study?

The study is funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), United Kingdom, grant reference NIHR208278.

Who is the main contact?

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## Additional identifiers

Integrated Research Application System (IRAS)

364397

## Study information

### Scientific Title

Workplace Intervention for Sustainable Health and Employment Support: A randomised controlled trial of a co-produced job crafting intervention to improve work ability, wellbeing and employment outcomes among UK workers

### Acronym

WISHES

### Study objectives

The study explores the potential of job crafting to make work more manageable, engaging and enjoyable for UK workers. Job crafting refers to practical changes that workers make to aspects of their job, working practices or workplace relationships in order to improve how manageable, meaningful and satisfying their work feels. A particular interest is on workers with disabilities, long-term health conditions and/or other workplace support needs (e.g. caring responsibilities), although all eligible workers may participate.

#### Primary Objective:

1. Determining whether a programme of support for job-crafting (intervention) will be superior to an information leaflet (control) in improving work ability at 2, 5 and 8 months post-randomisation

#### Secondary Objectives:[RD1.1]

1. Determining whether a programme of support for job-crafting (intervention) will be superior to an information leaflet (control) in improving sickness absence and presenteeism at 2, 5 and 8 months post-randomisation

2. Determining whether a programme of support for job-crafting (intervention) will [AW2.1] be superior to an information leaflet (control) in improving job retention at 2, 5 and 8 months post-randomisation

3. Determining whether a programme of support for job-crafting (intervention) will be superior to an information leaflet (control) in increasing productivity at 2, 5 and 8 months post-randomisation

4. Determining whether a programme of support for job-crafting (intervention) will be superior to an information leaflet (control) in increasing weekly employment hours at 2, 5 and 8 months post-randomisation

5. Determining whether a programme of support for job-crafting (intervention) will be superior to an information leaflet (control) in reducing NHS healthcare utilization at 2, 5 and 8 months post-randomisation

6. Determining whether a programme of support for job-crafting (intervention) will be superior to an information leaflet (control) in improving health at 2, 5 and 8 months post-randomisation

7. Determining whether a programme of support for job-crafting (intervention) will be superior to an information leaflet (control) in improving wellbeing at 2, 5 and 8 months post-randomisation

8. Determining whether a programme of support for job-crafting (intervention) will be superior to an information leaflet (control) in requesting and securing workplace accommodations at 2, 5 and 8 months post-randomisation

9. Determining whether a programme of support for job-crafting (intervention) will be superior to an information leaflet (control) in improving person-job fit at 2, 5 and 8 months post-randomisation
10. Determining whether a programme of support for job-crafting (intervention) will be superior to an information leaflet (control) in improving job satisfaction at 2, 5 and 8 months post-randomisation
11. Determining whether a programme of support for job-crafting (intervention) will be superior to an information leaflet (control) in improving work engagement at 2, 5 and 8 months post-randomisation
12. Determining whether a programme of support for job-crafting (intervention) will be superior to an information leaflet (control) in improving understanding and practice at 2, 5 and 8 months post-randomisation

A non-experimental analysis will address the following aims:

1. Establishing whether the trial alters the outcomes of the control group members
2. Examining the pathways through which effects occur: Specifically, whether the effects of the intervention on primary and secondary outcomes are double mediated by first effecting changes in job crafting self-efficacy from baseline (experimental effect). Changes in self-efficacy from baseline are hypothesized to be related to changes in job crafting behaviours from baseline, and changes in job crafting behaviours from baseline are hypothesized to be related to changes in outcomes from baseline
3. Examining variation in effects and mediation across key sub-groups (e.g. disability/LTHC, age group), with planned comparisons across baseline levels of workability, job control and workplace/organizational support

An economic evaluation will address the following aim:

1. Evaluating the cost-effectiveness of the intervention compared to the control and to a matched counterfactual group from a PROLIFIC survey

An embedded mixed-methods process evaluation will address the following aims:

1. Examining the pathways through which effects occur
2. Examining the organizational factors that affect job crafting practices and outcomes
3. Examining effects on the wider organization from the job crafting of trial participants

### **Ethics approval required**

Ethics approval required

### **Ethics approval(s)**

approved 01/06/2026, University of Strathclyde Ethics Committee (University of Strathclyde, 16 Richmond St, Glasgow, G1 1XQ, United Kingdom; +44 141 552 4400; ethics@strath.ac.uk), ref: UEC25/129

### **Primary study design**

Interventional

### **Allocation**

Randomized controlled trial

### **Masking**

Open (masking not used)

**Control**

Dose comparison

**Assignment**

Parallel

**Purpose**

Basic science

**Study type(s)****Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied**

Work ability, wellbeing and employment outcomes

**Interventions****SUMMARY OF STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation will use a mixed methods design comprising a randomised controlled trial, a quantitative analysis of business as usual, a process evaluation and an economic evaluation.

**RANDOMISED CONTROL TRIAL (RCT)**

Consenting individuals will be randomly allocated to either an intervention group (workshops and support) or a control group (receiving an information job-crafting leaflet). Randomisation will be conducted within employer. For each employer, once a pool of eligible participants is identified, individuals will be randomised in a single batch. Randomisation will be conducted separately per employer on a file containing two variables: an anonymised individual identifier and a dummy variable indicating whether the individual self-identifies as having a disability (measured on the baseline survey pre-randomisation accordingly to the Equality Act definition of disability).

The list of participants will be sorted by the disability indicator and, within that, by a randomly generated number. The first individual in the sorted list will be assigned to either treatment or control on the basis of whether a uniformly-distributed random number between 0-1 is greater than 0.5. Allocations will then be conducted for the rest of the list, with the allocation outcome being the opposite of the allocation outcome for the preceding individual in the list in each case. Doing this achieves a randomisation of half the list to the treatment group, stratified by whether the individual has a disability. Randomisation will use the Stata statistical software and will be conducted by a member of the research team not involved in participant recruitment.

Data will be collected on both groups from Qualtrix surveys administered at baseline and at three points post-randomisation: 10 weeks, 5 months, 8 months. The evaluation will use these data to reach assessments of the impacts, benefits and costs of the trial. An RCT method was selected to provide the best chance of gathering robust evidence about the impact of the intervention. The selection of this method, including a control arm where the individuals receive an information leaflet, is justified on the basis that it is not known whether the intervention will be effective. Key outcomes will be compared between the treatment and control group using data from surveys administered to all trial participants.

**INTERVENTION DETAILS**

Participants allocated to the intervention arm will receive a co-produced job crafting intervention designed to support workers to identify and implement practical changes to aspects of their work, working practices and workplace relationships. This intervention is

informed by job crafting theory and person-job fit models and has been co-produced with workers, disabled people's organisations and employers to ensure that it is practical, inclusive and relevant to real workplace settings. It has been designed to support accessibility through flexible participation formats (online or in-person), optional reflective activities and accommodation of participant accessibility needs where feasible.

The intervention will be delivered through a series of three structured workshops supported by guided reflective activities and action planning exercises. The workshops will take place over approximately six weeks and be facilitated by trained members of the WISHES research team using structured intervention materials:

- Workshop 1 lasts 3.5hrs and focuses on understanding work experiences and identifying personally meaningful work goals. Participants can attend in-person or online according to their preferences;
- Workshop 2 (1-2 weeks after workshop 1) lasts 3.5hrs and focuses on developing job crafting ideas and creating personalised action plans. Participants can attend in-person or online according to their preferences;
- Workshop 3 (4 weeks after workshop 2) lasts 1hr focuses on reviewing progress, reflecting on learning and planning future job crafting activities. The workshop is online.

Across the workshops, participants are supported to:

- reflect on factors that support or hinder their work experiences,
- identify aspects of work that are meaningful, manageable or challenging,
- develop job crafting ideas and goals,
- explore barriers and opportunities for workplace change,
- create personalised job crafting action plans,
- review and reflect on progress,
- and identify future job crafting activities.

The intervention includes:

- information about job crafting,
- structured reflection exercises,
- guided discussion activities,
- job crafting scenarios,
- action planning,
- facilitated workshop activities,
- and optional reflective activities between workshops,
- a one hour online information and Q&A session for line managers in the organisation who may or may not themselves be trial participants.

Participants are encouraged to identify practical workplace changes aligned with their individual needs, strengths, values and work goals. Optional reflective activities between workshops allow participants to record observations regarding work supports and barriers, work enjoyment and work challenge. Participants may complete reflective activities using written notes, typed entries or voice recordings according to their preferences and accessibility needs. Optional support opportunities, including job crafting drop-in sessions, will also be provided.

Individuals allocated to the control arm will receive an information leaflet. It is not realistic in terms of organisational recruitment, workplace realities or ethical research to operate a purely 'do nothing' control group. Instead, control group members will be offered light-touch information in the form of a leaflet setting out key considerations if they wish to take forward

job crafting after the trial. Participants allocated to the control arm will receive written information materials immediately after the point of randomization. Control group individuals will not receive further intervention.

#### QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS AS USUAL

A two-wave longitudinal PROLIFIC survey will be conducted, collecting outcome data aligned to that collected for the RCT. PROLIFIC provides actively engaged research participants for use in surveys. The PROLIFIC sample can provide a measure of expected 'business-as-usual' (BAU) change in outcomes. We expect wave 1 to be conducted Spring 2027 and wave 2 to be conducted Autumn 2027. The PROLIFIC sample will be pre-filtered to reach only working age adults in the UK who are in employment in the first survey wave. PROLIFIC wave 1 respondents will be matched to WISHES trial participants using propensity score matching and a wave 2 PROLIFIC survey will be sent to the matched PROLIFIC group. The target is to achieve 1,000 completed responses to both survey waves. Comparing the change in outcomes among the matched PROLIFIC sample against the change in outcomes seen for the control group in the RCT provides an insight into whether the provision of the information leaflet might have influenced the trial control group's outcomes.

#### PROCESS EVALUATION

A mixed-methods process evaluation will examine participant experiences, implementation processes, barriers and facilitators to job crafting, and contextual variation and effects across workplace settings.

#### ECONOMIC EVALUATION

An economic evaluation will examine whether the benefits of the intervention exceed the costs. The researchers will conduct a cost-benefit-analysis within a social return on investment framework, i.e. a valuation of individual and wider social/economic impacts in monetary terms (including future discounted benefits), from which the costs of the service can be subtracted to derive an 'analysis of value for money', e.g. benefit-cost ratios.

#### **Intervention Type**

Behavioural

#### **Primary outcome(s)**

1. Work ability measured using Work Ability Index (WAI) - composite single indicator measuring ability to perform job regards work demands, health and mental resource at Baseline, 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months after randomisation

#### **Key secondary outcome(s)**

1. Sickness absence and presenteeism measured using Survey question using Work Productivity and Impairment (WPAI) measure at 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months after randomisation

2. Involuntary job exit measured using Survey question at Baseline, 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months after randomisation

3. Productivity measured using Survey question, self-defined at Baseline, 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months after randomisation

4. Hours worked measured using Survey question at Baseline, 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months after randomisation

5. Healthcare resource use measured using Survey question using consolidated ModRUM measure at Baseline, 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months after randomisation
6. Health measured using Survey question using EQ5D5L at Baseline, 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months after randomisation
7. Well-being measured using Survey question using SWEMWBS at Baseline, 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months after randomisation
8. Whether workplace accommodations have been made measured using Survey question at 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months after randomisation[
9. Person-job fit measured using Survey question at Baseline, 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months after randomisation
10. Job satisfaction measured using Survey question adapted from Britain's Healthiest Workplace survey at Baseline, 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months after randomisation
11. Work engagement measured using Survey question using Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9) at Baseline, 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months after randomisation
12. Understanding and practice of job-crafting measured using Survey question at 10 weeks, 5 months and 8 months after randomisation

**Completion date**

31/05/2028

## Eligibility

**Key inclusion criteria**

1. Currently be in paid employment or self-employed
2. UK-resident
3. Would like to make their work more manageable, engaging and enjoyable through job crafting.
4. Be willing and able to provide informed consent
5. Be able to complete online surveys in English.

Recruitment materials will indicate that the study is particularly interested in recruiting workers with disabilities, long-term health conditions and/or workplace support needs.

Participating employers will be recruited prior to individual participant enrolment.

**Healthy volunteers allowed**

Yes

**Age group**

Mixed

**Lower age limit**

18 years

**Upper age limit**

100 years

**Sex**

All

**Total final enrolment**

0

**Key exclusion criteria**

1. Are unable to provide informed consent
2. Are not currently employed or self-employed
3. Are unable to complete study procedures

**Date of first enrolment**

22/06/2026

**Date of final enrolment**

30/11/2027

**Locations**

**Countries of recruitment**

United Kingdom

England

**Study participating centre**

n/a

n/a

n/a

England

n/a

**Sponsor information**

**Organisation**

University of Strathclyde

**ROR**

<https://ror.org/00n3w3b69>

**Funder(s)**

## **Funder type**

### **Funder Name**

National Institute for Health and Care Research

### **Alternative Name(s)**

National Institute for Health Research, NIHR Research, NIHRresearch, NIHR - National Institute for Health Research, NIHR (The National Institute for Health and Care Research), NIHR

### **Funding Body Type**

Government organisation

### **Funding Body Subtype**

National government

### **Location**

United Kingdom

## **Results and Publications**

### **Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan**

Within the team on a minimal access need basis within agreed ethics and data share agreements and using only the secure project onedrive folders.

NIHR are committed to maximise the value of their investments. As such:

Anonymised, de-identifiable versions of the datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study will be stored in a non-publicly available repository (UKDS's ReShare).

Consents are obtained from research participants for this purpose. The data will be deposited within 10 years of project completion and will remain there indefinitely.

### **IPD sharing plan summary**

Stored in non-publicly available repository