

Description of JSCI Factors and Points

Below is a description of each JSCI factor and its allocated weights or points.

- Age and Gender
- Recency of Work Experience
- Job Seeker History
- Educational Attainment
- Vocational Qualifications
- English Proficiency
- Country of Birth
- Indigenous Status
- Indigenous Location
- Geographic
- Proximity to a Labour Market
- Access to Transport
- Phone Contactability
- Disability/Medical Conditions
- Stability of Residence
- Living Circumstances
- Ex-offender Status
- Personal Characteristics

Age and Gender

This factor recognises that age and gender can be an employment barrier. For example, job seekers aged 50 years or older may find that prospective employers are reluctant to consider them for employment because of perceptions about outdated skills and health issues. Weights or points are allocated for this factor on the basis of age and gender, in combination.

Generally older job seekers attract more weights or points than younger job seekers for this factor. Data modelling undertaken by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (the Department) has also shown that female teenagers are found to experience higher relative labour market disadvantage than male teenagers.

From 1 July 2009, the allocation of weights or points to job seekers aged 15 to 19 years has been changed to take into account disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged teenagers. A disadvantaged teenager is a job seeker aged between 15 to 19 years with one or more of the following characteristics:

- mainly been unemployed in the last two years;
- has completed less than Year 10 at school;
- is Indigenous;
- lives in temporary accommodation;
- is a sole parent;
- is a disclosed ex-offender.

The weights or points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are based on routine information provided by the job seeker to Centrelink and/or are derived from questions answered directly by a job seeker as part of completing the JSCI.

Sub-factors	Points - Male	Points - Female
Non-disadvantaged 15-19 years	0	5
Disadvantaged 15-19 years	4	9
20-24 years	4	7
25-29 years	4	7
30-34 years	4	7
35-39 years	5	5
40-44 years	5	5
45-49 years	6	6
50-54 years	7	8
55-59 years	10	12
60+ years	15	16

Recency of Work Experience

Inadequate work experience or lack of labour market attachment represents a disadvantage in seeking employment. For example, prospective employers may be reluctant to employ job seekers who lack current skills or recent and appropriate experience. This is a particular issue for women because many of them are more likely to be absent from the labour market for some time to accommodate family responsibilities (or for other reasons).

Inadequate work experience is also a barrier for ex-prisoners and school leavers who have not had an opportunity to demonstrate work habits or develop employer networks or contacts.

This factor relates to how a job seeker spent his/her time, regardless of location or country, in the last two years. The impact of long periods of absence from the workforce, the lack of employer networks or contacts and the loss of labour market attachment are captured by this factor.

The weights or points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are based on questions answered directly by the job seeker as part of completing the JSCI.

Sub-factors	Points
Full-time	0
Part-time (8-30 hours per week)	0
Part-time (<8 hours per week)	2
Seasonal/irregular	2
Outside the labour force	3
Unpaid work	3
Unemployed	4

Job Seeker History

Job Seeker History was added to the JSCI from 1 July 2009 in recognition of the fact that job seekers who experience a protracted time on income support and/or multiple spells on income support are more disadvantaged in terms of finding employment. A job seeker's time in unemployment as well as any time spent out of the labour force are considered in this factor, provided the job seeker has continued to receive income support payments from Centrelink during this time.

Income-support recipients previously on non-activity tested payments for a substantial amount of time but who now have participation requirements, will receive weights or points under this factor.

The weights or points allocated for this factor are based on information sourced from the job seeker's registration and benefit payment records. Job seeker's receipt of various income-support payment types will be examined for the previous 10 years and receipt of Crisis Payment for the previous six months to determine the required information for this factor.

While Job Seeker History is a new factor, it is important to note that unemployment duration has either been part of the JSCI or the model of employment assistance since the original JSCI in 1998. For example, unemployment duration was a factor in the original JSCI.

Sub-factors	Points
<i>Time on income support component</i>	
Duration on income support 0-12 months	0
Duration on income support 12-23 months	6
Duration on income support 24+ months	12
<i>Number of times on income support component</i>	
More than one time on income support	1
Crisis Payment recipient	1

Educational Attainment

In this factor, points are based on a job seeker's highest level of education completed in Australia or overseas. The link between education and employment is well documented in the economic literature. Research undertaken by the Department has also shown that the lower the level of educational attainment, the higher is the job seeker's labour market disadvantage.

The weights or points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are based on answers provided by the job seeker to questions as part of completing the JSCI.

Sub-factors	Points
Degree/Post-graduate	0
Year 12/TAFE/Diploma	0
Year 10/11	1
< Year 10	2

Vocational Qualifications

Analysis by the Department indicates there is significant difference in employability between job seekers with vocational qualifications and those without. This factor is about a job seeker's qualifications and whether those qualifications can be used in the labour market (i.e. whether they are work related or not and whether they are still useful). It is also about qualifications which qualify a job seeker to work in a specific occupation.

The purpose of this factor is to take into account recognised work-related qualifications which offer an advantage to a job seeker in obtaining employment. Work-related qualifications include:

- educational qualifications which have a vocational orientation (e.g. a nursing or architecture degree compared to a general arts degree in philosophy);
- trade qualifications required for particular occupations (e.g. plumbing and electrical trade certificates); and
- non-educational qualifications required for particular occupations (e.g. special licences for driving a bus, forklift or truck) or tickets (e.g. seaman's ticket and other technical qualifications).

Short courses are only considered to be work related if they are formally accredited or generally recognised by employers and they constitute the basic prerequisites for entry to a particular occupation (e.g. Responsible Service of Alcohol Certificate).

This factor also acknowledges the circumstances of job seekers who may have a vocational qualification which they can't use (e.g. qualification no longer recognised or qualification suspended/terminated).

The weights or points allocated for to a job seeker for this factor are based on answers provided by the job seeker to questions as part of completing the JSCI.

Sub-factors	Points
Has useful vocational qualifications	0
No vocational qualifications	1
Vocational qualifications not useful	1

English Proficiency

This factor reflects the relative disadvantage that job seekers with low levels of English proficiency in the labour market. Research commissioned by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has shown a clear relationship between low levels of English literacy and numeracy and being unemployed.

Job seekers who disclose low levels of English proficiency may be referred to the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program or the Adult Migrant English Program.

The weights or points allocated for to a job seeker for this factor are based on answers provided by the job seeker to questions as part of completing the JSCI.

Sub-factors	Points
Good English proficiency	0
Mixed English proficiency	1
Poor English proficiency	2

Country of Birth

People migrating to Australia may face many difficulties in the Australian labour market including:

- lack of knowledge about, and attachment to, the Australian labour market;
- lack of networks or contacts within the Australian labour market; and
- cultural differences between the job seeker's country of birth and Australia.

The weights or points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are based on the job seeker's country of birth and the language first spoken as a child. Country of birth and language first spoken as a child are grouped into several categories based on different experiences of migrants from different countries within the Australian labour market.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers who first spoke an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language as a child are however allocated points for the first language spoken under the Indigenous Status factor.

The points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are based on routine information provided by the job seeker to Centrelink or are derived from questions answered directly by a job seeker as part of completing the JSCI.

Sub-factors	Points
<i>Country component</i>	
Australia, Oceania and others	0
North America	0
Southern Africa	0
Western Europe and Mediterranean	0
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	1
Central and Far East Asia	1
Middle East	1
South America	1
Central Africa	2
<i>Language component</i>	
English and other languages	0
Arabic and other Middle Eastern languages	1
Scandinavian languages	1
Horn of Africa languages	2
Pushtu (Afghani) language	3

Indigenous Status

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers are particularly disadvantaged in the labour market, often experiencing multiple barriers to employment. A number of factors in the JSCI take account of Indigenous disadvantages (e.g., the Disadvantaged Teenager subfactor in the Age and Gender Factor, and the Indigenous Location Factor).

The disadvantage identified by this factor, and not accounted for in other factors, is related to a number of issues including standards of health, cultural requirements, cross-cultural norms and language first spoken as a child.

A job seeker who does not wish to answer the voluntary Indigenous Status question in the JSCI is also allocated one point.

The points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are based on answers provided by the job seeker to questions as part of completing the JSCL.

Sub-factors	Points
Not Indigenous	0
Declined to answer	1
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	5
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language first spoken as a child	1

Indigenous Location

The barriers to employment are especially significant for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander job seekers living in rural and remote locations, although points under this factor are also allocated to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander job seekers living in selected metropolitan and provincial-city locations.

These barriers include:

- not being in close contact with the regular labour market;
- the social dynamic of a small community where anonymity is not possible and most residents know much more about other residents. In these circumstances, individuals in small rural and remote communities can be regarded negatively by family and group association rather than be considered on their merits.
- varying cultural requirements which may be more significant for those individuals living traditional or semi-traditional lifestyles or in recognised communities than for those individuals living in urban centres.

In addition, standard labour market measures are likely to underestimate the disadvantage potentially faced by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander job seekers in various parts of Australia. This is because of the high level of Indigenous participation in alternative employment arrangements such as Community Development Employment Projects.

The weights or points for this factor are allocated according to where the Indigenous job seeker lives and reflect the likelihood of finding employment within 12 months based solely on the Employment Service Area (ESA). An ESA is defined as a geographical area, within a Labour Market Region (LMR). There are 17 LMRs in Australia, each containing a number of ESAs.

The points allocated to an Indigenous job seeker for this factor are based on the home address provided by the job seeker.

Sub-factors	Points
<i>High Community Development and Employment Project (CDEP) component</i>	
Not High Employment Service Area (ESA)	0
Far West NSW ESA	1
Goldfields/Esperance WA ESA	1
Gwydir Namoi NSW ESA	1
Macleay NSW ESA	1
Mid West and Gascoyne WA ESA	1
Mount Isa QLD ESA	1
Pilbara WA ESA	1
Port Lincoln/Ceduna SA ESA	1
Oxley NSW ESA	2
Alice Springs NT ESA	5
Top End NT ESA	7
Kimberley WA ESA	8
Katherine NT ESA	9
Tennant Creek NT ESA	10
Far North QLD ESA	12
<i>Disadvantaged labour market component</i>	
Very low disadvantage ESA	0
Low disadvantage ESA	2
Medium disadvantage ESA	3
High disadvantage ESA	4
Very high disadvantage ESA	5

Geographic

This factor reflects the relative labour market disadvantage associated with living in a particular location. The condition of the local economy has a key influence on the probability of a job seeker remaining a job seeker for at least a year.

The weights or points for this factor are allocated according to where the job seeker lives and reflect the likelihood of remaining a job seeker for at least another 12 months based solely on the job seeker's ESA (i.e. locality) of residence.

The points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are based on the home address provided by the job seeker.

Sub-factors	Points
Very low disadvantage Employment Service Area (ESA)	0
Low disadvantage ESA	1
Low to moderate disadvantage ESA	2
Moderate disadvantage ESA	3
Moderate to high disadvantage ESA	4
High disadvantage ESA	5
Very high disadvantage ESA	6
Extreme disadvantage ESA	7

Proximity to a Labour Market

Proximity to a Labour Market was reintroduced to the JSCI from 1 July 2009 in recognition of the difficulties faced by geographically isolated job seekers. The allocation of weights or points to the job seeker for this factor is based on the postcode in the job seeker's home address.

While Proximity to a Labour Market is a new factor, it is important to note that it was a factor in the original JSCI first used in 1998.

Sub-factors	Points
Metropolitan or inner regional	0
Outer regional, remote, very remote or migratory	2

Access to Transport

Access to Transport has been reintroduced to the JSCI from 1 July 2009 in recognition of the fact that a job seeker's chances of finding employment are directly related to their ability to access the labour market. The allocation of weights or points is based on a job seeker's access to adequate private or public transport including own transport, other private transport, public transport and no transport.

Access to Transport was included in the original JSCI in 1998 and its inclusion was discontinued in 2003.

The points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are based on answers provided by the job seeker to questions as part of completing the JSCI.

Sub-factors	Points
Own transport	0
Other private transport	1
Public transport	1
No transport	2

Phone Contactability

This factor is about a job seeker's access to a phone. Statistical analysis by the Department has shown that a job seeker's chances of finding employment are directly related to his/her ability to access the labour market in terms of being able to make contact, and be contacted by, potential employers and employment service providers.

Job seekers are considered to be contactable by phone where they have either a home phone in their name, or someone else's name, at their place of residence (including a phone with a silent or unlisted number) or a mobile telephone.

The weights or points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are derived from routine information provided by the job seeker to Centrelink.

Sub-factors	Points
Contactable by phone	0
Not contactable by phone	2

Disability/Medical Conditions

This factor reflects the relative labour market disadvantage of job seekers who have a disability or medical condition and includes injuries; health conditions; intellectual, mental, sensory or physical disabilities; or addictions.

The weights or points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are derived from the job seeker's responses to the JSCI questionnaire, supplemented where relevant by information contained in the Job Capacity Assessment (JCA) report.

Where disclosure of disabilities/medical conditions does not trigger a JCA, weights or points for this factor are allocated according to the number of disabilities/medical conditions the job seeker discloses. If the job seeker undergoes a JCA, their JSCI is automatically updated with any permanent disability/medical conditions identified in the JCA report, work capacity as assessed by a JCA and the number of domains of support needs as assessed by a JCA. (The JCA may specify up to 15 support domains for a job seeker.)

A job seeker who does not wish to answer the voluntary Disability/Medical Conditions questions in the JSCI is also allocated one point for this factor.

Sub-factors	Points
No disability/medical condition	0
Has one disability/medical condition	2
Has multiple disabilities/medical conditions	3
Declined to answer	1
23-29 hours per week work capacity	3
15-22 hours per week work capacity	6
<15 hours per week work capacity	7
A single domain of support needs	1
Two domains of support needs	2
Three to 15 domains of support needs	3

Stability of Residence

The purpose of this factor is to take into account the relative disadvantage that job seekers without stable accommodation face in their job search compared with those living in stable accommodation.

For the purposes of the JSCI:

- stable accommodation is defined as having a reasonably fixed, regular and adequate place to stay. It includes rented or owner-occupied accommodation which may be a house, flat or caravan.
- primary homelessness is defined as staying in a squat, sleeping out or having nowhere to stay.
- secondary homelessness is defined as staying in a refuge; staying in emergency, transitional or support accommodation; staying in a hostel, boarding house or rooming house; staying in a hotel; short stays in a caravan park; temporarily staying with friends (or couch-surfing); or moving more than three times in the previous 12 months.

In order to accurately capture the different labour market disadvantage experienced by job seekers who are homeless, more points are allocated to job seekers who are in primary homelessness than those who are in secondary homelessness.

The points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are based on answers provided by the job seeker to questions as part of completing the JSCI.

Sub-factors	Points
Stable accommodation	0
Secondary homeless	3
Primary homeless	5

Living Circumstances

Living circumstances have a significant influence on a job seeker's labour force status. For example, labour market outcomes vary significantly depending on the nature of a job seeker's caring responsibilities.

ABS data shows that lone parents have a higher unemployment rate than partnered parents and that the unemployment rate tends to be higher among parents who have younger children. The Department using administrative data has also estimated that job seekers who are parents, lone or partnered, with younger children are more likely to remain a job seeker for another 12 months.

Most labour market disadvantage experienced by parents, both lone and partnered, is likely to be captured by other factors (e.g. Recency of Work Experience, Educational Attainment, Vocational Qualifications and Proximity to a Labour Market). Within the parent job seeker population, however, there is a level of disadvantage which is not captured by other factors. This includes different attitudes to work and caring responsibilities experienced by parents, both lone and partnered. The effect of these different attitudes is expected to be higher for those with younger children.

The points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are based on answers provided by the job seeker to questions as part of completing the JSCI

Sub-factors	Points
Lives with spouse	0
Lives with non-family members	0
Other living conditions	0
Lives alone	1
Lone parent with youngest child 6-15 years old	3
Lone parent with youngest child <6 years old	4
Partnered with youngest child 6-15 years old	1
Partnered with youngest child <6 years old	3

Ex-offender Status

A criminal conviction can be a substantial barrier to employment. Job seekers with a criminal record may get excluded in the screening process by many employers or

they may find it difficult to compete for a job because of outdated skills or a lack of recent work experience.

Job seekers who have served a custodial sentence are considered to be more disadvantaged and therefore allocated more points for this factor than job seekers who did not serve a custodial sentence.

A job seeker who does not wish to answer the voluntary Ex-offender Status questions in the JSCI is also allocated one point.

The weights or points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are based on answers provided by the job seeker to questions as part of completing the JSCI.

Sub-factors	Points
Not an ex-offender	0
Declined to answer	1
Non-custodial sentence	1
Sentenced <=1 fortnight	3
Sentenced >1 fortnight	4

Personal Characteristics

The purpose of this factor is to identify any other factors or personal characteristics that have not been accounted for by other JSCI factors and may require further assessment to determine their impact on a job seeker's ability to work, obtain work or to look for work. This further assessment can include referral for a JCA or referral to a Centrelink Social Worker.

Job seekers may require further assessment when they disclose or reveal that they have anger issues, problems with temper or violence; have experienced or are experiencing domestic violence; are on a drug treatment program (e.g. methadone); have experienced or are experiencing family trauma or grief; have a gambling addiction; have experienced or are experiencing a relationship breakdown; are at risk of homelessness; or have experienced or are experiencing severe stress.

The points allocated to a job seeker for this factor are derived from information contained in the JCA report should the job seeker have a JCA completed. Job seekers who have completed a JCA could receive 3 or more points for this factor. Job seekers who report 'Sleep problems/insomnia' or 'Self esteem/motivation/presentation issues' are not referred to a JCA for personal circumstances in the new JSCI. Instead, they are allocated 1 point for each issue, regardless of whether the JSCI is conducted at Centrelink or by a Job Services Australia Provider or a JCA Assessor.

Sub-factors	Points
No impact	0
Sleep problems/insomnia	1
Self esteem/motivation/presentation issues	1
Low impact (from JCA)	3
Medium impact (from JCA)	5
High impact (from JCA)	7