STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2015 No. 2006

The Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015

PART 2

Universal credit

CHAPTER 2

Claimant responsibilities

Reduction of benefit

Higher-level sanctions

31.—(1) The amount of an award of universal credit is to be reduced in accordance with this Article in the event of a failure by a claimant which is sanctionable under this Article.

(2) It is a failure sanctionable under this Article if a claimant falling within Article 27—

(a) fails for no good reason to comply with a requirement imposed under a work preparation requirement to undertake a work placement of a prescribed description;

(b) fails for no good reason to comply with a requirement imposed under a work search requirement to apply for a particular vacancy for paid work;

(c) fails for no good reason to comply with a work availability requirement by not taking up an offer of paid work;

(d) by reason of misconduct, or voluntarily and for no good reason, ceases paid work or loses pay.

(3) It is a failure sanctionable under this Article if by reason of misconduct, or voluntarily and for no good reason, a claimant falling within Article 24 by virtue of paragraph (3) of that Article ceases paid work or loses pay so as to cease to fall within that Article and to fall within Article 27 instead.

(4) It is a failure sanctionable under this Article if, at any time before making the claim by reference to which the award is made, the claimant—

(a) for no good reason failed to take up an offer of paid work, or

(b) by reason of misconduct, or voluntarily and for no good reason, ceased paid work or lost pay,

and at the time the award is made the claimant falls within Article 27.

(5) For the purposes of paragraphs (2) to (4) regulations may provide—

(a) for circumstances in which ceasing to work or losing pay is to be treated as occurring or not occurring by reason of misconduct or voluntarily;

(b) for loss of pay below a prescribed level to be disregarded.

(6) Regulations are to provide for—

(a) the amount of a reduction under this Article;

(b) the period for which such a reduction has effect, not exceeding 18 months in relation to any failure sanctionable under this Article.

(7) Regulations under paragraph (6)(b) may in particular provide for the period of a reduction to depend on either or both of the following—

(a) the number of failures by the claimant sanctionable under this Article;

(b) the period between such failures.

(8) Regulations may provide—

(a) for cases in which no reduction is to be made under this Article;

(b) for a reduction under this Article made in relation to an award that is terminated to be applied to any new award made within a prescribed period of the termination;

(c) for the termination or suspension of a reduction under this Article.