

# Working differently to increase employment in Oldham

## Employment and Skills Services

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November 2024

# Unemployment statistics

## Labour Market Report - Unemployment



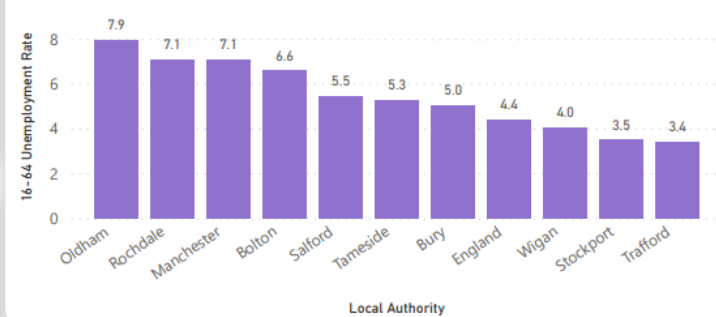
16-64 UC Claimants  
**11,855**

18-24 UC Claimants  
**1,885**

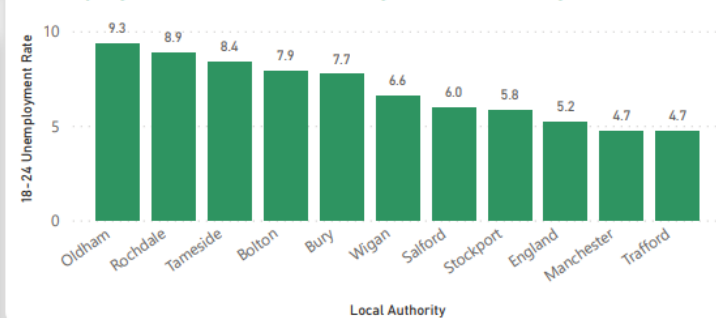
16-64 Unemployment Rate (%)  
**7.9**

18-24 Unemployment Rate (%)  
**9.3**

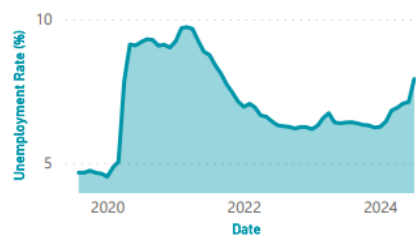
Unemployment Rate (16-64) % by Local Authority



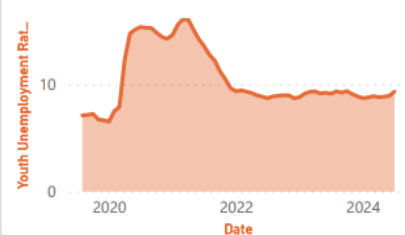
Unemployment Rate (18-24) % by Local Authority



16-64 Unemployment Rate Time Series - Oldham



18-24 Unemployment Rate Time Series - Oldham



- Oldham continues to have the highest unemployment rate in Oldham (All age and youth related).
- Youth unemployment remains steady but marked increase in the all-age group during 2024.
- Covid had a significant impact as has changes to Universal Credit conditionality.

# Universal Credit Changes 2020-2024

## UC claimants rise again with a new high reached in August 2024

Universal Credit (UC) claimants, Greater Manchester, January 2020 – August 2024

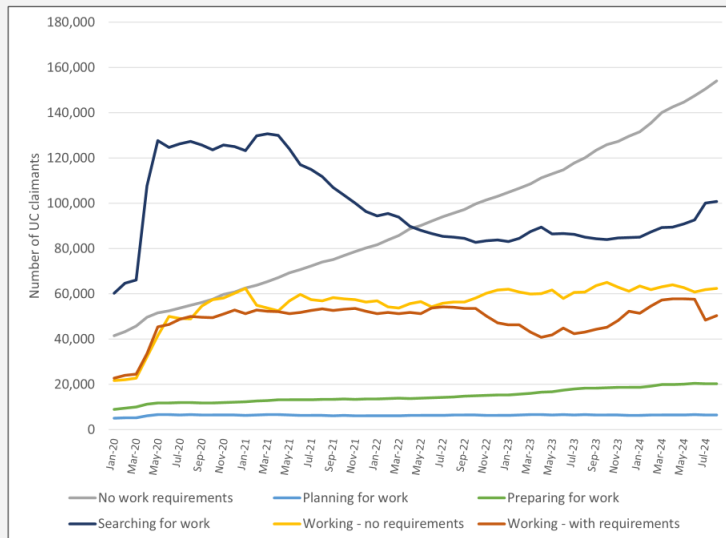
### UC claimant volumes have increased in every GM district

Universal Credit (UC) claimants, Greater Manchester districts, August 2023 and August 2024

- The number of residents who claim UC has risen in all GM

### Growing number of claimants have no work requirements

Conditionality regime of UC claimants, Greater Manchester, January 2020-August 2024



- The 'conditionality regime' for UC claimants refers to the requirements placed upon people in order to receive benefits.
- In August 2024, 154,097 claimants had no requirement to find work (39.0% of the total). This was higher than the number of claimants searching for work (100,820).
- The continued growth of UC claimants without any working requirements is the main trend over the pandemic and beyond – shown by the grey line on the chart.
- The number searching for work has been rising since October 2023 and saw a significant rise in July 2024 – nearly 8,000. This was mirrored by a sudden drop in the number working with requirements (though this has risen again in the latest month's data). This is likely related to the changes to the earnings threshold for full work search conditionality.

Source: DWP Stat Xplore

GMCA  
GREATER  
MANCHESTER  
COMBINED  
AUTHORITY

- Initial increase in UC claimants due to impact of Covid and economic fallout
- Quick recovery but above pre-pandemic levels.
- Secondary increase due to Universal Credit Claimant conditionally changes
- Across GM Universal Credit Claimants with no work conditionality has increased from 40,000 in 2020 to nearly 160k.
- This cohort has a range of issues that mean they are not mandated to find work (usually due to health/disability reasons).

# Barriers to employment

- Social mobility – movement in/out of Oldham – legacy impact of short term tenancies from 2008
- Right to work, language barriers, too far from the jobs market
- Lack of good employment opportunities – jobs and apprenticeships
- Poor physical health
- Disabilities/SEND
- Low mood/mental health/lack of confidence
- Low skills levels
- Economic drivers (concerns regarding transition from benefits, cost of childcare etc.)
- Sustainable employment opportunities (seasonal work)
- Caring responsibilities
- Poor networks – not knowing where to find jobs – no longer advertised in local papers.
- Choice
- New arrivals UK – rules about who can access public funds

# Strategic viewpoint

- **Employment and Skills Strategy**
  - Outstanding education and skills outcomes
  - Young people's progression into employment – linked to HM Government Youth Guarantee
  - Skills mapping – linking curriculum choice to local growth plans
  - Economic inactivity – supporting residents stay/return to work
  - Employers' role in the future curriculum
- Business Engagement/Supporting local businesses – need to connect residents to the vacancies
- Key opportunities: Atom Valley – 20k jobs; Green New Deal and Cyber/Digital growth sectors
- Manifesto Pledges
  - Skills England
  - Merging of JCP and NCS
  - Youth Guarantee
  - Technical Excellence Colleges
  - Universal Support

# Role of the Council

- **As a Civic leader**
  - Political Leadership – Setting clear goals through Corporate and Partnership Plans – Resident first.
  - Scrutiny Role – but not a direct commissioner
  - Economic Partnership – driving forward economic growth – Private sector led
  - Employment and Skills Board – bringing together all public sector funded agencies to deliver resident focussed outcomes
- **As a provider of externally funded employment support– The Get Oldham Working team supporting c. 5,100 residents a year of which 1,500 – 2000 progress into work and c2,200 into further learning.**
  - National Careers Service /Restart/ Support to Succeed
  - Corporate Parenting responsibilities; Youth Hub and Care Leaver additional support (now at risk due to funding)
  - Employer Support (recently supported recruitment for Egyptian Rooms, and outplacement support to Yodel, etc.)
  - Working Wardrobe – provision of clothing for interviews and for work
  - GOW Therapy – provision of mental health therapy to help progression into work
  - Low turnover of staff, high levels of CPD, Resident focus – aligned to civic Leadership. Lived experience and local to Oldham – support ongoing service improvement but dependent on winning contracts.
  - Engagement strategy – currently working with Family Hubs impact on effectiveness – not outreach for the sake of it!
- **As a provider of adult education – Lifelong Learning Service**
  - Delivery of Adult Skills provision - supporting c. 2400 adults across 22 centres (community and Council)
  - Lifelong Learning Tailored Learning Offer – supporting first rung learning for Oldham residents.
  - ESOL, ICT/Digital, Maths, English, Children and Adult Care pathways

# Role of the Council

- **As an employer**
  - To provide high quality employment opportunities to our residents across a wide skill set.
  - Business Development Support – create new jobs
  - Apprenticeships for Care Leavers
  - T-Level Work Placement Opportunities
- **As a change maker in the community**
  - **Creation of private sector jobs** – Egyptian Rooms – 42 vacancies (Front of House, Kitchen, Managers) – GOW provided recruitment support – 26 jobs for long term unemployed, 16 via GOW open recruitment – all residents of Oldham.
  - Local **support to GMCA funded Community Grant** providers- pre-employment/ learning support
  - **Working collaboratively with partners** to try to change delivery models within current contract restrictions and different departmental demands (Ingeus → LLS employment English pilot vs Ofsted Quality of Education)
  - **Use of social media channels** – GOW has a reach of 10k followers – 20k+ reach, LLS – 2.5k followers – 10k reach
  - **Alleviating Barriers project** – GOW engagement in community, deliver Step Up, 10-week work experience, bespoke level 2 in the Health and Social Care leading to guaranteed interview – provide child care and transport costs.
  - **Facilitate change** for hard to reach groups around recruitment practices – e.g. flexible jobs, job carving.

**Any Questions?**