

**EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND PROGRAMME
2007-2013**

LOCAL SPECIFICATION

NORTH WEST REGION

MERSEYSIDE

REF NO: NW05
TITLE: BASIC SKILLS/PRE ESOL

Customer Journey Stages 1- 3
(Engagement through to Access Employment/Skills Support)



European Union
European Social Fund
Investing in jobs and skills

DWP Department for
Work and Pensions

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1. INTRODUCTION

The North West Regional Context

The North West has a population of approximately 7 million. The region has 10% of the most deprived Super Output Areas (SOA) in England (more than any other region). Severe deprivation is evident in most districts across the North West with 17 of the 50 most deprived districts in England, including the top three of Knowsley, Liverpool and Manchester.

There are 43 Local Authorities in the North West, 13 have unemployment rates greater than the UK average of 5.5% even though their relative position may have improved considerably over recent years.

In the North West there are approximately:

- 107,000 people receiving Jobseekers Allowance
- 300,000 people receiving Income Support
- 407,000 people receiving Incapacity Benefit

The Incapacity Benefit claim rate is currently 10.3% compared with the UK average of 9.6%. There are also considerable variations in the geographical spread of people receiving benefits with high concentrations of Incapacity Benefit recipients at ward and SOA level.

The North West employment rate is 72.5%, 2% behind the England average. The employment rate is as low as 68% in Merseyside. The North West region would need 80,000 more people in work to bridge this gap.

Nationally 21% of children are in families that are in receipt of welfare benefits. In the North West region there are 79 wards where the percentage is at least the national average. Liverpool has 19 of these wards, Manchester 17 and Knowsley 8. In the Princess ward in Knowsley 68.2% of children are in families on benefit, the highest percentage in the North West.

Merseyside Strategy

Jobcentre Plus is looking to award a **Prime Contract** for this specification to cover the entire district. One organisation will be required to lead the contract and the successful provider will have to directly deliver some elements of the provision. Providers may bid to provide the entire provision themselves i.e. without using any sub- contractors. In this case they must demonstrate that they have sufficient capacity, capability, and expertise within their organisation to do so in addition to delivering any existing contracts for DWP and for any other organisations. The successful provider will be expected to demonstrate links they would create with local organisations to meet the requirements of this specification.

ESOL is the provision of English language for adult speakers of other languages. It is estimated that around 1 million adults in England have a first language other than English. A wide range of provision is needed to meet the many varied needs of customers who have diverse educational, social, cultural and learning backgrounds. The majority of provision currently available is at Entry Level 1 and above, with a lack of provision to support people needing Pre Entry Level ESOL.

This Annex sets out the criteria for the provision to be delivered through ESF in the Merseyside Outer District. Prospective bidders will be required to submit full and detailed proposals, meeting the specific criteria below

The North West Customer Journey

To ensure that DWP ESF provision adds value to existing mainstream provision and other programmes in the North West region, a 'Customer Journey' has been produced to clearly highlight the interventions and activities currently delivered by Jobcentre Plus and partners to progress customers from welfare into work.

This journey has enabled us to identify the following potential areas for 'value added' activities and each Jobcentre Plus district has identified their requirements within some or all of the stages of the Customer Journey. In table form, these stages of the journey are shown in **Annex 1**.

2. AIMS OF PROVISION

To provide pre-entry level Basic Skills/ Pre ESOL support to participants in order to address the severe ESOL and Basic Skills needs of participants in receipt of Working Age Benefit assessed as below Entry level.

3. DESIGN AND CONTENT

- Indicative contract value: £800,000 - £1million
- Contract starts: June 08 to May 2011
- Duration of contract: 3 years with the possibility of an extension to 2013. The value of the extension will be up to 50% of the contract value
- Minimum number of participants 300 over the three year contract duration.

4. DEFINITION OF ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS

In England, Basic Skills continues to be a priority and this Intervention is intended to support the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) Basic Skills provision.

The provider is expected to deliver activities to engage, encourage and prepare customers to increase their Basic Skills and/or ESOL abilities to Entry Level 1 as a minimum.

For those participants who are not eligible for assessment under the existing DWP Basic Skills Assessment contract, the Provider will need to assess the level of literacy and numeracy of customers against the National Standards for literacy and numeracy using the Basic Skills Agency Independent Assessment and refer them to appropriate Jobcentre Plus or LSC provision.

For those assessed as below entry level the Provider will deliver a 26 week programme of support with delivery of 15 hours per week. This programme will aim to address severe ESOL and Basic Skills needs of participants in receipt of working age benefit. These participants will have very poor levels of ESOL and Basic skills and will be unsuitable for LSC or Jobcentre Plus mainstream Basic Skills provision.

Support will be delivered on either a one to one basis or in small groups of between six to eight participants to one tutor. These participants should have similar abilities.

The support will be work focused and will include jobsearch support and the opportunity to undertake a work placement with a local employer where appropriate. The aim for the majority of participants will be to progress to Entry Level 1 provision.

It is anticipated that the majority of referrals to this Intervention will come from Jobcentre Plus Advisors and outcomes from this programme could be either a job entry or movement into LSC Basic Skills provision (Foundation or Employability Level).

5. TARGET GROUPS

- People on IB especially those with children (reflects Child Poverty Agenda);
- Lone parents;
- People with disabilities;
- Other people with children;
- Most disadvantaged e.g. Black and Racial Minorities, Refugees, homeless people, offenders, ex offenders and drug and alcohol misuse;
- City strategy;
- People with Basic Skills needs; and
- Jobseeker's Allowance customers.

In addition to the above eligibility, participants entering this programme must have been assessed at being below entry level in numeracy and or literacy or with a need for intensive ESOL support, who would not be ready to move into mainstream employment.

6. GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

All aspects are to be delivered from a central or community based location providing easy access for customers from within Liverpool, Sefton, Knowsley, St Helens and Wirral Local Authority areas. Locations should be selected to ensure that they are easily accessible by the priority customer groups.

7. ELIGIBILITY

ESF Priority 1 eligibility:

- Unemployed and economically inactive

Disadvantaged groups:

- People with disabilities;
- Those with health conditions;
- Lone parents;
- Older workers;
- Black Minority Ethnic communities;
- People with low skills;
- Those living in deprived communities;
- Excluded people

It will be the providers responsibility to check the eligibility of each participant prior to starting the programme.

8. REFERRALS

It is anticipated that a minimum of 30% of participants will be recruited from non Jobcentre Plus sources. Jobcentre Plus advisers will make referrals to join the project but the Provider cannot rely on these to achieve their target.

9. COHERENCE AND CONTEXT WITH OTHER PROVISION

This is a stand alone intervention that will enable participants to progress into mainstream Jobcentre Plus/LSC or other ESF provision after completion.

It is expected that those completers not entering employment will be referred to mainstream Basic Skills/ESOL provision to continue with their learning and development.

Customers on this provision cannot start the ESF Outreach through to Retention contract until they have completed this 26 week programme

10. NETWORKING /LINKS

Evidence must be provided of how you intend to work with local employers, providers and partner organisations. This must include a list of your contacts, the role they play and how they will contribute to the development of the programme.

If organisations do not have such experience then they will need to provide details of how they will address this gap.

11. MARKETING

The successful bidder will require a pro-active approach to ongoing marketing and promotion of their programme with potential participant groups and appropriate stakeholders within the local authority areas defined. A marketing plan should be produced covering the duration of the contract that will detail the planned activity to engage participants.

12. FUNDING MODEL RATIO/INDICATIVE VOLUMES

The expectation is that a minimum 300 participants will be engaged during the period up to March 2011

The provider will be expected to achieve a job outcome rate of a minimum of 15%.

The funding model will be as follows:

60% Delivery Payment

40% Job Outcome Payment

Please see part 10 of the Specification for England, which describes in more detail the funding model element.

13. NON PAID OUTCOMES

It is expected that 85% of completers will move into further training provision such as mainstream ESOL/Basic Skills, Skills for Jobs, New Deal or other specialist provision available within the Merseyside area. The contractor will be required to use their knowledge of local


provision to identify the most appropriate option for the participant and make the necessary referral.

The contractor will be required to establish a monitoring system that will enable them to record the destination of leavers and capture referrals to other provision.

14. EVALUATION

Bidders must demonstrate how they will evaluate their own delivery and that of their sub contractors. Detailing identification of areas for improvement and subsequent implementation of Performance Improvement activities to redress any under performances and quality issues, this must be done alongside any DWP/ESF requirements.

Annex 1 - The Customer Journey

Stage in Customer Journey		Areas identified for value added activity
Engagement stage	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 100px; margin-right: 10px;"></div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; font-size: small;">CASEWORKER SUPPORT</div> <div style="margin-left: 10px;">  </div> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engaging with harder-to-help customer groups currently outside mainstream activity and provision, delivering support to overcome barriers to participation and developing confidence. ▪ Identifying families in poverty and linking them with key agencies e.g. housing, childcare, health and training, developing packages of support and addressing multiple barriers. ▪ Caseworker/mentors linking with Jobcentre Plus prison staff to engage with offenders on release and addressing their individual needs. ▪ Engaging with long-term recipients of IB who are not engaged through employment-related activities. ▪ Supporting customers with disabilities who have not engaged through mainstream employment activities.
Customer Assessment and support		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Correct identification of needs. ▪ Use of additional aptitude testing and/or taster sessions. ▪ Establishing a detailed mentoring programme that delivers to all customers and integrates with LSC provision.
Access employment/skills support		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interventions to support LSC Skills for Life provision. ▪ Support for non-claimants with children, including jobsearch, work placements, careers advice, guidance plus the opportunity to achieve vocational qualifications. ▪ Support for IB customers to tackle confidence, motivation and financial issues. ▪ Community Projects to help priority customers to develop employability, soft and basic skills and overcome other barriers to employment. ▪ Work experience activity to enable IB customers to undertake work related activities. ▪ Support to help socially excluded customers engage with mainstream DWP provision.
Pre-employment support		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing specific help to disadvantaged people to help them find and keep a job. ▪ Delivery of short, responsive training linked to larger recruitment opportunities with employers offering <u>guaranteed jobs</u>.
Employment stage		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing support to employers through Local Employment Partnerships by complementing the help available to them through other DWP provision.

ANNEX 2 - LOCAL INFORMATION

Wirral Area

Traditionally, much of the employment on Wirral was founded on the shipbuilding industry, but now it is firmly based in the service sector, with an emphasis on clerical/administrative, retail and caring professions. Major employers are the Local Authority, NHS Trusts/Health Authorities, Central Government departments and the Lever Faberge group.

A number of large local companies take on casual seasonal workers. Consus Integrated Communications are a call centre handling international contracts Wirral Waterfront Regeneration is seeking to develop an 'employment corridor' from New Brighton to Eastham, taking in the Twelve Quays Development, with its new sea link to Ireland, and an ever-growing number of companies at the International Business Park in Bromborough.

Liverpool Area

Liverpool has been awarded the title of European Capital of Culture for 2008, and already this is propelling Liverpool's economy, and solid foundations have been laid for its ongoing transformation into a world class city.

There are approximately 10,000 businesses in Liverpool, dominated by the service sector. Liverpool has experienced an increase in employment within occupational areas requiring fully qualified employees, with skill levels above that of its current labour force. This mismatch has created a challenge to raise the level of skills within the labour force. Many employment opportunities within Liverpool are now based within the service sector, with an emphasis on clerical/administrative, retail and caring professions. Major employers are the Local Authority, NHS Trusts/Health Authorities, Central Government departments and organisations within the service sector. Seasonal workers are needed during the summer and during Christmas for the retail sector. The Speke/Garston and waterfront developments have brought new employment opportunities to the area.

The L1 development is a scheme which will transform the southern area of the City Centre into an area bustling with an attractive retail offer, commercial facilities, high quality apartments, and hotels which will vastly improve visitor options.

In the Merseyside area there are 58 different languages spoken by the population, with a higher proportion of people speaking Polish, Cantonese, Arabic, Bengali, Turkish and Somali, with smaller proportions speaking Farsi, Portuguese, Mandarin, French, Urdu and Spanish

Greater Mersey

Greater Mersey district is located in the North West Region, the District encompasses three Local Authorities, Knowsley, Sefton and St Helens. Covering the towns of St Helens, Newton Le Willows, Bootle, Crosby, Kirkby, Maghull, Formby, Huyton, Prescot and Southport. With JCP offices in St Helens, Newton Le Willows, Bootle, Crosby, Kirkby, Maghull, Formby, Huyton, Prescot and Southport.

The District working age population claim Jobseeker's Allowance, 12.0% Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disability Benefit and 9.4% Income Support.

Principal industries and Key employers:

The main employers in the Greater Mersey District are Local Government the NHS, and the Civil Service. A large number of people are also employed in Contact Centres, Call Centres and in the leisure and retail service.

Main industries in the district are retail with many highstreet chain store outlets such as Next, Wilkinsons and Primark opening stores in the main shopping areas and expansions of major supermarket chains. Domestic and social care sector vacancies remain high for residential care homes in Southport, Southport NHS Trust, various Local Authority care homes across the 4 boroughs. Call centres are a main employer, such as 02, QVC, Alliance and Leicester, Littlewoods, Argos and Vertex (insurance companies) with large call centre operations across the district. There is still some manufacturing mainly in St Helens and Knowsley area, although on the decline

With the recent regeneration of Southport seafront and the involvement of the area in Liverpool 08 Capital Culture, opportunities in tourism and leisure are reappearing.

Growth sectors also include science with the prestigious logistics and warehousing with many new distribution centres and construction, with three large housing regeneration projects in the District, Build Sefton consortium in and around Bootle, regeneration project in North Huyton building consortium project, which will commence shortly to replace housing stock in the Huyton area.

There are also considerable inward investment projects in the District. Including St Helens and Whiston hospital development, expected to generate approx 1,000 construction vacancies between 2007 to 2010, and eventually 600 hospital vacancies when the hospital's open. St Helens due to open July 08 and Whiston 2010. Two new hotels and a leisure complex being built in Southport, the new Kennet Prison near Kirkby opening in June 07.

A new 25-acre business park, 'Alchemy' under development with phase one just completed and a large new warehousing and distribution centre in Knowlsey.

Expansion of Bootle docks underway, as part of the Liverpool Sea Ports development and the re-development of Widnes waterfront including 3MG, Merseyside Multi-modal Gateway due for completion in July 08, a large warehousing and freight terminus, providing over 200 logistics and warehousing vacancies.

Future major developments due to start in the district are the Parkside Freight terminal, at the old Parkside colliery St Helens, commencing late 2008. Proposals for the Kirkby town centre, football stadium and Tesco's development, and the Omega business park in Warrington, which will also impact on Burtonwood on the border with St Helens .