

**EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND PROGRAMME 2007-
2013**

LOCAL SPECIFICATION

NORTH EAST

**SOUTH TYNE AND WEAR
VALLEY DISTRICT**

REF NO: NE 06 (revised June 08)

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This specification sets out the generic criteria for the delivery of ESF provision for the North East Region. Prospective bidders must submit full and detailed proposals, which meet the criteria given in this Generic Specification and the specific criteria below.
- 1.2 DWP/Jobcentre Plus requires a Prime Contract to cover the **County Durham, Sunderland and South Tyneside** area within South Tyne and Wear Valley Jobcentre Plus District. We expect the Prime Contractor to develop effective delivery arrangements where necessary via sub contractors and Partners to ensure they have the capability to meet a wide range of needs from the diverse customer group and rural locations.
- 1.3 The successful bidder will be required to adopt the Regional Employability Framework as a basis to demonstrate comprehensive planning against all elements of pathways to employability as outlined in Appendix 2.
- 1.4 Although activity requirements outline the elements that must be delivered, prospective bidders are encouraged to submit proposals that are innovative and flexible in their approach and based on individual need in relation to the Local Labour Market requirements. Proposals must meet the needs of all participants and deliver effective provision whilst addressing the minimum requirements of the Specification for England, Generic Specification for the District, and the specific Provision Annexes.
- 1.5 DWP/Jobcentre Plus seeks provision delivery which provides a flexible and supportive journey for participants through direct engagement in the local communities for those furthest from the Labour Market, with progression via Soft Skills/Jobsearch, Employer specific training, other LSC provision as appropriate, externally funding specialist services e.g. debt counselling etc, mentoring and in-work support. Bidders will be expected to manage the participant journey through each element and maintain records to support management information of the activities delivered.

2. AIM OF PROVISION

- 2.1 The overall aim of ESF priority 1 is to increase employment, reduce unemployment and inactivity and to help tackle barriers to work faced by disadvantaged groups. Further details can be found in paragraph 5 of the Specification for England. The successful Bidder will provide a range of measures designed to engage participants, remove barriers, improve employability and support the retention of participants into employment, education and further learning.
- 2.2 Participants must be supported through the programme ensuring basic skills needs are addressed at every opportunity. An Action Plan should be developed to address individual need using a mix and match of the Provision Elements listed below and described in the Annexes. All Provision should be designed to meet employer needs and Providers will be required to engage with Employers in the design and delivery of the proposal and throughout the delivery of provision.

PROVISION ELEMENTS

- Customer Engagement Community Outreach
- Soft skills/Jobsearch
- Employer/Sector specific Routeways
- Mentoring
- Pre & Post Employment Discretionary Fund
- Childcare Tasters
- Aftercare/In work support

- 2.3 The ESF Provision will add value by targeting people who may not otherwise come forward to access provision or be eligible for existing provision. It can focus on specific localities where there are particular difficulties for people wanting to return to work. It adds to the range of provision available or providing additional facilities already shown to be working in other parts of the region. The provision will provide different or more intensive support to people facing greater barriers which can run alongside their involvement in the main domestic programme. It will provide specific help to disadvantaged people to help them find and keep a job and; providing support to employers through Local Employment Partnerships to complement the help available to them through other DWP provision.

DWP/Jobcentre Plus anticipates a minimum 20% of participants will require access to Basic Skills Provision funded via either the LSC or any other Community Learning Organisation/Learn Direct. Participants should access the provision needed whilst being supported by their Individual Support Worker. On completion of Basic Skills Provision the participant will be expected to progress through the menu of provision within this contract or any other support needed such as LSC funded Nextsteps provision or LSC ESF co-financing funded intensive careers and skills coaching service.

DWP/Jobcentre Plus anticipates that approximately 20% of participants will require access to externally funded specialist services e.g. debt counselling, support with housing etc. Participants should be supported to access the services needed by their Individual Support Worker. On completion the participant will be expected to progress through the menu of provision within this contract or any other support needed.

3. DESIGN AND CONTENT

- 3.1 Providers will be required to compete on price as well as quality for this European Social Fund contract. However, an indicative notional value of between £6.4m and £8m has been earmarked for the delivery of this contract for up to 2 years and 8 months. This contract will run from **17 November 2008 to 3 August 2011**. There is an indicative value of up to £4 million for any possible extension period. The District anticipates that the total volume of participants accessing the contract will be a minimum of **4620**. **Participants may access one element or all elements of provision.**

Bidders will be required to submit details of the volume assumptions made for each element of provision when submitting price information.

3.2 **Recruitment Arrangements:** Participants may be referred via:

- Customer Engagement/Outreach 20%-30% - non JCP customers
- Direct provider referral – 40%-50%
- JCP referral – 20%-30%

4. **DEFINITION OF ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS:**

4.1 The activity requirements listed below are **common elements** of the delivery for **all participants**. Additional activities relating to the individual **tailored elements** of the programme are detailed below. Participants will access all common elements but may access more than one of the optional elements according to need. Appendix 3 gives an overview of the customer journey.

COMMON ELEMENTS

4.2 **INDUCTION**

On joining provision participants should receive an induction. This induction must make clear the aims of the provision and the benefits of participation including attendance, good time keeping and appropriate behaviour. The length of the induction will be determined by the length and nature of the provision and the characteristics of the participant. As a minimum, Induction must include an introduction to the following:

- Purpose, development and review of the Individual Action Plan;
- Hours of participation and availability of provision;
- Health and safety, fire and domestic arrangements;
- Arrangements regarding travel expenses and, where appropriate, childcare or other dependents expenses;
- Rules regarding attendance/participation;
- Appropriate behaviour, inappropriate behaviour and disciplinary procedures;
- Nature and purpose of job search, training and activity;
- Equal opportunities;
- Grievance and complaints procedures;
- Specific arrangements should be discussed with the participant on an individual basis e.g. restriction of hours; requirements for specialist support such as communicator support for those with a hearing impairment; and
- Inform participants that European Union funds are being used to support their participation on the provision.

4.3 **INITIAL ASSESSMENT:**

All participants must have a robust and comprehensive initial assessment, which is undertaken within the first week of participation and results documented to highlight barriers to employment and individual learning/training/soft skill needs. Additionally, a Basic Skills Assessment must be made available to all participants to establish any further basic skills needs. The results of these assessments will form the basis of an Individual Action Plan.

Soft Skill and Barriers identified during the Initial Assessment may include:

- Caring Responsibilities
- Health or Disability
- Ethnicity
- Chaotic Lifestyle
- Benefit “Trap”/ Debt
- Family Peer pressure
- Lack of Confidence/Motivation
- Ability to Problem solve
- Travel solutions
- Lack of effective Communication skills

Providers will be expected to address the above soft/skills or barriers and others identified during assessment through individual and group sessions, calling on local partner expertise as required.

4.4 INDIVIDUAL ACTION PLAN

All participants must receive an Individual Action Plan (IAP) by week two of starting provision, which must highlight the support needed to successfully enter the labour market. The arrangements for completion and maintenance of plans differ for different types of provision. In all cases the IAP will be a living document and clearly linked to reviews. In all cases, the plan should be individually tailored and include:

- The participant’s name, address, date of birth, signature and National Insurance number;
- Name and address of provider and signature of provider representative responsible for Action Plan;
- Duration of provision;
- Details of how the qualifications or other key/core/transferable skills will be assessed;
- The participant’s prior learning and assessed needs;
- The participant’s job goals, including short, medium and long term goals as appropriate;
- The start and planned end date of provision;
- Agreed attendance including location of training and daily hours;
- The activities which will be undertaken while on provision, including detailed job search activity;
- The level of support that will be given by the provider, including where additional support is required;
- Any training that will be delivered as part of the provision, any qualifications which will be achieved and how this relates to improving the participant’s employability;
- Be agreed and signed by both the participant and the provider; and
- Any arrangements for payment of dependent /childcare and travel costs.

4.5 INTENSIVE SUPPORT WORKER

The Provider will provide **Intensive Support Workers** to help support customers from engagement through to employment, assisting in resolving issues that may arise. The Intensive Support Workers will offer a continuous link between the steps of progression for the customer, by supporting referral onto other provisions/services as required, this may include:-

- Continued health care support considering the number of IB customer that will be engaged.
- LSC funded Basic Skills Provision
- Specialist services and agencies e.g. debt counselling etc.

The Intensive Support Worker (ISW) will help to remove barriers directly or by 'signposting' to other experts where they are unable to address issues themselves. The ISW will ensure that customer needs are being addressed while receiving externally funded support by acting as an intermediary. They will ensure Action Plans are updated to show progress and next steps are highlighted, planned and reviewed. The ISW will engage with providers and or employers to facilitate continued engagement and progression. This will be especially relevant for customers with multiple barriers to employment for which the risk of disengaging will be significant. The bidder should indicate staffing ratio of ISW to customers.

4.6 PROGRESS REVIEW

Providers must monitor, review and measure a participant's progress against defined criteria specified in the Individual Action Plan. It is expected that this activity will take place weekly on an informal basis. Formal, documented reviews should take place at least on a monthly basis.

4.7 EXIT INTERVIEW/STRATEGY

All participants must have a documented exit interview, detailing the reason for leaving, other support needed and outcomes achieved.

4.8 MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND PREMISES

Providers are responsible for the day-to-day administration of provision and must:

- Manage provision professionally, by putting systems in place which will ensure that all administrative work is completed to a high standard within the time limits imposed to meet DWP/Jobcentre Plus requirements;
- Deliver provision on premises in locations, which are easily accessible to participants. Where particular transport difficulties exist, for example in more rural areas, these must be addressed by providers. Premises must be of a high standard, offer a professional, business-like environment and be able to cope with the expected through flow of people. They should provide areas where group discussion, one to one activities or job search etc can take place without distraction.

4.9 MANAGING ATTENDANCE, TIMEKEEPING AND ABSENCES

Providers must maintain comprehensive and accurate attendance records for participants. The attendance requirements for specific elements of provision are defined separately. Where participants fail to attend provision DWP/Jobcentre Plus would expect the provider to contact the participant to remind them of the support and opportunities available. Where contact is not re-established within 4 weeks participants should be deemed to have left the programme. Providers must have a structured process to avoid early exit and quickly re-engage participants who are not attending back on to provision.

4.10 GRIEVANCE & COMPLAINTS

Providers must treat participants in a courteous and professional manner. Providers should listen and be receptive in response to reasonable complaints or issues raised about the suitability and quality of their provision.

TAILORED ELEMENTS

4.11 CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT – COMMUNITY OUTREACH – Element 1

The Customer Engagement provision will effectively address the needs of those customers who do not currently engage with Jobcentre Plus by offering flexible delivery tailored to individual need, inspiring and empowering participants to achieve their potential and move into work. It is anticipated that the provider will recruit 20%-30% of participants via this route.

Bidders should demonstrate how they will work within the community to engage customers. Activities must include work with GP's, Primary Care Trusts, Local Authority initiatives, Voluntary and Community Organisations and other organisations at local neighbourhood level. Providers must clearly show within their tender what engagement activities they plan to undertake with other local organisations through sub-contracting arrangements and how the client group will be engaged.

The participant group will include those not claiming Jobseekers Allowance and not on a New Deal /DEA /Lone Parent /Partners/ Pathways caseload; particular emphasis should be placed upon engaging with the following customer groups:

- Incapacity Benefit Customers
- Customers aged 50yrs and over

Once engaged the customer would then receive all of the common elements of the provision and would progress through the tailored packages and externally funded provision according to individual need.

Aim: The aim of this provision is to develop an innovative service model that engages with people furthest from the labour market to address their barriers thereby improving their chances in the labour market. Provision must be flexible to fully meet customer needs, by identifying and providing the necessary support/skills to find sustainable work and be delivered in the Local Communities.

DIRECT PROVIDER REFERRALS: DWP/Jobcentre Plus expects that most of the proposed volumes (see paragraph 5 “Target Groups”) are achieved by direct referrals obtained by the provider. The provider will be expected to provide robust information regarding their plans for marketing this provision in the local community. Close working with Jobcentre Plus will also be required to ensure participants are eligible for the provision. Again once the customer would then receive all of the common elements of the provision and would progress through the tailored packages and externally funded provision according to individual need.

4.12 SUPPORT INCLUDING SOFT SKILLS / JOBSEARCH – Element 2

For all participants where necessary this should include:

- Support from providers to address any immediate concerns about provision; ensuring participants receive adequate supervision, leadership, support, coaching, feedback and guidance;
- An assessment of Soft Skills / Jobsearch ability to identify individual support/training needs. The results should be clearly documented using SMART objectives on the participants Action Plan;
- Providing participants with the required resources to undertake provision and work placements (details of these resources, facilities and equipment should be included at the bid stage);
- Engaging local employers in order to raise awareness of the local labour market and employer expectations. This will be achieved by:
- Delivering innovative, flexible soft skills / job search support as an integral part of provision e.g. :-
 - Confidence / Motivation
 - Self Presentation / Hygiene
 - CV, Spec Letters, Application Forms
 - Interview Techniques
 - Local Labour Market Knowledge
 - Career Progression
 - Promoting continued learning for participants who leave provision, including for those who leave for work.

4.13 EMPLOYER/SECTOR SPECIFIC ROUTEWAYS PROVISION – Element 3

Introduction: Employer/Sector specific routeways will deliver short and long programmes for a minimum 2 weeks and maximum 20 weeks depending on requirements of the labour market. The longer programmes will deliver tailored learning and it is paramount that employer sponsorship and input is received throughout.

Short programmes will be flexible and enable the region to respond to individual and employer needs to gain qualifications or licences which will lead directly to employment where there are known opportunities.

All activities will continue to add value to and not duplicate the current ‘Train 2 Gain’ programmes.

Aims and objectives: The overall aim of this provision is to help participants to acquire and/or update work-related skills to enable them to get a job. As a result of taking part participants should be able to demonstrate to potential employers that they are capable of undertaking paid work.

The key objectives include:

- to help those people disadvantaged in the labour market, to gain the soft and occupational skills needed to get a job; and
- Embedding basic skills support throughout the delivery of provision in relation to occupational/sector specific requirements;
- delivering training which provides employers with a supply of employees who have the skills relevant to their business and thus enables unemployed/in-active people to be placed into jobs;
- to increase employer engagement and support the Government's recently announced Jobs Pledge and Local Employer Partnership initiatives.

Referrals: Jobcentre Plus will make direct referrals to the Employer/Sector routeways provision, however the Provider is expected to attract participants onto the Provision in line with the ESF Target Group.

Design and content: Provision should be available to allow customers to gain qualifications and licences required to move either directly into work or closer to the labour market. Provision will cover all occupational areas and sectors e.g. the Regional priority sectors Construction, Transport, Hospitality, Retail, Care, Engineering and Contact Centre Sector provision. There has been considerable work undertaken in the Region with Sector Skills Councils, Learning and Skills Council, City Regions, LSP and the North East

Employer Coalition on Employability/Occupational Routeways. The Provider would be expected to incorporate any identified best practice from this work within the provision.

Provision should include areas such as:-

- Pre employment training for a designated employer within the district – this will be designed individually to meet employer demands in partnership with DWP/Jobcentre Plus District Teams.
- Health & Safety Certificates, First Aid Training, Manual Handling, CSCS cards and other short certificated training to meet a specific need. (Such certificates will be viewed as enhancement certificates and should not be delivered in isolation).
- A certificated or vocationally recognised qualification or license. Customers do not need a guaranteed job to access this provision, however providers must undertake a robust initial assessment and which must clearly show all barriers to employment and learning needs. The IAP will then show how all areas identified will be addressed. Proposals must clearly show the precise type and level of qualification as well as the volume of participants expected to achieve

- Work experience placements with either:-
 - Projects
 - Voluntary Sector Organisations
 - Employers

- Work Trial and Job Interview Guarantee arrangements discussed and agreed with Jobcentre Plus as appropriate.

Customers must have clear aims and objectives prior to commencing any placements and reviews must be undertaken as per generic specification. Customers should be able to access one or all of the types of placements above, this should be managed by the provider and should show clear customer progression.

Managing Attendance, Timekeeping and Absences: Providers must maintain comprehensive and accurate attendance records for participants. The attendance requirements for specific elements of provision are defined separately but in general it is expected that Providers will deliver provision for a minimum of 10 hours and a maximum of 29 hours 59 minutes a week for participants, depending upon individual need. Where participants fail to attend provision DWP/Jobcentre Plus would expect the provider to contact the participant to remind them of the support and opportunities available. Where contact is not re-established within 4 weeks participants should be deemed to have left the programme. Providers must have a structured process to avoid early exit and quickly re-engage participants who are not attending back on to provision.

4.14 MENTORING – Element 4

This Mentoring provision should be available to participants at any stage of the ESF Prime Contract and throughout the participant’s journey along the ‘employability continuum’. Customers who are participating on LSC ESF Co-Financing Provision will also be expected to be supported by this Mentoring provision.

Prospective Providers will be required to submit full and detailed proposals which meet the specific criteria set out below and the generic criteria within the main document.

Aim: The aim of the Mentoring and Aftercare support is to help participants needing additional support in overcoming barriers, to improve their employability in the Labour Market and to assist them in making the transition into work and supporting them in-work to maximise the individuals opportunity of retaining employment.

Referrals: Jobcentre Plus will make direct referrals of New Deal participants onto the Mentoring provision, however the Provider is expected to attract non New Deal Jobcentre Plus and non-Jobcentre Plus participants onto the Provision as defined in paragraph 5 “Target Group” in the Specification.

Providers should match up participants to Mentors within 2 weeks of the referral. This can be through the use of specialist Mentoring services or by utilising more intensive support of the Intensive Case Worker (Engagement element).

Design and content: A Mentoring relationship is expected to last as long as the

participant requires it and could last at least up to 6 months. There will, of course, be variations on this pattern. In some instances the relationship may be shorter in duration as objectives are achieved early or because either party decides not to continue or longer where the mentoring support is accessed at an early stage in the participants' journey towards sustainable work.

A successful Mentor/participant relationship will be one where the two people succeed in establishing a relationship of mutual trust. Both the Mentor and the participant will have made a commitment at the outset to doing everything they reasonably can to establish such a relationship. The Mentor will aim to help the participant gain confidence and experience, develop his/her skills, increase his/her employability, find and stay in sustainable employment.

Mentoring providers will need to ensure that:

- The Mentoring Provision is co-ordinated and stipulate how they will do this, the precise duties will vary according to the local delivery arrangements;
- they have a number of Mentors who are independent, unpaid volunteers over the age of 18, Bidders are required to show the level of unpaid/paid mentors they will require to deliver within their proposal document;
- Mentors will offer support and act as a 'sounding board' to the participant in dealing with employment or training related problems/issues. The relationship between the Mentor and participant, although friendly and supportive, should have clear objectives and be 'job focused';
- Mentors are not directly involved in the day-to-day management or supervision of the participant;
- the Mentor/ participant relationship is a voluntary one, based on mutual agreement, commitment and shared responsibility, from which either party can withdraw at any time. The expectation is that the relationship could last at least 6 months. The relationship must be a confidential one. The Mentor must not disclose information shared by the participant unless prior agreement has been obtained;
- the Mentoring relationship between the two parties is equal and equitable. It is important that the participant is able to feel some ownership of the Mentoring process. Early in the relationship both Mentor and participant will need to establish what each can bring to the relationship and what they can expect of one another;
- the Mentor/participant relationship complements and does not replace the relationship between the participant and the where applicable the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser (PA). Potential providers should consider how best to ensure that PA's and Mentors are accessible to each other, while maintaining confidentiality and bearing in mind constraints imposed by, for example, the Data Protection Act;
- Mentors have the skills and experience to successfully undertake the Mentoring role. Mentors should be equipped, following their training, to mentor participants who may disclose a wide range of issues such as drug/alcohol, problems with managing money, confidence building, communication skills, presentation and interview skills and difficulties with colleagues and working relationships; and

- Mentors will offer support and encouragement, and his/her conduct in the Mentoring relationship could also offer an example to the participant of appropriate and effective workplace behaviour.

The provider will be required to deliver a training session to Mentors. All volunteer Mentors will be required to attend this session before they are allowed to mentor participants. The duration of this training will vary, but it should last at least half a day. The training should include as a minimum:

- an overview of the issues facing long term unemployed customers;
- a definition of Mentoring;
- a review of communication skills, including listening skills;
- the start of a Mentoring relationship – commitment, meetings, expectations etc;
- how to manage Mentoring relationships;
- what to do when a Mentoring relationship comes to an end;
- the support role of the Mentoring Co-ordinator;
- health and safety, grievance procedures and travel expenses; and
- the matching process and what happens next.

The provider will monitor the effectiveness of the Mentor/participant contact and identify and resolve problems such as low levels of contact.

On average Jobcentre Plus would expect fortnightly documented contact between the Mentor and those being mentored for approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour depending on the needs of the participant. Jobcentre Plus would expect more than fortnightly contact with participants if multiple barriers were identified to provide more intensive support.

Where a participant misses more than one meeting after their first scheduled meeting DWP/Jobcentre Plus would expect the provider to contact the participant to remind them that they can still have access to a Mentor, should they wish to do so. However, if after 4 weeks the provider has still been unable to make contact with the participant, the provider may deem the participant to have left their Mentoring relationship.

Providers tendering for Mentoring provision will need to demonstrate how they will co-operate with other organisations. For example, those involved in the delivery of the New Deal and organisations on a “grass roots” level delivering local support services e.g. debt management, drug/alcohol support organisations. Providers should also demonstrate how they will link with organisations providing in work mentoring e.g. Trade Union Learning Representatives.

The provider will be responsible for training and developing their staff.

Where a staff member has to attend training during a time when they would otherwise be delivering Mentoring provision the provider must ensure that suitable cover for that staff member is available.

Arrangements for delivering the information sessions/talks to New Deal participants, including lone parents and Pathways customers will be agreed locally with contacts from

the District. The information session should last for approximately one hour and as a minimum it should give information about:

- what Mentoring involves;
- the local Mentoring provision;
- the relationship between the Mentor and PA; and
- Confidentiality during a Mentoring relationship.

The provider will not receive any additional payments for delivering the information sessions/awareness visits.

4.15 PRE AND POST EMPLOYMENT DISCRETIONARY FUNDING – Element 5

This must be made available to all participants where necessary to help remove barriers to either moving into employment or remaining in employment. This should **only** be offered in instances where the Jobcentre Plus Advisor Discretion Fund (**ADF**) cannot be accessed by the participant. The funding could be used to address (not exhaustive):-

- The purchase of Interview clothes
- The purchase of tools/equipment to start work
- Travel to interviews
- Travel expenses to start work
- Unexpected costs during the first 13 weeks of employment

4.16 CHILDCARE TASTERS – Element 6

These tasters should enable parents to access childcare where this is considered a barrier to accessing training and work opportunities. The aim is to give parents the opportunity to ‘taste’ suitable registered childcare, including childminders, day nurseries and out of school clubs. This should be flexible enough to enable the parent to try a ‘mix and match’ of childcare up to a maximum of 5 days. Providers will be expected to liaise with Local Childcare Partnership Managers to raise awareness of childcare provision available within the local area. Bidders should build childcare costs into their proposals to accommodate the Taster and other ongoing Childcare needs during provision participation.

4.17 AFTERCARE/POST EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT - Element 7

In recognition of poor job retention for those who have been previously economically inactive, the provision will also include (dependant on need) up to 26 weeks in-work support and access to in-work discretionary fund to ensure employment is sustained. (IB customers should be referred to the existing In Work Support provision as available in Jobcentre Plus)

Prospective Providers are required to outline their contact strategy to support those who have moved into work.

The type of support needed may include:

- Vocational profiling to help the participant and employer with induction, on the job training and setting up natural support arrangements. In particular customers who are new to an occupational area and those needing additional time to become fully effective employees.
- Occupational Health Support with issues such as workplace ergonomics and working hours/patterns. Occupational Health support will also assist employers, where they request it, to provide health and safety risk assessments and determine customers' capabilities in relation to specific job roles. This provision will be specifically targeted at small to medium size employers who are unlikely to have access to such support.
- Financial advice and debt counselling e.g. to schedule debt repayments and provide ongoing money management support.
- Career progression, e.g. accessing other organisations to continue learning and development e.g. Next Steps or other intensive Careers and Skills Coaching services which may lead to participants being engaged in LSC managed provision or Train To Gain via Business Link North East if the employer wishes to participate.

5. TARGET GROUPS

5.1 The unemployed priority target groups expected to participate in this ESF provision are:

- People with disabilities and health conditions;
- Lone parents and other disadvantaged parents;
- Older workers;
- People from ethnic minorities;
- People with low or not qualifications, and

5.2 Expected % of each target group out of the project sought volumes that are expected to use the provision.

% of participants who are unemployed	55%
% of participants who are inactive	45%
% of participants with disabilities or health issues	22%
% of participants who are lone parents	12%
% of participants aged 50 and over	18%
% of participants from ethnic minorities	8%
% of female participants	51%

6. GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

6.1 DWP/Jobcentre Plus is looking to award a Prime Contract to cover the **County Durham, Sunderland & South Tyneside** area within South Tyne and Wear Valley District.

6.2 Full detailed description of the geographical area covered and the Jobcentre Plus sites servicing this area are provided within Appendix 1 Local Information attached.

6.3 Provision is to be delivered from premises in:

- either **Durham or Chester le Street**
- one or more of the following: **Bishop Auckland, Crook, Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor**
- **Peterlee and/or Seaham**
- **Consett and/or Stanley**
- **Sunderland**
- **South Shields and/or Jarrow**

Providers should clearly state within their bid the proposed delivery locations.

7. ELIGIBILITY

- 7.1 Participants accessing ESF provision must fall into the participant Target Group as defined in paragraph 5 above. Each referral to the provision either direct to the Provider or from Jobcentre Plus must be checked to ensure participant eligibility is met.
- 7.2 The procedures that Providers will be expected to undertake to ensure participant eligibility shall be defined prior to contract start.

8. REFERRALS

- 8.1 Providers will be expected to engage with Jobcentre Plus and Non Jobcentre Plus customers. It is expected that customers will be identified through continual marketing activity, undertaken by prospective bidders. Bidders must describe their marketing strategies and detail the specific measures they will put in place to attract the particular participant groups, e.g. Incapacity Benefit clients.

9. COHERENCE AND CONTEXT WITH OTHER PROVISION

- 9.1 The North East Region has undertaken extensive mapping exercises to ensure the ESF contract proposal does not duplicate existing delivery. The ESF Participants will therefore access other provision outside of the contract when appropriate to enhance their journey to sustainable employment. E.g. where a Basic Skills need is identified which requires specialist training the Provider would work with the LSC and all relevant partners to identify and progress the training need. The Provider will be expected to maintain contact with the participant who may return to the contract for continued support.
- 9.2 In some instances participants may be working with a Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser on a New Deal, Disability or Pathways caseload and referred to receive additional help from the Employer Routeways or Mentoring and In-work support. Where this is the case the Provider will be expected to liaise with the Personal Advisers and provide updated Action Plans as requested and agreed with Jobcentre Plus.

10. NETWORKING /LINKS

- 10.1 The successful Provider will be expected to work with the Jobcentre Plus Regional and District Employer Engagement Teams in support of the Local Employer Partnerships and the Governments recently announced Jobs Pledge.
- 10.2 The successful Provider will also be expected to work with to develop and agree provision with organisations currently working on the employability agenda in the local geographical area appropriate to the contract e.g. Tyne and Wear City Regions Employment Consortium, Tees Valley Unlimited, Removing Barriers to Work (Northumberland), County Durham Local Strategic Partnership.

11. MARKETING

- 11.1 Providers will be expected to continually market the provision to participants, employers, Jobcentre Plus and local agencies. All marketing activity must meet the ESF publicity requirements, details of this can be found in the Specification for England.

12. FUNDING MODEL RATIO/VOLUMES

- 12.1 The funding model will be split into two elements: an element for delivery (Delivery Fee), and an element, which will be outcome related (Outcome Fee). The ratio to be applied to this contract is 50/50, with 50% of the total Contract paid in monthly instalments and 50% paid for Job Outcomes achieved paid on a unit price basis. The Specification for England provides more detail on the model.
- 12.2 The District has set an indicative volume of total starts for the initial period of contract. The level of access on each element is provided and it is expected that the majority of participants will access at least two elements of support.
- Total indicative Volume Starts on provision – **4620**
- 12.3 Bidders are required to state the volumes they will support in each element of the provision and provide full cost details in their proposal.
- 12.4 The standard DWP Job Outcome definition will apply to the ESF contract as outlined below. The District has set a **minimum** Job Outcome Target of **35%** for this contract.

CUSTOMER JOURNEY

- 13.1 Appendix 3 details an overview of the customer journey.

DISTRICT: South Tyne and Wear Valley – Durham, Sunderland and South Tyneside

Jobcentre Plus District: South Tyne & Wear Valley

Address and Contact Details:

**Jobcentre Plus
Durham District Office
Elvet House
Hallgarth Street
Durham
DH1 3BP**

Referring Jobcentres Durham:-

Central Durham

Chester-le- Street
Durham

Provision to be delivered from premises in either Durham or Chester Le Street and in a venue that is accessible to participants from the above Jobcentre Plus offices by public transport.

South Durham

Bishop Auckland
Crook
Newton Aycliffe
Spennymoor

Provision to be delivered from premises in one or more of the above areas and in a venue that is accessible to participants from the above Jobcentre Plus offices by public transport

East Durham

Peterlee
Seaham

Provision to be delivered from premises in either Peterlee and or Seaham and in a venue that is accessible to participants from the above Jobcentre Plus offices by public transport

Derwentside

Consett
Stanley

Provision to be delivered from premises in either Consett and or Stanley and in a venue that is accessible to participants from the above Jobcentre Plus offices by public transport

Bidders should clearly state within their proposal their proposed delivery locations.

Referring Jobcentres in Sunderland:-

Sunderland
 Washington
 Southwick
 Houghton

Provision to be delivered from one or more premises within the Sunderland area and in a venue that is accessible to customers from the above Jobcentre Plus offices by public transport

Referring Jobcentres in South Tyneside

South Shields
 Jarrow

Provision to be delivered from premises in South Shields and possibly Jarrow and in a venue that is accessible to customers from the above Jobcentre Plus offices by public transport.

Bidders should clearly state within their proposal their proposed delivery locations.

District beneficiary register and make up of beneficiary register**South Tyne & Wear Valley District Information**

Local Authority	Population	Claimants	Unemployed Claimants	Sick and Disabled Claimants	Lone Parents	Total Claim Rate	Unemployed Claim Rate
Chester-le-Street	53,692	5,690	645	3,560	430	17.8%	2.0%
Derwentside	85,074	11,330	1,345	6,925	1,005	23.0%	2.7%
Durham	87,709	8,255	955	5,215	695	14.7%	1.7%
Easington	93,993	16,575	1,410	11,370	1,295	31.0%	2.6%
Sedgefield	87,206	12,210	1,400	7,615	1,170	24.1%	2.8%
South Tyneside	152,785	22,795	4,615	11,530	2,840	26.4%	5.3%
Sunderland	280,807	39,975	6,020	23,340	3,995	24.0%	3.6%
Teesdale	24,457	2,045	200	1,225	185	14.7%	1.4%
Wear Valley	61,339	9,310	1,205	5,420	955	26.6%	3.4%
Total	927062	128185	17795	76200	12570	23.6%	3.3%

Geography of the area

South Tyne and Wear Valley District covers the County of Durham, City of Sunderland and South Tyneside making it one of the largest Geographical Districts in the Country. The district has 16 local offices.

County Durham (Covered by Chester le Street, Stanley, Consett, Durham, Crook, Bishop Auckland, Peterlee, Seaham, Newton Aycliffe, and Spennymoor JCP offices)

Geography

County Durham occupies an area of around 223,000 hectares in the heart of the North East Region, with the North Pennines to the west, the North Sea coastline to the east, the Tyne and Wear conurbation to the north and the Tees Valley conurbation to the south.

Although most of the County is rural, its settlement pattern is unique, with over 60% of its population living in settlements of less than 10,000 people. Indeed, the largest urban centre is Durham City with a population of just over 37,000. The County is also unique in terms of its economic and social geography, with urban issues set in a rural context. Despite their attractive setting, many of the County's settlements suffer from high levels of deprivation, coupled with severe difficulties in terms of accessing jobs, learning and services.

It would be wrong therefore to view County Durham in the same terms as the more affluent shire counties. Forty-two of 8,414 wards appear within the top 10% of most deprived wards nationally.

Employment

The 2000 Annual Business Inquiry produced by the Office for National Statistics estimated the total number of employees within County Durham to be 158,700 (excluding self-employed) of which 52.5% were male and 47.5% were female.

In comparison to the national trends, County Durham still has an employment structure which is dominated by particular sectors, however, trends do indicate a slow convergence to the national structure. Noticeable differences are located within the Manufacturing sector and the individual categories that compose the Service sector. The County has a strong reliance on the Manufacturing sector for employment. In 2000, the Annual Business Inquiry estimated employment within Manufacturing at 38,900 employee jobs. This represents 24.5% of all employment within the County. However, figures for previous years were higher, 27.4% in 1998 and 26.7% in 1999 indicating a decline in employment within the sector. Although employment within Manufacturing is decreasing, the proportion employed is still much higher than the national equivalent where only 15.1% are employed within the sector.

City of Sunderland (Covered by Sunderland, Southwick, Houghton and Washington JCP offices)

Sunderland (population 296,400) is the largest City between Leeds and Edinburgh. In the last ten years Sunderland's economy has been improving. In terms of unemployment Sunderland has performed better than the North East. Washington to the West of Sunderland is fast becoming an expanding new town.

In employment, investment and birth of new firms the trends are promising, however this should not overstate what Sunderland needs to do to continue its recovery. Evidence from studies highlights a legacy of unemployment, social exclusion and environmental deterioration that remains a lasting challenge. Of 24 wards in the City, 11 feature in the top 2000 in the Indices of Deprivation.

Employment

While on both the national and regional scale the proportion of manufacturing employment to total employment has continued to fall since the mid 1980s – reaching around 18% (GB) and (Northern Region) – the proportion in the City of Sunderland has steadily risen from around 25% in the second half of the 1980s to 30% currently.

Employment gains have come mainly from the expansion of existing firms, particularly among the larger ones, rather than from new ones, in fact the actual number of establishments has fallen by around 7% - indicating a substantial fall-out among small firms. The largest five industrial sectors account for 72% of the city's manufacturing employment. These are motor vehicles (22%), Mechanical Engineering (17%), Electrical and Electronic Engineering (16%) followed by paper and printing and clothing and textiles. As recently as 1986 motor vehicles was the eleventh largest sector. Evidence is provided by analysis of new VAT registrations between 1995 and 1998 showing new businesses in the City, in relation to the size of its population, Sunderland's rate of business formation appears relatively low. Thus in 1998, gross new VAT registrations per 10,000 heads of population were 121 in Sunderland and 161 in the North East against 280 in England. With no real change since 1995.

South Tyneside (Covered by South Shields and Jarrow JCP offices)

South Tyneside covers 64 sq. km with six areas – South Shields, Jarrow, Hebburn, Boldon, Whitburn and Cleadon, bordering Northumbria District to the North (River Tyne), the North Sea to the East, Derwentside to the West and Sunderland to the South. This being the smallest part of the District having previously being part of Northumberland. The population figure being 151,500. Most of our coastline has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Some of the most desirable private properties in the region are to be found in Cleadon and Whitburn.

Employment

Through the 19th Century and first half of the 20th Century, South Tyneside built up world-renowned shipbuilding, coal mining and heavy engineering industries. South Tyneside suffered industrial decline in the 1970s and 1980s with severe social and economic consequences and in December 2001 had the worst unemployment rate in England and Wales. After working to tackle the problems of unemployment and economic regeneration, South Tyneside had climbed 12 places up the list by December 2004 of index of multiple generation and a further 5 places by December 2005 (Source NOMIS Job Seekers Allowance claimant count rate). South Tyneside is one of the four districts in the North East that has levels of employment deprivation amongst the most deprived 10% of districts in England.

Employment in area

Key employment sectors in South Tyne & Wear Valley are

- Business and Public administration
- Construction
- Distribution
- Finance
- Health and social care services

- Manufacturing & Food Processing
- Hospitality & Catering
- Retail

Providers must be able to show detailed knowledge of the local labour market and growth sectors demonstrating how they will engage and work with local employers to support participants on the programme.

REGIONAL EMPLOYABILITY FRAMEWORK

Throughout 2006, Skills North East partners (Regional Skills Partnership) led by One North East and Jobcentre Plus have been developing a Regional Employability Framework. (Similar to the work being developed in Scotland - Workforce Plus: an Employability Framework for Scotland).

The REF is bringing together policy investment and co-ordinated delivery in a region-wide framework owned and shared by partners. It will provide the mechanism for better joining up of interventions aimed at those in work as well as those out of work to offer seamless support for people moving into employment, supporting skills development and learning both before and in work, particularly at foundation level.

The purpose of the North East Regional Employability Framework (REF) is to:

- Produce a shared awareness of current investment in welfare to work, the return from this and how this return can be increased;
- Create an explicit strategic commitment to joint action to drive up performance;
- Generate agreement on the local infrastructure required to enhance performance and commitment to jointly manage its performance
- Jointly invest in creating this infrastructure and develop new ways of jointly procuring outcomes that will enhance performance.

The first stage of the work identified that the North East

- had a large amount of provision tied up in relatively low value geographically spread contracts,
- could be better at engaging employers and engaging disadvantaged customers,
- could do more to ensure individuals progression in the journey to employment, employment retention and continued development.

This led to a series of recommended actions specifically about transforming the infrastructure and shifting the pattern of spend on provision towards outreach and engagement at one end of the process and aftercare and progression in work at the other.

The second stage has involved extensive consultation on these findings and recommendations with key partners and focus groups involving Jobcentre Plus, the LSC, One North East, employers, the voluntary and community sector and local authorities. Out of these discussions will come the final framework and action plan, underpinned by strategic commitments to do things differently.

The Regional Employability Framework Implementation Team (REFIT) is developing an action plan to achieve this and overcome the issues highlighted above. A small number of task and finish groups are investigating key elements of the framework to identify good practice and from this adopt best practice for application across the Region.

There are currently a number of areas under development that may impact on the delivery and management of DWP/Jobcentre Plus ESF Co-Financing Contracts. These include:

Generic Management Information
Common Assessment Tool
Employer Access Point

Once these developments (and any subsequent best practices) are identified and recommended the successful bidder (including sub contractors) will be expected to adopt them. These must be embedded into the delivery and management of provision. The successful bidder and sub contractors will also be expected to comply with the requirements of the Employer Access Point.

Further information on the Framework can be found on the Skills North East website <http://www.skillsnortheast.co.uk/page/ref.cfm>

Customer Journey

