

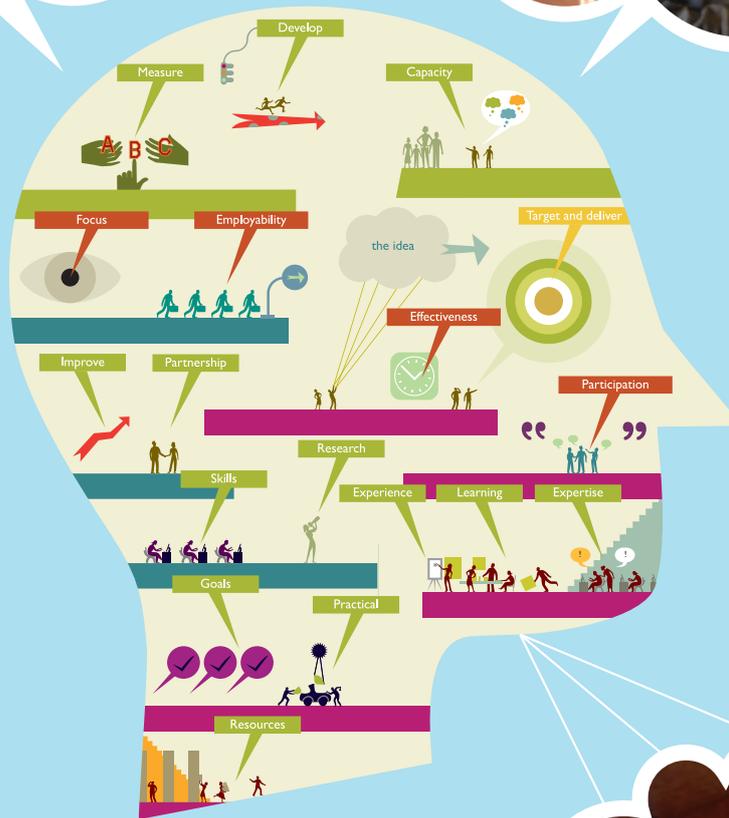


The Scottish Government

A Working Life for All Disabled People

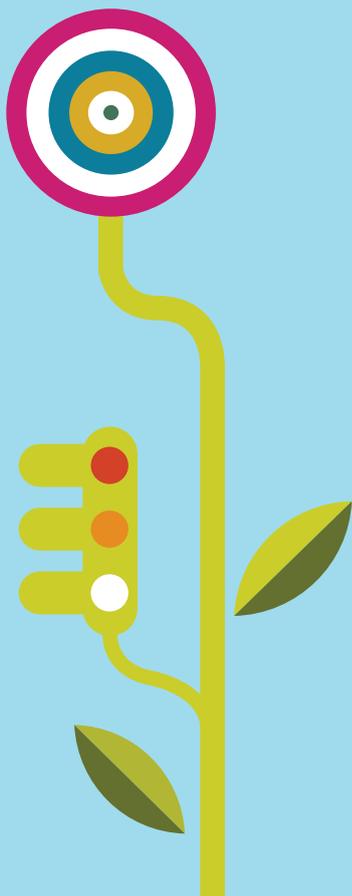
The Supported Employment Framework for Scotland

Summary Report



COSLA

A Working Life for All Disabled People The Supported Employment Framework for Scotland Summary Report





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Supported Employment Framework Joint Foreword



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National and local government are committed to creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish. In order to achieve this we need to ensure that people who can work, and want to, are given the opportunity to do so. We know, however, that for many disabled people there continue to be barriers which deny them this opportunity.





To remove these barriers we must be committed to working together and to share the joint vision of a healthier, fairer, smarter and more successful Scotland. Only through partnership working can we make the changes needed to deliver real benefits for those disabled people in our society.

This Framework sets out our shared determination for supporting disabled people, who want to work, into employment. At its heart is the desire to see a more consistent, person-centred approach to supporting those who want to work. It advocates a particular model of supported employment which involves a staged approach of progression for the individual. This will be tested in different areas across Scotland and we will use the lessons learned to inform and shape future practice. The Framework also sets out how we, and the organisations we represent, aim to improve the skills of the workforce, improve standards and quality of provision, and develop sustainable funding proposals.



The Scottish Government and COSLA have worked together with a wide variety of partners to develop this Framework. We want to record our thanks to all those who participated in the Task Group that supported this process and who contributed their expertise, either through membership of the Group or the workstream groups, or by providing material to support and inform discussions.

The publication of this Framework is an important milestone in an ongoing partnership between the Scottish Government and COSLA. Not only does it mark the culmination of a lot of hard work carried out over the last year, more importantly it represents a starting point for us and our partners in moving towards a more consistent service model of supported employment. We are committed to achieving equality for all and this Framework sets out how we will work together to improve opportunities in the labour market for disabled people in Scotland.





1. Introduction

Just under half of disabled people in Scotland are in paid employment, compared to around 75 per cent of the general population. This creates economic and social disadvantage that is preventing disabled people from becoming fully participating members of society. This needs to change by offering more consistent, person-centred support and developing new opportunities to help all disabled people who want to work to do so.

This Framework explains how that can happen. It has been produced following publication of the Scottish Parliament's Equal Opportunities Committee report in December 2006, *Removing Barriers and Creating Opportunities*. That led to the establishment of a Strategic Task Group on Supported Employment in partnership with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and the Scottish Union of Supported Employment (SUSE). The Task Group worked with a broad range of stakeholders to develop this Framework.

It focuses on how Scottish Government policies can help support disabled people into sustainable work in mainstream employment. It recognises that successful implementation must be underpinned by effective partnership working at both a national and a local level. Consistency in the delivery of support, service standards, workforce training and sustainable funding are all crucial to its success. The Framework also recognises that Scotland has to work within existing UK employment programmes run by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It seeks to avoid any duplication while working towards achieving better overall outcomes.

The aim is for paid work in the open labour market to be a reality for all citizens in Scotland. To make this happen, supported employment needs to be embedded in society as a whole. Employment as an outcome must be an integral part of all policies addressing the needs of disabled people and those with long-term health conditions.

2. Background

What is Supported Employment?



Supported Employment originated in North America in the 1970s to assist people with significant learning disabilities to access ordinary employment. It has since been extended to other excluded groups. It is based on the model of “place and train” whereby people learn on the job with support from work colleagues. This is backed up by the skills of a job coach¹ who provides well structured flexible support to both the service user and potential employer. This support in the main includes identifying the skills, preferences and experiences of the individual and matching this with potential employers. Along with work trial opportunities this helps to determine the type of employment that is best suited to the individual.

The Employment Support Worker then searches for a suitable job and provides training in the workplace once this is secured. Onsite training continues to the point where the service user and the employer are satisfied that the duties of the post can be discharged without the day to day intervention or assistance of the Employment Support Worker. The length of on the job support is determined to an extent by some of the natural workplace supports that become available from colleagues.

The job is not an end in itself. Individuals should be able to access continuing assistance for career progression and the further acquisition of skills through their employer, relevant learning providers and Skills Development Scotland.² Skills and support around financial capability and inclusion are particularly vital in transition periods.

Supported Employment is guided by the three main principles:

- the job should be in an integrated work place;
- the jobholder is paid the rate for the job; and
- all individuals have the right to end their reliance on welfare benefits, i.e. reduce poverty.

¹ Job Coach – The term ‘Job Coach’ continues to be used but a range of other terms have also emerged however for the purpose of this document the generic term of ‘Employment Support Worker’ has been used to take account of the variations.

² Skills Development Scotland <http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/>

Why is it important?

In 2007/08, 38% of children living in a family with a disabled adult were in poverty compared to 16% of children in a family without a disabled adult.³

The employment rate for people with a disability in 2008 was 48.1%. There is considerable variation in the employment rates for people with different health problems or disabilities. People with diabetes, severe disfigurement, skin problems or difficulties in hearing, have employment rates much closer to the overall rate for Scotland (75.6%). However, people who have depression or severe learning difficulties have very low employment rates (24.7% and 17% respectively). In addition, around 28,000 veterans in Scotland are known to be out of work; over half of them have long-term illness or disability and 20% have multiple conditions.

Paid employment is recognised as a key route out of poverty. A range of policies have been developed in recent years in Scotland to improve employability services and job opportunities, tackle the barriers to employment for those furthest from the labour market and, through this, help to address the existing health and other inequalities in Scotland. Employment is also central to the Scottish Government's broader approach to promoting equality for disabled people. The Framework for Supported Employment is a key part of that approach.

³ Achieving our Potential <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/11/20103815/0>





Work can also be beneficial in itself. The recent review of the health of Britain's working age population *Working for a Healthier Tomorrow*⁴ (2008) confirmed that being in employment is generally good for physical and mental wellbeing. It is recognised that work can be therapeutic and that, overall, the beneficial effects outweigh the risks of work for the majority of people, including many disabled people and those with long-term health conditions.

How does Supported Employment operate in Scotland?

In Scotland, Supported Employment services have evolved without any overarching Framework or consistent funding arrangement. As a result, some services have tended to be fragmented and uncoordinated, driven by a variety of funding arrangements with no consistent standards being adopted by organisations or staff.

A scoping exercise carried out among Scotland's 32 local authorities confirmed that considerable variation exists in how services are being implemented. Some providers are delivering voluntary work, permitted work or work placements while others provide training for work. Few providers, however, were found to be offering jobs and holding consistently to a defined Supported Employment model.

A substantial number of service providers tended to rely on the options of voluntary work and permitted work, which for some has become standard operational practice. Securing voluntary or unpaid work can act as an incentive in the pursuit of real jobs but it can also be a disincentive.

There is often a misconception among some service providers about the 'benefits barrier' that prevents people from working more than 16 hours per week. Evidence from North Lanarkshire Council shows that, on average, their service users are £124 per week better off in employment and are assisted to achieve this by maximising income through the tax credit system.⁵



⁴ Working For A Healthier Tomorrow <http://www.workingforhealth.gov.uk/documents/working-for-a-healthier-tomorrow-tagged.pdf>

⁵ Beyer,S. (2008) An evaluation of the outcomes of Supported Employment in North Lanarkshire. Welsh Centre for Learning Disabilities, Cardiff University

What needs to change?

Too often, disabled people are held back by low expectations of their ability to gain full-time employment.

This lack of aspiration has supported and maintained historical ways of working which are often discriminatory and cannot continue. Low expectations can often come from a lack of confidence and limited staff training. This problem is compounded by a lack of consistent and secure funding.

The Task Group identified a number of key themes that need to be addressed:

- the lack of a strategic, co-ordinated approach in delivering Supported Employment services which has led to variation across Scotland;
- the lack of quality standards, underpinned by accredited staff training; and
- the lack of long-term sustainable funding.

Action on all of these issues is needed to develop a system that delivers effective consistent support to disabled people across Scotland. Delivering that change will be challenging, not least because of the impact of the current global economic downturn. The temptation, in such circumstances, may be to do nothing and wait for the upturn before disabled people can move up the jobs queue. However, such an approach is not consistent with an inclusive approach and it makes no economic sense to write-off people due to their disability.

The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring that disabled people are equipped to compete in the labour market. It recognises the additional challenges in the current economic situation but is still determined to set in place a Framework that will provide better job outcomes for disabled people.

3. The Framework

What does the Framework aim to do?

This Framework is aimed at Supported Employment provision delivered by Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs), Local Authorities and the Third Sector. The Framework recognises the role of DWP in helping disabled people back into work and aims to complement and add value to DWP programmes. A Framework and set of quality standards already exist for all DWP provision through its contracts with providers, so this Framework does not apply to DWP provision.

Much of the current interventions to assist people into employment are driven by DWP and take the form of specific programmes. The Task Group acknowledged that while there has been substantial investment by both the UK Government and the Scottish Government in employment initiatives, there continues to be challenges in providing support for those furthest from the labour market who have severe disabilities or long-term health conditions. This large and very diverse group of people tend to get caught in the training cycle, rarely making the transition from training into employment. The challenge for them moving into work becomes greater with each unsuccessful intervention, and the Task Group is therefore keen to ensure that all interventions are consistent and person-centred.

This Supported Employment Framework for Scotland is aimed at targeting those individuals and providing the mechanisms necessary to support their move to employment in a systematic and effective way. That involves raising the standards of service, underpinned by sustainable funding.

Implementing these changes will take time and a staged approach will be required to develop the Framework. The model for delivering Supported Employment in Scotland is detailed below.



Supported Employment Stages – supporting the aspiration towards 16+ hours of work

Engagement by SE Service	Vocational Profiling	Job Finding	Employer Engagement	On/Off the Job Support and Aftercare
Helping disabled people most distanced from the labour market to make informed choices on their own future	Identifying skills and preferences for work, giving work experiences that will help the individual make their own vocational choices	Identifying the preferred job through employer engagement, also providing support to the employer	Finding out about the workplace environment, co-workers and the 'supports' a person might need	Providing help, information and backup to the employee and their employer, developing independence through natural supports in the workplace and addressing career progression in due course

What changes will it make?

The success of the Framework depends on a strong commitment and a partnership approach from all the agencies involved in supporting disabled people to secure paid work. It also requires a move away from segregated services and programmes to a more flexible and dynamic person-centred approach where paid employment is considered a realistic and achievable outcome.

Specifically, this requires action across three main areas:

1. Setting national standards

The lack of an agreed set of national 'Industry Standards' means there is little consistency in how supported employment services operate. This means quality is difficult to gauge and significant variations exist in access, process, delivery, outcomes and various monitoring arrangements in use in Scotland.

There are challenges in setting standards but they are an important part of ensuring the correct service is being delivered by the right provider in the best possible way. Standards will ensure the best possible outcomes for the most effective use of resources benefiting both funders and disabled people seeking jobs.





The Framework commits the Scottish Government and COSLA to jointly work with local authorities, Community Planning Partners and Supported Employment services to establish an agreed national data set and develop quality indicators for Supported Employment in Scotland.

Once agreed, these will be used by services to evaluate their own performance. Initially every organisation delivering Supported Employment services will be encouraged to undertake self-evaluation to establish how it is meeting the principles of Supported Employment. Self-evaluation is an opportunity for providers to examine their performance and can support the improvement of services in a continuous way. It needs to focus on recognising achievements and opportunities for improvement which may be gradual or transformational but must be based on robust evidence.

The findings from the self-evaluation questionnaire will be documented and evaluated on a four point scale ranging through outstanding, good, satisfactory and weak. Action plans for improvement will then be formulated where needed, using the information and evidence gathered.

In the longer term the aim would be that the self-evaluations should be subject to peer evaluations but before that can be done the standards need to be embedded and widely used. In the short to medium terms the self-evaluations need to be externally evaluated and funders and commissioners should give careful consideration to how they can support organisations to undertake informed self-evaluations.

Local authorities should consider the inclusion of performance information about Supported Employment services as part of their performance reporting process and performance management framework.





2. Ensuring consistency in service delivery

Staff training and development are crucial factors in ensuring the delivery of consistent, high quality services. The lack of standards and guidelines for Supported Employment in Scotland has impacted significantly on the workforce and has led to the lack of a consistent or coherent approach to staff training or development. The scoping exercise also found a wide variation in qualifications among staff across the country.

The Framework includes proposals for improving the recruitment and training of staff together with developing their skills. Recruiting the right staff for Employment Support Worker posts is critical to the success of the service and the job outcomes achieved by individuals who use it. A generic person specification and job description for these posts has been developed as part of the Framework.

Appropriate training structures will also be required to allow staff to understand and work effectively to the new national standards that are to be developed. The proposed training programme will be subject to formal accreditation as part of the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework. It is anticipated that, once the competencies are finalised and the training programme is in place, all existing Employment Support Workers should be encouraged and given the opportunity to complete the programme and gain accreditation within three years.

Competencies for staff will also be developed within each of the stages of the Supported Employment process.

This work will help to raise standards in service delivery and increase opportunities for those who work in Supported Employment. It will be linked to the quality standards and should lead to better outcomes for disabled people who need additional support into employment.



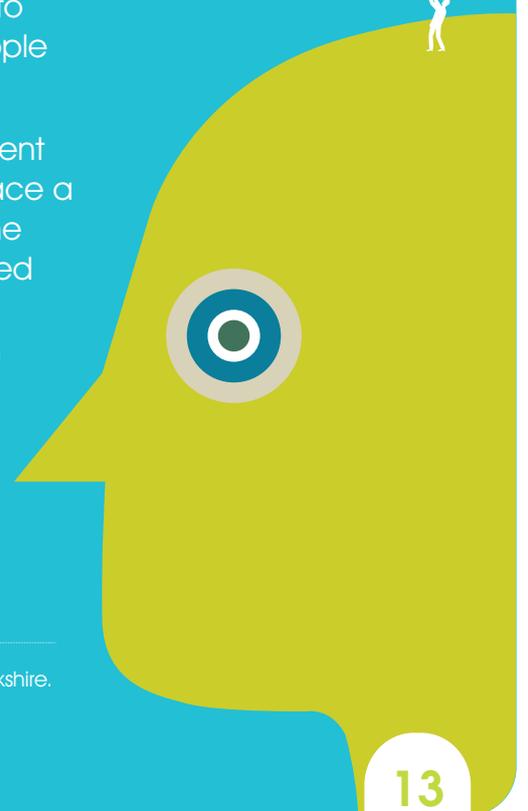
3. Ensuring sustainable funding

Funding for Supported Employment usually consists of funding in part or in kind by the local authority with the remainder coming from sources such as European Social Funds, The Big Lottery or grant-giving trusts. This cocktail of funding makes long-term planning difficult and affects the sustainability of services. Unfortunately, the future will present further challenges. Significant new pressures on local authority budgets combined with reductions being experienced in European and Lottery funding opportunities affect the funding landscape. Although investment in Supported Employment provision may look expensive compared to other mainstream services, when it is viewed from a client journey perspective it is comparable to other interventions. The Supported Employment Framework model presents an option which might be cheaper and more cost effective in the long term and this will be tested during the implementation of the Framework.

It is therefore crucial that Community Planning Partners take a strategic look at how disabled unemployed people are supported into work and should not rule out investments in Supported Employment which, at face value, can look expensive, but which will have significant long-term gains. Existing provision can be more effectively developed to achieve better outcomes for both the individuals and the services. It will need an examination of social care service arrangements to ensure a focus on employment outcomes for disabled people and those with long-term conditions can be achieved.

An economic analysis conducted into Supported Employment services in North Lanarkshire⁶ found that it cost £7,216 to place a disabled person in paid employment. This compares with the annual cost of day care of almost £15,000 per person. Based on these figures, savings of £54 million could be made by moving 7,500 people from day care into employment, with added benefits for the individuals concerned.

⁶ Beyer, S. (2008) An evaluation of the outcomes of Supported Employment in North Lanarkshire. Welsh Centre for Learning Disabilities, Cardiff University



Despite the evidence of the 'best value' argument for Supported Employment services, the model has always remained on the periphery of UK and Scottish centralised funding allocations. The responsibility for ensuring the continuation of the service has fallen to local authorities who, in partnership with voluntary and charitable organisations, have shown great ingenuity in managing to sustain the provision to date.

The challenge for the future is to pool and align the money already invested in Supported Employment with other budgets such as health, social care, economic development and economic regeneration to improve provision. This will allow services to target those who have employment as a real aspiration and to benefit from additional released resources created by successful Supported Employment provision.

The Framework suggests those resources be allocated, performance managed and accounted for within a joined up local arrangement to ensure most effective use and improved outcomes for both the funders and the individuals seeking employment.





What are the critical success factors?

There are a number of critical success factors involved in making Supported Employment successful in Scotland.

Strong leadership

Continued strong and effective leadership by local authorities, along with a clear role for Community Planning Partners which drives an inclusive agenda is absolutely critical.

Effective positioning

Effective positioning of Supported Employment within mainstream employment services, and the recognition and resourcing of Supported Employment across Community Planning Partners, is necessary to ensure it is a viable option for those who need it.

Funding commitment

A clear commitment is needed to consider how funding can become sustainable and long term to increase stability, forward planning and integration to provide more and better job outcomes. This includes consideration of realigning existing funding streams.

The model and stages

The preferred model of Supported Employment is a staged approach of engagement; vocational profiling; job finding; employer engagement and job support. This is central to recognising Supported Employment as an employment service that will focus on job outcomes for people.





Clarity of outcome

A focus on reducing dependency on welfare benefits, with a strong commitment to 16+ hours per week as the employment outcome is desirable. Voluntary work or unpaid work as an outcome on its own is not the objective of Supported Employment services but is recognised as a contribution to people's journey to work.

Clarity of responsibility

Clarity of responsibility and outcomes at each stage of the process is the aim. People must have intensive individual support through skilled Employment Support Workers with the agreed relocation to an appropriate service beyond six months support.

Welfare benefits

Advice on welfare benefits and financial capability arrangements must be an integral part of Supported Employment provision. A failure to cope with the financial implications of the transition from benefits into employment can cause significant challenges to an individual's ability to retain employment and to cope with the changes in their circumstances.



4. What happens next?

The Scottish Government and COSLA are fully committed to implementing a Supported Employment Framework to help ensure every opportunity is given for paid employment to become a reality for disabled people and those with long-term conditions who are able to work but who are often excluded from such opportunities.

Underpinning this plan of action is a need for a cultural shift to an approach that recognises the benefits of work and understands that disabled people and those with long-term conditions have the right to employment. Attention should be focused on ability rather than disability.

The success of this depends on strong partnership working and a move away from segregated services and programmes to a more flexible and dynamic person-centred approach where paid employment is considered as a realistic and achievable outcome.

Every public service has a responsibility for this and a contribution to make. The challenge for public services is to lead by example and, through Community Planning structures, nurture commitment from a range of others in the spirit of delivering truly inclusive communities.

Single arrangements need to be agreed locally on funding/resource applications, funding allocations and performance management to ensure the most effective use and improved outcomes for both the funders and the individuals seeking employment. Existing resources will have to be used more effectively and funds shifted from services such as day care to be reinvested in Supported Employment as a cost effective alternative and one that promotes inclusion and opportunities for paid work for all of Scotland's citizens.

This will all require greater consistency in the model to be used, standards to be applied, skills across the workforce, costs and performance management arrangements and the outcomes achieved.

The next section sets out the action plan which identifies what needs to be done and who should take lead responsibility. Implementing this plan will develop a more coherent and consistent system that will deliver better outcomes to help make paid employment a reality for many more disabled people across Scotland. An Implementation Board will be set up to oversee and monitor progress.



5. Action Plan



What is to happen?

Raise awareness about the contribution Supported Employment can make to economic growth, to employment, to social inclusion and to the health and wellbeing of disabled people.

Supported Employment provision should be delivered as an integral part of locally funded employment services. There should be a clear distinction from DWP programmes.

Supported Employment should be led, owned and driven by Community Planning Partnerships. It will focus on employment and delivering job outcomes.

COSLA will explore how Single Outcome Agreements should include plans for Supported Employment.

A National Data Set and Quality Indicators will be developed for Supported Employment.

Who will lead?

Scottish Government (SG)

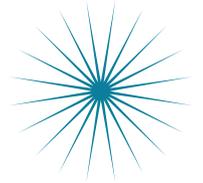
Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs)/Local Authorities (LAs)

CPPs

COSLA

COSLA/SG





How will this happen?

The framework will be launched and further promoted amongst Councils. CPPs will be offered the opportunity to test out the framework. Change funds will be available to support areas who want to demonstrate the model. Cross-directorate support will be provided by relevant Scottish Government policy interests.

Consideration should be given to long-term funding commitments to Supported Employment Services. Allocation of resources should be streamlined and managed through a single delivery route where possible. Existing Health & Social Care Funding should be considered for realignment. New funding for Supported Employment should be given only to providers who adopt the staged model.

Health, Regeneration and Social Care services should be tailored to individual aspirations for work through the redesign of existing support arrangements in favour of those that have employment as an outcome. Self directed support and the use of individual budgets to achieve job outcomes for people should be promoted.

Look at existing employment-related outcomes and link improved outcomes for disabled people.

Organisations providing Supported Employment will apply consistent standards and benchmark their services using the agreed Quality Standards. To raise performance, information about Standards & Quality of Supported Employment Services will be openly reported.



5. Action Plan continued

What is to happen?

Supported Employment Workers should work to a competency framework supported by an accredited qualification.

Raise awareness of Supported Employment with Careers Advisors.

Recognise Supported Employment and its fit with locally provided services in mainstream DWP programmes.

Raise awareness of Supported Employment with Disability Employment Advisor (DEAs) and other relevant Jobcentre Plus Staff.

Who will lead?

SQA

SDS

DWP

JCP



How will this happen?

New Employment Support Workers will be required to work towards accreditation or demonstrate relevant experience and/or qualifications through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Those currently employed will be provided with opportunities to achieve RPL for existing qualifications and experience.

Careers Advisers will make appropriate referrals to Supported Employment services.

DWP and Scottish Government to discuss respective approaches to standards and quality assurance and the links between the frameworks they have in place.

DEAs and other specialist staff will make appropriate referrals to Supported Employment services.







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