



DWP Provider Guidance ESF 2014 to 2020

Chapter 4: Starting Provision and Action Planning

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Requirements

- 4.1 You will be required to acknowledge the Provider Referral and Payment (PRaP) referral from DWP, instructions on how to do this are within the ESF chapter of the PRaP User Guidance document, Section 2: Acknowledging Referrals. You must undertake the face to face Participant Engagement Meeting (including agreeing and signing the initial action plan) and record the start date on PRaP within 20 working days of the PRaP referral date (not the date you acknowledge the referral). On your PRaP homescreen the referral date is termed order date.
- 4.2 To keep customers interested, you may wish to keep in touch with them until the PRaP referral confirmation is received, but you must not deliver any employability provision activities before they formally start the provision.
- 4.3 We recognise that some of the participants on this provision may have significant barriers to work, and that there may be occasions when it is not possible to meet the 20 day deadline. You should continue to keep your Performance Manager informed on a monthly basis of the numbers of participants that have not started provision within 20 days of receipt of the PRaP referral, together with the reasons, in each case, why meeting the 20 day deadline has not been possible. Where the Performance Manager authorises this, for example because of issues relating to the participant's circumstances, it will be taken into account when considering your performance against the associated performance measure, as detailed in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7. A new ESF1420 will be required after 40 days if the original has not been input as no one should be in a backlog for more than 40 days. You need to record Did Not Start (DNS) into PRaP against the original referral. The DWP Admin Team will create a new referral on receipt of the new ESF 1420. Note, references to Did Not Attend (DNA) from Annex 9 have been removed as this PRaP code is for mandatory provision only, it does not apply to ESF 14/20.

- 4.4 If the extended timescale is as a result of your own systems and processes this may be regarded as a systemic failure and could lead to a performance improvement action on your Action Plan and/or Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) and, depending on improvements made, the possibility of recovery of payments by DWP, future ESF audits and potential contract termination.

Starting Provision

- 4.5 A participant will be deemed to have started on provision once you have:
- undertaken an initial face to face in-depth needs assessment
 - agreed activities with the participant and an action plan has been signed by both parties, and
 - the start date is recorded on PRaP
- 4.6 You must not start a participant on provision before the face-to-face needs assessment is undertaken or without having their signature on the Action Plan.

Needs Assessment

- 4.7 You must undertake a Needs Assessment to establish the participant's requirements and identify any barriers, including labour market barriers. Following this assessment an Action Plan must be developed to set out the activities the participant will undertake and the support you will offer to address the barriers identified.
- 4.8 As a minimum, the participant's Needs Assessment must consider the range of activities and types of general support listed below.

Action Plans

- 4.9 The Action Plan must be reflective of the participant's personal needs as well as their barriers to work and activities recorded to help overcome these barriers. The content of the Action Plan will be based on the participant's in depth needs assessment therefore you may or may not be able to identify longer term goals at this stage. For this reason, it is acceptable to not include longer term proposals at the point where the initial Action Plan is developed, but this must be added to at a later stage. The initial Action Plan must be agreed and signed by you and the participant.
- 4.10 Action Plans must:
- clearly set out the agreed aims and actions that will help move the participant towards employment. These must address individual barriers to work and be based on your continuing support work with the participant
 - provide a framework of what the participant is aiming to achieve
 - include achievable actions that show consideration of minimum service requirements, as per the contract, and are tailored to the requirements of the participant
 - build on any existing Action Plans (e.g. JCP Action Plans) so that activities under this provision complement those in the other plans and do not duplicate support. If the participant has a JCP Claimant Commitment, they can share this with you, if they wish. This will help you understand the level and type of activities they have previously committed to undertake. Sharing of the Claimant Commitment is voluntary so, if they refuse, you should not take further action to pursue.

- 4.11 You are responsible for co-ordinating activities outlined in the Action Plan to move the participant towards their ultimate goal. The Action Plan is an important way of evidencing the progress made and it is therefore important that all activities undertaken are recorded on it.

Refer to Annex 1a (London Troubled Families) for additional activities required on Action Planning.

Reviewing the Action Plan

- 4.12 As a minimum, the Action Plan must be reviewed, updated and signed by both parties in a face to face monthly meeting; however frequency of these meetings should be tailored to meet the participant's needs. Where the meeting cannot be held face to face every month, or where the participant cannot sign the updated Action plan, reasons must be recorded by you.
- 4.13 At each review meeting, you must chart and record activities that have taken place; steps taken to achieve goals and identify further activities to be taken forward.
- 4.14 You must keep the Action Plan and its revision history in line with ESF audit requirements. Evidence of action planning must comply with your Customer Service Standards, the content of successful tenders and the provision contract. Requirements on document retention are detailed in the [DWP Framework Generic Provider Guidance Chapter 11b: ESF requirements 2014 to 2020 \(England only\)](#).

In-Work Support

- 4.15 For employment which falls within the participant's provision duration, In-Work Support may be required which meets the individual needs of the participant to ensure they have the opportunity to sustain employment.
- 4.16 On commencement of employment you should agree with participants the In-Work Support you will provide during their provision duration and record this on the Action Plan. In-Work Support will maximise your opportunity to claim both the Short and Sustained Job Outcomes.
- 4.17 If a JCP Adviser/DWP Work Coach requests a copy of the final Action Plan, you must send this within 5 working days of the request. The JCP Adviser/Work Coach will provide details of how the Action Plan is to be sent to them.