



European Union

European
Social Fund

ESF Data Evidence Requirements – Eligibility and results

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this guidance

This document provides guidance on how to assess and evidence (i.e. how to **verify**) an individual or project's eligibility for support by the European Social Fund in England.

This guidance focuses on evidence requirements covering eligibility and results that are linked to payments.

This guidance explains that:

- (i) When providing evidence of basic and specific eligibility (which includes programme eligibility as well as specific eligibility criteria set by the project at the recruitment stage) projects should use the **4-step methodology** described in the eligibility section below.
- (ii) When obtaining evidence for results linked to payments, the **3 step methodology** (described in the results section below) should be used.
- (iii) Evidence for management information immediate results not linked to payments can rely on provider declarations or self-declarations from the participant. For unpaid results an email self-declaration from the participant may be acceptable.

It should be noted that operations / projects should supply a response to **all of the Participant Data Schema MI data fields** and they should also check to ensure that they are completing programme-specific data fields too. (The **only exception** to this is the Big Lottery Fund CFO who have agreed that they will not be using ESF to help people to achieve qualification – and will not be required to complete the qualification fields in the PDS).

This guidance applies to match funded activity as well as activity funded directly by ESF and it supplements the existing eligibility guidance that has already been published (see web link below):

- https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510300/european_social_fund_national_eligibility_rules.pdf

The separate guidance on ESF indicator definitions along with the European Commission's guidelines on monitoring and evaluation and data gathering are in

addition to this guidance and are primarily concerned with ensuring that high quality data is gathered and reported in a consistent way (and include guidance on **validating** the consistency of indicator data at participant record level).

1.2 Background / Context

The ESF Operational Programme sets out the main types of target group and entities that can be supported by ESF and this is supplemented by the national eligibility rules published on Gov.UK. Eligibility criteria may also be set out in further action notes and guidance notes issued by the ESF Managing Authority as well as in provider contracts relating to ESF provision (for example, ESF co-financing organisation contracts with delivery partners / sub-contractors) and also in the project's own entry requirements. These eligibility criteria determine the eligibility of all expenditure related to participants. In this context, such criteria are referred to as financial eligibility criteria.

The basic eligibility criteria (relating to UK residency) and any specific eligibility criteria (e.g. labour market status / age etc.) act , in effect, as `gateways' to the programme expenditure since they help `enable' actual costs to be spent as well as enabling `contract costs'. Neither actual costs nor contract costs can be spent on ineligible participants. This means that `direct bid' organisations have to gather basic eligibility data (and any specific eligibility data where appropriate) as well as CFO organisations / providers funded under contract costs.

For certain priority axes/ investment priorities / operations / actions, some `output' features of participants can be decisive for the financial eligibility of expenditure relating to them. For example, in YEI, eligibility would be based on a number of criteria – for example: age; NEET status; and location of residence. In this example, the characteristics of the participants are clearly a condition for the eligibility of expenditure – and would normally require additional supporting evidence beyond self- declaration. It should be noted that some exceptions are allowed under this guidance. Of course, such financial eligibility criteria are **in addition to** other financial / payment eligibility criteria - for example, criteria such as ensuring that: declared costs have been incurred and paid; costs are linked to eligible periods of time; and ensuring that costs are supported by appropriate invoices etc.

In instances where there is **a sole financial eligibility criterion** that determines whether or not a participant can benefit from ESF support, there is a requirement for supporting evidence. Along with this `hard evidence' there is also a requirement for management verification checks – for example during an Article 125 spot-check by Managing Authority staff.

When a payment is directly linked to a participant / project achieving **a result** then this is also a financial eligibility condition. So, for example, this means that if a project is only paid for participants achieving a particular immediate result (on leaving or within 4 weeks of leaving) then the fulfilment of this condition should be evidenced and this should be subject to management verification checks. This

requirement is most likely to apply to CFOs and their delivery partners given that they are using contract costs methodology which may include the direct linking of payments to the achievement of results. For direct bid organisations who have contract payments based on actual costs the additional data evidence requirement (beyond self-certification) will not apply for results – since there is no direct link between the results and payments.

The programme will have a wide range of other / output and result indicators that are not directly linked to financial eligibility. Here, the main issue is quality and completeness of data and the methods used to gather and store the data. The underlying required evidence for such data can be less strict – which means there can be a greater reliance on signed 'self-certification'.

This guidance covers the methodology for gathering the evidence relating to financial eligibility (in connection with participant eligibility and results linked to payments) and provides examples of evidence that could be used.

1.3 Who should use this guidance?

This guidance should be used by 'direct bid' grant bid beneficiary organisations, CFOs and partners and the Managing Authority and Intermediate Bodies.

1.4 Extent and limitations of this guidance

It is not possible for this guidance to take all eventualities into account. Note that the guidance is not exhaustive and it remains the responsibility of the beneficiary to ensure that evidence is adequate and appropriately verified.

It should be noted, for example, that the evidence requirements for verification may not fully reflect or capture the complexity of the output and result indicator definitions. Notwithstanding the limits upon self-declaration below, for some eligibility criteria it may not be possible to provide evidence. For example, if a lack of basic skills is an eligibility requirement there is no documentation to 'prove' this' (it is not possible to prove a negative). In this type of scenario, the participant should self-declare their eligibility.

Any management information indicator data that covers the following should be supported by additional evidence:

- eligibility (for an individual to join the programme);
- eligibility for a micro, small or mediums sized enterprise (SME) to benefit from ESF support; and
- payments for results

The European Commission has therefore made it clear that the ESF Managing Authority and the EC / national auditors should be able to verify how a beneficiary organisation or delivery partner satisfied themselves about a participant's eligibility on enrolment and/ or whether or not a result was sufficiently evidenced to enable a payment to be made.

This guidance focuses primarily on verifying evidence for (i) financial eligibility / MI output data linked to financial eligibility and (ii) results payments / MI results data linked to payments.

As previously indicated, wider payments evidence requirements are not covered in this guidance (for these you should refer to any specific conditions / wider payments evidence requirements set out in the relevant contracts or funding agreements).

Section 2 of this guidance covers data evidence for **eligibility** and explains how eligibility assessments must be made (i.e. a potential **4-step methodology**).

Section 3 of this guidance explains data evidence requirements for **results** that are linked to payments (i.e. a potential **3-step methodology**).

Annex 1 provides an **exemplar recruitment, self-declaration and `exit` form** which projects may wish to use to ensure that they are collecting sufficient and relevant information - or check against their own existing forms to identify any `gaps' or deficiencies in information being gathered where further attention may be required. **The exemplar forms are not prescriptive.**

2. Assessing eligibility

2.1 What needs to be assessed and evidenced? (Eligibility)

Participant eligibility and the initial assessment / suitability assessment

Before agreeing to support a participant, it is usually considered **good practice** to undertake some form of initial or early assessment of the individual's circumstances to identify:

- the personal circumstances of the participant, identifying how the ESF funded activity will be suitable and effective in addressing their needs;
- the particular barriers or challenges they face (relevant to the ESF programme objectives); and
- whether the participant qualifies for support from the ESF programme and project

It is useful to keep a written record of the initial recruitment /assessment interview (to be signed by both parties) **including details of: eligibility issues; work and educational background; the individual participant's lifestyle; and current circumstances** - along with obtaining any supplementary evidence. (**See the ESF**

exemplar recruitment form in Annex 1). This `interview record' - along with any supplementary evidence that may be available - could be used as further evidence about the individual and it may be useful as additional `alternative evidence' in relation to eligibility (see step 3 of the 4 step methodology discussed in Section 2.5 below).

An inadequate initial assessment can result in poor value-for-money decisions and/or ineffective support.

2.2 Evidence of eligibility

Proof must be obtained to evidence that:

- (I) The participant is legally able to reside in the UK (and work in the UK) during the period of ESF support; and
- (II) The project's eligibility criteria are met (the entry conditions that individuals or entities must meet to qualify for support).

It should be noted that education law requires all young people in England continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday. So young people under the age of 18 who are NEET – or at risk of NEET- do not need to provide separate proof of a right to live and work in the UK in order to join ESF. However, evidence in the form of a school, national careers service or local authority referral (plus a letter from local authority confirming that the individual is at risk of being NEET where appropriate) will be required.

It should also be noted that the Managing Authority's guidance on eligibility rules is in addition to this guidance.

2.3 Who should obtain evidence of eligibility and when should evidence be obtained?

Who?

The beneficiary organisation or, where applicable, the provider / delivery partner carrying out the participant enrolment procedures for the beneficiary organisation. The beneficiary organisation decides who carries out any assessments that may be undertaken.

When should evidence be obtained?

Eligibility evidence should be obtained at the point of enrolment. The ESF Managing Authority for England recommends this approach as best practice.

In any event, evidence must be obtained before the eligible costs of the ESF activity (for the participant in question) are declared to the England ESF Managing Authority or, if applicable, to an Intermediate Body (IB) established by the ESF Managing Authority to process claims.

The beneficiary organisation / co-financing organisation decides the best approach for their projects – whether delivered by themselves or by delivery partners. However, they need to consider the associated risks when making their decision. For example, if participants are enrolled on the condition that they must provide suitable evidence at a later point:

- Procedures and controls must be put in place to prevent eligible costs being declared to the ESF Managing Authority / IB until suitable evidence is provided by the participant.
- If the participant is subsequently unable to provide suitable evidence or a reason to apply an exception, this means that no ESF support is payable and the beneficiary or delivery partner will be liable for all support costs for that individual.

Again, the beneficiary organisation / co-financing organisation decides the best approach for their projects – whether delivered by themselves or by delivery partners and they need to consider the associated risks when making their decision. Procedures and controls must be put in place to prevent eligible results payments being declared to the ESF Managing Authority / IB until suitable evidence is provided. Suitable evidence must be provided for results payments. No exceptions can be made for results evidence

2.4 How must the eligibility assessment be carried out?

This guidance, which explains the `hierarchy` of checks, aims to help beneficiary organisations comply with the England ESF Managing Authority's eligibility rules.

The England ESF Managing Authority and auditors will check whether the beneficiary / delivery partner has followed the methodology correctly. Intentional non-compliance with the required approach – such as using the `exception / no evidence` option (point (iv) below) before making reasonable attempts to obtain stronger evidence from the participant can lead to irregular expenditure and a consequent reduction in ESF support.

In brief, there are four ways to complete the eligibility checks, in descending order of preference:

- (i) obtain documents from the preferred evidence list (Step 2 below);
- (ii) a referral / introduction / written confirmation from a relevant third party (see Step 2) ;

- (iii) alternative documents (Step 3) if considered to be credible and persuasive by the beneficiary organisation / delivery partner;
- (iv) make a risk-based exception if no evidence can be provided and if suitably justified (Step 4).

Beneficiary organisations should always request 'preferred evidence' in the first instance. Alternative evidence or risk-based exceptions must not be used ahead of preferred evidence for reasons of convenience or simplicity.

The preferred approach for verification of evidence is for the provider to keep actual copies of documentation as evidence. However, the provider can countersign a participant's application / enrolment / learning agreement form (whichever is most appropriate) to confirm that the necessary evidence documentation has been seen. The form should be signed by both the participant and the provider and the form should identify what type of evidence has been seen.

The England ESF Managing Authority would not expect risk-based exceptions to be used as the predominant way of assessing eligibility and these cases are likely to attract particular audit scrutiny.

Auditors may review the methods used by beneficiary organisations to highlight misuse of the rules and/or unusual trends against comparable projects.

Beneficiary organisations must apply the methodology in the way intended (see below).

The above approach should mean that ESF support is only refused when the beneficiary organisation or delivery partner is not convinced that the individual meets the entry conditions based on: the information and documents presented; the suitability assessment; and the reasons given for not having any 'preferred' stronger evidence.

2.5 Methodology for obtaining evidence of ESF eligibility

Step 1: identify the eligibility criteria to be evidenced

The essential criteria are those that determine whether or not ESF support is available for the participant / entity.

'Essential criteria' means:

- The individual is legally able to reside in the UK and, if relevant to the project, work in the UK during the period of ESF support (but see earlier advice on young people aged under 18 who are NEET or at risk of being NEET where relevant).

- The individual is part of the target participant group agreed between the beneficiary and the Managing Authority (specified employment status, educational attainment, age, NEET / at risk of NEET status etc.)

The target participants group will be determined by the specific objectives of the relevant ESF programme priority, including the target output and result indicators.

The participant's full address must still be obtained as part of the participant's record, including usual workplace address or study location where applicable, to establish that the participant qualifies for support from the England ESF programme.

In addition, there is no requirement to obtain evidence for the following participant criteria even if they are correct qualifying criteria:

- Disabilities, medical records / opinions, work-limiting health conditions, substance misuse;
- Gender identity / sex;
- Sexual orientation;
- Ethnicity / racial origin;
- Religion or belief;
- Identifies as part of a minority or marginalised community;
- Participant is an ex-offender;
- Homelessness;
- Records relating to other people, for example, children, dependents, caring responsibilities;
- Troubled families

Whether any or more of the above factors are part of the qualifying criteria / target participant group, the following principles must be followed:

Participants must confirm that they meet the required criteria. This self-declaration information should be specific, signed and dated and retained with the participant records. 'Specific' means that the relevant eligibility criteria must be stated: 'generic' statements – such as 'I meet all applicable criteria' are not acceptable. The confirmation can be part of other participant forms and declarations.

Self-declarations should only be made as part of the 4-step methodology (steps 3 – 4) set out in the ESF Data Evidence Guidance. It is important that any self-declaration is signed by both parties i.e. the participant and the recruiting / project officer)

An exemplar self-declaration template is provided at the end of the 'exemplar ESF recruitment form' in Annex 1.

Beneficiary organisations / delivery partners should of course remain alert to the possibility that false information is being provided in order to gain access to ESF support. Suspected fraud must be properly investigated and beneficiaries must not enrol participants unless satisfied, to the best of their knowledge, that they meet the criteria.

Eligibility evidence is only required when the criterion determines whether or not ESF support can be offered by the project.

Table 1: Worked examples

Project-specific criteria (target group)	ESF Evidence requirement
Economically inactive (aged 25 and over) , not in education or training, who have complex barriers to employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence that legally able to reside / work in UK (applies to all participants) - Evidence that economically inactive () - Evidence that 25 or over. <p>Note: there is no requirement to try to obtain evidence that an individual does not have any formal qualifications.</p>
Employed, including self-employed, with no formal qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence that legally able to reside / work in UK (applies to all participants) - Evidence that employed or self-employed <p>Note: there is no requirement to try to obtain evidence that an individual does not have any formal qualifications.</p>
Employed, including self-employed participants , with up to and including a lower secondary education (or other specified educational attainment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence that legally able to reside / work in UK (applies to all participants) - Evidence that employed or self-employed. - Evidence that individuals have achieved the required minimum educational attainment

Step 2: Request items from the preferred list of evidence

See Tables 2 and 3 below for list of 'preferred evidence'.

Please note:

- Only one item from each bulleted list is required
- The intention is to obtain (i) documents that are readily available to the participant OR (ii) an introduction / referral from a relevant third party organisation that the individual is already engaged with and is therefore familiar with their personal circumstances. (The approach is not to ask the participant to spend additional time, effort or costs trying to obtain something they don't currently have.)
- Where the participant does have the preferred evidence but has not brought the item along for the enrolment assessment, they should be asked to return with the evidence at a convenient time. It would be inappropriate to consider alternative (weaker) evidence (step 3) or justify an exception (step 4) until this step is complete.
- Try to select an item of evidence that will verify more than one eligibility condition , e.g. one recent payslip confirms (a) participant in work and (b) is likely to contain national insurance number.
- The items in the list should not be interpreted as England ESF Managing Authority stating that the evidence provides absolute proof of the eligibility condition. The Managing Authority's objective is to achieve a reasonable degree of assurance – to the extent possible- that the participant qualifies for support , without imposing a significant burden on the participant or refusing support to those most in need.

Where referrals / introductions from third parties are accepted:

- The referrer should provide a written statement. The written confirmation referred to above must be signed, dated and at least contain:
 - name of participant
 - the eligibility criteria being confirmed
 - name of ESF project (this is preferable but not a strict requirement)
- If a participant's eligibility is confirmed by an introduction / referral or correspondence from DWP / Jobcentre Plus or National Careers Services, or Local Authority the referral document can be accepted in good faith at face value in the absence of any information to the contrary (such referrals are not considered to be participant 'self-declarations'). The beneficiary / provider does not need to obtain additional evidence on how that organisation was able to provide such confirmation but the referral should confirm that the eligibility criteria have been met and should also name the individual (and preferably be addressed to the ESF project).

- If a participant's eligibility is confirmed by other organisations (i.e. **not** DWP / / local Authority / National Careers Service) then the beneficiary organisation / provider should obtain a letter from the 3rd party organisation that is making the referral confirming that they undertake eligibility checks concerning, for example, right to live and work in the UK (and explaining what specific checks are made). These checks need to be consistent with ESF requirements as described in this guidance. A record of the letter should be kept by the beneficiary organisation. Any subsequent referrals from that organisation need to confirm that the individual is eligible for ESF and be in line with 3rd party referral requirements as described in this guidance. The onus on checking eligibility rests ultimately with the ESF project / provider.
- It should be noted that some documents are never out of date (e.g. qualification certificates) but information related to a participant's current circumstances need to be supported by recent evidence. The following guidelines apply (if in doubt, follow the `alternative evidence' approach).
 - Recent payslip - issued in last 3 months.
 - Documents produced annually (tax related, tax credits) - latest issued (should therefore be no older than 12 months).
 - Award letters (grants, benefits, student loans) – original letter acceptable unless recurring award letters are issued (e.g. annual tax credits notification).
- Other correspondence (non-recurring in nature) must be no longer than 12 months old.
- Introductions / referrals from relevant third party - within last 3 months

Step 3: if no preferred evidence available, consider credible alternative documents

Again, the intention is to obtain documents that are readily available to the participant or an introduction / referral from a relevant third party organisation that the individual is already engaged with and is familiar with their personal circumstances. The participant should not be asked to spend additional time, effort or costs trying to obtain something that they don't currently have.

Consider informing the Managing Authority of common `alternative evidence' to see whether they can be added to the preferred list.

Examples of alternative evidence include:

- documents from the `preferred evidence' list that are too old / expired;
- documents with partial information e.g. surname but no forename; and
- a combination of documents not listed as `preferred' evidence e.g. TV licence correspondence; digital TV subscription letters etc.

Where satisfied with such alternative evidence, document the justification for proceeding, to include reasons why the participant does not have any preferred evidence available and confirmation that credible and plausible reason have been provided and are acceptable. Explain why the alternative items provide persuasive evidence that the participant meets the criteria

Alternative evidence might also include a written and signed record of the initial recruitment interview covering the individual's eligibility / circumstances / lifestyle and signed by both parties (see exemplar form Annex 1). Such a signed record when combined with a self-declaration (and ideally any other additional alternative evidence) is always preferable to a self-declaration on its own.

Step 4: if no alternative documents, consider whether an exception to the evidence requirements can be justified

Where satisfied that, despite the absence of any evidence, the participant qualifies for support, document the justification for proceeding, to include:

- Reasons why participant does not have any preferred or alternative evidence available.
- Document how the beneficiary / delivery partner has attempted to collect the required evidence.
- Explain how / why satisfied that the reasons provided by participant are credible / plausible.

A properly signed self-declaration will also be required if the project believes the participant should still be supported.

If there is no case to justify an exception then the individual will not qualify for ESF support.

Table 2: Preferred evidence for assessing ESF participant eligibility

Type of condition	Examples of entry conditions	Indicative list of supporting documents (not exhaustive) (Only <u>one</u> item from list required)
Basic rules to participate in the England ESF programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal right to live in the UK during the period of ESF support (see earlier advice for young people aged under 18 who are NEET or at risk of being NEET) • For operations helping participants to gain work for other work-related outcomes: the legal right to work in an EU member state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full passport (EU Member) • ID cards from citizens from other EU countries • Full passport (not EU Member State): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Passport either endorsed `indefinite leave to remain – proceed (settled status) or includes work or residency permits or visa stamps (unexpired) and all related conditions met ○ Some non-EEA nationals have an Identity Card issued by the Home Office in place of a visa, confirming the individual’s right to stay , work or study in the UK – these cards are acceptable • Letter from the UK Immigration and Nationality Directorate granting indefinite leave to remain (settled status) • Birth / adoption certificate (EU Member State) • Residency permits for foreign nationals (usually in a passport) • Marriage/civil partnership certificate (if partner has legal right to live in the UK and this can be evidenced).
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESF support for individuals who have attained a specific qualification(s) or certain level of qualification 	<p><u>Qualifications held</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualification certificate issued to individual. Projects should retain a copy of the certificate in the

Type of condition	Examples of entry conditions	Indicative list of supporting documents (not exhaustive) (Only <u>one</u> item from list required)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESF support only for individuals qualified in a specified subject / field • ESF support for individuals studying already studying 	<p>participants file, certified as a true copy of the original.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of the academic institution / qualification body if such direct access would not be available to auditors / MA staff in future, then the project must retain copies of the records inspected. • Project or the participant to request written confirmation of studying arrangements / qualifications (whichever is applicable to eligibility from the academic institution /qualification body.
Employment (including self-employment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only for people in work • Only for self-employed 	<p><u>Self employment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A submitted HMRC `SA302' self-assessment tax declaration, with acknowledgement of receipt. SA302s can be requested from HMRC. • Where the first SA302has not yet been submitted, other documentation to show that the trade/business activity is registered with HMRC for tax and national insurance purposes • Records to show actual payment of Class 2 National Insurance Contributions • Business records in the name of the business - evidence that a business has been established and is active / operating e.g. lease on premises; purchase / lease of equipment; publicity materials; business invoices; correspondence with Local Authority; legal correspondence.

Type of condition	Examples of entry conditions	Indicative list of supporting documents (not exhaustive) (Only <u>one</u> item from list required)
	<p>Employed :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be working more/less than a certain number of hours each week; • Must have a certain type of employment contract (permanent, fixed term, temporary etc.) • Support for individuals under consultation or notice of redundancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If registered as a limited company: Companies House records / listed as Company Director • Confirmation letter from accountant • VAT registration confirmation from HMRC <p><u>Employed / contract type / number of hours worked etc.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latest payslip • Employment contract • Correspondence from employer • If applicable, copy of redundancy consultation or notice (general notice to group of staff or individual notifications) • Also see evidence in relation to Universal Credit (Annex 2 below)
Unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only for people who do not work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DWP/Jobcentre Plus benefits decision notification letter (for example JSA or new-style JSA) – new claims award / decision or change of circumstances decision letter. • Written confirmation / referral from DWP/Jobcentre Plus or a referral from Careers Service or similar. <p>(NB See Annex 2 for Universal Credit examples – i.e. evidence that can be used by non-DWP CFOs / non- DWP beneficiary organisations because they work to different labour market definitions compared to DWP CFO)</p>

Type of condition	Examples of entry conditions	Indicative list of supporting documents (not exhaustive) (Only <u>one</u> item from list required)
		<p>Where an individual is not engaged with DWP/Jobcentre Plus: written confirmation from a relevant third party that has been assisting the individual and so has an understanding of their current circumstances (for example, NGO, voluntary organisation, charity, third sector / not for profit organisation, social services or other professional providing support and guidance etc.) – but must be independent of the ESF project management and delivery team. As an alternative to written confirmation, sight of original case notes and support records are acceptable. Photocopies must be suitably redacted to remove sensitive personal data or if photocopies are inappropriate or not permitted, a written agreement that MA/EC auditors can access the documentation.</p> <p>Also see evidence in relation to Universal Credit (Annex 2 below)</p>
Economically inactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economically inactive. • Only for people who do not work 	<p>Economic inactivity refers to people who are neither in employment nor 'actively seeking work' (unemployed). The Managing Authority recognises that trying to obtain evidence to 'prove a negative' is likely to be difficult.</p> <p>Evidence of being receipt of new-style ESA (such as a correspondence from DWP) would be acceptable evidence of inactivity Jobcentre).</p> <p>A 3rd party referral may also be acceptable as evidence if it is consistent with requirements set out in this guidance.</p> <p>Self-certification is the minimum acceptable evidence requirement for economic inactivity. It is important that</p>

Type of condition	Examples of entry conditions	Indicative list of supporting documents (not exhaustive) (Only <u>one</u> item from list required)
		<p>any self-certified evidence is provided in-line with the current 4-step verification methodology and self-certification guidelines set out in this guidance.</p> <p>Beneficiary organisations / projects should try to obtain additional evidence in-line with hierarchy / methodology requirements set out in this guidance. So, for example, alternative evidence could be sought at stage 3. This could include making use of relevant participant 'lifestyle' information gathered at the initial assessment / recruitment stage which details and explains the individual's circumstances including his/her economic inactivity (please refer to the new exemplar form in Annex 1 for examples).</p> <p>In addition, at stage 3 of the methodology, projects can use correspondence issued by DWP in relation to Universal Credit as well as Universal Credit personal Account screenshot information – see Annex 2. Although, in certain circumstances, this correspondence may not be able to offer 100% positive proof of labour market status it will always be preferable to self- certificated evidence alone. Such UC evidence can also be sought after the participant has started ESF provision – to help 'bolster' / strengthen any self-certified evidence.</p>

Type of condition	Examples of entry conditions	Indicative list of supporting documents (not exhaustive) (Only <u>one</u> item from list required)
Employment Education Training	At risk of becoming NEET	☐ Referral letter from school and preferably, an additional confirmation letter from the local authority confirming that the individual is at risk of becoming NEET
	NEET status	<p>Referral from school</p> <p>Evidence from local authority client caseload databases developed for young people (‘screenshots’ – timed / dated as evidence).</p> <p>If the referral is not coming via a local authority / public body / public employment service then the minimum acceptable evidence will be a signed self-declaration by the participant (in-line with the 4-step hierarchy / methodology set out in these guidelines).</p>
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum age; maximum age; age ranges 	<p>Birth certificate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full or provisional driving licence (must be photo card) • Full passport • National Identity Card (EU) • Northern Ireland voters card • Employment contract / payslip (if date of birth is quoted) • Pension statement (if date of birth is quoted) • Evidence that in receipt of age-related state benefits • Letter/ confirmation from educational institution (if applicable) • Firearms certificate / Shotgun licence

Type of condition	Examples of entry conditions	Indicative list of supporting documents (not exhaustive) (Only <u>one</u> item from list required)
Employer / employment sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only for those employed in the public sector • Only for those employed in the private sector / voluntary sector etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latest payslip • Latest annual P60 • Latest benefits-in-kind statement • Employment contract • Correspondence from employer
Address / geographic location of individual (YEI and projects specifying that participants must live in a specific geographic location).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For YEI, eligible participants have to be living in the designated YEI programme areas which are sub-regional in England • Please note that the `category of region` applies to the location of the ESF `operation` and not the home address of the participant. For the purposes of recording and reporting headline MI data, the participant's data will be linked to the appropriate ESF operation and its category of region. (YEI data is not broken down by category of region) 	<p><u>Home</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter / confirmation from home owner (family / lodging) • Either a provisional or full driving licence (EU) (but has to be the photo card) • Recent statement from bank / building society / credit card company / credit union • Evidence of registration on electoral roll • Benefits / State Pension notification letter • Recent utility bill or council tax demand / correspondence • Tenancy agreement / documents • Mortgage statement / correspondence • HMRC correspondence • Rent card / statement • Solicitors correspondence <p><u>Work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latest payslip (if actual work address indicated) • Employment contract (if more than one possible location – must confirm actual work address)

Type of condition	Examples of entry conditions	Indicative list of supporting documents (not exhaustive) (Only <u>one</u> item from list required)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence from employer (if more than one possible work location – must confirm actual work address) <p><u>Study</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence from institution • Student ID card (if identifies name of institution) • If institution has locations in more than one programme region – must also identify main location of course

Table 3: Preferred evidence for assessing SME eligibility

Type of condition	Examples of entry conditions	Indicative list of supporting documents (not exhaustive) (Only <u>one</u> item from list required)
SME	Micro, small and medium enterprise enterprises to be supported.	Confirmation that the employer has fewer than 250 employees in the UK as recorded by the Employer Data Service or the Companies House registration

3. Evidence of results

3.1 Evidence of result (when linked to eligible payment)

Proof of evidence must be obtained to support any result indicators that link to payments.

Results for participants have to be achieved ('manifested') by the time the person leaves the operation or within 4 weeks of the participant's leaving the operation (

see section 3.2 below) and will typically fall under one or more of the of the following broad `result categories` and may also be combined with `output` (on starting) characteristics – for example the `into employment on leaving` result may have to demonstrate a progression from the `on starting` output characteristic `unemployed`

It is likely that most of the results will fall under one or more of the following headings.

Labour market

- Into work on leaving
- Into self-employment on leaving
- Into job search on leaving (actively seeking work)

Education /training

- Into education / training on leaving
- Gaining a qualification

YEI specific

- Offer of employment / continued education /apprenticeship / traineeship on leaving
- Completion of YEI supported intervention

Entities

- SMEs successfully completing projects

3.2 Who should obtain evidence of results and when should evidence be obtained?

The beneficiary organisation should obtain evidence of results.

When should evidence be obtained?

Results evidence should be gathered in a timely way. To be counted as a result (for headline MI reporting purposes to the European Commission) the result should have been achieved (manifested itself) by the time the participant leaves the operation or within 4 weeks of the date when the participant left the operation. A job or job offer (e.g. under YEI) or a qualification may be achieved whilst the person is on the ESF provision - but should only be counted / recorded when the participant leaves the operation. If the person achieves a job outcome after joining an ESF operation but subsequently loses it by the time he or she leaves the ESF operation, then the job cannot be recorded / claimed as a result for MI reporting purposes. Any payments

relating to job outcomes need to be made according to the specific contractual requirements which apply to the project / operation.

In the case of qualifications a participant may take and achieve a qualification whilst on the ESF operation. In some cases the result will not be available until more than 4 weeks after the person has left the operation because the examining board or college (for example) may not be able to publish the results within this timeframe. In such instances the result should initially be recorded as a '0' / nil result until the actual result is known - when it should then be amended as appropriate.

Exceptionally, for those individual participants who have become disengaged from ESF support and who cannot be contacted (typically, this would be under 'light touch' support arrangements) a rationale needs to be applied at operation level to define when the person has 'deemed to have left' and thereby calculate a leaving date. Any immediate results achieved will still have to have been achieved in-line with the standards described in the above paragraphs. Such an arrangement would have to be **proposed and agreed in advance and in writing** with the ESF MA contract manager. Any such exceptional arrangement would need to be fully justified and include a description of the rationale that would be applied for calculating the leaving date and confirm how it would be applied in a consistent way across the operation and its projects. In **most cases**, every effort should be made to obtain accurate leaving data in line with ESF standards / requirements rather than calculating leaving dates.

E-mails can be used for the notification of results linked to payments. Under such an arrangement the e-mail address should include the name of the organisation in the email address string. Ideally the e-mail should also include the logo of the organisation. The result notification should give a clear description of what has been achieved as a result of the ESF support provided. So, for example, if somebody got a job as a result of ESF support, the e-mail should provide: (i) details of who got the job; (ii) the name and address of the employer; (iii) the job title; (iv) location of where the person is working; (v) the start date of the job; (vi) the number of hours worked per week; and (vii) the type of contract - plus any additional related information that may be required under a specific contract etc.

A distinction can be made between results linked to payments and general output and result MI indicators that are not linked to payments. In other words, if the indicator relates to an eligibility or result linked to payment then the provider must try to obtain the necessary evidence using the appropriate methodology described in this guidance. For management information / results not linked to payments then a provider declaration OR a participant self-declaration will suffice

Again, the beneficiary organisation / opt-in organisation should decide the best approach for their projects – whether delivered by themselves or by delivery partners and they need to consider the associated risks when making their decision. Procedures and controls must be put in place to prevent eligible results payments being declared to the ESF Managing Authority / IB until suitable evidence is

provided. Suitable evidence must be provided for results payments. No exceptions can be made for results evidence

3.3 How must results assessments be carried out?

This guidance aims to help beneficiary organisations comply with the England ESF Managing Authority's eligibility rules

The England ESF Managing Authority/Intermediate Body and auditors will check **whether** the beneficiary / delivery partner has followed the methodology correctly.

Beneficiary organisations should always request 'preferred evidence'. If the preferred evidence is not available they should consult with the Managing Authority so that alternative evidence can be considered.

Auditors may review the methods used by beneficiary organisations to highlight misuse of the rules and/or unusual trends against comparable projects.

3.4 Methodology for obtaining evidence of ESF results

The methodology for obtaining evidence of ESF results is potentially a three-step process (compared to a potential five-step process for eligibility checks).

- Step 1: The beneficiary organisation / delivery partner should obtain documentary evidence of the result (in line with the preferred list of evidence – see table 4 below).
- Step 2: If the preferred evidence is not available, the beneficiary organisation should consult with the Managing Authority to agree alternative evidence that may be acceptable.
- Step 3: If no alternative, suitable evidence can be found, no payment should be made or counted.

Table 4: Preferred evidence for assessing evidence of results achieved in ESF

Result type	Indicative list of supportive documentation (only one item from the list required)
Into employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation of employment from employer (this could be a letter, email or a template) - Wage slip (this could also be linked to other conditions where appropriate – e.g. wage slips covering a specific time period) - Contract of employment
Into self-employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation of self- employment – e.g. HMRC letter evidencing registration - Bank statement for business account - Registration with Companies House
Into job-search	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Award letter / notification detailing Jobseeker’s Allowance / New style JSA - Copy of the individual’s bank statement showing benefit payments - Signed referral from DWP - ES40 (Jobseekers card) or My Work Plan demonstrating current status - Signed referral / template from recognised agency / service who can reasonably be considered to have an accurate knowledge of the participants circumstances (e.g. local authority, public body, or organisation receiving public funding)
Into education / training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of enrolment / registration at school, college, university or learning provider (documentation) - Letter / template from educational / training institution - Signed referral / template from recognised agency / service who can reasonably be considered to have an accurate knowledge of the participants circumstances (e.g. local authority)

Result type	Indicative list of supportive documentation (only one item from the list required)
Gaining a qualification or part of a qualification	<p>Qualification certificate issued to individual. (Projects should keep a copy of the certificate in the participant's record and certify it as a true copy of the original).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter / template / award letter / confirmation from awarding body - Project or the participant to request confirmation of the qualifications in writing from the academic institution / qualification body.
YEI - offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship, traineeship on leaving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter of offer of employment / apprenticeship / traineeship from employer (the offer must comply with MI definition of 'offer'); - Letter or template from educational institution / evidence of enrolment in formal education or training programmes leading to a recognised qualification
YEI – completion of YEI supported intervention	<p>Participant attendance record demonstrating that the participant attended the intervention according to schedule until the last day / last session of its scheduled end.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Action plan signed off as completed by provider and participant - In-house attendance certificate confirming attendance and completion of YEI provision.

ANNEX 1

Exemplar ESF Recruitment Form – annotated with guidance / hints and tips (non DWP CFO provision)

Organisation Name:
Project name
Course / provision title (if applicable).....

NB: This exemplar form is designed to help ensure you have good quality participant data for your ESF participant records. It is also designed to help ensure you have sufficient data to help you complete the participant data schema (PDS). For certain indicators, the formatting for the PDS varies from this exemplar form. For example, the PDS will ask if somebody is 'long term unemployed' whereas this form is designed to help ensure you gather sufficient information to determine whether somebody is long term unemployed in the first place. The PDS is cross referred to in the exemplar form below for ease of reference as well as to highlight some of the differences between this form and the PDS.

Participant's Name
Title (e.g. Ms / Mr / Dr etc.):
Forename(1) First name:
Forename 2 (e.g. middle name / further forename):
Surname / Family Name:
For office use:*
Unique participant reference number
NB: information that is for 'office use;' – will help ensure that you have sufficient data for the PDS and <u>also for your own records.</u>
Not all 'for office use' information will appear on - or be necessary- for the PDS.

Why do we ask for the participant's name?
Obviously, this is <u>essential information</u> for identification purposes
This information is an essential element for helping to verify evidence of eligibility (since the name needs to be linked to documentary ID evidence such as passports / driving licence etc. as well as for linking to results obtained).
See verification document ./ guidance
Insert web link
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/506534/MI_definitions_Final_V1_20160210.pdf
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/591548/ESF_Data_Evidence_Requirements_v2.pdf
<u>Office use section</u>
NB: information that is for 'office use;' – will help ensure that you have sufficient data for the PDS and also for your own records.
Not all 'for office use' information will appear on the Participant Data Schema PDS.
Each participant can have only ONE participant record per operation (see guidance in opening pages to this guidance).
Each participant must have a unique participant number linked to the operation number. If a participant leaves an operation, this number must not be 're-allocated' to a new participant.
Participant reference numbers should also link to project identifier(s).
An operation may use one or more of the projects that it is funding to help an individual participant (e.g. a pathway / specialist support).
More than one project may support a participant within the same 'operation'. A participant cannot have more than one participant record for any one operation (see national ESF guidance for

definition of operation). The same result for an individual participant cannot be counted more than once by different projects helping the same individual within a multi-project operation (and the same applies if multiple operations are helping the same individual)

What to do if this question is not answered?

ESF cannot fund people who cannot be identified since eligibility cannot be checked under such circumstances.

The PDS system will not accept an individual who cannot be identified.

Your project will bear all risks and costs of you recruit an individual who cannot be identified. Risks include those arising from audit. ESF cannot and must not be claimed for individuals who cannot be identified.

See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments>

The PDS will ask you for the participant identifier

Gender Identity

Male / Female / Other

.....

Participant chose not to answer

.....

Why do we ask for this? /Why is it important?

The EC regulations require us to provide data by gender – so all data can be analysed by gender identity – and help assess that ESF is being delivered fairly between men and women.

Participants with a non-binary gender identity should tick “other”.

Participants who do not want to give their gender identity should NOT tick “other”. They should be recorded as ‘refused to say’ or ‘chose not to answer’.

What to do if this question is not answered?

Gender is not deemed to be a ‘sensitive’ indicator under the regulations which means that unless gender identity is obtained and recorded the participant record will be treated as incomplete for MI reporting purposes for the EC.

Some hints and tips

A small minority of people may not have a ‘binary identity’. For these people please reassure them that, they are very welcome to join ESF and can record the identity of their choice on the form. (Assuming they meet the general and any specific eligibility criteria). We will not be able to supply their details to the EC since the EC does not provide any facility for us to do that.

See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments>

Record of initial recruitment interview with background / contextual information about the participant that supports basic and specific eligibility evidence

Why do we ask for this?

It is further supportive evidence. Also, it is useful for the purposes of supporting self-declarations if

etc. (this is especially important for supplementary evidence alongside self-certified evidence).

Possible questions / issues to record could include:

- Why is the person applying?
- The individual's future aims?
- **What the provision involves**
- **How can the project help?**
 - including any special need requirements
- **Confirmation of eligibility criteria for the project being explained – any issues arising?**
- **Current circumstances (lifestyle? where living? education? work?)**
 - Benefits and evidence of benefits currently claimed /received?
 - Past education and work history – include any issues?
- **Basic eligibility / specific eligibility / evidence and issues?**
- **Any documentary / third party evidence supporting above?**

required – which should be well structured so that it's clear that a provider has explained:

- (i) what the provision involves
- (ii) what the eligibility criteria are; and
- (iii) asked relevant questions around the basic and/or specific eligibility questions.

This section of the form enables secondary questions to be asked and therefore helps to provide supplementary evidence which help to **build up a picture of the individual's circumstances.**

Any form of third party evidence such as a college leaving certificate, an 'at risk of NEET' statement, unemployment registration with Jobcentre Plus, linked claim to LA Housing Benefit would be further evidence to support and corroborate any self-certification.

Full Address

Address line 1 (flat number + flat name / house number / house name)

.....

Address line 2 (street number if applicable + street name)

.....

Address line 3 (Village / Town)

.....

Address line 4 (City)

.....

Address line 5 (County)

.....

Why do we ask for this?

Regulatory requirement.

The FULL contact details are essential for the ESF cohort survey – which will be run by contactors commissioned by DWP. The survey will collect longer term result information from a representative sample survey of participants. The full contact details of each participant need to be forward to the contact database – see guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-european-social-fund-2014-to-2020>

The address and postcode are essential for assessing the YEI participant location eligibility criterion (along with 'age' and 'NEET status') – and correct verification evidence should be captured covering these criteria.

'Postcode' covers a 'rural areas indicator' which the EC ask the Managing Authority to report on. It is therefore **essential** that the correct postcode is provided.

What to do if this question is not answered?

<p>Postcode</p> <p>..... (NB See hints and tips for homeless)</p> <p>Home telephone number:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Mobile telephone number:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>E-mail Address:</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>This information has to be captured for all the reasons above and every effort must be taken to obtain this information before an individual starts on ESF.</p> <p>See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click)</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments</p> <p>The PDS asks for <u>postcode only</u> (See `personal data / on starting` section of PDS)</p> <p>Some hints and tips</p> <p>If the participant should die whilst on provision please DO NOT supply contact details to the contact database.</p> <p>Currently, participants are screened against Government records to identify participants who have died so that they can be removed from future surveys. However, as an additional assurance, if one of your participants dies whilst on ESF, it would be helpful if you could please also notify your contract manager and/or the ESF Managing Authority who will take the necessary steps to ensure that no attempt is made to contact the individual via the ESF follow-up survey etc.</p>
<p>Date of birth</p> <p>Preferred format:</p> <p>DD/MM/YEAR EG: 01/05/2000 = 1st May 2000</p> <p>..... DD/MM/YEAR.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Need to record the correct response to each question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive `yes` 	<p>Date of birth: Why do we ask for this?</p> <p>We are required to by EC MI regulations</p> <p>Date of birth is part of the <u>eligibility check</u> – especially for YEI</p> <p>It is part of the <u>eligibility check</u> for <u>Long Term Unemployed (LTU)</u> – the <u>definition of LTU is age-related</u></p> <p>Date of birth is not a `sensitive` indicator – so if it is missing the participant record is incomplete and won't count for MI reporting purposes</p>

- Positive 'no'
- Asked but 'preferred not to say / preferred not to respond'
- Not asked

PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records.

For office use:

Date first joined operation

.....

(operation reference number

.....)

Date of joining project

.....

Project reference number

.....)

Other projects that the individual may be attending under the same operation

(Project name & reference number)

.....

.....

.....

Date of re-joining operation – where applicable

.....

Date of re-joining project – where applicable

.....

NB: information that is for 'office use;' – will help ensure that you have sufficient data for the PDS and also for your own records.

Not all 'for office use' information will appear on or be necessary for the PDS

What to do if this question is not answered?

Age may be a specific eligibility criterion – or part of a number of specific criteria which need to be verified (see guidance);

If you cannot prove eligibility because the date of birth is withheld (e.g. for eligibility criteria relating to YEI / LTU / young people) you cannot use ESF / YEI to fund this individual

If the question is not answered the participant record will NOT be counted for reporting purposes – and it will be counted as incomplete.

Every effort must be made to provide this information. The project / operation will bear the financial risk if this individual is accepted for support and has not provided essential date of birth information at the point of recruitment

Some hints and tips

A person's age is measured in years and is measured in relation to the date he or she **first** joins the operation.

You need to record the date of birth and the date the person first enters the operation.

For MI reporting purposes, the EC require that none of the output information (including age) is amended if the person re-joins the same operation. So, if person was aged under 50 on joining the operation first time, and leaves – but re-joins when he/she is 51, the individual cannot then be recorded as being 'over 50'.

For YEI results a person may join when of eligible age but may leave at an age when they are not eligible. The age is not updated to reflect this because the result population has to be the same as the 'output population'.

See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments>

The PDS will ask for **date of birth** in the format provided in this form .e.:

DD/MM/YEAR – e.g. : 01/05/2017

It is good practice to record date of birth rather than 'age ranges' because of the EC requirements already described.

<p>Labour market status (for non DWP CFO provision)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you employed (this can include self-employed)? (Do you receive <u>any</u> money for <u>any</u> work?) • Are you currently unemployed (actively seeking work)* • When did you become unemployed? • How long have you been continuously unemployed? • Are you long term unemployed? (see hints and tips) • Are you claiming any benefits? If so please describe what they are? • Are you currently neither in employment nor unemployment <p>Need to record the correct response to each question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive `yes` (Denoted in PDS as : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unemployed (short term) (CO01) - Long term unemployed (CO02) - Inactive (in education or training) (CO03) - Inactive (not in education or training) (CO04) - Employed including self - employed (CO05) • Positive `no` (not covered in PDS) • Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond` (Not available in PDS) • Not asked (Not available on PDS) 	<p>Why do we ask for this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is a regulatory requirement - Labour market status can be an essential specific eligibility criterion. Evidence may be required in order to prove eligibility (refer to data evidence guidance / guidelines). - Labour market status provides key MI information and acts as important `reference population` for a range of ESF and YEI output and result indicators – many of which may be sub-sets of these indicators. - It is required in order to validate the total number of participants (a participant can only be counted as one of the following: employed or inactive or unemployed). <p>What to do if this question is not answered?</p> <p>This is a non-sensitive indicator and the record will be counted as `incomplete` – so if labour market status is not reported the record cannot be counted for MI reporting purposes Every effort must be made to obtain this important data / information.</p> <p>Some hints and tips</p> <p>The definition of long-term unemployed varies with age:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Youth long-term unemployed (<25 years of age) = more than 6 months continuous spell of unemployment</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Adult long-term unemployed (25 years of age or more) = more than 12 months continuous spell of unemployment</i> <p>You should also refer to definitions of unemployment in indicator CO01 above. The age / duration split apply to both non-DWP and the DWP definition of `unemployed`. Age refers to age when first joining the operation.</p> <p>See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click):</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments</p>
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<p><u>For office use:*</u></p> <p>Use `age` and `length of continuous unemployment` in order to calculate / identify long term unemployment. See hints and tips.</p> <p>NB: information that is for `office use;` – will help ensure that you have sufficient data for the PDS and <u>also for your own records</u>.</p> <p>Not all `for office use` information will appear on or be necessary for the PDS. Educational / training status</p>	
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<p>Educational / training status</p> <p>Q. Are you currently engaged in education or training?</p> <p>NB : Need to record the correct response to each question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive `yes` • Positive `no` • Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond` (this response not available on PDS) • Not asked this response denoted in the PDS as `participant failed to say (no signed exemption` 	<p>Why do we ask for this?</p> <p>This question supports a result indicator showing progression from `not being in education or training on joining the operation` to `entering education or training on leaving the operation`.</p> <p>It is highly recommended that educational/training status of the individual is initially established at the point of enrolment.</p> <p>If the individual was not in full time or part-time education or training on joining a progression (result) can be recorded if they leave the operation and enter education or training either on leaving or within 4 weeks of leaving the operation.</p> <p>What to do if this question is not answered?</p> <p>Try to obtain this information before the person leaves as well as finding out if the person is leaving the operation to enter education or training.</p> <p>Some hints and tips</p> <p>See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click):</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments</p> <p>Note</p> <p>PDS will ask if the individual is engaged in education or training.</p>
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<p>Highest level of educational attainment (on joining)</p>	<p>Why do we ask for this?</p>
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What is the highest level of qualification that you have ever achieved in any subject? (e.g. GCSE / A-level / degree etc.)

NB: PDS will ask for the following

- Below primary level education (below ISCED level 1) – other disadvantaged
- Primary education or equivalent (ISCED level 1)
- Lower secondary education or equivalent ISCED level 2
- Upper secondary school or equivalent (ISCED level 3)
- Post-secondary (non-tertiary) education or equivalent (ISCED level 4)
- Tertiary education or equivalent (ISCED level 5-8)

It is regulatory requirement

This information is required for indicators such as ESF CO09/10/11 and ESFCO17

Some hints and tips

ISCED levels are not the same as UK education levels – you need to check the individual's highest level of qualification achieved against the relevant ISCED level entry in the Annex provided in the MI definitions guidance to identify the relevant ISCED level.

Also, see PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments>

Note

PDS will ask if the individual is engaged in education or training.

Household situation ^{}(NB Since August 2018 , these indicators are now deemed to be programme-specific indicators and not `Annex 1 ESF `regulatory` indicators)**

Q. Do you live in a jobless household

If yes.....

Q. Do you have any dependent children in your jobless household?

Q. Would you describe your household as a `single adult household` with a dependent child / children?

NB : Need to record the correct response to each question

- Positive `yes`
- Positive `no`
- Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond`
- Not asked

Why do we ask for this?

This information is required for the programme-specific indicators

- ESF CO12 – participants who live in jobless households
- ESF CO13 Participants who live in jobless households with dependent children
- ESF CO14 Participants who live in a single adult household with dependent children.

Following the publication of the EC `Omnibus` Regulations in August 2018, **these indicators are no longer necessary in order to count a participant record as being `complete` for MI reporting purposes.** However, **the ESF Managing Authority would still like projects to continue gathering this data** since it provides important data that supports a programme target as well as providing important data for programme evaluation activities including ESF participant follow-up survey sampling arrangements

Some hints and tips

`Jobless household` refers to all household members irrespective of age (e.g. a young u/e person living with retired grandparents would count as living in a jobless household)

`Jobless household with dependent children` is a sub category of `jobless household`, meaning that anyone falling into this category **must also be recorded under jobless household.**

<p>PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records.</p>	<p>`Dependent child / children' means individuals aged 0-17 years OR individuals aged 18-24 if economically inactive and living with at least one parent.</p> <p>`Single adult household with dependent children' includes only one adult (individual aged 18 or above) <u>irrespective of their employment status.</u></p> <p>It is possible that an individual could be recorded under one <u>or more</u> of the above indicators. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An individual claiming to have dependent children in a jobless household must <u>also</u> be recorded under the indicator identifying individuals living in a jobless household. - The indicator identifying households as consisting of a single adult household with a dependent child / children aims to identify lone parents. This indicator relates to unemployed or employed. - If an individual is unemployed it is <i>possible</i> that a positive response could be given to each of the three indicators if appropriate. <p>Link to PDS</p> <p>The PDS will ask for information on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobless household? • Jobless household with dependent children? • Single adult household with dependent children (lone parent). <p>See link to PDS Below** (Inserted just before self-declaration of eligibility section below)</p>
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<p>Ethnicity</p> <p>What is your ethnic group? Select one option (from groups 1-18_below) that best describes your ethnic group or background.</p> <p>White</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British 2. Irish 3. Gypsy or Irish Traveller or ROMA 4. Any other White background, 	<p>Why do we ask for this?</p> <p>Regulatory requirement.</p> <p>Every effort should be made to encourage the individual to record their ethnic identity.</p> <p>What to do if this question is not answered?</p> <p>If individual `prefers not to say' then they should tick the `prefer not to say' box and sign the recruitment form. <u>If this is not done the record will be counted as incomplete.</u></p> <p>Some hints and tips</p>
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(if you tick box 4 please specify your ethnic identity)

Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups

- 5. White and Black Caribbean
- 6. White and Black African
- 7. White and Asian
- 8. Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background,

(if you tick box 8 please specify your ethnic identity)

Asian/Asian British

- 9. Indian
- 10. Pakistani
- 11. Bangladeshi
- 12. Chinese
- 13. Any other Asian background,

(if you tick box 13 please specify your ethnic identity)

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British

- 14. African
- 15. Caribbean
- 16. Any other Black/African/Caribbean background,

(if you tick box 16 please specify your ethnicity description)

Other ethnic group

- 17. Arab
- 18. Any other ethnic group

(if you tick box 18 please specify your ethnicity description)

NB : Need to record the correct response to each question

- Positive `yes`
- Positive `no`

People self-define their ethnic identity.

If an individual does not identify with an ethnic sub group listed on the form they should have the ability to record their specific self-described identity in an empty data field adjacent to the `any other` box provided.

See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments>

The PDS will ask for the ethnic minority sub category.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond` • Not asked <p>PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records</p> <p><u>Prefer not to say</u></p>	
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<p>Disability</p> <p>Do you consider yourself to have a disability?</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Do you have a physical or mental impairment or condition that has a `substantial` and `long term` negative effect on your ability to do normal activities?</p> <p>Do you consider yourself to have a disability that limits your ability to work?</p> <p>Do you receive a core disability benefit?</p> <p>Prefer not to say</p> <p>NB : Need to record the correct response to each question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive `yes` (Denoted on PDS as `yes`) • Positive `no` (denoted on PDS as `no`) • Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond` (Denoted on PDS as `participant chose not to say (signed exemption)`) • Not asked (Denoted on the PDS as `participant failed to say (no signed exemption)`). 	<p>Why do we ask for this?</p> <p>EC regulatory requirement</p> <p>Under the 2010 Equality Act 2010, ESF partners have a Public Sector Equality Duty to monitor equality data and information about the people they are trying to support.</p> <p>What to do if this question is not answered?</p> <p>Add a signature box at end of the form stating that “where I have ticked `prefer not to say` – I can confirm that I have been asked to answer the question(s) but refused to provide it”.</p> <p>Some hints and tips</p> <p>It is important to explain that as a provider <u>you need to know</u> about an individual's needs so that <u>you can design and tailor support to help them</u>.</p> <p>The programme also needs to monitor how many people with disabilities and health issues it is helping. All data will be anonymised for reporting purposes – which means that individual people and their characteristics cannot be identified in any monitoring reports that are published.</p> <p>Where disability is <u>a specific eligibility criterion</u> under your provision you should obtain a self-certification as evidence of this – see adjacent suggested wording. Also make full use of the background / contextual information box and keep a record of any available supplementary evidence such as benefits entitlement etc.</p> <p>See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click):</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments</p> <p>(The PDS will ask for the disability status of the individual.)</p>
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<p>PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records</p> <p><u>If Prefer not to say....</u> Add a signature box at end of the form stating that where i have ticked prefer to say – I can confirm that have been asked to answer the question(s) but refused to provide it. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?</p>	
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<p>Other disadvantaged (ESF CO17)</p> <p>(a) Are you homeless or affected by housing exclusion? Y/N</p> <p>(b) Do you lack basic skills in English? Maths ESOL (if foreign speaker) Y/N</p> <p>(c) Participants with ISCED level 0 should also be recorded under here Y/N</p> <p>NB : Need to record the correct response to each question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive `yes` • Positive `no` • Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond` • Not asked <p>PDS does not have a single box that counts `other disadvantage` – this indicator is informed by other `output` fields on the PDS.</p> <p><u>Prefer not to say to (a) above</u> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><u>Prefer not to say to (b) above</u> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Why do we ask for this?</p> <p>It is an EC regulatory requirement.</p> <p>It helps us understand and report on participants who are being supported and who have other disadvantages as indicated in the guidance.</p> <p>What to do if this question is not answered?</p> <p>These questions are deemed to be `sensitive`.</p> <p>If an individual `prefers not to say` then they should tick the `prefer not to say` box(es) and sign the recruitment form. <u>If this is not done the record will be counted as incomplete`.</u></p> <p>Some hints and tips</p> <p>Data for the `other disadvantaged` indicator has to be broken down by sub-category type. An individual may have more than one disadvantage.</p> <p>Please refer to guidance listed under ESF CO-18 in guidance in order to obtain definitions of homeless and affected by housing exclusion. Participants are counted under ESFC017 “other disadvantaged”.</p> <p>Participants should only be counted under the sub-category “ participants lacking basic skills” if they have not achieved entry level or higher in one or more of the following :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy (i.e. English); • Numeracy (i.e. maths); • ESOL (where relevant); <u>and</u> • who are not supported under IPs 1.1.; 1.2 and 2.1 <p>Participants who have not successfully attained qualifications at ISCED level 1 (see ISCED table in annex to definitions guidance) should be recorded under ISCED level 0 under “other disadvantaged” ESF</p>
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Prefer not to say to (c) above



(If prefer not to say – go to signature box – this is required...)

CO-17. (See `count exclusions section under ESF CO-09 in MI definitions guidance).

See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments>

The PDS records a breakdown of the three sub categories - (a) (b) (c) - listed under ESF CO17. See the `on starting' section of the PDS.

Programme specific indicators

<p>O6 Participants without basic skills (1.1. 1.2 and 2.1 only)</p>	<p>Why do we ask for this?</p>
<p>Please confirm if you <u>do not</u> have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK entry level or • UK level 1 or • UK level 2 in : <p>English <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Maths..... <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>ESOL (where relevant)..... <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>This is a programme-specific indicator and we are contractually required to provide this information to the European Commission.</p> <p>What to do if this question is not answered?</p> <p>Every effort should be made to collect and record an appropriate response to this question.</p> <p>Some hints and tips</p> <p>This programme-specific indicator relates to participants who do not have UK entry level / UK level 1 or UK level 2 in English, maths or ESOL (where relevant) at the time they join the ESF operation.</p> <p>So this question relates to `on starting`. So, on starting, to have basic skills (plural) you must have maths and English together (or maths and ESOL if appropriate).</p> <p>Data for this indicator relates to specific operational programme targets for IPs 1.1; 1.2; and 2.1.</p> <p>See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click)</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments</p>

<p>O7+O8 Participants who are offenders or ex-offenders (mandatory question for IP 1.4 only – voluntary question for IPs outside 1.4)</p>	<p>Why do we ask for this?</p>
<p>Have you been convicted of committing a criminal act? (you may be held in custody or currently completing a post-custody licence supervision period or serving a community order).</p> <p>NB : Need to record the correct response to each question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive `yes` • Positive `no` 	<p>This is a programme-specific indicator and we are contractually required to provide this information to the European Commission.</p> <p>What to do if this question is not answered?</p> <p>Every effort should be made to collect and record an appropriate response to this question.</p> <p>Some hints and tips</p> <p>Indicator ESF-07 relates to IP 1.4 only. We would anticipate that it would mostly cover NOMS provision – but ex-offenders supported under other 1.4 provision should also be recorded here.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond` ` • Not asked <p>PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records</p> <p>Are you an ex-offender? i.e. do you have one or more previous convictions (you should have completed all supervision and licence requirements to be counted as an ex-offender)</p> <p>NB : Need to record the correct response to each question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive `yes` • Positive `no` • Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond` ` • Not asked <p>PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records</p>	<p>Indicator ESF -08 is a voluntary indicator for non-IP1.4 provision. ESF beneficiary organisations / operations / projects not funded under ESF IP 1.4 need not collect the data if they do not wish to..</p> <p>See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click):</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments</p>
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Self-declaration of eligibility

This should only be made as part of the 4-step methodology set out in the ESF Data Evidence Guidance.

Only tick / complete those boxes where there is an appropriate eligibility / self-declaration requirement for the individual.

I confirm that on the day of starting at..... (insert name of ESF project)

I have the right to:

Live in the UK		Tick one or more boxes as appropriate (and explain why evidence is not available)
Work in the UK		

I am:

Employed (including self-employed)		Only tick ONE box only (and explain why documentation is not available)
Unemployed (looking for work – may or may not be on benefits)		
Economically Inactive (i.e. not in work and not looking for work)		

- I confirm that **I have been unemployed from** (..... insert date) **to**(insert date)
- I confirm that **my date of birth is**... ..(insert date of birth DD/MM/Year)

I confirm that:

I am not in education or training (part-time or full time)		Only tick ONE box (and explain why evidence is not available)
I am in education or training (part-time or full time)		

I confirm that:

I have a disability or health condition		You may tick more than ONE box if it is appropriate to do so
I am a lone parent		
I am an ex-offender		

I confirm that:

	<p>Project to insert any other specific eligibility criterion / criteria as appropriate for the participant to self-declare against.</p> <p>`Specific' means that the relevant eligibility criterion / must be explicitly stated.</p> <p>Generic statements – such as `I meet all applicable criteria' are not acceptable</p>
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I certify that I have not given up a job / paid employment in order to make myself eligible for this ESF support.

I also certify that the information given in this form is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Name and signature of participant

Date:

Name and signature of advisor recruiting officer / project:

Date

Exemplar participant leaving / exit certificate (or similar)

Employment Status on Leaving
<p>Engaged in job searching upon leaving (unemployed)</p> <p>NB : Need to record the correct response to each question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive `yes` • Positive `no` • Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond` • Not asked <p>PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records</p>
<p>In employment, including self-employment, upon leaving</p> <p>NB : Need to record the correct response to each question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive `yes` • Positive `no` • Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond` • Not asked

<p>Why do we ask for this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EC requirement - To assess progression
<p>What to do if this question is not answered?</p> <p>Every effort should be made to collect and record an appropriate response to this question.</p>
<p>Some hints and tips</p> <p>This results indicator aims to measure the progression the person has made (in labour market status) between joining the operation (start date) and on leaving the operation (leaving date or within 4 weeks of the leaving date).</p> <p><u>Engaged upon job search on leaving</u></p> <p>"Engaged in job searching" is to be understood as persons usually without work, available for work and actively seeking work as defined in the indicator "Unemployed".</p> <p>"Upon leaving" is to be understood as up to 4 weeks after the exit date of the participant.</p> <p>For a person to be counted as `unemployed` on leaving, they must have been `inactive` on joining. If the person was unemployed on joining and unemployed on leaving – no progression has been made – so no result can be recorded in labour market terms.</p> <p><u>In employment , including self-employment upon leaving</u></p> <p>Only participants who were inactive or unemployed on joining can be counted as employed, including self-employed on leaving the operation.</p> <p>"Upon leaving" is to be understood as up to 4 weeks after the exit date of the participant.</p> <p>Participants who were employed on starting cannot achieve an immediate labour market result (the only progression that could be reported would be an improvement in labour market situation at the 6 month follow up survey stage – this will not be recorded on the PDS).</p> <p>"Inactive" is defined as in the indicator "Inactive". "In employment, including self-employment" is defined as in the indicator "Employed, including self-employed".</p>

PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records

See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments>

Engaged in Education or Training on Leaving

In education or training on leaving?

NB : Need to record the correct response to each question

- Positive `yes`
- Positive `no`
- Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond`
- Not asked

PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records

Why do we ask for this?

EC Regulatory requirement

What to do if this question is not answered?

Every effort should be made to collect and record an appropriate response to this question.

Some hints and tips

Persons who have received ESF support and who are newly engaged in education (lifelong learning, formal education) or training activities (off-the-job/in-the-job training, vocational training, etc.) immediately upon leaving the ESF operation.

"Upon leaving" is to be understood as up to four weeks after the exit date of the participant.

This indicator is to be understood as a change in the situation upon leaving, compared to the situation when entering the ESF operation (with the participant not being in education/training when entering the ESF operation). The reference population is: all participants, except participants who were engaged in education/training upon entering.

The source of funding of the ensuing training is not relevant.

See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments>

Qualification gained on leaving

Did you gain a qualification upon leaving this ESF operation / project?
(The project must have supported you by providing the necessary education / training required for the qualification).

NB : Need to record the correct response to each question

- Positive `yes`
- Positive `no`
- Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond`
- Not asked

PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records

Why do we ask for this?

EC requirement – common core immediate result indicator

What to do if this question is not answered?

Every effort should be made to collect and record an appropriate response to this question

Some hints and tips

Persons who have received ESF support and who gained a qualification upon leaving the ESF operation.

Qualification means a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

"Upon leaving" is to be understood as up to four weeks after the exit date of the participant.

See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments>

Basic skills on leaving

Please confirm if gained **one or more** of the following basic skills qualifications as a result of the support you received from the ESF project:

- UK entry level or
- UK level 1 or
- UK level 2 in :

English

Maths.....

ESOL (where relevant).....

NB : Need to record the correct response to each question

- Positive `yes`
- Positive `no`
- Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond`
- Not asked

PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records

Why do we ask for this?

Programme-specific indicator - supports result target `Participant gaining basic skills` IPs 1.1, 1.2, and 2.1

What to do if this question is not answered?

Every effort should be made to collect and record an appropriate response to this question.

Some hints and tips

Basic skills gained upon leaving the operation and as a result of a participant taking part in ESF supported activity. The term `basic skills` refers to one or more of the following: literacy (English); numeracy (maths) or ESOL (where English is not the participant's `mother tongue`) - all at entry level or above.

Skill level relates to UK skills / qualification levels:
<https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/compare-different-qualification-levels>
This programme-specific immediate results indicator only applies to participants gaining basic skills under activities supported by Investment Priorities 1.1, 1.2 and 2.1

See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments>

Immediate results (programme-specific indicators)

Gaining level 2 skills or or a unit of a level 2 or below qualification (excluding basic skills) below on leaving	Why do we ask for this? Data gathered under this indicator supports the IP 2.1 results target of the same name. This immediate results indicator only relates to IP 2.1
NB : Need to record the correct response to each question <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive `yes`• Positive `no`• Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond`• Not asked	What to do if this question is not answered? Every effort should be made to obtain the information for this indicator
PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records	Some hints and tips This immediate results indicator only relates to IP 2.1 Participants gaining level 2 or below or a unit of a level 2 or below qualification upon leaving (this outcome is the result of the ESF support) This indicator is referring to UK skills levels and not ISCED levels. The following link explains UK skills levels: https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/compare-different-qualification-levels . Data for this indicator has to be broken down by category of region
	See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments

Participants gaining level 3 and above or a unit of a level 3 and above qualification

NB : Need to record the correct response to each question

- Positive `yes`
- Positive `no`
- Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond`
- Not asked

PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records

Why do we ask for this?

Data gathered under this indicator supports the IP 2.1 results target of the same name.

What to do if this question is not answered?

Every effort should be made to obtain the information for this indicator

Some hints and tips

Participants gaining level 3 and above or a unit of a level 3 and above qualification (UK skills level not ISCED equivalent) upon leaving. (NB this outcome is a result of the ESF support)..

See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments>

Highest level of education on leaving

What is the highest level of education attained on leaving?

NB : Need to record the correct response to each question

- Positive `yes` (confirmation)
- Positive `no`
- Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond`
- Not asked

PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records

Why do we ask for this?

The ESF Evaluation Team have asked for this question to be answered in order to help assess the extent to which different groups of people are making progress in terms of educational achievement on ESF etc.

What to do if this question is not answered?

Every effort should be made to provide an accurate record for this indicator.

Some hints and tips

Reference should be made to UK education levels

See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments>

YEI only (IP 1.3 only)

<p>Completed YEI Supported Intervention</p>
<p>Did the participant complete the YEI intervention?</p> <p>NB : Need to record the correct response to each question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive `yes` • Positive `no` • Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond` • Not asked <p>PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records</p>

<p>Why do we ask for this?</p> <p>EC requirement</p>
<p>What to do if this question is not answered?</p> <p>Every effort must be made to obtain this information</p>
<p>Some hints and tips</p> <p>Completion of intervention is to be understood that the participant attends the intervention according to schedule until the last day/last session of its scheduled end.</p>
<p>See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click)</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments</p>

<p>YEI – received an offer of employment , continuous education , apprenticeship or traineeship upon leaving</p>
<p>NB : Need to record the correct response to each question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive `yes` • Positive `no` • Asked but `preferred not to say / preferred not to respond` • Not asked <p>PDS covers above but need to be aware for local records</p>

<p>Why do we ask for this?</p> <p>EC regulatory requirement</p>
<p>What to do if this question is not answered?</p> <p>Every effort must be made to record this indicator.</p>
<p>Some hints and tips</p> <p>An offer is defined as a voluntary but conditional promise, submitted for acceptance by an offeror (e.g. employer, training organisation) to the participant, as long as it clearly indicates the offeror's willingness to enter into an agreement under specific terms with the participant and that it is made in a manner that a reasonable person would understand its acceptance will result in a binding agreement. Once the participant accepts it becomes an agreement which legally commits both parties.</p> <p>`On leaving` should be interpreted to mean either whilst on the intervention or within 4 weeks of leaving the operation. An offer does not have to be accepted for it to be recorded as an immediate result.</p>

	<p>"Continued education" is to be understood as the enrolment in formal education or training programmes leading to a recognised vocational qualification.</p> <p>Traineeships are generally understood as a limited period of work practice spent at business, public bodies or non-profit institutions, in order to gain practical work experience ahead of taking up regular employment. They generally last a few weeks to a few months, and are usually not considered to constitute employment contracts, as their main aim is to provide a training experience, not a paid work opportunity.</p> <p>See PDS guidance at the following link (ctrl + click)</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-claim-applications-and-self-declared-adjustments</p>
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Annex 2

Using Universal Credit correspondence to evidence eligibility

This Annex describes how Universal Credit correspondence / personal account screenshots etc. can be used to evidence eligibility. The annex does not cover every eventuality but offers general guidelines.

General Notes

- Where 'take home pay' for the period shows zero this can be used to evidence the participant is not working.
- For those **individuals** who have undergone a 'Carers test' or 'Work Capability Assessment' as part of their UC award this can be used to determine eligibility for ESF support involving barriers to work or economically inactive criteria respectively. [The award notification itself may not be sufficient without further supplementary questions in the case of proving an individual is the primary carer where the award notification relates to a couple or household benefit unit].
- Although awards under some specific headings of the award notification do not offer definitive proof of eligibility for ESF support they may be used as 'alternative' evidence (Step 3 of this guidance) where appropriate alongside supplementary evidence gathered (for example a record of recruitment / initial assessment interview explaining relevant personal / lifestyle circumstances – see Annex 1) and where there is no 'preferred' evidence available. For example awards paid in respect of children may be used to confirm barriers to employment [if there is also evidence to confirm that **the award is made to the individual** within a household/ benefit unit who is applying for ESF support i.e. they are the primary carer].

Annex 2

Labour Market Status Evidence Table – Universal Credit

ESF Labour market status	UC Labour Market Regime (LMR)	LMR Descriptor	Evidence NB: For using UC Account Screen Evidence – please refer to ‘how to use this table’ guidance (below this table) covering screenshot evidence and joint declarations.
Employed	Working enough (Conditionality group = “no work-related requirements”)	UC claimants whose earnings are over the `individual or household conditionality earnings threshold (CET) OR self-employed and minimum income floor (MIF) applies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of employed – see table 2 in this guidance (if this is available, then there is no need for any additional UC evidence as detailed below) <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official UC Correspondence / Evidence from a Job Centre Work Coach (where possible) confirming the individual is in the LMR ‘working enough’ or any other information they can supply confirming that the individual is in paid employment. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshot evidence from personal UC account – which could include one or more of the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of income within payments screen - No 35 hour job search requirement within the claimant commitment - Change of work details recorded within the Journal
Employed	Light touch (Conditionality group = “All	Claimants with individual or household earnings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of employed – see table 2 in this guidance (if this is available, then there is no need for any additional UC evidence as detailed below)

ESF Labour market status	UC Labour Market Regime (LMR)	LMR Descriptor	Evidence NB: For using UC Account Screen Evidence – please refer to ‘how to use this table’ guidance (below this table) covering screenshot evidence and joint declarations.
	work related requirements”	above the Administrative Earnings Threshold (AET) but earnings are not enough to take them above the relevant individual or household Conditionality Earnings Threshold (CET)	<p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official UC Correspondence / Evidence from a Job Centre Work Coach confirming (where possible) the individual is in the LMR ‘light touch’ or any other information they can supply confirming that the individual is in paid employment. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshot evidence from personal UC account – which could include one or more of the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No 35 hour job search requirement - Evidence of some income - Meeting with Work Coach required within claimant commitment and change of work details recorded within the Journal <p>(NB For DWP CFO provision only: those in ‘Light Touch’ because of their partners circumstances should be treated as being unemployed.)</p>
Economically inactive	No work related requirements (Conditionality group = “no	Claimants not expected to work at present. This includes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official DWP / UC Correspondence / Evidence from a Job Centre Work Coach confirming (where possible) the individual is in the LMR ‘no work related requirements’ or any other information they can supply including confirmation that individual has not been assigned a work coach – or confirmation that the

ESF Labour market status	UC Labour Market Regime (LMR)	LMR Descriptor	Evidence NB: For using UC Account Screen Evidence – please refer to ‘how to use this table’ guidance (below this table) covering screenshot evidence and joint declarations.
	work related requirements”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Claimants with limited capability for work related activity following the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) - Significant caring responsibilities for severely disabled person for at least 35 hours per week; - Lead carers with a child under 1 year of age. 	<p>individual is only required to meet work coach infrequently.</p> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshot evidence from personal UC account – which could include one or more of the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No evidence of income deductions from UC claim - Not assigned a work coach OR only required to meet work coach infrequently - Evidence of attending work capability assessment - Evidence such as absence of work-coach meetings / liaison - Within the Journal, a letter confirming the claimant has Limited Capability to Work - Within the payments screen, an LCWRA element payable, to those who have Limited Capability for work. - Within the payments screen, a Carers element payable to those who have caring responsibilities for over 35 hours per week.
Economically Inactive	Work preparation (Conditionality Group = Work Preparation).	Claimants expected to work in the future but are currently nominated lead carers for children. This includes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official UC Correspondence / Evidence from a Job Centre Work Coach confirming (where possible) the individual is in the LMR ‘work preparation’ or any other information they can supply confirming that the individual is neither employed nor unemployed

ESF Labour market status	UC Labour Market Regime (LMR)	LMR Descriptor	Evidence NB: For using UC Account Screen Evidence – please refer to ‘how to use this table’ guidance (below this table) covering screenshot evidence and joint declarations.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - those assessed as having limited capability for work (LCW) - lead carer where the youngest child is aged 2 	<p>(actively seeking) – or confirmation that the individual is only required to meet work coach infrequently.</p> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshot evidence from personal UC account – which could include one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no evidence of income deductions from UC claim - not assigned a work coach OR only required to meet work coach infrequently - Within the Journal, a letter confirming the claimant has Limited Capability to Work. - For those with lead caring responsibilities, the claimant commitment will reflect only the following work preparation type activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attending a skills assessment • preparing a CV • improving personal presentation • participating in an employment programme • developing a business plan • research childcare costs and provision
Economically Inactive	Work focussed interview	Claimants expected to work in the future but are currently nominated lead carers for children. This includes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official UC Correspondence / Evidence from a Job Centre Work Coach (where possible) confirming the individual is in the LMR ‘work focussed interview’ or any other information they can supply confirming that the individual is neither employed nor unemployed (actively seeking) or any other information they can

ESF Labour market status	UC Labour Market Regime (LMR)	LMR Descriptor	Evidence NB: For using UC Account Screen Evidence – please refer to ‘how to use this table’ guidance (below this table) covering screenshot evidence and joint declarations.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a nominated lead carer of a youngest child aged 1 • a single foster carer / main carer in a fostering couple where certain conditions apply • family and friends carer (also known as kinship carer) for the first year that the claimant is the responsible carer for a child under 16 	<p>supply including confirmation that individual has not been assigned a work coach – or confirmation that the individual is only required to meet work coach infrequently.</p> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshot evidence from personal UC account – which could include one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no evidence of income deductions from UC claim - not assigned a work coach OR only required to meet work coach infrequently - no requirement to actively seek employment or undertake work related activities in claimant commitment.
<p>Unemployed NB Some of these people may be working but earning very low amounts</p>	<p>Intensive work search</p>	<p>Claimants not working and those working but earning very low amounts and expected to take intensive action to secure work or work more. (NB DWP CFO participants can</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official DWP/ UC Correspondence / Evidence from a Job Centre Work Coach (where possible) confirming the individual is in the LMR ‘intensive work search’ or any other information they can supply confirming that the individual is neither employed nor unemployed (actively seeking) or has not been assigned a work coach – or confirmation that the individual is only required to meet work coach infrequently

ESF Labour market status	UC Labour Market Regime (LMR)	LMR Descriptor	Evidence NB: For using UC Account Screen Evidence – please refer to ‘how to use this table’ guidance (below this table) covering screenshot evidence and joint declarations.
		work for less than 16 hours per week and be counted as ‘unemployed’ – see ESF definitions guidance)	<p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshot evidence from personal UC account – which could include one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - claimant commitment refers to the need for the individual to be looking for work (it may specify up to 35 hours / week job search) – see Intensive Work Search claimant commitment - claimant has been assigned a Job Centre Work Coach who he/she has to meet / meets on a regular basis (once a month or more) - no evidence of income (but exceptions allowed for DWP CFO participants – 16 hour rule)

How to use this table – including screenshot evidence and joint declarations.

This table sets out evidence that can be used to verify eligibility (in relation to labour market status) for people in receipt of Universal Credit and who wish to join ESF.

It should be remembered that **eligibility relates to the date the individual joins the ESF operation** – so the dates used in any evidence should indicate that they at least cover the date that the individual joined. UC benefits are often paid on a monthly cycle – so it may take some time before any receipt of benefit appears on the individual’s UC account. It is possible that an individual applying for ESF is genuinely unemployed – but this is not fully reflected in the account / latest screenshot because they have only recently become unemployed. In this instance, in the absence of any other available evidence, a brief record of the individual’s personal circumstances (including details of their unemployment) be kept alongside a signed self-certification and that the relevant UC screenshot evidence be collected as soon as possible after it appears in the account.

The evidence referred to above should be treated as supporting ‘step 3’ of the 4-step methodology described in this guidance – and the self-declaration should be signed by the participant and the project recruiting officer / provider as recommended in section 2.5 of the guidance.

With regards to screenshots evidence, physical hard copies can be printed-off and countersigned and dated by the individual participant and project / recruiting officer as part of a joint declaration (these screenshots are to be taken ‘on-site’ at the project). Alternatively, a joint declaration can be made confirming that the information was seen by both parties (without copies of the screenshots). In this latter instance, a specific description of what was seen by both parties should be recorded as part of the joint declaration and kept on the records (this could include specific contextual references to absences of evidence – for example, . no evidence of earnings in payments section or no job search requirement in the individual’s commitment).

Background Information on UC Online Accounts

Universal Credit On-line accounts help individuals:

- keep a record of the actions they have undertaken to prepare or look for work;
- communicate with work coaches (messages can be sent via the system – and individuals can read their work coaches replies)
- report a change of circumstance

- provide details about a health condition or disability
- see details on how much UC benefits payments
- record (claimant) commitments – what the individual has agreed to do.

UC On-line Account: `To-do list`

Things that an individual need to do whilst applying for / on Universal Credit are set out in the `to do` list section of the UC online account. These could be things that need to be done to complete a claim or things the individual has agreed to do as part of their claimant commitment.

Tasks that have been completed in the `to-do` list are moved from the `to-do` list to the `journal`.

UC On-line Account: `The Journal`

The journal keeps a record of everything that the individual has done whilst claiming Universal Credit

The journal can be used to send / receive messages to work coaches and a record of the online conversation are stored on the journal

Individuals should use the journal to tell their work coach of actions they have taken such as: job-applications; job interviews; and any training undertaken. CVs can also be stored on the journal.

UC On-line Account: Payments

The online account will show details of Universal Credit payments – including an explanatory breakdown of payments.

Payments: Contains a monthly statement, detailing UC payments and details of any earnings.

My commitments: Contains the latest claimant commitment.

Journal: Details of activities undertaken and changes declared.

Universal Credit To-do list Claimants Colleagues Teams Telephone ID check agent2084: Sign out

Viewing Algernon Bendmartin Close view

Home To-do list Journal

Your next payment is due in **12 days**.

How much you'll get will depend on your circumstances from **1 July 2018** to **31 July 2018**.

[Report a change of circumstances](#)

[View to-do list](#)

[Payments](#)

[Add a note to your journal](#)

[My commitments](#)

[Guide](#)

[Job applications](#)
interested, applied, interviewing

Your commitments

This is what you've agreed to do in order to receive Universal Credit.

It's important that you understand that in return for your Universal Credit payment you're agreeing to look for extra work.

You'll need to do everything you reasonably can to increase your earnings. Your work coach will help you agree your commitments.

12:00
26/07/2018

Example Commitment for:

- Working enough
- No work related requirements

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Universal Credit portal. The address bar shows the URL: <https://agent-training02.digital.uc.dwp.gov.uk/agentv>. The page header includes the Universal Credit logo and navigation links: To-do list, Claimants, Colleagues, Teams, Telephone ID check, and a user profile for 'agent2084: Sign out'. Below the header, there are three tabs: Home, To-do list, and Journal. The main content area is titled 'My commitments' and indicates it was accepted on 26 July 2018. A light blue box contains the commitment: 'I'll use my online account to report changes to my circumstances.' Below this, under the heading 'Using my online account', it states: 'I'll sign in to my online account often to:' followed by a bulleted list: 'complete all activities in my to-do list' and 'report changes to my circumstances promptly, including changes to work'. It also notes: 'If I can't get online, I'll report any changes by calling 0800 328 5644 (Textphone: 0800 328 1344)'. At the bottom of the page, there are links for 'Contact', 'Privacy', and 'Cookies', and the Royal Coat of Arms. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 11:52 on 26/07/2018.

Example Commitment for: Light Touch

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://agent-training02.digital.uc.dwp.gov.uk/agentv>. The page header includes the Universal Credit logo and navigation links: To-do list, Claimants, Colleagues, Teams, Telephone ID check. The user is logged in as 'agent2084' and can 'Sign out'. The page title is 'Viewing Algernon Bondmartin' with a 'Close view' link.

Navigation tabs: Home, To-do list, Journal.

My commitments

Accepted on 18 June 2018.

I'll do everything that I can to find work or earn more.

Meetings with my work coach I'll attend and take part fully in all meetings with my work coach. I'll tell my work coach immediately if I can't do this.

Using my online account I'll sign in to my online account often to:

- complete all activities in my to-do list
- report changes to my circumstances promptly, including changes to work

If I can't get online, I'll report any changes by calling 0800 328 5644 (Textphone: 0800 328 1344).

[More about sanctions](#)

[Back](#)

[► Could we improve this page?](#)

The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 11:56 on 26/07/2018.

Example Commitment for: Intensive work search

Universal Credit | Home - Universal Credit | Intensive work search regime | DWP Intranet

agent2084: Sign out

Viewing **Griselda Bondmartin** [Close view](#)

My commitments

Accepted on 18 June 2018.

I'll do everything that I can to find work or earn more.

Work I can do	<p>I'll look for and take any work that I'm able to do, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Waitress• Customer service <p>I'll also apply for any jobs recommended by my work coach.</p> <p>I'll look for full-time work for the minimum wage or more.</p>
My availability	<p>I'm available for job interviews immediately and will participate fully. I'm available to start work immediately.</p>
Travel to work	<p>I can travel up to 90 minutes to work.</p>
What I'll do	<p>I'll normally spend 35 hours a week looking and preparing for work.</p> <p>I've agreed with my work coach that I'll:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internet search• Putting Cv's in to cafe's and restuarants
Extra activities	<p>I haven't discussed any extra activities.</p>
Meetings with my work coach	<p>I'll attend and take part fully in all meetings with my work coach. I'll tell my work coach immediately if I can't do this.</p>
Using my online account	<p>I'll sign in to my online account often to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete all activities in my to-do list• report changes to my circumstances promptly, including changes to work <p>If I can't get online, I'll report any changes by calling 0800 328 5644 (Textphone: 0800 328 1344).</p>

12:28
26/07/2018

Example Journal:

Universal Credit To-do list Claimants Colleagues Teams Telephone ID check agent2084: Sign out

Viewing Algernon Bondmartin Close view

Add a journal note

This will be added to the claimant's journal

[Attach a file](#)

Notify claimant by text or email

Save journal note

Journal entries

18 Jun 2018 at 11:11am	About reduced payments (sanctions)	Completed by an agent
18 Jun 2018 at 11:11am	Accept your commitments completed	Completed by an agent
18 Jun 2018 at 11:11am	Report change of work details	Completed by an agent
18 Jun 2018 at 11:11am	Work and earnings - declare changes completed	Completed by an agent
18 Jun 2018 at 11:08am	Entitlement to Universal Credit approved	
18 Jun 2018 at 11:07am	Personal Security Number issued	Completed by an agent
1 May 2018 at 1:55pm	Previous earnings from work	
1 May 2018 at 1:53pm	Get your identity documents ready completed	

Example Report change of work details:

Universal Credit To-do list Claimants Colleagues Teams Telephone ID check agent2084: Sign out

Viewing Algernon Bondmartin Close view

Home To-do list Journal

Report change of work details

Monday 18 June 2018 11:11am

Change of work details

The change occurred on 1 May 2018
Algernon currently does not receive additional payment
Algernon currently does not receive maternity allowance
Algernon is currently employed.
Algernon currently works **16** hours per week.
Algernon usually earns **£150** per week.

[▶ Could we improve this page?](#)

Contact Privacy Cookies

12:02
26/07/2018

Example statement of payment:

Any additional elements i.e. Carers element will appear underneath the Standard allowance.

Universal Credit

Home - Universal Credit | Treated as having Limited Capa... | DWP Intranet

agent2084: Sign out

Viewing Griselda Bondmartin

Your payment this month is **£317**
This will be paid by 8pm on 7 July 2018

How we calculate your payment

Your payment is based on what you've told us and covers the period between **1 June** and **30 June**.

It is important to tell Universal Credit immediately about any changes in your circumstances that could affect your Universal Credit payments.
[Report a change in my circumstances](#)

Standard allowance You receive a standard Universal Credit allowance each month	£317.82
Total before adjustments	£317.82
Total payment for this month	£317.82

Windows taskbar: 12:13 26/07/2018

Annex 2 continued

Glossary of some of the UC terms used in Annex 2

- **Universal Credit Personal Account – Full Service**

Universal Credit full service is available to all claimants in certain areas of GB. Claimants will have an online UC account to manage their claim. Eventually, all claimants will have access to full service / account.

- **Conditionality Group**

A claimant's circumstances will place them in a particular 'conditionality' group and an associated labour market regime which defines the level of support they can expect to receive, and the framework of what can be expected of them.

There are 4 conditionality groups:

- All work related requirements
- Work preparation requirements
- Work-focused interview requirements only
- No work-related requirements

- **Labour market regime**

On making a new claim, every claimant is automatically allocated to a labour market regime based on their individual and household circumstances. The regime that a claimant is allocated to is reassessed as circumstances change.

- **Claimant Commitment**

Claimants are expected to complete and accept a tailored 'commitment' which sets out what they have agreed to do in order to prepare for and look for work – or increase their earnings if they are already working.

- **AET – Administrative Earnings Threshold**

The AET has been introduced to help highlight those claimants with no income, or on a very low income below AET, so they can receive the most intensive support. It is set at individual level and at household level.

- **CET – Conditionality Earnings Threshold**

The Conditionality Earnings Threshold (CET) ensures that claimants earnings above a certain level will not be asked to carry out work-related activity. The CET is calculated on an individual basis, by multiplying the National Minimum Wage (NMW) by the claimant's expected hours. Individuals earning above the CET threshold are placed in the 'working enough' regime.

- **MIF – Minimum Income Floor**

The MIF is an assumed level of earnings for a gainfully self-employed claimant, and is based on the earnings the DWP expect a claimant with similar circumstances to achieve. It is designed to encourage and incentivise individuals to increase their earnings through developing their business, and is applied if earnings are below that level (and the individual is not in a business start-up period). Individuals who are subject to MIF will not be subject to work search or availability requirements, allowing them to concentrate on making a success of their business and maximising their returns up to and beyond the level of the MIF.

- **Work Capability Assessments (WCA) / Limited Capability Work Related Assessment (LCWRA)**

Universal Credit claimants may be asked to attend a WCA to find out if their health condition or disability affects their ability to work. A decision-maker will use the outcome of the WCA to decide if the claimant:

- is fit for work
- has limited capability for work – this means the claimant will not have to look for work, but will need to take steps to prepare for work
- has limited capability for work and work-related activity – this means the claimant will not be asked to look for or prepare for work