



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

# Connect to Work

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## Grant Guidance for Wales

31 January 2025

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	4
Grant Guidance .....	5
Responsibilities for Connect to Work .....	5
<b>Connect to Work Requirements</b> .....	7
<b>Eligibility and Suitability</b> .....	10
Fit with Other Provision .....	11
<b>Funded Activities</b> .....	12
Supported Employment Model.....	12
Caseload Sizes .....	13
<b>Design and Delivery: Participant Journey</b> .....	14
Identification and Introduction to Programme .....	14
Expressions of Interest .....	15
Engagement – Initial Meeting with Participant.....	16
Vocational Profiling.....	16
Employer Engagement.....	17
Job Matching .....	17
On and Off the Job Support .....	18
‘In-Work’ Retention Support.....	18
Self-Employment Support.....	19
End of Provision for Participants.....	20
Disengaged Participants .....	20
Change in Circumstance .....	21
Flexibilities .....	21
Participant Complaints .....	22
Implementation.....	22
<b>Fidelity Assurance</b> .....	23
<b>Marketing and Communications Strategy</b> .....	25
<b>Grant Funding</b> .....	26
Funding Period.....	27
Funding in the Implementation Period.....	28
Funding in the Delivery Period .....	28
Underspends and Performance Against Profile Volumes .....	29
Allowable Costs .....	29
Cost Validation .....	29
Unallowable Costs.....	29
<b>Management Information (MI) and Reporting Requirements</b> .....	30
<b>Performance Measurement and Assurance</b> .....	31
Introduction.....	31
Performance Expectations .....	31

<b>Evaluation and Local Learning</b> .....	33
<b>Fraud</b> .....	35
<b>VAT</b> .....	36
<b>Data Handling and Security</b> .....	37
<b>Annual Grant Review</b> .....	38
<b>Timeline</b> .....	39
<b>Annexes</b> .....	40
<b>Annex A – Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>40</b>
<b>Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>47</b>
<b>Annex B – Eligibility and Suitability</b> .....	<b>48</b>
Definition of Participant Groups.....	48
Eligibility Criteria.....	49
Suitability Criteria.....	50
Definitions and Descriptions of the Participant Groups.....	51
Detailed definition of Social Model of Disability .....	52
Disadvantaged Groups .....	52
<b>Annex C – Process Map</b> .....	<b>56</b>
<b>Annex D – Proposed Geographies</b> .....	<b>58</b>
<b>Annex D – Indicative Volume and Unit Cost Estimates by Delivery Area</b> .....	<b>59</b>
<b>Annex F – Contacts and Support</b> .....	<b>61</b>

The Department for Work and Pensions has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business in Wales it will treat the Welsh and English languages on a basis of equality. The Department for Work and Pensions’ Welsh Language Scheme sets out how it will give effect to that principle when providing services to the public in Wales.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 gave the Welsh language official status in Wales and established a new framework for introducing duties for organisations to use the Welsh language, in the form of Welsh language standards. Each organisation has its own ‘compliance notice’ which sets out which standards it has to comply with. The standards are based on the principle that the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language. This means that the Welsh service should be at least as good as the English service.

The Accountable Bodies shall at all times comply with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh language standards with which the Accountable Body is liable to comply with and any services will be delivered (in accordance with any Specifications) through the medium of English or Welsh (on an equal basis). Accountable Bodies will be responsible for promoting the delivery of the Services in Welsh or English to the Service user and will use all reasonable steps to achieve this.

# Introduction

- 1.** One of the Government's five missions is to kickstart economic growth with good jobs and improved productivity in every part of the country. The ambition is for a more inclusive economy which enables people to get into work and to get on at work, ensuring employment opportunity for all. The Government aims to take a more collaborative, locally led approach to tackling 'Hidden Unemployment', to support local people to realise their potential through local and national growth.
- 2.** Good quality work provides people with income, social interaction, and a sense of fulfilment and purpose among many other benefits. It's known that work has a positive effect on people's physical and mental health, and their wellbeing, while unemployment often has a harmful impact.<sup>1</sup>
- 3.** But in the UK, there are 1.9 million<sup>2</sup> people who would like to work but are not participating in the labour market – often due to health issues or disability. The funding for Connect to Work in England and Wales will help around 100,000 disabled people, those with health conditions and people with complex barriers to employment, to seek to find sustainable work each year, by offering them voluntary support based on the high-fidelity model of Supported Employment. 7,000 places a year in Wales will be funded through grants issued under this grant guidance. There is separate Connect to Work grant guidance for England.
- 4.** The new Get Britain Working Strategy will bring fundamental reform that transforms our relationship with local areas and ensures we have a strong foundation with which to work in partnership to support people into good, sustainable work. This Grant Guidance launches the first major element in the Get Britain Working Strategy – Connect to Work.
- 5.** Connect to Work will take a collaborative, locally led approach to tackling 'Hidden Unemployment'. It will help connect local work, health and skills support. The funding provides a coherent, systematic and joined up approach to maximise the benefits available for individuals and local communities. Accountable Bodies will determine how the support is delivered locally, in line with local priorities.

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**1** Gordon Waddell and A Kim Burton, *Is Work Good for Your Health and Wellbeing?*, London: The Stationary Office, 2006, pp. vii-ix. Fair Society, *Healthy Lives: strategic review of health inequalities in England post-2010*, London: The Marmot Review, 2010, pp. 68-71

**2** <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/economicinactivity/datasets/economicinactivitybyreasonseasonallyadjustedinac01sa>

6. Connect to Work will support the wider development of locally planned systems to drive growth, working jointly between the United Kingdom and devolved Governments. It will be an important strand in local plans to tackle inactivity and expand employment opportunity. By encouraging join up between health systems and employment support, Connect to Work will support those, primarily, currently outside the workforce and facing greater labour market disadvantages, to stay in work and get back into work. In turn, supporting the Government's ambition for a more inclusive economy, supporting local people to realise their potential and supporting local and national growth. This marks an important first step towards the future devolution of employment support.
7. We want this investment to transform lives, and we know that Connect to Work can make a difference for disabled people, people with health conditions and other complex barriers to employment, helping them to get into and on in work.

## Grant Guidance

8. This Grant Guidance provides detailed policy and delivery information to support Accountable Bodies (working with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and local partners) to develop their own local Connect to Work offer and inform submission of their Delivery Plans. The information is likely to be useful to key local partners such as other upper tier and unitary local authorities in the Delivery Area, strategic health bodies (including Health Boards, employers and business representative bodies, voluntary and community organisations and other delivery organisations.
9. This Grant Guidance reflects the significant engagement that DWP has had with local authority representatives, devolved administrations and experts in the field of Supported Employment in developing the Connect to Work design. It sets out how Connect to Work will build on the local high fidelity Supported Employment delivery already in place in a number of areas. It provides the key information to enable local areas to start to build an offer of support to eligible and suitable people in their locality.

## Responsibilities for Connect to Work

10. Accountable Bodies working (where appropriate) with constituent upper tier and unitary local authorities, Delivery Partners and DWP will be responsible for delivery of Connect to Work as outlined in their Delivery Plan. DWP and Accountable Bodies will work in partnership, with DWP providing Implementation Support for Accountable Bodies and their Delivery Partners alongside the Grant funding. As accountability for the service sits with the Accountable Body, throughout this Grant Guidance (and associated appendices and Technical Notes) delivery is described as the responsibility of the Accountable Body only.

- 11.** In order to access Connect to Work funding, Accountable Bodies are asked to complete a Delivery Plan, setting out how they intend to implement and deliver their offer, across their Delivery Area. The Grant Guidance is designed to support Accountable Bodies in preparing their Delivery Plan. It includes:
- An overview of the Connect to Work Grant.
  - The objectives and principles of Connect to Work, including the national Eligibility and Suitability Criteria and the Supported Employment offer.
  - Details of the Grant award funding mechanism and Allowable Cost activities.
  - Details of how Accountable Bodies will develop their Delivery Plans.
  - Details of the Implementation Period and the type of support on offer to Accountable Bodies and their partners.
  - How the development of a quality service will be supported by Fidelity assurance.
  - Details of Management Information (MI), the reporting requirements and the evaluation of Connect to Work.
  - The marketing and communication requirements to encourage strong engagement by potential participants and employers.
- 12.** This Grant Guidance document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying:
- Appendix A – Connect to Work Delivery Plan Guidance.
  - Appendix B – Connect to Work Delivery Plan template.
  - Appendix C – Connect to Work Grant Cost Register.
  - Appendix D – Connect to Work Draft Grant Funding Agreement.
  - All applicable Technical Notes (see Technical Note: General for a schedule of future Technical Notes).
- 13.** This Grant Guidance document may be revised by DWP from time to time as circumstances require. Updated documents will be circulated by DWP following any changes.
- 14.** Capitalised terms and acronyms referred to in this Grant Guidance are defined in the Glossary set out in Annex A and if not defined therein, they shall have the meanings given to them in the Grant Funding Agreement.
- 15.** The indicative unit cost and volumes by Accountable Body (as estimated using the Grant Formula) are set out in Annex E.
- 16.** For information on available support, and access to a question and answer log in relation to Connect to Work, see Annex F.

# Connect to Work Requirements

- 17.** As a key plank in the Government's Get Britain Working Strategy, Connect to Work will primarily help disabled people, people with health conditions, and those with more complex barriers to work who are outside the labour market in 'Hidden Unemployment' who wish to be in employment, to find a suitable job and sustain work. It will also help those in work but at risk of falling out of the labour market (and who will struggle to get back into work if they lose their job) to retain their employment.
- 18.** Connect to Work is a voluntary programme to help tackle economic inactivity by providing a specific form of support targeted at the right people at the right time, based on their individual circumstances. Participants must be both eligible and suitable for the provision. Connect to Work will deliver the evidence-based Supported Employment model, 'place, train, and maintain', building on the existing DWP funded Supported Employment programmes; Local Supported Employment (LSE) and Individual Placement and Support in Primary Care (IPSPC), to deliver support to around 7,000 Participants starting per year in Wales once fully rolled out. It will complement other provisions including the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities' (OHID) Individual Placement and Support for Alcohol and Drug Dependence (IPS-AD), and other locally led programmes.
- 19.** Connect to Work will be delivered across all areas of Wales.
- 20.** Where appropriate Connect to Work funding would pass to the Additional Delivery Area Members via a grant from DWP to the Accountable Body. The Connect to Work Grant will be paid under Section 2 of the Employment and Training Act (1973). The Connect to Work Grant is a ring-fenced grant and expenditure will be agreed against the Allowable Cost Register Cost Categories and as recorded in the Grant Cost Register. This will include costs for planning, implementation and delivery.
- 21.** Accountable Bodies will be well placed to align Connect to Work delivery with economic, skills and growth hub planning. These form part of Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) functions, which local areas will have in addition to other skills plans and strategies.
- 22.** This Grant Guidance provides detailed information to support Accountable Bodies to develop their own local Connect to Work offer and inform submission of their Delivery Plans. The Delivery Plan will contain key information including the details of the commissioning approach, the delivery approach that is planned, and the Accountable Body's design of the service.

- 23.** The Delivery Plan template and accompanying detailed guidance for completion (Delivery Plan Guidance) are provided separately. The DWP will support, as necessary, the Accountable Bodies in developing Delivery Plans which will give all parties confidence around the quality of Connect to Work delivery.
- 24.** After agreement of the Delivery Plan, the Accountable Body for the Delivery Area will enter into a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) with DWP. Further details of the GFA are provided in Appendix D. This Grant Guidance (and any updates to it) and the Delivery Plan will form part of the GFA. Accountable Bodies should provide a copy of the GFA to Additional Delivery Area Members, alongside the GFA side letter, and facilitate its completion by each Additional Delivery Area Member.
- 25.** Each Accountable Body will be assigned a Regional Engagement Lead (REL), who will be their main point of contact into DWP. The REL will be in place to provide support throughout both the implementation and delivery phases of Connect to Work, sharing good practice and lessons learnt as well as drawing on expertise to help overcome any challenges or issues.
- 26.** Accountable Bodies may outsource elements of Connect to Work to one or more Delivery Partners as they see fit. Accountable Bodies will want to ensure their commercial strategy can identify and appoint suitable contractors. Whilst local contractual arrangements are the responsibility of Accountable Bodies, DWP notes that payment by results contract arrangements may not work well for the Supported Employment model. Delivery Partners will report to the Accountable Body on delivery of Connect to Work including against the Agreed Objectives and Performance Measures, ensuring that the appropriate number and quality of staff are maintained throughout.
- 27.** It remains the responsibility of the Accountable Body to meet all conditions of the Grant Funding Agreement. Responsibilities of the Accountable Body include:
  - Commissioning or establishing a Connect to Work service using both models of Supported Employment; Individual Placement and Support (IPS) and Supported Employment Quality Framework (SEQF), for eligible and suitable Participants, to 'place, train and maintain' competitive employment within the Delivery Area. The Connect to Work service is expected to adhere to IPS and SEQF fidelity scales and will be expected to engage with the fidelity assurance system;
  - Where the Connect to Work Delivery Area covers more than one upper-tier authority and is not a combined authority which oversees the whole Delivery Area, establishing and agreeing Connect to Work governance arrangements with other upper tier authorities (using existing cross local authority governance where appropriate), including securing sign-off of Connect to Work proposals using their agreed governance process;



- Leading the development of their Delivery Area's Delivery Plan, working with and securing agreement with all upper tier and unitary local authorities within their area and other key local stakeholders;
- Shaping their Delivery Area's Connect to Work offer around local services and priorities, ensuring that the more collaborative, locally led approach supports the national ambition for a more inclusive economy, helping local people to realise their potential and furthering local and national growth;
- Managing the day-to-day operation of the programme and have overall accountability for the funding and how the grant operates within their Delivery Area;
- Ensuring that outcomes for Participants are delivered, such as sustained employment, in line with the programme's Performance Measures;
- Providing DWP with information/documentation to help with evaluation of effectiveness of the programme; and
- Determining, alongside constituent upper tier authorities, whether they deliver Connect to Work in house, via contracts, or a mixture of the two, and whether this is applied across the whole area or in parts.

**28.** Each Accountable Body will appoint a Single Point of Contact (SPOC), who will act as the main contact point for everything related to Connect to Work.

# Eligibility and Suitability

- 29.** Connect to Work will primarily provide support for people who are economically inactive within priority groups and want to work. It will also provide support to some people to retain work who are at risk of losing employment (and if they lose their job would be unlikely to move back into work without support). Individuals participating in Connect to Work do so on a voluntary basis.
- 30.** In line with the programme's strategic intent as set out in the Introduction, Accountable Bodies are responsible for identifying people who will meet i) the eligibility criteria (which is a factual assessment); and ii) the suitability criteria (which requires judgement of the individual's circumstances), for Connect to Work within the criteria (as set out in Annex B). Accountable Bodies will shape provision around priority groups, for those who meet the Eligibility and Suitability Criteria, to reflect local need and consideration of other employment support available within the Delivery Area.
- 31.** Accountable Bodies should target Connect to Work at participants they assess are most likely to benefit from the Supported Employment model of support. Accountable Bodies will determine who will deliver Connect to Work in their area. Potential participants will be assessed by the Accountable Body and must meet both the Eligibility and Suitability Criteria. The Employment Specialist<sup>3</sup> will confirm whether Connect to Work is the most appropriate support to help them find and/or retain work (see Design and Delivery section), such that without the help of the Supported Employment model they would be unlikely to find, maintain or retain work.
- 32.** Eligible participants must be in one of the following groups:
- A disabled person, who has a disability or a long-term health condition, as defined in the Equality Act 2010<sup>4</sup> or the Social Model of Disability<sup>5</sup>; or
  - A specified disadvantaged group, as detailed in Annex B of this Grant Guidance.
- 33.** Further details on the Eligibility and Suitability Criteria for Connect to Work including detailed descriptions of the Participant groups are provided in Annex B.
- 34.** Accountable Bodies cannot extend or amend the Eligibility or Suitability Criteria but do have flexibility to shape provision around priority groups, for those who are eligible and suitable, to reflect local need and provision of other employment support.

**3** The practitioners, employed or engaged by an Accountable Body and/or an Additional Delivery Area Member, who carry out all phases of employment support on Connect to Work, who are responsible for supporting people back into paid employment and supporting those in employment to stay in work.

**4** [www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-guidance/disability-equality-act-2010-guidance-on-matters-to-be-taken-into-account-in-determining-questions-relating-to-the-definition-of-disability-html](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-guidance/disability-equality-act-2010-guidance-on-matters-to-be-taken-into-account-in-determining-questions-relating-to-the-definition-of-disability-html)

**5** [www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-communication/portraying-disability](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-communication/portraying-disability)

- 35.** Prior to referring a participant, Accountable Bodies are responsible for confirming Eligibility and Suitability for each participant, including whether the participant is on another DWP provision (see Fit with Other Provision section below for details).

## Fit with Other Provision

- 36.** Accountable Bodies will have the responsibility to decide the fit of Connect to Work with wider government and local support (as will be reflected in their local work, health and skills plan). They are best placed to understand the landscape of local support through using their geographical knowledge to decide the best fit provision for an individual.
- 37.** The principles below can act as a guide when making decisions on whether other support accessed alongside Connect to Work will help the Participant get the most from the programme, or whether it will duplicate or overlap with what they are likely to receive from Connect to Work, representing poor value for money. Any employment support delivered at the same time as Connect to Work should be complementary, with the aim of improving the likelihood of individuals securing or retaining employment. These principles are:
- Individuals are referred to provision that is the best fit for their needs, even if this is not Connect to Work.
  - Individuals cannot be on Connect to Work at the same time that they are on another intensive employment provision designed to deliver sustained work outcomes, or on a programme that may be detrimental to Participants engagement with Connect to Work.
  - Integration with other relevant services for individual Participants is key and will be encouraged as far as possible, in order to provide holistic support.
  - Individuals who are on DWP programmes should continue with the programme up to the agreed end point. Participants who have previously been on other provision may access Connect to Work if they meet the Eligibility and Suitability Criteria.
- 38.** Any local or national Supported Employment programme such as Individual Placement and Support for Alcohol and Drug Dependence and Individual Placement and Support for Severe Mental Illness should not be accessed by individuals simultaneously with Connect to Work. If these services are available, there should be consideration as to which is more appropriate for the individual.
- 39.** The previous completion of any local or national Supported Employment programme does not prevent individuals from accessing Connect to Work if they meet the Eligibility and Suitability Criteria.
- 40.** See Annex C of Technical Note: General for further guidance on how Connect to Work fits with other provisions.

# Funded Activities

- 41.** To deliver the strategic intent as set out in the Introduction, the scope of Funded Activities is set out below. Details on Allowable Costs are provided in the Allowable Costs section. and Technical Note: General.

## Supported Employment Model

- 42.** As set out in the Introduction, Connect to Work will build on the local high fidelity Supported Employment delivery already in place in a number of areas. The Grant should be used to deliver the evidence-based Supported Employment approach. There is an international and domestic evidence-base demonstrating that Supported Employment is effective in enabling a range of groups to enter jobs that match individual and employer needs and helps that work to become sustained work.
- 43.** Connect to Work will deliver support based on both IPS<sup>6</sup> and SEQF<sup>7</sup> fidelity scales. Connect to Work will utilise and expand on the approach taken with IPSPC and LSE. Whilst Connect to Work will complement the existing IPS SMI and IPS-AD services, these will remain separate IPS services.
- 44.** It will be Accountable Bodies' responsibility for ensuring that support will be available to meet the needs of all Participants including delivery of both Supported Employment models. DWP does not intend for the Accountable Body to establish two separate Supported Employment services. Instead, there will be one Connect to Work service (even if it is formed of multiple teams).
- 45.** The Connect to Work service will adhere to IPS and SEQF fidelity scales and Accountable Bodies will be expected (with their prospective Delivery Partners) to engage with the fidelity assurance system which DWP will establish. See the Fidelity Assurance section for more information on the fidelity assurance system.
- 46.** The Accountable Body will be responsible for determining whether IPS or SEQF is the most suitable model of support to best address a Participant's individual needs and circumstances. They will need to deliver both models to meet the needs of all Participants. Delivery Areas will need to consider their identification routes to generate participants that reflect that mix of need.
- 47.** It is expected that the majority of Participants will require IPS support and the remainder SEQF. DWP has assumed that there will be a 75%/25% split at a national level. Note that this estimate has not been determined using the Grant Formula. The indicative estimates of volume of participants, and unit cost have been determined using the Grant Formula. For further information, see Grant Formula for Connect to Work: Methodology Note.

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**6** [ipsworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/IPS-Fidelity-Scale-Eng1.pdf](https://ipsworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/IPS-Fidelity-Scale-Eng1.pdf)

**7** [www.base-uk.org/SEQF\\_Model\\_Fidelity](http://www.base-uk.org/SEQF_Model_Fidelity)

- 48.** Accountable Bodies will be required to set out in their Delivery Plan the estimated proportion of Participants in their Delivery Area that they plan to receive IPS and SEQF support. This estimated proportion may vary from the 75% /25% split reflecting local needs; however, the Accountable Body will need to consider how they can still achieve the agreed volume of Programme Starts within their Grant funding allocation. The Accountable Body will then monitor and manage the split as agreed with DWP in their Delivery Plan.

## Caseload Sizes

- 49.** The service should be delivered by Employment Specialists adhering to the Supported Employment fidelity models (see the Fidelity Assurance section).
- 50.** The Employment Specialist will actively provide support to a number of Participants at any time, this being their caseload.
- 51.** Caseload averages form a key element of demonstrating fidelity to the IPS and SEQF models. These caseload parameters are in place to ensure Employment Specialists can dedicate the appropriate level of support for each Participant's needs.
- 52.** The Employment Specialist should have an average maximum active caseload of 25. Wherever possible, each Participant should work with the same Employment Specialist for the duration of Connect to Work.
- 53.** Both IPS and SEQF models have a definition of an active Participant set out in their fidelity model.
- 54.** Within the average maximum caseload of 25, some fluctuations and variations will be expected as delivery progresses. Caseload sizes will be discussed with DWP as part of performance measurement and assurance (see the Performance Measurement and Assurance section). The average caseload should be considered across the whole of each Delivery Area.
- 55.** As a guide, an Employment Specialist only providing SEQF support should operate a smaller caseload, with an average maximum caseload size of 20, in comparison to an average maximum caseload size of 25 for IPS.
- 56.** The Supported Employment model is predicated on regular contact between the Participant and Employment Specialist. The frequency of contact required within IPS and SEQF is set out in the fidelity scales. Employment Specialists co-ordinate access to integrated health and wider support (for example – debt, housing, skills) working through key stakeholders. The Employment Specialist should consider how best to integrate Connect to Work with a Participant's support needs as appropriate.

# Design and Delivery: Participant Journey

## Identification and Introduction to Programme

- 57.** Accountable Bodies are responsible for the identification and securing of eligible and suitable people to participate in Connect to Work and finding appropriate routes to reach economically inactive people to offer them support. Accountable Bodies should use their established relationships with many of the key strategic and delivery partners from which potential Connect to Work participants are already receiving support, including health support, to generate potential participants in Connect to Work.
- 58.** Accountable Bodies should ensure that, as part of the delivery of Connect to Work, Participants and Supporting Organisations understand:
- What Connect to Work is.
  - The benefits offered by participation in Connect to Work.
  - What participation in Connect to Work involves.
  - Eligibility and Suitability for Connect to Work.
  - How to register interest in Connect to Work.
  - Where to go for further information.
- 59.** The Accountable Body is responsible for enabling a broad range of Supporting Organisations to generate interest and support potential participants to access Connect to Work. Supporting Organisations are likely to include, for example:
- Health boards and trusts.
  - Jobcentre Plus.
  - Primary care (GPs, practice nurses, allied health professions, other primary care staff members).
  - Community care and other care settings (For example, NHS Counselling, pain clinics, physio and other community care services, psychology, and/or psychotherapy) and social prescribing.
  - Charities (national and local).
  - Local groups including faith groups and groups focussing on specific barrier conditions and disadvantages.
  - Prison work coaches and mentors within prisons.
  - Rehabilitation centres.
  - Domestic abuse refuges.

- 60.** The Accountable Body will wish to consider how best to integrate Connect to Work with key support networks. For example, the Employment Specialist can form part of the clinical team working in primary or community care settings. They can form part of professional or physical health teams in the same way as practice nurses, pharmacists, psychologists, physiotherapists etc attend regular team meetings to assess the employment support needs of patients. They can work in a GP practice/ health centre in person for at least part of their week and actively participate in practice team meetings and liaise with other staff.
- 61.** The Accountable Body has responsibility for stimulating interest in the programme for potential participants so that it can meet its expected starts profile. The agreed number of starts on Connect to Work will be split between 'Out-of-Work' Participants and 'In-Work' Retention Support Participants. Given that the support required to meet Participant needs is likely to be more intensive in the 'Out-of-Work' cases, these cases are expected to cost more. The split between 'Out-of-Work' and 'In-Work' Retention Support is expected to be 85%/15%, which is reflected in the average unit cost. This ratio will be considered and agreed based on delivery experience as part of the Annual Review, however a modest deviation is permitted.
- 62.** To achieve their agreed volumes including the number of Programme Starts the Accountable Body should engage actively with Supporting Organisations in its local network, discussing potential numbers of cases, agreeing expectations, feeding back on quality, and looking for continuous improvement.
- 63.** Some Participants may be sexual, violent or certain other dangerous offenders who are being managed in the community. The Accountable Body is responsible for making sure arrangements are in place to enable the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) notifications to keep staff and other Participants safe.<sup>8</sup>

## Expressions of Interest

- 64.** Individuals wishing to be considered for participation in Connect to Work, will need to complete an 'Expression of Interest' in order to make an application. Accountable Bodies will be provided with standardised content to use (for more information see Technical Note: General).
- 65.** The 'Expression of Interest' content will provide the Accountable Body with sufficient information to undertake a preliminary eligibility check (the participant pre-screen as detailed in the process map, at Annex C), filter out ineligible participants, and to manage prospective participants through the Participant journey (including contacting the potential participant).
- 66.** Having standardised and consistent data collected as part of the 'Expressions of Interest' process is important for both DWP and Accountable Bodies who will both have uses for this data. How the data is collected is for the Accountable Body to decide, and may reflect existing local arrangements.

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<sup>8</sup> For more information on MAPPA see [www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-public-protection-arrangements-mappa-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-public-protection-arrangements-mappa-guidance)

- 67.** If the potential participant is deemed as likely to be eligible, an initial meeting should be arranged.

## Engagement – Initial Meeting with Participant

- 68.** The initial meeting is the point at which a tailored assessment takes place to ensure the participant receives the support that best meets their needs.
- 69.** The Accountable Body should confirm participant eligibility, check suitability and collect relevant information about the participant. This should include establishing participant involvement with other provision and previous enrolment on Connect to Work. Those who do not meet the agreed Eligibility and Suitability Criteria, or do not wish to participate, should be signposted to other support and included in local triage processes (where available).
- 70.** During the initial meeting, all participants should demonstrate that they understand and have agreed to engage with the Connect to Work offer.
- 71.** The meeting should be used to establish the most appropriate model of Supported Employment for each participant, either IPS or SEQF. Where identification of specific support is unclear, IPS should be the default service.
- 72.** Participants are expected to remain on the same model until the provision ends. Participants are able to move between the IPS and SEQF models, however if new information (e.g., during vocational profiling) or a change of circumstance indicates the alternative model would best suit the Participant's needs. Accountable Bodies should determine whether the Participant will move forward as part of the 'Out-of-Work' or 'In-Work Retention Support' journey.
- 73.** At the initial meeting, once the potential participant has confirmed that they agree to participate and wishes to continue with Connect to Work, the first vocational profile meeting should be arranged.
- 74.** Additionally, the Participant's details should be shared with the central DWP team for registering on DWP systems (see Technical Note: General).

## Vocational Profiling

- 75.** This is a detailed and unique "discover and planning process" that enables the Participant to identify their passions, strengths, needs, and employment goals, and work out a plan for getting there.
- 76.** Employment Specialists, working with Participants will co-produce a vocational profiling assessment to build a rich and rounded profile of the Participant. This will inform a Vocational Action Plan which details the next steps required, career planning and support strategy (for more information see Technical Note: Supported Employment Delivery Model).



## Employer Engagement

- 77.** Accountable Bodies should proactively engage with employers to build a diverse range of employment opportunities that will be accessible for Connect to Work Participants.
- 78.** Employers should be supported by Accountable Bodies to recruit and retain Connect to Work Participants. This support should last the duration of the employer's involvement with Connect to Work, including providing access to workplace adjustments where appropriate (for more information on employer engagement see Technical Note: Supported Employment Delivery Model).
- 79.** Financial incentives for employers to employ Participants is not part of the Supported Employment model and must not be used to encourage an employer to engage with Connect to Work, to employ a Connect to Work Participant, or for any other reason.

## Job Matching

- 80.** The Employment Specialist should work with 'Out-of-Work' Participants on activities they need to complete to find secure employment. Realistic goals regarding the employment objective should be maintained, whilst focusing on the wishes of the Participant. If Participants are in the 'In-Work' Retention Support journey, flexible options should be considered to sustain work, such as identifying new needs or carving out new roles.
- 81.** Using the Vocational Action Plan, Employment Specialists and Participants should work together to identify vacancies that are a good match between Participant, employer and job, including through vacancies that are not advertised, but that the employer wants to fill.
- 82.** The Employment Specialist should also work to understand the needs of the employer to help identify Connect to Work Participants who could be a good match to their needs, vacancies, and organisation culture.
- 83.** This is designed to ensure the Participant gets a job role that meets their aspirations, whilst the employer has a clear understanding of the needs of the employee, and the employer is offered potential candidates which are likely to be a good fit for their organisation needs.
- 84.** All Participants should be provided with assistance from Employment Specialists, when considering job vacancies to understand the impacts, including independent benefits advice for claimants. Where applicable, they should obtain comprehensive, individualised work incentives, planning and assistance to access employment benefits, when making decisions about changes in work hours and pay. As part of this, the Accountable Body should adopt a strong disclaimer on better off calculations, ensuring the Participant is always present when they are completed and has read and understood the disclaimer (for more information on Job Matching see Technical Note: Supported Employment Delivery Model).

## On and Off the Job Support

- 85.** When in employment, the support given to Participants should be individually tailored and targeted, and will depend on their requirements, capabilities, and employment status. Support given, both in work and outside of work, should empower the person to understand and learn what support they need, when they need it, and where and how to find it.
- 86.** Support should also be tailored to the Participant's employer depending on their requirements and capability. The Employment Specialists should look to support employers, helping them to build inclusive workplace cultures, working as an advocate for the Participant if any issues arise.
- 87.** The Participant, Employment Specialist, and employer should agree on support and action the arrangements needed to put this support in place.
- 88.** The Employment Specialist should also offer help with career development i.e., assistance with education, more hours, more responsibility, a more desirable job, or more preferred job duties.
- 89.** Where appropriate, support from Connect to Work should be gradually substituted by support from colleagues. This builds inclusive companies that are internally equipped to employ people who require additional support.
- 90.** Participants may benefit from additional support that is not specific to employment such as solving practical problems or maintaining contact with wider support services. Employment Specialists should provide that support or signpost Participants appropriately, where they do not hold the requisite expertise (for more information about on and off job support, see Technical Note: Supported Employment Delivery Model).

## In-Work' Retention Support

- 91.** Connect to Work includes assistance for those at substantial risk of losing their current employment, and those who require support to retain existing employment, or to move to new employment.
- 92.** For those accessing the 'In-Work' Retention Support element of Connect to Work, the appropriate IPS or SEQF model of Supported Employment should still be followed. There may be some differences in the support offered to the Participant and their employer, for example, within the 'Job Matching' stage.
- 93.** Participants may wish to increase their working hours and seek progression opportunities and development as appropriate. Where this is not possible with a Participant's current employer, an alternative job could be appropriate.

- 94.** If it becomes apparent that a job is not suitable, the Participant may leave their current job, and the Employment Specialist will provide appropriate support for transition into another role, where possible. If a job change is required, the Employment Specialist may be able to help the employer source a suitable candidate for the role that the Connect to Work Participant has left.

## Self-Employment Support

- 95.** The Employment Specialist should recognise the different variations of self-employment which includes but is not limited to, entrepreneurship, freelance, contracting and working within the gig economy. Self-employment support should be tailored to reflect the needs of the Participant.
- 96.** For the Self-employed 'In-Work' Retention Support cohort, support could include assistance in online business development, financial management, accessing mentors, networking events, PR and linking in with business support provision. This may also include support around time management, managing health conditions, applying for Access to Work support, accessing support to recruit staff, and creating marketing materials.
- 97.** Self-employment support for those 'Out-of-Work' could include support with, market research, business planning, digital skills (including online marketing and using online platforms) accessing grants, personal and business budgeting. Enterprise and viability assessments could also form part of the Participant's vocational profile.
- 98.** Support will not necessarily always come from the Employment Specialist and link up between providers and platforms or people with specialist knowledge of self-employment should be encouraged. This includes facilitating entrepreneur peer support and/or networking.
- 99.** For more information on self-employment see Technical Note: Self-employment.

## End of Provision for Participants

- 100.** Support for Participants will end when:
- They have achieved the agreed employment goals and no longer require programme support (requires an early exit – see Technical Note: PRaP).
  - They have been on the programme for 12 months (365 calendar days) for ‘Out-of-Work’ Participants, or 4 months (122 calendar days) for Participants that required ‘In-Work’ Retention Support, and their participation on the programme has not been extended.
  - There has been a change of circumstances (see the Change of Circumstances section below) and/or the Participant has left the programme, unless by exception an extension is agreed by the Accountable Body (requires an early exit – see Technical Note: PRaP).
- 101.** At the end of provision, where possible, the Employment Specialist should conduct a discussion with each Participant and jointly complete, and then agree, a final version of the Vocational Action Plan to guide further activity by the Participant | (see Technical Note: General for further details).
- 102.** In addition to this, in cases where Participants did not transition into employment, the Accountable Body should signpost the Participant to any suitable local provision using knowledge of the local provision landscape.

## Disengaged Participants

- 103.** Where Participants fail to attend meetings or follow the Employment Specialists advice, it is the responsibility of Accountable Bodies to make sure that all appropriate steps are taken to re-engage Participants. If this is not successful, Participants should be informed that they will no longer be a Participant of the programme.
- 104.** Accountable Bodies have discretion to determine what constitutes appropriate contact with disengaged Participants. In the instance where Participants are re-engaged, they have the opportunity to continue with Connect to Work for the duration of time that is left on the programme. Accountable Bodies are able to offer one of the flexibility options (see the Flexibilities section) to Participants who disengage and re-engage with Connect to Work if they have not been removed from the programme. Where Participants have disengaged and been removed from the programme they can be re-referred, but Accountable Bodies will need to ensure that they remain eligible and suitable for Connect to Work.

## Change in Circumstance

- 105.** There should be a clear distinction in treatment between people reporting changes in their circumstance and those that constitute early disengaged leavers. Participants who, due to changes in circumstance (e.g., location, health condition, caring responsibilities), were delayed in reporting their changes, are not classed as disengaged.

## Change of Location

- 106.** If a Participant moves outside England and Wales, the provision will end (see Technical Note: General for further details).
- 107.** When a Participant relocates outside their current Connect to Work Delivery Area but remains within England and Wales, the Participant should have the opportunity to leave or continue with support with the same Accountable Body. The Accountable Body has the responsibility to ensure that its ability and capability to deliver Connect to Work does not impact the level of support outside their Delivery Area being offered to the Participant, such as the local knowledge of support and employers, and to decide whether this is an appropriate option. Where the Accountable Body does not have the ability or capability, the Participant should be re-referred in the new Delivery Area.

## Change in Employment Status ('Transition')

- 108.** Where 'In-Work' Retention Support Participants fall out of employment, and need more intensive support to find work, they can continue receiving support for the time remaining on the programme. The support should continue to follow the five stages of Supported Employment, and the Vocational Action Plan should be updated to reflect the change in employment status. If the Participant still requires support either to return or sustain employment the Accountable Body can follow the flexibilities outlined in the Flexibilities section, or they may re-refer Participants, beginning with the 'Expression of Interest' process, so long as the current duration of support has ended. See Technical Note: PRaP for further detail.

## Flexibilities

- 109.** Reflecting the nature of the target group, a Participant's allotted time on Connect to Work can be flexed by the Accountable Body on a case-by-case basis where it would be of benefit to the Participant and funding allows. Funding for these flexible options is subject to, and included in, the Maximum Sum set out in the Grant Funding Agreement.

- 110.** Flexible options (see Technical Note: General for further details), which are not mutually exclusive, include:
- pausing,
  - extending, and
  - re-referral.

## Participant Complaints

- 111.** Any complaints and conflict management in relation to the Connect to Work service must be handled by the Accountable Body in line with their established complaints management policies and procedures.

## Implementation

- 112.** Subject to paragraph 139 of this Grant Guidance regarding the s31 grant, during the Implementation Period, it is expected that Accountable Bodies will deliver the activities outlined in their Delivery Plans. Funding of up to 5% of the Maximum Sum is available to cover these costs. For example:
- Procurement and appointment of Delivery Partners and training partners, if applicable.
  - Relevant recruitment and training carried out.
  - Development of supporting processes and procedures ready for service.
  - Marketing of Connect to Work.
  - Regular engagement by Accountable Bodies through the provision of the Implementation Support.
- 113.** Recruiting sufficient numbers of high-quality staff will be critical to the success of this programme. Accountable Bodies are given the opportunity in their Delivery Plan to detail their plans to recruit the appropriate resource to deliver the programme, including specified roles such as Employment Specialists, alongside plans to ensure all managers and frontline staff have a consistent understanding of the Supported Employment models.
- 114.** DWP recognises that Accountable Bodies may be at different stages of readiness to deliver Connect to Work. Therefore, to support success and build capability, DWP will make available dedicated Implementation Support. See Technical Note: General, for more information on Implementation Support.
- 115.** Engaging with the Implementation Support offer is encouraged, and local expertise and contexts will be recognised through flexibility in the support offered.

# Fidelity Assurance

- 116.** In line the programme’s strategic intent as set out in the Introduction, the most effective Supported Employment programmes demonstrate fidelity to the five-stage Supported Employment model. Connect to Work will therefore be underpinned by a Fidelity Assessment system to ensure the development and consistent delivery of high-quality services. DWP will be responsible for procuring the Fidelity Assessment system and Accountable Bodies should actively engage with this process.
- 117.** The Fidelity Assessment system will involve both self-assessment and external assessment. The external assessment will be delivered by a Third Party and will comprise of scored assessments of services, alongside a full report and the co-production of an action plan with the Accountable Body/Delivery Partner(s) for improvement. Assessments will be conducted in-person at delivery sites through the collection of evidence and interviews.
- 118.** All Fidelity Assessments will be conducted against the appropriate scale for the support provided – IPS-25<sup>9</sup> or the shortened SEQF<sup>10</sup>. The scales will have their language adapted, in collaboration with Supported Employment experts, to make them relevant to the Connect to Work context without diverging from the existing evidence base.
- 119.** All Accountable Bodies and/or their Delivery Partner(s) will receive an initial Fidelity Assessment from the external Fidelity Assessment provider after month 12 of the Delivery Period. DWP and the Third Party Fidelity Assessment provider will work with Accountable Bodies to determine the schedule for Fidelity Assessments
- 120.** In preparation for the initial external assessment, all Accountable Bodies and/or their Delivery Partner(s) will first be required to conduct an internal self-assessment. All Accountable Bodies and/or their Delivery Partner(s) will also be required to complete self-assessments in between receiving an external assessment. Materials will be provided by the Third Party Fidelity Assessor.
- 121.** Engagement with the Fidelity Assessment system is a Grant condition. Engagement with self or external assessments, and with the co-production of action plans for service improvement, are conditions and part of the Performance and Engagement Framework (see Technical Note: General). Accountable Bodies and/or their Delivery Partner(s) will need to fully engage with the assessment process.

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**9** [ipsworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/IPS-Fidelity-Scale-Eng1.pdf](https://ipsworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/IPS-Fidelity-Scale-Eng1.pdf)

**10** [www.base-uk.org/SEQF\\_Model\\_Fidelity](http://www.base-uk.org/SEQF_Model_Fidelity)

- 122.** Scores, reports, and co-produced action plans will be shared with DWP by the Fidelity Assurance provider for information and to help DWP provide additional support where needed. Resulting scores from a Fidelity Assessment do not form part of the Performance and Engagement Framework, therefore Performance Measures will not be attached to Fidelity Assessment scores.
- 123.** More detailed information on the Fidelity Assessment process and requirements will be shared by DWP during the Implementation Period.



# Marketing and Communications Strategy

- 124.** Raising awareness of Connect to Work amongst eligible and suitable participants in local areas can help to build trust and encourage participation. This will be most effective if awareness is built before areas go live with Connect to Work.
- 125.** To raise awareness, Accountable Bodies should promote Connect to Work, ensuring it is recognised across their locality. This should include:
- Ensuring easy access to information on the programme through social, online and print media.
  - Making information accessible in formats suitable for people with sensory impairment and/or in other languages.
  - Using both existing and new networks to Connect to Work across a range of systems.
- 126.** DWP will provide Connect to Work Branding Guidance which will contain information about use of the Connect to Work name and any national branding requirements, as well as materials to support Accountable Bodies to take account of these requirements in any publicity, marketing, or communications materials.
- 127.** Materials produced by Accountable Bodies must not adversely affect the reputation of the programme, or the Government. For example, marketing materials should not include communications or messages which could lead to adverse media attention or could be misunderstood or misinterpreted.
- 128.** Marketing and communications products do not need to be submitted to DWP for quality assurance, however Accountable Bodies can submit products to be checked if they would find that helpful.

# Grant Funding

- 129.** To support implementation, the Connect to Work Grant payment will be made monthly in arrears for planning and implementation activities during the implementation period, and quarterly in arrears for the Delivery Period. This will be based on:
- The financial profile of the Accountable Body formatted and profiled as set out in the Allowable Cost Register Cost Categories, as detailed in the Grant Cost Register.
  - The validation of costs claimed with any adjustment to sums paid against the value claimed being made against subsequent Monthly or Quarterly (as applicable) reimbursement cost claims.
- 130.** Thereafter, the Grant will be paid to the respective Accountable Body Quarterly in arrears based on:
- The financial profile of the Accountable Body, formatted and profiled as set out in the Allowable Cost Register Cost Categories, as detailed in the Grant Cost Register.
  - The validation of costs claimed with any adjustment to sums paid against the value claimed being made against subsequent Quarterly reimbursement cost claims.
  - To note claims may be subject to adjustment through formal reviews, see the Cost Validation section for full details.
- 131.** Subject to paragraph 129 above, the Grant will be paid in combined Quarterly payment instalments. During the cost validation exercise DWP will work collaboratively with Accountable Bodies to test the process at the outset and implement the necessary requirements. DWP will provide the relevant support before and throughout the process and will make any adjustments in a timely manner. The cost validation exercise will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions set out in the Cost Validation section to ensure only Allowable Costs are claimed, with each cost element being claimed supported through financial and other records. It will include sampling across costs and amounts claimed and other sources of assurance. Payment of the Grant may be suspended or adjusted if an Accountable Body includes Unallowable Costs, costs claimed cannot be validated. Further details are included within the Technical Note: Performance Measurement and Assurance, and Technical Note: Cost Validation.

## Funding Period

- 132.** The Funding Period is intended to run from the commencement date of the Grant Funding Agreement and ends on 31 March 2030. Funding is not guaranteed and is subject to agreement at spending reviews and fiscal events. Accountable Bodies will recognise that the adjustment of or cancellation of funding may be the outcome of such reviews and events and DWP may terminate the Grant Funding Agreement if funding is withdrawn (as detailed in clause 4.5 of the Grant Funding Agreement). In addition to the Implementation Period, and the Delivery Period, the Delivery Period covers two further phases of activity by the Accountable Body:
- a phase where Participants are recruited and supported (referred to herein as the recruitment phase), and
  - a phase where recruitment has ceased, but existing Participants continue to be supported (referred to herein as the support only phase).
- 133.** During the recruitment phase, Accountable Bodies will be seeking to identify potential participants, establishing Eligibility and Suitability, and supporting Participants either in their job search and into employment, or to remain in employment.
- 134.** The Employment Specialist will provide a maximum of 12 months (365 calendar days) support to an ‘Out-of-Work’ Participant, and 4 months (122 calendar days) support to an ‘In-Work’ Retention Support Participant, subject to the flexibilities described in this Grant Guidance and Technical Note: General.
- 135.** Subject to paragraph 132, the Accountable Bodies should take account of the funding end date and programme support durations when making decisions on Participants joining the programme in the final year to ensure they are fully funded. In making calculations about managing the support only period, Accountable Bodies should bear in mind that the Employment Specialist will provide up to 12 months (365 calendar days) support to an ‘Out-of-Work’ Participant, and 4 months (122 calendar days) support to an ‘In-Work’ Retention Support Participant, with the flexibilities described in the Flexibilities section of this Grant Guidance and Technical Note: General.
- 136.** DWP will have detailed and collaborative conversations with Accountable Bodies about arrangements for ending Connect to Work at an appropriate time before the support only period is reached.
- 137.** At the transition point from the recruitment phase to support only phase, if the Accountable Body feels there are reasonable grounds for admitting further Programme Starts, this can be discussed and where appropriate may be considered by DWP on a case-by-case basis.
- 138.** During the support only phase of the Grant, the Accountable Body should consider how to take the necessary steps to close the programme and as appropriate, transition Participants to alternative support.

## Funding in the Implementation Period

- 139.** Each Accountable Body will be able to apply for set up costs of up to 5% of the total Grant value. The payment will be made in arrears and be based on an invoice of actual costs. Any funding provided to Accountable Bodies under a separate section 31 grant award, for the purpose of funding implementation activities within the Implementation Period, shall be deducted from the Maximum Sum available in relation to Connect to Work.
- 140.** Costs relating to the Implementation Period are to be profiled in the Grant Cost Register. This has two elements: first, planning relating to the production of the Delivery Plan and any cost associated with submission; and second, implementation related costs. These two elements can comprise any Allowable Cost required for planning and implementation activities. For reimbursement of Allowable Costs incurred, as a guide a period of around 6 months preceding the start of the Delivery Period. Accountable Bodies are encouraged to discuss with DWP where their implementation arrangement may differ from this.

## Funding in the Delivery Period

- 141.** The basis of payment during the Delivery Period (following the Implementation Period) is the reimbursement of Allowable Costs incurred. Payment will be made up to a maximum of the cost recorded in the approved Grant Cost Register for the Quarter being claimed.
- 142.** Reimbursement of Allowable Costs incurred will be made on a Quarterly basis in arrears based on the Grant Cost Register cost profiles. A cost validation exercise will be undertaken to ensure:
- The total claimed is not more than the total sum in the approved Grant Cost Register for the Quarter claimed.
  - Only Allowable Costs have been claimed.
  - The claimed sums reconcile to the approved Grant Cost Register Cost Categories and sums for each month of the Quarter.
  - Finance, payroll and other records fully support each entry and sum claimed.
  - Any payment adjustment (+/-) following cost validation will be made through adjustment to the subsequent Quarterly payment. The final grant payment will include any adjustment from the previous Quarter and any final adjustment for the final Quarter.
- 143.** The cost validation process is introduced in paragraph 150, and the Technical Note: General. More detail will be provided in the Technical Note: Payment and Cost Validation.

## Underspends and Performance Against Profile Volumes

- 144.** Delivery Plans need to profile potential Programme Starts for the duration of the Funding Period broken down into Financial Years and monthly within Financial Years. Payment will be made up to the maximum value claimed for the relevant period as recorded in the approved Grant Cost Register profile for the same period.
- 145.** Expenditure on Connect to Work is annualised and there is no automatic facility to transfer underspends from one financial year to the next. Those Accountable Bodies who think they can demonstrate a clear plan for expenditure moving from year to year are advised to raise this with DWP.

## Allowable Costs

- 146.** A full list of Allowable Costs is recorded in the "Allowable Costs Register" tab of the Grant Cost Register and clause 5.2 of the Grant Funding Agreement. Reasonable expenses and support for participating in Connect to Work should be provided by the Accountable Body/Delivery Partner to Participants – to ensure that Participants are not worse off for attending provision. These are to be included as part of the monthly expenditure profile across the Funding Period.
- 147.** Further details on the Allowable Costs are set out in the Technical Note: General.
- 148.** To be considered Allowable Costs, all costs must be clearly evidenced as being solely attributed to the delivery of Connect to Work. For example, Employment Specialist costs must be in addition to staff delivering other existing Supported Employment provisions.
- 149.** Duplicate Funding is prohibited, therefore any intended Third Party funding for activities that are the same or like the Funded Activities of the Grant will need to be declared as Match Funding and will be subject to prior written consent of DWP. See clauses 4.10 and 27.1.8 of the Grant Funding Agreement for further details on Duplicate Funding.

## Cost Validation

- 150.** The Connect to Work Grant payments will be based on the reimbursement of Allowable Costs incurred and claimed by the Accountable Body. Cost validation is an essential requirement to ensure payment is only made against Allowable Costs outlined by Accountable Bodies within their agreed Grant Cost Register and monthly profiles. Accountable Bodies will need to provide assurances and meet requirements set by DWP. See Technical Note: General, and Technical Note: Payments and Cost Validation.

## Unallowable Costs

- 151.** Unallowable Costs are any costs that are not Allowable Costs, see clause 5.3 to 5.4 the Grant Funding Agreement for further details on prohibited costs.

# Management Information (MI) and Reporting Requirements

- 152.** Accountable Bodies are to provide the specified MI in accordance with the template MI report that DWP shall provide. DWP requires the MI for the following purposes:
- tracking information to ensure the objectives of Connect to Work are met through delivery;
  - as a source of evidence for the monitoring and evaluation of the programme; and
  - to enable wider evaluation activities such as impact analysis and sampling for research.
- 153.** DWP recognises it would be best, wherever possible, if the collection of MI (including Personal Data where required) could be automated. Accountable Bodies will be expected to work with DWP on developing automated systems. DWP will also keep the potential for further automation of MI under review and update Accountable Bodies accordingly. This may mean that some elements of MI that start as manual collection move, in time, to be automated.
- 154.** Further details on which MI requirements are currently digital or to be reported manually along with their frequency will be provided in the future Technical Note: MI. Please note that the specific requirements listed in this future Technical Note may be updated by DWP from time to time. There is also the opportunity to capture relevant notes or information that give additional context to the reported information. It should contain updates on progress achieved over the previous period.
- 155.** For Allowable Cost reimbursement, Accountable Bodies are required to capture all Connect to Work related expenditure over the Quarter as a cumulative total from the start of the programme against each expenditure type stated. See the Grant Funding section for payment model and costs.
- 156.** The template MI report and its frequency of return may change before and during the operation of the programme. Accountable Bodies will be notified of any changes where necessary.
- 157.** DWP expects to monitor earnings information via Real Time Earnings (RTE) for employed Participants. However, Accountable Bodies and/or Delivery Partners will need to obtain and retain evidence to provide assurance relating to hours worked, duration of employment and job roles. For MAPPA/SCR Participants, information to support outcomes (to be held clerically) may include information and documentation provided by the employer and wage slips. The MAPPA/SCR claims process is detailed in Technical Note: Job Outcomes.
- 158.** The data supplied by His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) does not contain earnings from self-employment. Therefore, Self-employed Job Outcomes will be based on evidence of trading during the period of self-employment. Accountable Bodies or Delivery Partners (on behalf of Accountable Bodies) will track and record Self-employed Job Outcomes themselves and submit through the PRaP system (see Technical Note: PRaP).

# Performance Measurement and Assurance

## Introduction

- 159.** This section provides an overview of the delivery expectations relating to quality and performance, and the support that may be available from DWP.
- 160.** DWP is committed to very high standards of its Grant funded provision and encourages continuous improvement.

## Performance Expectations

- 161.** Performance will be measured against the Accountable Body's Profile Template and the Performance Measures as outlined below. Accountable Bodies shall deliver the Grant in accordance with the Agreed Objectives, and the performance of each Accountable Body shall be measured against the Performance Measures.

## Performance Measures

- 162.** DWP expect Accountable Bodies to achieve the Performance Measures set out below. DWP will measure each Accountable Body's performance against these Performance Measures in accordance with a "Performance and Engagement Framework". This framework consists of a four staged approach to ensure the Grant delivers a good quality service in accordance with the Delivery Plan and Grant Cost Register, Grant Funding Agreement and Managing Public Money principles. The Grant Cost Register uses a performance curve created by analysts to reflect and account for the differing time periods across the Delivery Period. This performance curve will be used to help track Accountable Bodies performance against the Performance Measures on a monthly and quarterly basis, using the Performance and Engagement Framework. DWP shall review and readjust the performance curve if appropriate. When commissioning or contracting for delivery, it is important for Accountable Bodies to allow for performance to build up against these Performance Measures over the first 6 months of the Delivery Period whilst the tracking of Accountable Bodies' performance and Engagement Framework are not fully introduced.
- 163.** DWP acknowledges that the future health of the economy and circumstances of Participants are major factors in contributing to the level of performance. The most important success factor for Connect to Work, as it is for any programme, is to what extent it delivers an employment impact beyond what would have happened without the support – this is estimated through the evaluation as described in the Evaluation and Local Learning section below; the highest impact will be achieved by delivering the most effective support that is focused on the most appropriate groups. Therefore, the Performance Measures are set to help manage delivery in a timely way that is likely to achieve most impact. With that context the agreed Performance Measures may be adjusted by DWP at the Annual Review (see the 'Annual Grant Review' section for more information).

- 164.** Alongside regular engagement with Accountable Bodies to understand what is going well and what is proving challenging, DWP will review performance through analysis of MI returns, and any other automatic MI received by DWP, against the following Performance Measures on a monthly basis and will co-ordinate appropriate performance support.

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## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

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### Job Start

- At least 50% of total Programme Starts to achieve first earnings ('Out-of-Work' Participants).
- To be achieved up to 456 calendar days from the Participant's programme start date, or if extended up to 638 calendar days from the start date.

Note that first earnings are **any** allowable earnings recorded by HMRC PAYE data.

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### Outcomes

See Technical Note:  
Job Outcomes

- At least 40% 'Out-of-Work' Participants of total Programme Starts to achieve a Lower Threshold Job Outcome. Earnings threshold calculation (9hrs x 13 weeks x NLW) and Self-employed equivalent measured over 13 cumulative weeks.
  - To be achieved up to 456 calendar days from the Participant's start date, or if extended up to 638 calendar days from the start date.
- 
- At least 29% 'Out-of-Work' Participants of total Programme Starts to achieve a Higher Threshold Job Outcome. Earnings threshold calculation (18 hrs x 26 weeks x NLW) and Self-employed equivalent measured over 26 cumulative weeks.
  - To be achieved up to 456 calendar days from the Participant's start date, or if extended up to 638 calendar days from the start date.
- 
- At least 80% of 'In-Work' Retention Support Participants to achieve a Higher Threshold Job Outcome (higher only – Employed and Self-employed Job Outcomes). Earnings threshold calculation (18 hrs x 26 weeks x NLW) and Self-employed equivalent measured over 26 cumulative weeks.
  - To be achieved up to 365 calendar days from the Participant's start date.
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# Evaluation and Local Learning

- 165.** To provide accountability for the expenditure committed on Connect to Work (proportionate to its scale as a major programme), DWP aims to establish evidence on the impact, value-for-money and delivery of Connect to Work. There is also a need to provide learning which will support DWP and Accountable Bodies to improve the delivery of Connect to Work and future interventions.
- 166.** DWP therefore plans to conduct a national evaluation of Connect to Work and may commission a Third Party evaluation organisation to undertake this or elements of it. Accountable Bodies and Delivery Partners are required to actively participate in the national evaluation and to support the engagement of all types of research participants which may include potential programme participants (from receipt of an 'Expression of Interest' onwards), programme Participants, staff at Accountable Bodies and Delivery Partners, employers, wider stakeholders (such as staff at Supporting Organisations or support services involved in integrated support) and other research participant groups identified by DWP, with the national evaluation. As part of supporting the engagement of research participants, Accountable Bodies and Delivery Partners will be required to take actions to enable surveys and qualitative research (for example, providing sample records, promoting opportunities to participate in research and providing access for site visits).
- 167.** Accountable Bodies will be required to securely provide personal data to enable DWP and any Third Party evaluation organisation appointed by DWP to conduct research and analysis as part of the national evaluation, including by complying with MI requirements (see the Management Information and Reporting Requirements section) and by taking additional actions where requested to collect and store sample details (such as identifiers and contact details) for all types of research participants (as described in the Evaluation and Local Learning section) and share these sample details with DWP and/or a DWP appointed Third Party evaluation organisation. Accountable Bodies must ensure that the data recorded and provided is of a consistently high standard of accuracy, completeness and timeliness.
- 168.** The national evaluation will focus on estimating impact on sustained employment, earnings, health and wellbeing outcomes for Participants, identifying causal factors that have resulted in impacts, undertaking a cost-benefit analysis and assessing the process of delivery. In order to manage research participant burden, as DWP will be conducting surveys with programme participants as part of the national evaluation, Accountable Bodies should discuss with DWP the timing and implications prior to commencing survey fieldwork with this group as part of any local research or evaluation activities that they may conduct.

- 169.** Accountable Bodies may receive further guidance on avoiding duplication of effort with the national evaluation and minimising the burden on research participants as part of any local research or evaluation activities that Accountable Bodies may conduct (see Technical Note: General, for further information regarding the requirement to gather local learning, which may include conducting a proportionate local process evaluation).
- 170.** DWP will provide advice and guidance to support Accountable Bodies and Delivery Partners with their commitments to actively participate in the national evaluation, including on providing data for evaluation purposes.

# Fraud

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- 171.** Accountable Bodies should ensure that Delivery Partners are genuine, appropriately qualified, and capable of delivering the required Funded Activities, and that the use of the Delivery Partner by the Accountable Body represents value for money. This may include the Accountable Body carrying out due diligence, pre-procurement checks, ongoing performance management of all Delivery Partners and the Accountable Body making payments in arrears to all Delivery Partners.
- 172.** Accountable Bodies should ensure contractual arrangements with Delivery Partners support appropriate auditing and assurance, with information and access rights included within all arrangements (as per clause 8.2. of the Grant Funding Agreement).
- 173.** If the Accountable Body knows or suspects, or should know or suspect, that fraudulent activity of any kind has taken place in connection with Connect to Work or the Grant, the Accountable Body must notify DWP immediately providing full details of the suspected fraudulent activity, including but not limited to, the nature, the scope, and the total monetary value of the activity to be reported.

# VAT

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- 174.** The amount specified in the Grant Funding Letter and the Grant Funding Agreement is the total amount that may be payable by DWP, and no additional amount shall be payable to account for any VAT that each Accountable Body may have to pay to HMRC (or such equivalent body).
- 175.** If the Accountable Body incurs VAT from Third Party suppliers, they must claim this back themselves. VAT costs should not be passed on to DWP and VAT costs do not constitute Allowable Costs.
- 176.** If VAT is incurred and cannot be reclaimed, Accountable Bodies would be expected to absorb this cost. The amount specified in the Grant Funding Letter and the Grant Funding Agreement is the total amount payable by the DWP, and no additional amount shall be payable to account for any VAT that each Accountable Body may have to pay to HMRC (or such equivalent body).

# Data Handling and Security

- 177.** Each Accountable Body must ensure that in carrying out the Funded Activities, it complies with all of its obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 in relation to processing personal and special category data. In the event of a Freedom of Information request being submitted, the Accountable Body will be responsible for all aspects that relate to delivery of the programme. However, DWP will be responsible for requests in relation to strategic intent and policy.
- 178.** Accountable Bodies must acknowledge and act in accordance with their duty of care to protect vulnerable adults enrolled on the programme during all activities related to it. This includes ensuring that all Accountable Body staff, Delivery Partners and employers are appropriately trained and that sufficient background checks have been carried out to safeguard all who engage with the Connect to Work service (irrespective of the stage of interaction) in line with the Accountable Body's existing safeguarding policy for vulnerable adults.
- 179.** Accountable Bodies should ensure that information is protected together with IT systems, equipment and processes which support its use. Accountable Bodies must demonstrate an appropriate level of security, for example ISO/IEC27001 standard.
- 180.** Accountable Bodies should be aware that DWP will be operating to its pre-existing data handling and document retention policies.

# Annual Grant Review

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- 181.** DWP will carry out an Annual Review of the Connect to Work Grant. DWP will consider the delivery of the Funded Activities against the Delivery Plan and Profile Template.
- 182.** Each Annual Review may result in DWP deciding that (for example, this is a non-exclusive list):
- The Funded Activities and the Grant Funding Agreement should continue in line with existing plans.
  - There shall be an increase or decrease in the Connect to Work Grant for the 12 month period following the relevant annual review.
  - The Agreed Objectives shall be re-profiled and agreed.
  - The Accountable Body shall provide DWP with a draft Remedial Action Plan (as defined in the Grant Funding Agreement) setting out the steps the Accountable Body will take to improve delivery of the Funded Activities.
  - DWP shall recover any Unspent Monies (as defined in the Grant Funding Agreement).
  - The Grant shall be terminated in accordance with the Grant Funding Agreement.
  - There has been an Event of Default (as defined in the Grant Funding Agreement).
  - Any other action DWP deems should be taken in the circumstances.

# Timeline

- 183.** DWP expects a phased approach towards implementation, recognising multiple factors could impact when Programme Starts may commence in a Delivery Area, such as:
- experience in delivering Supported Employment,
  - availability of practical commercial approach to set in place Delivery Partners,
  - experience in producing Delivery Plans, and
  - competing local priorities.
- 184.** DWP will work to agree phasing of implementation within set periods, using information in the Delivery Plans.
- 185.** Dates for submission of the Delivery Plan will be discussed individually with Accountable Bodies, following the issue of this guidance. Further information is set out in the Delivery Plan Guidance.
- 186.** Accountable Bodies can obtain Information and support regarding the Delivery Plan process by sending questions to DWP via the following inbox throughout the Delivery Plan process [enquiries.supportedemploymentprogramme@dp.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries.supportedemploymentprogramme@dp.gov.uk).
- 187.** DWP will aim to assess each Accountable Body's Delivery Plan timeously, but decisions may not be immediate, and Delivery Plans may need to be updated in an iterative process with DWP in light of discussions about the content. The Delivery Plan shall be appraised in accordance with the Delivery Plan Appraisal Process set out in the Delivery Plan Guidance document to ensure it meets the required standard for agreement. This is not a competition between areas to access Connect to Work funding.
- 188.** Once Accountable Bodies receive confirmation that their Delivery Plan has been agreed by DWP, a Grant Funding Agreement will be drawn up on substantially the same terms as those provided during the launch of Connect to Work. The Implementation Period will reflect the amount of activity required in each Delivery Area. DWP will make every effort to notify Accountable Bodies as early as possible in the event that the timeline needs to be adjusted.
- 189.** The Connect to Work timeline will involve the below steps (with additional detail set out in the Delivery Plan Guidance):
- Delivery Plan preparation period.
  - Delivery Plan closing date.
  - Grant Funding Agreement issued.
  - Funding Period confirmed.
  - Ongoing Implementation Period.

# Annexes

## Annex A – Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

TERM	DESCRIPTION
<b>Access to Work</b>	Access to Work is a personalised discretionary grant which supports the recruitment and retention of disabled people in sustainable, paid employment, as further detailed in Annex C (Fit with National DWP Funded Programmes) of Technical Note: General.
<b>Accountable Bod(y)(ies)</b>	A lead authority within the defined Delivery Area, who will take overall responsibility as the Grant recipient for leading the implementation of Connect to Work across the Delivery Area.
<b>Additional Delivery Area Member(s)</b>	Means, where applicable, a member of the Delivery Area other than the Accountable Body.
<b>Agreed Objectives</b>	Means the Accountable Body's Profile Template as agreed by DWP and as set out in Annex 9 (Grant Cost Register) of the Grant Funding Agreement, and the Performance Measures set out at Annex 6 (Performance Measures) of the Grant Funding Agreement.
<b>Allowable Costs</b>	Means the expenditure incurred by the Accountable Body or an Additional Delivery Area Member during the Funding Period for the purposes of delivering the Funded Activities which either falls within the categories listed in the 'Allowable Costs Register' tab of the Grant Cost Register, or is listed in clause 5.2 of the Grant Funding Agreement, and complies in all respects with the eligibility rules set out in clause 5 of the Grant Funding Agreement.
<b>Allowable Cost Register Cost Categories</b>	Has the meaning as set out in the Technical Note: General.
<b>Annual Review</b>	The yearly review of the Grant to each Accountable Body carried out by DWP in accordance with clause 6 of the Grant Funding Agreement.
<b>Delivery Area(s)</b>	Means, where applicable, the geography within which the Accountable Body will deliver Connect to Work. The top tier authorities in each of the 43 Delivery Areas in England are set out in Annex D (Proposed Geographies) of this Grant Guidance.
<b>Delivery Partner</b>	A Third Party partner instructed by the Accountable Body to carry out any part of Connect to Work on behalf of the Accountable Body in the Delivery Area.
<b>Delivery Period</b>	Means in the lifecycle of Connect to Work, the period of time when the Accountable Body is in delivery of the provision, following the Implementation Period
<b>Delivery Plan</b>	The plan for the Delivery Area covering the full Funding Period setting out how the Accountable Body will deliver Connect to Work, in the relevant Delivery Area.



<b>Delivery Plan Appraisal Process</b>	Means DWP's Delivery Plan appraisal methodology set out in the "Delivery Plan Guidance" document (see Appendix A of the Grant Guidance), used to determine who should be grant recipients.
<b>Delivery Plan Guidance</b>	The supported documentation at Appendix A of the Grant Guidance, to support the development of Delivery Plans.
<b>Disability / Disabled Person</b>	Has the meaning set out in Annex B (Eligibility and Suitability) of this Grant Guidance.
<b>Duplicate Funding</b>	Has the meaning given in the Grant Funding Agreement
<b>Economically Inactive / Economic Inactivity</b>	People not in work and either not looking for work or not available to work.
<b>Eligibility and Suitability Criteria</b>	The criteria which must be met for a potential Participant to be eligible to receive support on Connect to Work, as further detailed in Annex B (Eligibility and Suitability) of this Grant Guidance.
<b>Employed</b>	Means where there is a contract of employment between an individual and an employer, the individual is paid through Pay as You Earn (PAYE) with tax and Class 1 National Insurance contributions automatically deducted, and the individual has access to employee benefits.
<b>Employed Job Outcome</b>	Means a Lower Threshold Employed Job Outcome or a Higher Threshold Employed Job Outcome.
<b>Employment Specialist</b>	The practitioners, employed or engaged by an Accountable Body and/or an Additional Delivery Area Member, who carry out all phases of employment support on Connect to Work, who are responsible for supporting people back into paid employment and supporting those in employment to stay in work.
<b>Expression of Interest</b>	The application which potential participants will need to complete to enable the Accountable Body or Delivery Partner to undertake a preliminary eligibility check and to manage the case through the Participant journey.
<b>Fidelity</b>	Adherence to the specific Supported Employment model.
<b>Fidelity Assessment</b>	A review of current practice to measure how closely the Accountable Body or Delivery Partner is adhering to the models of Supported Employment (whether IPS or SEQF) and to drive continuous improvement.
<b>Financial Year</b>	Means from 1 April to 31 March.
<b>Funded Activities</b>	Means the activities as set out in Annex 4 (Funded Activities) of the Grant Funding Agreement and further described in the Funded activities section of the Guidance, and the Delivery Plan (Annex 8 (Accountable Body's Delivery Plan) of the Grant Funding Agreement).
<b>Funding Period</b>	The period in which DWP intends to make funding available to Accountable Bodies. The period for each Accountable Body will start on the Commencement Date (as defined in the Grant Funding Agreement) and end 31 March 2030. As delivery commencement is staged the exact Funding Period for each Delivery Area will be set out in the Grant Funding Agreement.

<b>Grant</b>	The sums DWP will pay to the Accountable Body in accordance with the conditions and provisions set out in the Grant Funding Agreement.
<b>Grant Cost Register</b>	Means the register in which costs are recorded for the Funding Period against Allowable Costs, aligned to Financial Years, and recorded in monthly planned expenditure profiles. A Grant Cost Register Template to use for this exercise has been issued as part of the Grant Guidance and Delivery Plan documentation.
<b>Grant Formula</b>	Estimates of shares of participants and shares of funding for each Accountable Body are calculated using a specific formula for Connect to Work, based on set criteria. The estimates shared in the Grant Guidance are for Programme Starts in a financial year at peak and unit cost over the lifetime of the programme. These estimates are indicative only, and volumes of Participants and amount of funding allocated to each Accountable Body are determined by the Accountable Body's Delivery Plan. For the avoidance of doubt, Connect to Work is not a formula grant.
<b>Grant Funding Agreement</b>	The grant funding agreement to be entered into by DWP and the Accountable Body for each Delivery Area.
<b>Grant Funding Letter</b>	Means the letter DWP issued to the Accountable Body, a copy of which will be set out in an annex of the Grant Funding Agreement.
<b>Grant Guidance</b>	Means the Connect to Work Grant Guidance as amended from time to time unilaterally by DWP by written notice.
<b>'Hidden Unemployment'</b>	People who are not actively looking for work but who are willing and able to work, and therefore are not counted as part of the official unemployment statistics.
<b>Higher Threshold Employed Job Outcome</b>	Means when a Participant receives gross earnings (excluding any Non-Qualifying Earnings) in at least the amount described in Technical Note: Job Outcomes and DWP identifies such earnings using HMRC PAYE data.
<b>Higher Threshold Job Outcome</b>	Means a Higher Threshold Employed Job Outcome or a Higher Threshold Self-employed Job Outcome as relevant to the circumstances.
<b>Higher Threshold Self-Employed Job Outcome</b>	Means when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Participant is Self-employed for the period described in Technical Note: Job Outcome; and</li> <li>b) the Accountable Body can evidence that period of Self-employment.</li> <li>c) Any period of Self-employment can only be counted once regardless of whether the Participant has one or multiple Self-employed occupations during that period.</li> </ul>

<b>Implementation Period</b>	The period assigned to activity to prepare for delivery of Connect to Work, for example, Delivery Plan preparation, procurement, recruitment, and marketing. For reimbursement of Allowable Costs incurred, as a guide a period of around 6 months preceding the start of the Delivery Period. Accountable Bodies are encouraged to discuss with DWP where their implementation arrangement may differ from this.
<b>Implementation Support</b>	During the Implementation Period, DWP will provide support to the Accountable Bodies in the preparation for 'go-live' as detailed in Technical Note: General.
<b>Integrated Care Systems</b>	<p>When local partners – the NHS, councils, voluntary sector and others – work together, they can create better services based on local need.</p> <p>Integrated care systems, (ICSs) have been set up to make this happen. Their aim is to improve health and care services – with a focus on prevention, better outcomes and reducing health inequalities.</p> <p>The 42 ICSs in England are local partnerships that bring health and care organisations together to develop shared plans and joined-up services. They are formed by NHS organisations and upper-tier local councils in that area and also include the voluntary sector, social care providers and other partners with a role in improving local health and wellbeing.</p>
<b>Individual Placement and Support</b>	A model of Supported Employment that helps people accessing health services find work to aid their recovery.
<b>'In-Work' Retention Support</b>	Support to help retain existing jobs or find new employment opportunities.
<b>'In-Work' Retention Support Participant</b>	Employed/Self-employed Participants at risk of falling out of work into inactivity without the support of Connect to Work.
<b>Job Outcomes</b>	Means both or either of Employed Job Outcomes and Self-employed Job Outcomes as relevant to the circumstances.
<b>Job Start</b>	<p>Has the meaning below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Out-of-Work' Participants – start of first recorded earnings in HMRC PAYE data notified to DWP for the Participant. Earnings must be notified and paid during the Qualifying Period.</li> <li>• 'In-Work' Retention Support – the start date on Connect to Work.</li> <li>• Self-employment – the date when a Participant completes one day's Self-employment within any seven-day period.</li> </ul>
<b>Lower Threshold Employed Job Outcome</b>	Means when a Participant receives gross earnings (excluding any Non-Qualifying Earnings) in at least the amount described in Technical Note: Job Outcomes and DWP identifies such earnings using HMRC PAYE Data.
<b>Lower Threshold Job Outcome</b>	Means a Lower Threshold Employed Job Outcome or a Lower Threshold Self-employed Job Outcome as relevant to the circumstances.

<b>Lower Threshold Self-employed Job Outcome</b>	<p>Means when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant is Self-employed for the period described in Technical Note: Job Outcomes; and</li> <li>• the Accountable Body can evidence that period of Self-employment.</li> </ul> <p>Any period of Self-employment can only be counted once regardless of whether the Participant has one or multiple Self-employed occupations during that period.</p>
<b>Management Information</b>	Specified data and information on performance or Participant types, or potential participants, submitted by the Accountable Body (known as the Management Information returns).
<b>Match Funding</b>	Means any contribution to the Funded Activities from a Third Party to the Accountable Body or an Additional Delivery Area Member to meet the balance of the Allowable Costs not supported by the Grant.
<b>Maximum Sum</b>	Means the maximum amount of the Grant set out in the Grant Funding Letter, DWP will provide to the Accountable Body for the Funded Activities, subject to clause 27 of the Grant Funding Agreement.
<b>Month</b>	Means a calendar month in the Funding Period. Monthly shall be interpreted accordingly.
<b>Non-Qualifying Earnings</b>	<p>Non-Qualifying Earnings means:</p> <p>any and all earnings paid, paid to a Participant prior to the relevant Programme Start;</p> <p>or</p> <p>any income other than Qualifying Earnings which has been included in the HMRC PAYE Data and which has been paid to a Participant.</p> <p>See Technical Note: Non-Qualifying Earnings for more detail.</p>
<b>'Out-of-Work' Participant</b>	A Participant who is not employed or Self-employed at the time they start Connect to Work.
<b>'Out-of-Work' Support Participant(s)</b>	Support to help find a suitable job and sustain work. A person who meets the Eligibility and Suitability Criteria for Connect to Work, agrees to participate in the programme and a Programme Start is recorded.
<b>Performance Measures</b>	Means the agreed performance measures as set out in the Performance Measures section of this Grant Guidance.
<b>Performance and Engagement Framework</b>	Means the approach to performance measurement as detailed in the Technical Note: General.
<b>Profile Template</b>	Means the 'Out-of-Work' and 'In-Work' Participants per month as recorded in the Participants tab (which is allocated from the Forecast monthly Participant numbers recorded in the Volumes tab) of the Grant Cost Register across the Funding Period (as set out at Annex 9 (Accountable Body's Grant Cost Register) of the Grant Funding Agreement).

<b>Programme Starts</b>	The point at which the Participant will have started on Connect to Work, being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the point of completion of the first vocational profile meeting (i.e., the one scheduled at the initial meeting);</li> <li>b) there being a signed initial Vocational Action Plan, agreed following the completion of the initial vocational profile meeting; and</li> <li>c) the start has been notified to DWP.</li> </ul>
<b>Provider Referrals and Payments (PRaP)</b>	An Oracle based system developed for DWP which enables DWP to track the customer journey of Participants and their Job Outcomes.
<b>Quarter</b>	Means each consecutive period of 3 calendar months during the Funding Period. Quarterly shall be interpreted accordingly.
<b>Regional Engagement Lead</b>	A DWP member of staff responsible for dedicated support to each Accountable Body throughout both implementation and delivery phases of Connect to Work.
<b>Self-employed</b>	Means where someone runs their business for themselves and takes responsibility for its success or failure. They carry out a trade, profession or vocation and normally report their income and pay tax and Class 2 National Insurance contributions through self-assessment, or Construction Industry Scheme (CIS). Self-employed workers are not paid through PAYE, and they do not have the rights and responsibilities of an employee <sup>11</sup> , and <b>Self-employment</b> shall be construed accordingly.
<b>Self-employed Job Outcome</b>	Means a Lower Threshold Self-Employed Job Outcome or a Higher Threshold Self-Employed Job Outcome.
<b>Special Customer Records</b>	Means certain customer records of a sensitive nature which are subject to restrictions and special handling arrangements to ensure confidentiality. For example, this can include individuals who are, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• transsexual</li> <li>• transgender</li> <li>• prominent national figures; or</li> <li>• people at risk of violence</li> </ul>
<b>Supported Employment</b>	The ‘place train and maintain’ employment approach using the five-stage model to help people move into and retain work as described in Technical Note: Supported Employment Delivery Model.
<b>Supported Employment Quality Framework</b>	SEQF links the five basic principles of Supported Employment (client engagement, vocational profiling, job finding, engagement, on and off job support) by improving services for vulnerable job seekers, employees, and their employers.

<sup>11</sup> [www.gov.uk/employment-status/employee](http://www.gov.uk/employment-status/employee)

- Employment status: Employee - GOV.UK
- Employment status (worker, employee, self-employed, director or contractor) affects employment rights and employer responsibilities in the workplace

<b>Supporting Organisations</b>	A broad range of supporting organisations (as detailed under Identification and Introduction to the programme) will play a crucial role in generating interest and supporting potential participants.
<b>Technical Note</b>	Documentation that supports Accountable Bodies and supplements the Grant Guidance by providing lower level detail on practicalities. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical Note: General</li> <li>• Technical Note: Supported Employment Delivery Model</li> <li>• Technical Note: Job Outcomes</li> </ul> Additional Technical Notes will be provided in line with the schedule detailed in Technical Note: General.
<b>Third Party</b>	Any person or organisation other than the Accountable Body or DWP, and any government department other than DWP.
<b>Unallowable Costs</b>	Means expenditure incurred by the Accountable Body or an Additional Delivery Area Member which is not Allowable Costs and as set out in clauses 5.3 and 5.4 of the Grant Funding Agreement.
<b>Vocational Action Plan</b>	A live document containing a Participant’s vocational profile and job/educational experiences.

# Abbreviations

ABBREVIATION	DESCRIPTION
AF	Armed Forces
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GFA	Grant Funding Agreement
GP	General Practitioner
HM's	His Majesty's
HMRC	His Majesty's Revenue and Customs
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance
ICS	Integrated Care Systems
IPS	Individual Placement and Support
IPS-AD	Individual Placement and Support for Alcohol and Drug Dependence
IPS SMI	Individual Placement and Support for people with Severe Mental Illness
IPSPC	Individual Placement and Support in Primary Care
ISO/IEC 27001	International Organisation for Standardization/ International Electrotechnical Commission 27001
IT	Information Technology
LAs	Local Authorities
LSE	Local Supported Employment
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MI	Management Information
NHS	National Health Service
NLW	National Living Wage
OHID	Office for Health Improvement and Disparities'
PRaP	Provider Referrals and Payments
REL	Regional Engagement Lead
RTI	Real Time Information
SCR	Special Customer Records
SE	Supported Employment
SEQF	Supported Employment Quality Framework
SPOC	Single Point of Contact
VAT	Value Added Tax

# Annexes

## Annex B – Eligibility and Suitability

### Definition of Participant Groups

- 190.** Accountable Bodies are responsible for confirming the i) eligibility criteria (which is a factual assessment); and ii) the suitability criteria (which requires judgement of the individual's circumstances), for all Participants. In confirming eligibility, the Accountable Body will be required to confirm with DWP that the participant is already being supported by a relevant DWP programme for example, Restart.
- 191.** Eligible participants must be a disabled person, or belong to one of the specified disadvantaged groups:
- Have a disability as defined in section 6 of the Equality Act 2010 or the Social Model of Disability.
  - Meet the definition of one of the specified disadvantaged groups with additional multiple and complex barriers that would benefit from support;
- 192.** The specified groups are as follows:
- An offender (someone who is serving a community service) or ex-offender (someone who has completed a custodial or community sentence).
  - A carer.
  - An ex-carer.
  - A homeless person.
  - A former member of His Majesty's (HM) Armed Forces (AF), a member of HM AF reserves, or a partner of current or former Armed Forces personnel.
  - A person for whom a drug or alcohol dependency, including a history of dependency, presents a significant barrier to employment.
  - Care experienced young person or a care leaver
  - A refugee, a resettled Afghan.
  - A person on the Ukrainian scheme.
  - A victim/survivor of domestic abuse.
  - Young people identified as being involved or at risk of being involved in serious violence.
  - A victim of modern slavery.
- 193.** Definitions for each of the groups are set out at the end of this Annex.



## Eligibility Criteria

- 194.** People in these participant groups (as defined in paragraph 191-192) must also meet the following additional criteria to be eligible for Connect to Work:
- They must not currently be doing any paid work and would be available to start a suitable job (applies only to participants who are not working), or are at risk of losing work (retention participants only).
  - Should have been employed continually for at least 3 months before starting Connect to Work, (retention participants only)\*.
  - Are of Working Age, aged 16 or more in Wales.
  - Have the right to work in the United Kingdom<sup>12</sup>.
  - Have the right to live in the United Kingdom and are resident in England or Wales.
  - Do not belong to a group which has no entitlement to public funds<sup>13</sup>.
  - Is not on a DWP employment programme (see Technical Note: General, Annex C for more detail).
- 195.** For individuals on zero-hour contracts who are looking to access the ‘In-Work’ Retention Support strand of Connect to Work, the 3 month paid work criteria does not need to have taken place for a continuous period of 3 months. Any spell of employment within 3 months before accessing support will be acceptable. The potential participant will need to be in paid employment at the point of accessing Connect to Work. If they drop out of work whilst on Connect to Work, the same process will follow as for when this occurs for those in work.
- 196.** For those considered for the offer of in work retention support, we would expect that they had been in work for at least 3 months so that the employer has had time to have completed their usual induction of new staff and had a chance, for example, to put in place appropriate adjustments. It is, however, acceptable to offer support to individuals who have been employed for shorter periods where the Accountable Body judges that would be appropriate.

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<sup>12</sup> [Prove your right to work to an employer: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/proofs/proof-your-right-to-work-to-an-employer)

<sup>13</sup> [Public funds - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/proofs/public-funds)

## Suitability Criteria

- 197.** If all the above eligibility requirements are met, the prospective participant must also meet the suitability criteria. To be suitable for Connect to Work, eligible people must meet at least one of the employment situation criteria and at least one of the ‘would benefit from Connect to Work’ situation suitability criteria, set out below.
- 198.** The primary focus for the programme will be individuals who are not required to seek work as a condition of benefit receipt (who have often been overlooked for employment support). We’d expect appropriate participants to have never worked or to have not worked for around 6 months or more. It will also be available for those who are required to seek work but whose needs are best met by Supported Employment. It will also be available for those same groups where someone is in precarious employment and needs additional support to sustain employment.
- 199.** The suitability criteria are:

Individuals must meet at least one of the following employment situations.

- **Economically inactive or unemployed:** Person has not worked for around 6 months due to their disability, long term health condition or disadvantages and feel they need comprehensive tailored employment support to help them to identify the right roles for their needs and to engage in effective job search towards work.
- **Employed but risk of dropping out of work:** Person is working/Self-employed for at least 3 months and is struggling to sustain employment due to their disability, long term health condition or disadvantages. However, it is acceptable to offer support to individuals who have been employed for shorter periods where the Accountable Body judges that would be appropriate.
- **Maintaining work:** Person has never been in employment or a track record of struggling to retain jobs/sustain employment due to their disability, long term health condition or disadvantages.

- 200.** Individuals must also meet at least one of the following, ‘would benefit from Connect to Work’ situations:

- **Comprehensive tailored help:** Person is unlikely to be able to move into/retain paid work without very frequent, comprehensive and tailored support above and beyond standard provision (e.g. IAG, CV & application support) or other national provision including Restart.
- **Adaptability:** Person has previously, or is expected to, struggle with learning new skills or adapting to new environments due to their disability, long term health condition or disadvantages.
- **Integration:** Person needs employment support that is integrated with support for their other needs e.g. health services, probation, social care.

- **Job role and workplace:** Person will need employer flexibility to tailor the role and/or workplace to support with their disadvantages or disability or health condition.
- **Sustained work:** Person requires/will require significant support to retain work over and above standard reasonable adjustments.

- 201.** References to disability or disadvantages in the suitability criteria set out above should be read as referring to the relevant Participant groups set out below.
- 202.** If the individual meets at least **one** of the criteria in each of the situation categories set out above and the individual is identified as motivated to work, they understand the Connect to Work offer and are willing to engage with Connect to Work, then they are eligible and suitable for Connect to Work. Connect to Work is a voluntary programme so individuals must be motivated to work and agree to volunteer for the programme.

See further below for a map detailing the above process.

## Definitions and Descriptions of the Participant Groups

### Disabled People

- 203.** Definition of the disability group is:
- A disabled person as defined under section 6 of the Equality Act 2010; or
  - A person considers themselves disabled under the Social Model of Disability.
- 204.** Under the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if (in summary):
- they have a **physical or mental impairment**; and
  - the impairment has a **‘substantial’** and **‘long-term’** adverse effect on
    - their ability to carry out normal day-to day activities’. ‘substantial’ is defined as more than minor or trivial, e.g.it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed.
    - **an impairment has ‘long-term’ effect if:**
      - (a)** it has lasted for at least 12 months,
      - b)** it is likely to last for at least 12 months, or
      - c)** it is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected.

- 205.** The Social Model of Disability defines disability as an individuals' experience of attitudinal and practical barriers to employment which stem from an impairment. In summary this is:
- **Impairment:** An injury, illness, or congenital condition that causes or is likely to cause a long-term effect on physical appearance and / or limitation of function within the individual that differs from the commonplace.
  - **Disability:** The loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in society on an equal level with others due to social and environmental barriers.

## Detailed definition of Social Model of Disability

- 206.** The Social Model of Disability makes an important distinction between 'impairment' and 'disability'.
- 207.** The Social Model of Disability recognises that people with impairments are disabled by barriers that commonly exist in society. These barriers include negative attitudes, and physical and organisational barriers, which can prevent disabled people's inclusion and participation in all walks of life.
- 208.** According to the Social Model of Disability, impairment is what has historically been referred to as a "disability" or a health condition. For many (but not all) disabled people, their impairment is a significant part of their life and may form part of their personal identity. For some people, their impairment may require considerable management, and they may need ongoing medical support. Experience of impairment is personal. Everyone's experience is different. That experience is always valid and always important.
- 209.** Disability by contrast is the inequality, disadvantage, disempowerment or discrimination which may affect people with impairments as a result of barriers to access and inclusion. For example, a staircase is a barrier to a wheelchair user; providing a lift removes that barrier. Disability is therefore something which affects people with impairments but is different from impairment. Disability is something which disables someone with an impairment. Barriers can be removed. If you remove the barrier then you remove the disability.

## Disadvantaged Groups

- 210.** The definition and descriptions of Connect to Work disadvantaged groups are set out in the table below. Early access to intensive employment support helps prevent people in these groups becoming inactive. There is a distinction within disadvantaged groups between those underrepresented in the labour market and those that will have complex barriers. For example, veterans as a whole are not underrepresented in the labour market but there are some ex-armed forces veterans who will have complex barriers and will benefit from Connect to Work.
- 211.** Accountable Bodies will not have discretion to extend eligibility beyond these groups but will be able to prioritise specific groups in Delivery Areas, on the basis of need and fit with the programme.

DISADVANTAGED GROUP	DESCRIPTION
Ex-offender	A person who has completed a custodial or community sentence or who is serving a community sentence.
A carer or ex-carer	A person who provides (or has until recently provided) full or part-time unpaid care by looking after a family member or friend, who is infirm, disabled or seriously ill. They do not have to live in the same household. These people are called carers, but many would probably say they were just "looking after someone".
A homeless person	<p>A homeless person, including a person with homelessness experience or currently at risk of homelessness, is someone who has encountered a period of having no accommodation available for their occupation, in the United Kingdom or elsewhere. It does not just refer to people who have experienced rooflessness/slept rough, but also those who have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lived in insecure housing (threatened insecure tenancies, eviction, domestic violence, or staying with family and friends known as ‘sofa surfing’)</li> <li>● Experienced houselessness (with a place to sleep but temporary, in institutions or a shelter)</li> <li>● Lived in inadequate housing (in caravans on illegal campsites, in unfit housing in extreme overcrowding)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Veterans</b></p> <p>Includes the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A former member of HM Armed Forces</li> <li>● A partner of current or former Armed Forces personnel</li> <li>● A member of the HM AF reserves</li> </ul>	<p>[While veterans and other members of the Armed Forces Community are included in this list and some will benefit from support, not all are disadvantaged.]</p> <p>A person who is a former member of His Majesty’s (HM) Armed Forces (AF), their partners and armed force reservists (including volunteer reservists and regular reservists as set out below). To be classed as a veteran a person needs only to have served in HM AF for at least 1 day.</p> <p>A person who is a volunteer reservist. Voluntary reservists comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● the Royal Naval Reserve,</li> <li>● the Royal Marine Reserve,</li> <li>● the Territorial Army, and</li> <li>● the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, and</li> </ul> <p>A person who is a regular reservist. Regular reservists comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● the Royal Fleet Reserve,</li> <li>● the Army Reserve, and</li> <li>● the Royal Air Force Reserve.</li> </ul> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, the partners of armed force reservists are not eligible.</p>

DISADVANTAGED GROUP	DESCRIPTION
A person for whom a drug or alcohol dependency, including a history of drug or alcohol dependency, is a significant barrier to employment	<p>A person for whom a drug or alcohol dependency presents a significant barrier to employment. This can include drug or alcohol dependency in the past.</p> <p>This could include individuals at the start or end of their recovery journey. Individuals may be experiencing a lack of confidence to take forward work, require support to maintain recovery or need to address wider barriers that stem from substance misuse such as housing or financial issues.</p>
A care experienced young person or a care leaver	<p>A person who is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Care leaver – a care leaver is a person under 25 who has been in local authority (LA) care (e.g. residential or foster care) for a period of at least 13 weeks or more, or periods amounting in total to 13 weeks or more, since they were age 14, and ending after age 16.</li> <li>● Care experienced young people - A person with care experience has spent time within the local authority care system living in foster care or residential care.</li> </ul>
A refugee	<p>Refugee – a person who has been granted refugee status in the UK under paragraph 334 of the Immigration Rules made under section 3(2) of the Immigration Act 1971.<sup>14</sup></p>
A person on the Ukrainian scheme	<p>A person who is living in the UK on one of the following Ukraine Scheme visas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● the Homes for Ukraine Scheme (including Welsh and Scottish super sponsorship schemes),</li> <li>● the Ukraine Family Scheme, or,</li> <li>● the Ukraine Extension Scheme.</li> </ul> <p>The <b>Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) scheme</b> which will extend existing permissions for Ukrainians who are living in the UK under a Ukraine scheme visa for a further 18 months starting from March 2025</p>
An Afghan resettler	<p>Afghan resettler – A person who arrived in the UK legally via a safe and legal protection route set up in response to the situation in Afghanistan, including the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme, the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy and the Afghanistan Locally Employed Staff Ex-Gratia Scheme.</p>

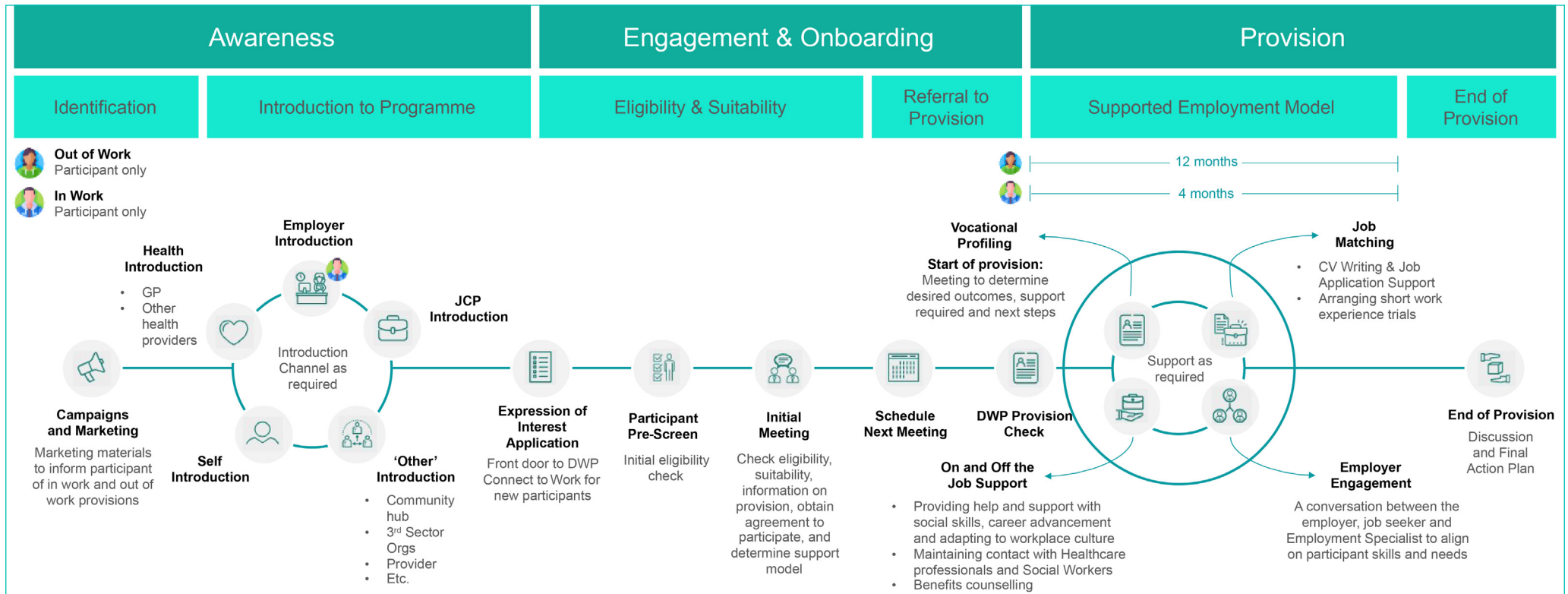
<sup>14</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1971/77/section/3#:~:text=\(2\)The%20Secretary%20of%20State,United%20Kingdom%20of%20persons%20required](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1971/77/section/3#:~:text=(2)The%20Secretary%20of%20State,United%20Kingdom%20of%20persons%20required)

DISADVANTAGED GROUP	DESCRIPTION
<p>A victim/survivor of domestic abuse</p>	<p>A person who meets the Domestic Abuse Act 2021<sup>15</sup> definition of domestic abuse (summarised below).</p> <p>Definition of domestic abuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Behaviour of a person (perpetrator of the abuse) towards another person (victim of the abuse) is domestic abuse if: both are aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive.</li> </ul> <p>Behaviour is abusive if it consists of any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● physical or sexual abuse;</li> <li>● violent or threatening behaviour;</li> <li>● controlling or coercive behaviour;</li> <li>● economic abuse</li> <li>● psychological, emotional or other abuse; and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.</li> </ul> <p>A victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child who –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● sees or hears, or experiences the effect of, the abuse, and</li> <li>● is related to perpetrator of the abuse and the victim of the abuse.</li> </ul> <p>Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, sexuality, or background.</p>
<p>Young people identified as being involved, or at risk of being involved, in serious violence.</p>	<p>A young person (aged between 16-24) is classed as being involved, or at risk of being involved in serious violence if they are involved with specific types of crime such as knife crime, gun crime and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as county lines drug dealing.</p>
<p>A victim of modern slavery</p>	<p>A person who has been confirmed as a victim of modern slavery by having a positive ‘Conclusive Grounds’ decision issued by the relevant Competent Authority at the Home Office. The Home Office issues the decision letter to the adult concerned or to their appointed representative where applicable.</p> <p>Modern slavery is the illegal exploitation of people for personal or commercial gain. It covers a wide range of abuse and exploitation including human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour.</p>

# Annexes

## Annex C – Process Map

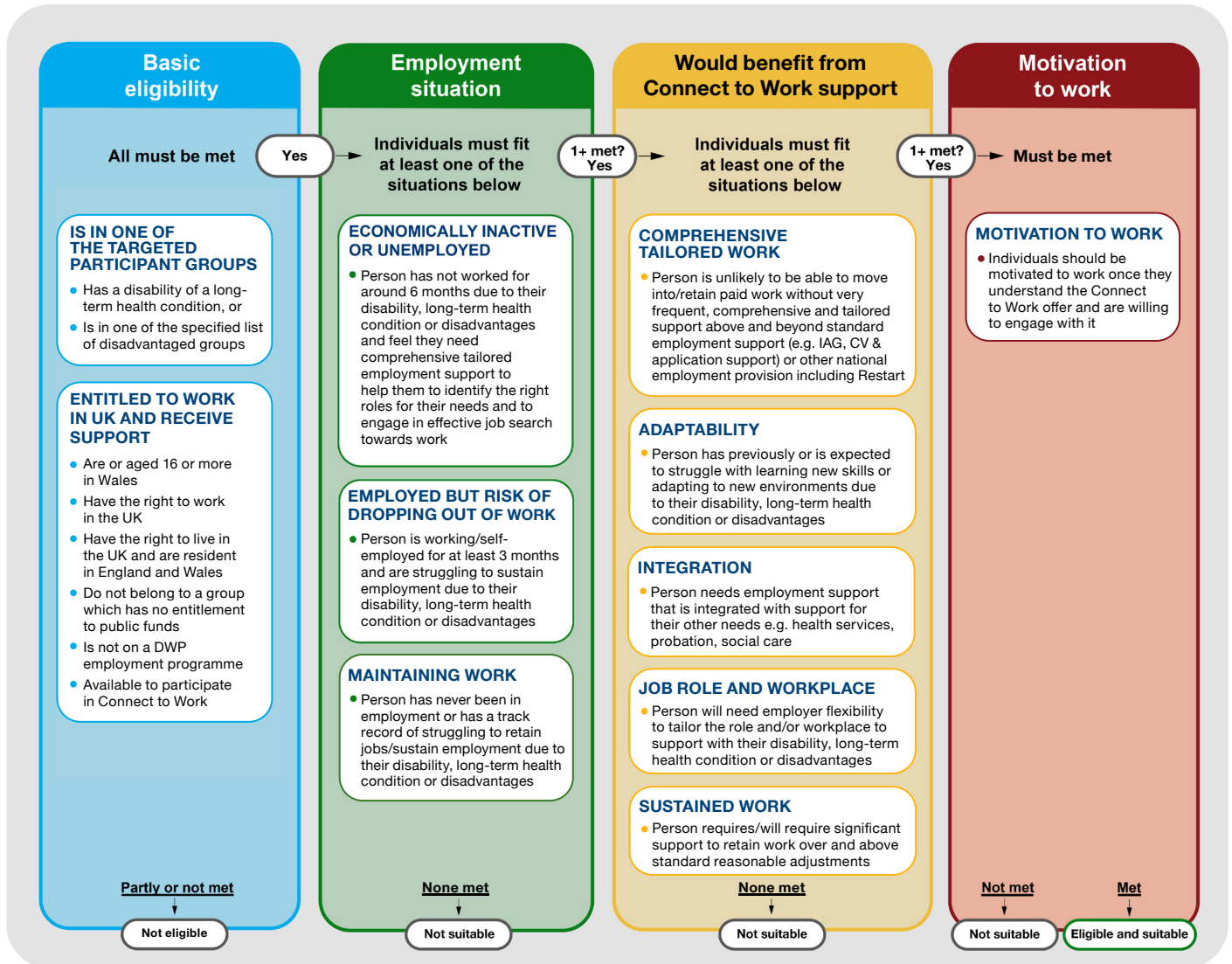
See image below for an overview of the Connect to Work process.



\*Please use the zoom functionality to enlarge this image, if viewing this electronically.



The following describes the Eligibility and Suitability Criteria for Connect to Work that must be met by potential participants before they can access the programme.



\*Please use the zoom functionality to enlarge this image, if viewing electronically.

# Annexes

## Annex D – Proposed Geographies

The following table lists each of the Connect to Work Delivery Areas, their Accountable Body and their constituent upper-tier and unitary councils.

<b>ARDAL GYFLENWI</b>	<b>AELODAU ARDAL GYFLAWNI</b>	<b>CORFF SY'N ATEBOL</b>
Wales – Mid Wales	Ceredigion County Council	TBC
	Powys County Council	
Wales – North Wales	Conwy County Borough Council	Denbighshire County Council
	Denbighshire County Council	
	Flintshire County Council	
	Gwynedd Council	
	Anglesey County Council	
	Wrexham County Borough Council	
Wales – South East Wales	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	TBC
	Bridgend County Borough Council	
	Caerphilly County Borough Council	
	Cardiff Council	
	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	
	Monmouthshire County Council	
	Newport City Council	
	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	
	Torfaen County Borough Council	
	Vale of Glamorgan Council	
Wales – South West Wales	Carmarthenshire County Council	Swansea Council
	Neath Port Talbot Council	
	Pembrokeshire County Council	
	Swansea Council	

# Annexes

## Annex E – Indicative Volume and Unit Cost Estimates by Delivery Area

- 212.** When Connect to Work is fully rolled out at the peak of delivery each Delivery Area will be delivering an appropriate share of peak annual Programme Starts nationally. The table below provides indicative estimates for Programme Starts for each the Connect to Work Delivery Areas in a financial year when peak Programme Starts are delivered. The table also provides indicative estimates of unit costs for the lifetime of Connect to Work. These indicative estimates were determined using the Grant Formula.
- 213.** The indicative Programme Starts and indicative unit costs are supplied here to illustrate the likely scale of Connect to Work and to support Accountable Bodies with planning a coherent service for their Delivery Area. In developing their Delivery Plan, Accountable Bodies should use the estimated peak starts as a guide to the level of delivery that they propose to work towards. In their Delivery Plan, Accountable Bodies should demonstrate how they intend to reach peak state and the expected Participant volumes. Accountable Bodies should also consider the funding required for delivery over the lifetime of the service based on the indicative unit cost, which includes ramp-up and ramp-down costs. As the distribution of spend on the grant-delivered service will be different from the distribution of starts, combining the unit cost with starts in a financial year will not provide an accurate figure for the amount of funding that would be received in a specific year.
- 214.** The Grant Formula estimates shares of total volumes and total funding. The Grant Formula has been designed to estimate volumes and funding in a consistent and transparent way, using the same publicly available data sources with Local Authority level data for all areas as far as possible. Shares of total volumes are estimated based on an area's working age population and demand indicators, which include the proportion who are economically inactive due to long-term sickness, disability employment gap, and measures of deprivation (for disadvantaged groups Participants). Shares of total funding are based on estimated volumes with cost adjustments to reflect variations in staffing and premises costs and the additional costs faced by rural areas. As the scale of delivery will depend on Delivery Plans, the indicative unit costs (relative to total funding levels) better express the Grant Formula's cost adjustments. Indicative estimates for the number of Programme Starts at peak and the overall unit cost are provided for information and to assist with the framing of planning. **They are not guaranteed. Funding and volumes for each Accountable Body will be agreed as part of the approved Delivery Plan and the Grant Funding Agreement.**

- 215.** The cost per Participant will vary by Delivery Area, reflecting area characteristics. The level of funding also reflects that the target groups cover individuals with a range of needs. Additionally, we would expect those ‘In-Work’ Retention Support Participants, supported to retain employment, to require less support than an ‘Out-of-Work’ Participant. Beyond the Grants to the Connect to Work Delivery Areas, the Connect to Work budget will also support central costs, including for example Implementation Support, Fidelity Assessment, and evaluation.
- 216.** This Grant Guidance invites the Accountable Bodies for Connect to Work Delivery Areas to develop a Delivery Plan. The funding, splits between different Participant types and profiles for the build-up of Participant volumes will be discussed between Accountable Bodies and DWP. The figures provided here are not a prejudgement of the outcome of those discussions.
- 217.** The build up to the peak of delivery will be agreed between DWP and Accountable Bodies. The pace of the ramp up will vary between Delivery Areas and this will affect the total volumes and total funding provided over the length of the programme.
- 218.** In the table below, the indicative Grant Formula estimates for Programme Starts in a financial year at peak and unit cost are rounded to the nearest 100.

<b>Delivery Area</b>	<b>Indicative Programme Starts in a financial year at peak</b>	<b>Indicative unit cost over the lifetime of the programme</b>
Wales	6,700	£3,700

# Annexes

## Annex F – Contacts and Support

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### Question-and-Answer Log

- 219.** Accountable Bodies can submit questions at any time whilst developing their Delivery Plan to their single point of contact for the programme at: [laenquiries.supportedemploymentprogramme@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:laenquiries.supportedemploymentprogramme@dwp.gov.uk). DWP will maintain an anonymised question-and-answer log to manage and monitor all questions raised via any forum. A Frequently asked questions log will be developed and shall be regularly circulated directly to each Accountable Body.



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