



European Union
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Investing in jobs and skills

**LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL
NORTHWEST**

ESF CO-FINANCE

OTHER TENDER SPECIFICATIONS



Leading learning and skills

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For Information Only

Title: Lancashire – Skills For Jobs For Offenders	Reference: NW/OTHER/S09
Aim	
<p>To develop employability skills and support offenders in order to gain sustainable work following the Skills for Jobs routeways (please refer also to the Introduction and Guidance to Skills for Jobs). Offenders are part of the workless cohort and often face multiple barriers to engagement. The target group for this tender are those offenders for whom employment has been assessed as a need and this is entered on their sentence plan. (The assessment will be using the criminal justice sector's OAsys process). Whilst the majority of offenders will be serving their sentence in the community some 'in reach' work in prisons will be required for those offenders who are still in custody. Applicants should note that some offenders from Lancashire may be held in prisons outside Lancashire, either in the North West or other regions. Applicants will need to take account of the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) delivered in prisons and the community as well as the Job Centre Plus service which is also present in the North West prisons.</p> <p>The overall strategic aim of services sought under this specification is to support the delivery of an integrated employment and skills system, known as Skills for Jobs for Offenders.</p> <p>Skills for Jobs aims to tackle worklessness by reducing the number of individuals not in employment through more effective engagement, and to move individuals into sustainable jobs through coaching, skills development, ongoing support, and the achievement of qualifications. This will be achieved by linking people who want to work with employers/sectors where there are vacancies and preparing individuals to secure and sustain employment.</p>	
Service requirement	
<p>The LSC has developed 3 Skills for Jobs Routeways which as indicated above aim to reduce the number of individuals not in employment. The LSC's preference is to support applications which seek to deliver <i>all</i> of the Routeways defined below, to the target groups and relevant sectors via a consortium/partnership approach. A Partnership/consortium approach is essential and applications must describe how the capacity of such partnerships/consortia exists or will be developed. This is particularly important for offenders in custody who will need a multi agency approach to support them towards and 'through the gate' into the wider community.</p> <p>Applicants will need to demonstrate how they will work with a range of partners and providers to develop a comprehensive menu of progression opportunities and ensure smooth transition arrangements for clients to navigate through provision. Specifically the LSC requires the linking up of interventions throughout the routeways detailed below, inside and outside prison to enable a smooth transition to the community by providing support which is specific to offenders in custody.</p> <p>It is expected that partners will include Jobcentre Plus, organisations that are successful under the LSC ESF Co-financing Information Advice and Guidance tender issued in November 2007 Co-financing round and organisations successful in the DWP Co-financing round. Other partners may include voluntary and community organisations and existing providers of learning, support and employment programmes.</p>	

The 3 Skills for Jobs Routeways are described below:

1. The Employability Skills Routeway – Enhancing the Employability Outcomes of Existing Provision

This Routeway will navigate eligible learners, already engaged in LSC funded Offenders Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) or any other learning programmes below level 2, from this into sustained employment. This will be done by linking with suitable sustainable employment opportunities and supporting the transition from custody to employment and ideally via further skills development to level 2 via Train to Gain/further appropriate learning.

This routeway will enhance the outcomes from existing LSC provision. Regional priorities will be to consolidate the value of existing investment and add value to existing outcomes.

2. The Individualised Routeway – Meeting Individual Needs

This Routeway will develop engagement with those in the target group not presently engaged in OLASS or other formal learning. This Routeway will enable a customer focussed progression route for participants into sustainable employment, taking account of:

- Local labour market need
- Client aspirations and aptitudes

This Routeway will provide the employability skills required by participants to compete in the local labour market and will provide transitional support from worklessness to workforce.

3. The Sector Routeway – Demand Led Programmes with Employers

Working with Job Developers, Employer Support Officers in prisons and the prisons' industries and Sector Skills Councils, demand led sector routeways will be developed which are designed by the sector to direct and support eligible learners through pre-employment training into identified sustained employment, ideally with training to Level 2 via Train to Gain. This can include the **Sector Employability Toolkit** (see The Introduction and Guidance to Skills for Jobs Annex 4)

The primary target sectors throughout the region will be:

- Identified regional priority Sectors such as Logistics, Health and Social Care, Construction, Manufacturing, the Public Sector, Retail, Tourism and Hospitality.
- Other Sectors with identified job growth potential such as Call Centres, Passenger Transport

For offenders in the North West there are some specific factors which must be taken into account.

Given the nature of the client group and their multiple barriers it is inevitable that there are many service providers involved with offenders and, whilst this is largely beneficial, it can often be very confusing and difficult to comprehend particularly when communication is ineffective between the parties concerned. Successful providers will need to work with others to avoid duplication and displacement of services to offenders. Applicants will need to consider how they will record and allow for management information to be easily shared between the criminal justice partners, different agencies concerned with the individual offender and the offenders themselves.

The successful applicant will also be expected to work with the OLASS lead providers, the Heads of Learning and Skills working in prisons in the North West and the Probation Service in transferring information and updating learner records and assessments. They will need to demonstrate how they will work together to ensure that offenders are fully supported through the transition from

custody into the community because of these effective working arrangements. It is important that applicants work with other providers who are successful in securing funding via the other Skills for Jobs Tender Specifications so that effective linkages are made, where appropriate, with that framework.

The successful applicant will work in partnership with the OLASS lead providers in each of the NORTH WEST sub-regions, as the overall lead for offender learning. Their current delivery role is primarily based in custody but they also champion and coordinate the provision of OLASS in the community.

The ultimate aim of any intervention for offenders is the reduction of re-offending, a key Government target supported by national and regional delivery plans which set out the strategy along different pathways covering, for example, accommodation, health, finance and benefit and employment, learning and skills. The National Offender Management Service (NOMS), part of the Ministry of Justice, has appointed 9 Regional Offender Managers (ROM) who commission services for offenders in custody and the community from a range of different statutory and non statutory providers.

In the North West, the ROM leads the Reducing Re-offending Delivery Board which covers 8 different pathways of need. The LSC leads the Employment, Learning and Skills Pathway and manages the progress of the pathway delivery plan. Any interventions for offenders should relate to the pathway plan and providers should also understand that working with other pathways is usually necessary in order to meet needs of offenders. The North West Reducing Re-offending Delivery Plan can be found at [North West Reducing Re-offending Delivery Plan \(April 2007\)](#).

At present some offenders in prison and the community benefit from working with offender managers and supervisors who focus on local interventions needed to help the offender through their sentence plan. The offender manager will be responsible for ensuring that interventions are sequenced so that, for example, offenders do not engage with learning and skills provision until their drug treatment is effective. Offenders in the target group will have either an offender manager or an assigned probation officer. It is important that referral protocols are agreed between the successful applicant and the probation service so that offenders in the target group are properly identified and referred by this route.

Contributions to the reviews of an offender's progress will be required and applicants should explain how they will contribute to this process. It is essential that the successful applicant is able to adapt the structure and activities of the Skills for Jobs for Offenders' service in order to respond to the changing demands of criminal justice partners.

For offenders in the North West it is essential that providers take account of current employability skills programmes funded through ESF and EQUAL. This includes ESF OLASS, IMPACT, PS PLUS and EQUAL Engage. These programmes are commissioned by LSC, probation and prison services. A critical element of these programmes has been to test out ways of working with offenders in order to develop employability skills and valuable information will be generated during the period October 2007 and July 2008. The successful contractor will need to take account of this information so that interventions are informed by evidence of effective practice.

The NWDA has recently provided funds to create 8 new posts for Employer Support Officers attached to prisons including one in HMP Haverigg in Lancashire. Their role is to engage with employers to encourage and support them to consider the recruitment of offenders. It is critical that the contractor works with these post holders and responds to employer demand so that activities are properly targeted, joined up and not duplicated. The Employer Support Officers will be working in conjunction with the two Job Developers, funded through the National Employer Panel, working in Greater Manchester and Merseyside.

For planning purposes the following shows the approximate number of offenders in the community in Lancashire. Offenders will be referred to this Skills for Jobs for Offenders' Programme by the Probation Area.

Criminal Justice Area	Approximate Caseload
Lancashire	8000

A partnership structure for offender employment, learning and skills has been developed at regional and local levels in the North West. The Lancashire Employment, Learning and Skills Pathway Board is led by the LSC and works as a partnership to deliver in accordance with an employment, learning and skills pathway plan for the area. Applicants need to demonstrate how they will contribute to this plan. The overriding aim must be for providers to work together in order to present a holistic package of support to offenders.

Routeway Activity Stages

Each of the 3 Routeways defined earlier will need to include the following 5 stages of activity and these need to be considered from the perspectives of both the employer and the individual.

Stages 1 and 2 – Learner/Employer Engagement

Stage 3 – The Pre Employment Phase.

Stage 4 – The Entry to Employment Phase

Stage 5 – The Post Employment Phase

These 5 stages are listed above; within each stage we have described a range of activities which could be delivered and these are included in the **Introduction and Guidance to Skills for Jobs**. These are identified as examples of the types of activities which should be included and other appropriate activities can be factored in as necessary to achieve the Skills for Jobs objective. For offenders there are some specific additional activities which must be incorporated into each of the 5 stages, these additional activities are as follows:

- Effective linkages with offender managers and probation staff
- Effective linkages with the prison's Reducing Re-offending Manager responsible for resettlement
- Linkages with other reducing re-offending pathways
- Effective linkages with Employer Support Officers
- Disclosing offences in a positive way
- Skills for Life embedded in other interventions where appropriate
- Mentoring and support services for offenders and employers
- Post employment mentoring and support for individuals and employers

Please be aware that the LSC is not willing to consider applications which only seek to deliver particular stages, or actions within the stages detailed in The Introduction and Guidance to Skills for Jobs. Applications must contain activities that will deliver *all* of the defined progression stages.

Some of these activities will be provided through provision that is already funded. Applications need to show how best value will be achieved by maximising the utilisation of provision that is already available. Applicants must also ensure that where Jobcentre Plus provision is funding any of these activities then these should not be included in the proposal put forward to the LSC however the applicant should demonstrate how they will link into that Jobcentre Plus provision.

The achievement of entering employment is not seen as the end of the learner's Skills for Jobs for Offenders' journey as we wish to ensure that in work support and training ensures sustainability of

employment and, where appropriate, also pulls through to level 2 learning via Train 2 Gain.

Support may require that new services be developed to tackle specific gaps or need; or may extend existing good practice by geographical location or by client group. It will be essential for Skills for Jobs providers to work in close co-operation and liaison with providers of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services.

Applications will need to make clear links to bespoke information, advice and guidance (IAG) services including the existing nextstep service and enhanced services procured through LSC and DWP ESF Co-financing. Impartial and wide-ranging IAG is critical to the success of Skills for Jobs and should ensure that individuals are able to make informed choices that meet their personal circumstances, skills needs and aspirations and that lead to sustainable job outcomes and further learning. In order to ensure that an IAG offer puts the individual first and provides an impartial service drawing on a range of possible interventions, a separate Tender Specification for IAG was issued in the November 2007 LSC ESF Co-financing round. Successful applicants under the Skills for Jobs for Offenders Tender Specification will be required to work with successful IAG providers, providing information about the Routeways being proposed and looking to IAG services for client referrals and continued client IAG support at each stage of the Routeway.

Skills for Jobs activity will support existing priorities including those in local/multi area agreements, joint delivery plans with Jobcentre Plus, growth areas, and City Strategies. Skills for Jobs activity will support emerging Local Employment Partnership activity, and complement achievement of the Skills pledge, as appropriate. It will necessarily need to cross reference with, and complement, the mainly client engagement focussed activities procured by Jobcentre Plus through their ESF Co-Financing round, and also other ESF funded LSC Skills for Jobs activity. It is recognised that the balance of Jobcentre Plus led and LSC led activities contributing to the learner's journey to sustainable employment will vary in local areas.

The success of the Routeways approach demands the effective utilisation and co-ordination of existing provision and support (LSC funded and funded from other sources). Therefore a partnership working approach will be essential and provider behaviour will need to ensure the avoidance of the duplication of provision. The offer to participants must align and enhance existing funded activity *not* replicate it. We require that protocols be developed with key partners to ensure smooth transition for customers and sharing of information etc e.g. Probation Service, Jobcentre Plus, learning providers.

Formative Evaluation

Successful tender applicants will need to participate in evaluation activity as appropriate. They will need to articulate their baseline starting point so that the distance of travel can be measured. Please see the **Introduction and Guidance to Skills for Jobs** for more details.

Target groups & priority

Skills for jobs is intended to create better engagement of disadvantaged adults who are both economically inactive or on benefits, and who need additional training, upskilling and support to prepare them for employment; and in-work training and help to enable them to sustain and progress in employment.

The target group for this tender are those offenders from Lancashire aged 19+ for whom employment has been assessed, through OAsys, as a need and this is entered on their sentence plan.

ESF is primarily aimed at people who are available to work in the job market. Therefore people in custody are eligible to access ESF as follows:

- People sentenced to less than two years can access ESF at any point during their sentence.
- People sentenced to more than two years can only access ESF during the last two years of their sentence.

(Skills and employment training under skills for jobs will need to be compliant with existing benefit regulations, for example the 16-hour rule to those in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance or Job Seekers Income Support).

Applicants must note that provision under skills for jobs will need to be compliant with existing benefit regulations, for example the 16-hour rule to those in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance or Job Seekers Income Support.

Applicants must also note that the normal eligibility criteria will apply to existing provision which may form part of the Routeway. For mainstream LSC provision this criteria can be found at: http://www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/funding-policy/Furthereducation/Funding_Guidance_for_Further_Education_in_200708.htm For provision funded by other agencies, applicants should contact those agencies to obtain their eligibility criteria.

Geography / area of delivery

We are willing to consider applications which seek to support offenders who:

- Reside in Lancashire and are serving their sentence entirely in the community; or
- Will return to Lancashire once their custodial sentence has been completed.

Given the nature of the target group it may be necessary to work with IAG services in other regions.

Outputs

Criminal Justice Area Lancashire	Outputs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 348 offenders supported in the programme via an action plan • Minimum of 244 progressions achieved from Skills for Jobs Stage 3 to Stage 4 (following the Skills for Jobs Stages described above and evidenced through individual action plan achievements)
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Results

LSC North West is looking to support activity that will deliver or contribute towards the following results. Applicants must specify on the tender form what activity will be delivered against each of these results.

Lancashire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 104 offenders entering employment with training • Minimum of 87 of offenders continuing in employment with training after 13 weeks • Minimum of 70 of offenders in employment after 6 months • Minimum of 157 of economically inactive participants engaged in job search activity or further learning
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Other outcomes

LSC North West is looking to support activity that will deliver or contribute towards the outputs and results specified above. However, applicants are invited to identify any other outcomes, including soft outcomes that their project will deliver including:

- Employers supported
- Link up with skills for jobs routeways in the community where appropriate
- Reduction of re-offending

- Willingness to share data, information and effective practice with partners
- Focus on individual offender needs
- Effective partnership working and collaboration in the area of employment, learning and skills for offenders
- Models of effective practice for offenders in custody and the community
- Flexible and adaptable working practices to respond to a changing NOMS agenda
- Flexible and adaptable working practices to respond to a changing skills development agenda

Funding available

The maximum amount of funding available for this tender specification is: £519,870

Applicants may not apply for more than the maximum level of funding which has been identified for this Tender Specification.

Start and end dates

Projects must not start activity before 1st September 2008 and must complete all of their activity by 31st December 2010 (including evaluation and dissemination activities).

Programmes must not recruit individuals if there is insufficient time available to allow them to achieve the results required. The LSC reserves the right to extend the end date of individual contracts where necessary.

Contracting details

LSC North West would expect to let no more than one contract.

The Learning and Skills Council intends to contract the activity within this tender specification against a set of deliverables, such as starts, qualifications, job outcomes, companies assisted; as applicable with the activity defined in the Outputs and Results section of this Tender Specification. Each key deliverable will be assigned a unit cost and the LSC will pay against this profile of activity. Successful applicants will be required to submit regular learner and performance related information to the LSC and the LSC will normally reconcile contracts on a quarterly basis, which will affect future profile payments, or seek to recover funds where necessary.

The Learning and Skills Council may also choose to invite projects to be retained on a reserve list to enable them to be funded at a later point.