



'Routes into Work' programme

**Parking sector materials
for the role of Parking Support Officer**

Report

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‘Routes into Work’ programme

Setting the scene

This report summarises the work undertaken, and the consequent outcomes, in developing materials in support of the ‘Routes into Work’ (RiW) programme for the role of a Parking Support Officer. It also identifies key points arising from the consultation process and makes recommendations relating to the promotion of the materials to parking sector employers, learning providers and Jobcentre Plus.

Asset Skills, the Sector Skills Council, together with the British Parking Association (BPA), have commissioned the creation of ‘Routes into Work’ materials to support Jobcentre Plus (JCP) clients into employment in the parking sector. The focus is upon the recruitment of young people, typically school leavers. Initial research undertaken as part of this project identified that the roles into which they are being recruited are usually service-support roles. For those seeking to build a career within parking, opportunities are then available within service-support, customer-facing roles and subsequently within related managerial pathways.

The RiW programme aims to support unemployed people into sustained employment, via real vacancies or anticipated demand within entry level occupations. The RiW materials provide a pre-entry programme to enable Jobcentre Plus (JCP) advisers to be briefed in new career opportunities within the parking sector, and/or to provide potential employers with a set of free materials in support of induction and learning programmes. It is intended that through this pre-entry programme JCP clients might be supported into sustainable employment within the parking sector. The pre-entry programme comprises the organisation of three separate events for trainees, which include the following:

- Selection event,
- Two week training course,
- Three week work trial with an employer from the parking sector.

The programme and materials provided for the ‘Routes into Work’ programme also aim to be accessible to trainees of mixed abilities, offering them opportunities to assess and improve their literacy, language and numeracy throughout the two week course, work trial and into employment. Upon completion of the three week work trial, the trainee may be given the opportunity of permanent employment. Alternatively, the employer may choose not to offer employment, and in this situation the reason for decline should be provided.

The materials have been produced through consultation with a range of private and public organisations, including learning providers, within the parking sector to ensure that the structure, content and delivery of the materials gain their endorsement.

Objective

The objective for this work was to prepare materials to support the RiW initiative for the parking sector, and that the materials would include :

- 1) An employability checklist,
- 2) A recruitment checklist,

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- 3) A structured selection event,
- 4) A two week training programme,
- 5) A three week work trial,
- 6) An information document for training providers signposting the RiW programme to relevant NOS and QCF units.

In addition the project prepared a briefing sheet for JCP advisers.

Methodology

The programme of work was designed to ensure the breadth of consultation required and was comprised of the following principal actions:

- 1) Reviewing existing RiW materials from other sectors,
- 2) Preparing initial drafts of the RiW materials particular to the parking sector,
- 3) Issuing these for comment to selected representatives of local authorities and private companies which provide parking services,
- 4) Analysing and incorporating relevant feedback as appropriate,
- 5) Presenting materials for comment at the Local Authority Special Interest Group (LASIG) on 25 November 2010,
- 6) Preparing advanced drafts of materials and issuing these to representatives of the parking sector, including local authorities, private companies and learning providers,
- 7) Collating, analysing and incorporating the feedback,
- 8) Ongoing discussions and review of materials with Asset Skills and the BPA.

Outcomes from the project

The outcomes from this project include three principal documents, with these entitled:

- 'Pack 1 : Selection event materials'
- 'Pack 2 : Two week training course materials'
- 'Pack 3 : Three week work trial materials'

These materials have been produced following consultation with employers across the parking sector. It is acknowledged that these materials are therefore generic to the whole of the parking sector. When implemented, they might be tailored to contain information specific to the particular employer(s) offering potential vacancies.

Further outcomes to support the promotion of the RiW initiative have been developed, and these include:

- An employability checklist,
- A recruitment checklist,
- An information document for training providers : 'Signposting to NOS and QCF units',
- A briefing sheet for Jobcentre Plus advisers.

Each of these outcomes is described briefly below, and all are available as separate stand-alone documents.

Pack 1 : Selection event materials

The materials developed in support of a selection event offer a pack of resources for a half-day event, by which JCP/employers might identify relevant young people to be accepted onto the two week training course and three week work trial. The selection event materials pack includes the following documents:

- Guidance, relating to usage of the selection event materials,
- An agenda for the event,
- Interview guidelines and questions for those recruiting,
- An introduction to the selection event,
- A pre-course questionnaire for candidates.

Pack 2 : Two week training course materials

The two week training course materials cover the delivery of the training programme for young people selected on to the initiative, to be delivered by JCP appointed learning providers and with additional input from employers, where possible. The course offers trainees a flexible 60 hour modular design over the duration of 10 days of learning, and it is recommended that the timing of the modules is determined through discussion between the employer and trainer. The programme combines parking-specific modules with others which impart those general employability skills identified by employers as being essential. It is recognised that these materials are generic to the whole parking sector, and would therefore benefit from input from the learning provider to tailor the programme to be relevant to the employer offering work placement and/or potential vacancies, i.e. private sector or public sector such as Local Authorities.

The materials include the following:

- Guidance, relating to the delivery of the two week course materials,
- A programme overview,
- A training course plan,
- An employability checklist, setting out the skills, behaviours and attitudes which might be considered as required by employers,
- Three Appendices, as follows:
 - A : Handouts, providing information for the trainer and/or young people,
 - B : A workbook for the young people on the programme,
 - C : An information document for training providers : Signposting to NOS and QCF units.

Pack 3 : Three week work trial materials

The materials produced for the three week work trial cover an initial 'induction'/work trial which might be offered by employers in conjunction with learning providers/JCP to determine the young peoples' employability. The three week work trial supports JCP clients by providing practical experience of activities related to the work of a Parking Support Officer in the workplace environment. It is also intended that the work trial might also introduce

trainees to the different types of job opportunities and career development options that are available within the parking sector.

A small number of respondents made suggestions regarding additional content which might be better included within an induction programme for those who have gained employment. Therefore, when promoting the RiW materials we recommend that employers are clear that this initiative is separate from any subsequent formal company induction programme.

The materials which support the delivery of the three week work trial include the following documents:

- Guidance,
- An induction programme,
- An induction checklist, confirming the activities covered,
- A recruitment checklist, setting out what employers look for when recruiting 'Parking Support Officers'.

An employability checklist

The employability checklist details the basic requirements for employment within the parking sector, and describes those skills, behaviours and attitudes which might be considered as required by prospective employers. This document is also included within 'Pack 2 : Two week training course materials'.

A recruitment checklist

The recruitment checklist describes those activities and skills which would apply typically when recruiting for the job of a 'Parking Support Officer'. In addition, the checklist describes the functional skills, teamwork skills and other requirements which might be required of anyone applying for this post. The document may therefore have additional applications beyond the scope of RiW, in relation to the following activities:

- Supporting training programmes,
- Interviewing candidates,
- Writing job descriptions.

This document is also included within 'Pack 3 : Three week work trial materials'.

An information document for training providers : 'Signposting to NOS and QCF units'

Young people who complete the learning programme and three week work trial as part of the 'Routes into Work' initiative for the parking sector will have been introduced to the role of a 'Parking Support Officer'. This entry-level role may cover a number of actual job-titles according to what this role is called in particular employer organisations. However, the role will include providing administrative support across a number of parking activities.

The knowledge and skills developed by young people completing the programme and work trial are likely to overlap with the requirements of a number of parking National Occupational Standards (NOS), and their associated Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) units. These NOS and QCF units were used to inform the content of the 'Routes into Work'

initiative, and are listed within the separate document entitled 'Signposting to NOS and QCF units'.

Having progressed from the programme and work trial, a young person might use the resulting outcomes, such as a workbook, towards evidencing related requirements within particular NOS/QCF units. Where the NOS/QCF units are included as components within qualifications, then the young person might use such outcomes towards evidencing relevant skills/knowledge.

A briefing sheet for Jobcentre Plus advisers

It is intended that the briefing sheet for Jobcentre Plus advisers will provide information in relation to the RiW initiative within the parking sector, career opportunities in parking services, and to help build and/or develop the sector knowledge of JCP staff.

Next steps

The RiW materials produced for the role of a Parking Support Officer are the result of consultation involving stakeholders from across the parking sector. The consultation and its outcomes have received the invaluable support of those within Local Authorities, private organisations and learning providers. It is recommended that the next steps build upon the impetus generated. These steps should include:

- 1) Promoting the RiW initiative to employers in the parking sector, Jobcentre Plus staff and learning providers,
- 2) Making the RiW materials available to employers for the wider purposes of recruitment and training.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge with particular thanks all those involved in the development of these materials, and gratefully recognise the contributions made by the individuals and organisations concerned in putting this programme and its resources together.

The vast majority of respondents were very supportive of the RiW initiative, although a number acknowledged that with the current cutbacks in public sector funding future recruitment levels were uncertain.

Illustrative of the comments are the following, that the materials were '*very comprehensive*', '*easy to follow*', '*well structured*' and '*identified key aspects to be covered*'. Further feedback was received from trainers who commented, '*There is a lot of scope for trainers and employers to change and add to the programme which is fine. They can then run their own lesson plans and materials using the material provided as a guide (which is what I believe you intended)*', and who also reflected that '*Overall I think the programme gives all stakeholders a basic plan for the programme with room to add or alter areas to make it fit their own requirements*'.

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The level of response represents a significant figure of 35% of those contacted, and this would appear to be indicative of the enthusiasm for those working within the parking sector to raise its profile and have the sector's professionalism recognised. One respondent summed this up within the following statement, *'Thank you for asking my opinion. I'm convinced that a pathway providing employability skills would benefit the industry considerably and a programme like this would help facilitate an increase in the status of parking management services across the sector, especially in increasing the range of vocationally recognised qualifications and National Occupational Standards.'*

Heather Prior
Director,
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20 December 2010

Contributors to the outcomes from the project

The following is a list of those to whom the 'Routes into Work' materials were issued for comment, and the column on the far right indicates those who kindly provided feedback. It is recognised that this is not exhaustive, as in several cases, individuals sought the views of colleagues in preparing their feedback.

Name	Organisation	Feedback
Helen Ashcroft	Warrington Borough Council	
Pamela Avery	Town and City Parking	✓
Linda Baker	Parking UK	
Steven Barnes	Dacorum Borough Council	
Jason Benjamin	Borough of Poole Council	
Gavin Brown	Edinburgh City Council	
Kevan Butt	Sheffield City Council	✓
Steve Carnell	Exeter City Council	
Robin Chantrill-Smith	Thanet District Council	
Andrew Clarke	Excel Parking Services Ltd	✓
Sheryl Clarke	Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council	
James Clancy	Nottingham City Council	
Mark Cox	Pass Training Consultancy Ltd	
Helen Crozier	Oxfordshire County Council	
Rocky Dato	British Parking Association	
Michael Davenport	APCOA Parking UK	✓
Kash Dhadwar	Surrey Heath County Council	
William Earnshaw	Urban Vision Partnership, Salford	
Denise Eccleston	Wolverhampton City Council	
Ellen Falloon	Oxfordshire County Council	
Nigel Gibb	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council	✓
Michelle Green	Havant Borough Council	
Graham Greenwood	Warwickshire County Council	✓
Diane Hale	Bedford Borough Council	

Name	Organisation	Feedback
Philip Hammer	Cambridgeshire County Council	
Richard Hein	Winchester City Council	
John Hiley	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	
Nick Hill	Vehicle Control Services Ltd	
Caren Hindle	Barrow Borough Council	
Denville Hopkins	Vinci Park Services Ltd	✓
Barry Hopley	NSL Services Group Ltd	✓
Dawn Huish	British Parking Association/ DHH Training Ltd	✓
Karan Jay	South Thames College	
Glynnis Jeavons	Walsall Council	
Celia Jenkins	Nottingham City Council	
Mark Kemp	Cambridgeshire County Council	
Chris Kutesko	Norfolk County Council	✓
Scott MacBrayne	Winchester City Council	
John McEvoy	Carmarthenshire County Council	
David Morris	London Borough of Enfield	
Gill Niven	Leeds City Council	✓
Jason Passfield	Worthing Borough Council	
Anjna Patel	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council	
Sudha Patel	Central Bedfordshire Council	
Roger Payne	West Sussex County Council	✓
Andrew Pulham	East Herts District Council	
Jim Rayner	Parking Techniques Ltd	
Mike Rollo	Allerdale Borough Council	
Mary Schramm	South Thames College	✓
Sharon Simpson (Project manager)	Asset Skills	
John Skeen	Newcastle City Council	✓
Elaine Smith	Bournemouth Borough Council	✓
Perri Stevenson	Leicester City Council	✓
Elizabeth Sutton	London Borough of Camden	

Name	Organisation	Feedback
Ian Taylor	Tendring District Council	✓
Maria Wheatley	Cotswold District Council	✓
Yvette Widdowfield	Stratford--on-Avon District Council	
Keely Woods	Islington Borough Council	✓
Steve Wyatt	Dodsworth Wyatt	✓

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