

## **Service Academies: A Progress Note**

'The Coalition: Our Programme for Government' set out the intention for a range of Service Academies to offer pre-employment training and work experience for unemployed people.

The aim is to provide support that is flexible and responsive to meet the skills needs of those seeking work and the requirements of employers.

Service Academies will be part of the package of additional support options, known as the Get Britain Working measures, which Jobcentre Plus can use to help people into work prior to referral to the Work Programme.

### **What will Service Academies look like?**

Service Academies will be a flexible model that can be tailored to meet sector and local needs. Within this model Service Academies will:

- Combine sector-specific training with work experience with an employer in that sector;
- Be targeted at those Jobcentre Plus customers on active benefits who are close to the labour market and would benefit from participating in the Service Academy to help them find work;
- Be established in sectors with high volumes of entry-level jobs and current local vacancies – with participants receiving a guaranteed interview on completion of a Service Academy;
- Last for a maximum of six weeks, with the individual remaining on benefit during that time and receiving additional support with travel and childcare costs if required;
- Include accredited provision – leading to units on the Qualifications and Credit Framework as appropriate to the entry requirements for intended jobs.

It will be up to Jobcentre Plus, working in partnership with local employers and training providers to determine the most appropriate offer to meet local need.

### **Delivery:**

Jobcentre Plus will have a brokerage role, bringing together employers, Further Education colleges / training providers and other local partner organisations to develop a Service Academy package of support that meets local labour market needs.

Work experience will be offered by participating employers, who will be expected to support the development and delivery of these Service Academies.

Training will be provided through the mainstream skills system in England and will be accredited, and subject to all the usual rigorous quality checks. As Service Academies draw on the mainstream budgets there is no ring-fencing of places so Service Academies will be demand-led. Where appropriate, BIS ESF funded skills provision will also be used to support the delivery of Service Academies. DWP is in discussions with the Devolved Administrations about similar offers in Scotland and Wales.

**Further Information:**

DWP and Jobcentre Plus colleagues are currently working with employers, Sector Skills Councils and other partners to develop the design of Service Academies. We hope to test aspects of the delivery model ahead of the new skills offer and funding beginning in August.

More information on Service Academies and the other Get Britain Working measures can be found on the DWP website, using the following link:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/get-britain-working/>