



**Department
for Work &
Pensions**

Commercial Directorate

Mentoring and Employability Skills for 50+ Claimants

South London

Invitation to Tender

Specification

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Mentoring & Employability Skills for 50+ Claimants

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Flexible Support Fund (FSF) is intended to help Jobcentre Plus (JCP) District Managers to flexibly deliver elements of our service in the way they see fit for their Districts. In particular, the FSF enables JCP Districts to trial different approaches to tackling worklessness. Greater autonomy for District Managers will enable JCP to respond to one of the priorities of the coalition government - public service reform and the devolution of power from the centre to the front line. District Managers are best placed to deliver elements of our service effectively and efficiently, procuring external services where appropriate, in order to meet the needs of local customers.
- 1.2 The Jobcentre Plus Group of South London & the Home Counties intends to use FSF to fund this proposed provision which will provide additional support for Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) claimants or Employment Support Allowance (ESA) who are 50 years of age or older and who are not currently enrolled on the Work Programme or eligible to be referred to the Work Programme, although they may have previously participated and returned. See paragraphs 5.1 to 5.15 for more information about the claimant group.

2 Aims

- 2.1 The provision is targeted at claimants primarily in receipt of JSA or ESA aged 50+ .It is intended to assist claimants to tackle challenges and remove barriers that maybe preventing them from returning to work. The journey back to work for this group of claimants can be complex and for many, the first step is to engage with the concept that work is a possibility and then move onto the practical steps of making this a reality.

3 Targeted Support

- 3.1 The provision will target claimants residing in South London only. Information about delivery locations, and Claimant volumes is included at Section 5.

4 Design & Content

4.1 Provision will be targeted at Claimants aged 50+ and in receipt of either Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or Employment Support Allowance (ESA) but not currently enrolled on the Work Programme, although they may have previously participated and returned from the Work Programme. For this reason, the provision must deliver an innovative responsive and personalised service which supports and challenges claimants as they apply for jobs and prepare for interviews by utilising a range of support measures determined by the individual's needs. As this provision is seeking an innovative approach to supporting the claimant group it is envisioned that the solution offered by the provider will not be wholly classroom based.

4.2 The provision should comprise of intensive face to face support for twelve weeks. Hours and days of attendance are not prescriptive but it is envisaged that claimants will attend the provision, two days per week, five hours per day. The provision to include;

- An in depth Diagnostic and Planning Interview and complete an Individual Action Plan (IAP) with a dedicated Opportunity 50+ operative which will help identify

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barriers and issues preventing the claimant from moving into employment. It is anticipated that the initial meeting will last for approximately 2 hours and will involve the Provider gathering information from the Claimant about their personal circumstances, qualifications, work experience, existing skills, and barriers to employment and labour market ambition.

- Consideration of the claimants transferable skills (especially if they have worked in a specific field for a considerable period of time, or undertaken long-term adult/child care responsibilities), and work with them to develop a robust CV
- Where necessary, provide facilitated-led basic IT skills training to ensure the claimant is confident using a Personal Computer to compile letters; search job sites; complete/send application forms; set up an e-mail account; register on Universal Jobmatch; and, search the internet for jobs and training information. Demonstrate Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn mediums, which are becoming very popular for advertising jobs and for companies to establish claimant's profiles/attitudes. Furthermore, highlight the importance of how they should portray themselves on these particular mediums, bearing in mind employers are looking at prospective employee's profiles etc.
- Where necessary, arrange and conduct mock interviews to boost the claimants confidence, addressing possible beliefs relating to employer reactions/value for older workers
- Highlight internet jobsearch webpages, including those specific to 50+ job searchers, and explore the option of self employment with them providing information on what is involved and exploring whether it is a viable option for them
- Develop a programme of weekly contact with the claimant which must include a fortnightly face-to-face meeting to ensure they are supportively progressed and their Action Plan is updated. Look at setting up facilitated-led group sessions to enable claimants to share experiences with like-minded people and discuss/share any concerns they may have
- Set realistic goals for the claimant to achieve, which works towards them gaining sustained employment
- Consider whether the individual is presenting themselves in the best way for Employers especially if they haven't been in the job market for some time

This list is not exhaustive and providers should feel free to be innovative.

4.3 In Work Support

- All claimants progressing into work will have access to an In Work support service for a period of 13 weeks
- The support service should focus on helping claimants to retain their job.
- The type of support and frequency of contact should be agreed with individual claimant as part of their final review of their IAP

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- The Provider must ensure that the claimant's JCP Adviser is informed when the claimant starts or fails to attend the provision, leaves the provision, starts other provision, finds employment, and remains in employment after 13 weeks.
- The Provider will need to ensure that they have a pool of Mentors with suitable skills available to allocate to individual claimants as and when required.

4.4 Contracts are expected to be delivered for a 12 month period. DWP has the option to extend for up to a further 12 months.

5 Referrals/Volumes

5.1 Jobcentre Plus does not guarantee claimant volumes, but it is anticipated that approximately 1000 claimants will start this provision during the contract period.

5.2 The Claimants will primarily be aged 50+ and in receipt of JSA and ESA from day 1 of their claim. Exceptionally we may refer claimants under 50 if this provision will best support their return to work.

5.3 These 50+ claimants will be in receipt of JSA/ESA and will be referred by their Jobcentre Plus Work-Coach, having been identified as requiring additional support to maximise their chances of securing work.

5.4 The speed with which claimants can access the provision is obviously an important factor and so the Provider will be required to conduct the initial meeting with each claimant within five working days of the referral from Jobcentre Plus. Subsequent access to the provision is similarly important and so bidding organisations will also be required to describe in detail their proposals (accompanied by a convincing rationale) for ensuring how they will schedule regular support for each claimant.

5.5 Claimants will be required to participate in the provision for a period of a minimum of 12 weeks and receive 13 weeks in work support.

5.6 Claimants referred to the programme may have low motivation and perceived barriers which have prevented them from moving into work. They need re-motivating and an intensive programme of activity to ensure that their job search activity is effective and focussed.

5.7 Attendance will be voluntary but mandating (see 5.13) remains an option for Districts for customers on JSA. The Provider will be responsible for encouraging and supporting the claimants to complete all elements of the provision.

5.8 Jobcentre Plus will have responsibility for determining claimant suitability and eligibility.

5.9 In addition, recent legislative and procedural changes now allow Jobcentre Plus Work-Coaches greater powers to compel jobseekers to undertake activity which will help them to return to work. These include:

- More Frequent Attendance' arrangements for the duration of their participation on the proposed provision;
- use of Jobseekers Directions, where appropriate;
- follow up and challenge of non-compliance.

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- 5.10 Jobcentre Plus intends to implement these powers robustly to support this provision and expects to work collaboratively with the Provider in order to achieve the stated objectives of the provision.
- 5.11 Jobcentre Plus require the Provider to report non attendance, including where possible the reasons, from the initial interview through to the end of the post work experience placement support service.
- 5.12 Skills conditionality is to reduce the numbers of people who fail to start and fail to complete on provision which is identified as necessary. When a claimant signs for benefit there is an obligation that they skill themselves to move into the workplace. Participation in the training will be mandatory for all claimants referred to this programme. If a claimant fails to participate then Providers are required to inform Jobcentre Plus, within 24 hours, by completing the referral form for any claimant who fails to comply, and to keep supporting evidence, which includes information regarding:
- Failure to participate in or complete the training;
 - Refusing a place on the training programme when notified of the requirement to attend by Jobcentre Plus, demonstrated by a failure to attend the first day;
 - Failure to attend or participate in any meeting or activity, having been notified of the requirement to attend by the Provider without the previous agreement of the Provider; and
 - Losing a place on the training programme through misconduct.
- 5.13 The sanction regime is a 4 week sanction for the first offence, followed by a further 13 week sanction for a second offence within 12 months.
- 5.14 The Provider will be responsible for ensuring all claimants are treated within the requirements of legislation outlined in the contract. The Provider should ensure the claimants are clear about the aims of the provision, the specific aims of the programme of activity that has been developed and the benefits of their participation.
- 5.15 The provision is required to be delivered across South London covering the following boroughs; Bexley, Bromley, Croydon, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Southwark and Sutton.

6 Travel Costs

6.3 The Provider is responsible for paying directly to claimants' their travel expenses in full for return journeys from their home to the agreed delivery venue and attendance at interviews.

7 Childcare Costs

7.3 Jobcentre Plus will be responsible for arranging to provide childcare costs associated with the participant's attendance. Bidders should note that all such costs must be agreed with Jobcentre Plus in advance of any agreement reached with the claimant.

8 Timing

8.3 The Provider will be required to work with Jobcentre Plus in order to schedule and ensure provision commences on 01st May 2015, with the last claimant referrals being made no later than 5th February 2016. The contract end date will be 30th April 2016.

8.4 DWP reserves the right to extend the contract by 12 months, subject to the availability of funds, the satisfactory performance of the Supplier and the continuing need for the provision.

9 Performance

9.3 The overall performance requirements for the provision are as follows:

- 100% of claimants starts to receive and actively participate in face-to-face initial Diagnostic and Planning interview and develop an individual Action Plan
- 90% of claimants to complete the 12 week provision with agreed next steps.
- 100% of claimants to receive 30 working days of In-work Support, where appropriate to enable claimants to overcome any barriers when starting work.

9.4 Job Outcome – a minimum of 40% of claimants who start the programme to cease claiming JSA/ESA and move into qualifying employment within 4 weeks of leaving the provision. To claim the job outcome the job must have lasted for at least 4 weeks.

9.5 Sustained Job Outcome – a minimum of 40% of claimants moving into qualifying employment move into sustained employment. Sustained employment is defined as one which is for a minimum of 16 hours per week and is expected to be sustained for 13 weeks or more.

9.6 The Provider will be required to supply Jobcentre Plus with regular monthly performance data (e.g. starts / leavers data, supported by appropriate evidence such as completed Action Plans etc). Full details of reporting requirements will be agreed with Jobcentre Plus following award of contract.

9.7 The Provider will be required to report their success against these criteria to Jobcentre Plus on a monthly basis. Jobcentre Plus will validate achievement of Job Outcomes by

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a combination of documentary evidence supplied by the Provider (see paragraph 9.3) and direct contact with the claimant and / or their employer.

9.8 Job outcomes must be genuine opportunities with a realistic possibility of providing sustained employment for the customer.

9.9 It is important to ensure that the provision delivers value for money for the public purse. Jobcentre Plus therefore intends to employ robust management of the provision in order to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery.

10 Payment Model

10.3 Jobcentre Plus will pay the successful organisation on an overall unit cost as follows:

- An initial payment will be available for each customer having an initial interview and agreed action plan: Up to a maximum of **£200.00** per customer.
1000 customers x £200 = £200,000.00
- An additional payment for each customer completing the twelve week course: Up to a maximum of **£300.00** per customer completing the course, up to a maximum of 900 customers completing the course.
900 customers x £300.00 = £270,000.00

The balance of the contract value will be paid on achievement of positive outcomes:

- Payment for each customer starting paid employment: Up to a maximum of **£400.00** per customer achieving a job outcome, up to a maximum of 400 customers achieving a job outcome.
400 customers x £400.00 = £160,000.00.
(Definition of Job Outcome - evidence provided to show individual has started work for a minimum of 16 hours a week for a minimum of 4 weeks).
- Payment for each customer in sustained employment: Up to a maximum of **£500.00** per customer achieving a sustained employment outcome, up to a maximum of 160 customers achieving a sustained job outcome.
160 customers x £500.00 = £80,000.00.
(Definition of Sustained Job Outcome – evidence provided to show individual has completed a minimum of 16 hours a week for a minimum of 13 weeks)

There will be an additional Job Outcome bonus payment of **£200.00** for any job outcomes over the initial 400 initial job outcomes to incentivise Job outcomes for this provision. One payment only per customer:

- Payment for each additional Job Outcome, over the initial 400 Job Outcomes, at **£200.00** per customer.
600 x £200.00 customers = £120,000.00.

An additional start-up fee of **£10,000.00** will be available to drive innovation for this provision.

10.4 Bidders are asked to submit their proposed fees exclusive of VAT.

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- 10.5 Bidders are asked to submit their proposed prices for delivering the provision at Part 11 (Annex S) of the Tender Form. Bidders may propose lower fees, than those illustrated above. Bidders are advised that the District budget for this provision sits at a maximum of **£840,000.00**
- 10.6 Each fee claim / invoice must be supported by appropriate evidence, i.e. an SL2 for starts and evidenced by Jobcentre Plus off benefit check.
- 10.7 The successful Provider will be paid monthly in arrears upon submission and validation of a suitable invoice detailing the claim along with appropriate supporting evidence.
- 10.8 The cumulative total of all monthly claims paid to the provider will not exceed the agreed contract value.

11 Customer Feedback and Complaints Handling

- 11.3 The Provider should put in place a range of mechanisms for encouraging feedback from customers. Customer feedback will be an integral part of the Provider's performance monitoring system.
- 11.4 The Provider must ensure systems are in place to allow customers to resolve any grievances, concerns or complaints promptly and with the minimum level of bureaucracy, without causing them embarrassment. This includes complaints in relation to discrimination.
- 11.5 The Provider must always try to resolve problems internally. In some circumstances, however, it may be necessary to contact Jobcentre Plus for additional advice.
- 11.6 The Provider must record any discussions and their outcomes, allowing the customer to see and sign the record. Customers will be told the outcome of issues raised by them through the complaints procedures.

12 Management Information

- 12.3 Management Information is used to measure the performance and success of the provision:
- evaluate the effectiveness of the programme;
 - measure the uptake and delivery of provision; and
 - monitor and manage contracts (including financial monitoring and external quality inspection).
- 12.4 The Jobcentre Plus London & Home Counties Group will monitor performance and will use Management Information to inform Provider Performance Reviews, as required.
- 12.5 DWP will collect Management Information about participants who have been referred to the provision by Jobcentre Plus. DWP may request Management Information from the Provider. The Provider will be required to maintain records to

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allow Management Information to be provided to DWP on the following (list not exhaustive):

- Referrals;
- Progress on their journey to work;
- Job Outcomes.
- Sustainment of Job Outcomes.

12.6 Where DWP requires additional information, to support performance management for example, Providers will be expected to supply this within the agreed time limits.

13 Sharing of Management Information

13.3 There are rules around the sharing of Management Information. These are detailed in the contract.

13.4 The Provider shall not (and shall ensure that any of their Sub-contractors shall not) at any time publish, disclose or divulge any of the Management Information to any third party until the date of publication of the official and/or national statistics.

13.5 The Provider must implement appropriate arrangements which ensure that the Department's information and any other Departmental assets are protected in accordance with prevailing statutory and central government requirements. These arrangements will clearly vary according to the size of the organisation.

13.6 It is the Provider's responsibility to monitor compliance of any sub-contractors and provide assurance to DWP.

13.7 Failure to comply with any of these Policies or Standards could result in termination of the contract.

14 Health and Safety

14.3 All customers involved in any way with DWP Provision are entitled to train and work in a healthy and safe environment with due regard to their welfare. Under Health and Safety Law they are regarded as the Provider's employees, whether or not they are paid. Providers must, therefore, comply with their Duty of Care under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Act's associated regulations in the same way as they would do for any other member of their workforce. Providers must ensure that customers receive health and safety induction, training and supervision which are appropriate to the provision being delivered, and that systems are in place for checking this, both within their own organisation and at any sub-contractors. Providers must complete risk assessments, instruct, inform and train customers on the control measures identified. There are specific risk assessments for young people, pregnant workers, Lone Workers and employees who are engaged in Manual Handling activities. This list is not exhaustive.

14.4 DWP and Jobcentre Plus staff may therefore visit Providers and their sub-contractors for a variety of reasons. When doing so they will, in the course of their duties, adopt an 'awareness' approach to health and safety. In doing this they will not be conducting a health and safety inspection, nor will they be in a position to offer advice on whether something is safe or not. Instead they will approach this from the

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position of any layperson. If, however, they do spot something on which they require assurance or clarification they will raise this with the Provider or their sub-contractor's representative at the location they are visiting. If it is subsequently decided that the issue raised is one that requires follow up, this will be arranged with the Provider through their local Jobcentre Plus contact.

15 Data Security Requirements

15.3 Cabinet Office has introduced mandatory requirements relating to data handling, security and information assurance in government contracts. Information must be protected, together with systems, equipment and processes which support its use. DWP Contractors must provide an appropriate level of security. Bidders will be required to submit a Security Plan with their Tender, which details all activities required to safeguard DWP information in compliance with the DWP Security Policy and standards. Bidders are required to complete and submit their Security Plan using the template attached as Annex 4 to the Tender Form.

16 Her Majesty's Government (HMG) Personnel Security Requirements

16.3 The HMG Baseline Personnel Security Standard is a staff vetting procedure. It requires that a number of checks are made on persons who are to be given access to Government assets (premises, systems, information or data). Full details of the contractual obligations required to comply with the above procedures can be found in the Guidance document "HMG Baseline Personnel Security Standard - A Guide for DWP Contractors". A PDF version can be viewed at:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/aguidefordwpcontractors.pdf>

17 DWP Customer Charter

17.3 DWP is committed to providing high quality and efficient services to our customers. The DWP Customer Charter sets out the standards that customers can expect and what their responsibilities are in return. DWP are dedicated to raising the standards of all our contracted provision and require all Providers and sub-contractors to embed the principles of the Customer Charter into the services they deliver on DWP behalf. The customer charter can be found at:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/customer-charter-dwp.pdf>

18 DWP Code of Conduct

18.3 The DWP Code of Conduct spells out the key values and principles of behaviour which DWP expects of Organisations which are essential for creating healthy, high performing supply chains. Organisations that contract with DWP will be expected to operate in accordance with the Code of Conduct. The Code is Annex 1 to the DWP Commissioning Strategy and be found at:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/cs-rep-08.pdf>

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19 Supplier Charter

19.3 The Supplier Charter is a set of principles that outline how DWP and its contractors, will work together to help DWP achieve its strategic objectives. The charter embraces a partnering approach to driving up value for money through continuous improvement and innovation. It reflects DWP core values and our commitment to a fairer and more sustainable society. See above link for a full copy.

20 Off-Shoring (including Landed Resources and Near-Shoring)

20.3 Prior written consent from DWP must be sought where Bidders (and/or their sub-contractors) are proposing to host or access DWP systems, services or official information outside of the United Kingdom, or to bring foreign nationals to the United Kingdom to provide services in delivery of the Contract. Bidders must submit an application for approval together with their bid. Further details can be found in the guidance document 'A Guide for Contractors on the DWP Off-Shoring Policy V2.0'. A PDF version of this can be viewed at: [DWP Contractor Offshoring Guidance](#)

21 Provider Assurance Team

21.3 The Provider Assurance Team (PAT) provide DWP with assurance that:

- payments to contracted employment provision Providers are in accordance with DWP and Treasury requirements;
- public funds and DWP data are protected; and
- value for money has been obtained.

22 Programme Evaluation

22.3 Evaluation of the programme may seek to determine the success of provision. DWP will analyse MI and conduct qualitative research with JCP/DWP staff, customers and Providers to build up a picture of the support delivered. Researchers may wish to visit and interview Providers as part of the evaluation. Providers will be contacted in advance of any fieldwork. Providers are expected to fully co-operate with evaluation activity commissioned by DWP.

23 Sustainable Development

23.3 DWP supports the main goal set out in the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development (Securing the Future, 2005) which is to 'enable all people to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life of future generations. This includes four main aims - social progress recognising the needs of everyone; effective protection of the environment; prudent use of natural resources; and maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth.

23.4 DWP contractors are required to ensure that they and their sub-contractors use all reasonable endeavours to comply with the principles set out in the UK Strategy and the Sustainable Operations on the Government Estate (SOGES) targets. More information can be found on the [DWP Sustainable Procurement page](#).

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23.5 DWP contractors are required to provide a policy statement within six months of the contract start date to demonstrate how they will satisfy and adhere to the principles of sustainable development, together with an action plan to explain how they will deliver environmental and community benefits.