

Fair Work, Employability and Skills Directorate

Employability Division

NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

ALL AGE EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE

LOCAL EMPLOYABILITY PARTNERSHIPS

BEST PRACTICE GUIDE

2022/23

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1. Context

Scotland's [National Performance Framework](#) and [National Strategy for Economic Transformation](#) set out the Scottish Government's purpose and vision for inclusive economic growth. A critical aspect of inclusive growth is ensuring that as many people as possible, including those further from the labour market and facing complex or challenging circumstances, can access, sustain and progress within fair and sustainable work.

Building on the Scottish and Local Government [Partnership Working Agreement](#) for Employability, we are working with local government and other partners to design and deliver person-centred employability services that support people to move towards into and within employment. The first phase of the new model was rolled out in April 2019 and the second phase in April 2022 supported by a [Local Employability Partnership Framework](#)

Grant funding arrangements enable Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs) to apply flexibility to delivering employability support to ensure that services are flexible and responsive to both service users and local labour markets.

No One Left Behind continues to provide the opportunity LEPs to ensure that a co-investment approach achieves Scottish and Local Government joint ambitions, delivering transformational change and an employability system that improves outcomes for all users.

As part of the implementation of Phase 2, Scottish & Local Government have introduced local level 3 year Delivery Plans covering the period April 2022 to March 2025.

There is still work to be done to fully integrate employability services across Scotland, and the Scottish Government is continuing to engage with Local Government and other partners to develop the No One Left Behind approach.. Continuous improvement remains at the heart of all we do and we will continue to share best practice and learning both nationally and locally, gathering evidence of what works to inform future development.

No One Left Behind is an All Age approach and includes targeted funding for young people (the Young Person's Guarantee), parents from the priority family groups (the Parental Employability Support Fund) and to deliver Intermediate Labour Market Opportunities for those facing long-term unemployment.

The Young Persons' Guarantee

In response to the pandemic the Scottish Government introduced the Young Person's Guarantee (the "Guarantee") in November 2020. This is aimed at supporting young people aged 16-25 who face significant barriers to moving into positive destinations. The Guarantee is a commitment that no young person in

Scotland will be left disadvantaged by the impact of COVID-19. It aims to connect every 16-24-year-old in Scotland to an opportunity, such as: an apprenticeship, a job, further or higher education, a formal training programme, a formal volunteering opportunity or an enterprise prospect.

Under the Guarantee the Scottish Government is investing £15m in 2022-23 in local employability partnerships through local authorities to deliver support to young people. From April 2022, this investment has been incorporated into No One Left Behind to provide greater flexibility to our partners to deliver services that meet local needs.

Intermediate Labour Market Opportunities

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on those further from the labour market. The Scottish Government responded to this by investing up to £20 million in No One Left Behind to offer 2,000 intermediate labour market opportunities to those facing long-term unemployment. The funding available ensures Intermediate Labour Market Opportunity starts can continue until 30 September 2022.

Tackling Child Poverty

Employment can offer a sustainable route out of poverty for many families. The Scottish Government published [‘Best Start, Bright Futures: Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan’](#) on 24th March 2022, building on the work of the first tackling child poverty delivery plan and setting out an ambitious target to support 12,000 parents into work and an additional 3,000 in-work parents to increase their income from employment..

Whilst employability has a key role to play in reducing Child Poverty, our ambitions cannot be met by employability support alone. Not only must we extend the reach of our services to parents but we must build stronger links with other services locally to provide the integrated packages of support that parents need.

Alongside development of a targeted “Offer for Parents” the Parental Employability Support Fund (PESF) delivered through No One Left Behind will continue to provides both pre-employment and in-work support to parents from the priority family groups, and who are most at risk of or experiencing poverty, to increase their earnings through employment.

PESF provides support to:

- Lone Parent families
- Families with a disabled child or adult
- Families with a young mother (aged under 25 years)
- Minority ethnic families
- Larger families (3 or more children)

- Families where the youngest child is under 1 year

The targeted support available through PESF supports parents to address barriers, upskill and/or re-train to help increase family income. It provides personalised support for parents who face barriers to progressing their careers, including help to gain qualifications, improving skills or work experience, money advice, and motivational support.

2. Service Standards and our shared expectations of delivery

Working collaboratively with partners from the public, third and private sectors we have developed our [Service Standards](#) to bring national coherence and define expectations of delivery. These Standards cover a broad range of activity, including Local Employability Partnership activity and our expectations of service providers. These Standards will be the basis of annual delivery reporting from Local Authority areas.

The Standards have been designed to align with the [Customer Charter](#), developed and agreed with a panel of service users, to set out our commitment to participants accessing services through No One Left Behind.

Employability Key Workers and staff involved in the delivery of services under No One Left Behind must familiarise themselves with the Service Standards, and Customer Charter and actively consider how they ensure that these commitments are met.

3. Personal Support – Employability Key Worker

Local Authorities have the responsibility to ensure that Employability Key Workers are appropriately qualified and experienced. The responsibility for ensuring there are sufficient, timely and appropriate learning and training opportunities across the strategic skills pipeline lies with Employability Leads and Employability Key Workers.

Consistent advice, guidance and support underpins the all-age No One Left Behind approach.

Employability Key workers will also provide pre-16 engagement support (but not provision or activity) for up to 6 months for young people identified as requiring employability support on leaving school. They will also work with Developing the Young Workforce /Curriculum for Excellence Leads in schools, focusing on ensuring that young people re-engage with mainstream pathways.

Additionally, Employability Key Workers will provide aftercare support to enable participants to sustain progression and promote fair working practices, including payment of the Living Wage where possible.

4. Eligibility

Given the range of barriers someone may experience, the eligibility criteria for No One Left Behind has been set at a high level to ensure local areas have the flexibility they need:

- Individuals who reside in Scotland
- People from school leaving age up to 67 years (Pensionable age) who are experiencing barriers to employment
- Young people over the age of 15 years who are within 6 months of the school leaving date and who are identified as being at risk of not moving on to a positive destination
- Local Employability Partnerships will have discretion on how best to respond to local needs and circumstances in their local area
- Individuals awaiting the outcome of asylum applications may participate in employability support, except where this involves paid work; they cannot receive a training allowance during their participation

Evidence of eligibility should be recorded, suitable evidence of identity, residence, age etc. should be in line with current Local Authority practice and saved in the case file.

People who are already participating in, or are ready to start on, Fair Start Scotland are not eligible for No One Left Behind. Participants on No One Left Behind are expected to be those further from the labour market and would be unlikely to be ready for Fair Start Scotland, however this may be a progression route for them.

5. Early Intervention

For those who have been assessed as likely to benefit from participation, and meet the eligibility criteria, early intervention and engagement can start no earlier than 6 months prior to the young person's official school leaving date. The Employability Key Worker may only provide support and advice to the participant during this period.

6. Duration

No One Left Behind is a voluntary service which provides an individually tailored package of support to help individuals progress along the Employability Skills Pipeline. The assessment of a person's needs should determine the minimum requirements for taking part in a Learning Agreement/Action Plan. It is recommended that a minimum of 3 hours per week of engagement should be planned for from the outset however Employability Key Workers may use their discretion during assessment to determine the most suitable level of engagement and support tailored around individual needs.

The duration of participation is also determined by the individual – allowing progression at the point they are ready. Within this flexibility there must be a clear focus on the participant’s progression towards more formal learning, training or employment. This carries an expectation that a participant’s work on the Learning Agreement/Action Plan might evolve or become more demanding, resulting in longer periods of participation as they progress.

For some people participation will be a short, focused intervention which helps them to become ready for more formal learning or employment. For others however, a longer timeframe may be needed. It is recommended that an individual should participate in a Learning Agreement/Action Plan for an anticipated period of support to enable progression to the next stage of the employability journey which will be dependent on individuals with the majority of participant requiring support for no longer than 18 months. This will however depend on the intervention, the nature of support and the other provision available locally.

7. Participant Journey

The success of participation should be based on achieving milestones which are agreed at the outset but may be varied and added to throughout the period of engagement depending on emerging needs and additional barriers identified. Milestones can be based on achieving soft skills such as increased confidence or using public transport, however, a suitable method of tracking progress against these skills should be utilised. From the outset, participants should be supported to articulate their goals in terms of their development and progression. Participation will form a clear pathway towards progression and will include activities specifically designed to prepare participants such as taster sessions at college, time with training providers, mentoring, peer mentoring opportunities and innovative group projects.

8. Employer Recruitment Incentives

Employer Recruitment Incentives (ERIs) can be provided at the discretion of the local authority but must be in line with the [ERI Framework](#)

9. Training Allowances

A framework is currently being developed, which sets out the minimum standards for a public funded Training Allowance for Young People (TAs) to help support young people as they undertake skills development and training. Training Allowances are vital to ensure that all young people, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are able to take advantage of the employability support available to them.

The Training Allowance has been developed to align with other financial support available to young people, such as Universal Credit and Education Maintenance Allowance, and should only be offered to those who are not eligible to access other

methods of financial support. The framework aligns with the commitment to deliver the No One Left Behind approach to employment support in Scotland including the delivery of the Young Person's Guarantee.

10. Disclosure Scotland Checks

The Police Act 1997 introduced Disclosure Scotland checks to promote safer recruitment practices and the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 established the PVG Scheme which aims to protect vulnerable people.

Where Local Authorities deem that vulnerable people are in receipt of support then as such they are required to comply with the Local Authorities' Disclosure Policy.

11. Equalities

Local Authorities should be mindful that no one should be denied an opportunity because of their race or ethnicity, their disability, their gender, sexual orientation or religion.

It is important to reflect on how you engage with minority groups as part of the EQIA process which must be completed this year and consider whether any changes to engagement practises need to be put in place.

An EQIA must be completed and submitted to Scottish Government by end June 2022.

12. Reporting

Local Authorities are required to submit Quarterly Reporting documents and Grant Claim forms within the dates set out in the Grant Letter. The reporting documents consist of a data return spreadsheet containing individual-level participant data, an Excel spreadsheet which contains the Financial Report and a Word document which contains the No One Left Behind combined quarterly narrative Delivery Report. The quarterly narrative Delivery Report allows Local Authorities to describe in more detail the activity being delivered each quarter by the Local Authority, Other Public Sector Bodies, Third Sector and Private Sector, GRG expenditure, feedback on any specific points/challenges, any already completed Local Authority reporting providing further additionality to the report and case studies. There is separate guidance contained within the reporting template for each question asked that sets out the kind of information to be included in the report.

- All reporting documents must be fully completed and returned to Scottish Government within 28 days of the end of each Quarter. Incomplete or missing documents will affect the payment of the relevant quarterly grant payment. The data return spreadsheet should be returned to the relevant Objective Connect folder – this will be in place from Q2. Local Authorities will be notified when this is available to use.

- The Finance Return and the signed grant payment request (Schedule 2) should be returned to EmployabilityGrantPaymentsMailbox@gov.scot
- The quarterly narrative Delivery Report should be returned to the relevant Local Authority workspace on Objective Connect.

The amount claimed on the Schedule 2, must be the actual expenditure within that quarter. Evidence documentation is required to be retained by the Local Authority and made available to Scottish Government on request.

Completing the Finance Return

Quarterly finance returns should be returned to Scottish Government within 28 days of the end of each Quarter. Each budget tab on the return should be fully completed, providing clear details of budget expenditure to date. Supporting narrative on actual expenditure against LA/LEP profiling as well as a description of the rationale on forecast outturn and steps taken to achieve this should also be included.

Additional monthly finance returns should be submitted as requested at the end of months May, August, November and February, to provide an up to date forecast outturn position, including the rationale for how this will be achieved and an explanation on any variance from previous forecasts.

All returns must be signed / approved by the LA Director of Finance with the submitting email either coming directly from Director of Finance, or they must be cc'd into the email.

13. Progression and outcomes

The data items that should be collected and reported from Q2 have been agreed via the first iteration of the [Shared Measurement Framework](#) and collaborative work taken forward via the Employability Data and Reporting Group.

These are set out in the Data Reporting template [hyperlink when available on OC]

14. Completers

At any point where the participant and Employability Key Worker agree that the participant has completed their Learning Agreement/Action Plan the Employability Key Worker should arrange to carry out an exit review.

15. Early Leavers

Where support through No One Left Behind is no longer suitable for the participant, this should be agreed and onward referral to an appropriate alternative support service should be made and recorded on the case notes. Where possible the reason for leaving early should be recorded in the case notes and onward support established if the participant is willing.

A Participant is regarded as having disengaged from No One Left Behind when the Employability Key Worker is no longer able to make contact with the participant.

If the participant is under 19 years of age Skills Development Scotland must be notified so that the Participation Measure data is updated accordingly.

16. Fair Work

As set out in [Scotland's Labour Market Strategy](#) The Scottish Government shares the vision of the Fair Work Convention that by 2025, people in Scotland will have a world leading working life where fair work drives success, wellbeing and prosperity for individuals, businesses, employers and society.

The Fair Work Convention set out 5 principles of Fair Work: Security (including income security); respect; opportunity; fulfilment; and effective voice.

Local Authorities will be expected to be able to demonstrate how they have worked to promote fair work in Scotland, including discouraging the use of inappropriate zero hours contracts and working to help customers access living wage jobs.

17. Management Information

It is important to ensure that, when participants are moving between different service providers the risk of disengagement is mitigated. This means that, as well as a common process for assessing participant's needs, there should be a procedure for ensuring that information from existing systems is drawn on to support an individual's participation in a Learning Agreement/Action Plan, and for appropriately reflecting their participation and progression. An important part of this will be monitoring the participant's progression when they complete their Learning Agreement/Action Plan; this will require close working with other learning providers.

18. Participant Feedback

All participants should have the opportunity to provide feedback on the support received to inform continuous improvement. Employability Key Workers should ensure that there are a variety of suitable options for participants to provide feedback, that recognise the individual circumstances of each participant. Early leavers should be offered the option to complete an online survey or another appropriate feedback tool. Details of the methods utilised and the feedback received should be reported in the Quarterly Progress Reports.

Although feedback should be handled at the local level in the first instance, participants also have the option to provide feedback through a national process, if they do not wish to do so directly to their keyworker/ service provider. You can find out more in the Customer Charter.

19. Audit and Compliance

Local Authorities will be expected to identify and develop internal review mechanisms and measures that ensure standards of delivery have been met.

For audit purposes, services will keep all participant files up to date and retain any evidence obtained within case files which can be stored electronically if preferred.

Overall quality reviews will be carried out by Scottish Government. The content and approach of these reviews will be developed with partners recognising the person-centred approach.

20. Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

Young people (Age 16 – 19) who are participating in No One Left Behind should have access to financial support in the same way as participants learning in more formal settings. All vulnerable young people undertaking will require extra support in the application process in addition to developing and undertaking their tailored learning agreement.

A learning agreement sets out what's expected of participants around attendance and coursework. The learning agreement is set by the education provider and takes participant's personal circumstances into account.

The Local Authority Employability Lead should liaise with Education colleagues and agree the approach and process to be followed. Guidance on Education Maintenance Allowance can be found [here](#).

21. Welfare Benefits

Participants in receipt of Universal Credit or legacy benefits should discuss with their Work Coach the benefits of taking part in No One Left Behind and obtain agreement as part of their Claimant Commitment prior to starting any activity. Under Universal Credit up to 12 weeks full time employability training is allowed without benefits being affected.

The new [Social Security Adult Disability Payment](#) in Scotland is being introduced through a phased approach from March 2022. Participants in receipt of the Adult Disability Payment can receive employability support and take up employment without affecting their payments.

22. School Leaver Destination Rates and Participation Measure

No One Left Behind participants who are aged 16 – 19 years should be recorded under the “Other Formal Training” option for both the School Leaver Destination Rates and the Annual Participation Measure. The definitions and categories for both

measures are currently being reviewed and the advice here may need to be updated. Any changes will be communicated directly to Employability Leads.

23. Questions

Any questions or areas where further information is required should be directed to the shared mailbox - nooneleftbehind@gov.scot