

COMMISSIONER'S GUIDE

Supported Employment Quality Framework (SEQF)



Foreword

The Supported Employment Quality Framework is more than just a fidelity model, it has a rich set of values that underpin the way we work with individuals, communities, and employers. This Commissioner's guide will provide you with information and support to commission high quality SEQF Supported Employment. It details how the fidelity model, values and focus on continual improvement all align to drive the best outcomes for disabled, neurodivergent, and disadvantaged people accessing careers. Alongside this guide, BASE lead a network of providers sharing learnings and best practice across the UK, and we highly recommend joining BASE and our sector's community.



This Commissioner's Guide is part of a wider set of resources designed to help Supported Employment providers, staff and commissioners better understand, deliver, and evidence high-quality Supported Employment provision. This includes:

- **Guidance for services, commissioners and policy makers:** [Supported Employment fidelity beyond severe mental health](#) (Prof Adam Whitworth et al), to provide examples of specific tools and measures commissioners can use to create quality service specification for Supported Employment Quality Framework Model Fidelity (SEQF)
- [Supported Employment guidance, videos and other resources](#)

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This Supported Employment Staff Guide was developed through a collaboration between the British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) and Inclusive Trading CIC and Professor Adam Whitworth (University of Strathclyde). With special thanks to Emily Woodberry, Staffordshire County Council for the monitoring tool that commissioners can use and adapt.

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Contents

1. What is Supported Employment?

- 1a. The Supported Employment Model
- 1b. Jobseeker Engagement
- 1c. Vocational profiling and Action Planning
- 1d. Employer Engagement
- 1e. Job Matching
- 1f. In-Work Support and Career Development
- 1g. The Underpinning Values of Supported Employment

2. What is the Supported Employment Quality Framework (SEQF)

- 2a. Introduction to SEQF
- 2b. Who are SEQF clients
- 2c. Scoring within SEQF
- 2d. External Assessment Outcomes for SEQF

3. Commissioning SEQF Considerations

- 3a. Capacity of Providers
- 3b. Minimum Service Delivery Standards
- 3c. Delivery Fees
- 3d. Invitation to Tender
- 3e. Training for Providers and Staff

4. Supporting Providers with SEQF

- 4a. Contract Compliance
- 4b. Supporting Providers with SEQF

5. Other Aligned Provision

- 5a. Inclusive Apprenticeships
- 5b. Individual Placement & Support
- 5c. Supported Internships

6. Further Training and Resources

Section 1 is all about the Supported Employment Model and Values and if you feel confident in this area, please move on to Section 2. We would recommend that commissioners who are new to Supported Employment read through all sections of the guide.

1. What is Supported Employment?

Supported Employment is a method of working with disabled people and other disadvantaged groups to access, maintain paid employment and build careers in the open labour market.

The model focuses on the principle that none of us are truly work ready and the sooner we provide real life experiences of work, the more likely people will layer up the skills and strengths needed for a career. Everybody can work with the right support.

Supported Employment differs from mainstream employment support provision. It is based on fidelity and values and adopts the “place-train-maintain” approach – seeking (appropriately) rapid progress into well matched paid employment at market wage rates in the open economy. delivered through more intensive interventions with lower caseloads, provides workplace training support and provides ongoing, tailored support to both employer and employee. The Supported Employment model views employer and employee as equal customers, both with needs to fulfil. Building trusted relationships with both jobseekers and employers is key to enabling effective job matching to occur, needs to be met, and capabilities to be grown and empowered. It includes a toolkit of techniques such as training in systematic instruction (TSI) that can assist jobseekers to learn and carry out complex tasks. The model has been described as mainstream where possible, and specialist as needed. Supported Employment is truly set aside from other models due to its evidence-based fidelity model that associates with improved job outcomes performance as well as its rich set of values that underpins how the model is delivered, with a holistic view of how to break down barriers to accessing good careers.

At its heart is a focus on identifying and matching to the right role for each individual so that it makes use of their skills, strengths, meets their work preferences and

supports the employer recruit the right person for their business. It is about placing the right person in the right job with the right level of support, to empower all to flourish and support sustained employment, leading to fulfilling careers

1a. The Supported Employment Model

This 5-stage model supports the belief and evidence that anyone can be employed if they want paid employment and the right support is provided. It provides space and resolves to unpick barriers that may impact on people's motivation to work and starts with high ambition and aspirational support. The model is a flexible and continuous process, designed to meet all anticipated needs.

The [Supported Employment Toolkit – ASEE](#) provides background information on the Supported Employment model and includes useful "how to" guides. The model focusses on both early careers and workplace retention, ensuring that we don't just support people into a job but also help them to sustain and progress in secure employment. The focus is on the right job, not just any job, so people can remain and flourish within the labour market.

1b. Jobseeker Engagement

Assuming everyone can work, Supported Employment proactively engages with individuals and communities to promote well matched, high aspirational careers for all. Supported Employment doesn't wait for people to come to them, instead they take Supported Employment to the people, connected into communities and services that serve them.

Supported Employment focusses on high ambition for disabled, neurodivergent and disadvantaged people, proactively engaging with potential jobseekers beyond traditional routes, such as Jobcentre Plus, and is likely to include individuals receiving social work support, using traditional day services or receiving support from health and social care agencies. Supported Employment services maintain close links with referring agencies and encourage people to explore employment as a way of improving quality of life, whilst raising ambitions across services and systems. Supported Employment is a holistic approach and works in partnership with services to address barriers that may prevent someone engaging with employment.

1c. Vocational Profiling and Action Planning

The first element of a successful job match is the vocational profiling or "getting to know you" process. Vocational profiling is not a transactional conversation but a tool to ensure you gain a rich understanding of who that individual is. Identifying the aspirations, individual skills, past experiences, talents, potential barriers, and job interests of the jobseeker. Working with individuals, families, and support workers, we gather the information needed to inform a good job match. We look to identify the ideal matched job for that person based on skills and preferences, such as hours, type of work, distance of travel and finding the right working environment. People who have never worked or not worked for many years may need support to make informed choices about career opportunities. Vocational profiling is not a form filling exercise and remains a live document that grows as you get to know the individual and their circle of support.

Action plans should be used throughout the Supported Employment journey, including the production of a vocational profile. A good action plan should contain **SMART** (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound) objectives that are regularly monitored, reviewed and updated.

1d. Employer Engagement

Employers understand the benefits of Inclusive Recruitment but remain concerned about how to achieve this for disabled neurodivergent and disadvantaged people. They engage fully with why" but lack confidence in the "how." Supported Employment provides a unique space to support Employers to progress their Disability Inclusion work; by ensuring they are valued and counted as equal partners.

The Supported Employment model provides a framework for employers to build Disability Inclusion into accessible recruitment pathways and workforce planning, supporting employers to understand the full business case, support available and how this supports both early careers and workforce retention.

We know traditional recruitment techniques can be overly rigid and formal and interviews risk not getting the right person for the right job. Employers are

increasingly recognising the value of "working interviews" which allow individuals to demonstrate their skills in the workplace and allow the employer to gather evidence that a formal interview seeks to capture but is so often unable to.

Following the place-train-maintain model, our aim is to secure 'employment and training' rather than 'training then employment'. This means that an individual gets a job from the outset. We know most people learn skills better in situ rather than in artificial environments. By doing this we overcome the "job readiness" obstruction where people can get stuck in permanent and repeat training. It also increases people's motivation significantly because they see from the beginning that they are employed.

Language is important when engaging with employers. Make sure you familiarise yourself with the different levels of Disability Confident and how you can support progress along their Disability Inclusion Journey.

Building strategic relationships with employers takes time, consistency and being able to confidently describe the full business case for employing disabled, neurodivergent and disadvantaged people, alongside the full offering of support available for them.

1e. Job Matching

Job Analysis is a tool used with employers in the workplace to build a rich understanding of that working environment and a specific job role.

As part of the **Job Analysis** process, you can explore any assumptions that have been made in the job description. A job description usually describes the overarching responsibilities for an employee, whereas a **Job Analysis** provides a detailed analysis of the job specifics, and the entire working environment.

Supported Employment services should review all aspects of the job and the workplace, including health & safety and workplace culture, to make sure we have the right job and environment for the right person.

Example of a good job match: Candidate A wanted to work in a data analyst role. Through the vocational profile it was identified that they had great attention to detail and were confident with data. A loud and vivacious character, with a loud voice and a passion for music. While they had the skills to do any data focused role, to ensure the right job match, the culture of the organisation was as important. Following a job analysis, a marketing company was identified that was looking for a data analyst. The workplace had a fun and upbeat work culture where big personalities thrived. A job match was made. Not just the right role but the right environment.

We determine whether extra support or adjustments to working practice or to the environment are needed. This helps to produce a better job match. The job analysis might point to ways of shaping parts of job descriptions that suit the workers' talents or creating new job descriptions that suit the worker and are cost effective for the employer, whilst continuing to meet their business needs.

Matching the right person to the right role will help you to build up trusted partnerships with both jobseekers and employers, ensuring job retention is as important as job starts and growing longer-term relationships of trust and mutual benefit with employers.

When you don't have the right person to match to a job it is important not to place poorly matched jobseekers. Instead, continue the dialogue and partnership with employers to build upon the relationship you to work together in the future. Showing the employer that you will not place the wrong person shows them that you care about them and their business and not just the outcome. Right employer, right time matters and building strategic relationships crucial.

1f. In-Work Support and Career Development

By using a vocational profile and a job analysis you can identify any skills gaps and identify an action plan around how skills gaps can be addressed. By developing 'in-work support plans' the appropriate level of support is identified encouraging the involvement of the employer and co-workers, to maximise the use of sustainable, natural workplace supports. Supported Employment services can support inductions and provide on-site training support as identified in the in-work support plan. This

can support employees to reach the productivity, quality and social standards set by the employer. They may also offer out of work support if needed. By reviewing the in-work support plan, progress can be monitored and support increased or decreased. Goals should include actions to encourage social inclusion within the workplace. You know you have delivered good quality in work support, when you are no longer needed, or the support is reduced, and the individual is fully integrated into the workplace.

Not many people stay in the same job for the whole of their working lives. People with disabilities are no different in having to adapt to changing labour markets and wanting to improve their working lives or react to change to their personal circumstances. Supported Employment should encourage the career development of individuals by promoting training opportunities and seeking choice and chance for increased responsibility.

Remember getting a job is the first stage and must be viewed as part of career progression.

1g. The Underpinning Values of Supported Employment

For a Supported Employment practitioner to practice competently they must apply skills and knowledge that is informed by deep understanding of the SEQF fidelity models and its underpinning values and ways of working. Supported Employment practitioners must apply a value-based and ethical approach to their practice. These values, skills and knowledge are formalised in the [National Occupational Standards - The British Association of Supported Employment](#) for Supported Employment Practitioners.

1. People with disabilities and/or disadvantages can make a positive contribution in the workplace.
2. People with disabilities / disadvantage should have access to a real job where:
 - wages are paid at the going rate for the job,

- the employee enjoys the same terms and conditions as all other employees.
- the job helps the person to meet their life goals and aspirations.
- the role is valued by managers and colleagues.
- the job has similar hours and times at work as other employees, with safe working conditions.

3. Practitioners uphold the "zero rejection" philosophy of Supported Employment. Remember that so that, with the right job and the right support, everyone who wants to work, can work.

4. Supported Employment does not adhere to a work readiness model and a 'place, train and maintain' approach is implemented.

5. Job search should happen at the earliest opportunity.

6. People are encouraged to exercise choice and control in achieving their career aspirations. Support is individualised and all options assume successful employability.

7. There is genuine partnership between the person, their family carers, employers, community supports and the provider of Supported Employment.

8. People are supported to be full and active members of their workforces and wider communities, both socially and economically.

9. Support services recognise the importance of the employer as a customer of Supported Employment in their own right with requirements that need to be satisfied.

10. Supported Employment draws on Social Role Valorisation (SRV) in recognising that employment is a valued social role and becoming employed can help reverse societal devaluation, with wider positive consequences for the person.

11. Supported Employment draws on the social model of disability recognising that disability is the product of the physical, organisational, and attitudinal barriers

present within society. The removal of discrimination requires a change of approach and thinking in the way in which society is organised, in this case removing barriers to employment.

12. Supported Employment should encourage the career development of individuals by promoting training opportunities and seeking options for increased responsibility.

It is important that Supported Employment services live these values in their organisational practices, process and interactions with jobseekers, employers, referral sources and staff members. As they do so high quality Supported Employment services balance commitment to quality and continual improvement in both their delivery (people are centred, client agency and empowerment is grown, employment specialist go above and beyond towards client needs, client preferences and wellbeing matter) and their outcomes (clients do want meaningful, sustainable change in their life via well matched paid employment so job outcomes are key).

2. What is the Supported Employment Quality Framework (SEQF)?

2a. Introduction to the SEQF

The SEQF was originally developed in 2017 to establish a quality framework for the provision of Supported Employment to improve services for disabled jobseekers, employees, and employers.

The SEQF is intended to establish a core set of quality standards and values that Supported Employment providers should uphold. Supported Employment providers should ensure that every individual seeking paid employment receives high-quality support to find, maintain, and flourish in well-matched employment opportunities. Employers seeking to promote workforce diversity should also receive high-quality assistance to guide them.

By evaluating the provider's adherence to SEQF model fidelity, external fidelity assessment can both certify and grow the quality of the provider's Supported Employment services to jobseekers, employers, and commissioners. Providers

should also self-assess their own fidelity at at least annual intervals and should have in place a set of internal training and development activities to drive continual improvement in fidelity understanding, adherence and delivery across staff members.

Following a self-assessment tool, an independent SEQF assessment takes place. An SEQF external assessment has two key purposes. First, the external assessment enables SEQF providers to receive an externally validated score of the current fidelity of their service across each element of the SEQF model fidelity. This helps services to benchmark their service, understand its strengths and areas for development, and potentially to receive SEQF fidelity recognition.

Second, an SEQF external assessment enables providers to be supported in a process of continual SEQF improvement. It is a constructive external assessment that encourages self-reflection and is oriented towards supporting providers in an ongoing improvement journey. Whilst providers will naturally be focused on their current fidelity score, more important is that providers engage with the external assessment as part of an ongoing process of reflection and continual improvement.

There are various resources available for Supported Employment providers within the Membership Area of BASE's Your Membership to support self-assessment and external assessment.

2b. Who are the Clients for SEQF

SEQF is the right model for adults with learning disabilities and/or neurodivergence. SEQF might also be considered for other groups with high levels of need and disadvantages where integration with clinical (or other) teams is not necessary or possible. Use appropriate, evidence-based, cohort and model specific values to build specifications.

2c. Scoring within SEQF

The SEQF Model Fidelity is scored against criterion evidenced by the provider in the following table:

Section of SEQF	Number of Criteria	Maximum Score Available	Weighting of Section
1.1 Engaging Jobseekers	10	20	15%
1.2 Vocational Profiling and Action Planning	14	28	15%
1.3 Engaging Employers	14	28	15%
1.4 Job Matching and Securing Employment	10	20	15%
1.5 In-Work Support and Career Development	15	30	15%
2.1 Business Results	8	16	10%
2.2 Key Performance Indicators	5	40	15%

Each criterion has a score from 0-2 within 1.1 – 1.5 & 2.1.

The section on Key Performance Indicators is scored as per below:

- ➔ 2.2A - Percentage of people commencing a vocational profile that achieve a paid outcome -. Scoring: $\geq 10\%$ = score 2; $\geq 20\%$ = score 4; $\geq 30\%$ = score 6; $\geq 40\%$ = score 8; $\geq 50\%$ = score 10.
- ➔ 2.2B - Average time from service start to job start - This is the period (in weeks) between the date of the service start and the date of a job start. Scoring: ≤ 52 weeks = score 2; ≤ 39 weeks = score 4; ≤ 26 weeks = score 6; ≤ 16 weeks = score 8; ≤ 10 weeks = score 10.
- ➔ 2.2C - Employer average satisfaction ratings - An average of the overall satisfaction ratings from employer questionnaires. Scoring: 0 – 5, where 0 is where the provider has not received sufficient feedback, 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied.
- ➔ 2.2D - Jobseeker/employee satisfaction ratings - An average of the overall satisfaction ratings from jobseeker/employee questionnaire. Scoring: 0 – 5, where 0 is where the provider has not received sufficient feedback, 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied.
- ➔ 2.2E - Percentage of people starting work who sustain paid work for 6 months – Using data for all job starters who became employed more than 6 months before the date of external assessment, calculating the percentage of these who sustain paid employment for a period of 26 weeks or more. Scoring:

≥50% = score 2; ≥60% =score 4; ≥70% = score 6; ≥80% = score 8; ≥90% = score 10.

2d. External Assessment Outcomes for SEQF

If providers receive an external assessment from BASE, there are four potential assessment outcomes:

- ➔ Providers scoring 90% or higher in their overall scoring plus ≥ 20 total in the following Key Performance Indicators 2.2A + 2.2B +2.2E will receive the Excellent Model Fidelity certification mark.
- ➔ Providers scoring between 75% and 89.9% in their overall scoring plus ≥ 15 total in the following Key Performance Indicators 2.2A + 2.2B + 2.2E will receive the Good Model Fidelity certification mark.
- ➔ Providers scoring between 55% and 74.9% in their overall scoring plus ≥ 10 total in the following Key Performance Indicators 2.2A + 2.2B + 2.2E will receive the Accredited Model Fidelity certification mark.
- ➔ Providers scoring less than 55% do not receive a certification mark but can be assessed again in the future.

All providers receive a report regarding the external assessment highlighting good practice and areas for improvement. The provider will submit an action plan against this report before the report is finalised and certification mark is issued.

Please note - The certification mark is awarded for 3 years subject to BASE receiving an annual self-assessment, updated action plan and KPIs from the provider.

3. Commissioning SEQF Considerations

3a. Capacity and Expectations of Providers

As part of the procurement process, consider the provider's capabilities and capacity to deliver the specific Supported Employment model for their specific population group. Remember, Supported Employment is very different from general employment support. This provider consideration may include, knowledge, resources and time, of providers to really understand Supported Employment values and

fidelity and to deliver both at high quality. This might include a track record of previous delivery of high fidelity Supported Employment, evidence of a detailed understanding of fidelity standards and processes to develop and measure them, and demonstration of progressive, person-centred Supported Employment values in line with the social model of disability.

Some key areas around capacity and expectations we would advise commissioners to consider are:

- ➔ Traditional referral sources: Adult Social Care; SEND provision, education providers etc.
- ➔ Maximum caseload of 20.
- ➔ Intensive job matching based on detailed information gathered through in-depth communication and relationship building with a potential employer.
- ➔ Intensive in-work support for both the participant and employer following a “Place, Train then Fade” model in the in-work support phase. A Supported Employment specialist will support an individual in the workplace in person, where required, assisting with induction, adapting training, and putting systems in place to sustain communication around reasonable adjustments etc.
- ➔ Supported Employment staff need to have the knowledge and skills to support disabled and neurodivergent participants and their employers to introduce appropriate solutions in the workplace.
- ➔ Supported Employment staff need to have the knowledge and skills to provide ongoing wraparound support to employers of all sizes.
- ➔ Providers need an understanding of the support networks available to individuals, e.g. Adult Social Care, Mobility support, Welfare Benefits etc.
- ➔ Staff will create a bespoke support package to remove barriers to employment, which constitutes more of a case management role.
- ➔ Unit Cost £5-6K

3b. Minimum Service Delivery Standards

Minimum Service Delivery Standards can be used to ensure potential providers deliver against the minimum service standards of fidelity and through them, agree performance measures which will be used to hold providers to account.

The Minimum Service Delivery Standards can also be linked to delivery fees as an alternative to outcome-based Payment by Results which are solely based on outcomes. In this way a commissioner can guide the correct behaviours and values from their provider, ensuring a person-centred approach, without risking the problematic provider behaviours that can come with outcome-based payment models (e.g. 'parking' jobseekers needing greater support). Evidence demonstrates that a higher scoring fidelity provider produces better outcomes.

Minimum Service Delivery Standards can be managed through the monitoring returns, performance meetings, CPD / staff training records, contract compliance and audit functions.

Below are some examples for guidance:

1. Staff follow written processes – There are written processes that staff follow across the model, and these are reviewed and updated at least annually, these fits in with SEQF criteria: 1.1.9, 1.2.12, 1.3.11, 1.4.10, 1.5.12 & 2.1.3.
2. Pre-Work Support
 - a. Vocational Profiling and Action Plan - The provider and participant must co-produce a vocational profile and action plan. Vocational profiling should start at the first meeting with an individual – i.e. service start appointment and is a live, dynamic, and creative process which is used to understand a person's experiences, skills, abilities, interests, ambitions, and needs with regular reviews. An initial (vocational and action) plan should be completed by 90% of participants within 15 working days of their service start appointment. This is 1.1.8 of SEQF criteria and should demonstrate the need for starting work immediately with a participant on a rapid job search and getting to know an individual. Providers should give detail about the content and style of their vocational profiling and action planning processes in their tender submission.

- b. Co-produced Vocational Profiles and action plans are in place for all participants. These are live and updated monthly as a minimum. This fits with the following SEQF criteria: 1.2.1, 1.2.5, 1.2.6 & 1.2.11.

3. Employer Engagement & Job Matching

- a. The provider and the participant must undertake rapid job search in line with the participant's preferences using formal and informal methods including identifying opportunities in the hidden job market through good and proactive employer engagement. If the participant requests support for self-employment, the provider must be able to support with this, and they may link in with other organisations that specialise in this area. use other specialist services to offer this. Providers will be required to set out how they will support all participants to find paid jobs and how they will work with, and their offer for, employers in their tender submission. The delivery model should include measures to ensure that Employment Specialists dedicate appropriate time and investigate all potential avenues to employment, widening the scope where applicable. Providers will be required to set out how they will do this in their tender submission.
- b. Understanding the business case for both participants and employers - Staff understand that employers are key customers with their own business needs and staff understand the business case. This fits with the following SEQF criteria: 1.3.6 & 1.3.9. Providers will be required to set out how they will ensure that staff are appropriately trained to understand and deliver Supported Employment. There should be a clear employer engagement plan that demonstrates the frequency of contact. Robust Continuous Improvement Development and emphasis on a participant led values-based approach.
- c. Job Analysis is used alongside Vocational Profiles to identify the skills gap and how to bridge the skills gap. This fits with the following SEQF criteria: 1.4.2, 1.4.5 & 1.4.7.

4. In-Work Support Plan - Once a Participant has gained a paid job, the Provider will continue to provide support to meet participant and employer needs. The provider and Participant must co-produce an in-work support plan in line with the following SEQF criteria: 1.5.4, 1.5.5, 1.5.6, 1.5.10 & 1.5.14. This should be reviewed and updated monthly as a minimum. This plan should include supporting the participant, and their employer, to find and develop the natural sources of support that exist within and around individuals and workplaces to enable individuals to sustain their job and enhance their experience of work, including socially. It may also include supporting participants to increase the number of hours they work or could involve supporting participants into a different job in line with their aspirations with choice and chance of progression and promotion. Where relevant, it will include exploring what support might be available to participants through a Department for Work and Pension's Access to Work grant. Providers will be required to set out how they will provide on/off job support to both Participants and to employers in their tender submission. The delivery model should include training for Supported Employment specialists on the support available and how the provider will work in partnership with other stakeholders to ensure staff are kept abreast of new developments in this area.
5. Data Collection Systems – A provider is expected to have a data collection system and processes in place capable of analysing, promoting and appropriately reviewing performance which fits with the following SEQF criteria: 2.11, 2.1.4, 2.15 & 2.16.
6. Providers have in place a clear set of activities to complete internal fidelity assessment, including training and development, to grow understanding, adherence and delivery of high-quality fidelity and values.

3c. Delivery Fee

Another option for ensuring that the commissioned provider is operating to good fidelity is to attach a portion of the delivery fee to achieving set outcomes on the SEQF review. This could reduce the resourcing required from the commissioner's programme office team around monitoring and validation.

An example of this could be that 20% of the delivery fee could be dependent on achieving minimum levels you would expect to see on a first SEQF assessment, which could be broken down further as per below:

- ➔ That processes and procedures have been implemented against the 5 stages of Supported Employment (5%)
- ➔ Co-produced vocational profiles and action plans in place (5%)
- ➔ Active employer engagement (5%)
- ➔ Job starts (5%)

Proposed details and measures could be discussed and supported through BASE during the tender design process.

3d. Invitation to Tender

Invitation to Tender (ITT) questions provide the opportunity for a potential provider to demonstrate an understanding of Supported Employment values and fidelity and if they can deliver both at high quality.

Some suggested questions that could be used within an ITT are:

1) Track record of previous delivery of high fidelity and high values SEQF

Supported Employment services:

- ➔ Please provide details of up to xx contracts, in any combination from either the public or private sector; voluntary, charity or social enterprise (VCSE) that are relevant to our requirement. VCSEs may include samples of grant-funded work. Contracts for supplies or services should have been performed during the past three years. Works contracts may be from the past five years.
- ➔ Please describe your, and your supply chain's if you have one, experience of delivering Supported Employment services that work with participants and employers to achieve job outcomes for people with complex disabilities and health needs. This must include experience of delivering services for people with a learning disability, neurodivergent people and other disabilities.
- ➔ Outline your experience and examples of engaging with employers through proactive broad-brush employment engagement that has led to employment outcomes, including the use of job shaping

- ➔ Outline your experience and how you intend to deliver to a high-fidelity service model.

2) Evidence of a detailed understanding of SEQF fidelity standards and processes to strengthen and measure them from service launch and on an on-going basis thereafter:

- ➔ Please describe your approach to staffing the service with regard to the sub-criteria below, and if relevant to your model how you will do this across your entire supply chain:
 - Leadership and management of the Service
 - Recruitment and selection of staff and how you will ensure that you attract and retain staff with the necessary skills, experience, values, and qualities to work with the eligible participants and with employers.
 - The training, development, and supervision of staff to gain:
 - Skills in person-centred conversational and communication technique for working with all eligible participants.
 - The skills and knowledge for working with employers.
 - A culture of learning and reflective practice amongst staff
 - How will you ensure that all staff follow the 12 core values of SEQF.
 - How will you support your frontline staff working on the contract.
- ➔ How will you engage with jobseekers, support vocational profiling, and action planning, matching the relevant skills and aspirations of the person with the realities of the local job market using personal profiling?
- ➔ How will you engage with employers, supporting employers with the business case and ensuring good job matching and In-Work Support until the person is working interdependently with the natural supports within the workplace?
Please detail your offer to provide appropriate in-work support to both client and employer.

3) Building fidelity into the Delivery Model:

- ➔ How your service delivery model responds to the principles of delivery of Supported Employment and key requirements outlined in the Specification.
- ➔ How you will deliver services across the relevant area, managing capacity and demand in line with the requirements in the Specification.

- ➔ Confirmation of what your anticipated caseload sizes will be. Please note that these must be within the specified caseload sizes as per SEQF guidelines.
- ➔ Demonstrate how your delivery model will ensure that participants gain good quality employment, specifically working towards secure jobs paid at Real Living Wage.
- ➔ What you identify as the main challenges of your proposed delivery model and how you intend to overcome them.
- ➔ Your approach to gathering feedback from participants on the support they have received and how you will use this feedback to improve the service (where appropriate).
- ➔ How will you ensure delivery, measurement and continual improvement of SEQF fidelity, values and ways of working.

4) Demonstration of progressive, person-centred Supported Employment values in line with the social model of disability:

- ➔ What are the key values (or similar) of your organisation and how will you embed these in your proposed delivery model?
- ➔ Regarding participants, please describe how partnership and co-production will underpin the Service in relation to both:
 - The delivery of the Service
 - The ongoing development and improvement of the Service

3e. Training for Providers and Staff

It is important that provider staff receive training and development in Supported Employment to support continuous improvement and delivering high quality services to all participants. When commissioners are working with providers in this area, we recommend that commissioners support providers in accessing high quality training and may consider the following questions:

- ➔ Does the training provider use trainers that have worked in or alongside Supported Employment?
- ➔ Does the training cover all five stages of the Supported Employment model, values, and quality assurance as a minimum?
- ➔ How many years has the provider been delivering training and has this been Supported Employment job coaching or generic coaching?

- ➔ Does the provider use the National occupational standards at the heart of the training?
- ➔ What training methods are used and how do they check the understanding of participants?
- ➔ What career pathway training does the provider offer, to support the ongoing development of the Supported Employment sector?

4.Supporting Providers with SEQF

4a. Contract Compliance

Commissioners can monitor performance of a Supported Employment provider through contract compliance against the Minimum Service Delivery Standards and use these as an opportunity to provide reflection to the provider and support their provision.

4b. Quality of SEQF Provision

There is [comprehensive information](#) available about preparing for an SEQF assessment that we would recommend commissioners are familiar with and use this to support a provider's continuous improvement journey.

Commissioners could provide support to providers through several ways but please remember that services need to get on with delivery and the support from commissioners should be seen as helpful and supportive and not too onerous on a provider. Areas that commissioners could support with are:

- ➔ Set expectations from the outset that providers will participate in external fidelity reviews as well as development of a set of internal training, supervision, and assessment activities to continually monitor, strengthen and reflect on fidelity and values within the service.
- ➔ Local commissioners and relevant wider local partners should expect to be actively involved in the development and improvement of the service, helping providers access key referral partners, troubleshoot issues, and gradually strengthen fidelity and values, referrals, and outcomes in the service. A strong stakeholder group that meets regularly can be invaluable to guide and

enhance the service. Members of this group could include: the provider, commissioner, Adult Social Care representatives, experts by experience, SEND education providers, SEND Information, Advice and Guidance service, Local Authority Work and Skills leads.

- ➔ Commissioners should expect to invest time, energy, and potential resource to support newer providers to embed into the local service ecosystem to set up strong referral pathways. Warm introductions to Adult Social Care services, SEND Education providers etc. cannot be underestimated to successful mobilisation. It is also advisable to keep an open-door policy for potential referral partners to contact the commissioning team with any issues or concerns once the programme is live.
- ➔ Commissioners should expect providers to require training and development around Supported Employment fidelity and values for several months and on an on-going basis thereafter.
- ➔ Commissioners could set KPIs in line with the SEQF KPIs, some examples are below:
 - a. Caseloads to be a maximum of 20 for a full-time equivalent member of staff.
 - b. At least 40% of total Programme Starts to achieve a Job Start (first earnings at market wage rates in the open labour market) within 12 months of programme start;
 - c. At least 70% of all Job Starts to achieve 26-week sustainment.
- ➔ Support providers in having standardised documentation across the provision, which could include onboarding people to provision, initial assessments, vocational profiles, action plans, job analysis, employer engagement plans, in-work support plans etc.
- ➔ Support with a strategic plan at the beginning of delivery that can be continually monitored and updated. This will ease the pressure of a self-assessment and foster an attitude of continual improvement.
- ➔ Monthly data reviews and audits – which could include data against KPIs set and KPIs within the SEQF, processes, systems and procedures. Staffordshire County Council have been working alongside BASE to develop [a tool that commissioners could use as part of the monitoring process.](#)

- ➔ Setting up communities of practice – bringing providers together to discuss the SEQF and identify areas of good practice, areas for improvement etc. Make sure providers and their staff understand the importance of quality.

5. Other Aligned Provision

Supported Employment techniques are also used across a range of other initiatives.

5a. Inclusive Apprenticeships

Inclusive Apprenticeships are a recognised route into employment. Inclusive Apprenticeships should provide support to disabled people and ensure that reasonable adjustments are made throughout the apprenticeship lifecycle. There are specific criteria around English, Maths and functional skills regarding Inclusive Apprenticeships and these rules change periodically so we would recommend staff supporting disabled people onto Inclusive Apprenticeships keep up to date with guidance. <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/>

5b. Individual Placement & Support (IPS)

IPS is a Supported Employment approach that has been developed for people experiencing severe mental health issues. Its usage has expanded to other population groups over the past decade including individuals with low to moderate mental health and/or physical health conditions as well as substantive misuse issues. IPS principles and values differ only slightly from SEQF Supported Employment. However, the details of the IPS model in terms of its fidelity scale and implementation do differ in significant ways from SEQF Supported Employment given the differing population groups between the two. A key difference for example is the need inside IPS to co-locate and integrate IPS employment support staff with relevant clinical teams. Conversely, elements like travel training, TSI and job analysis that are often key for individuals within learning disabilities and/or neurodivergence and/or other disadvantages are found within SEQF Supported Employment but not within IPS services. As such, IPS and SEQF should be considered as parallel, complementary Supported Employment models tailored to different population groups.

Further information: [What is IPS? - Individual Placement Support - IPS Grow](#)

5c. Supported Internships

Supported Internships are an education study programme for young people with learning disabilities aged 16 to 25 with an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP) or a Learning Difficulty Assessment (or their equivalents in Wales and Scotland) who want to move into employment and need extra support to do so. Put simply, they are an exit route from education into paid employment.

Supported Internships are work-based learning placements within mainstream employment settings. The aim is to secure a job at the end of the placement. Placements should last 6-12 months and normally would extend to at least 20 hours per week. Often, they involve three rotations i.e. the learner would try out three work roles within the company. A school, college or training provider delivers group learning around the placement, often at the start and end of the day, but sometimes through day release. Many colleges contract with Supported Employment agencies to provide the job coaching element of the course and to support onwards career pathways. Employers also play a key role in the internships. The key is to develop a strong partnership between employer, college, Supported Employment provider and the local authority.

Further information: [Supported internships - GOV.UK](#)

6. Further Training and Resources

This document is designed to provide guidance and ideas for those looking to commission high quality SEQF provision. It is not exhaustive and would need to be modified to reflect the needs in the relevant geographical area, considering existing provision as well as gaps. However, we are always here to support BASE members and if you have any questions or require further support, please feel free to contact us at training@base-uk.org

BASE has numerous opportunities for providers to support Continuing Professional Development through our membership and training offer.

BASE have produced [a variety of free resources](#) to support organisations through the SEQF process. More resources can be found in Your Membership within the BASE community.

Additionally, there are further free [short training videos](#) for people to access covering Supported Employment and accessibility.

Inclusive Trading CIC was established in 2010, and is owned by the BASE, the charity and with a shared mission that employment must be for all.

Inclusive Trading CIC delivers high quality, training, and consultancy to support the Supported Employment sector. Inclusive Trading is committed to offering and delivering accredited and non-accredited training and consultancy to Supported Employment providers and other customers to reflect the wide range of skills used within the Supported Employment industry.

If you're interested in learning more about the cost and membership benefits of joining the BASE community please visit [Benefits of Joining the British Association for Supported Employment](#)

For more information on the training and other services available through Inclusive Trading CIC visit [Training & Consultancy from Inclusive Trading CIC](#)

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