



Education & Skills
Funding Agency



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Skills Support for the Work Force Development Plan

ESF 2014-2020 Education and Skills Funding Agency

Provider Name	PeoplePlus
Contract Number	SSU ESF-5066
LEP	Lancashire
Date	22/5/2019

Section 1 Overview

The ESF SSU project in the Lancashire LEP area is being delivered by PeoplePlus as the Lead Accountable Body (LAB). PeoplePlus has 3 delivery partners.

The contract runs from April 2019 to 31 July 2021. The ESF contract value is £4,399,645 with 2901 learners to be supported.

This Development Plan summarises the activities that will be undertaken by PeoplePlus and partners to address the specific requirements set out in the Invitation to Tender Specification published by the ESFA.

Some of the activities included in this Development Plan build on those that were delivered as part of the Engagement Activity Plan for the previous SSU project.

Section 2 Stakeholders

This Development Plan has been prepared in consultation with colleagues from the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, part of the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

It will be shared with the project steering group and the Lancashire Skills and Employment Advisory Panel (a sub-group of the LEP) as will progress reports regarding its implementation on a regular basis.

Stakeholders with a particular interest in the project are represented on the Steering Group include the LEP Skills and Employment Hub, members of the Lancashire Adult Skills Forum, Economic Development Officers, referral organisations across the region, Lancashire Work Based Learning Executive Forum and Job Centre Plus.

Section 3 Proposed Activity

Describe the activity the plan will deliver (including the rationale for this activity)

1. Ensuring strategic fit - To ensure that the project adds value, complements and avoids duplication with other activities in the LEP area, in particular working drive forward the Lancashire Adult Skills Forum and the Escalator Model.
Support and develop the on-line tool Escalate to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.
Targeting and priority setting - To ensure that provision is flexible and responsive to local conditions, takes into account local LMI and focuses on the target groups requested in the specification and to ensure the programme responds to the skills needs of the LEP's priority sectors.
2. Marketing and promotion - To support the referral of businesses and residents to the project, directly and through intermediaries/stakeholders. To encourage employers to work with the project to offer opportunities and progression routes for learners and to inform curriculum design.
3. Work to promote the Lancashire Skills Escalator to support referrals onto other ESF projects, Apprenticeships and further education and support.
4. Ensure alignment with other LEP strategic initiatives – To ensure that SSU aligns and is responsive to other LEP strategic priorities including the Technical Education Vision and the Digital Skills Partnership.
5. Strategic Partnership Manager - To allocate resource to work in partnership with Lancashire's Skills Hub, to support development and implementation of the project and to forge links with other opt-in projects, BBO projects and directly matched ESIF projects.
6. Steering the SSU Project - Create and manage a steering group which will sit across all strands of activity with relevant local stakeholders, which will report to the LEP via the Skills and Employment Advisory Panel.
7. Working with the Business Growth Hub (BOOST) - To put in place a data sharing and a service level agreement with the Lancashire Growth Hub (Boost) and input employer contacts and activity on the Growth Hub CRM system. The data will be used to support referrals from the Growth Hub, a joined up approach to employer engagement and to support Lancashire-wide marketing campaigns promoting business support products and skills and will work enable People Plus to work pro-actively with the Growth Hub to support business support simplification and effective engagement of employers.
8. Evaluation – To undertake evaluation of the project at the mid and end point of the project with the aim of ensuring continued learning.

Section 4 Action plan

(including timescales and responsibility)

Action	Timescales	Lead
1. Ensuring Strategic fit		
Participate in the Adult Skills Forum to share information and intelligence with the providers of other projects and activities, share good practice and support partnership working etc.	Ongoing	SG/JT

Develop and promote the Skills Escalator Model ensuring that this provides clarity for Lancashire referral agencies and to ensure that this supports cross referrals and progression activity.	July 2019	JT
Chair the Adult Skills Skills Forum ensuring that ToR and membership are relevant to the employer facing ESF projects and includes leads for other projects available for the target group.	Ongoing	SG
Ensure that all staff members and partners are using the system to cross refer when SSU is not the best option for a resident and to ensure progression routes for participants where appropriate.	Ongoing with at steering group meetings	JT
Ensure all provision is adequacy included on the system,	May 2019	JT and Partners
2. Targeting and priority setting		
Work with the LEP Skills and Employment Hub to develop a programme which responds to the changing needs of the community/businesses including recruitment activity for the seven priority areas of Lancashire.	June 2019	JT/SL
Ensure activity is promoted and accessed by the priority group described in the tender document.	June 2019	JT
Review the Gap Analysis research (vis partners and Escalate) to show the availability of flexible provision for those aged 19+ compared with identified needs, and geographical areas.	August 2019	SG
Pending the findings of the research, agree further actions to encourage increased availability of projects across the required areas.	Late 2019	SG
3. Marketing and promotion		
Work with the LEP Skills and Employment Hub to build on the Skills Pledge, ensuring positive and prompt employer support.	June 2019	JT
Support the full roll out of the Skills Pledge Model across Lancashire.	September 2019	SG/JT
Enter into an SLA with the Skills and Employment Hub that sets out the role of PeoplePlus in responding to the Skills Pledge requests.	June 2019	SG/JT
Develop a project website to help promote the project to key referral agencies and businesses in Lancashire.	August 2019	JT/SL
Develop marketing collateral to promote the project to the target group and referral agencies (leaflets, banner stands etc.) This should be Lancashire focused and is to include both employer and learner facing materials.	June 2019	JT/SL
Engage referral agencies, JCP and LA Economic Development (or similar) teams to promote the project and agree referral protocols for residents.	On-going	SG/JT
Attend key local events e.g. Jobs Fairs to promote the project to residents, employers and referral agencies.	On-going	SG/JT
4. Progression pathways		

Participate in the Lancashire Apprenticeship Action Group. Contribute to the development of the action plan and ongoing monitoring of the plan to support progressions onto Apprenticeships.	On-going	SG
Work with partners to bring the Lancashire Skills Escalator to life to map clear pathways and next steps for learners and businesses.	September 2019 and then ongoing	SG/JT
5. Alignment with LEP strategic initiatives		
Participate in and support the LEP Local Digital skills Partnership (LDSP) Ensure the development of appropriate provision that respond to the findings of the research undertaken through this partnership.	April 2019 and ongoing	SG/JT
	August 2019	SG/JT
6. Strategic Partnership Manager		
Provide a resource to work with in partnership with Lancashire's Skills Hub to co-ordinate delivery between this project and other ESIF projects in the area.	April 2019	SL
7. Steering the SSU Project		
Request the continuation of the existing Steering Group for this new contract.	May 2019	SG
Chair SSU steering Group, review Terms of Reference and Membership of the Steering Group. Ensure that the reporting reflects the outcomes of the projects and meets the needs of the Skills and Employment Hub.	1 st meeting post April 2019	SG
Participate in SSU steering group and in particular ensure the presentation of comprehensive information to enable the group to fulfil their role in steering the project.	On-going	SG/JT
8. Working with the Business Growth Hub (BOOST)		
To complete and sign the data sharing and service level agreement (MOU) with the Lancashire Growth Hub (Boost).	July 2019	JT
To develop the mechanisms for inputting employer data on the Growth Hub (BOOST) CRM.	June 2019	JT
9. Evaluation		
Conduct an evaluation at the end of the project to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the contract from commissioning through to delivery to inform future practice and priorities.	July 2021	JT/SL

Section 5 Impact of Activity

Activity	Impacts
1. Ensuring strategic fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased understanding among stakeholders including intermediaries and referral agencies of the differentiation between different ESF funded project offers. Increased and more relevant referrals to other ESF funded projects. Clarity for JCP partners and stakeholders of the skills offer.
2. Support Escalate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased activity from referral agencies. Supported gap reporting across Lancashire.

3. Targeting and priority setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project meets the gaps identified by the tender and through research undertaken by the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub.
4. Marketing and promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective Skills Pledge model that enables employers to engage with the comprehensive skills offer in Lancashire. Increased referrals to the project and in particular via the Lancashire Skills Pledge and dedicated website.
5. Alignment with other LEP Strategic Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Skills offer contributes to the Skills Gaps identified through the Lancashire Digital Skills Partnership. Effective Lancashire digital skills offer. Effective working relationships with wider delivery partners including BBO, directly matched ESF providers, Adult and Community Learning etc.
6. Strategic Partnership Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued focus of SSU on LEP strategic priorities and that it is complimentary to and aligns with other provision. Delivery of the development plan.
7. Steering the SSU Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective Stakeholder engagement.
8. Working with the Business Growth Hub (BOOST)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased referrals from BOOST and BOOST partners and also referrals to other Business support products. Increase awareness of stakeholders including intermediaries and businesses of the comprehensive skills and business support offer.
9. Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the contract from commissioning through to delivery. Influences ESFA and LEP priorities and commissioning and contracting arrangements.

Section 6 Key Risks

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Key personnel change	Low	Low	The coordination of the delivery of the plan will be led by the Strategic Partnership Manager. The Partnership approach to this plan including the monitoring of the plan by the SSU Steering Group will ensure that any resourcing issues are flagged at an early stage and addressed.
Lack of engagement of learners and/or employers.	Medium	Medium	PeoplePlus have dedicated learner/employer engagement officers across Lancashire to support this activity.
Key stakeholders do not engage in activities detailed in the plan and therefore alignment of ESF	Low	Medium	Strategic Partnership manager post is in place to drive and facilitate effective working between ESF funded projects.

funded project is not effective.			
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Section 7 Meeting the LEP Priorities

The Development Plan has been shaped through consultation with the LEP Skills and Employment Hub and the activity included within it is aligned with the wider strategic activity of the LEP and supports the key themes in the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework particularly "Inclusive Workforce"

In delivering the plan there will be continued focus on considering the skills gaps within the LEPS priority sectors as follows and focusing support and development of new recruitment activity for employers and innovation in these sectors

- Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering
- Energy and Environment
- Finance and Professional Services
- Visitor Economy
- Creative and Digital
- Health and Social Care
- Construction

There will be a focus on the priority groups noted in the tender these include:-

- Participants over 50 years of age
- Participants from ethnic minorities
- Participants with disabilities
- Participants without Basic Skills
- Participants who live in a single household with dependent children
- Female Participants

Key priority will be given to working alongside other projects to support the Lancashire Skills Escalator, ensuring activity is complementary and employment opportunities link to the priority sectors across Lancashire as noted above. The plan will support the development of progression into additional learning and apprenticeships and in particular support the focus on higher level learning and progression into degree apprenticeships.

Section 8 Monitoring and Review

This Development Plan will be shared with the project steering group and the Lancashire Skills and Employment Advisory Panel (a sub-group of the LEP) as will progress reports regarding its implementation on a regular basis.

The individuals named in the Action Plan will jointly review progress and risks to ensure that activities are on-track, they will also consider whether any additional activities or actions should be added to the plan as the project progresses.

Section 9 Measures of Success

The main measure of success will be the extent to which the contract is successfully delivered and meets LEP priorities as identified in the ESFA contract specification.

The MI provided to the ESFA and included in reports for use by the Steering Group and the Lancashire Skills and Employment Advisory Panel will indicate the extent to which this has been achieved.

Completed By

Date

LEP Approval date

ESFA Approval date