

WORKSTEP DISTANCE TRAVELLED PROJECT

BACKGROUND

Following on from the WORKSTEP Programme evaluation, DWP has commissioned the Centre for Public Policy, at Northumbria University to undertake a new two year project. This research will explore a distance travelled approach to WORKSTEP development planning and aims to develop and pilot a tool for the measurement of 'in-programme' progression or distance travelled for supported employees.

INTERVIEWS AND WORKSHOPS

Stage one: Researchers will seek to identify and learn from existing good practice, working with stakeholders to develop a tool which will be pilot tested in stage two. This will involve:

- Reviewing existing literature
- Specialist advice from an expert academic panel
- Interviews with a range of other stakeholders:
 - Provider staff
 - Contract Managers
 - Specialists within DWP
 - Representatives from ALLI, DEAC, BASE and Trades Unions
- Review of current methods for measuring progression within WORKSTEP, aiming to highlight specific areas of good practice among providers
- A series of three workshops for WORKSTEP providers in October and November 2006. This will gather further views on distance travelled to facilitate development of the tool, and recruit providers for stage two, the pilot phase of the Distance Travelled Project.
- Providers for the pilot will be selected to include a range covering contract size, and type of provision. The sample will also aim to cover a range of organisational types (not for profit, private etc).

PILOTING THE TOOL

Stage two: Researchers will facilitate and monitor the piloting of the Distance Travelled tool with ten selected providers of the WORKSTEP programme.

- Development of the tool will continue following phase one interviews and workshops, and an introductory session will be held with the pilot providers in January 2007.
- Regular contact will be maintained with the pilot providers throughout this phase via email, telephone, and monitoring visits.
- Providers will also work in pairs to carry out 'peer review' sessions.
- The Distance Travelled tool will be piloted for 18 months with interim and final review meetings for all of those involved in October 2007 and June 2008.
- Recommendations will be generated to inform the process for the development of distance travelled within WORKSTEP and other DWP policies and programmes.

PROJECT TEAM

- Ann Purvis, *Senior Research Consultant, Centre for Public Policy*
- James Lowrey, *Senior Research Assistant, Centre for Public Policy*
- Rebecca Law, *Research Assistant, Centre for Public Policy*

Contact details for the Centre are given at the bottom of the page, and you can also email questions about the project to Ann Purvis or James Lowrey:

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Copies of the WORKSTEP Evaluation Report and Summary can be found at:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep348.pdf>

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/summ2005-2006/348summ.pdf>