

Proposals for a Supported Employment Quality Mark:

A discussion paper

**British Association for
Supported Employment**

**Scottish Union of
Supported Employment**

October 2013



Discussion Paper: Proposals for a Supported Employment Quality Mark

Context

We know that supported employment is increasingly recognised as the evidence-based approach which is most effective at supporting people with significant disabilities and other disadvantages into paid employment. Despite this, there is no nationally accredited Quality Mark at present for supported employment service providers. This is leading to many supported employment providers working towards other quality standards which do not fit as these are often required within commissioning arrangements.

From its inception, BASE has sought to promote quality standards in the delivery of Supported Employment. BASE's policy is that:

- All providers of specialist employment support should be subject to inspection using a common set of standards founded on evidence-based practice. Quality inspections should be proportionate and fit for purpose. Best practice should be identified and widely disseminated.
- Providers should adopt quality assurance processes that are designed to enable benchmarking across the sector.

Equally, SUSE's mission statement outlines its commitment to improving quality:

- SUSE will promote a professional approach to the delivery of Supported Employment, leading to excellence in service delivery.

Therefore BASE and SUSE wish to consult with stakeholders about the design of an accreditation system that recognises the quality of service provision.

The key questions for the quality standards are:

- 1) Do you think there is a need for supported employment to have a Quality Mark?
- 2) Do you think the criteria in the 5 Elements are fit for purpose?
- 3) How should it be costed, how often should it take place, and which agency should implement the inspection?

We would welcome your thoughts on this matter and look forward to hearing your views.

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Quality Standards

It is proposed that we introduce quality service standards that can be administered, registered, accredited and monitored, leading to the award of a Quality Mark.

The framework is a concise set of service standards for the provision of supported employment which are measurable, driving and providing continuous quality improvement for providers. They should also provide a Quality Mark for those purchasing supported employment services, which would include commissioners, disabled people and their family carers, and for those using services e.g. employers.

We have undertaken a mapping exercise against other quality standards that are often used within supported employment (EUSE, National Occupational Standards, Supported Employment Quality Assurance, Matrix, Ofsted, Customer Service Excellence, Investors in People, ISO 9001) to ensure that we reduce duplication.

The standards proposed fit with Government agendas and other initiatives across the UK which include:

- Fulfilling Potential – Making it Happen (HM Government, July 2013)
- Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People (HM Government, 2005);
- Valuing Employment Now (HM Government, 2009);
- No Health Without Mental Health (2011);
- Autism Strategy 2011: Fulfilling and rewarding lives (HM Government, 2009);
- Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disabilities (Dept for Education, March 2011);
- Perfect Partnership (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2012);
- Getting in, staying in and getting on: Disability employment support fit for the future (HM Government, June 2011);
- More Choices, More Chances (Scottish Executive, 2006);
- Achieving Our Potential (Scottish Government, November 2008);
- A Working Life for All Disabled People: The Supported Employment Framework for Scotland (Scottish Government, 2010);
- National Occupational Standards for supported employment (UKCES, 2012);
- Certificate (Level 3) for Supported Employment Practitioners (QFA, 2012)
- Personal Development Award (level 7) in Supported Employment (SQA, 2012)
- EUSE - A quality standards framework for supported employment (EUSE).

Key Question 1 - Do you think there is a need for supported employment to have a Quality Mark?

The benefits of quality standards to stakeholders

Commissioners

- The quality standards will enable commissioners to be more confident that the services they are purchasing are high quality and cost effective in delivering sustainable employment outcomes, and are focussed on driving up quality.
- The standards will be independently assessed and reviewed.
- The standards fit in with supported employment principles recognised by the European Union of Supported Employment.
- The standards link to the new supported employment National Occupational Standards ratified by the UK Commission on Employment and Skills.
- The standards fit with Government agendas throughout the UK.
- The standards can be used within relevant procurement processes as a Quality Mark that is recognised.

Supported Employment providers

- The standards will enable providers to be more confident that the services they are providing are high quality and cost effective in delivering sustainable employment outcomes, and are focussed on driving up quality.
- The standards will allow for providers to examine the performance of their organisation and assess improvement in their provision.
- A nationally accredited quality standard will demonstrate quality within tendering opportunities and in the marketing of services.
- The standards will help in the development of partnerships and consortia.

People using supported employment services which includes people with disabilities and employers

- The standards will help individuals, supporters, employers and other agencies identify the quality of services they should expect and which provider services are able to deliver that quality.

The Framework

1. Leadership, Management & Achievement

Quality Standard Criteria	What Does this Mean?
1a) The service is provided with clear leadership and direction.	<p>The organisation has a mission statement that commits them to integrated employment and community inclusion.</p> <p>Managers can describe how they lead and direct people. Staff can describe how well managers lead them to deliver the service.</p> <p>The service is clear about how it helps to address identified local needs.</p>
1b) The service implements a strategic plan with short, medium and long term goals and objectives for service development that are linked to customer needs and expectations.	<p>A Strategic plan is in place with relevant goals which is monitored and reviewed regularly. This plan takes into consideration jobseekers, employers and partnerships needs and expectations.</p> <p>Additionally, systems are in place to source, allocate, monitor and evaluate financial resources.</p> <p>The service has a clear description of the service offer and can demonstrate how this is implemented and reviewed.</p>
1c) The service sets demanding job outcome targets which are monitored and met.	<p>The service collects and analyses job outcome achievements and sets targets for staff to achieve demanding job outcome targets.</p> <p>Examples of definitions of job outcomes are provided.</p> <p>Managers and staff can describe how they are set and who is involved.</p>
1d) The service defines quality assurance approaches which analyse data and feedback on the service to build upon its strengths and address any areas	<p>The service has a clear quality assurance system that shows a system of continuous evaluation and improvement of performance in all aspects of service.</p> <p>The service collects and analyses data on customer</p>

<p>for improvement.</p>	<p>outcomes, staff productivity and customer satisfaction.</p> <p>Managers and staff are able to explain how all aspects of the service are reviewed against the measurable aims and objectives including marketing/engagement, service delivery, resources, leadership/management.</p> <p>Managers and staff can describe how the service is quality assured and what plans, policies, procedures and/or processes are in place and how they are implemented.</p>
<p>1e) The service structure promotes clear communication, responsibilities and accountability.</p>	<p>There is an organisational structure with clear lines of communication and accountability.</p> <p>Staff are supported and supervised.</p> <p>Staff are clear about who they report to and who has responsibility for the various aspects of service design and delivery.</p>
<p>1f) The service has a clear understanding of key, local and national policies and has explicit links to multi-agency strategies.</p>	<p>Managers and staff can give examples of policies and how the aims of the service fit with multi-agency strategies.</p> <p>The service is named as having responsibility for achieving objectives within local multi-agency strategies.</p>
<p>1g) The service complies with legislative requirements and has robust policies and procedures to ensure the health, safety and well-being of jobseekers.</p>	<p>The service has policies and procedures to ensure equality of opportunity and the protection of the rights of all.</p> <p>Systems and protocols are in place to ensure confidentiality, data sharing and the protection of personal information.</p> <p>The service ensures equality of opportunity, equal access/participation and non-discriminatory practice at all levels of the service.</p> <p>Managers and staff can describe and give examples of legislation including how it impacts on the</p>

	<p>service.</p> <p>Staff can demonstrate the use of relevant documentation to ensure the health, safety and well-being of jobseekers.</p>
1h) There is a clear understanding of local labour market needs and circumstances.	Managers and staff can demonstrate an accurate understanding of the local labour market and how this influences the delivery of services to customers.
1i) The service understands local demographics and gauges equality of access and achievement within the service.	Customer access to the service and the achievement of outcomes is representative of local demographics.
1j) The service promotes and resources a learning culture in which creativity, innovation and risk-taking is supported and where staff and individuals feel empowered.	<p>Resources and time are allocated for staff development and learning.</p> <p>Structures are in place for staff and managers to contribute to service development.</p>
1k) The service provided is impartial and objective in its relations with employers and jobseekers.	<p>Managers and staff are able to demonstrate how they ensure the service is impartial, free from bias and objective.</p> <p>Employers and jobseekers can describe how they are made aware of any potential conflicts of interest in the advice provided and understand the limitations of the service.</p>

2. Effective Use of Resources

Quality Standard Criteria	What does this Mean?
2a) Caseloads are manageable and allow for individualised support for clients.	<p>The organisation maintains an appropriate staff to jobseeker ratio, depending on customer groups and needs.</p> <p>Staff and managers can explain the sizes of caseloads and how they allow for individualized support.</p>
2b) Premises used are comfortable, accessible, safe and welcoming and provide facilities for confidential discussion.	<p>Private space is available for confidential meetings.</p> <p>Premises are warm, welcoming and comfortably furnished.</p>
2c) The service actively engages with commissioners and funding bodies to source and allocate financial resources.	<p>Service managers and commissioners discuss and agree the appropriateness of budgets and outputs.</p>
2d) The service has systems in place to monitor and evaluate the effective use of financial resources in meeting individual customer need.	<p>Managers and staff are able to explain how the level of resource, in relation to customer needs, are established and can give examples of this.</p>
2e) The service ensures that data is accurate, reliable and accessible.	<p>Data is collected, quality-assured and available to those who need access to it in order to monitor that service delivery meets customer needs.</p>
2f) All data is held securely, IT systems are backed up and a business continuity plan is in place.	<p>Data is held securely and a schedule of back-ups is in place. A business continuity plan is in place and regularly reviewed.</p>

<p>2g) Customers and partners are provided with current, accurate and quality assured information that is accessible.</p>	<p>Managers and staff can explain different methods of how the service is promoted – what works well and why in relation to the audience.</p> <p>Managers and staff are able to define the service offering and give examples of how they ensure customers understand.</p> <p>Customers and partners are able to give examples of the types of information they were able to access and explain how appropriate it was to their needs.</p> <p>Managers and staff can describe what quality assurance purposes are in place to ensure information is current, accurate, accessible, written in plain language, and free from bias.</p> <p>Managers and staff delivering the service can explain how they support customers and how the resources they use are quality assured.</p>
<p>2h) The service works actively to build and strengthen the exchange of resources with key partners.</p>	<p>Managers, staff and partners can demonstrate joint working and the benefits of this.</p> <p>Jobseekers can describe what other agencies are linked in to support their employment journey.</p>
<p>2i) Clients are provided with, and supported to use, appropriate resources including access to technology.</p>	<p>Jobseekers are able to describe and give examples of what resources were made available when exploring different and appropriate options.</p>
<p>2j) The service understands and accesses a range of appropriate learning tools and resources.</p>	<p>Staff can demonstrate the various tools and resources used for delivery and how they evaluate and update them.</p>

3. Staff Capability and Competence

Quality Standards Criteria	What does this Mean?
<p>3a) The organisation defines the skills, knowledge, competencies and qualifications, in line with current national recognised professional qualifications and frameworks, for individual staff roles, linked to the aims and objectives of the service.</p>	<p>The organisation has a staff recruitment and retention policy that promotes the selection and retention of high quality staff.</p> <p>There are clear competencies and responsibilities defined for each job role within the organisation.</p> <p>Managers can describe and give examples of how they identify and define the skills, knowledge and competencies of staff roles linked to achieving the aims and objectives of the service including being aware of the boundaries of their role.</p> <p>Managers and staff can describe the qualifications and frameworks which are appropriate to their delivery role.</p>
<p>3b) Rigorous performance management and appropriate professional development is used to meet service targets and objectives.</p>	<p>Staff have targets which are monitored as part of the supervision and appraisal process.</p> <p>The organisation ensures all staff have their performance reviewed on a regular basis and that they receive adequate support to fulfil their role and achieve outcomes.</p> <p>Staff have access to regular professional development and individual training needs are identified.</p> <p>Staff have opportunities for job enhancement as their skills develop.</p>
<p>3c) Staff knowledge and experience feeds into the service development and improvement.</p>	<p>Service design and delivery reflects the views and experiences of staff. Staff are able to explain how they are involved and give examples of how they have influenced service development and improvement.</p> <p>Managers and staff are able to describe how lessons are learned from reflective practice and</p>

	feedback.
3d) Staff understand the importance of their contribution and role in the organisation.	Staff can describe how their role fits in with the organisational structure and can describe how they contribute to the quality of service delivery.
3e) Staff develop and apply values and ethical practice to become reflective employment support practitioners.	Staff can explain how they reflect on their working practices, both individually and as a team.
3f) Staff demonstrate a clear focus on customer service.	<p>Staff can describe how they have a focus on meeting customer needs and can give examples of this.</p> <p>Customers will be able to give examples of how they feel their working relationship is with the supported employment service.</p>

4. Engagement & Partnership

Quality Standards Criteria	What does this Mean?
<p>4a) The service encourages the active involvement of customers in the design, delivery and improvement of services.</p>	<p>There is a policy and plan for customer involvement.</p> <p>Regular feedback is collected from customers about their experiences of the service.</p> <p>Feedback is given to customers on changes to the service following evaluations.</p> <p>Customers are able to describe how they are involved in the design and development of the service and can give an example of how they have influenced these.</p>
<p>4b) There is a clear compliments, complaints and suggestions procedure in place.</p>	<p>Procedures are in place and information is analysed and used to inform improvements to the service.</p> <p>Jobseekers are aware of who to contact with a compliment, comment, suggestion, or complaint and the process the organisation follows when dealing with them.</p> <p>Managers and staff are able to explain how complaints are recorded, investigated and what action is taken. Trends are analysed.</p>
<p>4c) Jobseekers and partners understand any eligibility criteria and what to expect from the service.</p>	<p>Jobseekers and partners can describe and give examples of how they know what to expect from the service.</p>
<p>4d) The service actively engages to raise aspirations and expectations amongst jobseekers, families, employers and partner organisations.</p>	<p>The service actively promotes supported employment with jobseekers, families, employers and partner organisations.</p> <p>Jobseekers are supported to achieve their employment rights.</p> <p>The right for customers to express views and opinions and to make choices are upheld at all</p>

	levels of the organisation.
4e) Employers and jobseekers benefit from signposting and referral to other appropriate agencies or organisations.	Managers and staff are able to describe how they establish links with other partnerships and networks and measure the effectiveness of the relationship. Customers are able to describe the benefits they gained by being referred to other appropriate agencies or organisations.
4f) Employers are supported to develop inclusive recruitment and retention practices.	Employers can describe and give examples of how they have developed inclusive recruitment and retention practices with support from the supported employment organisation.
4g) The service maintains the confidentiality of customer data and has protocols for managing disclosure and data sharing.	The Managers and staff can describe the protocols in place for storing and sharing personal information.
4h) Jobseekers are supported to exercise choice and control, using advocates where appropriate.	The jobseeker can describe how they are supported to identify and include appropriate others to support their employment journey.
4i) The service acknowledges, and acts on, the cultural factors associated with its customers.	Managers and staff can describe how they ensure cultural factors are considered with customers and give examples of this.

5. Model Fidelity

In terms of Model Fidelity, all of the criteria below will be assessed in lines with the supported employment model of 'place and train'. For assessment purposes, staff, managers and customers will be able to describe and give examples that meet the criteria.

Quality Standards Criteria	What does this Mean?
5a) The service recognises that everyone can work with the right support and the right job match.	<p>The service offers support to jobseekers regardless of the nature of their impairment.</p> <p>The organisation works creatively with jobseekers to identify an appropriate job match.</p> <p>The organisation does not operate a screening process to identify job readiness.</p>
5b) Person centred approaches are used to collect relevant information about the jobseeker's aspirations, requirements, interests and skills and this information is collated into co-produced vocational profiles.	<p>A holistic vocational profile is compiled based on interviews and observation of the person within a variety of environments.</p> <p>The jobseeker can describe their involvement in co-producing the vocational profile.</p>
5c) The service provides Better Off Financial Calculations for all jobseekers to inform their decisions on employment.	<p>Better Off Financial Calculations are routinely offered to inform the jobseeker's choice of career and working hours.</p>
5d) Individuals are encouraged to make informed choices about work and future career development.	<p>Jobseekers are able to describe and give examples of how they have benefitted from the support process and how they were able to explore different career options.</p> <p>Jobseekers are able to describe what support they were given to understand and make appropriate choices.</p> <p>Jobseekers are able to describe how they came to their career decision.</p>
5e) Jobseekers are encouraged	<p>There is a focus on increasing and maximising hours</p>

to maximise their working hours to meet their needs.	of work.
5f) Co-produced action plans are used to support the jobseeker through the supported employment process. These are regularly monitored and reviewed with relevant parties.	<p>Action plans are in place throughout the employment journey and are regularly reviewed and updated.</p> <p>Action plans are in a format appropriate to the individual's needs and are used by jobseekers, employers, and service staff to inform actions.</p>
5g) The service identifies and agrees clear learning objectives for any work experience and pre-employment activity.	Learning objectives are clearly identified and communicated with those who have involvement in achieving them.
5h) Rapid progress is made towards employment. The frequency and intensity of support is agreed with customers.	The frequency and intensity of contact is agreed by all involved and monitored for appropriateness.
5i) The service seeks competitive and inclusive employment where the employee receives the same rate of pay and benefits as other employees doing the same job.	The service can evidence that pay rates and terms of employment are typical for the job role.
5j) The service ensures that self-employment and a variety of locally available jobs are considered.	<p>Options for self-employment are discussed with jobseekers.</p> <p>Support for self-employment is identified and publicised.</p>
5k) Employers, across a range of sectors, are supported to identify appropriate vacancies through creative job design and job creation techniques	<p>The organisation can demonstrate how it engages employers across the different employment sectors that are available locally.</p> <p>Managers and staff can describe the principles of job design.</p> <p>Jobseekers are supported into a wide variety of job</p>

	<p>roles.</p> <p>The organisation demonstrates a clear understanding of the local labour market and how this may be changing.</p>
5l) To ensure an effective job match, job analysis is used to systematically identify the skills and other requirements needed to undertake the role.	Job analysis is routinely used to understand the skills and knowledge required of different job roles.
5m) Employers are supported to understand their responsibility for the management and training of their employees.	Employers understand and can clearly describe their role and responsibilities in managing the development of their employees.
5n) The service supports employee learning through the most natural methods, using structured training techniques where needed.	<p>Staff can describe how they actively engage natural support within the workplace.</p> <p>Managers and staff can describe the principles of structured training techniques and how they monitor their effectiveness in skills development.</p>
5o) The service can demonstrate that clients develop personal, social and vocational skills.	<p>Individual achievement is recognised and recorded.</p> <p>Customers are encouraged to seek out opportunities for the accreditation of learning and employees are supported to participate and achieve.</p>
5p) The service supports customers to be socially included within the workplace.	Customers can describe how they are supported to participate in social activity with work colleagues.
5q) The service supports customers to identify reasonable workplace adjustments and put them in place	The organisation works collaboratively with customers to identify reasonable workplace adjustments and supports their acquisition and use.
5r) The service supports customers to resolve conflict and problems, including issues associated with safeguarding, harassment and discrimination.	<p>The service has clear procedures to monitor the health, wellbeing, and safeguarding of customers.</p> <p>Procedures are in place to ensure that workplaces are safe and that risks are quantified and</p>

	<p>acceptable.</p> <p>Managers and staff can describe how they support customers to resolve conflict.</p> <p>Staff can demonstrate the use of Workplace Risk Assessments and monitoring documentation to deal with issues associated with safeguarding, harassment and discrimination.</p>
5s) Customer requests for support are responded to in a timely manner.	Customers are able to describe how their requests for support are met in a timely and appropriate manner.
5t) The service provides time-unlimited, individualised support for customers.	<p>The service can clearly demonstrate the process for any reduction in support to customers.</p> <p>The frequency and intensity of support is regularly reviewed and agreed with customers.</p> <p>Ongoing contact with customers is planned and recorded.</p>

Key Question 2 – We have suggested the quality mark be based on 5 areas, each with underlying criteria and corresponding indicators that will be measured. Do you agree with this layout? If not, what would you would like to see in the standard instead?

Key Question 3 – Are the criteria fit for purpose? If not, what changes should be made? What other criteria should be included? What shouldn't be included?

Key Question 4 – Which bodies do you think are best placed to manage and undertake the inspection process?

Accreditation costs

There will be a cost element for administering the standards but this needs to be discussed further as the standards are developed. Base and SUSE have researched the cost of other quality standards and will consider these when finalising the standards and the inspection process.

It is initially proposed that accreditation will be on a 3year cycle. We need to consider how we might handle requests for re-accreditation if the first attempt is unsuccessful.

Key Question 5 – What do you think would be fair and affordable price to pay for accreditation?

Key Question 6 – How often do you think accreditations should take place?

Key Question 7 – How should we deal with requests for re-accreditation?

Your Views

We want to hear your views on the development and implementation for the supported employment quality standards. You can respond directly to us at admin@base-uk.org or complete the survey at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SPTHGZF>
The survey closes on 31 December 2013.

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www.base-uk.org/quality-standards

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