

Sector-based work academies (England) – guidance for employer and partner-facing staff

Guidance Queries and Help

1. If you are unable to find an answer to a particular question regarding the policy within this guide you must contact the Jobcentre Plus Live Support Advice Line. Do not give the Advice Line number to claimants or outside bodies under any circumstances, it is for the use of Jobcentre Plus staff only. Details of how to contact them can be found on the DWP Advice Line Home Page.
2. Please do not use the 'E-mail page owner' and 'Page information' links at the bottom of each page of guidance to raise policy queries, these should only be used to report broken hypertext links.

What are sector-based work academies

3. Sector-based work academies (sbwa) are part of the package of Get Britain Working measures that can be used by Jobcentre Plus to help individuals into work. They were launched on 1st August 2011 in England only. They are also available in Scotland. Similar support is available through the Routeways to Work programme for claimants in Wales.
4. sbwa are designed to support JSA and ESA (WRAG) claimants aged 18 or over who are close to the labour market but who have been unable to find work to move into sustained employment in a demand sector. There is a further aim of supporting employers in those sectors to fill their vacancies more efficiently.
5. Jobcentre Plus District Managers (DMs) have overall ownership and accountability for the delivery of sbwa.
6. There is no standard approach to designing an sbwa. DMs are free to deliver flexible sbwa to meet the needs of employers, claimants, colleges and training providers in order to maximise off-flow within the principles outlined in this guidance.
7. Employers should be at the heart of every sbwa. They should not be set up unless you are working with an employer/employers with vacancies.
8. sbwa are available to JSA and ESA(WRAG) claimants of all ages from day 1 of their claim.
9. The detailed design of sbwa will not be prescribed but will last for a maximum of six weeks and will usually consist of:
 - pre-employment training (PET) of up to 30 hours a week;
 - work experience placement (WEP); and
 - guaranteed job/apprenticeship interview (GJI) with an employer in the sector or support with an employer's recruitment processes.
10. In exceptional circumstances, where the employer is unable to offer a GJI due to their recruitment processes, the sbwa can consist of PET and WEP only. In these cases, support will have been built into the sbwa, to help the claimant with the employer's recruitment processes. These should only be set up where there is a vacancy for participants to apply for.
11. Participants will remain on benefit during the sbwa
12. The decision for a claimant to participate in a sbwa is voluntary (Jobseeker's Directions should not be used for referral to the sbwa) but:
 - once a JSA claimant has been formally referred to the sbwa, participation in PET and GJI becomes mandatory (see note on exception to mandation to GJI);
 - All sbwa must contain a WEP and claimants should be encouraged to attend. Claimants will not be sanctioned for non-participation in WEP, however, JSA claimants will be told that they can be sanctioned if they fail to maintain basic

standards of good behaviour at any time during their participation in sbwa, including the work experience element. It has been agreed with Ministers that, in respect of the WEP, it is only if the claimant loses the placement due to his/her gross misconduct that a sanction may be imposed. See guidance in DMG Memo 28/12.

- JSA claimants will also be subject to sanctions if they are offered a job or place on an apprenticeship and they refuse to take up that offer. There are some exceptions to refusal of employment rules for JSA claimants, including refusal of a place on a government funded (NAS) apprenticeship or a zero hour contract job.
- once an ESA(WRAG) claimant has been referred to sbwa, participation in pre-employment training becomes mandatory, but, participation at the Work Experience Placement and Guaranteed Job Interview is voluntary;
- ESA (WRAG) claimants who are in receipt of National Insurance Credits only, lone parents responsible for a child under 5 and not yet at school or full-time carers cannot be mandated to Work-Related Activity. All 3 elements of sbwa must remain on a voluntary basis for these claimants;

13. A Jobseeker's Direction should not be used to refer claimants to sbwa. However it may be decided locally to use Jobseeker's Directions to refer claimants to open days or selection events for sbwa. Where these are used, it should be discussed with the employer involved in the sbwa so they are aware that some claimants have been sent to the event under a Jobseeker's Direction and that some of the people there may decide not to participate. Advisers should also still ensure claimants are close to the labour market before using a Jobseeker's Direction to send them to an event.

14. sbwa participants can undertake training of up to 30 hours a week. Those participating in training of 16-30 hours a week are not required to be actively seeking or available for work (with the exception of 18 year olds). However, policy intent is that claimants should have regular contact with their adviser to show they are taking steps towards gaining employment. The rules for attending an Employment Related Course do not apply to sbwa which allows claimants to do more than 2 weeks full-time training in any 52 weeks whilst participating in sbwa.

15. **Important note:** An organisation called "The Work Academy" already exists and has rights to use the registered brand "The Work Academy". Legal advice dictates that we must ensure that reasonable steps are undertaken to ensure that sbwa is not confused with "The Work Academy". To avoid the potential risk of a legal challenge to Jobcentre Plus if the strict conventions detailed below must be specifically followed.

16. In any reference to sector-based work academies, capitalisation should not be used on any of the words. When using an abbreviation, "sbwa" should be used and not capitalised. When describing a specific sector-based work academy (sbwa), use the name of the sector as well, e.g. Retail academy or Hospitality academy, without the specific or formal use of "The" at the beginning of the title wherever possible. The following variations of wording are acceptable:

- "sector-based work academy"
- "sector-based work academies",
- the abbreviation "sbwa"
- "xxxxx [eg Retail] academy",
- "xxxxx [eg Hospitality] academies"
- "Sector-based work academy" only where the name appears at the start of a sentence.

17. In addition, any proposed marketing or publicity material which features colour schemes, logos or provider/employers branding (other than the standard DWP and Jobcentre Plus logos) should be cleared with the skills and provision team

Youth Contract

18. The Youth Contract, launched on 2nd April 2012, includes a range of additional help for young people, including extra places on sector-based work academies and access to a wage incentive payment for the employer for young people who have been unemployed for 6 months or more.

19. With the end of Get Britain Working funding in April 2013, the only funding DWP receives for sbwa is for Youth Contract places. Claimants aged 25 and over remain eligible to participate in sbwa. These places are funded from Jobcentres' day-to-day finances and so District Managers will be responsible for managing the availability of places at a local level.

20. Sector-based work academies and vacancies should not normally be arranged for a particular age group as this could lead to discrimination on age grounds. If the employer does wish to restrict a vacancy/sbwa to a particular age group then the District will need to consider whether there is justification for the employer to do so. This should be considered in line with current DWP Discrimination Guidance which would include looking at the make up of the local labour market in terms of age. As a result of random individual referrals being made to sbwa it is possible that a cohort could potentially consist solely of 18-24 year olds or over 24 year olds.

Which claimants are eligible to participate in sbwa?

21. sbwa are designed to support JSA and ESA (WRAG) claimants aged 18+, who are close to the labour market but who have been unable to find work to move into sustained employment in a demand sector. (Some colleges/providers will only be able to access funding for age 19+). Note: 18 year old JSA claimants are treated differently for availability and actively seeking work whilst undertaking training

22. Although funding and aspirational profiles are for Youth Contract places only from April 2013, sbwa are still open to all claimants aged 18 and over and sbwa should not be restricted to 18-24 year olds only.

23. Claimant groups other than JSA and ESA (WRAG) are not eligible for sbwa. However where the provider agrees to other claimant groups joining the training and/or the employer agrees to take other claimant groups for work experience placement and guaranteed job interview, they can participate BUT these must not be counted as sbwa participants. Only JSA and ESA (WRAG) customers can be submitted to the sbwa LMS opportunities, **other customer groups must not be submitted to sbwa LMS opportunities.**

24. sbwa are not normally open to claimants on the Work Programme/Work Choice but in exceptional circumstances, where Jobcentre Plus is unable to fill a sbwa with non-Work Programme/Work Choice eligible claimants, a District can approach all the Work Programme/Work Choice providers in their Contract Package Area to seek nominations. These claimants must not be submitted to LMS opportunities or be counted as sbwa starts. Any referrals to the 3 elements for WP/WC claimants should be made by the WP/WC provider directly with the employer/provider and Jobcentre Plus notification letters must not be used.

25. Post-Work Programme JSA and ESA(WRAG) claimants are eligible to participate in sbwa. Please bear in mind sbwa participants should be close to the labour market.

26. JSA claimants on PET of between 16 and 30 hours are not required to be available or actively seeking work (unless aged 18). However, policy intent is for claimants to stay close to the labour market. To facilitate this, claimants on training of 16-30 hours are required to attend regular interviews with an adviser whilst on the PET during which advisers should encourage them to continue to look for employment. They will also need to sign the ES24JPsbwa to ensure their benefit is paid. Where the hours and location of the PET make it difficult for the claimant to attend the office, the discussion can take place by telephone. Normal sanction rules for not attending an adviser interview apply. 18 year

olds are required to be available and actively seeking work, whether undertaking part-time or full-time training and should attend FJR as normal.

27. It is expected that claimants will only complete one sbwa, however there may be occasions when a claimant will re-engage in sbwa or participate in a further sbwa.

28. Those participants who are unsuccessful in securing job offers should return to the Adviser caseload and be matched to vacancies in the sector/industry for which they received sbwa training and work experience, and other sectors for which they have transferable skills.

29. Actions to take when referring claimants to sbwa can be found in the sbwa Adviser Guidance.

Apprenticeships

Sbwa may be used as a stepping stone to apprenticeships. A GJI can be for a job vacancy or an apprenticeship opportunity. Sbwa and apprenticeships are open to all ages and Jobcentre Plus should not normally advertise these for a particular age group. If funding for the apprenticeship is only available for 18-24 year olds then that information should be shown on the opportunity. For further guidance please see the Discrimination Guidance.

Data sharing

30. Data sharing regulations allow for the proportionate sharing of claimant information between Skills Funding Agency funded colleges and providers that are supporting JCP claimants with their employment, skills and training needs. In practice this means that such information can be shared as often as is necessary to support activities such as the management of adviser caseloads or any reasonable adjustment requirements and in providing updates to monitor and build on the progress a claimant is making with the skills activity they are undertaking to support a move into work.

31. This legislation does not extend to include employers or non-Skills Funding Agency funded provider. Informed consent must be obtained to allow entry to sbwa. Advisers should ask the claimant to complete an authority (informed consent) to allow JCP to disclose such information to the employer or non-Skills Funding Agency funded providers.

32. The authority applies to the exchange of information between the employer, provider and Jobcentre Plus.

Planning a sbwa

33. DMs have overall ownership and accountability for the delivery of sbwa. Additional resource for districts to deliver a brokerage, management and support function for sbwa has been allocated, with DM discretion on how this role is undertaken. During testing it was apparent that appointing a co-ordinator is key to the success of sbwa. The Skills and Provision pages contain details of the co-ordinator role. It may be that a District does not have a sbwa co-ordinator in post. Even if that is the case, there should still be a single point of contact to plan and oversee each sbwa to ensure that the steps in this guidance are followed and that it runs smoothly for employers, providers and claimants. Districts should maintain management and ownership of each sbwa – this should not be passed to a third part e.g. a provider.

34. Employers should be at the heart of every sbwa. They should not be set up unless you are working with an employer/employers with vacancies.

35. The National Employer Service Team Senior Employer relationship Manager "SERM" role in sbwa is outlined later in this guidance.

36. The roles and responsibilities involved in the success of each sbwa will be defined locally during the design process. There is no standard approach and each sbwa will be individually tailored to meet the needs of all involved.

37. Districts will need to engage with and bring together local colleges, training providers and national and local employers to influence and shape the design of sbwa. Districts can choose the range and length of provision to offer, within the parameters set out in this guidance. Engaging employers, providers and colleges early in the process is key to ensuring that they are able to offer suitable pre-employment training (PET), work experience placement (WEP) and guaranteed job interviews (GJI) and that there are vacancies available for sbwa participants to apply for. Vacancies can be for jobs or apprenticeships.

38. Sbwa opportunities may also arise via a direct approach from colleges, providers, employers or local partnerships.

39. The decision to offer a sbwa should be based on local labour market need, i.e. where employers have vacancies for jobs or apprenticeships.

40. It is important to ensure the employer's and claimant's needs inform the decision on what support should be included in each employer offer. Achievement of the sbwa aspirational profiles should be regarded as secondary to the quality of the package and the appropriateness of that package to both claimants and employers.

41. The employer should be at the heart of the sbwa and involved in its design if they wish. Policy intent is that sbwa should include all 3 elements. However in exceptional circumstances, where the employer is unable to offer a GJI, then the sbwa can take place with PET and WEP only and still be treated as a sbwa opportunity. However support to help the claimant through the employer's recruitment processes must be included in the sbwa. If the support the employer would like involves PET and a GJI, the district can offer this support to the employer but it must not be counted as a sbwa and must not be set up on sbwa LMS opportunities.

42. The best outcome for any sbwa would be for the claimant to enter a full time job as sbwa are designed to support Districts in achieving off flow targets. However it is for District Managers to decide, using the flexibility afforded to them, how to deploy activity on sbwa taking account of the needs of their locality and local labour market and then secure the types of vacancies that will lead to achievement of their off-flow target. This can include:

- part-time contracts
- zero hour contract vacancies where appropriate.
- self-employment vacancies, for example, a taxi firm which recruits drivers to its business but those drivers operate as self-employed once appointed. **NB GJI for self-employed vacancies or zero hours contracts are not mandatory.**

Districts will need to build a picture of local labour demand featuring vacancy trends, current vacancies, claimant caseloads/volumes by JSAg preferences /occupations sought using a range of sources including

- Using the Knowledge Hub to find out information on:
 - Analysing vacancies available by sector;
 - Employer engagement/vacancy planning;
 - Local Labour Market knowledge and intelligence in relation to vacancies and new business opportunities;
 - Supply and demand data; and
 - Vacancy trends and current vacancies (by sector);
- Sector Employability Toolkits which are available for use by District teams and have been developed by Sector Skills Councils in consultation with employers;
- National Skills Academy Toolkit, information available via Business link;
- Local Enterprise Partnerships and other local partnerships intelligence;
- Building relationships with employers, colleges and providers;
- Using adviser knowledge/networks to identify what participants want;

- Revisiting employers who may have expressed an interest in sbwa as a result of previous engagement;
- Consulting the National Employers Get Britain Working pages to establish the position at a National level and through contact with NEST to gain support from national employers in the location;
- Using claimant caseloads and JSAG preferences; and
- Consulting employer forums and networks;

43. During planning the following must be considered:

- ensure employers with vacancies are involved in the process from the outset and that the sbwa is planned around their needs.
- a sbwa co-ordinator/single point of contact should be put in place for colleges, training providers and work experience host employers once the sbwa programme is underway, to deal with or allocate responsibility for responding to any issues that arise during the delivery of the sbwa; it should be made clear to employers and providers that they need to contact the co-ordinator if any part of the sbwa changes from what is set out on the claimant notification letter so that the claimant can be issued with a revised notification letter.
- sufficient numbers of work experience placement opportunities and guaranteed job interviews (unless the employer is unable to offer one, for example, due to their recruitment processes) in the appropriate sectors/industries should be available to match the number of sbwa participants completing pre-employment training;
- Although funding and aspirational profiles are for Youth Contract places only from April 2013, sbwa are still open to all claimants aged 18 and over and sbwa should not be restricted to 18-24 year olds only.
- advisers have access to sufficient information to give them a high level of awareness of sbwa opportunities available locally and sbwa are effectively promoted to eligible JSA and ESA (WRAG) claimants e.g. by ensuring that details of the sbwa appear on the District Provision Tool (DPT);
- to maintain momentum of the sbwa, the separate elements should be brought together in a seamless manner and time gaps between the different elements should be kept to a minimum;
- ensure sbwa pre-employment training, work experience placements and guaranteed job interview opportunities are set up on LMS;
- ensure JR and signing arrangements are considered during the planning stages of the sbwa;
- ensure sbwa participants are notified of sbwa start dates and move seamlessly between the elements. SMS texting has proved to be a good tool to use to remind claimants when they need to go to each element. Text template 3 on the Rapide system is available to use which reads: "Remember to attend your /Initiative/Provision Type/ at /Time/ on /Date/ at /Venue/. If you have any problems call 0845 6043719 and select Option 7 or Textphone 0845 60887551".
- Where employers are providing blended training and work experience, it should be made very clear in advance to the claimant how the two elements are to be delivered, so that claimants can be adequately notified of which part of their attendance may attract a sanction, and what that sanction would be, if they do not participate.
- Depending on local arrangements with providers referrals can be made to PET either by
 - the SL2 process; or
 - completion of a local referral list.
- Where a referral list is used to refer claimants to provision, a process should be put in place to ensure all referred claimants are captured on the referral list. The co-

ordinator/SPOC would collate the details and send the list to the relevant provider, ensuring data protection rules were followed.

- There is no form to refer claimants to the employer for WEP and GJI.
- ensure colleges and training providers are provided with details of sbwa participants that are expected to start the pre-employment training;
- ensure employers are provided with details of sbwa participants that are expected to start work experience placements and attend guaranteed job interviews;
- ensure colleges and training providers agree start dates for any pre employment training and communicate these to Advisers, e.g. by entering on the DPT;
- ensure employers agree start dates for work experience placements and dates of guaranteed job interview;
- ensure colleges and training providers confirm sbwa starts, FTAs, early leavers and completions;
- ensure work experience placement employers confirm sbwa starts, FTAs, early leavers and completions;
- ensure employers providing guaranteed job interviews confirm attendance, FTA, and, wherever possible provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates;
- ensure it is made clear to employers and providers that they need to contact the co-ordinator if any part of the sbwa changes from what is set out on the claimant notification letter so that the claimant can be issued with a revised notification letter.
- ensure a process is in place to put starts for all 3 elements on LMS – either by advisers or co-ordinators.
- ensure SLA is completed with provider, where provider is not Skills Funding Agency funded;
- ensure Work Experience Placement Agreement is completed with employer; or the employer-led sbwa Work Experience Placement Agreement where the employer is funding the training.
- for all employers who are nationally managed ensure you involve the Senior Employer Relationship Manager and National Employer Service Team (SERM/NEST);
- A list of top ten tips have been identified from feedback/evaluation of the experiences of the Test Districts to help in the setting up and operation of sbwa.
- sbwa should not be confused with work experience opportunities or Work Trials. Differences between sbwa, work experience and Work Trials.

Engaging with training providers

44. In order to establish a sbwa, districts should engage with colleges and other training providers to:

- Promote the benefits of their involvement in sbwa by using the planning discussions with training providers and partner's fact sheet.;
- agree who will lead on employer engagement and link the work experience placement element to the training programmes;
- agree sector focus for sbwa;
- agree a programme of training provision that meets local labour market demand and the needs of employers;
- share vacancy information and employer leads;
- agree local planning assumptions on potential referral volumes across the academic year;
- agree roles and responsibilities to facilitate employer input to the training and deliver the required work experience placement;

- provide details of the sbwa co-ordinator or a single point of contact if there is no co-ordinator post in the District;
- agree a process of referral. This can be the SL2 referral process or a local referral list; and
- Explain to the provider the process for reporting non-attendance.

45. If providers are unable to deliver what is required by the employer:

- consider whether you are engaging at the right level
- consider finding an alternative provider e.g. revisit those colleges who have previously been reluctant to engage, try new providers
- for Skills Funding Agency provision, consider escalating the problem through The Issues Resolution and Escalation Process

Referral lists

46. Referral lists can be used to refer claimants to provision. These are not claimant trackers and must be provider specific. Where referrals to multiple providers take place, there should be a separate spreadsheet for each provider.

47. The sbwa co-ordinator or SPOC will have responsibility for collating the referral list and should put a process in place to ensure all those referred to the sbwa PET are included on the list.

48. Details of claimants referred to the sbwa can be flagged up by advisers or obtained from LMS.

49. The spreadsheet can be designed locally but must include:

- DWP logo
- Claimant details
- Start date of PET

Sending information to providers

All information sent between JCP and providers must be sent securely. Details on how and when to send Secure Email and be found in the Secure Email – DWP User Guide.

Engaging with employers

50. Use your local knowledge to identify those employers who, based on the local labour market demand and sector identification would benefit from and be able to participate in a sbwa.

51. Before approaching local outlets of national employers districts should consult the National Employers Get Britain Working sites and the SERM to establish what has been agreed to enable local delivery. Some national companies may seek a consistency in design across all of their outlets.

52. Discuss sbwa, and the overarching Get Britain Working measures and Youth Contract as part of your targeted and routine engagement.

53. Explain the key features of sbwa and promote the business benefits of their involvement using key points from:

- key messages for employers
- the 'Preparing for sector-based work academies Factsheet';
- the presentation developed to support engagement discussions about Get Britain Working; and
- the sbwa employer guide available via gov.uk website

54. Explain to the employer how Jobcentre Plus will support them during the sbwa by providing an overview of your district's co-ordinator/single point of contact role.

55. Know the employers business, recruitment needs and activity, personalise your approach and explain how sbwa will support their recruitment needs.

56. Consider what the employer can and is willing to offer – they can commit to just one of the elements, e.g. guaranteed job interviews, to support delivery – they don't have to commit to all of the elements. The sbwa can be organised with a group of employers providing different elements.
57. It is important to ensure the employer's and claimant's needs inform the decision on what support should be included in each employer offer. Achievement of the sbwa aspirational profiles should be regarded as second place to the quality of the package and the appropriateness of that package to both claimants and employers.
58. The employer should be at the heart of the sbwa and involved in its design if they wish. Policy intent is that sbwa should include all 3 elements. However in exceptional circumstances, if the employer is unable to offer a GJI, then the sbwa can take place with PET and WEP only and still be treated as an sbwa opportunity. Where the employer cannot offer GJI because of recruitment processes, you need to consider whether to work with the employer to ensure that the sbwa includes assistance for the claimant to help guide them through the employer's recruitment processes. If the employer would like PET and a GJI, the district can consider this but it must not be counted as an sbwa and **must not** be set up on sbwa LMS opportunities.
59. If the employer would like an overview of the training available, familiarise yourself with the appropriate information available in the QCF framework and/or liaison with the Skills Funding Agency.
60. Where appropriate, explore a consortium approach and how they can work with other employers in the area, including outlets of national employers.
61. Manage employer expectations when discussing their role and requirements in taking part in a sbwa.
62. Explain that a Work Experience Placement Agreement (or an Employer-led training Work Experience Placement Agreement) will be signed between Jobcentre Plus and the employer to cover roles and responsibilities e.g. health and safety, if not already in place.
63. There may be occasions where the employer wants to influence the training, be part of the selection process or be happy to discuss the work experience placement with claimants prior to them participating. In these instances the LMS opportunity should reflect that the employer has agreed to this.
64. Explore the possibility of an employer led sbwa, explaining to the employer that this will involve them providing both the pre-employment training and work experience placement elements of the sbwa and that no funding will be provided for the training.
65. Discuss suitable training providers who are able to accommodate the employer's training requirement.
66. Providers and employers would normally be expected by law, to arrange and fund any reasonable adjustments. However where these costs cannot be met from any other source, including Access to Work support for the work experience placement element, Jobcentre Plus can consider meeting these costs
67. Although funding and aspirational profiles are for Youth Contract places only from April 2013, sbwa should not normally be arranged for particular age groups as this could lead to discrimination on age grounds.
68. Explain that wage incentives are available for claimants aged 18-24 as part of the Youth Contract.
69. Deliver the right messages about the work experience placement element of sbwa. Avoid creating confusion if the employer is already participating in the Work Experience measure. Build on these discussions, re-inforcing the differing aims of the work experience placement which now also forms part of a sbwa. The key differences in the two measures are :-

- **work experience measure :**
 - aimed at 18-24 year olds on JSA;

- for claimants further away from the labour market who have little or no work experience;
- lasts between 2 – 8 weeks;
- provides an insight into the world of work;
- helps to build participant's CV and employability
- **work experience placement element of sbwa :**
 - aimed at motivated, job ready JSA and ESA (WRAG) claimants close to the labour market with no significant basic skills needs (such as literacy or numeracy);
 - enables participants to consolidate their training with real work experience;
 - is designed and tailored to meet the employer's specific sector requirement – no minimum period;
 - shows recent knowledge and awareness of the sector, enabling them to present this during a guaranteed job interview.

70. sbwa should not be confused with work experience opportunities or Work Trials.

Differences between sbwa, work experience and Work Trials.

71. There is not a specified minimum or maximum duration for sbwa work experience, so in theory it could be as short as one day but this would probably not provide a quality work experience placement. What is important is that the work experience placement provides sbwa participants with a meaningful experience of the reality of working in the sector/industry, and an opportunity to demonstrate their skills to the host employer in the workplace rather than the classroom.

72. WEP is not mandatory for JSA claimants however sanctions will need to be considered if they have been dismissed for gross misconduct. It has been agreed with Ministers that, in respect of the WEP, it is only if the claimant loses the placement due to his/her gross misconduct that a sanction may be imposed. See guidance in DMG Memo 21/12.

73. If the employer cannot provide WEP, you can consider other ways of providing the work experience as long as the WEP provides meaningful work experience and fits the employer's needs. For example, if the vacancy is in a restaurant, consider approaching a local catering college to provide work experience in their restaurant. Merseyside District have provided some examples of sourcing WEP when the employer is unable to do so.

74. If the employer wishes to take part in the sbwa, provide details of the sbwa co-ordinator or a single point of contact if there is no co-ordinator post in the District.

Designing a sbwa

75. Sbwa will usually combine three elements

- pre-employment training
- A work experience placement, and
- A guaranteed job/apprenticeship interview for participants completing both of the above elements or support with an employer's recruitment process.

76. In exceptional circumstances, if the employer is unable to offer a GJI due to their recruitment practises for example, then the sbwa can be delivered with PET and WEP only and still be treated as a sbwa opportunity. Where the employer cannot offer GJI because of recruitment processes, work with the employer to provide support to claimants within the sbwa to guide them through the business's recruitment process

77. Although funding and aspirational profiles are for Youth Contract places only from April 2013, sbwa should not normally be arranged for particular age groups as this could lead to discrimination on age grounds.

78. Sbwa does not have a minimum length, although consideration should be given to the quality of the sbwa and the added value it is providing for the claimant.

79. The combination of time spent on the three components will be up to a maximum of six weeks. Exceptionally, there may be short breaks between the elements to fit in with an employer's recruitment practises or to accommodate bank holidays, but it is crucial that these be kept to a minimum and that the momentum of the scheme be maintained.

80. Sbwa can be employer-led, with employer funded, non-accredited training; If this is the case, see information on employer-led training within this guidance.

81. Sbwa can be provider-led where the provider has engaged employers to provide work experience placement as part of the training, (with Jobcentre Plus input);

82. The sbwa can include blended work experience placement and training, and be delivered in any order with the guaranteed job interview typically being held at the end of the scheme. The guaranteed job interview cannot be before the pre-employment training.

83. Jobcentre Plus will provide payment for travel, and childcare costs and replacement care costs.

84. Providers and employers would normally be expected by law, to arrange and fund any reasonable adjustments. However where these costs cannot be met from any other source Jobcentre Plus can consider meeting these costs.

85. sbwa can be a stepping stone to Apprenticeships.

86. There may be occasions where advisers use a Jobseeker's Direction to ensure a claimant attends an initial meeting with providers/employers or an open day. If this is the case, ensure the provider and employer are aware that some people attending the open day in an attempt to show them the benefits of taking part in the sbwa.

sbwa pre-employment training

87. The length of pre-employment training should be in line with the employer's needs as long as the sbwa consists of pre-employment training, work experience placement and guaranteed job interview and does not exceed 6 weeks. This will normally be full-time training, although the employer's requirements should be considered and part-time courses provided where appropriate.

88. sbwa includes sector-specific pre-employment training, primarily funded and delivered through the Skills Funding Agency and which enables participants to undertake units on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). However where the pre-employment training element of a sbwa is not funded through the Skills Funding Agency, participants do not have to undertake units on the QCF but, Jobcentre Plus should seek to influence the type of training being offered to ensure that the skills participants develop are transferable and meet industry standards wherever possible. Where the approach is made directly from an employer the first preference would be to facilitate training delivered by a Skills Funding Agency provider, as this will be funded through the Adult Skills Budget and will include accredited Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) modules. However the employer could deliver and fund in-house non-accredited training.

89. If an employer states that they wish to use their own training provision, and to use their own preferred training provider or their own in-house training team to deliver, then the employer must fund the training. However if the employer wishes bespoke training to be delivered, you must follow the normal hierarchy:

- Firstly you must explore all avenues with colleges to offer Skills Funding Agency funded training
- If Skills Funding Agency funded provision is not suitable or available, then you must discuss with the Work Programmes Division JCPSC Performance Manager the potential for using the Support Contract. This is in scope of the Support Contract because clauses are written into the contract to facilitate the delivery of pre employment training where the Skills Funding Agency or the Devolved Administrations can not deliver.
- In the unlikely event of the JCPSC not being able to provide the training, then the prime providers of either the Work Programme or ESF contracts can be considered. Clauses have been written into contracts for both WP and ESF 2011-13 to facilitate

PET delivery. You must discuss with the Work Programmes Division Performance Manager the potential for delivering the required training using the Work Programme or ESF contracts as the contractual vehicle.

- As a very last resort, ad hoc procurement using the Flexible Support Fund can be considered but this is likely to involve a lengthy competitive tender.

In all cases where a DWP provider delivers the pre employment training, additional payments will be made to the provider using the Flexible Support Fund.

Employer delivers pre-employment training

90. Sbwa can be employer-led, with employer funded, non-accredited training. Usually there will be one employer involved but in practice this could involve a consortium of employers who are delivering different elements of the sbwa.

91. Where the pre-employment training element of a sbwa is funded by the employer, participants do not have to undertake units on the QCF but, Jobcentre Plus should seek to influence the type of training being offered to ensure that the skills participants develop are transferable and meet industry standards wherever possible. This will normally be full-time training, although the employer's requirements should be considered and part-time courses provided where appropriate.

92. To ensure that any employer led sbwa meets policy intent, SERMs should complete a template giving details of the sbwa and e-mail Lee Miller, the National Employer Service Team (NEST) Manager with the details.

93. Where the employer is not account managed by NEST, Districts should decide locally if the employer led sbwa meets policy intent. You may find this template useful in making that decision.

94. Once the training has been agreed with NEST (or locally if not a nationally account managed employer), the employer should be asked to complete an Employer-led training Work Experience Placement Agreement. Details of the sbwa should be documented on the second page of the agreement.

95. The employer-led Work Experience Placement Agreement covers both the PET and WEP of the sbwa. If the employer is only running the PET and not delivering the WEP part of the sbwa, the Agreement should be amended to suit.

sbwa work experience placement

96. The work experience placement should enable participants to consolidate their training with real work experience;

97. It should be designed and tailored to meet the employer's specific sector requirement (as long as the sbwa consists of pre-employment training, work experience placement and guaranteed job interview and does not exceed 6 weeks).

98. work experience placement can take place during evenings and weekends if this is the employer's normal pattern of shifts.

99. There is not a specified minimum or maximum duration or a specified number of hours work per week for sbwa work experience placement. What is important is that the work experience placement provides sbwa participants with a meaningful experience of the reality of working in the sector/industry, and an opportunity to demonstrate their skills to the host employer in the workplace rather than the classroom.

100. Work Trials must not be used as a substitution for the work experience placement. A Work Trial is conducted on a non-competitive basis where the participant has been successful at a job interview, is the only person under consideration for the post and will be recruited providing the trial is successful.

101. sbwa should not be confused with work experience opportunities or Work Trials. Differences between sbwa, work experience and Work Trials.

102. A Work Experience Placement Agreement should be signed by the employer. . Please see guidance on complaints procedure and review of the WEP agreement.

103. WEP is not mandatory for JSA claimants however sanctions will need to be considered if they have been dismissed for gross misconduct. It has been agreed with Ministers that, in respect of the WEP, it is only if the claimant loses the placement due to his/her gross misconduct that a sanction may be imposed. See guidance in DMG Memo 28/12.

104. If the employer cannot provide WEP, you can consider other ways of providing the work experience as long as the WEP provides meaningful work experience and fits the employer's needs. For example, if the vacancy is in a restaurant, consider approaching a local catering college to provide work experience in their restaurant. Merseyside District have provided some examples of sourcing WEP when the employer is unable to do so.

Access to Work help for sbwa participants

105. If claimants have a health condition or a disability, Access to Work can provide practical and financial support to help overcome barriers to starting work or keeping a job. Claimants who are eligible for Access to Work support who participate in sbwa can also apply for Access to Work support for the Work Experience Placement element of the sbwa. It is not available for the PET even where this is delivered by the employer.

Access to Work support should be considered before using FSF to pay for travel expenses and reasonable adjustments. A process map for sbwa Access to Work support is available on the Access to Work guidance site. Advisers should identify if a claimant may qualify for Access to Work support and follow guidance on the process map. A claimant fact sheet gives details of eligibility and how to apply for Access to Work support.

sbwa guaranteed job/apprenticeship interview

106. Must be linked to a vacancy/apprenticeship (not a mock or practice interview);

107. Will typically take place at the end of the scheme, although some flexibility can be used in order to meet the recruitment needs of the employer. However, the guaranteed job interview must not take place before the pre-employment training.

108. There can be a short break between the end of the participation in sbwa and the guaranteed job interview.

109. Policy intent is that sbwa should include all 3 elements. However in exceptional circumstances, where the employer is unable to offer a GJI, then the sbwa can take place with PET and WEP only and still be treated as a sbwa opportunity. For example, an employer may use on-line recruitment which may mean they are unable to offer a guaranteed job interview. Where the employer cannot offer GJI because of recruitment processes, work with the employer to provide support to claimants within the sbwa to guide them through the business's recruitment process. If the support the employer would like involves PET and a GJI, the district can offer this support to the employer but it must not be counted as a sbwa and must not be set up on sbwa LMS opportunities.

110. The guaranteed job interview does not have to be with the employer delivering the work experience placement, districts can broker and match individuals to other employers vacancies within the sector.

111. GJI is mandatory for JSA claimants. However if the claimant has not completed the PET or WEP, the employer may withdraw the offer of a GJI. If that is the case a GJI with another employer should be found if possible. If this is not possible then the claimant should be released from the requirement to participate.

112. If the employer is still willing to offer the GJI for a job or an apprenticeship then this remains mandatory for the JSA claimant.

113. If the job vacancy is for self employment, then attendance at the GJI is voluntary.

114. If a job or an apprenticeship is offered following the GJI, usual refusal of employment rules for JSA apply. There are some exceptions to refusal of employment rules, including refusal of a place on a government funded (National Apprenticeship Service) apprenticeship or a zero hour contract job.

Monitoring and collection of Management Information

115. Jobcentre Plus will collect and report the following Management Information by benefit type via LMS opportunities:

- Total number of pre-employment training referrals/starts.
- Total number of work experience placement referrals/starts.
- Total number of sbwa guaranteed job interviews attended.

116. Job outcomes will not be recorded or reported by Jobcentre Plus Districts.

117. A sbwa activity monitoring tool is available to assist Districts with capturing and reporting sbwa activities and is recommended as best practice.

118. Referrals to sbwa opportunities should only be made once the claimant has agreed to participate and is given a notification letter. Claimants should not be referred to sbwa opportunities for open days/information events. It is important that starts are also recorded on LMS when the claimant starts each element. This will ensure the stats reflect referrals and starts to the actual sbwa. If claimants are referred to sbwa and do not start then DMA action should be considered. The difference between the number of referrals and the number of starts should therefore correspond broadly to the number of DMA considerations. If there are big differences between the number of sbwa referrals and starts but a low number of DMA referrals then this could be an indication that either a) referrals are being made to sbwa incorrectly, b) starts are not being input to LMS or c) advisers are not taking the appropriate DMA action.

119. sbwa performance will be captured from the location (office) where the person who inputs the LMS referral is based. Wherever the start is input, the performance will be pulled through to the office which input the referral. If your District has a central team which records referrals and starts then all starts will be attributed to the office they are based in.

Senior Employer Relationship Manager (SERM)/National Employer Service Team (NEST) role in supporting Districts

120. NEST will help districts to deliver sbwa by :

- Negotiating with national employers to secure their commitment and providing Districts with the employer offers, by email where these are business critical;
- Where non business critical offers are negotiated, these will be entered on the National Employers Get Britain Working site with the agreed national approach to inform local delivery (using the SERM National Employer GBW contact template).

121. Where districts identify that support from a specific national employer is required or you need help to develop a local relationship with that employer, then you should contact the NEST Senior Employer Relationship Manager for that employer directly.

122. Where, as a District, you identify that support or a local relationship is required more widely from a NEST account, ie for a specific sector or for GBW measures, then you should email this request to a single point of contact within NEST:

xxxxxxxxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxx.xxx.xx (shown in GAL as JCP Employer Advice).

123. The National Employers Get Britain Working pages show a list of national employers and the level of commitment they have to Get Britain Working measures including sbwa.

124. If an employer who is not account managed by NEST wishes to be involved in an sbwa locally then this can be organised without the involvement of NEST. It may be useful to use ERM to record an employer's interest/agreement in running sbwa. This can be done by using the initiatives marker where there is a sbwa indicator.

Work Experience Placement Agreement

125. A Work Experience Placement Agreement, must be agreed and signed by the employer (confirmation by email is acceptable) before the sbwa commences. It

contains the legal and policy requirements. It is good practice to record this in “notepad” on the LMS Provider record within the opportunity.

126. Where the employer is delivering the training, they must sign the Employer-led training Work Experience Placement Agreement – this covers both the PET and WEP. This negates the need for an SLA where the employer is the training provider.

127. Districts/NEST are able to tailor the second page of the Agreement to outline the specific terms, roles and responsibilities agreed with the employer or leave as a generic template where overarching principles are appropriate. Where appropriate, you may also wish to add a section regarding the role of the training provider.

128. This part of the Agreement should be treated as a “live” document and can be evaluated, agreed and amended without the need for a further signature.

129. Where an employer has already signed a Work Experience Placement Agreement for the work experience measure they are not required to sign a further one for sbwa work experience placements, but Districts can choose to review if needed.

130. Districts should discuss and complete the Work Experience Placement Agreement with the employer, with both the employer and Jobcentre Plus retaining a copy. Districts should update the employer record on ERM / LMS as appropriate.

131. Some national employers may have signed Work Experience Placement Agreements which cover all of their outlets - the National Employers and Get Britain Working pages provides this information for national accounts.

Reviewing the DWP Employer Agreement

132. The Employer Agreement should be reviewed periodically to check it is still current and the employer still complies with Health & Safety legislation etc. It would be acceptable to consider reviewing the agreement on an annual basis if the employer is providing opportunities on a rolling basis. Where there are long gaps in an employer’s sbwa involvement, the agreement should be reviewed / resigned when the employer re-engages with us.

133. When reviewing the agreement, the wording on the first page should not be amended as this would need to be cleared through our legal colleagues. The back page of the agreement should be reviewed and updated to reflect what the employer is offering at that particular time.

Support for Participants

134. Participants should be encouraged to resolve any issues they have with the employer directly, but there must be a process in place for escalating and dealing with concerns about employers and the quality of opportunities. Districts will need to decide whether this is through their Adviser or their sbwa Co-ordinator / team.

135. The nature of the work experience placement means that it could be open to abuse by an employer, e.g. they may not be providing the participant with the agreed type or quality of work experience, or be using the opportunities inappropriately, just to cover a busy period. Jobcentre Plus has a responsibility to ensure such abuse does not take place and to protect the interests of those participating in opportunities.

136. Any complaints from the participant or suspicion that employers are not operating in the spirit of the opportunity must be investigated and, where appropriate discussed with the employer. If doubts remain about the employer follow the complaints about employers process and where necessary withdraw the DWP Employer Agreement.

DBS checks (formerly known as CRB checks)

137. Jobcentre Plus cannot fund DBS checks on behalf of employers. Where an employer identifies a need for a DBS check during the sbwa discussion, it is the employer’s responsibility to obtain and fund the check.

138. Some participants, by exception, may have the cost of the enhanced DBS check reimbursed to the employer as agreed in the DBS Framework. As this will not be known

until the participant has agreed to start the sbwa, the employer's expectations must be managed.

139. DBS checks must not be funded by Jobcentre Plus for any claimant where they will be working for an employment agency and 'hired' out to a third party; similarly, Jobcentre Plus cannot help with costs if an agency is recruiting on behalf of an employer.

DBS Checks (formerly known as CRB checks) in the Adult Social Care Sector

140. The Care Quality Commission (CQC), the regulator for the care sector, has reviewed and issued specific guidance for providers and managers of adult social care services who are accepting people on work experience placements (WEP) from DWP employment programmes. The changes mean that for work experience placement, courses lasting a maximum of 2 weeks, the requirement for participants to have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is removed.

When a DBS check is not undertaken, providers should **always** ensure that they take the following steps:

141. The person on work placement is fully supervised throughout their work placement
- The provider will ensure adequate supervision arrangements and that the relevant staff are aware of their supervisory responsibilities. It will be expected that the supervisor will have had an appropriate DBS check.
 - The person on work placement must not be left alone with people who use services. In domiciliary care, this means that they should not visit people alone, or be alone in the house of someone who uses the service.
142. The person on work placement does not deliver any aspect of personal care
- They must only be given tasks (not including personal care) suitable to their level of knowledge, skills and experience. This should be limited to a supporting role.

For all placements providers should take the following steps:

143. The provider will take due account of their responsibility to respect and involve people who use services
- The provider will inform people who use services that the person is on a placement and seek their consent to the person's involvement. This is to ensure that their privacy and dignity is respected and promoted, and takes into account their needs, wishes and preferences.
 - Where the person using the service or their advocate cannot give their consent, then the person on work placement should not observe personal care.
144. The provider must undertake a risk assessment before the work placement
- The provider must carry out a risk assessment to ensure that the above criteria are met and any other risks are identified and managed. Providers should be able to demonstrate to us that they have assessed the situation and carried out the safeguards they can.

145. Claimants being referred to a sbwa in the care sector **MUST** be informed that it is a requirement for staff working in this sector to have an enhanced DBS check before they can be employed by registered care providers.

146. CQC guidance for information.

DBS claimant declaration where no DBS check is being undertaken

147. Working with District and legal colleagues and some care employers a claimant declaration has been developed to use where the work experience is for 2 weeks or less and no DBS check is being undertaken. This does not remove the risk to the employer that someone may have previous convictions but it may help overcome barriers raised by employers by reducing this risk and thus enable the employer to participate in offering a WEP. It should be made clear in your discussions with the employer that this is not a DBS

check and does not guarantee that the claimant has no previous convictions as it is reliant on the honesty of the claimant.

LMS Opportunities

148. Districts will need to set up three sbwa opportunities on LMS for pre-employment training, work experience placement and guaranteed job interview for Adviser referrals and starts for MI purposes.

149. The LMS Opportunities as defined in the Adviser guidance are:

- Ref'd to sbwa Pre-empl Training,
- Ref'd to sbwa Work Experience Placem't, and
- Ref'd to sbwa G'teed Job Interview

150. If, by exception the employer is unable to offer the GJI, for example due to recruitment processes, then the sbwa can be set up on the PET and WEP opportunities only.

151. District flexibilities can apply when inputting sbwa opportunities to LMS. However, the following information must be captured from Opportunities for MI purposes – referrals and starts to each of the three elements of sbwa. Please note that if using an employer record to do this, the record must be set up as a provider otherwise the information will be incorrectly displayed as a vacancy. It is important that all 3 elements referrals and starts are input on LMS as this data is used by Ministers and DWP to look at the progression through the 3 elements and the relationship between starts/leavers/DMA data.

152. Claimant groups other than JSA and ESA (WRAG) are not eligible for sbwa and should not be referred to these opportunities. (Other claimant groups can access sbwa but must not be counted as participants)

153. The District Provision Tool will need to be updated with full details of the sbwa. DPT publishers will already have received guidance.

Gross Misconduct

154. WEP is not mandatory for JSA claimants however sanctions will need to be considered if they have been dismissed for gross misconduct. It has been agreed with Ministers that, in respect of the WEP, it is only if the claimant loses the placement due to his/her gross misconduct that a sanction may be imposed. For guidance on gross misconduct see DMG Memo 28/12.

155. Gross misconduct for these purposes is conduct that is so serious that only one instance of such behaviour will warrant the employer's immediate termination of the work experience.

156. The following are examples of gross misconduct which would normally justify the imposition of a sanction but this list is not exhaustive:

- Dishonesty or theft from the employer or co-workers
- Fighting with or assault on another person in the workplace
- Abusive behaviour towards co-workers or customers
- Deliberately damaging the employer's property
- Serious act of insubordination towards a person in a position of authority in the workplace
- Deliberately endangering the safety of others
- Serious incapability through the use of alcohol or illegal drugs

Repeated instances of minor misconduct such as lack of punctuality or carelessness in performing tasks will **not** amount to gross misconduct. For full guidance on sanctions see DMG Memo 04/13 and for gross misconduct please see DMG Memo 28/12.

Key Messages to promote sbwa to employers

157. How we promote and sell sbwa to our employers is key to their success. The positive messages you deliver to employers could include :

- This is a flexible programme that can be tailored to meet your recruitment needs and improve attrition rates.
- The eligibility criteria is simplified to provide access to a large pool of potential candidates, enabling churn vacancies to be filled more easily.
- It provides you with the opportunity to recruit staff with the right training and skills from the outset developed through fully funded pre-employment training.
- We will work with you to understand what skills you need your recruits to have and by doing so will ensure the pre-employment training is fit for purpose.
- The programme provides an opportunity for you to be in control of your own recruitment and try out potential employees to make sure you have the right person for the job after their training is completed.
- Jobcentre Plus will support you through the sbwa experience, providing a single point of contact to ensure the smooth running of the programme.
- By offering work experience placements within your company, your existing employees could benefit by being offered a developmental opportunity to share their insight 'for example' by developing their mentoring, supervisory and coaching skills.
- By supporting this programme you will gain positive publicity to show you are part of a business which is working together with Government to meet its social responsibilities.
- Pass on your expertise! Work with colleges and training organisations to share ideas and good practices and contribute to the development of a package of support that meets the needs of your local business community.
- sbwa participants will achieve accredited units that will ensure that they have the skills required to enter your business, and they can be used to build towards full qualifications or as a stepping stone to an apprenticeship.
- Recruiting the right skilled people will give you the potential to increase productivity.
- Participants on a sbwa remain on benefits and will receive help with their travel, child care costs and where appropriate reasonable adjustment.
- This programme will give you the chance to raise your company profile by networking with your peers.
- Be as involved as you like. Invest as much of your time as you are able to in the sbwa. You can be involved in the full design and selection or limit your involvement and let Jobcentre Plus support your needs.
- If the successful candidate is aged 18-24, this can result in access to a wage incentive as part of the Youth Contract (**Note:** Although funding and aspirational profiles are for Youth Contract places only from April 2013, sbwa are still open to all claimants aged 18 and over. Districts should not normally arrange sbwa for particular age groups as this could lead to discrimination on age grounds.

sbwa Delivery Options

Examples of delivery options

158. Below are examples of how a sbwa could be designed and delivered. Jobcentre Plus must provide a management and support role throughout the sbwa – we are responsible for the customer journey.

Example 1

159. Where the sbwa is for one employer/new opening.

- **pre-employment training – through Skills Funding Agency**
 - 3 weeks Pre-Employment Training
- **work experience placement – by one employer**
 - 2 weeks Work Experience Placement
- **guaranteed job interview – by the work experience placement employer**

Example 2

160. A sbwa may be run using an consortium approach, where more than one employer in the same sector work together to run a sbwa. An example of this could be in the fast food sector where a large number of employers in a shopping centre agree to support a sbwa.

- **pre-employment training – through Skills Funding Agency**
 - 2 weeks part time (16hrs) Pre-Employment Training
- **work experience placement – by a consortium of employers in the same sector**
 - 1 week Work Experience Placement
- **guaranteed job interview – obtained by Jobcentre Plus matching and screening participants to active vacancies from employers recruiting in the sector**

Example 3

161. A sbwa can be employer-led and/or take a blended approach

- **work experience placement – one day introduction work experience day**
- **pre-employment training – employer led (training provided by employer)**
 - 2 weeks full time
- **work experience placement – 4 days work experience under supervision**
- **guaranteed job interview**

Good Practice from the Test Districts

- **Make best use of Open Days:**
 - to provide the opportunity to get everyone involved in the programme together at the same time and gives the participants the chance to discuss the sbwa with everyone involved in its delivery.
 - where the provider/employer has asked to be involved in selecting participants.
 - Select potential participants on the day and be able to offer places straightaway
- **Consider personal participant records, ie**
 - to enable the participant to record their pre-employment training/work experience placement before moving onto the next stage of sbwa.
 - to ensure training isn't duplicated and the provider/employer knows what has happened previously
 - to use as a record at the interview/on a CV.

Sbwa activity monitoring tool

162. The sbwa activity monitoring tool has been developed in partnership with South Yorkshire and Merseyside Districts using their experience of testing the sbwa model and maintaining an overview of all sbwa activities and monitoring the progress of each sbwa programme through the pre-employment training and work experience placement stages

to guaranteed job interviews and job offers. It is based on a spreadsheet which also enabled co-ordinators in the two test Districts to meet both internal and external management reporting requirements.

163. The monitoring tool is focused on the management information that District Managers and Senior Management Teams are likely to require sbwa co-ordinators / co-ordinator teams to collate and report on a regular basis. The spreadsheet can also be adapted to meet a District's specific information needs, e.g. an additional column could be added for recording the employers involved in each sbwa.

164. There is likely to be growing Ministerial interest in the level and extent of sbwa activity across the country, therefore the use of this tool (or an equivalent locally produced tool) is recommended as it will enable Districts to responding quickly and easily to ad hoc requests for information about sbwa.

165. OPD will produce monthly MI reports on sbwa referrals and starts captured on LMS. However, occasional requests for information to supplement this data for inclusion in Ministerial and senior leader briefings are likely to be made, e.g. the number of sbwa run and in which sectors.

Operational Examples and Tools

166. sbwa operational examples and tools are available on the operational example pages.

Top Ten Tips

The following tips were gathered following trials of sbwa.

- Obtain a list of Skills Funding Agency contracted providers in your District and the skills training they deliver. These will be able to deliver Pre Employment Training (PET) for sbwa.
- Examine Labour Market Information, Vacancy Information and Sought Occupation information and identify the sectors appropriate for consideration of establishing a sbwa locally.
- Build on any existing employer relationships / identify any new employers in the relevant sectors and make contact to establish interest in developing a sbwa locally. Work with NEST and SERM for national accounts.
- Once employer has confirmed an interest in being involved in the sbwa include provider(s) in any discussions as soon as possible and take into account the employer's views when selecting the provider to deliver the Pre-Employment Training
- Ensure Jobcentre Plus is represented at any discussions between the employer and the provider to ensure that sbwa procedures are adhered to.
- Identify any pre-requisites for participation in sbwa, how the District will fund these and the process the adviser needs to follow as early as possible in the planning discussions. e.g In one of the Test Districts, a sbwa was delivered with McDonalds. The employer required participants to wear flat, black shoes during the Work Experience Placement (WEP). Ensure any pre-requisites are included on the LMS opportunity and the District Provision Tool (DPT).
- Ensure effective procedures are in place for the payment of travel childcare, reasonable adjustment and replacement care expenses etc. Providers and employers would normally be expected by law, to arrange and fund any reasonable adjustments. However where these costs cannot be met from any other source Jobcentre Plus can consider meeting these costs. Feedback from one of the Test Districts showed that this worked best when one person was identified as responsible for all expenses payments to claimants.

- Open days involving both the employer and the provider were identified as the best route for promoting the sbwa and selecting appropriate claimants. These provide the employer with the opportunity to talk to all applicants and give the claimant full details of the sbwa. It is good practice for advisers to book a follow-up interview with the claimant to issue mandating paperwork and expenses etc for claimants that are starting on the sbwa, explore non attendance at the open day if the claimant didn't attend or provide feedback as to why they weren't selected, if appropriate.
- Co-ordinator role is key – they need to stay close to the claimants, the employer and the provider to ensure that the sbwa runs smoothly and the claimant is where they should be at all times.
- When developing generic sbwa with consortium of employers it is really important to group together employers whose recruitment requirements are similar. E.g. during catering sbwa some customers were suitable for a fast food employer for example but not for an employer with a high class restaurant – this led to difficulties when organising work experience placements and guaranteed job interviews, resulting in some claimants dropping out of the sbwa. It is good practice to ensure “value for money” so Districts should evaluate the first sbwa for a particular sector/employer to ensure a good rate of job outcomes before arranging future ones

sbwa useful links

sbwa intranet page

sbwa – did you know?

operational examples

tools

sbwa Q and A

products for employer facing staff

products for staff working with providers