

Sector-based work academies

SECTOR-BASED WORK ACADEMIES AIM TO HELP THE UNEMPLOYED GAIN THE RELEVANT SKILLS AND WORK EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO WORK IN A SPECIFIC SECTOR. PARTICIPANTS ARE GUARANTEED A JOB INTERVIEW IN A SPECIFIC VACANCY WHICH ALSO ALLOWS EMPLOYERS TO FILL EXISTING VACANCIES WITH SUITABLE APPLICANTS

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Sector-based work academies are developed in partnership with employers and run in sectors with a current high volume of local vacancies. They are designed to help unemployed benefit claimants gain the relevant skills and work experience required to work in a specific sector, give claimants the guarantee of a job interview in a specific vacancy and also allow employers to fill existing vacancies with suitable applicants.

A quantitative impact assessment of young people participating in these work academies found that taking part reduces the time 19 to 24 years old Jobseeker Allowance (JSA) claimants spend on benefits and increases the time they spend in employment.

Name of the PES	Jobcentre Plus (JCP) (Please note owning Department is DfE)
Scope of measure (a pilot project or a national reform)	National programme running in England and Scotland but not in Wales.
When was the practice implemented?	August 2011 in England and January 2012 in Scotland, ongoing
What was the driver for introducing the practice? Was it internal or external?	External
Which organisation was involved in its implementation?	Jobcentre Plus, in partnership with Skills Funding Agency (England) and Skills Development Scotland (Scotland).
Which groups were targeted by the practice?	Unemployed benefit claimants receiving Jobseekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance and Universal Credit claimants.
What were the practice's main objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Getting jobseekers who are receiving benefits into employment. ▶ Helping businesses to obtain high quality staff. ▶ Helping to sustain and grow businesses.
What activities were carried out?	<p>A sector-based work academy usually consists of three elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. sector-specific pre-employment training of up to 30 hours a week; 2. a work experience placement with an employer; and 3. a guaranteed job interview linked to a genuine vacancy.
What resources and other relevant organisational aspects were involved?	<p>There is no standard approach to designing a sector-based work academy. Jobcentres are free to deliver flexible placements to meet the needs of employers, claimants and training providers. DWP's National Employer and Partnership Team negotiates with national employers to secure suitable job vacancies. Opportunities may also arise via a direct approach from local employers, colleges, training providers or local business partnerships.</p> <p>Jobcentres engage with employers and training providers early in the process to ensure that they are able to offer suitable training, work experience and guaranteed job interviews and that there are vacancies available for which participants can apply. These vacancies can be for jobs or apprenticeships. Once the programme is underway jobcentres offer a co-ordinator or single point of contact for training providers and host employers.</p>

What were the source(s) of funding?	JCP administrative costs from DWP's budget: pre-employment training from national adult education budgets in England and Scotland.
What were the outputs of the practice: people reached and products?	Sector-based work academies are delivered in partnership between Jobcentre Plus, employers and training providers. The pre-employment training and work experience placement are tailored to employer needs to help fill vacancies more efficiently, whilst helping participants into employment in a demand sector. The programme is demand led and run in industries with high volumes of local vacancies therefore spanning a broad spectrum of sectors. Teaching, retail, hospitality, transport and logistics, food, care, manufacturing and engineering, agriculture and administration are examples of the sector programmes.
What outcomes have been identified?	<p>A quantitative impact assessment¹ provides evidence that participation in sector-based work academies reduces the time 19-24 year-old JSA claimants subsequently spend on benefit and increases the time they spend in employment.</p> <p>The impacts on employment compared to impacts on benefit receipt shows sector-based work academies have the more positive effect of moving participants off benefit and into work, as opposed to moving off benefit and into non-work destinations which may be less sustainable.</p> <p>The results also suggest that the positive impact of participation extends beyond the observed 18-month tracking period. Finally, a cost-benefit analysis suggests that the programme is efficient.</p>
What are the lessons learnt and success factors?	Individuals who participated in all three elements of the sector-based work academy experienced a greater impact than the participant cohort as a whole. Those who participated in all three elements spent on average 39 days less in receipt of benefit and not in employment relative to non-participants across the 18 month tracking period. On average, participants spent 29 days less on benefit relative to non-participants.

- 1 Richard Ward, Joseph Woods and Ruth Haigh, Sector-based work academies: A quantitative impact assessment. Department for Work and Pensions, Research Report 918. March 2016.



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