

Job Description

Skills & Employability Officer

Known as - Employment Support Specialist

Reference: 4561/4569

Date: March 2026

Job Family:	Education & Skills/ Skills & Employability
Level:	2
Band:	6
Career Track:	Technical, Professional, Supervisory

Job Purpose

The Job Coach provides intensive, person-centred employment support to individuals facing barriers to work, including physical and learning disabilities, mental ill health, and neurodiverse conditions. The role supports participants to achieve and sustain paid employment through personalised guidance, skills development, confidence building, and tailored in-work support. It requires building strong relationships with employers to create suitable opportunities and ensure effective workplace adjustments. The post holder must also develop partnerships with families, partner organisations, and other stakeholders while delivering within the supported employment model through both independent and collaborative working.

Service Purpose

Northumberland Skills delivers education, training and employability provision, including Connect to Work, for residents across the county. The service operates multiple campuses, including specialist centres for construction and welding, ensuring access to industry-standard facilities that support technical and vocational development. With a strong emphasis on community learning, apprenticeships and employment-focused programmes, we equip people with the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to progress in a competitive labour market. Provision is further strengthened through tailored careers guidance, sector-aligned training and partnerships with key industries. We also offer SEND pathways, ensuring inclusive access to learning and progression into further education and employment.

Duties and Responsibilities

Participant Engagement & Case Management

- Engage and recruit suitable participants through referral partners across adult care, education, VCS, and JCP networks.
- Manage a small caseload, delivering personalised supported-employment interventions for individuals with a range of disabilities, health conditions, and employment barriers.
- Create detailed vocational profiles and action plans to identify development needs and employment goals.
- Develop participants' skills, confidence, independence, social communication, and readiness for work, including travel training and workplace access.

Employment Preparation & Jobsearch Support

- Prepare clients for employment through jobsearch support such as vacancy identification, CVs, applications, interview skills, and delivery of group sessions.
- Provide ongoing in-work support, helping participants understand workplace expectations, build workplace relationships, manage issues, and develop long-term independence and resilience.
- Support participants and families/carers to raise aspirations and maximise employment opportunities.

Employer Engagement & Job Development

- Build and maintain strong employer relationships to identify, negotiate, and secure suitable vacancies—both advertised and hidden.
- Explore job opportunities with employers, assessing workplace environments and identifying required adjustments to match individual strengths and needs.
- Provide employers with specialist advice, including workplace adjustments, return-to-work planning, safeguarding, health and safety, and disability awareness.
- Conduct health and safety checks for placements and ensure service-level agreements meet required standards.
- Maintain wide knowledge of local labour-market intelligence and explore self-employment or social-enterprise options where appropriate.

Quality, Compliance & Record Keeping

- Maintain accurate and compliant records, adhering to GDPR, information governance, and organisational data-security requirements.
- Provide accurate management information, monitoring data, and statistical reporting to support programme performance and meet contractual KPIs.
- Ensure compliance with safeguarding, health and safety, and lone-working policies, maintaining professional boundaries at all times.

Person Specification

Professional and Technical Requirements

Qualifications

- Level 4 qualification in Information, Advice and Guidance.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- Understanding of employment needs and challenges faced by people experiencing labour-market exclusion.
- Good knowledge of local labour-market conditions, employment trends, and training/employment support services.
- Understanding of DWP out-of-work benefits, the welfare system, and related support infrastructure.
- Knowledge of funding streams for training, economic development, or business support.
- Experience supporting people with disabilities, health conditions, or neurodiverse needs into employment.
- Experience working with jobseekers and residents of deprived areas, both individually and in groups.
- Experience working across public, private, community, and voluntary sector environments.
- Knowledge of disability-related employment issues and barriers to work.
- Ability to use ICT systems including Microsoft Office and digital recording tools.

- Ability to manage own time, caseload, and resources effectively while working autonomously.

Core Competency Requirements

- **Communication:** Tailors communication to audience and context. Uses listening and questioning techniques to clarify complex issues and support team understanding.
- **Collaboration:** Coordinates with colleagues and partners to deliver shared goals and improve service outcomes.
- **Service Delivery:** Identifies and resolves service issues, improves processes, and ensures policy alignment. Promotes efficiency and avoids waste through practical improvements.
- **Decision-Making:** Uses evidence and judgement to resolve issues and improve delivery.
- **Digital & Data Literacy:** Interprets data to improve services. Applies knowledge of digital risks and ethical data use. Uses basic analytical techniques to support decision making
- **Adaptability:** Adjusts approach responsively to evolving needs and priorities. Identifies opportunities for continuous improvement and supports others through change.
- **Problem-Solving:** Analyses problems and applies knowledge to develop practical solutions and suggest improvements.
- **Community & Customer Focus:** Engages with service users and customers to improve delivery, ensure accessibility, and reflect diverse needs.
- **Leadership:** Supervises day-to-day activity and supports team development. Coordinates tasks and resources to meet the needs of the service.

Strengths

Adaptable: You can adapt to variations in work or environment. Your effectiveness is not affected by change. You are flexible and versatile. You act as an advocate for change

Analytical: You seek and analyse information to inform your decisions, based on the best available evidence.

Catalyst: You are self-motivated to act towards achieving a goal. You are confident using your own initiative to take forward actions

Change Agent: You are positive and inspirational in leading and supporting others through change.

Courageous: You are an innovator who tries new approaches. You push yourself to work outside your comfort zone.

Desirable

Level 3 qualification in Supported Employment, or equivalent relevant training.

Strong understanding of national and regional welfare-to-work policy.

Significant experience delivering supported employment services, including providing IAG, action planning, jobsearch support, and broader careers/employability guidance.

Safeguarding

The post holder is expected to promote and safeguard the welfare of children, young people, and Adults at Risk they are responsible for or come into contact with, in line with the organisation's safeguarding policies.

This post is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, including a check against the barred list for working with children and/or vulnerable adults.