JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Connect to Work Employment Specialist		
Directorate	Community Place and Economy		
Reporting to	Service Manager		
Grade	13		
Evaluation ref:	TR0266	**Job Family ref:**	

Role purpose

To support Somerset residents, particularly those experiencing health conditions, disabilities or multiple disadvantages, to access, sustain or return to meaningful employment. Using a person-centred and strengths-based approach, the postholder will deliver tailored employment support in accordance with either the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model or the Supported Employment Quality Framework (SEQF), helping participants to overcome barriers and achieve sustainable employment outcomes.

To manage a caseload of participants by completing vocational profiles, co-producing personalised action plans and providing practical support with job searching, applications, interviews, job matching and workplace adjustments. The postholder will work collaboratively with employers, health professionals, training providers and community organisations, monitor participants' progress and provide ongoing in-work support, while contributing to the quality and continuous improvement of the service.

Accountabilities

Effective caseload management of participants, delivering tailored one-to-one support strictly aligned to either the IPS or SEQF model. Caseloads will be 20:1 for SEQF and 25:1 for IPS – caseloads will not be mixed to ensure fidelity to each model. High fidelity is essential to achieving positive employment outcomes and maintaining the integrity of the service.

Build trusted relationships to provide long-term, consistent one-to-one support. Conduct vocational profiling to identify strengths, interests, and barriers, ensuring alignment with the principles of IPS or SEQF.

Develop and regularly meet and review personalised action plans to support suitable employment goals, ensuring these are co-produced with participants and reflect the fidelity standards of the chosen model.

Assess and address participant support needs related to employment, which may include welfare advice, disclosure of mental or physical health conditions, and any restrictions to work. Support must be holistic and responsive, in line with IPS or SEQF fidelity guidance.

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Understand the participant's interests and needs for being in work, advocate and build confidence in navigating complex job-search processes, and aid job-matching with support towards returning and sustaining work. This includes embedding IPS principles such as rapid job search and integration with clinical teams, or SEQF's structured progression pathways.

Provide practical job search support, including CV writing, interview preparation, and job-matching, tailored to the participant's vocational profile and the fidelity requirements of the selected model.

Deliver support using either model of supported employment: IPS or SEQF. Caseloads will not be mixed to ensure proper adherence to Fidelity scales. High fidelity indicates that a service is being delivered more closely to the Supported Employment model, which is strongly associated with better employment outcomes. The post holder will be trained and supported to maintain fidelity through supervision, reflective practice, and ongoing development.

Advise on benefits, disclosure of health conditions, and reasonable workplace adjustments, ensuring advice is accurate, up-to-date, and aligned with IPS/SEQF best practice.

Collaborate with employers, training providers, and partner agencies to secure appropriate and suitable job placements. Employer engagement must be proactive and tailored, reflecting the participant's goals and the fidelity standards of IPS or SEQF.

Support access to training, skills development, and digital inclusion opportunities, ensuring these are relevant to the participant's employment goals and progression pathway.

Monitor and report on participant progress, outcomes, and retention. Use fidelity-aligned tools and metrics to ensure consistency and quality of delivery.

Continue to support individuals throughout their journey to ensure sustainable employment is achieved. This includes post-placement support and employer liaison, as required by IPS and SEQF fidelity standards.

Ensure compliance with Health and Safety regulations, safeguarding individuals, equalities, and data protection policies. Ensure a robust risk assessment is in place with regular monitoring and review.

Understand and comply with national legislation, regulations and Council policies, processes and procedures including mandatory training.

Maintain accurate records and adhere to council procedures including cyber security and information governance/data protection. Documentation must reflect fidelity requirements and be auditable for quality assurance purposes.

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Contribute to marketing, communications, and development of case studies. Case studies should reflect fidelity to IPS or SEQF and demonstrate impact and outcomes.

Participate in team meetings, supervision, and ongoing professional development. Engagement in fidelity reviews, reflective practice, and model-specific training is essential to maintain service quality.

Undertake other duties appropriate to the grade of the post.

Knowledge / Experience / Qualifications / Skills		
	Essential	**Desirable**
Knowledge		
• A clear understanding of the barriers to employment faced by disadvantaged groups who experience labour market exclusion.	X	
• Knowledge of employment support services, job search strategies, and the local labour market including the geography of Somerset.	X	
• Awareness of supported employment models, fidelity and inclusive practices.	X	
• Knowledge of Individual Placement and Support (IPS) and Supported Employment Quality Frameworks (SEQF)	X	
• Awareness of the opportunities and destinations available to disadvantaged individuals and specific support available.	x	
• Knowledge of developing supported pathways to employment plans with individuals to ensure the suitability to employment and that the individual is placed in the right employment.	X	
• Understanding of health and wellbeing services relevant to employment.	X	
• Awareness of data protection and safeguarding principles.	X	
• Knowledge of working to Government guidelines and processes including the DWP.		X
• Knowledge of service improvement planning and delivery.		X
Experience		
• Proven experience providing advice, guidance, or support to individuals seeking employment.	X	

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• Experience working with people with health conditions, disabilities, or multiple disadvantages.	X	
• Experience in employer engagement and partnership working.	X	
• Experience of working closely with individuals and being responsible for people's health and safety and well-being including safeguarding.	X	
• Experience using Microsoft IT systems and digital platforms for case management and reporting.	X	
• Experience working as part of a team and within multi-agency settings.	X	
• Proven experience of meeting and exceeding outcomes and targets		X
• Experience in the policy development, workforce, and skills aspects of economic development.		X
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications		
• Level 2, 3 or 4 Certificate/Diploma in Advice & Guidance or equivalent.	X	
• Level 4 Careers Information qualification (or working towards).	X	
• Level 6 Diploma in Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG).		X
• IPS Employment Specialist Accreditation/Training.		X
• SEQF Employment Specialist Accreditation/ Training.		X
• Accreditation from a recognised economic development body.		X
• Evidence of continuous professional development in relevant areas.		X
Skills		
• Excellent verbal and written communication skills and ability to share experience and understanding clearly with participants as well as professionals.	X	
• Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to motivate and build rapport with a wide range of people.	X	
• Empathy and understanding for individuals with health support needs and additional complex needs.	X	
• The willingness to challenge to ensure an individual receives the appropriate support.	X	
• The ability to maintain resilience and tenacity to not give up despite unavoidable setbacks and issues.	X	
• Organisational skills and the ability to manage competing priorities and work to deadlines.	X	

• A problem-solving and solution-focused approach.	X	
• Ability to work independently and collaboratively within a team including sound decision making skills.	X	
• Competence in Microsoft Office and digital platforms.	X	
• Commitment to continuous professional development.	X	

Working Conditions

The role is primarily community-based, operating from Community Employment Hubs and other locations across Somerset, with attendance at Council offices as required. Regular travel across Somerset will be required to meet participants, visit employers and employment settings, attend meetings and undertake community engagement activities. There may occasionally be a requirement to work evenings or weekends to meet service requirements or attend community events.

Dimensions of the role

The postholder will manage an individual caseload of participants in accordance with the assigned supported-employment model. Caseloads will normally be up to 20 participants under SEQF or up to 25 participants under IPS and will not be mixed, to support fidelity to the relevant model. The role operates across Somerset and contributes to agreed participant progression, employment and job-retention outcomes.

Working Arrangements

Somerset Council's Dynamic Working Strategy applies to this role. The postholder will be required to work flexibly across Council, community and partner locations according to service and participant needs.

Corporate Accountabilities

Understand, uphold, and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.

Date: 23/10/2025