CONNECT TO WORK

PREPARING FOR A SEQF FIDELITY REVIEW

Inclusive Trading

base british association for supported employment

CONNECT TO WORK
Funded by UK Government

About this resource and how to use this guide

This practical guide supports Connect to Work (CtW) Accountable Bodies and Supported Employment Delivery Partners to prepare for a Supported Employment Quality Framework (SEQF) model fidelity review. It outlines what the review involves, the types of evidence assessors will look for, and how to organise your preparation so the review runs smoothly and reflects your practice accurately. Throughout the Connect to Work SEQF Fidelity Work, the British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) will be holding meetings with Accountable Bodies and their Delivery Partners to support their continuous improvement journey.

Use this guide alongside the [CtW SEQF Assessment Tool] and your local evidence set. You may read it end-to-end, however you may find it more useful to access it section by section as you work through each stage, then return to the checklist and evidence examples as you build and finalise your submission.

This practical guide builds on the original assessment handbook developed through collaboration between BASE, Inclusive Trading CIC, the University of Strathclyde, and the University of Sheffield. It is part of a wider set of resources designed to help Supported Employment providers understand, deliver, and evidence high-quality provision as defined by the SEQF.BASE is available to offer advice and guidance throughout the self-assessment period, and you are encouraged to use this support if you are unsure about any criteria or evidence requirements. Any queries should be sent to quality@base-uk.org.

Contents

1: Overview of SEQF model fidelity review

1.1 How the SEQF model fidelity review was developed

The SEQF was developed in 2017 as part of an ERASMUS project involving BASE and some transnational partners. Its purpose was to establish a quality framework for the provision of supported employment to improve services for vulnerable jobseekers, employees, and employers. A key part of its original development was ensuring that the core values of Supported Employment, as defined by the National Occupational Standards for Supported Employment are embedded in the practices of Supported Employment Services, and that Supported Employment was implemented consistently across all providers.

BASE created a model fidelity version of the SEQF in 2018 to allow for self-assessment, assessment, and standardisation within, and between, Supported Employment services. As part of BASE's continuous improvement approach, the model and tools were reviewed and refined in 2025 to strengthen robustness, provide granular scoring and analysis within the framework, and ensure they continue to support high-quality supported employment.

In addition to providing a core set of values and quality standards that supported employment service providers should uphold, the SEQF allows providers to evaluate their outcomes and practices. The model was developed with the notion that supported employment services should ensure that everyone seeking employment, who has a disability and/or neurodivergence and/or other personal barriers/disadvantages, receives high-quality support to find, maintain, and flourish in well-matched employment. Employers seeking to promote workforce diversity should also receive high-quality assistance in making reasonable adjustments and meeting their business goals.

By evaluating the provider's adherence to the SEQF model fidelity, using a scoring system, BASE’s fidelity review benchmarks the quality of the provider's supported employment services to jobseekers, employers, and commissioners.

1.2 Purpose and outputs of the SEQF fidelity review

Fidelity reviews are designed to support providers on their continuous improvement journey and ultimately strengthen sustainable employment outcomes for the customers they support. They provide an expert external perspective on how a service is working in practice, highlighting strengths and identifying areas for focused development so teams can and avoid ‘drift’ from the model. Please note that customers within SEQF are participants and employers.

The purpose of the fidelity review is twofold. Primarily, it provides an externally validated view of your current fidelity to the SEQF model across each element. This helps you benchmark performance, consolidate strengths and identify priorities for development. It also gives commissioners, employers, and participants confidence in the quality of support they can expect.

Secondly, it supports continual improvement. The process is constructive and reflective: assessors explore how your practice aligns with the SEQF standards, discuss what is working well, highlight opportunities to strengthen delivery over time, and provide the service with a development plan. While the final score is important, the main value is using the findings to plan, implement, and evidence ongoing improvements.

1.3 How SEQF links to Connect to Work

The DWP Connect to Work Guidance reflects the evidence available, indicating that the most effective Supported Employment programmes demonstrate fidelity to the five-stage Supported Employment model. Connect to Work will therefore be underpinned by a Fidelity Assessment system to ensure the development and consistent delivery of high-quality services. The Connect to Work Grant is to be used to deliver the evidence-based Supported Employment approach, where the SEQF will measure model fidelity and give providers a framework to develop and deliver their provision. Accountable Bodies (ABs) and their delivery partners are to adhere to the Supported Employment model, as assessed by the SEQF model fidelity review. Approaching the review with an open mindset and communicating transparently, will help you get the most value from the feedback and a focussed action plan for continuous improvement.

1.4 Evidence Gathering: Start early and embed it into delivery

Early and consistent evidence gathering is essential. Putting simple systems in place from the beginning of the programme to capture practice as it happens, rather than trying to recreate it retrospectively, is proven to improve long term outcomes. Fidelity reviews are not a one-off event; they are part of an ongoing quality improvement cycle and therefore need to be embedded throughout the lifetime of the Connect to Work (CtW) contract.

In practice, the fidelity review combines a review of what you say you do (your self-assessment and evidence) with what people experience (interviews and discussions with customers, staff, management, circles of support etc) and what your records show (data and case file sampling). It is designed to be proportionate and supportive, helping you evidence delivery against the SEQF criteria and identify practical next steps.

1.5 What happens during the review

SEQF reviews evaluate the organisation's adherence to model fidelity within its processes and procedures, and do not focus on the performance of individuals. Assessors will triangulate evidence across sources, ask for clarification where needed, and record findings against each element of the framework. Taken together, this approach provides a clear picture of how aligned your service is to the model, and where you can strengthen practice.

An SEQF fidelity review takes place over two days: a desktop review of your submitted evidence, followed by an on-site visit with your service two weeks later. The fidelity review is carried out with you by BASE assessors, who are experienced in the SEQF Supported Employment model and in conducting SEQF fidelity reviews. There will always be a member of the assessment team that has direct experience of delivering Supported Employment services with strong adherence to the SEQF model.

1.6 Benefits for providers

In addition to providing an accurate reflection and action plan, we know that providers with strong model fidelity achieve better job outcomes in both volume and job retention. While it is acknowledged that providers might be concerned about not scoring highly in year one, many use the knowledge and experience of assessors to develop their service and perform strongly in later assessments due to increased model fidelity, strong relationships with employers and better outcomes.

2: The Connect to Work SEQF fidelity review process

2.1 Planning for success

Connect to Work delivery partners will typically receive a fidelity review between 12 and 16 months after the first participant in the Accountable Body (AB) area goes live on SEQF, as per the contract specification with DWP.

In some cases, a provider may be out of scope for a Year 1 review if they have not yet been live with an SEQF participant for 12 months at the point the review is scheduled, but they will be part of future reviews in the cycle.

We have included a typical end-to-end timeline for a Connect to Work SEQF fidelity review, from initial contact and planning through to reporting and post-review improvement activity. This can be used as a practical checklist, enabling services to

- ✓ confirm who is responsible for each action (BASE, the Accountable Body, and Delivery Partners (DPs))
- ✓ track progress against key deadlines.
- ✓ ensure the self-assessment and supporting evidence is uploaded in time.

> Remember that this is a continuous improvement journey, so embedding and integrating work around the SEQF should commence as soon as practically possible within teams.

2.2 Overview of timescales

ACTION	Week -20	Week -16	Week -10	Week -8 to -4	Week -2	Week -1	Week 0 On-site review	Week +2	Week +4	Week +8
BASE contacts AB to hold initial planning meeting										
Online touchpoint meeting to confirm dates/locations, introduce Lead Assessor, agree expectations and upload process										
Upload self-assessment and all supporting evidence to SharePoint (deadline for submission is -4 weeks).										
Fidelity review team selects the random sample and notifies you.										
Final timetable shared with the Lead Assessor										
On-site fidelity review completed										
Draft report completed and sent for moderation, then shared with AB & DP for factual accuracy check.										
BASE summary report compiled for AB/DWP sign-off.										
Local Community of Practice completed to support action planning and Delivery partner action plan completed										

2.3 Explanation of timescales

A) CONFIRM SCOPE AND PLAN THE REVIEW: 20 -16 weeks before on-site review

BASE will contact the Accountable Body Single Point of Contact (SPOC) 16–20 weeks before fidelity reviews are due to arrange an initial planning meeting. This meeting will confirm which Delivery Partners (DPs) are in scope, agree provisional dates for the fidelity review, and gather key information (for example, staffing levels and the number of CtW participants) to help BASE confirm the appropriate fidelity review team size.

B) ONLINE TOUCHPOINT MEETING: 10 weeks before on-site review

BASE will arrange a 10-week online touchpoint meeting with the AB, who will ensure the relevant Delivery Partners (DPs) attend. This meeting confirms the date(s) and location(s) for the review, introduces you to the Lead Assessor, and provides an opportunity to ask questions. We will outline what to expect on the fidelity review visit, discuss the draft timetable and key stakeholder's assessors should meet, and explain how to upload the self-assessment and evidence to SharePoint. BASE will allocate a fidelity review team. In Appendix 2, you will find examples of timetables.

Please note - The relevant data sharing arrangements must be in place between Social Finance and the Accountable Body before BASE shares access to the SharePoint where the evidence will be uploaded. If you are unsure if the agreements are in place, please contact the Accountable Body Single Point of Contact (SPOC), BASE and Social Finance to confirm that the arrangements for sharing redacted personal data is in place.

C) BUILD THE EVIDENCE SET: 8 - 4 weeks before on-site review

The Accountable Body (AB) and Delivery Partners (DPs) should begin drafting the on-site fidelity review timetable, completing the self-assessment, and uploading supporting evidence to SharePoint (including the SEQF self-assessment).

D) EVIDENCE SUBMISSION: Week 4 before on-site review

All required documentation and evidence **must be fully uploaded to the designated SharePoint site no later than 4 weeks prior to the fidelity review**:

- Confirm any local requirements (e.g., confidentiality agreements, access to systems, Wi-Fi, parking).
- A full list of pseudonymised participants within the contract period on a pre-prepared data spreadsheet. This will help us choose which participants and employers we would like to speak to as part of the review and to sample files. The attached datasheet may be of use, but you do not need to use it if you can produce and submit this pseudonymised information directly from a CRM system.
- The SEQF Self-Assessment elements of the SEQF Assessment Tool are completed.
- The evidence referenced within the self-assessment is uploaded and labelled. Evidence must be appropriately redacted before it is uploaded to SharePoint in alignment with GDPR and Data Protection regulations. Any evidence that does not meet validation requirements will be flagged to the providers and will not be reviewed unless it is amended and submitted within one week.
- Consent forms for CtW participants who will be interviewed. This includes explicitly informing them that their contact details will be shared with BASE if they consent to have a telephone interview. If they chose to have a face to face interview, then BASE do not need the participant's contact details.
- A timetable for the fidelity review day (see Appendix 1). It is the delivery partner's responsibility to ensure all required interviews are included in the timetable.

IMPORTANT

There is no opportunity to submit additional evidence after the submission deadline.

While assessors may request clarification or further information during the on-site visit, this does not replace the requirement for a complete submission four weeks before the on-site fidelity review.

E) DESKTOP REVIEW, SAMPLING AND FINAL TIMETABLE: 4–0 weeks before on-site review

The appointed Lead Assessor will review the evidence submitted and send any clarification questions to the AB and DPs. As part of this review, the Lead Assessor will begin compiling findings to support preparation for the on-site visit.

2-4 weeks before the onsite fidelity review, the fidelity review team will select a sample of 10–30 participants (depending on the geographical area covered) and will notify you of the sample list. You will need to have the relevant case notes and supporting documentation available for the selected sample during the on-site fidelity review and consent sought from the individuals. If a participant does not consent, then it is the responsibility of the delivery provider to redact identifying information from the case file ready for the on-site review.

The final timetable should be shared with the Lead Assessor one week prior to the on-site fidelity review date. If any changes are needed after this point, please communicate them to the Lead Assessor as soon as practicable (recognising that some changes may still occur on the day).

F) ON-SITE REVIEW: Week 0

The on-site fidelity review should take place at a central location for the delivery area. Assessors require a suitable, relatively undisturbed workspace and access throughout the day to the nominated self-assessment lead, who can help locate and provide any additional evidence requested by the fidelity review team (including access to CRM systems where relevant).

BASE assessors will remain on site to complete the fidelity review. This will include interviews, reviewing additional evidence, and reviewing CRM systems. When assessors arrive, provide a short orientation to the key areas they will need (for example, toilets, their workspace, and how to access support during the day). Please ensure assessors can move around the building as required (for example, by arranging a temporary pass) and have access through the day to necessary conveniences such as refreshments, power sockets for laptops, and private areas for interviews. Share relevant fire evacuation procedures and advise if a fire alarm test is scheduled. If assessors need to leave the building during the day (for example, to purchase lunch), please factor this into the timetable and ensure suitable arrangements are in place for re-entry.

The BASE fidelity review team will speak with staff involved in the delivery and management of supported employment services to better understand their approach to SEQF provision. These may be group discussions or one-to-one conversations. We have provided examples of questions that may be asked in Appendix 3.

Run mock fidelity review interviews with staff so they feel confident answering questions during the fidelity review.

The BASE fidelity review team will conduct interviews with participants (at any stage of their SE journey), their families/carers, employers, and/or other partnership organisations as per the random sampling as set out in 2-4 weeks. These may be in-person (at the place of review only) or telephone interviews. Typically, assessors speak to participants and carers in small discussion groups and with employers via phone at a time that is convenient for them. The delivery provider is responsible for scheduling these interviews within the timetable and for providing phone numbers or making in-person meeting arrangements.

Have more than the minimum number of participants and employers available for interviews, as cancellations do occur. Assessors will aim to speak with a minimum of five participants & five employers; this may be higher dependent on geographical area coverage.

Assessors validate judgements by triangulating evidence from different sources. Where evidence appears inconsistent or incomplete, they may ask follow-up questions or request additional clarification. The review is designed to be supportive and improvement-focused, helping you understand how your current practice aligns with the SEQF model fidelity.

Assessors will share feedback during the day and will meet with you at the end of the visit to explain the interim findings and indicative results. They will also agree the expected date for the next review.

G) DRAFT REPORT AND MODERATION: 2 weeks after on-site review

Within 5 days of the on-site fidelity review, the review team will complete the draft fidelity report and submit it for internal moderation. Once moderation is complete (within 5 working days), BASE will share the draft report with the Accountable Body (AB), Delivery Partners (DPs). The AB and DPs will have 14 working days to identify any factual inaccuracies. BASE will check any factual inaccuracies raised and amend the report where appropriate. Please remember this is not an opportunity to challenge scoring but correct factual inaccuracies. For example, if we have stated there are 10 Employment Specialists but there are in fact 12 Employment Specialists, we would expect you to advise of this factual inaccuracy so the report can be changed.

The report will include the final score for each stage, an overall summary and context for the provider, and findings of good practice and areas for improvement against each criterion.

H) FINAL REPORT COMPLETE: 4 weeks after on-site review

Each provider will have their own SEQF report and BASE will compile a summary report for submission to the AB and DWP for sign-off. The summary report will include:

- Final stage scores
- An overall summary and provider context
- Identified good practice
- Identified areas for improvement
- For subsequent summary reports after Year 1, there will also be a comparison of scores and actions from the previous year.

Once the Summary Report has been approved, BASE will delete all files in the SharePoint folder, except the SEQF report and notify the AB SPOC once deletion has been finished.

I) ACTION PLANNING AND COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE 60 days post summary report (approx. 8 weeks)

A half-day, face-to-face local community of practice will be arranged (with BASE facilitating) to review the fidelity review findings, share good practice, and support action planning. The AB is responsible for sourcing a venue for the local community of practice to take place, inviting relevant people from all delivery partners. BASE will request that each DP submits an action plan following the Local Community of Practice.

IMPORTANT

This cycle is repeated annually, and all DPs that have been live for more than 12 months will be included in the review cycle. BASE recommends using your Year 1 report, including any actions you have added, as the basis for your revised self-assessment tool for the following year.

3: What Assessors will look for

Assessors will look for evidence throughout the fidelity review that the provider understands and applies the core values of Supported Employment as defined by the National Occupational Standards for Supported Employment. In addition, we require evidence that the provider has established processes and policies that are fully understood by staff. Processes should be reviewed to ensure they continue to be relevant and contribute to improved practice and outcomes. You will see that a thread often runs through each stage and it may be helpful to focus initially on the key themes behind each of the stages. Below is a summary of what we are looking for in each of the stages of the self-assessment tool.

A) Engaging with Jobseekers (Section 1.1)

We will look for evidence that providers are ambitious for participants and do not screen individuals based on perceived “job readiness”. Providers should be able to demonstrate inclusive access to the service and a commitment to enabling everyone referred to engage meaningfully. This will be reflected in a formal process, reviewed within the last 12 months, and we will establish the effectiveness and adherence to policy in the evidence reviewed.

We will expect to see that marketing and information materials are accessible, easy to understand, and clearly explain the nature of the service and how it operates. Participants should be able to demonstrate that they receive impartial advice and guidance that enables them to explore career choices and identify and address any potential barriers to employment.
Evidence may include copies of promotional materials, processes for initial engagement, examples of advice and guidance offered, and feedback from participants.

B) Vocational Profiling and Action Planning (Section 1.2)

We will expect to see evidence of how the service actively involves participants, their circle of support (where appropriate), and relevant stakeholders to build a comprehensive understanding of the individual's experience, skills, abilities, interests, wishes, and support needs.

We will look for evidence that vocational profiling is used effectively to identify appropriate employment options and that it is treated as an active, ongoing process rather than a one-off, one-dimensional assessment, and we will look to see that more than one method of profiling is used by practitioners. Providers should be able to demonstrate how vocational profile information is updated and used over time. This will be reflected in a formal process, reviewed within the last 12 months, and we will establish the effectiveness and adherence to policy in the evidence reviewed.

We will also seek evidence of the effective use of SMART action plans that clearly identify learning goals, responsibilities, and timescales, that explicitly address identified barriers to employment and are accessible to participants.

C) Employer Engagement (Section 1.3)

We will look for evidence of how providers use local labour market information to proactively engage with employers across a range of sectors. We will seek to understand the priority given to employer engagement within the service model and how this is reflected in staff roles, time allocation, and performance expectations. Both individualised and broad-brush approaches should be demonstrated, and staff should understand the difference between these approaches.

We will expect to see evidence that job coaches understand the business case for inclusive employment and are able to address employer concerns effectively. As customers of the service, employers should experience engagement that is responsive to their needs and informed by an understanding of their business context.

This will be reflected in a formal process, reviewed within the last 12 months, and we will establish the effectiveness and adherence to policy in the evidence reviewed. We will also look for evidence that employer engagement processes are reviewed and evaluated to assess their effectiveness. This includes how information about employer contacts is recorded, stored, and used to inform ongoing engagement. Providers should be able to evidence how employers are advised and supported to develop inclusive recruitment, induction, and retention practices.

D) Job Matching and Securing Employment (Section 1.4)

We will look for evidence that job matching is driven by undertaking job analysis and comparing this to the vocational profile information relating to the jobseeker’s interests, skills, and aspirations, We will seek to understand whether the service demonstrates ambition for participants, both in the types of roles matched and in the number of hours worked per week. Providers should be able to evidence that they have an accurate understanding of job requirements through the use of Job Analysis, alongside a clear understanding of the jobseeker’s strengths and aspirations. This will be reflected in a formal process, reviewed within the last 12 months, and we will establish the effectiveness and adherence to policy in the evidence reviewed.

We will also look for evidence that identified skills development needs inform action planning. Providers should have systems in place to ensure workplaces are safe, with individual risk factors identified, assessed, and appropriately managed.

E) In-Work Support and Career Development (Section 1.5)

We will seek evidence of how the service identifies, plans, and delivers ongoing support to both the employer and the employee. This includes how support is tailored, reviewed, and adjusted over time. This will be reflected in a formal process, reviewed within the last 12 months, and we will establish the effectiveness and adherence to policy in the evidence reviewed.

We will expect to see evidence of how employers are encouraged and supported to play a full role in inducting, training, and supporting their staff. We will also look for examples of how natural support within the workplace is identified and maximised.

Providers should be able to evidence how the service responds to workplace challenges, including conflicts and any instances of discrimination, and how these are addressed in a timely, effective, and rights-based manner.

F) Business Results (Section 2.1)

We will look for evidence of how data is gathered, stored, and analysed to inform business planning and goal setting. We will explore what the service is learning from its data and performance indicators, how performance information is communicated to stakeholders, and how value is demonstrated to customers and funders.

Assessors may request sample system reports or dashboards to support this discussion.

G) Performance Indicators (Section 2.2)

Where data systems are in place, most performance indicators should be straightforward to evidence. We recognise, however, that indicators A, B, and E may be more challenging to demonstrate in the early stages of delivery, particularly for newer services.

The table on the next page sets out the relevant Key Performance Indicators.

2.2 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
A. Percentage of people starting on the programme who achieve a paid job outcome. (This does not include in-work participant referrals)	≥10% = score 2; ≥20% = score 4; ≥30% = score 6; ≥40% = score 8; ≥50% = score 10
B. Average time from service start to job start. (This does not include in-work participant referrals)	≤52 weeks = score 2; ≤39 weeks = score 4; ≤26 weeks = score 6; ≤16 weeks = score 8; ≤10 weeks = score 10
C. Employer average overall satisfaction ratings. Score 0 if sample size not large enough to score, sample size is minimum of 10% or 10 (whichever is largest)	Very dissatisfied = score 1; Dissatisfied = score 2; Neutral = score 3; Satisfied – score 4; Very satisfied = score 5
D. Jobseeker/employee average overall satisfaction ratings. Score 0 if sample size not large enough to score, sample size is minimum of 20% or 20 (whichever is largest)	Very dissatisfied = score 1; Dissatisfied = score 2; Neutral = score 3; Satisfied = score 4; Very satisfied = score 5
E. Percentage of people starting work who sustain paid work for 6 months. (This indicator will only apply to those participants who started employment over 6 months previously to assessment and this would include in-work participant referrals but start date of employment for these participants will be date started on programme).	≥50% = score 2; ≥60% = score 4; ≥70% = score 6; ≥80% = score 8; ≥90% = score 10

In addition to the Key Performance Indicators, there are further criteria where assessors will review supporting data as part of the fidelity review, which are listed below:

1.1.1 – Jobseekers and referral organisations understand any eligibility criteria and what to expect from the organisation, including its limitations. In addition to examples of evidence, we will review how many people were referred to Connect to Work and the reasons why people were not accepted onto the caseload.

1.1.5 – The organisation does not operate a screening process to identify job readiness, and the zero-rejection policy is consistently applied. In addition to examples of evidence, we will review how many people were referred to Connect to Work and the reasons why people were not accepted onto the caseload.

1.1.8 - At least 90% of vocational profiles commence within 3 weeks of the eligibility confirmation date (where eligibility confirmation date for Connect to Work is the date recorded on PRap system as the official programme start date).

1.1.10 – Active caseloads are 20 or under (per FTE).

2.1.1 The organisation has a system to collect data on a wide range of key performance indicators, including SEQF KPIs and other KPIs, for example, pay rate, hours worked, demographics.

The datasheet here can utilised by services to support them in measuring the following criterion as part of the self-assessment: 1.18, 1.10, 2.2A, 2.2B, 2.2E.

4: SEQF self-assessment approach and tips

4.1 SEQF assessment approach

Service providers should complete and submit the SEQF Assessment Tool four weeks prior to the fidelity review visit. The self-assessment sections help you reflect on the quality of your service: you will record the score you propose for each criterion, reference the supporting evidence, and note any comments or improvement actions. Scores entered for each stage will automatically transfer to the main scoring summary within the SEQF Assessment Tool.

Recommended: Ask a senior lead (for example, a quality manager or senior manager) to coordinate the self-assessment and bring together the right people to contribute over time. It can help to set up small task groups to focus on sections, identify evidence, and draft comments and actions. You do not need to complete the tool in a strict sequence, many teams find it easier to start with the sections where evidence is already well established. The self-assessment is intended to support learning and continuous improvement, so it is fine to record where practice is still developing and what you plan to strengthen next.

Aim to provide evidence against as many criteria as possible, even where you cannot yet demonstrate full alignment for a particular stage. Some criteria require professional judgement; your role is to explain how your practice meets the intent of the criterion, using clear evidence and short commentary. Where you identify gaps, note the actions you are taking to strengthen delivery—this is often helpful context for assessors.

Each standard has a number of criteria. Each criterion is scored separately on a scale of 0 to 2, with the exception of the key performance indicators.

The SEQF CtW Assessment Tool brings together the required criteria, scoring guidance, and illustrative examples of the types of evidence you may wish to use as part of your self-assessment. It is designed to help you present clear, robust evidence against each criterion, while enabling assessors to review your submission consistently and provide constructive feedback.

During the fidelity review visit, assessors may request clarification or additional evidence where needed. BASE is available to offer advice and guidance throughout the self-assessment period, and you are encouraged to use this support if you are unsure about any criteria or evidence requirements. Any queries should be sent to quality@base-uk.org.

Evidence will be provided in a written form (i.e., documentary evidence, case files, policies, databases, feedback, emails, etc.) and oral form (i.e., interviews with participants, employers, staff, management and other relevant stakeholders). Examples of evidence that may be used are provided in the SEQF Assessment Tool.

4.2 Self-assessment practical tips

- ☑ Start action planning early. Small changes made now can create early impact and support your continuous improvement journey.
- ☑ Organise your evidence as you go, and reference it clearly within the self-assessment (for example, using file names or evidence numbers).
- ☑ Put simple systems in place to capture evidence consistently (for example, templates, shared folders, and routine checks).
- ☑ Don’t upload too much evidence, for example, a small sample of redacted VPs, (i.e. 2) would be enough as we review cases whilst we are on-site.
- ☑ Keep accessibility and co-production at the centre of your approach and consider how this is evidenced in practice.
- ☑ Agree and document common working procedures from the start, so the team is aligned on how key activities are delivered and recorded.
- ☑ Make sure all team members are aware of the reviews and the need to consistently keep up to date information. Bring the whole team on the journey

4.3 Example of Completing the self-assessment document

The next few pages go through an example of working through the self-assessment document and processes you would follow

	Engaging Jobseekers Criterion	Self-score	Evidence	Self-assessment comments / actions
1	Jobseekers and referral organisations understand any eligibility criteria and what to expect from the organisation, including its limitations.	1	1. Website 2. Referral forms 3. Leaflets for Participants	• Add to Local Offer website. • Develop presentations for referral organisations to include what to expect and limitations.
2	The organisation provides impartial information, advice and guidance to jobseekers using accessible materials.	1	1. Website 3. Leaflets for Participants	• Add case studies to website. • Develop leaflet in easy read.
3	The organisation provides a private area for confidential discussions.	1	4. Staff Calendar of appointments	• Work with team to create a list of venues that can be utilised. • Add the list to internal procedures.

As you complete the self-assessment, you will often identify actions to strengthen practice. We recommend recording these actions in the action plan section of the SEQF Assessment Tool (an example is shown on the next page).

	Engaging Jobseekers Criterion	Score	Follow Up Actions Required	Due Date	By Whom
1	Jobseekers and referral organisations understand any eligibility criteria and what to expect from the organisation, including its limitations.	1	• Add Programme to Local Offer. • Develop presentations for referral organisations.	28/02/26 01/03/26	NO-T BM
2	The organisation provides impartial information, advice and guidance to jobseekers using accessible materials.	1	• Add case studies to website. • Develop easy read leaflet.	28/02/26 01/03/26	NO-T BM
3	The organisation provides a private area for confidential discussions.	1	• Create list of venues • Add this link to the procedures.	01/03/26 10/03/26	BM/Team NO-T

As actions are implemented, you can update your action plan and, where appropriate, revisit your self-assessment scores to reflect progress. This helps demonstrate how improvements are being made over time and supports a clear narrative of learning and development.

The actions above have been implemented and recorded in the action plan, as shown on the next page.

Actions	Due Date	Who	Progress	Outcome
Programme onto Local Offer	28/02/26	NO-T	18/02/26 - Discussed with LA and have format required to submit	Programme now published on Local Offer
Develop presentations for ref. organisations	01/03/26	BM	01/03/26 - Generic presentation completed. 15/03/26 - Adapted presentation for specific referral organisations	Adapted presentation now available for local community buildings, Adult Social Care & Health.
Ensure website has case studies	28/02/26	NO-T	20/02/26 – Identified customers and circles of support for case studies. 28/02/26 - Worked with customers to produce case studies.	Case studies are on website, video formats and documents.
Develop leaflet in easy read.	01/03/26	BM	28/02/26 Met with various participants to gain feedback on leaflet and ideas on how to make it easy read. 07/03/26 - Easy read document now available on website.	Easy read document now on website and printed off and provided to referral organisations
Create list of venues	01/03/26	BM / Team	01/03/26 Met with staff team to collate venues list	Venues list created
Add this link to the procedures.	10/03/26	NO-T	07/03/26 Added to internal procedure	List added to internal procedure but needs to be updated and reviewed quarterly.

The team then revisited the self-assessment after making progress against the actions and updated the scoring accordingly (see next page).

This illustrates how the SEQF self-assessment can be used as part of an ongoing continuous improvement cycle.

	Engaging Jobseekers Criterion	Self-score	Evidence	Self-assessment comments / actions
1	Jobseekers and referral organisations understand any eligibility criteria and what to expect from the organisation, including its limitations.	2	1. Website and Local Offer Website 2. Referral forms 3. Leaflets for Participants 20. Presentations	We have added new presentations, case studies and leaflets to website.
2	The organisation provides impartial information, advice and guidance to jobseekers using accessible materials.	2	1. Website 3. Leaflets for Participants 21. Easy read Leaflet	We have more of a range of accessible materials now available, which includes case studies etc available.
3	The organisation provides a private area for confidential discussions.	2	4. Staff Calendar of appointments 22. List of venues 23. Team meeting notes 24. Internal procedures for engaging jobseekers.	We can see jobseekers in community buildings and Council buildings, but we always discuss options for where they would prefer to meet.

When completing the self-assessment, you will also need to complete the Evidence tab. The example on the next page shows how additional evidence can be added and referenced as you work through the self-assessment.

EVIDENCE NO	EVIDENCE NAME	EVIDENCE LINK
1	Website	www.organisation
2	Referral Form	SEQF SharePoint
3	Leaflet for Participants	SEQF SharePoint
4	Staff calendar of appointments	SEQF SharePoint
5-19	Not included here for the purpose of this example	
20	Presentation	SEQF SharePoint
21	Easy read leaflet	SEQF SharePoint
22	List of venues	SEQF SharePoint
23	Team Meeting Notes	SEQF SharePoint
24	Supported Employment Procedures	SEQF SharePoint

PLEASE REMEMBER THIS IS A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Checklist: How to prepare for the SEQF Fidelity review

☐ A full list of all pseudonymised participants (with personal information redacted) on a pre-prepared data spreadsheet is shared on the designated SharePoint site.

☐ The SEQF Self-Assessment element of the SEQF Assessment Tool is completed and shared on the designated SharePoint site.

☐ A timetable for the on-site fidelity review day is created and shared with assessors on the designated SharePoint site.

☐ Supporting evidence is well organised, redacted and assessors will be able to access it easily via the designated SharePoint site.

☐ Staff are available and prepared for interviews.

☐ Participants and employers are scheduled and available for interviews.

☐ Consent forms from participants are uploaded to the designated SharePoint site.

☐ A private room has been allocated for assessors.

☐ Access to Wi-Fi will be available for assessors.

☐ Assessors advised on car parking and refreshments.

Appendix 2a – Example timetable for two on-site Assessors

Timings	Lead Assessor 1		Assessor 2
09:00 – 10:00	Introductions / Planning with Lead and meet with Service Manager, agree additional evidence required from desktop exercise and data review.		
10:00 – 11:30	Meet with Employment Specialists & Job Coaches (broken down into 2*45 min slots – groups)		Review random sample of files and additional evidence provided
11:30 – 12:30	Meet with participants		Discussions with employers
12:30 – 13:15	Working lunch to review/catch up		
13:15 – 14:00	Meet with Accountable Body / Quality Lead		
14:00 – 15:00	Meet with triage team for Connect to Work		Discussions with circles of support
15:00 – 16:30	Reviewing evidence and populating report, scorings and recommendations		
16:30 – 17:00	Final feedback with indicative scoring. The team can invite who they would like to attend this session. Agree date of next annual review.		

Appendix 2b – Example timetable for three on-site Assessors

Timings	Lead Assessor 1	Assessor 2	Assessor 3
09:00 – 10:00	Introductions / Planning with Lead and meet with Service Manager, agree additional evidence required from desktop exercise and data review.	Introductions / Planning with Lead and meet with Service Manager, agree additional evidence required from desktop exercise and data review.	Introductions / Planning with Lead and meet with Service Manager, agree additional evidence required from desktop exercise and data review.
10:00 – 11:30	Meet with Employment Specialists & Job Coaches (broken down into 2*45 min slots – groups) Maximum 8 staff per group.	Meet with Employment Specialists & Job Coaches (broken down into 2*45 min slots – groups) These will be different people to the Lead Assessor meetings.	Review random sample of files and additional evidence provided.
11:30 – 12:30	Meet with participants	Discussions with employers	Review random sample of files and additional evidence provided.
12:30 – 13:15	Working lunch to review / catch up	Working lunch to review / catch up	Working lunch to review / catch up
13:15 – 14:00	Meet with Accountable Body / Quality Lead	Meet with Accountable Body / Quality Lead	Review random sample of files and additional evidence provided.
14:00 – 14:45	Meet with triage team for Connect to Work	Discussions with circles of support	Discussions with referral/signposting organisations
14:45 – 16:30	Reviewing evidence and populating report, scorings and recommendations		
16:30 – 17:00	Final feedback with indicative scoring. The team can invite who they would like to attend this session. Agree date of next annual review.		

Appendix 3 – Example fidelity review interview questions

Examples of questions that assessors may ask during the on-site fidelity review.

This section presents examples of questions assessors may ask during the fidelity review.

- Does the organisation have accessible service literature and published eligibility guidelines?
- How does the organisation ensure these are understood by stakeholders?
- How does the organisation manage disclosure issues?
- How does the organisation ensure that all participants who want to work receive a service? How are their circle of support involved?
- How does the organisation signpost to alternative provision if appropriate?
- How does the organisation provide impartial IAG ensuring any conflicts of interest are managed and professional boundaries are maintained?
- Does the organisation monitor local demographics, and how does it ensure referral demographics are comparable?
- How does the organisation review and update its engagement procedures and policies?
- How does the service manage under-demand and over-demand for the service?
- How does the organisation carry out vocational profiling and action planning? Are these co-produced and accessible? Do they acknowledge and act on any cultural factors associated with the jobseeker?
- How are vocational profiles and action plans reviewed and updated?
- How are participants supported to exercise their choice and control?
- How are the vocational profiling and action planning processes reviewed and updated?
- How does the organisation ensure that participants understand the financial implications of work?
- How does the organisation address self-employment options?
- How does the organisation ensure that SMART action plans identify and address any obstacles faced by the jobseeker?
- How do action plans ensure rapid progress towards employment using a “place and train” approach?
- How does the organisation plan, monitor and evaluate any pre-employment activity, including work experience?
- How does the organisation use local, regional, and national sources of information to identify employers?
- How does the organisation decide which employers and sectors to target for engagement activity?

- How does the organisation record employer contacts? How are staff time and resources allocated to employer engagement?
- How does the organisation engage employers to promote the business case for getting involved in supported employment?
- How does the organisation support employers with inclusive recruitment and retention practices to identify job roles, including the potential for job design and job carving?
- How does the organisation address any issues of concern and discrimination from employers?
- How does the organisation identify employer needs? How does the organisation support staff to recognise that employers are service customers?
- How successful is the organisation in developing long-term relationships with employers? What is the basis for the relationships?
- How are the employer engagement policies and processes reviewed and updated? Who is involved in this?
- How does the organisation ensure it achieves parity of terms & conditions and complies with legislative requirements when securing employment for participants?
- How does the organisation use vocational profiles and job analyses as part of the job matching process?
- How does the organisation work with employers to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of employees?
- How does the organisation support employers and participants through the recruitment process?
- How does the organisation secure jobs across a range of sectors and occupational areas that meet the preferences and abilities of participants?
- How does the organisation, in partnership with employers and participants, identify and address any perceived skills gap?
- How does the organisation work with partners to ensure that employers get the best possible job match?
- How does the organisation review and update its job matching processes? Who is involved?
- How does the organisation plan and provide for individualised support for customers?
- How does the organisation ensure that social integration and independence is maximised?
- How does the organisation support employers to understand their responsibility for the management and training of their employees?
- How does the organisation ensure ongoing and timely support for customers?
- How does the organisation identify, secure, implement and monitor any reasonable adjustments, including assistive technology?
- How does the organisation work with employers and employees to ensure that the employee is safe at work and issues of safeguarding, harassment and discrimination are proactively managed?
- How does the organisation monitor the progress of employees, resolving any problems and maximising job sustainability? How do these processes link with employers' natural routines?

- How does the organisation make use of external partners to resolve work-related issues?
- How does the organisation develop employee skills and help employers to plan for career development?
- How does the organisation collect, analyse and use job outcome data?
- How does the organisation review and update its in-work support and career development processes? Who is involved?
- How does the organisation collect, analyse and present data on outcomes?
- How does the organisation set and communicate targets?
- How does the organisation use outcome data to determine best value, improve services and gauge equality of access and achievement?
- How does the organisation benchmark performance against comparator organisations and show leadership in the sector?

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