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# Employment Entry in Growth Sectors

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# Employment Entry in Growth Sectors: A Review of the International Evidence

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## Summary

- This report is based on a detailed search of the available evidence on employment entry in growth sectors. It focuses on financial and professional services; manufacturing; energy and environment; construction; social care; and hospitality.
- Employment entry is influenced by a range of factors including individual characteristics and circumstances, employer and organisational practices, local labour markets and macro-economic conditions.
- Programmes in the UK which provide pre-employment training in sectors with high volumes of entry level vacancies, work experience placements and a guaranteed job interview have been effective in moving participants into work, though their impacts have not been disaggregated by sector.
- Evaluations of sector-focused initiatives in the US also point to the potential benefits of sector-specific approaches to employment entry policy.
- Active labour market policy has focused primarily on promoting job entry but there is increasing recognition of the importance of creating sustainable employment and career progression. There is evidence that sector-focused policies can encourage under-represented groups into particular sectors.
- The construction sector is well placed to provide employment and training for local people and governments can use procurement processes to encourage this.
- There is growing interest in the role of social enterprises in providing employment pathways, particularly in the repair and maintenance of social housing.
- Social care and hospitality have low barriers to entry but are characterised by low pay, so policies focused on these sectors need to focus on progression as well as job entry.
- Since employers are gatekeepers to employment it is important that policies take account of their recruitment and selection practices and to ensure that these are understood by job seekers. Labour market intermediaries play an important role in keeping abreast of and relaying information about employers' recruitment / selection procedures to job seekers, but it may be necessary to adjust recruitment practices to reach some groups.
- The evidence shows that it is important not to consider employment entry initiatives in isolation but to see them as part of a broader employment pathway.
- It is also important to integrate sectoral initiatives with place based approaches that take account of local demand for and supply of labour.

## Introduction

In-work poverty is of increasing concern in the United Kingdom. In part this reflects the long-tail of low-paid work that exists. For workers in low-pay it is not always easy to escape. There is ongoing concern about the difficulties some individuals experience in entering employment at all, let alone that which is sustainable with prospects for progression. Another key issue relates to cycling between low-paid employment and non-employment (Schildrick et al., 2010, 2012; Macmillan, 2014; Luchinskaya and Green, 2016). There is also evidence from secondary data analysis conducted for the 'Harnessing Growth Sectors for Poverty Reduction' project of distinct sectoral patterns of both low-pay and the chance of leaving low-pay (Green et al., 2017).

The focus of this report is on the role that growth sectors might play in increasing employment entry, with a view to retaining and subsequently progressing in employment, and on examining the evidence base for sector-focused approaches to employment entry. This contribution is one of a number of research reports which analyse the potential of growth sectors to support poverty reduction aims. The growth sectors discussed are outlined below.

The paper is structured as follows: Section 1 introduces the issue of employment entry and the sector focus adopted; Section 2 details the approach to the evidence review and analysis; Section 3 outlines the continuing importance of employment entry in tackling poverty and the potential role for public policy in encouraging employment entry as a first step towards retention and progression out of low-paid work; Section 4 provides the main evidence review, initially with a wider focus on sector-based policy, before considering the issues at the individual sector level; Section 5 draws conclusions and policy implications from the evidence.

### **Why focus on growth sectors and poverty?**

Following the economic crisis of 2008/9 there has been a renewed interest in industrial policy as part of attempts to stimulate economic growth (Mayhew and Keep, 2014; Sissons and Jones, 2016). As outlined in an accompanying project paper (Green et al., 2017), the UK Coalition Government (2010-2015) identified specific sectors ('growth sectors' or 'strategic sectors') at national and sub-national level as a focus of policy attention (see BIS, 2012). UK Industrial Strategy (BIS, 2012; HM Government, 2014) identified the following three broad parts of economy as being of long-term strategic importance:



- advanced manufacturing (including automotive) – characterised by technological strength and innovation, and supply of ‘high value’ products;
- knowledge intensive traded services (in particular professional and business services) in which the UK is considered to have comparative advantage, with expanding use and development of technology and important links to other parts of the economy; and
- ‘enabling industries’ (including energy, construction) which are sectors that have a significant impact on enabling or constraining growth in other parts of the economy.

The Welsh Government and various sub-national bodies in the UK also identified their own growth / priority sectors. There are similarities and differences in the various growth / priority sectors identified, with similarities tending to outweigh differences. To date, industrial strategy has largely targeted growth sectors from an international ‘competitiveness’ perspective. This means there is often a disconnect between policy which is focused on growth, and policy focused on poverty. This is important because evidence suggests that employment growth, rather than growth in gross value added, has a greater impact on poverty (at least in the short-term) (Lee et al., 2014).

In January 2017, the UK Government released its *Building our Industrial Strategy* Green Paper setting out proposals on what a post-Brexit industrial strategy might look like. This had a strong focus on sectors, with the aim of: “cultivating world-leading sectors” building on competitive advantage, while at the same time targeting areas of low productivity, which is partly behind low pay (HM Government, 2017: 11). The Green Paper also emphasised the need for policy to take account of differences between places, so recognising a role for building on the strengths of different geographical areas.

For these reasons, the growth sectors that have been selected for inclusion in this research represent a mixture of high value sectors, those of strategic focus, and those projected to generate significant employment growth (see Green et al., 2017). These sectors were compiled using details of Gross Value Added (GVA), projected employment growth and policy interest (industrial strategy), while also taking into account the gender profile and spatial footprint of sectors. The list includes some large low-paid sectors, as well as sectors which are typified by higher wage jobs. Barriers to entry vary between the sectors selected. The growth sectors examined through the project are:

- Financial and professional services
- Manufacturing
- Energy and environment
- Construction
- Social care
- Hospitality (including tourism)

There are several reasons why the focus on growth sectors in this research offers potentially useful insights for policy and practice:

- Growth sectors are generating opportunities from those out of work or those in low pay in other sectors to potentially move into, and therefore understanding what works in linking people in poverty to these opportunities is an important aim.
- Where growth sectors are targeted by industrial strategy this can create opportunities for policy to help support the growth and widening of opportunity, for example through provision of business support services and integrated strategies for economic development and skills policy which encourage firms to upgrade strategies.
- Fast growing sectors are more likely to experience skills shortages, which can encourage employers to seek to engage with publicly funded skills and training provision.
- Where growing sectors experience high levels of staff turnover this may act as a driver to target approaches to make employment in the sector more attractive.
- More generally a sector focus is of interest because public policy may have more traction in some sectors than others (Schrock, 2013).

### **The continuing interest in employment entry**

Policies aimed at poverty reduction have typically prioritised work entry among disadvantaged groups. Past research has demonstrated the importance of employment as a route out of poverty, and despite a marked increase in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the proportion of people in poverty who were in families where someone was in work (MacInnes et al., 2015), the risk of poverty remains significantly higher for workless than working households (Smith and Middleton, 2007; Browne and Paull, 2010). However, there is a concern about the sustainability of employment. Workers who enter low-wage work are disproportionately more likely to experience subsequent periods of unemployment (Stewart, 2007); creating the so

called 'no-pay/low-pay cycle' which can increase financial instability (Shildrick et al, 2010). Therefore, there is increasing interest in the quality of employment entry amid concerns that while a 'Work First' policy approach (getting people into work quickly) has had some success, it does not reduce the risk of fragile employment because many of the jobs secured as a result of it are part-time, temporary, and characterised by low skill and low pay.

Policy makers in the UK and beyond continue to emphasise a role for active labour market programmes. These typically have a strong emphasis on job search activities alongside pre-employment services, advice and support, to move benefit claimants into employment as rapidly as possible. However, there is limited consideration given to the quality of employment (McQuaid and Fuentres, 2014) and so for subsequent employment sustainability. The introduction of the Work Programme<sup>1</sup> payment model with an emphasis on 'payment-by-results' marked a move in the long-term direction of travel for active labour market programmes. This emphasised not only employment entry but also the importance of sustained employment outcomes (whether in a single job or a succession of jobs), with differential payment structures recognising variations in the relative ease / difficulty of employment entry between sub-groups.

There is also a good deal of policy emphasis on initial entry to employment amongst young people and more broadly on ensuring successful transitions from education to employment. The role of careers information, advice and guidance is important here, and there is increasing emphasis on the part that work experience plays in facilitating employment entry.

Yet employment entry is not solely a concern for out-of-work benefit claimants and young people. With the extension of working lives and an upturn in older people in employment, as well as labour market returners, issues of (re)entry to employment are of increasing policy interest.

Within the context of a continuing interest in employment entry, the question of what works in improving outcomes is clearly important.

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<sup>1</sup> The support targeted at the long-term unemployed.



## Accessing and Assessing the Evidence Base

This section provides a summary of the process through which the evidence base on employment entry in growth sectors was sourced and assessed for this research.

### **Evidence search, screening and review**

Each of the evidence review reports in the project followed the same format, using the principles of a systematic review to source, screen, collate and assess the evidence (based on an adapted version of the EPPI-Centre [2002]). Table A1 in Appendix 1 lists the academic sources searched for relevant literature. To facilitate searching a set of keywords were developed (see Table A2 in Appendix 1 for details of the keywords and for more details on the search strategy). A second phase of the searching aimed to compile relevant grey literature which would not be picked up through the academic search. This involved a somewhat different approach using standard searching software. Table A3 in Appendix 1 presents the search terms used. A third phase of searching was to target specific repositories of research by relevant think tanks, research centres, Government Departments and international organisations (see Table A4 in Appendix 1 for details). Additional material has also been incorporated in this report based on further ad hoc searches of particular sectors, material already known to the research team, and citations followed-up from key papers.

Screening for core relevance was assessed by whether the article or report provided evidence on a programme, project or intervention targeted at employment entry and which operated (at least in part) in one of the growth sectors. An established scientific scale – the Maryland Scale (see Table A5 in Appendix 1) – was used to assess the robustness of evidence. In this report, under each sector heading the robust evidence (where any is available) is presented first.

### **Assessment of the evidence base**

Evidence can be considered in relation to whether a policy or practice is:

- **Plausible** – makes sense theoretically but has not been tested empirically
- **Promising** – where outcomes from the practice appear positive but where evidence is not robust
- **Proven** – where practice has been subject to rigorous evaluation with positive benefits demonstrated

(Corbett and Weber, 2001)

Overall the scale of the evidence on programmes and initiatives aimed at employment entry is quite large but the evidence relating to employment entry in growth sectors is relatively limited; rather, where disaggregated, the evidence on employment entry tends to focus on sub-groups of the population, rather than sectors. This reflects the generic nature of many employment entry programmes and initiatives. Only a limited number of examples of evidence drawing on robust evaluation frameworks were found. Where robustly evaluated programmes and projects were found, these are mostly from the US, where there is both greater local variation in policy approaches and a longer established focus on robust methods of evaluation. The distribution of programme and project evaluations is also unequal across the sectors of interest.

With regard to the adoption of a specific sector-focus (rather than a sector neutral approach), there is some robust evidence that suggests the potential benefits of adopting sector-focused orientations in programmes. This is in part to equip individuals to have awareness of, and to meet, employers' requirements in particular sectors, and is especially apparent in initiatives where employment entry is only one element within a broader concern with employment sustainability and progression.

Finally, it is important to note that the concern of the research project is on the relationship between growth sectors and poverty. In the main however, the programmes and projects reported here measure success on indicators which are largely at the individual level, for example increased wages or employment of particular groups; as such the relationship to household poverty is often not directly observed.

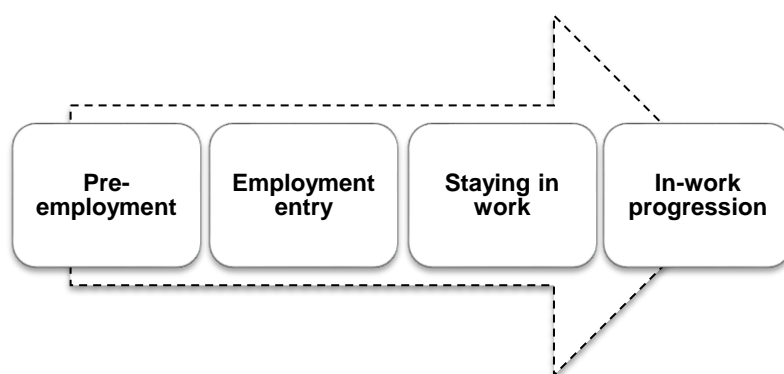
## Employment Entry and Public Policy

This section considers the relationship between public policy and employment entry. First, the position of employment entry within a stylised pathway from non-work into employment is considered. Next an overview of the barriers and facilitators of individuals' entry to employment is presented. Subsequent sections address the need to understand employers' recruitment and selection practices and possibilities for reshaping them; the role of labour market intermediaries in facilitating employment entry; and the importance of job search. Finally, emerging directions in employment entry policies, particularly in relation to other stages in a pathway from non-employment to non-poverty, are outlined.

### The centrality of employment entry in tackling poverty

From the viewpoint of a stylised employment pathway (Figure 1), the process of finding work culminating in employment entry is the key step or goal of an individual in moving from non-work into employment. It is preceded in some cases – depending on an individual's distance from the labour market - by various pre-employment support such as basic training or employability skills among a range of potential interventions. It is followed by work retention (staying in work) and in-work progression.

**Figure 1: A stylised employment pathway from non-work into employment**



(Source: Green et al, 2015)

The central focus here is on employment entry, but reference is made also to other stages in the pathway, particularly pre-employment and staying in work, given:

- the nature of some policy initiatives which incorporate different stages of the pathway (e.g. as noted above, the Work Programme payment model operating across Great Britain has shifted the emphasis of policy to reduce worklessness

solely from employment entry to include an element of employment sustainability); and

- from a reducing poverty perspective the desire to break out of a cycle of fragile employment characterised by 'no pay and low pay'.

Issues of progression are considered in detail an accompanying paper (Sissons et al., 2016) but need to be borne in mind here, given that the quality of an initial job entry, and whether or not any support is provided immediately after job entry (and the amount and nature of such support) has implications for the sustainability of outcomes. There is some inevitable overlap between the employment entry and progression papers given evidence from some programmes which seek to develop a sustainable employment pathway (through employment entry, retention and progression).

### **Barriers and facilitators of employment entry**

A wide range of factors influence employment entry. An employability framework devised by Green et al. (2013) provides a useful way of identifying different groups of influences. They distinguish five key groups of influences: individual factors, individual circumstances, employer/ organisational practices, local contextual factors and macro-level factors.

- **Individual factors:** There are a wide range of factors here. First and foremost, *employability skills and attributes/characteristics* influence employment entry. These encompass what might be termed 'essential attributes', such as basic social skills (required for most jobs, but particularly customer-facing jobs), personal presentation, honesty and integrity, reliability and a positive work ethic. Linked to these are 'personal competencies' such as self-esteem, (self-)motivation, self-efficacy and initiative (again required for most jobs, but especially in non-elementary roles). Most jobs require 'basic transferable skills': literacy, writing, numeracy and ICT skills; a lack of such skills limits the range of employment opportunities available to an individual. Possession of 'key transferable skills' – including problem solving, teamworking, time management, communication skills, etc., and 'high level transferable skills' – open up more potential employment possibilities. For some employment opportunities 'job-specific skills' will be required. Formal qualifications – academic and/or vocational – may be used by employers as a screening device (albeit formal qualifications might not be essential in some instances). A low level of skill or educational attainment is strongly associated with labour market disadvantage. Competition

for jobs and the ability of the more highly qualified to 'bump down' in the labour market to fill routine jobs means that individuals with no/low qualifications are at the back of the hiring queue, with analyses indicating that the employment rate gap between unqualified individuals and those with Level 2 qualifications (and above) has worsened in recent years (Hasluck, 2011). A further set of individual factors relate to an individual's *disposition to enhancing employability*. Of relevance here are attitudes to paid employment (and willingness to take up different types of employment), attitudes to education and training, and to engagement in networking to extend human/ social/ cultural capital which may enhance employability. Negative attitudes in this domain are likely to be a barrier to employment entry. An individual's *labour market and job seeking knowledge* is likely to facilitate employability. Work experience, awareness of labour market opportunities, knowledge of employers' recruitment practices, knowledge and use of formal and informal data sources, a realistic approach to job targeting and an ability to perform effectively at interview are likely to be associated with a greater likelihood of employment entry, *ceteris paribus*. Moreover *mobility* is an important factor: a preparedness to be occupationally/ sectorally/ functionally and geographically mobile is likely to facilitate employment entry. Then there are *demographic characteristics* (which have the potential in practice to be used as the basis for discrimination) – including age, gender, nationality, country of origin, ethnic group, religious affiliation and name. Next, *health and well-being* factors encompass physical and mental health, as well as disability. Poor health is often a barrier to employment and disability can be also (depending on the nature of the disability some types of jobs may not be accessible to a disabled person, *ceteris paribus*). Finally, *work history* may be a barrier or facilitator to employment: a lack of recent work experience, an intermittent work history and/or long durations of non-employment are potential barriers to employment entry, while individuals with short durations of unemployment and good work histories are likely to be more attractive to employers.

- **Individual circumstances:** An individual's *household circumstances* are likely to be a key factor influencing employment entry. Caring responsibilities (e.g. for children, a partner, other family members, etc.) may impinge on the temporal and spatial configuration of employment opportunities that an individual can consider, so reducing the number and types of employment opportunities available. Ensuring synchronicity with the employment/ non-employment activities of another household member might also be important here. The *household work culture* might act as a barrier or facilitator to employment entry: some individuals

may find themselves in a culture where paid employment is not encouraged, while others may find themselves in a supportive household context. A related influence is *access to resources*: access to social capital might help job search while access to cultural capital might ease entry into sustained employment. Access to private transport is likely to increase the geographical range of jobs that might reasonably be considered and likewise access to financial capital is likely to facilitate employment entry (especially into a 'quality job'). Finally, access to the internet/ a smartphone is increasingly important for successful job search (as discussed below).

- **Employer/ organisational practices:** *Employers' recruitment and selection practices* influence also impact on employability. Recruitment and selection is discussed in more detail below. Here it is sufficient to note that how and where jobs are advertised (e.g. by informal/ means, solely electronically, etc.) is an important consideration, as are the methods used to screen applicants (e.g. use of e-screening/ manual screening, etc.). An organisation's *working practices* are also influential in opening up/ constraining access to employment. Flexible working practices – including part-time working, term-time working, compressed hours, job sharing, teleworking, etc. – may make jobs more accessible for individuals with caring responsibilities, while lack of such flexibility might pose a barrier to some potential applicants. Aspects of *organisational culture/ ethos*, such as whether or not an employer has a corporate social responsibility policy and/ or offers work experience placements, and business models adopted (e.g. whether they are 'low cost', 'high value', etc., might also impinge on employment entry; (the factors mentioned are likely to facilitate employment entry).
- **Local contextual factors:** The availability of suitable jobs locally is an influence of employment entry. *Key features of local employment* include the quantity of job opportunities available (*vis-à-vis* the number of people seeking employment – typically measured by the unemployment rate), the sectoral and occupational profile of employment, and the qualification/ experience requirements of jobs available (*vis-à-vis* the characteristics of [potential] job seekers). The location of jobs is also a consideration *vis-à-vis* the spatial pattern of residences and local transport networks. It is important to note that *local labour market norms and operation* vary to some extent between areas, and at neighbourhood level high levels of non-employment may influence *local norms and aspirations* regarding formal employment, suggesting that policy initiatives need to be sensitive to the local situation to best facilitate employment entry. In the latter case a

'geographical saturation' policy approach (i.e. targeting all individuals within a small area) may be applicable.

- **Macro level factors:** *Macroeconomic conditions* influence employment entry: a higher demand for labour facilitates employment entry, *ceteris paribus*. Employers may relax their usual recruitment standards and/ or seek workers from non-traditional sources. It is important to note from a policy perspective that initiatives that might work well at a time of economic growth might not be so successful in a context of high unemployment. The *prevailing employment policy and welfare regime* are also likely to influence employment entry. Reference has been made above to active labour market policy, which is one key factor shaping the behaviour of benefit claimants within its scope, while specific policy initiatives may influence some job seekers' activity and employers' recruitment practices.

Playing an overarching role, **labour market intermediaries** (including the public employment service, employability delivery organisations, careers information advice and guidance services, education and training providers, community/ voluntary organisations, local/ regional authorities, trade unions, chambers of commerce, sectoral bodies, etc.) may be considered as 'enabling support factors'. They can play a role in supporting individuals' entry to employment through pre-employment training, signposting to non-employment related support, information, job broking and job matching services, etc. They can provide support to employers (e.g. through pre-employment training, help with recruitment, etc.). Finally, they can influence local skills and training policy in order to adapt it to local needs and equip potential recruits to meet employers' requirements.

## **Understanding and influencing employers' recruitment and selection practices**

Since employers are the gatekeepers to jobs it is important to understand their recruitment and selection practices. Recruitment relates to the identification and attraction of potential employees. Selection is the assessment of prospective employees against criteria for employment.

Traditionally the role for public policy with regard to recruitment and selection has been to ensure that employers' processes are transparent to job seekers. Such an approach may be seen as uncritically accepting employers' current practices and behaviour. Yet there is also a role for public policy in working with employers to modify traditional recruitment and selection protocols which might filter out some potential suitable recruits (Fletcher, 2004) to make them more accessible to

individuals and sub-groups who are disadvantaged in the labour market. A third approach for influencing employers' recruitment and selection policies is to offer employers' subsidies to encourage hiring or financial incentives/ subsidies for certain sub-groups of potential recruits who would not normally be taken on due to lack of (relevant) work experience. The example of the Future Jobs Fund (Fishwick et al., 2011), in which the Government, through national organisations and local and sectoral partnerships, made a maximum £6,500 contribution for a job of at least six months duration<sup>2</sup> 'was positive (as discussed below).

### **Recruitment methods**

Much of the evidence on recruitment is concerned with recruitment methods. With regard to employment entry a key concern is whether methods used are inclusive or whether they systematically exclude or disadvantage groups of potential employees. Employers need to balance a desire to attract a sufficiently wide pool of applicants of the required quality to select from with the expense and resources incurred through the recruitment process. Recruitment channels which are cheap and easy to use from an employer perspective may not be the most 'open' from a job seeker perspective. This is particularly the case for word of mouth recruitment, since this is a relatively 'closed' channel which potentially disadvantages those without social networks and workplace links.

Evidence from the 2014 Employer Skills Survey (Shury et al., 2014) indicates that in the UK 74 per cent of employers used '*private free*' recruitment channels, with the single most important channel within this category being word of mouth (used by 30 per cent of establishments with vacancies), followed by their own website (used by 21 per cent of establishments with vacancies). 44 per cent of employers used '*private paid for*' recruitment channels, with the local press and recruitment agencies each used by 19 per cent of establishments with vacancies. 38 per cent of employers used '*public free*' recruitment channels. Foremost here is Jobcentre Plus (i.e. the public employment service) used by 32 per cent of establishments with vacancies; (this makes Jobcentre Plus the single most used recruitment channel, closely followed by word of mouth).

It is clear from the percentages quoted above that employers typically use a variety of recruitment channels, and comparison with previous similar surveys indicates that the number of channels used by individual employers is growing – so potentially increasing the chance of candidates seeing vacancies. However, there are significant

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<sup>2</sup> The jobs has to be 'additional' and the individual worker had to be engaged for at least 25 hours per week at the minimum wage.



variations in recruitment channels used by size of establishment. Word of mouth was the single most common channel used by small establishments. By contrast, use of employers' own websites, and of the most commonly used private paid for channels - paid for recruitment websites and the local press - increases with establishment size.

Given the focus here on sectors it is notable that there are sectoral variations in recruitment channels used. Key features include:

- Manufacturing: controlling for size employers are more likely than average to have used public free services and private paid for services, and less likely to use private free channels.
- Hotels and restaurants: employers in this sector are more likely than average to have used private free channels, and less likely to have used private paid for channels.

### **Selection**

Theory suggests that selection decisions are objective and rigorous – perhaps informed by web-based screening and formal testing - with the successful candidate being the individual who in a completely meritocratic exercise best fulfils a formal job description and person specification criteria. In practice, however, selection practices may be much less rigorous and more informal, with factors such as 'cultural fit' with the employer organisation taking a key role. In these circumstances when social and informal criteria play a prominent role in selection it is likely that new recruits will reproduce the existing workforce (Warhurst et al., 2017). The long-term unemployed and those with limited work experience are likely to be disadvantaged.

Literature reviews encompassing selection have highlighted the particular importance of 'personal traits' – such as reliability, motivation, health/ fitness, honesty, integrity and a 'good attitude' – for low-pay low-skilled jobs (Atkinson and Williams, 2003; Devins et al., 2004; Devins and Hogarth, 2005; Newton et al., 2005). While some large companies, in particular, might use e-screening methods (and raise the bar when the number of applicants is high) (Green, 2016) and/ or psychometric tests to assess such factors and associated organisational fit (Centre for Social Justice, 2011), often these traits may be signalled in work history and references for adults, and by attitude, awareness of what the job role entails and 'likeability' amongst young people (Hasluck and Armitage, 2011).

The 2014 Employer Skills Survey in the UK includes information on the relative importance employers place on a subset of different factors when recruiting. It is notable that having relevant work experience is ranked as 'critical' or 'significant' by a

greater proportion of employers (60 per cent) when recruiting new staff than qualifications: 57 per cent of employers rated having GCSE Maths and English as 'critical' or 'significant' and the respective ratings for vocational qualifications and academic qualifications were 50 per cent and 49 per cent, respectively.

Again there are some notable sectoral variations in employers' rating of these factors when recruiting new staff:

- Manufacturing: academic qualifications were less likely than average to be rated as 'critical' or 'significant'.
- Construction: academic qualifications and Maths and English GCSE were less likely than average to be rated as 'critical' or 'significant', while vocational qualifications were more likely to be rated as such.
- Hotels and restaurants: all types of qualifications are much less likely than average and having relevant work experience is less likely than average to be rated as 'critical' or 'significant'.
- Financial and professional services: academic qualifications and Maths and English GCSE are more likely than average to be rated as 'critical' or 'significant'.

These sectoral variations provide insights into the relative ease of employment entry into different sectors (e.g. the lower barriers to entry in hotels and restaurants and higher barriers to entry in financial and professional services) and how employers in different sectors rate different qualifications and work experience. It is important that policies to facilitate employment entry pay heed to such factors. Overall the survey data suggests that while formal qualifications are important, work experience opportunities are also likely to play a key role in equipping people for employment.

### **The role of labour market intermediaries**

Labour market intermediaries include the public employment service, employability delivery organisations, careers information advice and guidance services, education and training providers, community/ voluntary organisations, local/ regional authorities, trade unions, chambers of commerce, sectoral bodies, and others. The first two have a direct role to play in employment entry. Traditionally their foremost activity has been to help 'match' individuals seeking work with employers' recruitment requirements via vacancies. They may also work with employers to alter recruitment and selection practices to open up new opportunities for job seekers, including through targeted pre-employment training initiatives, ring-fencing some jobs for particular sub-groups of applicants through local procurement policies (and similar initiatives) and guaranteed interviews. These latter types of activity can obviate the

consequences of a simple matching approach uncritically filtering out some potential recruits (Fletcher, 2004). Engaging employers to adjust recruitment and selection policies requires specific skills in identifying employers' skills needs and the building relationships between job seekers and HR managers (Green et al., 2015).

An example of the 'matching' approach is provided by the Gasworks Employment Matching Service (GEMS) in Belfast, which sought to open up new employment opportunities associated with a large scale redevelopment bringing new jobs to residents of surrounding neighbourhoods characterised by long-term unemployment (McKinstry, 2004). GEMS worked to develop linkages between employers, local communities and support agencies. It promoted corporate social responsibility among companies and enhanced the capacity of local communities to participate in employment opportunities brought about by local economic development through provision of advice and support in career planning, linking candidates with appropriate training, education and employment opportunities, and assistance with job search (including job search and interview preparation) (Ploger, 2008). Launched in 2002, by 2006 GEMS had supported over 2,000 unemployed people, of whom over 1,000 entered employment. GEMS maintained working relationships with over 400 employers (Ploger, 2008).

Of course not all 'matching' services are on such a large scale as GEMS. Rather support to individuals with a view to subsequent 'matching' may be mainstreamed, with personal advisers/ work coaches from the Public Employment Service and/ or key workers from employability service delivery organisations working with unemployed individuals to support employment entry. A meta-review of evidence on employment programmes spanning the ten years to 2007 concluded that personal advisers are critical to the success or otherwise of interventions to tackle worklessness (Hasluck and Green, 2007). This was not just a technical matter of how well a service was delivered but also a matter of how well the personal adviser was able to engender a desire to seek and accept employment amongst out-of-work benefit claimants and to build on the initial engagement by providing support and encouragement of an appropriate type. The evidence in the review suggested that the greater the flexibility given to personal advisers, the better they were able to fulfil their role and meet the specific needs of the individual customer.

The value of 'flexibility' and 'individualisation' is reiterated by strong evaluation evidence from a small-scale Randomised Control Trial (RCT) of the Support for the Very Long-Term Unemployed Trailblazer (SVLTU) in 2011-12. In the SVLTU long-term unemployed individuals were mandated to one of two treatment groups – (1) an



Ongoing Case Management (OCM) intensive offer of flexible and personalised adviser-based support, or (2) a Community Action Programme (CAP) in which a six-month work placement was complemented by provider-led supported job search – or to (3) a control group of fortnightly job search reviews and additional appointments at the discretion of a personal adviser. The evaluation showed significantly lower levels of benefit receipt for both OCM and CAP participants within six months of the start of the programme, although only 15-18 per cent from the programme strands entered paid employment, self-employment or were waiting to start a job; (this relatively low percentage reflects the characteristics of the very long-term unemployed group, including low motivation, low confidence, high levels of ill-health and disability, poor basic skills and lack of recent/ any work experience) (Rahim et al., 2012). OCM participants and advisers felt that the intensive case management approach and tailored approach to delivering support from a single adviser able to provide practical support and maintain momentum on job search activity helped increase participants' confidence and motivation.

The *work placement* element appeared to be the real strength of the CAP strand; (albeit some of the very long-term unemployed proved difficult to place, and over half of placements were with charities (Rahim et al., 2012).

The value of work experience is also borne out by the experience of the Future Jobs Fund (FJF), which provided subsidised temporary (six-month) paid jobs for unemployed young people and individuals in disadvantaged areas in recessionary conditions in 2009-11 (Fishwick et al., 2011). This independent evaluation highlighted that the advantage of the FJF for participants was experience of a 'real job'. An evaluation by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) using a propensity score matching methodology revealed that between 2009 and March 2011 the Future Jobs Fund had placed over 105 thousand people in temporary employment, at a net cost to the Exchequer of approximately £3,100 per participant and created net benefits of approximately £7,750 per participant to society (DWP, 2012). The advantage of this for participants was experience of a 'real job'.

Picking up on the role of charities in the CAP strand of SVLTU, there is history of community organisations playing a central role in pre-employment training and work placements/ experience as a supportive employer. This is exemplified by the Community Jobs Scotland (CJS) Programme, which was a Scottish Government funded job creation programme providing young unemployed individuals with paid work and additional training to help them progress into sustainable employment, as well as to support the development of third sector organisations. In the first phase the

main features of CSJ was the creation of subsidised jobs of six-nine months duration of at least 25 hours per week paid at the National Minimum Wage. In a second phase some Wage Incentive jobs targeted at 16-24 year olds with a disability or long-term health condition were introduced. Strong evaluation evidence is not available, but CSJ employee and employer feedback on the programme was very positive (McTier et al., 2012; McTier and McGregor, 2013). The post-CJS job entry rate was nearly 40 per cent (McTier and McGregor, 2013) but a weakness around CSJ emerging from the evaluation was a lack of clear responsibility for helping CSJ employees into sustainable employment beyond the end of their CSJ contract. A recommendation from the second phase evaluation was that a specific organisation should have primary responsibility for supporting CJS employees into positive destinations at the end of their contracts.

Not all support for employment entry need relate specifically to the particular job in question. Public employment services may have *flexible funds* available to provide individual support with transport to work, suitable work clothing, etc. Support for care responsibilities is also very important. These types of assistance are termed 'wraparound' support.

A multi-pronged approach with wraparound support is exemplified in a 'geographical saturation' approach by Jobs-Plus. Working in six public housing areas in the US where residents face complex challenges, the programme operated from 1998 to 2003 and aimed to help residents increase their employment and earnings. The Jobs-Plus model was founded on a comprehensive approach to tackling the combination of barriers to work – including poor preparation for employment, lack of information about job opportunities, individual and household barriers, weak social supports for employment and lack of financial incentives - faced by residents in low income neighbourhoods (Riccio, 1999; Reid et al., 2006). It offered employment services (including assistance with job search, education and training) at on-site job centres in the housing developments, changes in rent rules that provide a greater financial incentive to work, and community support for work involving spreading information about work-related opportunities through local outreach and other social networking efforts. The program targeted all working-age residents, attempting to 'saturate' the housing developments with information, services, and incentives to support work. In three of the six Jobs-Plus sites there were substantial earnings gains for residents in during the first four years. Over a seven-year period in these three sites there was a 16 per cent increase in average annual earnings for

nondisabled, working-age public housing residents (Riccio, 2010). These earnings suggest that Jobs-Plus offered a feasible and effective platform for work.

A UK example of *wraparound support* is the Working for Families (WFF) programme in Scotland between 2004 and 2008 which was established to invest in new initiatives to help parents (predominantly female lone parents) facing difficulties participating in the labour market and/ or continuing in employment. Support was concentrated around three points in the pathway to employment: first, at the pre-employment stage; secondly, at the point of transitioning into employment, and thirdly, post-employment (McQuaid et al., 2009). Administered by 20 local authorities (so highlighting the importance of local partnership working in assisting employment entry), WFF operated through 226 public, private and third sector local projects. Clients were linked to these employability support local projects and supported by key workers on the basis of their own personal action plan requirements. Types of assistance provided included pre-employment personal development courses, careers advice, money advice, work experience, help with transport, links to childcare places, etc. £50 million was spent on WFF and 53 per cent (13,594 individuals) achieved 'hard' outcomes,<sup>3</sup> with 54 per cent entering employment. Overall the evaluation demonstrated the need to provide parents with one-to-one mentoring and support to address the range of barriers clients experienced, as well as addressing childcare needs.

WFF highlights the importance of *information, advice and guidance services* at the pre-employment stage in helping jobseekers to develop their skills and to advise them on appropriate ways to look for work. As careers guidance services make greater use of online support and access to guidance services is limited, increasingly jobseekers have to rely on finding support online themselves in a 'do it yourself' approach of navigation through a seemingly complex maze of options (Green, 2016). The evidence suggests that there is a role for initiatives to enhance awareness and knowledge of the range of recruitment and selection methods used by employers for different kinds of job roles (Green et al., 2015).

## **The importance of job search**

Job search is central to employment entry. Active labour market policy seeks to enhance the effectiveness of job search to support faster employment entry and a reduction of time spent on benefits. More broadly in terms of poverty reduction,

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<sup>3</sup> Defined as moving into employment, entering or completing education or training of six months' duration, or entering voluntary work of 16 hours or more per week.

personal well-being and economic competitiveness, effective job search by individuals in employment looking to change jobs is also important.

The rationale for job search support in active labour market policy is that benefit claimants need the requisite job search skills, approach and attitude to successfully gain employment. In October 2014 the DWP ran small-scale Supervised Jobsearch Pilots (SJP) as a randomised control trial<sup>4</sup> to test whether supporting and supervising claimants' job search activity made it more effective and increased their likelihood of moving off benefits and into employment. Benefit claimants were referred to SJPs by Jobcentre Plus and were required to attend a local provider centre for up to 35 hours per week for 13 weeks, unless they stopped receiving benefits during that time. The results of the SJP pilots showed the intervention group spent less time on benefits than the control group.<sup>5</sup> However, cost-benefit analysis showed that the costs of running the programme were by a significant margin larger than the savings to the Exchequer of reduced benefit expenditure and increased tax returns (Coleman et al., 2016).

Despite general agreement about the central importance of job search activity, providers and participants felt that the emphasis of the pilots was narrow and too much time was spent on job search. Despite the fact that pilot participation had a positive impact on respondents' confidence in their job search skills, their ability to do well in interviews, and being ready for work, overall satisfaction with the pilot was low (albeit there was a wide range of views, with participants with lower skills/ further from the labour market/ from younger age groups/ with children being more positive than average). Providers felt that there was a need for greater flexibility in support. Some felt that the intensive job search needed (in some instances) to be accompanied by skills-based training, and literacy and/ or numeracy support. They felt that work-based placements and direct engagement with employers would be useful, so highlighting the importance of providing other support for employment entry alongside that focusing on job search.

Another trial has tested the veracity of requirements for completion of a package of structured and intensive activity in the first three weeks of a Jobseekers Allowance claim. The package involved attendance at a fixed curriculum of workshops, work at home activities and follow-up meetings with Work Coaches within the first three

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<sup>4</sup> There were 1,725 participants in the treatment sample and 2,540 individuals in the control sample.

<sup>5</sup> Those in the treatment group who had been claiming Jobseekers Allowance for less than a year spent an average of 10 fewer days on benefits and 5 more days in employment than the control group, while for the long-term unemployed (who had spent two years on the Work Programme and had not found employment) spent 19 fewer days on benefits and 6 more days in employment.

weeks of a Jobseekers Allowance claim. The Intensive Activity Programme (IAP) trial was implemented as a randomised control trial across seven Jobcentre Plus offices, with the control group receiving ‘business as usual’ support. The logic model underpinning IAP was that supporting benefit claimants to become effective, active and persistent jobseekers from the earliest stage of their benefit claim would accelerate entry into employment. Through engaging with IAP via Work Coaches, individuals’ confidence and ownership of their job search activities would increase, and because the provision was tailored towards individuals’ skills and capabilities it would encourage attention to be paid towards the quality of job seeking activities. With regard to workshop activities, the rationale was that these would deliver tips on job seeking, reduce isolation in unemployment, and foster collaboration and sharing of ideas and experiences.

IAP impact analysis results showed that the IAP accelerated transitions off benefits and into work: the IAP group were more likely to be off benefits and in work by the fifth week of their claim than the control group (Department for Work and Pensions and Institute for Employment Studies, 2016). These benefits were sustained: IAP claimants spent on average around 11 more days off benefit in the first nine months of their claim than the control group.

The evidence from the IAP trial evaluation found that most claimants learnt new skills or welcomed the opportunity to revise their job search techniques. The fact that workshop sessions were facilitated, tailored to individuals and encouraged knowledge sharing between participants was seen as positive. However, the workshop sessions were less useful for claimants experienced in or interested in specialist sectors; claimants suggested that organising workshops on the basis of employment sector experience or interest would have enhanced their relevance and value (Department for Work and Pensions and Institute for Employment Studies, 2016). Hence, there is suggestive evidence that a sector-focused approach to job search would be beneficial.

There is evidence from other interventions that there is value in assisting job search through enhancing self-efficacy – i.e. one’s belief in one’s ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task (Bandura, 1997). The JOBS program in the US was a large-scale intervention was designed to enhance job search skills of recently unemployed individuals. It sought to enhance participants’ self-esteem and sense of control, job search self-efficacy and inoculation against setbacks through learning workshops facilitated by skilled trainers, adopting active learning methods in a supportive learning environment designed to enhance confidence and job-related



self-efficacy, and coaching in planning for and dealing with setbacks and obstacles (Caplan et al., 1989, 1997; Vinokur and Schul, 1997). Results of two randomised control trials demonstrated significantly better re-employment outcomes in terms of better quality and higher paying jobs and better mental health than the control group (Vinokur et al., 1991).

The JOBS program has been replicated in several countries, including in Ireland as the Winning New JOBS (WNJ) programme. Evaluation using a quasi-experimental design showed that employment and psychological outcomes were positive: a year after the intervention WNJ treatment group participants were significantly more likely to be re-employed, to experience less economic hardship and to report improved inoculation against setbacks compared with the control group (Barry et al., 2006).

### **New approaches to employment entry**

As employers' recruitment and selection practices evolve it is important that changes in such practices are transparent to job seekers. This kind of information, and associated variations by sector and establishment size, needs to form part of job search advice. The impact evidence suggests that while generic job search support can be useful in speeding up exit from benefits and entries to employment, feedback from participants and providers in such initiatives highlights the importance of tailoring support to individuals' needs and indicates that sector-specific support would be helpful. There is increasing recognition that employer involvement in helping shape active labour market policies is beneficial (this issue is discussed further in the next section). This means that the onus is on labour market intermediaries to understand employers' needs.

While the focus here is on employment entry, there is merit in considering the full pathway into employment. Hence support at the pre-employment stage can facilitate (the quality of) employment entry, while support at the time of transition to employment can facilitate sustained employment. This suggests that it is important to consider employment entry initiatives not in isolation but within the context of part of the broader pathway to employment – especially if poverty reduction is a central objective. This also means that employment entry support needs to extend beyond job-related support to include wraparound support. While all benefit claimants are likely to benefit from flexible and intensive support this is particularly the case for the most disadvantaged. The personal adviser/ key worker/ work coach has an important role to play here.

The evidence also suggests that employment initiatives need to be targeted to the local context – i.e. to the needs of local residents and the types of jobs available locally (Meadows, 2008). This reinforces points made about tailoring of interventions to local needs.



## Evidence on Employment Entry in Growth Sectors

In this section the evidence from the literature search and review is presented for each growth sector in turn. Within the write-up for each sector, contextual information is also presented which is pertinent to issues of employment entry.<sup>6</sup>

Before presenting the sector evidence base, the initial sections provide commentary on the overall scale of the evidence base and the evidence base for sector-focused policy on employment entry more broadly, distinguishing in turn between the UK and the US evidence.<sup>7</sup>

### **Assessment of the evidence base on growth sectors**

Overall there is a relatively large evidence base relating to the role that public policy might play in employment entry (Green et al, 2015). This reflects the fact that public policy has been predominantly focused on supporting individuals into work, with less consideration – until recently - of what happens after they get there. However, with regard to employment entry and growth sectors two key points emerging from a review of the evidence are:

- Only a limited amount of evidence on employment entry is sector-specific: the evidence tends to focus more on disaggregation by population sub-groups (e.g. younger people, older people, lone parents, the long-term unemployed, etc.) than by sectors.
- Where employment entry programmes have a sector focus results are not always distinguishable by sector.

A third important point is that:

- It is the mix of components of a programme/ interventions that matters, rather than one specific intervention *per se* (Hasluck and Green, 2007).

Hence a sectoral focus might be important as part of a recipe for successful employment entry but other ingredients are essential as part of the mix.

The evidence base on sector-specific policies is most developed in the US, where policymakers, practitioners and philanthropic institutions have focused on sector-based strategies for workforce development with promising results for low-income job seekers and workers. Such sector-focused policies have tended to include progression (advancement) policy alongside employment entry as part of a longer pathway to employment, incorporating careers advice, training and supportive wraparound components (see Fitzgerald, 2004;

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<sup>6</sup> This is the same information drawn upon in the accompanying paper on progression (Sissons et al., 2016).

<sup>7</sup> Many of the US policy initiatives reviewed cover progression as well as employment entry and so there is some replication of material presented in the accompanying paper on progression (Sissons et al., 2016).

Holzer and Martinson, 2005; Giloth, 2009; Maguire et al, 2010). In keeping with this general thrust in the direction of policy, sectoral strategies are at the heart of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (Maguire, 2016). WIOA passed into legislation in 2014 and is designed to strengthen and improve the US public workforce system and help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labour market by accessing high quality jobs and careers and to help employers hire and retain skilled workers.

## **Sector-focused policy and employment entry**

### ***Evidence on sector-focused programmes from the UK***

Over recent years one element of provision to support individuals to enter employment in the UK has been the development of a sector-focus, most obviously through the development of sector-based work academies (SBWAs). SBWAs are designed to help unemployed benefit claimants gain the relevant skills and work experience to gain employment in a specific sector and allow employers to fill vacancies with suitable applicants. Introduced in August 2011 in England and in January 2012 in Scotland, the SBWA programme has three elements which together should not exceed six weeks in duration (i.e. this is a short-term focused programme):

- Sector-specific pre-employment training of up to 30 hours per week;
- A work experience placement with an employer; and
- A guaranteed job interview linked to a genuine vacancy.

SBWAs are run by Jobcentres and are developed in partnership with (predominantly large private sector) employers<sup>8</sup> in sectors with high volumes of current local vacancies – notably, retail, hospitality, transport and logistics, food, care, manufacturing and engineering, and administration, with elementary occupations accounting for the single largest proportion (32 per cent) of work experience placements. Two-thirds of SBWA employers are in the service sector, with the largest single proportion in wholesale and retail (Coleman et al., 2013). A similar sector-focused scheme – Get into – is run by the Prince's Trust. Get into is a short vocational course that develops young people's skills in a specific sector for 16 to 25-year-olds. As in the case of SBWAs, courses are run in sectors where it is known that jobs are likely to be available, such as retail, logistics and hospitality.

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<sup>8</sup> A quantitative survey of employers participating in SBWAs found that 59 per cent had 250 or more employees and 76 per cent were multi-site organisations (Coleman et al., 2013).

In the case of SBWAs, Jobcentres are free to deliver flexible placements to suit the needs of employers, claimants and training providers. Benefit claimants continue to receive benefits<sup>9</sup> and are required to continue their job search activities while attending a SBWA.

An impact evaluation using a difference-in-difference methodology with two cohorts of SBWA participants aged 19-24 years and a matched comparison group of non-participants with similar characteristics constructed using a propensity score matching approach (Ward et al., 2016) shows that:

- In the 18 months following a SBWA start participants spend, on average, 50 days longer in employment and 29 days less on benefit compared to similar non-participants.
- Participants who undertake all three elements of the SBWA (i.e. pre-employment training, a work experience placement and a guaranteed job interview) on average spent 66 days more in employment and 38 days less on benefit across an 18-month tracking period compared with non-participants.

These results show that SBWAs have a positive impact on moving participants off benefits and into work, with most positive results for those participants who participated in all three elements of the SBWA programme. No disaggregation by SBWA sector is available. A cost-benefit analysis reveals an estimated net benefit to participants of approximately £1,950 per participant, a neutral impact on employers, a net benefit to the Exchequer of approximately £100 per participant and a net benefit to society of approximately £2,000 per participant.

Research on employer perspectives of SBWAs and work experience from a survey of 3,000 employers involved in SBWA or provision of work experience reveals that motivations to participate in programmes include:

- Giving a young person/ an unemployed person a chance (57 per cent for work experience, 43 per cent for SBWAs); and
- Getting extra resource at no/low cost (22 per cent for work experience, 23 per cent for SBWAs).

The majority of employers were positive about the schemes, with the most common benefits being to try individuals out before hiring them; 72 per cent of employers participating in SBWAs indicate that the programme enables them to take a risk on someone you otherwise would not (Coleman et al., 2013). 78 per cent of SBWA employers who offered work placements<sup>10</sup> took on a least one person at the end of the placement and 44 per cent of

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<sup>9</sup> This is also the case with the Prince's Trust Get into programme.

<sup>10</sup> It is notable that only 52 per cent of employers participating in SBWAs said they were involved in all three core elements (i.e. sector-specific pre-employment training, a work experience placement and a guaranteed job

SBWA employers took on ten or more participants, and this was particularly high (67 per cent) where employers offered all three elements of the SBWA.

In part drawing on the experience of SBWAs which focused predominantly on young people, the Department for Work and Pensions operated trials with older benefit claimants (aged 45 years and over) in 2015-16 to boost work experience and training opportunities. Claimants volunteered to take part and were referred by Jobcentre Plus staff to either:

- A SBWA; or
- A work experience programme offering participants a work placement generally lasting between two and eight weeks, for 25-30 hours per week.

Qualitative research with 60 trial participants and 19 host employers, and quantitative survey research with 125 SBWA, 386 work experience participants and 600 non-participants with similar characteristics to participants (Johnson et al., 2017) reveals that:

- Those who participated in the trial welcomed it and felt that their skills and confidence was improved and that the experience helped them overcome age-related barriers and move closer to employment;
- SBWA participants all reported receiving training but only 16 per cent reported a follow-up work experience placement and only 42 per cent said that they had a guaranteed job interview. Not receiving work placements was a source of dissatisfaction, as likewise was not receiving a guaranteed job interview – or having such an interview for a role unconnected with the training undertaken.

The latter point reiterates the point above about the importance of programme implementation and of participants being exposed to all elements of a programme.

From a sector-specific perspective the types of training courses undertaken were similar to those for younger SBWA participants - as exemplified by customer service roles accounting for the largest proportion, but with the exception that more older people participated in training for care work. This SBWA trial demonstrates the value of sector-focused training in widening job search beyond traditional gender-specific roles, with more men than women undertaking training in social care and women undertaking training for fork lift truck licences. Claimants who were in paid work following the trial were commonly working in sales assistant, care assistant, cleaning, customer service or administrative roles.

Employers reported taking part in the trial for the following reasons:

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interview (Coleman et al., 2013). The report does not include specific details about the SBWA employers or the opportunities provided by the jobs.

- To meet recruitment needs – with older workers being viewed positively by employers in terms of skills, experience and reliability;
- Altruism – motivated by personal reasons or the ethos of the organisation and corporate social responsibility; and
- Positive previous experiences of recruiting through Jobcentre Plus.

Overall, the programmes reviewed above are demand-led and relatively short-term. They focus specifically on pre-employment training and employment entry into sectors with large volumes of entry level vacancies. The evidence suggests that a sectoral focus is helpful in facilitating employment entry. It also points to the importance of all elements of programmes – i.e. pre-employment training, a work placement, and a guaranteed job interview – to be in place for the programmes to enhance success.

### ***Evidence on sector-focused programmes from the US***

Sector-focused programmes in the US have a longer history of focusing on integrating the training and skills needs of individuals with the demand-side needs of particular employers or sectors. As noted above, typically the focus of such programmes has extended beyond employment entry to employment retention and progression they have largely targeted industries which offer comparatively well-paid entry-level posts and chances for progression.

Evidence on sector-focused programmes is presented in a companion paper on ‘Supporting Progression in Growth Sectors’ (Sissons et al., 2016). A summary of that evidence is presented here, with key points related to employment entry emphasised.

In an influential paper on the *potential benefits of sector-focused programmes* Maguire et al. (2010) presented evidence from RCT evaluations covering three US programmes<sup>11</sup> which varied in terms of sector focus and model of delivery but all of which connected disadvantaged job seekers to employers. The focus of the interventions was primarily on labour market entry to ‘good jobs’ which offered prospects for decent initial wages, as well as retention and progression opportunities. The overall findings on key employment outcomes (across the three programmes) for the study were positive:

- Participants were more likely to find employment, and by the end of the second year to have worked more consistently.
- Participants were more likely to work in jobs that paid higher wages.

The study identified common elements to the programmes which could be important for policy design:

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<sup>11</sup> The Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP), Jewish Vocational Service – Boston (JVS Boston), and Per Scholas.

- Strong organisational capacity with the ability to adapt to meet the needs of employers and target employees;
- Strong links to local employers and an understanding of the target occupation and connection to jobs;
- An offer of basic skills, job readiness and technical skills ‘through the lens of a particular occupation or sector’;
- Recruitment and intake processes targeted outreach and recruitment of participants but also included screening to ensure a good match between participants and their target sectors/ occupations; and
- Tailored individual services were delivered to support training and completion and success on entering work; including addressing ‘wraparound’ needs relating to childcare, transportation and/or legal services.

The Maguire et al (2010) findings have provided a basis for further programme development of sector-focused approaches, including *Sector-focused Career Centers in New York* (Gasper and Henderson, 2014). The programme was initially developed around three sector-focused centres: transportation, manufacturing and healthcare, with the two former subsequently merged into an Industrial and Transportation Center. The rationale for focusing on these particular sectors was two-fold. First, they are assessed to be of ‘high growth potential’. Secondly, they are sectors that can offer comparably decent wages. The programme is structured to be a dual-facing (supporting employers and participants) and to combine economic development and anti-poverty strategy. The evaluation of the first-year outcomes of the programme using a counterfactual based on propensity score matching showed that a year after programme participation:

- Participants were more likely to have been employed at some point after programme exit (83 per cent versus 73 per cent of the comparison group);
- Participants had greater job stability – 48 per cent had worked in each of the four quarters after exit (34 per cent of comparison); and
- Participants appeared to benefit regardless of characteristics and prior work history.

Supporting results about the potential benefits of sector-focused programmes are provided by Schrock and Jenkins (2006) in the evaluation of the *Illinois Job Training and Economic Development (JTED) programme*. JTED targeted sectors which offered comparatively good starting wages and opportunities for progression: manufacturing, healthcare, and clerical and other services. The programme had two strands – one focused on job entry and other on incumbent workers. For job entrants the interventions were focused on training with employer input to the design. The programme outcomes for job entrants were assessed



using propensity score matching, with the counterfactual group coming from a more light-touch job matching programme. The evaluation found significant positive effects to employment rates and to earnings of programme participants in the job entry strand.

One of the questions raised by previous studies is whether the potential for positive impact varies across sectors and if so which sectors a sector-focused approach might best suit. Schrock's (2013) evaluation of *Chicago's Sectoral Workforce Centers* suggests the effects may be unequal. Two Sectoral Workforce Centers – ManufacturingWorks (developed to build on the City's restructured manufacturing sector strengths and an agenda around high road manufacturing) and ServiceWorks (serving the retail and hospitality sectors) were developed in 2006 to work with local employers. There is some evidence that in manufacturing progress was made in positively shaping labour market dynamics towards higher wages and promotion of career ladders, but this was not the case in services.

### ***Summary of sector-focused programmes and employment entry***

Overall there is some evidence from the UK and, more particularly, the US, including robustly evaluated programmes, which suggests there are potential benefits to a sector-focused approach to employment entry policy. Where the focus extends beyond employment entry to progression, screening job seekers for interest in, and attributes/ skills required in, the sector is likely to enhance the success of policies. However, it is possible that sector-focused policy may be more important for employment progression than for employment entry.

As well as the sector of focus, issues that matter include the quality of delivery by organisations providing services and whether all elements of a programme are implemented, and the strength of their employer links.

In the following sections the focus shifts away from the potential benefits of sector-focused programmes more broadly, to consider the evidence on employment entry in specific growth sectors. In each case some context of employment and skills in the individual sectors is provided (so replicating some of the material presented in the companion paper on progression [Sissons et al., 2016]), as well as the nature of potential opportunities and constraints for employment entry policies.

## Financial and professional services

### *Introduction and context*

The financial and professional services sector is a large and high value sector of the UK economy. It comprises subsectors such as financial service activities, insurance, legal and accounting services, and management consultancy activities. Within these subsectors there is significant employment at professional and managerial levels, although there is also a diversity of other functions such as customer service (including call centre) work which are less well paid and which have lower barriers to entry (UKCES, 2012a).

Employment growth within financial and professional services is projected to be concentrated in the more highly skilled segments of the sector, while there is also growth projected at associate professional levels.<sup>12</sup> Positions in administrative and clerical occupations are projected to decline (although replacement demand needs will remain sizeable). Part of the explanation for declining jobs in these occupations is the offshoring and automation of customer service and back-office support roles (Stuart and Lucio, 2008). More broadly, technological change is likely to reshape job content across occupations within the sector (UKCES, 2014).

Employment in professional and business services is comparatively concentrated in larger firms (UKCES, 2012a). The sector as a whole has a significant training infrastructure and comparatively well-developed human resource management functions (UKCES, 2012a). The barriers to entry to many parts of the sector are high, being linked to degree-level qualifications, although apprenticeship routes into the sector have been growing recently and there appears scope to further develop these as well as other vocational qualifications as entry points to employment in the sector (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2010; UKCES, 2012a; HM Government, 2013; Finamore, 2017).

There is limited evidence on programmes which have been developed to support employment entry to financial and professional services. It is likely that this reflects the higher skilled profile of many of the jobs and the barriers to entry which have meant the sector has not typically been a target of employment policy. However, as noted below, there does appear to be interest in diversifying recruitment into the sector, although there is limited evidence about the success of otherwise of these efforts.

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<sup>12</sup> See *Working Futures* projections for the UK - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-labour-market-projections-2014-to-2024>

### ***Evidence on initiatives***

There is some robust evidence from a US programme called Year UP: a programme designed with the aim of supporting disadvantaged young people into high quality jobs in technology and finance (Rodder and Elliot, 2011). The programme was designed to provide a year of training and work experience focused on the target sectors to young people in urban areas. The programme provided six months of technical skills training (with content designed to meet recruitment requirements of corporate partners); development of communication skills; a six month internship with 'top companies' in the sector; mentoring and other supportive guidance services; and, help with job search or college application. The delivery model is non-profit led but relies on partnerships with private companies who provide placement opportunities and links to employment. The evaluation utilises the over-subscription of the programme to create a small-scale RCT,<sup>13</sup> with evaluation data coming from administrative data and surveys of participants. The evaluation found no positive influence employment rates of participants, but there was a positive effect on earnings (on average by \$2.26 an hour [and with consequent increases in total quarterly earnings]). These findings suggest that there are potential benefits from a focus on a sector which can provide good jobs, but that the success depends on the ability of participants to access those good jobs on programme exit.

There are resonances here with the City of London Business Traineeship Scheme, a scheme delivered by a local charity (The Brokerage Citylink) established in 1996 and aiming to support disadvantaged local young people to secure jobs at city firms through working in partnership with businesses and institutions in London's financial districts. 37 per cent of employees working in the financial services sector are educated at private schools and the aim of The Brokerage Citylink is to work with young people to raise their aspirations, to create access and to provide opportunities so that they can compete for jobs on a level playing field with more affluent peers. This is done through provision of work experience, opportunities to develop key employability skills and paid jobs. For 10-18 year olds this is done through corporate visits and workshops. For 17-21 year olds there are opportunities for mentoring, networking, careers advice, interview and presentation skills sessions and assessment centres. For school-leavers and undergraduates provision includes placements, internships, apprenticeships and jobs at school-leaver and graduate levels. In 2016 95 candidates were placed in internships by City firms and The Brokerage Citylink worked with over 125 companies to help fill school-leaver, apprenticeship and graduate roles. 3,585 hours of volunteering was provided by corporate partners. Statistics on job entry are not

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<sup>13</sup> Those on the waiting list were told they could reapply in ten months' time but should pursue other employment and education opportunities in the interim

published, but evaluation of activities by participants is overwhelmingly positive (The Brokerage Citylink, 2016). The charity's activities highlight the importance of exposing young people to potential opportunities in the sector from a young age and illustrate the commitment of some employers in the sector to opening up training and employment opportunities to under-represented groups.

McKinstry and Shuttleworth (2012) provide descriptive evidence of how the large-scale<sup>14</sup> Halifax Call Centre in Northern Ireland sought to source recruits when there was no locally available traditional/ historical pool of labour on which to draw. This was in the face of negative press reports about job quality in call centre work and perceptions that jobs in the financial services sector were potentially unattainable by a section of the local labour pool because of a need for specialist qualifications and/ or experience. From the outset the employer undertook a review of skills needs and recruitment and selection procedures and decided that they did not require a minimum level of qualifications for customer service/ call handler positions. Likewise any requirement for previous experience within a call centre or the broader financial services sector was dispensed with. Instead recruitment and selection was based on an aptitude test evaluating literacy and numeracy and a behavioural competency interview. Enhanced recruitment packs provided guidance on filling in application forms, including emphasis on the value of non-employment related experiences in problem solving and team working as an alternative to in-work experience. Employees taking part at open days and mock work sessions designed to encourage local residents to see the working environment were selected to come from a diverse range of backgrounds. The Halifax Call Centre also utilised Bridge to Employment: a programme providing the unemployed with employer linked customised training and found that recruits via this channel had higher retention rates.

However, ethnographic research based on participant observation of a single pre-employment training programme for unemployed people geared to entry-level telephone operator jobs in a call centre provides insights into the barriers that exist to entry to call centre work (Clarke, 2014). The programme in question lasted 60-90 hours (depending on participants' pre-existing computer and keyboard typing skills) and took place in a simulated call centre environment. However, the descriptive evaluation suggested that many participants lacked a sufficiently consistent track record, adequate competence in IT and keyboard skills and in spoken and written English, and basic work skills necessary to work in a call centre environment. Moreover, the training course content was aligned with the perceived needs of employers, rather than the core skill requirements of a front-line operator

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<sup>14</sup> There was a promise of 1,500 jobs from this new investment.

reported by employees themselves. The case study suggests that pre-selection for pre-employment training is likely to be valuable in achieving subsequent job entries.

### ***Synthesis and conclusions***

There is limited robust evidence of programmes which seek to encourage entry to jobs in financial and professional services and associated sectors which tend to offer comparatively high wages. These have focused on employer engagement, work experience, technical and soft skills, and have been particularly orientated towards young people. They suggest that developing programme models which seek to encourage the entry of disadvantaged groups to better quality employment opportunities is one way which might help to utilise the anti-poverty potential of growth sectors. Such programmes targeting good quality jobs typically involve significant education and work experience components and close links with sector employers to provide input and placements. Such practices are resource intensive but there does appear to be interest in employers' widening recruitment – including making adjustments to recruitment and selection procedures - to achieve a more diverse workforce.

For jobs with lower barriers to entry there is some descriptive evidence of relaxation of recruitment criteria to attract recruits who would otherwise tend to think that the sector was not for them. However, customer service skills are a prerequisite for many roles in the sector – including in call centres, and some benefit claimants do not necessarily have, or are unable to acquire in a short period, the necessary skills and attributes for such roles.

## **Manufacturing**

### ***Introduction and context***

Employment in the manufacturing sector has been declining for several decades in UK due to automation and production shifts to developing countries (BIS, 2010; Forfas 2013). However this decline is variable across manufacturing, and parts of the sector, particularly advanced manufacturing, remain a core focus of industrial strategy. The manufacturing sector has a median wage above average and in the US has been recognised as a sector which can yield large wage rewards for workers for otherwise disadvantaged groups (such as Black workers) (Saunders, 2012). However, there are subsectors (such as food and drink manufacturing and textiles) where wages tend to be lower.

The manufacturing sector has traditionally operated as a large user of apprenticeship routes as ways to enter and progress within the sector, and there remain many high quality apprenticeships provided among manufacturing employers (UKCES, 2012b).

### ***Evidence on initiatives***

There is some evidence from robust evaluations, of programmes targeting job entry (and progression) in the manufacturing sector. The Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP) worked in partnership with manufacturing firms and training providers to strengthen training systems (Maguire et al, 2010), but while the results of sector-focused programmes were positive for other sectors this was not the case for manufacturing. Conversely, the outcomes in terms of job entry (and wages) for ManufacturingWorks in Chicago<sup>15</sup> and Sector-focused Career Centers in New York (mentioned above) are positive.

Further evidence from a robust evaluation in the US involving a quasi-experimental design and data from New Jersey's Individual Training Grant (ITG) program designed to assist workers losing their jobs to find new jobs faster and mitigate wage loss found that ITG participation on aggregate had a positive impact on re-employment in the seventh quarter after claiming unemployment insurance (Hebbar, 2006). However, for women participating in male-dominated employment fields, such as engineering and computer programming, re-employment rates were similar to or lower than in the comparison group, although wage recovery was higher. For their male counterparts both re-employment rates and wage recovery were higher than for the comparison group. So overall the results suggests that training for work in higher-paid fields – including engineering - is advantageous for both men and women with regard to their subsequent wages once re-employed, but there is a need to understand more about why some sub-groups face more difficulties than others in gaining employment. The results also indicate that having good information about training options is important.

Descriptive information from an assessment of the BioWork programme in North Carolina providing a 128 hour certificated training course designed to support entry to posts in the pharmaceutical and bioprocessing production sectors (Lowe et al., 2011) indicates a positive association between the strength of workforce intermediary activity with employers and job offers for programme participants. This suggests that while sector-specific training is important, the extent to which this is translated into job offers is dependent, at least to some extent, on engagement with employers.

### ***Synthesis and conclusions***

Overall, the evidence suggests that despite a net reduction in employment in the sector, manufacturing can provide relatively good quality jobs. The sector continues to be beset by skill shortages and gaps, so highlighting the importance of sector-specific training. Apprenticeships are a key route for job entry to the sector. Other sector-specific training

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<sup>15</sup> In 2007 ManufacturingWorks made 456 job placements with an average hourly wage of \$12.49.

programmes can help in facilitating job entry, especially when supported by labour market intermediaries with strong links with employers. Such support may be particularly helpful for under-represented groups (including women) to gain employment in manufacturing.

## **Energy and environment**

### ***Introduction and context***

Energy and environment is a relatively diverse sector which cuts across other sectors of employment, including construction and manufacturing. The overall job creation potential of so called 'green jobs' remains unclear, and has been the subject of considerable debate (see Deschenes, 2013; CEDEFOP, 2013; Blyth et al, 2014). However, the move to a low carbon economy is expected to generate new skills needs which span a number of sectors (OECD, 2010; Jagger et al, 2012).

### ***Evidence on initiatives***

No robust studies evaluating programmes aimed at employment entry in the energy and environment sector were found. Yet there are various initiatives that highlight the potential of 'green jobs' to provide employment entry opportunities. In the CSJ initiative in Scotland referred to above, which provided training, support and fixed-term jobs in third sector organisations, the single largest proportion of jobs were in the environmental and recycling sector (McTier et al., 2012). This highlights the role that 'green jobs' can play in facilitating employment entry.

In the US, Scully-Russ (2013) provides some descriptive findings of the potential of 'green jobs' to improve social outcomes using the example of two Energy Training Partnerships funded by the Department of Labor to train workers for green jobs. The Energy Training Partnerships funded workforce development activities with a dual-customer focus (i.e. being orientated to the needs of both employers and employees). The funding developed new programmes to train workers for a 'career path in green industries'. One of the challenges identified at both sites included difficulties with finding expertise to deliver training, and the technical level of the training being unsuitable for low-skilled workers who might need additional basic skills support as a pre-requirement. This suggests that green jobs often do not tend to have particularly low barriers to entry and therefore can be difficult for those in poverty to access.

A second example from the US is the Emerald Cities Collaborative (ECC) a workforce intermediary designed to support linking disadvantaged groups to careers in the green building sector (Fairchild, 2014). The programme engages employers in the green construction, infrastructure and energy sectors which are targeted areas of growth. The

programme created apprenticeship routes through building and construction trade unions which were designed to connect participants to high quality training opportunities and to support initial job entry and access to long-term career opportunities. However, evidence on the impact of these activities is scant.

A third US example is provided by the MillionTreeNYC Training Program (MTTP) in New York: a green jobs training program run collaboratively by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation and the non-profit New York Restoration Project. MTTP targeted young people (aged 18-24 years) disconnected from the workforce but with a high school diploma and provided experiential learning in arboriculture, ecological restoration, landscape design and horticulture, plus certification in chainsaw training, pesticide/herbicide application, together with a Life Skills Training Class. A key feature of the programme was that it combined employment entry and workforce development goals with the aim of teaching and motivating young adults to become more active stewards of the environment. Small scale survey evidence from sixteen out of thirty participants in the first MTTP class who were in employment two-three months after initial job entry and their supervisors found that:

- MTTP graduates had a positive attitude towards work;
- common challenges faced by employees in entering and sustaining employment included issues in their personal lives (associated with care responsibilities, illness in the family, financial difficulties, etc.) and the logistics of coping with early morning starts;
- there was a discrepancy between MTTP graduates and supervisors on job preparedness: 19 per cent of the employees interviewed felt that they were prepared for full-time employment (which Falxa-Raymond et al. [2013] attribute to the emphasis of the MTTP programme on promoting self-efficacy), while 82 per cent of supervisors felt that there were significant problems regarding preparedness; and
- the majority of MTTP graduates interviewed were able to articulate a desired career path beyond their current position; (however, it should be noted that due to the purposive nature of the survey sampling the findings focus only on those MTTP graduates who sustained employment for a short period after initial job entry and those dropping out are excluded).

In a cross-over between the energy and construction sector, the Arbed scheme in Wales has sought to stimulate economic regeneration, create employment opportunities in areas suffering low household income, tackle fuel poverty and increase capacity in the manufacture of low carbon technologies in Wales. For the Arbed 1 Scheme 156 training weeks were required per £1 million investment. In total 1,704 training weeks were



undertaken – in trades such as building treatments, carpentry plumbing, heating, plastering and electrical installation, which was 25 per cent more than the required 1,308 weeks (Patterson, 2012). Information is not available from the evaluation report about employment outcomes of trainees, although it is noted that of the twenty subcontractors involved in the programme sixteen were based in South Wales, so supporting the aim of the scheme to support local employment.

### ***Synthesis and conclusions***

Overall, there are various examples regarding the potential for green jobs to provide opportunities for job entry but there is a lack of good evidence on impact. At job entry level descriptive evidence highlights a role for third sector organisations to play an important role in green-collar employment entry initiatives. There is suggestive evidence that the fact that some green jobs entail working outdoors may have certain socio-psychological benefits for disadvantaged sub-groups of the population over and above employment entry.

## **Construction**

### ***Introduction and context***

The construction sector is characterised by a relatively fragmented employment structure and high levels of self-employment (BIS, 2013). Employment in the sector is cyclical and construction suffered a significant fall during the recession, with around an 8 per cent decline in 2008/9 (UKCES, 2012c). The sector is however expected to grow in coming years as house builders respond to demand from the private sector and in response to a number of large infrastructure projects. Economic and technological drivers of change in the construction sector include the influences of new technologies, the drive for more 'green' construction (hence there is an overlap between with the energy and environment sector and 'green skills') and the growth offsite construction (Vokes and Brennan, 2013).

There are also important social and policy drivers that impact the construction sector. Historically the involvement of contractors and their supply chains in community-based activities has been seen as a normal part of their business activities. These ranged from 'softer' requirements to deliver benefits through negotiation to 'harder' requirements linked to specific targets. Procurers of construction projects and society at large are increasingly expecting that the construction industry contributes to the communities in which it builds (Loosemore and Higgon, 2015). Community benefits or 'social' requirements in public sector procurement, which are intended to ensure that wider social and economic issues are considered when delivering construction contracts, have added impetus to such activities. For instance, in Wales wider objectives of procurement policy are to deliver outcomes that

help build stronger communities, reduce social exclusion and poverty and encourage the development of the economy, including by creating education and training opportunities (Constructing Excellence in Wales, undated).

The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) in the UK works with the industry to encourage training and to improve skills, increase companies' competitiveness and respond to challenges such as the low carbon agenda, reducing costs on site and recruiting the best talent for their sector. Apprenticeships continue to provide an important route into employment in the sector. While large companies can provide a range of opportunities for apprentices there are also examples of shared apprenticeship schemes<sup>16</sup> which allow apprentices to complete a full apprenticeship programme by working with a number of different employers, to gain the skills they require to become qualified.

### ***Evidence on initiatives***

While there are examples of programmes targeting job entry and training in construction, robust evaluations of such programmes are scant. One exception is the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP) (mentioned above and discussed in Sissons et al. [2016]) which through a collaborative structure involving trade unions, local employers and external training providers delivered sector-specific job training in construction (amongst other sectors) to unemployed disadvantaged workers in Milwaukee. Candidates are screened for their suitability at the outset to select those most likely to benefit from training and succeed in employment. A RCT evaluation showed that those individuals who participated in construction saw bigger earnings gains over two years than those enrolling in other sectors. Notably these earnings gains were more pronounced than any employment gains (by comparison with the control group) (Maguire et al., 2010).

Another US example of a programme including a focus on construction is the Rapid Employment Model (REM) in Travis County, Texas. The REM combined short-term occupation-specific training, pre-employment life skills training and job search assistance for disadvantaged residents. Specifically, the Construction Gateway element of the programme included basic carpentry training, electrical and plumbing work alongside job search assistance and interview skills over a five-week period (Smith and King, 2007). Over four rounds of the programme 65 per cent of Construction Gateway participants entered employment, compared with 67 per cent of REM participants across all sectors for which training was provided. The evaluation experienced some difficulties in implementing a quasi-experimental design in which an attempt was made to match REM participants with similar

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<sup>16</sup> An example from Wales is Y Prentis: a partnership between Melin Homes and Monmouthshire County Council, funded by the CITB and Welsh Government.

individuals using Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records because independent contractors and the self-employed (who form an important component of the construction sector) are not part of the UI system (Smith et al., 2012). However, in aggregate across all sectors (i.e. separate construction-specific data are not reported) the REM project had a statistically significant impact on employment (Smith et al., 2010).

Rapid engagement in construction employment is also a feature of the BladeRunners programme, founded in 1994, operating to support the transition into employment of disadvantaged young people (aged 15-30 years) in British Columbia, Canada. The programme model operates in the construction sector and participants receive short-term training tailored to their needs and basic skills training. Once basic skills are acquired participants are inserted into the workplace. The assumption is that other skills can be acquired on the job, as can more specialised training after participants have observed others at work. Descriptive evaluation reveals that programme managers, co-ordinators and young people believe that this design enables participants to gain confidence in their employment abilities quickly and to realise that working for a living wage is within their reach (Molgat, 2012; Dean, 2013). All participants are paired up with BladeRunners co-ordinators who provide support (mainly for issues other than job-specific employment support). The co-ordinator takes the participant to the construction site on the first day of their employment, introduces them to the site manager and other workers, and returns on subsequent days to check that the participant is okay. Wraparound support is provided also. This includes housing support for the first month, together with help with transport to work and lunches (as applicable).

The BladeRunners programme illustrates how construction may be used to transform lives of residents within a community. Another such case study is provided by the work of Birmingham City Council in England. In this instance targeted recruitment and training opportunities in procurement contracts in construction are used to address concerns about poverty and to enhance social mobility (Macfarlane with Anthony Collins Solicitors, 2014; Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2016). Birmingham City Council introduced a Public Procurement Framework for Jobs and Skills in 2010 to harness the power of recruitment to tackle worklessness and improve skills in the city. This Framework requires that all contracts worth more than £200,000 include community benefits, either through contract clauses, voluntary agreements or a charter. It also includes a formal requirement to engage with the City Council's Employment and Skills Service, which offers wide-ranging support in devising contract clauses, negotiating targets, and assisting in recruitment processes, etc. The Framework has been implemented across a number of large scale contracts, including the

Library for Birmingham: a £193 million contract which resulted in 306 jobs for Birmingham residents, including 82 apprenticeships, with residents of priority areas taking up 54 per cent of the opportunities (Macfarlane with Anthony Collins Solicitors, 2014). In the case of the Birmingham Gateway project, for which Network Rail was the lead contractor, 325 construction jobs were delivered for Birmingham residents and over 100 apprenticeships for unemployed people (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2016). In London when a brownfield site adjacent to St Pancras and Kings Cross stations was redeveloped there was a dedicated Construction Skills Centre set up at the onset of construction to ensure that all contractors on site employed at least 5 per cent local apprentices (Taylor, 2013).

There are other examples of major development projects being used to generate employment and training opportunities for unemployed people (see Macfarlane with Anthony Collins Solicitors, 2014; While et al., 2016). A particular benefit of major construction projects is that their relatively long lead-in times to major projects give opportunities to develop employment and skills support for local residents/ disadvantaged groups through procurement and Section 106 agreements.<sup>17</sup> One concern expressed about major construction projects is that they provide temporary jobs only; (albeit permanent jobs are created in operation of facilities after construction, although often in a different sector).

There is growing interest in the role of housing associations providing employment opportunities and skills support (Wilson et al., 2015), including by employing local residents to deliver local services, such as repairs and maintenance (as outlined in an accompanying case study), (as well as more broadly beyond construction). In France, where many low-income social housing neighbourhoods contain a high proportion of unemployed residents 'Regies de Quartiers' developed from the 1980s, employing (on average) 55 residents per annum on short-term part-time contracts undertaking repairs/maintenance and upkeep of external areas, etc., as part of their aims and objectives. 'Resident Services Organisations' (RSOs) in the UK developed from this model (Saunders, 1997). RSOs (and similar initiatives) can offer temporary work as a stepping stone to employment elsewhere, or provide permanent jobs. In relation to such initiatives, and more broadly, based on an analysis of case studies of social enterprise in construction, Loosemore and Higgon (2015) suggest that there is considerable scope for social enterprise in the sector.

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<sup>17</sup> Section 106 agreements are agreements made under Section 106 of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*. Section 106 agreement (S106) is a legally binding private contract between a developer (or a number of interested parties) and a Local Planning Authority that operates alongside a statutory planning permission.

## ***Synthesis and conclusions***

The construction sector is well placed to provide employment and training opportunities to local residents, especially through procurement policies and agreements associated with planning obligations. These can specify minimum numbers of individuals from specific locations with specific characteristics to participate in specific schemes. Such opportunities are particularly apparent in the case of large scale construction projects, but there is growing interest in the role of social enterprise – especially with regard to repairs and maintenance. While there are case studies of programmes providing training and employment opportunities, there is limited robust evaluation evidence; the relatively high proportion of self-employment associated with sub-contracting in the sector means that it can be difficult to match programme participants with similar individuals in control groups. Historically apprenticeships have provided a key route into the sector, and they continue to do so.

## **Social care**

### ***Introduction and context***

The social care sector encompasses employment in residential nursing care, residential care facilities for the elderly, children and those with disabilities, child day care and non-residential social care. The focus in this research is primarily on the adult social care part of the sector. Employment growth in social care is projected to be significant in the coming years.

The social care sector is characterised by comparatively low-wages; estimates suggest that two-thirds of frontline care workers are paid below the level of the voluntary Living Wage (Gardiner and Hussein, 2015). The employment structure of the sector is dominated by small firms. In England, 85 per cent of social care enterprises have fewer than 50 staff, and 45 per cent have fewer than 10 staff (Skills for Care, 2015). The majority of jobs (57 per cent) are in the private sector, around half of employees are on a full-time contract and around one-quarter have a zero hours contract (Ibid.). The sector has high labour turnover and a long-term reliance on migrant workers (Skills for Care, 2015). This means that some providers are in a state of ongoing recruitment with vacancies permanently open.

Important drivers of employment change in the sector include demographic trends, technology, regulation and funding (UKCES, 2012d). Technological changes include the increasing use of assistive living technology (ALT) and the delivery of support through new service channels (such as telecare) (Eurofound, 2013). There is also an agenda to pursue greater integration between health and social care which may lead to some care jobs becoming more complex (National Audit Office, 2014).

The most significant challenge faced by the sector currently is meeting increasing demand during a period of constrained financial resources (UKCES, 2012e). Local authority spending on care has been falling in real terms in recent years (National Audit Office, 2014). Research in Scotland has demonstrated how pressures on public spending and changes in contracting processes<sup>18</sup> are placing downward pressure on wages and eroding pay and conditions for workers in the social care sector (Cunningham and James, 2014). In England there is also some evidence of providers having difficulties in investing in staff training, as well as wider concerns about the ability of some providers to survive (National Audit Office, 2014).

Research therefore points to elements of poor job quality, insecurity and lack of staff representation (Rubery and Urwin, 2011). The context of wide-spread low-pay and reducing resources has led commentators to suggest that any meaningful attempts to tackle the poor pay conditions of the sector are likely to require some reassessment of funding levels and contracting models (Philpott, 2014).

### ***Evidence on initiatives***

Social care (and associated linkages to the health sector) has been the site of a number of programmes aimed at improving progression (see Sissons et al., 2016). Some programmes will include so called 'bridge' elements – which may be basic or sectoral in nature – to introduce entrants to the sector. Sometimes these may be accompanied by support for training for necessary short-term certificates. The US Health Professions Opportunities Grant (HPOG) program (highlighted in a separate case study) provides eligible individuals<sup>19</sup> with opportunities to obtain education and training for occupations in the health and social care fields that are expected to experience labour shortages or be in high demand. It incorporates employment entry elements alongside support for entering mid-skilled and upper-skilled roles.

Perhaps relating to the relative ease of entry to social care, evidence on initiatives targeting employment entry is scant. As noted above, some SBWAs have targeted opportunities in the social care sector, but the sector is more popular amongst older than younger people (Johnson et al., 2017). However, the study notes that the introduction to sector-specific training provided in SBWAs can help attract men (who are currently under-represented in social care employment) to the sector.

Young people are also under-represented in care. Evidence from Care First Careers pilots run in four districts in England and Wales in 2009 aimed to attract young people into the

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<sup>18</sup> With the now dominant model of arms-length relationships which prioritise cost.

<sup>19</sup> The program is targeted at Temporary Assistance for Needy Families recipients and other low-income individuals.

sector by offering employers a recruitment subsidy (£1,500) or a recruitment subsidy plus candidates who had received pre-employment training. Evidence from interview with 30 participating employers found that training interventions were seen as more valuable than recruitment subsidies – except in the case of large employers who ran their own training programmes (Dobson and Byrne, 2010). The particular value of the pre-employment training was that it helped filter out uninterested candidates at an early stage, so saving time and resources of the employer on training uninterested candidates. However, lack of experience and inappropriate attitudes were continually highlighted by employers as barriers for young people entering the sector.

Evidence from a small-scale qualitative study of a training programme for residential care in Australia provides descriptive evidence that the care sector can provide meaningful employment for disadvantaged people (Mestan and Stanley, 2006). The Scheme for Training and Educating People (STEP) care programme gave people who faced barriers to employment an opportunity to gain a pre-vocational training certificate in residential care and from this group individuals were selected to be placed on 12-month traineeships with host employers. Although based on very small numbers the programme was judged successful: of 20 people who commenced a traineeship 15 obtained a certificate, and nearly three out of every four who completed the traineeship worked as Personal Care Attendants. Costs incurred in employing trainees could be recouped through savings in recruitment, orientation and costs of providing cover by bank staff. To make a successful transition from unemployment to working in the care sector evidence from STEP suggests that a nurturing and supportive environment is needed. On the one hand the care sector is well placed to provide such an environment given that care workers are expected to be empathetic and caring towards their clients, but on the other hand the stressful nature of work in the care sector and relatively high rates of staff turnover by comparison with other sectors places constraints on such provision.

### ***Synthesis and conclusions***

The social care sector is a large low-paid sector facing ongoing recruitment and retention issues. It provides significant opportunities for employment entry – especially given that formal qualifications are not required for entry to care work. Rather the issue is one of ensuring that individuals have the necessary personal attributes for working in care. Short course sector-specific training can be of value in attracting under-represented groups into the sector and given links with healthcare there may be opportunities for subsequent progression.

## Hospitality

### *Introduction and context*

The hospitality sector covers a relatively broad range of occupations including those in the visitor experience and tourism, and hotels, pubs and restaurants. The sector is typified by low-pay and seasonality (especially in coastal areas) which can affect continuity of employment in parts of the sector. The sector generally experiences high rates of turnover and has retention issues, which can in part be explained by the different motivations of individuals working in the sector (Gould, 2009). These have direct costs in terms of recruitment and training, and indirect costs in terms of greater recourse to use of overtime working and potential reductions in customer satisfaction. There is a high reliance on students and temporary workers, including immigrants (Marchante et al, 2006). Related to high labour turnover, the sector tends to experience skills gaps (McQuaid et al, 2012), yet employers tend to identify difficulties in finding suitable applicants to train (Pearlman et al., 2013). The sector has seen the growth of outsourcing of parts of business delivery (including human resource management functions) such as housekeeping and cleaning (Davidson et al, 2010).

The sector is of particular interest from an employment entry perspective because of low barriers to entry (Lashley, 2009); rather the challenge for addressing poverty lies in tackling progression<sup>20</sup> because of the large low-wage base of cleaners and kitchen workers and few middle level jobs (Osterman, 2013). This applies across the sector as a whole.

The workforce across the sector is characterised by relatively low levels of qualifications (UKCES, 2012e). The age profile of employees in the sector is relatively young and there is a comparatively large use of students and migrant workers. Formal qualifications play less of a role in recruitment process or decisions than in many other sectors, with more emphasis placed on attributes such as personality and presentation (especially in customer facing roles) (Baum, 2002; Marchante et al, 2006; Nickson et al., 2012). Indeed, customer demands for higher standards of customer service have grown over time creating needs for stronger interpersonal skills among employees (Baum, 2002).

Increasing use of technology is beginning to penetrate the sector in a number of ways which has implications for skills, including online methods of training, development of new

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<sup>20</sup> The difficulty of moving beyond employment entry to progression in the sector is borne out by the experience of ServiceWorks – a Sectoral Workforce Center – in Chicago which served the hospitality and retail sectors, where employers displayed interest in bringing in low-skill workers to fill entry level positions, but where there was little success in working with the employers to develop career ladders.



platforms for customer relationship management, and the introduction of new front of house technologies (UKCES, 2012e).

### ***Evidence on initiatives***

There is limited robust evaluation evidence from programmes aimed at facilitating employment entry in the hospitality.

An example of a programme focused at a very specific population sub-group is The Clink Charity's Restaurant Training Programme, which works with prisoners between 6 and 18 months prior to release. The programme provides training in catering, customer service and cleaning for prisoners in a live restaurant environment, giving them the skills and qualifications needed to secure employment on release, with the aim of reducing re-offending, plus an intensive support package on release into the community. As well as hospitality-specific skills, the programme focuses on developing team working, time-keeping and customer services skills. An evaluation of the programme measured proven re-offences in a one-year period for a treatment group of 89 offenders who took part in the programme and a much larger control group of similar offenders who did not take part (Ministry of Justice, 2016). The results showed that on average of every 100 individuals participating in the training scheme 17 would go on to re-offend within a year of release, this compares with 29 non-participants. This is a statistically significant difference.

The example above focusing on ex-offenders highlights the potential for tailoring sector-specific training programmes in hospitality to sub-groups of the population traditionally facing disadvantage in the labour market. Some descriptive statistics and qualitative insights are provided by the Boston Massachusetts the Hospitality Training Program (HTP): a six-week pre-employment program in Boston Massachusetts providing contextualised English language courses, training in hospitality skills, hotel tours, interview assistance and job shadowing for immigrants with incomes below Family Economic Sufficiency Standards seeking employment in the hospitality industry (Minzer et al., 2009). Subsequent investment in the SkilWorks Hotel Career Center (HCC)<sup>21</sup> enabled expansion of the number of trainees annually (from 30 to 48) and enabled more extensive career coaching for those struggling to find employment (associated HCC training for incumbent workers is outlined in Sissons et al., 2016). A central aim of the programme was to encourage systemic changes in hotel employers' practices to recruitment and progression, and in doing so help low-skill, low-income residents move to family-sustaining jobs. Over a five-year period from 2004 to 2008 nearly 93 per cent of individuals enrolling on the HTP program completed the training course

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<sup>21</sup> Formed through a partnership between the International Institute of Boston, the Hilton Hotel Corporation and the Massachusetts Lodging Association.

and nearly 80 per cent entered employment in the sector. This high placement rate was attributed to the quality of HTP graduates and employers' affinity to hiring them. It is notable that individuals enrolling on HTP were considerably more educated than incumbent workers on HCC provision. HTP graduates were generally placed in more advanced positions than HCC participants already working at the hotels. English language training was identified as being particularly useful in increasing worker confidence and self-esteem.

There are further examples of hospitality initiatives to improve the lives of disadvantaged groups. Community interest companies are one vehicle for doing this, as exemplified by the example of Beyond Food<sup>22</sup> in London. Investment in a restaurant has been accompanied by two programmes targeted at supporting homeless people or people at risk of homelessness to end the cycle of 'no job no home – no home no job'. The first programme is Freshlife: a 6-week series of motivational workshops that promotes well-being, passion for food and meaningful employment. The second programme is United Kitchen Apprenticeship: a training programme where apprentices study towards an NVQ Level 2 Diploma in Professional Cookery. Alongside certified training the apprentices also receive personal mentoring and employability coaching helping to create a direct pathway to future employment. More than 250 people a year enrol in the Freshlife programme, of whom 150 attend workshops at the restaurant and gain work experience in the kitchen, and up to 28 people each year go on to do full apprenticeships at the restaurant. It is notable that this restaurant benefits from a location in central London with a large and relatively wealthy potential client base. In more sparsely populated/ deprived locations it is likely to be more difficult for such enterprises to be sustainable.

At local/ city level there are examples of initiatives providing job training opportunities in hospitality for benefit recipients. For example, in 2003 the construction of the £12 million Days Hotel in south Belfast on a site adjacent to the Sandy Row area, offered the potential of local jobs for unemployed residents. The Sandy Row Community Forum (an umbrella body for community organisations in the local area), supported by the South Belfast Partnership Board (comprising representatives of the community, private, statutory and political sectors), GEMS (outlined above) and the Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland, developed an initiative to improve the employability of Sandy Row residents. Through community-employer collaboration pre-recruitment support (including CV services and interview assistance) was provided to local residents and 20 local residents gained work. The extra effort of the employer at the pre-recruitment stage was offset against lower turnover. However, there is some evidence that those successful in gaining

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<sup>22</sup> See <http://www.beyondfood.org.uk/> [Accessed 18 March 2017].

employment were reluctant to take advantage of promotion opportunities when offered, so reducing potential earnings gains (McKinstry, 2003). More recently, the Hospitality and Retail Training for Employment (HARTE) initiative in Northern Ireland,<sup>23</sup> funded by local authorities and the European Social Fund with support from the Northern Ireland Department of Employment and Learning, provided training to residents of the Belfast and Lisburn City Council areas who had been unemployed for at least six months and wanted to work in the hospitality, tourism and retail industries. Part of the rationale for the programme was investment in new hotels. While statistics are available on numbers of trainees developing industry-specific skills, a detailed evaluation is not available.

### ***Synthesis and conclusions***

Hospitality provides plenty of opportunities for initiatives to support employment entry, including for disadvantaged groups. There are relatively low barriers to entry and access to many occupations within the sector can be improved by provision of contextualised training (including language skills where necessary) alongside more general employability skills. The challenge for addressing poverty is the relatively low-wage nature of the sector (as outlined in Green et al., 2017), the seasonal nature of some jobs and limited opportunities for subsequent progression.

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<sup>23</sup> Interview with Ruth Rea, Belfast City Council.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

This section sets out key conclusions and recommendations from the review of evidence on employment entry. It discusses the nature of the evidence base, the potential of sector-focused programmes, the prospects and limitations for targeting different growth sectors and implications for policy and initiative design.

### **The evidence base on employment entry**

For this paper a detailed search of the available evidence on employment entry in growth sectors has been conducted. A matrix of key search terms was applied across a range of databases as well as specific repositories searched. Articles of core relevance were assessed and evaluated; and evidence of wider contextual relevance has also been considered.

To date public policy has focused predominantly on pre-employment and employment entry rather than on progression in work. However, the emphasis is starting to shift in the UK with the move to Universal Credit and growing concerns about in-work poverty. The UK evidence varies markedly in its robustness, with 'plausible' and 'promising' evidence outweighing that that is 'proven' (i.e. robustly assessed). What is clear is that the evidence relating to specific sectors is less robust than that relating to sector effects/ impacts more generally. Indeed, many employment entry programmes and initiatives have tended to focus on specific population sub-groups rather than on sectors, albeit some potential merits of a sectoral approach have been recognised.

In general there is a more robust evidence base from the US. Moreover, a sectoral focus for policy is more developed in the US than in the UK. It seems likely that, at least in part, this reflects a more developed emphasis on workforce development initiatives in the US. This is reflected in a greater tendency for policy initiatives to range across the full employment pathway from pre-employment, through employment entry to in-work progression. Several US programmes adopt a 'dual customer' approach – i.e. (1) an employer need or driver of engagement (such as retention problems); and, (2) a participant benefit.

### **The potential of sector-focused programmes**

A central focus of this paper has been on employment entry as it relates to growth sectors. This raises an important question regarding whether there is an advantage to targeting programmes on a sector basis (as opposed to being sector neutral). There are theoretical arguments which suggest a potential benefit to sector targeting. These include the sector providing a focal point for coordination of employment and skills activities; and the sector

focus being a facilitator to developing partnerships, knowledge and capacity between providers and employers to identify areas of mutual benefit, and to effectively tailor provision. A sector-focused approach may also be integrated with place-based approaches, to combat deprivation and aid economic development.

There is some empirical evidence that suggests a sector-focused approach to job search would be beneficial. Evaluation of sector-based work academies and work experience programmes in the UK indicates that a sectoral focus for short-term training and associated support is helpful in facilitating employment entry. However, the evidence suggests that this is most powerfully the case when individuals are in receipt of all component elements of programmes focusing on employment entry (i.e. pre-employment training, work experience and a guaranteed job interview), rather than one or two elements in isolation.

Evidence from robustly evaluated sector-focused interventions in the US indicates that participants are significantly more likely to find employment and to work more consistently than counterparts in control groups. As noted in Sissons et al. (2016) there are also significant average earnings effects across the programmes. It is reasonable to assume that such effects would be most pronounced when participants are screened for suitability at the outset.

However the evidence tends not to be sufficiently detailed or robust to draw firm conclusions about the relative merits of focusing on different types of sector. It should be remembered that variations in sectoral impacts may be as much a result of delivery models and providers' implementation of them as to sector-specific differences.

### **The prospects and limitations for targeting different growth sectors**

There is insufficient empirical evidence to identify the 'best sectors' to target for employment entry initiatives, but drawing on the evidence examined from across the growth sectors and the nature and dynamics of employment within them the following factors can be highlighted:

- Financial and professional services – generally has high barriers to entry, although pre-employment training programmes have tended to target call centre roles. There is some indicative evidence that such programmes need to take more account of what the role involves from an operative perspective alongside employer requirements. One barrier to employment entry in this sector is that individuals suffering labour market disadvantage may believe jobs in the sector are out of reach. Hence there are growing efforts to widen recruitment through engaging children at school and providing work experience and internship placements for older school students and university graduates. Apprenticeships also have a role to play here.

- Manufacturing – excepting some subsectors characterised by low pay and poor conditions, historically this sector has provided good quality jobs for groups who otherwise disadvantaged in the labour market. Sector-focused programmes have been shown to have particular promise in providing training opportunities for under-represented groups (including women in engineering), but such groups might require particular support in initial access to employment opportunities in order to reap the higher than average wages many manufacturing jobs can offer. Despite a continuing net decline in manufacturing employment there remain ongoing skill shortages which sector-focused programmes can help address. Apprenticeships remain an important entry route to the sector with opportunities for progression.
- Energy and environment – this is a diverse sector with links to other sectors such as manufacturing and construction. The prospects for job creation remain unclear. ‘Green jobs’ subsume occupations at a variety of skill levels, and for more technically advanced roles screening for suitability is likely to be necessary. For some individuals furthest from employment job entry initiatives, sometimes involving third sector organisations, appear to have promise in providing a supported way into employment. Outdoor working/ being in the natural environment may also confer psychological benefits beyond employment entry to some disadvantaged sub-groups.
- Construction – procurement and community benefit clauses provide important mechanisms opening up opportunities for training and jobs in the construction sector. These are especially pronounced in the case of large local infrastructure projects where opportunities have been opened up for local people. The sector has also been the site for initiatives following a ‘rapid engagement model’ in which individuals enter the workplace/ building site following short/ minimal sector-specific training – partly to demonstrate that comparatively well-paid employment is within reach. There is growing interest in the role that can be played in the sector by social enterprise, including in opening up opportunities for repairs and maintenance. Apprenticeships continue to provide an established route into the sector and shared apprenticeship models have been developed to provide continuity of training/ employment.
- Social care – the sector is typified by low pay, relatively low barriers to entry (with the emphasis in recruitment of care workers being on personal attributes [such as a ‘caring disposition’] rather than formal qualifications). Many social care providers are constantly recruiting, so there are ongoing opportunities for employment entry. There is some plausible evidence that pre-employment training and recruitment subsidies can persuade employers to ‘try out’ individuals they might otherwise not have considered. Again there

is some indicative evidence that sector-focused initiatives can attract under-represented groups (men in this instance) into the sector.

- Hospitality – this sector is of particular interest from an employment entry perspective because of low barriers to entry. Historically it is a sector where immigrants have sought employment and there is evidence from the US that contextualised language training can help in securing and advancing in employment. Case study evidence from employment and training initiatives geared to specific disadvantaged groups such as offenders and those at risk of homelessness have had some success. From the perspective of addressing poverty it should be noted that this sector is characterised by low pay and so employment entry may be characterised by in-work poverty.

Overall there is evidence more generally that there may be benefits to a sector focus, with different sectors offering different opportunities.

### **Implications for policy, practice and initiative design**

Some of the core lessons that follow from the evidence base about partnership working, understanding recruitment and selection practices, and aligning training effectively to sector needs are applicable across sectors.

- Employment entry is central to employment policy but is only one element within an employment pathway and there is increasing policy interest in considering progression alongside employment entry– especially in order to address in-work poverty.
- There are theoretical reasons why a sector-focused approach might be beneficial. Overall, the evidence points to sector-focused approaches leading to more positive employment outcomes. But factors like quality of delivery are important too.
- A sector-focused approach may be particularly beneficial in facilitating employment entry to specific sectors for under-represented groups.
- There is a tension between screening/ creaming suitable candidates and widening access to opportunities in particular sectors/ programmes.
- A strong emphasis on job search to facilitate rapid entry to employment lies at the heart of active labour market policy. Yet there is some evidence that adopting a sector-focused approach to job search, and sharing experiences with job seekers with similar interests can be beneficial.
- Labour market intermediaries have an important role to play in keeping abreast of, and relaying knowledge of employers' recruitment and selection procedures to job seekers.
- There is evidence that sector-focused pre-employment training has positive results for job entry.

- There is growing emphasis on the value of work experience. There is evidence that it is valued by unemployed individuals seeking work and participating in pre-employment training, alongside guaranteed job interviews. Work experience also has a more general role to play in education in enhancing awareness of employment opportunities available and the requirements of specific job roles.
- A range of individual factors and circumstances, employer/ organisational practices, local contextual factors and macro level factors act as barriers and facilitators to job entry. It is important that policy initiatives are cognisant of these factors. Wraparound support has a role to play alongside sector-focused policy.
- Procurement regulations and community benefit clauses provide opportunities for employment entry of individuals with specific characteristics in specific areas. Such regulations and clauses are particularly developed in construction – notably in the case of large development contracts, but can apply in other sectors too.

Overall the evidence suggests that including a sectoral component in job search, pre-employment training and other employment policy interventions is likely to be beneficial from an individual perspective. Sector-focused work experience can provide individuals with insights into work in particular sectors before they are of an age to enter the labour market. Likewise, sector-focused work experience is likely to be beneficial for non-employed adults – especially those interested in considering working in a sector where individuals with their characteristics are under-represented. Sector-focused interventions are also of value in opening up opportunities for labour market intermediaries to forge closer relationships with employers and to tailor labour market interventions to employer requirements.

There are low barriers to entry in many of the sectors characterised by low pay. Hence, as far as possible, there is merit in considering possibilities for progression alongside pre-employment and employment entry in policy initiatives.



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## Appendix 1: Evidence Search Details

Table A1: Academic sources searched

ABI/Inform
ASSIA (Applied Social Science Index & Abstracts)
Business Source Premier (in EBSCO)
DOAJ Business and management
DOAJ Economics
Econlit (in EBSCO)
Emerald
Google Scholar <sup>3</sup>
Index to Theses
International Bibliography of the Social Sciences
JSTOR
Scopus
Social Science Citation Index
Sociological Abstracts

Table A2: Matrix of search terms for academic literature – abstract search

Employ* OR Work
AND
Poverty OR “low pay” OR “low-pay” OR “Low paid” or “Low-paid” OR “Low wage” OR “low-wage” OR “Low income” OR “Low-income” “Low earners” OR “Low-earners” OR “Low earning” OR “Low-earning” OR Benefits OR Welfare OR Unemploy*
AND
Entry OR Training OR Skills OR Recruit OR Retain OR Retention OR Progress* OR Advance* OR Apprentice* OR Promotion OR “Career ladder” OR “Internal labour market” OR “External labour market” OR “Job quality” OR “Work quality” OR Wages OR Pay OR “Job satisfaction” OR “Good job” OR “Bad job”
AND
“Financial services” OR “Professional services” OR “Call centres” OR “Business services” OR Insurance OR Manufacturing OR Environment OR “Low Carbon” OR “Green jobs” OR Construction OR “Social care” OR “Residential care” OR “Domiciliary care” OR Hospitality OR Hotel OR Restaurant OR Tourism

Table A3: Matrix of search terms for grey literature

Low pay	Skills	Financial services	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Professional services	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Call centres	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Business services	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Manufacturing	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Environment	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Low carbon	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Green jobs	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Construction	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Social care	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Residential care	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Domiciliary care	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Hospitality	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Hotels	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Restaurant	Evaluation
Low pay	Skills	Tourism	Evaluation
Low pay	Retention		Evaluation
Low pay	Progression		Evaluation
Low pay	Advancement		Evaluation
Low pay	Job quality		Evaluation
Unemployed	Retention		Evaluation
Unemployed	Progression		Evaluation
Unemployed	Advancement		Evaluation
Unemployed	Job quality		Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Financial services	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Professional services	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Call centres	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Business services	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Manufacturing	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Environment	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Low carbon	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Green jobs	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Construction	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Social care	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Residential care	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Domiciliary care	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Hospitality	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Hotels	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Restaurant	Evaluation
Unemployed	Skills	Tourism	Evaluation

*Note: For each of these combinations the first 20 pages of results from Google were screened; and for Google Scholar the first 10 pages were screened*

Table A4: List of repositories searched

Brookings Institute
Brotherhood of St Laurence
Canadian Council on Social Development
CEDEFOP
Centre for Cities
Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES)
Centre for Poverty Research (University of Kentucky)
Centre for Study of Urban Policy (University of California)
CESI – Inclusion
Demos
Economic Policy Institute
Eurofound
European Trade Union Institute
ILO
Institute for Research on Poverty (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
ippr
Joseph Rowntree Foundation
LARIA
Local Government Association
Local Government Information Unit (LGIU)
Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research
National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR)
National Poverty Center (University of Michigan)
NESTA
New Economics Foundation (NEF)
Policy Exchange
Policy Studies Institute (PSI)
RAND
Rocket Science
Russell Sage Foundation
Smith Institute
Social Market Foundation (SMF)
The Work Foundation
Townsend Centre for International Poverty Research
Upjohn Institute
Young Foundation
UK Government
Cities Policy Unit
Department for Work and Pensions
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
Department for Communities and Local Government

Table A5: The Maryland Scale of Scientific Methods

*Maryland Scale: Level and Description*

1 Observed correlation between an intervention and outcomes at a single point in time. A study that only measured the impact of the service using a questionnaire at the end of the intervention would fall into this level.

2 Temporal sequence between the intervention and the outcome clearly observed; or the presence of a comparison group that cannot be demonstrated to be comparable. A study that measured the outcomes of people who used a service before it was set up and after it finished would fit into this level.

3 A comparison between two or more comparable units of analysis, one with and one without the intervention. A matched-area design using two locations would fit into this category if the individuals in the research and the areas themselves were comparable.

4 Studies providing comparison between multiple units with and without the intervention, controlling for other factors or using comparison units that evidence only minor differences.

5 Experimental studies including random assignment and analysis of comparable units to intervention and control groups. A well conducted randomised controlled trial (RCT) fits into this category.

Source: Adapted from Sherman et al, 1998; Green et al, 2015



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