Working with Minority Ethnic Clients to Promote and Progress Racial Equalities: A Toolkit for Employability Partnerships and Projects

March 2014
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Introduction

WORKING FOR GROWTH, the refreshed employability strategy makes clear that overcoming barriers to work is at the heart of employability. People from minority ethnic groups face many labour market barriers and are a key target group for employability services.

People from minority ethnic communities will account for half of the growth in the working age population over the next decade. It is critical this resource is used effectively. THE GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC STRATEGY argues ensuring everyone can contribute fully to the economy will be essential to Scotland’s future growth and prosperity. No one should be denied opportunities because of their race or ethnicity, their disability, gender, sexual orientation, age or religion.

All employability services should be concerned about what they can do to help people from minority ethnic communities enter and progress in the labour market. As WORKING FOR GROWTH highlights, Employability Partnerships should review the effectiveness of their approaches to working with minority ethnic clients regularly.

This toolkit aims to give employability practitioners information to do this and to promote and progress racial equality in their services. It is based on the premise that employability practitioners already have relevant skills and experience to enable them to work with minority ethnic clients effectively. This experience includes:

- working with people who face discrimination and disadvantage, are distant from the labour market, or have barriers to accessing mainstream services;
- networking in local communities to engage clients and to access the support clients may need (such as money advice) to achieve their employability goals;
- working with employers to make them aware of the difficulties clients may have and supporting them in work.

Organisation

The toolkit is organised as follows:

- Section 1 highlights key points in relation to promoting equality.
- Section 2 provides an overview of the labour market issues facing people from minority ethnic groups.
- Sections 3 - 6 provide information to address the specific issues facing minority ethnic clients.
- Section 7 provides further information including useful organisations, further reading and references.

The tools employability services use should be relevant for all clients. Examples of tools developed by Bridges Programmes in Glasgow which is a specialist service can be accessed on the Employability Learning Network website.

We are very grateful to Bridges for sharing these resources.
Section 1: Promoting Equality

Research with employability projects has found employability advisers view equalities as a very important part of their work. Employability projects are aware of barriers to employment for different equality groups including women and people with disabilities although the issues are perhaps more likely to have been addressed in isolation, with the development of projects focused on specific areas of disadvantage such as disability or gender. Nowadays, there tend to be fewer targeted projects and so employability services need to become adept at addressing multiple and complex needs for all clients.

Services need to ensure they are accessible to all people by promoting:

- **equality of opportunity** – ensuring different groups with different needs do not experience barriers to accessing services; and
- **equality of outcome** – ensuring services meet the needs of people who experience disadvantage or inequality so they achieve the same outcome as people from other communities or groups.

Public services have a duty to eliminate discrimination and promote equality. In this section we cover these duties briefly and also highlight how employability services can become more proactive about promoting equality. The information should help services consider how well they are achieving racial equality.

**Legislation and Compliance**

The Equality Act (2010) is the main piece of legislation that addresses discrimination and inequality in the UK. It brought together nine separate pieces of legislation into one single Act, simplifying the law and also strengthening it in many ways. The majority of the provisions came into force in October 2010, with others coming into force in 2011 and 2012. The box below lists the nine characteristics protected under the Equality Act (2010).

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
Of direct relevance to minority ethnic groups are the provisions on racial discrimination. Race is defined as including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. Discrimination on the grounds of any of these is unlawful.

The law prohibits discrimination relating to any of the protected characteristics whether direct or indirect. Individuals who feel they have been discriminated against on any of the above grounds can bring an action in court against the perpetrator. The law also prohibits victimisation of persons who have brought action against a perpetrator or given evidence in connection with proceedings under the Act.

The Act prohibits discrimination across a broad range of areas including employment, the provision of goods and services to the public and the exercise of public functions.

The Public Sector Equality Duty is one of the provisions of the Act. It came into force in April 2011. Under this provision, public bodies (and others discharging public functions, such as third sector organisations):

- have a general duty to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation; and
- should promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

Further specific duties require public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information showing compliance with the Equality Duty and to set equality objectives designed to enable the better performance of the general duty. An example of this, which relates to employability is given in the box below.

In April, 2013 North Lanarkshire Council published equality outcomes in line with public sector equality duty. It developed a specific outcome to improve the job prospects for Black and minority ethnic people: "The job prospects for black and disabled people are improved"Another outcome which impacts on job prospects is: "More disabled and BME people are taking part in Community Learning and Development activities through improved access and support". The Council is developing a performance management framework for these outcomes which will outline key activities, timescales and measures to measure progress to achieving these outcomes.

Remaining Compliant with the Equality Act
A broad underlying principle in the Equality Act (2010) which providers of public services need to consider is that everyone must be treated with dignity and respect. The following are some specific things employability services need to be aware of to remain compliant.

What Constitutes Direct Discrimination?
In services and public functions when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic this is considered to be direct discrimination.

A Practical Example
An employability adviser refuses to provide advice to Nana who is an African woman on the assumption that she will not be able to understand the information because of her ethnicity.

This is a case of direct discrimination.
Direct discrimination can also occur when a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic even though that person does not have the characteristic themselves. This includes a person being treated less favourably because they have links or associations with someone who has a protected characteristic.

**A Practical Example**
Khalid is Julie’s partner. Julie is unemployed and trying to get support from an employability agency. Khalid is Somali and as a result Julie is treated less favourably by advisers at the employability agency.

This is discrimination because of association with an minority ethnic person.

Direct discrimination also includes discrimination because a person is wrongly perceived to have a particular protected characteristic.

**What Constitutes Indirect Discrimination?**
Indirect discrimination occurs when there is a rule, a policy or practice which applies to everyone but which disadvantages those with a particular protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified as lawful if it can be shown that the rule, policy or practice is intended to meet a legitimate objective in a fair, balanced and reasonable way. When considering introducing a new rule or policy, it is important to consider whether there are other ways you can meet your objectives that would not have a discriminatory effect.

**A Practical Example**
An employability agency has a policy of informing clients about jobs and training opportunities by telephone in English only. This makes it difficult for many ethnic minority clients, who do not speak English, to access information. Unless the service can justify its policy of informing clients only in English and by telephone as being a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, this can be considered to be indirect discrimination.

**Harassment**
Harassment occurs if the conduct of the person harassing is unwanted and has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person being harassed. It is unlawful to harass somebody because of their race. If the person is then treated less favourably because he or she rejects or submits to the conduct this could also be seen as harassment.

**A Practical Example**
Fumi, a Black woman is waiting at a local project when she overhears two members of staff making racially abusive comments. As this conduct was unwanted and it made her feel humiliated and degraded, she can bring a claim of harassment.

**Victimisation**
Victimisation occurs when someone is treated less favourably/badly because they have taken an action in relation to the Equality Act, such as making or supporting a complaint or raising a grievance about discrimination, or because it is suspected that they have taken or may take such action. A person is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciouly made or supported an untrue complaint.
A Practical Example
Aisha makes a formal complaint against her employability adviser that they have discriminated against her because of her Asian background. The complaint is resolved through the agency’s grievance procedures. However, as a result of making the complaint the adviser has refused to provide support for Aisha.

This is a case of victimisation.

Positive Action
Some people with protected characteristics are disadvantaged or under-represented in some areas of life or have particular needs linked to their characteristic. They may need extra help or encouragement if they are to have the same opportunities as everyone else. The positive action provisions in the Equality Act allow public sector organisations to take reasonable steps to help people tackle their disadvantages or to meet their needs.

Employability services then can take action to encourage people to access their services or put services in place that meet the different needs of some groups. The example below shows how positive action can be taken in an employability context.

The Roma Employability Project delivered by Jobs&Business Glasgow worked with local community organisations to reach clients. They had to adapt their provision to meet the needs of clients, with poor English literacy. Instead of class based training they emphasised hands on training, volunteering and work placements to showcase clients’ skills and abilities to potential employers. They also support clients in an holistic way including offering language support, advocacy, assistance with benefits and IT support. Clients are also signposted for specific money advice with regards to debt. All of this has helped to engage clients effectively. See a full case study of the Roma Project at:

Further Information
Scottish Government equalities information: www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality

Scottish Ministers published their regulations in relation to the specific duties in May 2012 see: http://scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality/PublicEqualityDuties


Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights provides access to information and documentation regarding the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Scottish Specific Duties through their portal: http://www.crer.org.uk/public-sector-equality-duty
Monitoring
A critical aspect of promoting equality is having robust monitoring in place to identify who is using the service. Services should collect data on ethnicity to identify whether there are differences in engagement and outcomes across ethnic groups. All employability partnerships and services should be incorporating monitoring of ethnicity into their client monitoring systems. This allows services to identify how many people are engaged and whether anything needs to be done to improve rates of engagement. Outcomes across clients groups should also be monitored so corrective action to improve services and outcomes can be taken. Data on gender should also be collected in view of the specific difficulties faced by minority ethnic women in the labour market.

What to Monitor
The categories used in the Census are most useful for ethnic monitoring as this allows comparison and covers all ethnic groups. Ethnicity should be recorded for all clients who join an employability service. Existing arrangements should be examined to identify:

- where monitoring data is currently insufficient;
- where this could be improved upon; and
- what will happen to monitoring data after it has been collected.

The categories for the most recent census (2011) are shown below and can be incorporated into client records systems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The information can be obtained by asking: What is your ethnic group?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>White</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Scottish, other British, Irish. Gypsy traveller, Polish, other white ethnic group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>African</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- African, African Scottish or African British, other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Caribbean or Black</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British, other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Black, Black Scottish or Black British, other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Ethnic Groups</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Arab, Arab Scottish, Arab British, other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


What Should be Done With the Information?
This information can provide a basis for further investigation into why there are different rates of engagement and outcome for different ethnic groups than might be expected. An example of how to approach this is given in the box below.
**Capital City Partnership** record and monitor the ethnicity of all clients who join their services by recording this information on their Caselink client monitoring system. They use the Census categories as this allows a useful comparison of their client data. Recently, they compared Census data for Edinburgh with their client caseload. Ideally, it would be good to compare activity rates and unemployment for different groups but this information is not yet available. Instead, they looked at the population data. Using the 2011 Census they found:

- 23.9% of their clients described themselves as white: other although the population of Edinburgh has only 2.1% who describe themselves as white: other. The partnership is engaging more people from this group than would be expected.
- Only 3.4% of the client caseload are from an Asian background although 5.5% of the population of Edinburgh has an Asian background. Fewer people from this group are being engaged than would be expected.
- People from other ethnic groups also achieved fewer outcomes compared to white: Scottish people.

This information has therefore highlighted areas the Partnership can investigate further to find out why there are differences in engagement rates and outcomes.

For more information see: [http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/media/308475/caselink_data_for_ethnicity_ver2.pdf](http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/media/308475/caselink_data_for_ethnicity_ver2.pdf)

There must be commitment to report equalities data. It is important to have a procedure for addressing equalities issues that are identified through monitoring and reporting. Action should involve setting specific targets for equalities groups in relation to engagement and outcomes.

**Further Information**

The Equality and Human Rights Commission publishes a useful guide on ethnic monitoring for public authorities which outlines the rationale for monitoring and how to do it.


**Equality Impact Assessment**

Equality impact assessments (EIA) can be conducted to ensure any new policy or programme will not have an inadvertent negative effect on equality groups. The starting point is recognition that people have different needs and requirements – it is not sufficient to treat everyone the same; services must take into account the potential differential impacts of changes to policy or services. An EIA involves gathering information to assess the possible impact of a service. If a policy or service change involves people it is likely that an EIA needs to be carried out.

EIA generally has 10 steps as outlined in the box below.
**Step 1** is defining the aims of the policy or service – what is it designed to achieve? How will the needs of different groups be integrated into its aims and objectives? Who will benefit and how?

**Step 2** is setting out what is already known about the diverse needs and experiences of the target group. This will help to understand the effects of the policy or service – positive and negative. This information could include statistical evidence or research evidence. It is important to consider the implications of any findings from this information carefully – if the research suggests that there may not be an impact or only a small impact, does this need further investigation?

**Step 3** involves looking at this evidence and deciding what else is needed. Are there any gaps in the evidence collected? Does further analysis need to be carried out? Is there enough information to proceed?

**Step 4** is using the information to assess how different groups will be affected. Will any groups be excluded? Will the proposed changes be beneficial to some or all groups? Will there be any adverse effects and if so could this amount to unlawful discrimination?

**Step 5** is deciding whether there is a need for any change to the service or policy to avoid adverse impacts. What action can be taken? Who will take that action? When should it be taken?

**Step 6** involves thinking about how the policy or programme provides an opportunity to promote equality and good relations. An EIA is not just about identifying negative impacts, but also about where there are opportunities to make things better.

**Step 7** is rating the impact – whether it will be high, medium or low on equality groups – the high can include a mix of positive and negative impacts.

**Step 8** looks at whether a further impact assessment is required.

**Step 9** is setting out how the impact of the policy or service will be monitored to ensure adverse impacts are avoided and positive impacts realised. Data requirement, how often they will be collected and how they will be analysed should be outlined.

**Step 10** is signing off and publishing the impact assessment.

**Equalities Training**

Equalities training can help employability practitioners feel more confident they are taking the right approach. Training can be provided for all staff members as part of induction and also offered as continuing professional development but it should be tailored to roles within the organisation.

Good equalities training results in staff having a better understanding of their role in promoting equality and feeling more confident about their capacity to work with equalities groups including minority ethnic clients. Training should:
• allow staff to increase knowledge and understanding of equality legislation;
• provide them with the right information to help them to deal with day to day issues;
• allow them to integrate this into their day to day practice.

There is a range of organisations that can provide equality and diversity training including organisations which work with ethnic minorities, academic institutions, local authorities and private trainers. Many will tailor training to meet your organisation’s particular needs. When planning training look for the following to be included.

• Promoting equality and diversity and raising interest in these issues.
• Raising awareness of the legal context.
• Identifying the business case for equalities.
• Increasing knowledge of the Equality Act (2010).
• Helping staff to understand key concepts such as direct and indirect discrimination.
• Helping staff explore their own views, for example around stereotypes, and how they can lead to discrimination.
• Identifying action that can be taken both within the organisation and with clients.

**Embedding Equality**

Training on its own will be insufficient to embed equality into services. Mechanisms to support staff must be put in place. *The European Social Fund Equality and Diversity Good Practice Guide – Ethnic Minority Communities*, highlights common features of employability projects which have a good approach to promoting equality and diversity. These are listed in the box below.

- A good understanding of equality and diversity and the communities they support.
- Have secured community buy-in to encourage the engagement of diverse participants.
- Have a robust and fair approach to assessment and development of participants.
- Have relevant processes and partnerships in place to support participants into employment.
- Ensure there is ongoing monitoring and evaluation to continue that support for those in employment.

**Key Points**

1. Employability services need to ensure they are accessible to all people by promoting equality of opportunity and equality of outcome.
2. Monitoring ethnicity is a critical aspect of promoting equality and all employability services should be doing this.
3. Equality impact assessments can determine the likely impact of a change in services for different equalities groups and should be carried out when planning any changes in services.
4. Training can help employability staff feel more confident they are taking the right approach.
5. Mechanisms need to be put in place to support staff to integrate promoting equalities into their day to day practice.
Section 2: Minority Ethnic Groups in the Labour Market

This section provides an overview of the minority ethnic Scottish population and how people from these groups are faring in the labour market.

Population
The 2011 Census found that Scotland’s minority ethnic population was 211,000, which constitutes 4% of Scotland’s 5,296,400 population. Figure 1 shows the largest ethnic group is the Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British group, within which the Pakistani ethnic group is the largest sub-group.

Figure 1: Scotland’s Ethnic Minority Population, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>5,084,407</td>
<td>96.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups</td>
<td>19,815</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British</td>
<td>140,678</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British</td>
<td>49,381</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British</td>
<td>32,706</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British</td>
<td>3,788</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British</td>
<td>33,706</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other Asian</td>
<td>21,097</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>29,638</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean or Black</td>
<td>6,540</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ethnic Groups</td>
<td>14,325</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Ethnic Minority Population</td>
<td>210,966</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>5,296,403</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Scotland’s Census

Figure 2 shows the ethnic minority population is largest in Glasgow (at 12% of Glasgow’s population), while Edinburgh and Dundee both have proportions above 8%. Nineteen of Scotland’s 32 local authority areas have an ethnic minority population of less than 2% of their total population.
Employment Status

There is a marked difference between the employment status of Scotland’s minority ethnic groups compared with the white population. Figure 3 provides a summary analysis of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity rates in 2013.

- The employment rate in Scotland for the white population was 71.3%, compared with the minority ethnic group rate of 56.4%.
- The unemployment rate was 7.6% amongst the white population and 12.8% amongst the minority ethnic population.
- The economic inactivity rate was 22.7% amongst the white population and 35.2% amongst the minority ethnic population.
These figures show why, at the UK and Scottish levels, narrowing the gap between the minority ethnic employment rate and the overall employment rate is a key policy goal. Over time, the employment rate gap between the white and ethnic minority had been closing until 2008. For example, in March 2008, the employment rates were 74.2% for the white population and 67.1% for the minority ethnic population – i.e. a 7 percentage point difference. However, since the onset of the recession the gap has widened to a 15 percentage point difference in September 2013. Similar trends can be seen in the unemployment rates and economic inactivity rates.

Women face particular disadvantage. Figure 4 presents the employment rates by different ethnic group and gender – and clearly shows the differences across these characteristics.

- By ethnic group, employment rates range from 69.7% for Indians to 51.7% for Pakistanis/Bangladeshis. The white population employment rate was 71.3%.
- By gender, females have lower employment rates than males across all ethnic groups. The gap in employment rates between genders does, however, vary.
  - The smallest gap is between Black/Black British males (55.2%) and females (52.0%).
  - The largest gap is between Pakistani/Bangladeshi males (64.9%) and females (37.5%).

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**Figure 3: Employment, Unemployment and Economic Inactivity Rates, 2013 (%)**

Source: Annual Population Survey (October 2012-September 2013)

**Figure 4: Employment Rates by Ethnic Group and Gender, 2013 (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>71.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>79.5</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>69.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Ethnic Group</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black / Black British</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ethnic Group</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistanis / Bangladeshis</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Annual Population Survey (October 2012-September 2013)

Note: An analysis of employment status by gender and age for Great Britain is available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/labour-market-status-by-ethnic-group](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/labour-market-status-by-ethnic-group)
Employment
Looking at the jobs that minority ethnic groups do, Figure 5 shows the percentage of white and ethnic minority employees by broad industry. It shows that 34% of minority ethnic employees work in retail and hospitality, compared with 19% amongst all white employees. Ethnic minorities are also more likely to work in transport and communications and banking, finance and insurance and are less likely to work in construction, manufacturing and public sector services. The lower proportion employed in public sector services could be an area of concern as public sector employers should be leading by example on equalities issues.

Figure 5: % of White and Ethnic Minority Employees by Industry, Scotland 2013

Source: Annual Population Survey (October 2012-September 2013)
Note: Agriculture & Fishing and Energy & Water employment not included due to small numbers involved.
A sectoral breakdown by ethnic group for Great Britain is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/labour-market-status-by-ethnic-group

By occupation, Figure 6 shows that 29% of minority ethnic employees work in professional occupations, compared with 20% amongst all white employees. People are also more likely to work in caring and leisure, sales and consumer service, and elementary occupations and are less likely to work in associate professional and technical, skilled trades, and process, plant and machine operative occupations – the latter two occupational types reflecting the lower numbers employed in construction and manufacturing.
Figure 6: % of White and Ethnic Minority Employees by Occupation, Scotland 2013

Source: Annual Population Survey (October 2012-September 2013)

Qualifications
Amongst S4 school pupils, pupils from minority ethnic groups tend to perform better in terms of attainment. Figure 7 shows the average S4 Tariff Scores (i.e. a points aggregate of their Standard Grades performance) and shows that many ethnic groups performed above the white pupil average of 187. For example, Asian Chinese pupils had an average S4 Tariff Score of 244.

Figure 7: Average Tariff Score of S4 Pupils by Ethnic Group, Scotland 2011/12

Source: Scottish Government

For the working age population, data for Scotland’s ethnic minority population is not available. Instead 2011 Census data for England and Wales is used as a proxy with Figure 8 showing the highest qualification held by ethnic group. Similar to school attainment, qualification levels are often higher amongst ethnic groups. For example, 29% of the white working age population have a degree qualification or above (i.e. Level 4 qualification) but amongst the Asian/Asian British ethnic group the proportion is 36%.
Figure 8 does, however, identify two potential issues for ethnic minority groups.

- The uptake of apprenticeships by ethnic minority groups appears to be lower than the white population. This is supported by Equality and Human Rights Commission Scotland research that finds that less than 2% of apprenticeships in Scotland are taken by ethnic minorities although they are around 4% of the target population of 16-24 year olds.
- Some ethnic minority groups have ‘other qualifications’ that may be difficult to transfer to the UK labour market.

Figure 8: Highest Qualification Levels Held by Ethnic Group in England and Wales, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No Q</th>
<th>L1 Q</th>
<th>L2 Q</th>
<th>Apprenticeship</th>
<th>L3</th>
<th>L4+</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Asian British</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African/Caribbean Black British</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ethnic Group</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Office for National Statistics*

**Key Points**

1. Scotland’s minority ethnic population is 211,000 or 4% of the population.
2. There are stark differences in the employment, unemployment and economic activity rates for people in the minority ethnic population compared to the white population.
3. The recession has exacerbated labour market disadvantage for all minority ethnic groups.
4. Women from minority ethnic groups are particularly disadvantaged in the labour market.
5. There is some evidence that people from minority ethnic groups are more likely to work in particular occupational sectors. This suggests particular difficulties with securing employment in some sectors.
6. There is also evidence that despite good qualifications people still face barriers in the labour market.
7. All employability services need to be aware of the barriers to work people from minority ethnic groups face and respond appropriately.
Section 3: Referral and Engagement

People from minority ethnic communities can find it difficult to access employability services. There are number of reasons for this:

- people do not know where to go to get help;
- they perceive services will be unhelpful;
- they feel services will not understand issues or be relevant;
- services may be inaccessible because of location, or the time they are open or the way they are provided.

It is important that services carry out a regular critical review to identify whether there are any barriers to services that may be preventing target groups from accessing the service. Employability services also need to be proactive and take positive action to reach people from minority ethnic groups and engage them successfully.

Some employability projects have carried out research to determine how they could reduce barriers to services. They talked to organisations working with minority ethnic groups. These organisations suggested reaching clients could be more effective by:

- developing relationships with minority ethnic organisations to tap into their client base and expertise;
- using leaflets which have representation of the minority ethnic community;
- highlighting the confidentiality of the service;
- engaging with the community by having posters and leaflets available in places of worship, schools and community centres, as well as having a presence at community events;
- raising the profile of minority ethnic staff working in the organisation and the availability of interpreters;
- ensuring all staff have had equality and diversity training.

Employability services in Scotland have developed approaches to reach people as shown in the examples of work in the box below.

The Youth Community Support Agency (YCSA) in Glasgow works with minority ethnic young people aged 16-25. They find that a lot of the young people coming to them are not accessing services for a range of reasons including thinking that services will not meet their needs. They are also developing partnerships with other local agencies to try to reach more young people. Working with other family members has helped them to engage more young women.
Frae Fife reach people through workshops to promote their service and networking with community groups. This networking is a very important way of reaching people as not all of their clients are in touch with Jobcentre Plus or other mainstream services which normally refer to the service.

Once people have been referred, or have referred themselves, there are particular factors are associated with keeping people engaged with the service. These include:

- offering personalised and tailored help;
- knowing how to accommodate people with different backgrounds;
- ensuring clients have repeat contact with the same adviser – who gets to know the client’s circumstances;
- ability to access provision to tackle a range of barriers.

More examples of work are highlighted in the box below.

ESF-funded employability providers took a number of steps to increase engagement and participation of minority ethnic individuals. These included the following.

- Arranging outreach events designed to target specific minority ethnic communities. For example, one provider, in consultation with elders of a local community, held an outreach event which led to a significant increase in participation.

- Forging links with minority ethnic community and voluntary sector groups to raise awareness of the service. This route was seen as more effective than advertising in places like Jobcentre Plus offices because the relevant groups would be more likely to access them, and as trusted channels they could help to overcome negative perceptions, suspicion or wariness of employment-related services.

- Learning from community and voluntary groups about issues facing different participant groups and of the best ways to provide help and support to them.

- Employing staff who could communicate with individuals for whom English was not their first language. This helped improve understanding and better meet clients’ needs. It also raised awareness of the relevance of employability provision amongst non-English speaking communities.

- Helping participants to have their qualifications and skills recognised in the UK by raising awareness of qualifications that could be recognised in the UK or of qualification conversion programmes.


Communication with People who Need Language Support
Refugees and migrants may need language support. When engaging people who need this support it is important to think about communication. The way native speakers of English talk naturally can create difficulties in understanding for people who are not native speakers of English. The ESOL department at Glasgow Clyde College identified several factors relating
to native speaker communication which can create barriers to understanding for new learners of English. These include the following.

- How quickly someone speaks.
- Lack of repetition.
- High level of certain phrases or which might be unfamiliar (such as ‘on benefits’).
- Using language which is too complicated.
- Using vocabulary which is too difficult or unfamiliar.
- Not checking whether someone has understood what has been said.
- Speaking with a local dialect/accent.

Practitioners can make a conscious effort (and monitor their own speech) to make themselves more easily understood by new speakers of English. The required techniques are relatively simple to incorporate into work with clients and will improve understanding on both sides. They include the following:

- Making sure the other person is listening.
- Simplifying speech – making sentences short and simple and using common vocabulary.
- Slowing pace of delivery.
- Lessening any accent.
- Checking understanding.
- Repeating as necessary.
- Using other means of communication (e.g. miming, visuals, body language).

**Key Points**

1. People from minority ethnic groups can find it difficult to access employability services and so a proactive approach to engagement is likely to be needed.
2. Developing relationships with local organisations that work with people from minority ethnic communities can be good way of reaching potential clients.
3. Communication with people who need language support can be improved through taking a few simple steps.
Section 4: Assessment

There are considerable differences in the characteristics and circumstances of people within and across different minority ethnic groups. This will affect their employability in different ways. Differences in labour market outcomes within and across groups can be related to:

- discrimination – unequal treatment by employers related to race, colour or religion;
- different levels of education and training;
- where people live – whether they live in areas with lower levels of employment and fewer job opportunities;
- gender, disability and age;
- for refugees and migrants, different levels of English language fluency; and
- different cultural factors which affect likelihood of participating in the labour market.

It is important not to have preconceptions about clients just because they come from a specific community and therefore person – centred and holistic assessment is a critical part of the work.

Data Collection

The assessment process can be enhanced by including questions which elicit specific information to improve support for minority ethnic clients. Bridges Programmes, which works with refugees and migrants, has a comprehensive data collection process which helps them provide appropriate support to clients with a range of different backgrounds and needs. Useful questions include:

- How do you pronounce your name? Or are you known by another name?
- Are you here with your family?
- If you have a partner does he/she want information about the Programme?
- Are you receiving benefits?

They also record:

- Nationality
- Ethnicity
- Current status (for example if someone is still going through asylum process)
- Whether someone has PVG
- Whether the client is registered with other agencies
- Education in country of origin and education in the UK
- Language skills
- Job history, both in country of origin and the UK
- Any membership of a professional body
The full data collection form can be accessed on the Employability website.


Assessing Status
Refugees, asylum seekers and migrants can all benefit from employability support. Most have rights to work as detailed in the box below.

- **Refugees** are people whose application for asylum have been accepted by the government and recognised as needing protection under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. People who have refugee status, Indefinite Leave to Remain, Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave to Remain have the same rights to work and benefits as anyone else.

- **Asylum seekers** are people who are not yet recognised as a refugee under the 1951 Convention. It is a human right to seek asylum in another country. Some asylum seekers have permission to work, generally if they have waited over a year for their initial decision on whether they have been given leave to remain in the UK.

- **Migrants** are people who come to Scotland looking for work. It is generally expected that migrants will be able to support themselves without any support from public funds. Czech, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Slovakian, Slovenian Bulgarian and Romanian nationals do not need to obtain permission before they work in the UK. People who are not from the European Economic Area (EEA) and who are applying for leave to remain (or to extend leave to remain) do not have access to benefits like income based Jobseekers Allowance, income support, tax credits and housing benefit. From 1 January 2014 all EU jobseekers will have to wait for 3 months before they can apply to claim income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA). After 3 months, migrants will also have to take a test if they want to claim income-based JSA.

The UK Border Agency provides more information on this.

http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/

Assessing Skills
Assessing skills is a critical part of the assessment process for all employability services. However, some of the people we spoke to in the course of producing the toolkit said that it can be difficult to identify skills because some people from minority ethnic backgrounds are not used to talking about their skills. Holistic assessment to identify people’s skills, talents, educational background as well as their needs is appropriate. Often people from minority ethnic groups are not used to presenting themselves and this needs to be brought out so that this can go into their CVs. Clients can find it difficult to identify their transferable skills. A full and skilful assessment and is needed to establish these.

*Bridges Programmes* in Glasgow carry out an extensive skills audit with clients to assess skills in a range of areas including: communication – written and spoken; working with numbers; information technology; and practical and other skills.

The Bridges skills audit tool is available on the Employability website:
Bridges also use the Reflection Toolkit to help people reflect on their learning which can be useful in assessment. This is an open resource developed by Bridges and the Open University available at: http://labspace.open.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=8322

Assessing Qualifications
If clients have existing qualifications from overseas these can be assessed through obtaining information about how they relate to Scottish qualifications. There are different ways of doing this.

The National Recognition Information Centre for the UK (UKNARIC) databases provide information about vocational, academic and professional skills and qualifications from all over the world. This can provide clarity about the skills and qualification levels held by clients.

Access to the online databases is through membership packages for 12, 24 or 36 months. http://ecctis.co.uk/naric

The Open University’s open credit transfer can be useful to start the process of understanding overseas qualifications. http://www.open.ac.uk/study/credit-transfer/my-previous-study/overseas-qualifications/countries

Key Points
1. There are considerable differences in the characteristics and circumstances of people within and across different minority ethnic groups, therefore it is important not to have any preconceptions about clients just because they have a minority ethnic background.
2. Client profiling and assessment tools should be effective in eliciting all of the information needed to provide an holistic assessment needed to develop appropriate support.
Section 5: Barrier Removal

Minority ethnic clients will face many of the same barriers as other disadvantaged groups, using employability services including difficulties accessing childcare, being stuck in a benefits trap or having few skills and little employment experience.

People from minority ethnic groups can also face specific barriers and it is important to be aware of these. This section covers the most critical barriers encountered by minority ethnic clients, based on research and talking to services currently working with people from these groups.

A flexible approach and a strong equalities perspective can address barriers effectively. This should involve:

- Flexibility in terms of service design and the kind of support which can be offered including flexibility intensity of support, timings, location and structure of training;
- Addressing barriers such as poor basic skills, housing problems or substance misuse issues as well as employability issues;
- Tailoring support to meet diverse participant needs and circumstances.

The Roma Employability Service case study on the Employability website is a good example of this perspective and shows how support was put in place to meet the additional needs of Roma clients. [http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/media/313214/case_study_-_ethnic_minorities_toolkit_-_jobs_and_business_glasgow_-_roma_p5_employability_project_-_march_2014.pdf](http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/media/313214/case_study_-_ethnic_minorities_toolkit_-_jobs_and_business_glasgow_-_roma_p5_employability_project_-_march_2014.pdf)

**Discrimination**

Discrimination is the key problem which minority ethnic people face when they are trying to get a job or progress in the labour market. It is important to understand the dimensions of discrimination and to be aware of all of the ways it can affect people.

It can affect entry to the labour market. For example, a research project found apparent ethnicity determined by a person’s name on a job application affected whether applicants were successful on the first round of the selection process. There is other evidence that although people are often short listed for jobs they face difficulties moving from the short listing stage into jobs.

Discrimination is also the reason why people have difficulties progressing in the labour market. Many people remain underemployed in jobs which do not reflect their qualifications.
Many are segregated occupationally in certain sectors such as catering and hospitality and find it difficult to move into other sectors. There tend to be lower retention rates and higher exit rates with a range of reasons for this including harassment and isolation at work.

Yet race is not the only dimension on which discrimination can be based. People can be members of other equality groups linked to disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief and therefore experience multiple discrimination when these factors intersect. It is important to be aware of the issues around intersectionality which can compound problems for minority ethnic clients and increase the discrimination they face.

When working with clients it is important to:

- be aware of the way that discrimination can affect client’s employability chances;
- help clients cope with discrimination and make them aware of sources of support;
- work with employers to tackle discrimination for example through offering training or bringing employers together to discuss the issues;
- promote the benefits of employing a diverse workforce among employers.

These latter two actions are discussed later in the toolkit.

Sources of information and support for tackling discrimination are:

- local race equality councils and citizen’s advice bureaux
- people can also take their case to an employment tribunal.

Gender Issues

Women can face additional barriers as a result of being female and from a minority ethnic group. Specific barriers for minority ethnic women include lack of access to childcare, occupational segregation and pay gaps, cultural attitudes towards women and lack of social capital. Women also tend to bear the brunt of decline in local services like childcare, ESOL and community groups further isolating them in precarious socio-economic positions.

The key barriers for women refugees include difficulties matching qualifications to UK equivalents, language barriers, college and childcare commitments and employers’ understanding of immigration status.

Understanding of the Labour Market

Several of the services we spoke to when developing this toolkit told us some clients may have very limited understanding of the UK labour market and how it works as they may have been out of the labour market for some time. They will require help to develop their job seeking skills.

This is particularly important for people who are migrants, refugees or asylum seekers as the usual procedures and cultural practices for obtaining a job in the UK may be quite different to those used in people’s country of origin.
Clients will need assistance with:

- finding out about where to look for jobs;
- what job adverts mean;
- how to apply for a job;
- how to create a CV;
- interview skills;
- what training opportunities are available;
- understanding that it can take a long time to get a job.

Examples of work to address lack of understanding of the UK labour market are highlighted in the box below.

**Govanhill Backcourts Initiative** found many of their Roma clients had misconceptions of the UK labour market. They knew little about the culture of work in the UK, employers’ expectations and had a preference for casual work. The project had to spend some time working through these issues but have found that the improved understanding has had a positive impact on the sustainability of job outcomes.

**Frae Fife** organises workshops to help clients develop job application techniques, preparing a CV and interview skills and increase confidence about applying for jobs.

**Low Confidence**

Building confidence is likely to be a key part of work with minority ethnic clients. Being out of the labour market for some time, or facing discrimination when applying for jobs can have profound effects on clients’ self confidence. Undergoing the asylum process can affect people’s self confidence and skills and can lead to gaps in work histories.

Confidence can be built in many ways, but groups can be particularly helpful people often welcome the chance to meet with others in the same situation and to develop peer support.

**English Language Fluency**

Research has found that one of the most important factors affecting ability to find work is fluency in English. This affects whether employment is secured, the type of employment, promotion prospects and earning potential. This means that for all clients for whom English is not their main language, their level of English can present a significant barrier to gaining employment. English fluency can be determined by amount of contact with English, length of residency in the UK and ability to access English classes. It is in this latter area that employability projects can make a useful contribution by helping people to access the right kind of provision.

ESOL classes are available across Scotland in many forms and at a range of levels to help people achieve a qualification in English. The right type of provision for an individual learner depends on their circumstances which include level of English, access to funding, whether they want a qualification or need access to childcare. For some learners, a community-based class may provide a less intensive and more local starting point. However, in many cases, (e.g. for those wishing to study at higher levels) a college main campus place may offer more appropriate courses of study. ESOL may be offered as a standalone course or it
may be embedded in a vocational training programme. For instance, a construction skills course may be taught by a tutor who has an ESOL qualification and can teach both construction and language skills. ESOL may also be studied as a main course, with a module in another subject, such as IT embedded in it. ESOL learning may take place in private institutions or within the workplace. Much publicly funded ESOL provided by colleges, universities, community based providers and voluntary organisations is free. For case studies on different ESOL delivery modes, see: http://www.esolscotland.com/casestudies.cfm.

Types of ESOL qualifications

Three main types of ESOL qualifications are offered in Scotland:

- Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) awards which are provided as part of its NQ framework and which are recognised by education establishments and employers across the UK.
- Cambridge ESOL qualifications which are recognised around the world.
- Some providers help people to prepare for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) which is an indicator of a candidate’s ability to communicate in English.

More information about these qualifications can be found at: www.sqa.org.uk/esol and www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-qualifications.

The type of qualification chosen can depend on why the person needs the qualification. If they are looking for work, the SQA ESOL for Work units may be most appropriate. If the person wants to learn English to support an application for British citizenship, the Home Office will require an SQA qualification at Access 2 – Intermediate 1 level. If the person is looking to go to college or university they will probably need to attain a qualification equivalent to SCQF Level 6 such as SQA Higher ESOL or IELTS 6.0 and above. The different ESOL levels and qualifications and how they map unto the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework is provided below.
Figure 9: ESOL Levels and Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCQF Levels</th>
<th>Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) names</th>
<th>Traditional ESOL Level Names</th>
<th>Common European Framework</th>
<th>IELTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Access 2 Literacies Stage 1</td>
<td>Complete Beginner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access 2 Literacies Stage 2</td>
<td>Starter</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access 2</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Access 3/National 3</td>
<td>Pre-Intermediate</td>
<td>B1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Intermediate 2/ National 5</td>
<td>Upper-Intermediate</td>
<td>B2</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>C1</td>
<td>6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Proficiency</td>
<td>C2</td>
<td>8-9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [www.learnesolglasgow.com](http://www.learnesolglasgow.com)

Understanding ESOL Level Descriptions

Glasgow Clyde College in conjunction with the former Glasgow South East Regeneration Agency developed useful ESOL indicators to help employability practitioners better understand how skills at different levels might relate to job skills. These indicators, which are described in the table below, are useful in explaining the ESOL levels outlined above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level and Name</th>
<th>Speaking and Listening Description</th>
<th>Reading and Writing Description</th>
<th>Employability Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCQF 2: Access 2 Literacies stage 1 (Complete Beginner)</td>
<td>Can communicate only through gestures and a few basic words</td>
<td>Cannot fully recognise or use the English alphabet and cannot write independently</td>
<td>Will be extremely limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCQF 2: Access 2 Literacies Stage 2 (Starter)</td>
<td>Can use and understand simple English for personal and social purposes and respond to basic phrases spoken slowly and repeated if necessary</td>
<td>Can recognise and write letters and numbers. Can read and understand simple written texts and common sight words</td>
<td>Can manage routine jobs which do not require written or spoken communication in English and in which all tasks can be demonstrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCQF 2: Access 2 (Elementary)</td>
<td>Can understand, request and provide short, simple spoken information in familiar and predictable, personal, social, work and study contexts</td>
<td>Can understand basic notices, instructions or information. Can complete basic forms and write short notes and letters including times, dates</td>
<td>Can manage routine jobs which involve basic spoken or written communication in English and in which tasks can be demonstrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCQF 3: Access 3 (Pre Intermediate)</td>
<td>Can talk to others on topics of immediate interest in personal, social, work and study contexts. Can understand instructions and public announcements</td>
<td>Can read and write short, straightforward texts. Can write letters, emails and articles on predictable matters</td>
<td>Can manage mainly manual jobs which involve simple spoken and written communication but in which the tasks can be demonstrated orally</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SCQF 4: Intermediate 1 (Intermediate)

- Can follow or give a talk on a familiar topic or keep up a conversation on a fairly wide range of topics in personal, social, work and study contexts. Can understand speakers in a range of listening situations and identify clearly expressed opinions and attitudes.
- Can read a variety of texts to identify purpose and main points as well as clearly expressed opinions and attitudes; write different types of texts such as emails, letters or articles in which grammar, spelling and punctuation are sufficiently accurate to convey meaning on a first read.
- Can manage jobs and/or training which involve following basic spoken and written instructions and diagrams.

### SCQF 5: Intermediate 2 (Upper-Intermediate)

- Can interact with reasonable fluency, using an adequate range of structures with an appropriate level of accuracy to communicate the message and showing knowledge of general and some specialised vocabulary in personal, social, work and study contexts. Can understand idiomatic language in familiar situations and explain a viewpoint on an issue. Can maintain the conversation and produce organised speech with limited hesitation which does not detract from communication.
- Can understand the purpose and content of straightforward texts and produce structured texts in personal and social, study-related or work-related topics; read quickly enough to cope with an academic course; use an adequate range of structures with a level of accuracy appropriate to the task, showing knowledge of general and some specialised vocabulary. There may be some inaccuracies in grammar, spelling and punctuation, but these do not impede understanding on a first reading.
- Can manage jobs and job training situations which involve following oral and written instructions.

### SCQF 6: Higher (Advanced)

- Can interact with fluency and spontaneity and recognise different registers, operating appropriately in personal and social, study or work-related contexts. Can use a range of structures with an appropriate level of accuracy to clearly communicate the message. Can show knowledge of a wide range of general and some specialised vocabulary and use this accurately and appropriately within the context of a task. Can understand complex and idiomatic language in familiar situations and identify opinions and attitudes. Speaking output is organised with limited hesitation which does not detract from the communication.
- Can understand the purpose and content of complex documents, correspondence and reports, identifying points of information including opinions and attitudes; use a range of structures with a level of accuracy appropriate to the task and showing knowledge of a range of general and specialised vocabulary; and produce clear, detailed texts in personal and social, study or work-related contexts explaining a viewpoint on an issue and giving the values of various options.
- Can understand routine work-related conversations and can manage work that involves following oral and written instructions. Can perform reading and writing tasks, such as forms and reports with reasonable accuracy to meet work needs.

Further information about ESOL levels and qualifications can be found at: [http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/adultlearning/ESOL/framework/progression/levels.asp](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/adultlearning/ESOL/framework/progression/levels.asp)

More generally, the quality of ESOL provision can be judged by determining the extent to which it meets the principles for adult ESOL provision set out in the Government’s ESOL strategy. This states that provision should:

- support inclusion and full participation in society and the economy;
- promote diversity, by recognising and valuing cultures and contributions migrants can make to the economy;
- be of good quality, that is accessible, cost effective and uses best practice in teaching languages;
- support achievement, supporting wider and national literacies standards;
- support and encourage progression into further learning, employment and in local community life.
**Linking ESOL Provision and Employability**

It is increasingly recognised that ESOL needs to be better integrated with other services, particularly employability services. Like many clients accessing employability services, minority ethnic clients may have barriers to learning and may need encouragement and their confidence built to take part in learning. Clients can be referred for an ESOL assessment carried out by a trained ESOL practitioner to provide them with a test of their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. This may help clients to gain confidence and to access an appropriate course of ESOL. An example of work is provided in the box below.

In Glasgow, *ESOL Assessment and Advice Sessions* are held in different locations in the city on different days of the week. These provide access to ESOL initial assessment and advice on learning opportunities and help learners to access appropriate ESOL courses of study. The sessions also allow ESOL providers in the city to gain information about learner needs and demand. Following initial assessment, the assessor and client discuss the recommended level of ESOL study and information on local providers to decide which offers the most appropriate ESOL course. For more information about the service, see: [www.learnnesolglasgow.com/esol-assessment-and-advice-sessions.html](http://www.learnnesolglasgow.com/esol-assessment-and-advice-sessions.html).

Where the required resources are available, ESOL can be included within a package of support for clients, as in the example below.

The *Bridges Programme in Glasgow*, which offers employability support to refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, has tasked City of Glasgow College with developing *vocational ESOL courses* for its clients. This was because staff of the programme realised that clients who have no work experience in the UK sometimes struggle to find the words in English to express themselves in relation to their vocation and also that cultural differences add to the barriers to work facing clients.

So far ESOL vocational courses have been offered to clients in a range of subjects, including social care, early years education, construction, finance, customer care and employability skills. A laboratory technology course is also likely to be offered to the programme’s clients in the near future.

The courses are designed to prepare clients for work and cover the language/vocabulary needed within the particular vocation, as well as work ethics and workplace culture (such as the importance of punctuality and the need to phone the workplace if one is going to be late). Clients are also taught how to make e-portfolios. The courses take 90 hours to deliver over a 6 week period and are delivered at the Bridges Programme premises. Clients may also undertake work placements. With clients having different levels of ability in English tutors assess them to determine their correct level.

At the end of the courses clients gain SQA units, language skills and improved confidence and self esteem.


ESOL providers can be located on the ESOL Scotland website ([www.esolscotland.com](http://www.esolscotland.com)), which provides information about publicly funded ESOL courses, has a directory of courses.
which can be searched as well as a list of college and community based ESOL contacts. It also provides information on funding.

**Wider Barriers**
Some minority ethnic clients might also be facing other issues that are affecting their employability such as poor health, housing issues, access to childcare and benefits traps.

**Health**
Poor health is a barrier to employment and job retention and is related to deprivation so affects minority ethnic communities who are more likely to live in deprived areas. Information to help understand about issues relating to health, inequality and discrimination can be found at NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde’s Equalities in Health website. See: [www.equality.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.equality.scot.nhs.uk)

Some projects work specifically on health issues. An example is shown in the box below.

| **Reach Community Health Project** | works with people who have poor health but want to return to work. It developed a skills development programme for this client group a key element of which was personal development. The programme helped people with long term health conditions gain confidence and take up volunteering opportunities to help them move into work. See a case study of this project at: [http://www.voluntaryactionfund.org.uk/files/1613/6567/9989/2013-04-11_REACH_Community_Health_Project.pdf](http://www.voluntaryactionfund.org.uk/files/1613/6567/9989/2013-04-11_REACH_Community_Health_Project.pdf) |

**Housing**
Housing is a very important issue which affects the ability to gain and remain in employment. Some minority ethnic clients may face housing issues, including difficulty securing housing; getting access to good quality housing and finding housing in areas where they are safe from the threat of racial harassment.

The incidence of recorded homelessness affecting households from minority ethnic communities can be up to 75% higher than across the population as a whole, although substantial differences were found among individual ethnic minority groups.

Local authorities, housing associations, as well as charitable organisations such as Shelter can be contacted for help and support on housing-related issues. However, specialist help and information about housing law can be sought from:

- Housing advice centres;
- Solicitors with expertise in housing law;
- Legal advice centres;
- Shelter; and
- Citizens Advice Bureaux.

There are some specialist organisations that can assist with housing issues. Positive Action in Housing Ltd (PAiH) [www.paih.org](http://www.paih.org) is a Scotland wide charity working with communities, housing providers, voluntary organisations and faith groups to help people get an equal chance to live in good quality, affordable and safe homes. They offer advice, information and support to people from new migrant, refugee and ethnic minority communities.
PAiH runs a free, confidential and impartial casework service for those facing poverty, homelessness, racism or poor housing. They also have a Hardship Fund and provide emergency shelter and practical resources for destitute asylum seekers and their families.

Childcare
As with many other client groups, finding appropriate childcare can be a barrier to employment. There can be issues about the cost and availability of childcare as well as difficulties finding the kind of childcare parents feel happy about.

Also, as with other client groups, some minority ethnic clients may not be used to using formal childcare providers and may instead prefer to rely on informal care given by family and friends. If this is no longer possible or it does not fit in with their requirements when the client starts work then there will be a need to find alternative childcare.

Employability services in Glasgow have taken a variety of approaches to increasing ethnic minority clients’ childcare options.

- They have worked with local mother and toddler groups to give information to parents about local childcare facilities.
- They have tried to offer a range of types of childcare support and to highlight the availability of a range of different providers.
- Another approach has been to source childcare where staff can speak community languages.
- They have worked with women from the communities to act as advocates for childcare to try to break down any issues of lack of trust with formal childcare services.

Key Points
1. Minority ethnic clients face many of the same barriers to work as other clients, but they can also face specific barriers such as discrimination which need to be addressed by employability services.
2. Discrimination is a key barrier. It is important to understand the dimensions of discrimination and know how it can affect entry into and progression in the labour market.
3. Other barriers that need to be addressed include limited understanding of the labour market, lack of fluency in English, poor health, housing issues and lack of childcare.
Section 6: Moving Clients into Work

Action Planning
Once barriers are identified action planning can take place to address barriers. Employability projects should have their own approaches to action planning but a useful template, developed by Bridges is available on the Employability website:


This action planning template incorporates:

- short and medium term goals;
- actions required;
- barriers and challenges;
- who or what can help achieve the goals;
- target date for action.

Action planning is a key element of Reach Community Health Project’s Skills Development Path Training Programme. Many of their clients who have been out of the labour market for some time, need assistance to develop their capacity to self manage their employability. This can include how to apply for jobs, interview skills, understanding how to develop their skills and take advantage of opportunities. This needs to be underpinned by an action plan that raises confidence and self belief. Following through on the action plan can be a way of developing self confidence as it helps clients to develop control over their life and increases motivation.

Employability Skills Development
As we’ve seen from earlier sections, some clients may need their employability skills developed because they have little experience of the labour market. Employment support programmes developed by Bridges such as Bridges Life Skills or Equipped for the Future help clients to develop these skills. Examples of the worksheets and tools used in these courses are available to access on the Employability in Scotland website. These help clients reflect on past experience, qualifications and life events which can be used to identify transferrable skills. Bridges also use the reflection toolkit mentioned above for employability skills development.

The links to these resources are given in the box below.
Vocational Training

Minority ethnic groups appear to be under-represented in some national training programmes and the national averages disguise wide variations in ethnic minority participation between areas in Scotland. Recent data from the Employability Fund shows that only around 2% of trainees are from minority ethnic groups although around 3.8% of the working age population are people from minority ethnic groups.

Possible reasons for under-representation include the higher proportion of minority ethnic young people entering higher or further education – meaning fewer are eligible for training programmes. Also, since the provision of Modern Apprenticeships is concentrated in industries and occupations where minority ethnic people are less likely to be employed, fewer are likely to participate in them.

Employability services can encourage clients to enter vocational programmes. Action can include the following.

- Addressing basic skills issues with clients.
- During advice and guidance sessions, making them aware of all of the options on education and training available and referring them where necessary.
- Supporting clients on education and training programmes.
- Monitoring progression on programmes and addressing any issues arising.

Some employability services have developed their own vocational training programmes targeted towards specific groups. Targeting can allow more work to support the specific barriers some groups may have. The example below shows how the programme was adapted to ensure Roma clients were able to achieve similar outcomes to other trainees.

The Govanhill Backcourt Initiative in Glasgow provides training and work experience in construction skills and horticulture. Trainees are with the project for 13 weeks during which they receive training, have work placements and one to one support to address any barriers.
to employment they may have. Around a third of the trainees are from the Roma community. During the project’s first phase outcomes for the Roma trainees were poorer than for other trainees, so a number of modifications to the programme were made to improve outcomes. These included dedicating two workers to work more intensively with the Roma participants as they required more support; providing more tailored ESOL support and working in partnership with Jobs & Business Glasgow which has a dedicated Roma employability service so that people were better prepared for joining the Initiative. As a result of these changes more Roma clients are going into and sustaining employment.

**Work Experience and Volunteering**

Work experience and volunteering can be a good way for people to develop employability skills when they have never been in the labour market or out of it for some time. An example is shown in the box below.

The **YCSA** in Glasgow works with minority ethnic young people aged 16-25. They link young people with employers to get voluntary and work experience. Many of the young people they work with have experienced discrimination and this has affected their confidence about looking for work. The placements help them to learn how to present themselves to employers and also develop work experience. They provide training for employers to help them better support the young people during the work experience. The training focuses on the benefits of taking on young people, sets out the business case for a diverse workforce and helps employers to see that it can be good for business.

It can be useful to explain the benefits of work placements or voluntary positions for clients if they have never taken part in placements before. Reach Community Health Project found some clients were not clear about the benefits of work experience and the project had to find ways of presenting the benefits of placements. This information could include:

- The purpose of the placement – as a way of developing an employability profile and gain a reference;
- expectations about the placement, from both the client’s and the employer’s perspectives around what each will gain from the placement;
- practical information such as the hours, who the client should report to, duties and skills to be developed during the placement.

Bridges Programmes have a guide to work placements which is available from Bridges [http://www.bridgesprogrammes.org.uk/](http://www.bridgesprogrammes.org.uk/)

**Employer Engagement**

Active employer engagement can be a successful way of assisting minority ethnic clients. Engagement activity involves:

- building sustainable relationships with employers;
- facilitating the creation of work placements,
- challenging negative employer perceptions of different client groups.
Employer engagement can be assisted by making the business case for a diverse workplace, which is now clearly established. Businesses which have a diverse workforce are more successful for a number of reasons:

- They are more competitive – they are more likely to have a wider customer base, to recognise potential new markets, to develop more tailored services and to recruit from the widest possible talent pool.
- They have better industrial relations – if they tackle discrimination they are likely to have other policies that support the workforce and encourage better relationships in the workplace. This means that they are likely to have better recruitment and retention, better staff morale, reduced absence and labour turnover. This, in turn means that they are likely to have higher levels of productivity.
- Finally, the public image of businesses is an increasingly important factor in securing markets and being competitive. If businesses have a more diverse workforce then they are likely to have a better public image.

However, employability services also need to recognise the economic realities faced by local employers and target industries where there are likely to be entry level jobs and demand for labour. Think about:

- Which jobs can people fill given pre-employment support?
- Which employers are likely to provide opportunities for advancement from entry level to a better job?

The example in the box below shows how employer engagement has proved to be an effective approach for one organisation working with minority ethnic clients.

Frae Fife have developed a network of contacts with private sector employers and voluntary organisations to organise work experience and volunteer placements for their clients. They also organise networking events with businesses to raise employers awareness of the barriers people from minority ethnic groups in the labour market face and how they can change their practice to increase applications from these groups. Frae Fife also offer in work support to clients and employers to help sustain employment. They feel this is a very important aspect of their work and aim to more of this in the future.

Job Search Support
There is evidence of less favourable recruitment of people from ethnic minority backgrounds. For example, one research project found employers favoured applicants with white names compared to Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Indian, Chinese and black Caribbean names at the job application stage. Greater use of standard job application forms can help to mitigate this. Employability practitioners need to be aware of the potential for this to happen.

Interviews can be particularly problematic as there is evidence that people from ethnic minority groups can be disadvantaged because of culturally-specific practices in interviews. This means that job interviews create a linguistic penalty that arises because candidates do not conform to interviewers’ expectations of how they should talk in interviews and many cultural assumptions are made while cultural differences are not taken into account.
This can be a problem for people whose first language is not English even if they are fluent. Interviewers expect people to be able to talk about the job, the qualities they will bring to it in much more complex ways than the job demands so that there is a gap between the communicative demands of the interview and the communicative requirements of the job. To be successful in an interview it is not sufficient to speak English well, the candidate must also be able to meet these expectations.

Employability projects need to prepare candidates for this and help clients perform well in interview. This needs to take more account of cultural factors – for example in some cultures, respect is shown through expressing humility – this can be hard to reconcile in an interview situation where the goal is to 'sell' yourself. Interviewees will need help around:

- the format of the interview;
- what kind of answers are valued, what kind of language needs to be used etc.
- presenting him or herself well;
- using the right kind of language expected in interviews;
- being able to pick up on the hidden assumptions of interviews and produce the answers the interviewer is looking for, yet not come across as too 'scripted'; and
- interacting well with the interviewer.

Further Information
Successful at Selection and FAQs is a useful DVD which covers the issues faced by ethnic minorities and which assists with preparation of people for interviews. It has been developed by King’s College London’s Department of Education and Professional Studies. Contact Melanie Cooke melanie.cooke@kcl.ac.uk for information about the DVD which can be copied.

In Work and After Care
People from ethnic minority groups can find it difficult to progress in the labour market and can be trapped in low wage jobs. There are different reasons for this including:

- unequal access to opportunities for development;
- not having enough information about training;
- prejudice and stereotyping; and
- under-recognition of skills and experience.

These factors can make it very difficult for people to progress in the labour market because they don’t have equal access to opportunities. People in this situation are also at risk of in-work poverty. Ethnicity can be a major disadvantage at recruitment, promotion, training and retention stages – with workplace culture affecting outcomes at all of these stages.

Much work focuses on making the business case for diversity. Much more needs to be done to tackle informal workplace custom that contributes to unfair practice. Employability projects may help through contacts and mediation with employers, because the support from the employer once a client has entered into employment is highly crucial. Support mechanisms within the workplace, such as mentoring, will help clients to sustain their employment, as well as support their progression.
For clients who need language support continued access to ESOL may help sustain employment. For some practice examples of workplace based learning see the ESOL Scotland website and also these specific case studies:


http://www.esolscotland.com/casestudies/First%20Bus%20Glasgow,%20UNITE&%20Adam%20Smith%20College.pdf

**Key Points**

1. Supporting minority ethnic clients to develop their skills and to access vocational training and work experience opportunities will all be helpful to move clients closer to work.
2. People from minority ethnic groups are underrepresented in vocational training and need to be made aware of these options.
3. Work experience can offer a useful way of developing work readiness.
4. Good employer engagement can help reduce discrimination.
5. In work support can help clients progress in the labour market.
Section 7: Further Information

Organisations
BEMIS (Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure Scotland) has a database of 500 Black and ethnic minority organisations and groups across Scotland which represent and provide services to ethnic minority communities. BEMIS will help projects identify and network with groups. Contact: mail@bemis.org.uk.


Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights http://crer.org.uk/

Specialist Employability Projects
Bridges Programmes www.bridgesprogrammes.org.uk
Frae Fife www.fraefife.com
Radiant and Brighter http://www.radiantandbrighter.com/
Reach Community Health Project http://www.reachhealth.org.uk/

Strategies


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**European Social Fund: Equality and Diversity Good Practice Guide: Ethnic Minority Communities**
http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/ethnic.pdf


Refugee Women’s Strategy Group (2011) **The Struggle to Contribute: A report identifying the barriers encountered by refugee women on their journey to employment in Scotland.**
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