1 Introduction and summary

The partners in CCP have put together coherent partnership approaches for both the supply (JUFJ) and the demand (JUFB) sides of the employability agenda. In particular CCP with the partners in Edinburgh has worked hard over the last 18 months to build an integrated and joined up business support service (JUFB) – and to attempt to do this in a way that connects the job opportunities being identified and created by businesses with the individual clients being helped through the strategic skills pipeline. The recent (June 2014) 18 month review workshop identified significant progress in integrating the different services around the needs of individual businesses.

The partners in Edinburgh are now keen to review and transform the way in which the supply and demand sides of the equation can work together to ensure that employers can get recruits from the strategic skills pipeline that meet their specific needs when they need them. In this way they will be able to support business growth and build trusted working relationships with local employers that will help them realise their employment potential.

The brief for this assignment identified some specific requirements in terms of:

- How to better meet the needs of employers
- How to increase providers’ knowledge of facilities and incentives to increase the appeal of clients
- How to help organisations to:
  - Better plan for known job opportunities and produce appropriate referrals.
  - Grow the capacity of job-ready clients at stage 3 and 4 to meet the anticipated demand
- How to establish a rapid response mechanism for urgent requests from businesses
- How to share knowledge and labour market evidence that will contribute towards effective planning of provision.

The task was therefore about identifying ways of...

- Enhancing insight and intelligence and improving the flow and use-ability of information about jobs and skills in terms of:
  - Current vacancies
  - Use-able forecasts
  - Longer terms trends and ‘grounding’
- Improving the planning of provision
- Enhancing the match between clients and employer requirements
- Improving the supply of job ready clients
- Raising service quality, reputation and responsiveness.
In other words, CCP wishes to put in place systems, approaches and behaviours that ensure that the work with clients is being fully informed and influenced by a clear appreciation of the current and emerging generic and specific needs of employers.

We focused on the following three questions:

- How can the partners gather and analyse insights and information from businesses about their current and emerging skill and recruitment needs?

- How can the partners help those working with clients make use of this intelligence so that clients (particularly at Stages 3 and 4) are helped to gain the skills (soft and technical) that are valued and required by businesses?

- How can the partners ensure a rapid response to businesses with a current need and ensure that a very high quality match can be made which builds trust and confidence in the service among businesses?

The partners behind JUFJ and JUFB have shown in their work to date that the process of getting to the answers, and the process of embedding new kinds of behaviours and relationships, provides a much more robust and sustainable and effective way forward. Our work therefore placed considerable emphasis on two workshops with all the partners to ensure that there was significant buy in to the actions we proposed.

At the heart of the review was the need to develop a clear understanding of the inter-relationship between the needs of employers, the provision of trainers and intermediaries, and the role of brokerage to match up people with training with jobs.

This is not simply about being demand led – it is about exploring the ways in which demand and supply intertwine in terms of:

- Continuous flows of intelligence and feedback between individual employers, groups and sectors of employers and those who develop skills, motivation and aptitude.

- An understanding of the leads and lags in the system and how to make sure they don’t lead to blockages in the flow of people into available jobs.

- An appreciation that employers want skills and aptitude and attitude, and that placement in work may just be the start of the story for many new recruits.
Some of the key features emerging from the current landscape that are relevant to this work are:

- A growing interest in workforce development and skills utilisation in the workplace and the contribution that this makes to productivity and GVA.

- Some radical thinking about work experience and how to work with employers to provide a range of opportunities (which may vary in length, intensity and timing) to meet the needs of employers and relate much more closely to the aspirations and skills of young people. This is likely to lead to a strong move away from the ‘one size fits all’ approaches of the past and the annual burden of finding employers to meet the requirement for all young people to be in a workplace at a particular time.

- The publication of the Final Report of the Wood Commission in July 2014 produced a far reaching agenda of action aimed at connecting the education and training of young people much more closely to the current and emerging needs of employers, and developing a much more significant strand of vocational training in work.

- An ever strengthening focus on demand led funding for skills. This means that there is a growing trend for money to go to employers to combine with their own funding when commissioning skills provision. Employers – particularly smaller employers - may need support to manage this kind of approach (as exemplified by the role of Intraining in Scotland). In England and Wales the Employer Ownership Pilots being managed through UKCES are at the leading edge of this approach.

- A stronger focus on sustainability and progression in work and therefore in the quality of the match and the level of the entry point into work. There is an emerging debate around good jobs/bad jobs and the extent to which economic development should focus on ‘good job’ creation with employability efforts not far behind. This has significant implications for integrated skills and employment approaches, perhaps suggesting a shift away from ‘work first’ approaches to more measured ‘better jobs later’ approaches. In other words some of the most effective welfare to work approaches helps people to raise their skills to a higher entry point in the labour market – one which is much more likely to provide them (and particularly young people) with sustained employment and a progressive career path.

- A growing appreciation that the needs of unemployed people may best be met by a clear focus on business growth and by building credibility with employers by ensuring that businesses get the service and support they need and don’t feel they are being ‘sold’ unemployed people – who may or may not be the best solution. This is leading some local partnerships (including Edinburgh) to embed their skills
and recruitment service within a wider business development service – so providing local businesses with a one stop shop – sometimes including related local authority services such as development control, building regulations and trading standards.

- Some of these themes came out strongly in the refresh of the Employability Framework for Scotland. Working for Growth placed a strong emphasis on joining up economic development, employability and skills, on enhancing work quality through skill development, and on maintaining the significance of local employability partnerships as the key vehicles for local delivery. The key national agencies, JCP and SDS, are strongly supportive of effective collaboration at the local level and there are some striking models of collaborative behaviour emerging.

- What all these approaches have in common is a strong partnership effort between employers, local authorities, third sector organisations, SDS, JCP and sometime private sector recruitment agencies. The way these partnerships are focused and structured and the way that their staff develop effective shared working practices and a ruthless focus on understanding and responding to the needs of employers is at the heart of their effectiveness.

- Finally, our recent report on micro-businesses and recruitment for the Federation of Small Businesses suggests that a local focus on business growth through recruitment can lead to the creation of significant numbers of jobs. Though this needs to be driven by business growth objectives and not welfare to work objectives the local employability partners can do much to help ensure that the proportion of these jobs which go to unemployed young people and others disadvantaged in the labour market is maximised.

Our work involved:

- Review of key documentation including the CEC Strategy for Jobs, Working for Growth, and the Interim and Final Wood Commission Reports

- In depth interviews with all the main stakeholders (see Appendix 1 for list of those interviewed)

- An interim note of findings, conclusions and recommendations and a workshop in March 2014 built around the main points of this note.

- A second workshop in May where we presented and discussed our main areas for action and a draft Action Plan.

- Production of a Draft Report for discussion with the client.
We have identified 8 areas for action and in the Action Plan on pages 3 to we set out the recommended tasks involved in taking forward each of these actions:

- **Early intervention**: ensuring young people get the intelligence, support and experience they need to make robust choices about their future.

- **Transforming the quality of intelligence about jobs and careers**: ensuring that all those entering the labour market, together with those who support and train them, have access to high quality insights into current and emerging recruitment and skill needs – and understand the way that employers are recruiting and selecting staff.

- **Transforming employer engagement**: ensuring that there is high awareness (among all businesses, but particularly the smaller end of SMEs) of the support available to recruit and help them be confident that a good match can be made with their requirements. This will enhance the number and range of opportunities available for those seeking work.

- **Extending the Academy approach**: ensuring that smaller businesses can gain more confidence to recruit by providing candidates with the right skills, attitudes and behaviours.

- **Using procurement to drive the employer focus**: linking financial reward to the satisfaction of employer and client with the quality of their experience. This will help to drive a strong employer and client centred approach.

- **Joining up commissioning and programme review**: ensuring a strongly collaborative approach to what is commissioned and how delivery is monitored and reviewed in the light of emerging demands.

- **Making sense of the Strategic Skills Pipeline**: strengthening the demand-led focus as people make progress through the Strategic Skills Pipeline.

This Final Report is built around these points. It is structured in the following way:

- Chapter 2 (page 6) explores what is meant by a match between supply and demand – at each scale (labour market, employer/sector, individual vacancy).

- Chapter 3 (page 10) describes the main areas for action.

- Chapter 4 (page 29) sets out the proposed Action Plan.
2 What is meant by a ‘good match’?

The task of ‘growing the supply to meet the demand’ needs to focus on ensuring that there is a close match between the supply of those seeking work – their skills, attitudes and behaviours – with the scale, nature (skills, attitudes) and timing of the demand for recruits. This task of matching supply to demand needs to happen at different scales:

- At the local labour market scale there needs to be the right balance in terms of the profile of those who can realistically apply for jobs and the numbers, types and levels of jobs across the different sectors and. In other words, the profile of those graduating from the strategic skills pipeline across Edinburgh should bear a close resemblance to the profile of opportunities across the different sectors of the economy. The profile of those seeking work should be dominated by those with the skills suitable for the sectors with the highest recruitment requirements. Some aspect of this balance will be easier than others:
  - There is a range of skills which are valued across a number of sectors (eg customer services skills) – some of these are almost pre-requisites and can be built into any support or training programme.
  - There are more sector specific skills which are realistic for those seeking work to have or to gain and will require more careful matching (eg through an ‘academy’ approach)
  - There are a range of technical and higher qualifications which may be realistic aspirations in the medium and longer term for some of those seeking work.

- At the scale of the individual employer – or related groups of employers – there is a profile of requirements over time, or a short term requirement, which can inform some specific matching work.

- At the scale of the specific vacancy there is a need to match the vacancy to the candidate and the candidate to the vacancy.

In this Chapter we consider the work needed to ensure appropriate action at each of these scales.
Local labour market

There are a number of sources of information and insight into current and emerging labour market needs (see the left hand side of Figure 2 on page 13). The main source of systematic information into trends and requirements in the Edinburgh labour market is the regular publications from Skills Development Scotland (SDS). These will be complemented at the regional level by the forthcoming Regional Skills Assessments which aim to provide an overview of current and emerging skill requirements which can be used to guide investment and intervention.

However, there is a wide range of informal insights and information held by those working with businesses in Edinburgh: these include staff from Business Gateway, City of Edinburgh Council (eg building standards, planning, Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Licenses and permits as well as economic development staff) and Scottish Enterprise, as well as the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses.

We explored with stakeholders the opportunity to draw on this wide range of information to create a more complete picture of current and emerging demand and later in this report we make recommendations about this.

Individual employer

There have been successful – and less successful – efforts in Edinburgh to work with individual employers, and groups of employers with similar requirements, and co-design training and development programmes that will provide them with recruits to meet their needs.

Later in this Report we consider the opportunities to extend this approach.

Specific vacancy

At the level of the individual vacancy a good match needs to take full account both of the needs of the employer and the needs of the individual recruit.

In Figure 1 overleaf we describe the range of features that need to be taken into account in terms of ensuring a good match – at the bottom of each column are the questions that need to be posed in seeking a close match. What the Figure shows is that the task of getting a good, robust match between an individual and a particular vacancy can take in a wide range of variables. The more of these that are considered, the more likely it is that the recruitment will be a success: the business will get a recruit who can contribute to business success, and the recruit will thrive.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interests and aptitudes</th>
<th>Motivation and aspirations</th>
<th>Technical skills and quals</th>
<th>Soft skills</th>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Preferred role (eg Belbin)</th>
<th>Stated requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do they enjoy doing?</td>
<td>What do they want to achieve?</td>
<td>Level</td>
<td>A positive attitude</td>
<td>What drives us?</td>
<td>Power culture</td>
<td>Plants</td>
<td>Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kind of things are they good at?</td>
<td>What do they want from work?</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>Day to day behaviours</td>
<td>Role culture</td>
<td>Resource Investigators</td>
<td>Tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needed from Day 1?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teamwork and communications</td>
<td></td>
<td>Task culture</td>
<td>Monitor Evaluators</td>
<td>Qualifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding the business</td>
<td></td>
<td>Person culture</td>
<td>Co-ordinators</td>
<td>Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thinking and solving problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Implementers</td>
<td>Competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Language skills and numeracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Completer Finishers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teamworkers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shapers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: The elements that make up a match between the needs of an employer and a recruit [Rocket Science]
Our discussions identified good examples of practical ways improving the quality of the match by helping individuals explore the labour market in the round and ensure that they were fully aware of the range of opportunities available when making decisions about their future and applying for specific vacancies. This is likely to enhance the quality and sustainability of any subsequent match with a vacancy:

- Edinburgh College have found that a two week programme of encouraging students to broaden out their perceptions and aspirations has helped them move into the job market more quickly by widening their job search options.

- The Routes to Market project developed by WEACT is a kind of ‘finishing school’ – it is designed for clients at Stage 4 of the Strategic Skills Pipeline and focuses on:
  
  o Broadening clients’ horizons about the kind of jobs out there, and which ones might fit with their skills, aptitudes and interests.

  o Helping clients with online application process and interviews (some of which are now by skype).

Our discussions around action at the different operational scales have helped us identify some specific areas for action which are described in the next Chapter.
3 An agenda for action

Our discussions with stakeholders identified an appetite for change based on the evidence of what is working and what is creating issues. On the basis of these discussions we have identified the following seven areas for action:

1 *Early intervention*: ensuring young people get the intelligence, support and experience they need to make robust choices about their future.

2 *Transforming the quality of intelligence about jobs and careers*: ensuring that all those entering the labour market, together with those who support and train them, have access to high quality insights into current and emerging recruitment and skill needs – and understand the way that employers are recruiting and selecting staff.

3 *Transforming employer engagement*: ensuring that there is high awareness (among all businesses, but particularly the smaller end of SMEs) of the support available to recruit and help them be confident that a good match can be made with their requirements. This will enhance the number and range of opportunities available for those seeking work.

4 *Extending the Academy approach*: ensuring that smaller businesses can gain more confidence to recruit by providing candidates with the right skills, attitudes and behaviours.

5 *Using procurement to drive the employer focus*: linking financial reward to the satisfaction of employer and client with the quality of their experience. This will help to drive a strong employer and client centred approach.

6 *Joining up commissioning and programme review*: ensuring a strongly collaborative approach to what is commissioned and how delivery is monitored and reviewed in the light of emerging demands.

7 *Making sense of the Strategic Skills Pipeline*: strengthening the demand-led focus as people make progress through the Strategic Skills Pipeline.

In the rest of this Chapter we consider each of these areas for action in more detail.
1 Early intervention

The quality of the match starts in schools: if young people at school don’t have the opportunity to come to an understanding of their interests, aptitudes and aspirations and where these may find a match in roles at work, this is likely to lead to problems later in terms of thriving in a job and developing a career. There is a lot of evidence that suggests that many pupils are not making well-informed choices about training or work and this is showing up in drop-out rates at FE (particularly noticeable in those groups who would in better times go straight into work) and in drop-out rates from work. This is underlined by the findings and recommendations of the Wood Commission.

Although developing recommendations about how to enhance pupils understanding of opportunities appropriate to them and how to pursue them is outside the scope of our work, the Wood Commission provides an opportunity to take forward a range of actions to pupils gain a wider sense of opportunities and hence a better match between their career choice/next step and their interests and aptitudes. The Wood Commission recommendations also involve a further blurring of the boundary between school and FE and between school and work – both of which will help young people manage these transitions more successfully.

2 Transforming the quality of intelligence about jobs and careers

At the heart of the process of matching supply with demand lies the quality of the intelligence about current and emerging jobs and careers. So the partners need to be confident that there are processes and systems in place to ensure the provision of complete, up to date and highly accessible information about labour market opportunities over the medium and long term for all those seeking work and those helping them to do so – including pupils, teachers, parents and providers.

As discussed above, there is a wide range of sources and people who are able to provide insights and information about the current and emerging needs of employers (Figure 2 on page 13). This involves insights from analysis, surveys and direct engagement with employers.

Similarly, providers use a wide range of sources focusing on current vacancies: employer engagement staff, websites, newspapers, JUFJ, email exchange with other local providers (Appendix 3 on page 38). In our discussions they expressed a desire to have reliable insights into emerging demand (either replacement or new jobs):

‘Our focus is on the here and now – I would like to know more about the future and reliable needs’

The different sources of information are described graphically in Figure 2 on page 13.
Our discussions have identified the simplest and most robust way of developing a useable synthesis of this range of information would be to create an annual ‘labour market issues and trends’ workshop for all those working with employers (ie all those in the box on the right of Figure 2).

The purpose of this workshop would not be to replicate the information already available from SDS but to complement and build on it by drawing on local employer perspectives and identifying key trends and current and emerging needs and issues in terms of skills and recruitment. In other words the focus would be on teasing out those aspects of the intelligence that need to be taken account of in fashioning practical responses, both in terms of training focus, content and balance and also the ways in which employers are recruiting, which may require responses in terms of tracking down, applying for and interviewing for jobs.

It would be worth considering intelligence and insight at three levels:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short term (now)</th>
<th>Medium term (up to 24 months)</th>
<th>Long term (beyond 24 months)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current vacancies</td>
<td>What is likely to be available in the foreseeable future</td>
<td>Some may be reliable (eg major construction project leading to occupier roles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What might appeal to known employers (latent vacancies)</td>
<td>Can use with clients at earlier stages in the pipeline</td>
<td>Much will not be reliable and difficult to act on or plan for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to help employers be as clear and specific as possible – and follow this through to the application process</td>
<td>Can use to help clients with shorter term choices if they want to see some longer term development opportunities</td>
<td>BUT invaluable for identifying the kind of ‘grounding’ that recruits will need in the long term</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The introduction of Career Academies to Edinburgh should make a difference to the awareness of school pupils of the range of opportunities available and the partners should ensure that they are aware of progress on this in terms of which employers are working with which schools.
**ENHANCING INTELLIGENCE**

- **SDS LMI**
- **CEC/SDI Inward Investment Planning**
- **Regional Skills Assessment**
- **CoC Skills Pulse**
- **Skills Investment Plan**
- **JCP Vacancies**

**Synopsis**

**Patterns and trends**
(skills, jobs, recruitment)

**Useable Insights**
for young people, teachers, parents, providers, trainers

**Contribution to Review of Provision**

- Refining match of supply to demand

**Insights from working with businesses**

- JCP
- SDS
- BG
- SE
- CEC Econ. Dev
- Providers
- Edinburgh College

**Figure 2**: Sources of job, skills and recruitment information and how these can be synthesised and converted into useable intelligence
As suggested by Figure 2 it will be important to ensure a strong link with My World of Work as it is the main promoted source of insight and intelligence on jobs and careers for young people.

Figure 2 also presents the significance of using the synthesis to review training provision. This is dealt with specifically later in this Chapter (section 6 page 25).

The format and structure of the workshop will need to be carefully designed to ensure that it is an effective and efficient way of identifying useable intelligence.

The information and insights that will flow from a combination of a synthesis of existing information and the additional insights from those working with businesses need to contribute to and build on some reasonable expectations of both employers and individual clients. So, when constructing this clear picture of demand it is reasonable to expect employers to:

- Be clear about a vacancy in terms of job description and person specification
- Be consistent with this in terms of application process and criteria
- Have a thorough induction process
- Train new recruits in their processes, systems and equipment
- Invest in the further development of skills.

Many employers – particularly smaller employers – may need help to ensure that they have this kind of approach in place. Where it is not in place there is a significant threat to the quality of the experience of a new recruit and their ability to thrive at work.

And it is reasonable to expect clients – with the support of the relevant service – to:

- Be aware of the full range of opportunities so that they are making fully informed choices
- Understand the skills and attitudes needed for each
- Have a strong awareness of their interests/aptitudes, aspiration and ambition
- Display determination and persistence in pursuing their chosen future
- Have developed habits and routines that will help them thrive in work.

When these two sets of expectations are in place the elements of a match between supply and demand are being developed.

**ACTION PLAN: Page 30**
3 Transforming employer engagement

There is scope for some radical thinking about employer engagement. Given the competitive nature of the market, outreach to employers is likely to remain un-coordinated and some employers (particularly the larger ones) may continue to experience a range of approaches with a confusing array of offers. This can be frustrating for employers but it is also inefficient for providers: most of the time there is not an immediate need for recruits by the businesses being contacted so much of the effort may not be well-targeted. There is a shortage of data in this area. Although employer surveys do show consistently that many employers perceive a confusing array of offers and want a clear and obvious place to go for support, there is no evidence we are aware of that reveals the ‘hit rate’ of those contacting employers, or the number of apparently appropriate contacts that turn into successful service delivery.

An alternative approach to this would be to turn this approach on its head and create an obvious high profile contact point for recruitment and skills, underpinned by a very high quality service and assured recruits. In other words employers are helped to find their way to the service when they have a specific need rather than being approached by a range of organisations at all sorts of times. Such an approach would have the primary aim of reaching out to employers who had not been reached by other efforts – notably smaller employers. Others – particularly larger employers – may have relationships with providers or intermediaries that they are happy with and it would be important that the approach did not cut across these existing relationships.

There are a number of advantages to this approach:

- It would help those smaller businesses who recruit only occasionally to be clearer about where to go – and provide the partners with the confidence that this contact would lead to a rapid and accurate assessment and referral.
- It would allow employer engagement to focus on needs, issues and solutions rather than ‘selling’ specific services or clients.
- It would be more efficient in terms of resources – in other words the focus will be on attracting approaches by employers with needs rather than extensive outreach which is very expensive in terms of time and which involves contacting large number of employers, many of whom do not have current needs.
- It would reduce the range of contacts that some employers experience.
For this approach to work it would need to have four components:

- A clearly identified and highly accessible **single point of contact** for employers seeking recruits – so that partners can guide employers towards the offer rather than expending the considerable effort and cost of going out to them. The set up costs, management and promotion of this single point of contact would need to be funded but it would probably be possible to fund at least part of this from the savings achieved by reducing the scale of face to face outreach to employers. The main objective of this approach would be to extend the reach of services to the large numbers of smaller SMEs that currently are not using the services. So the focus would be on businesses which are not in existing relationships with providers or intermediaries. This means that the approach would explicitly not cut across the range of relationships that currently existing between providers and (mainly larger) employers.

This recommendation has a number of practical implications:

- It will be important to use a brand which is appropriate and does not add to confusion. Since Business Gateway is the national service for smaller businesses it would make sense to build on this brand in Edinburgh – and extend the range of issues with which their telephone service can respond comfortably. Despite being a national service the partners should explore with BG the scope for doing this on a local basis.

- The brief for such a service needs to be clear and focused. In contrast to the Single Point of Contact in Fife for example (which is commissioned from a private call centre at significant cost) the Edinburgh version is not expected to engage directly with individual clients, or build up a sophisticated database and Q and A system. As a corollary the costs would be significantly less.

- The response would need to be of high quality in terms of an ability to assess quickly the actual needs of the caller and ensure an accurate referral.

- **A high quality, responsive service** which focuses on working with employers to clarify and articulate their requirements and ensure that employers are being provided with a high quality match to meet their needs. The approach should also be able to accommodate those (mainly larger) employers who are keen to support the recruitment of those currently unemployed because it forms part of their Corporate Social Responsibility commitment. These employers may not require an exact match – their CSR commitment means that they are able and willing to ‘meet clients half way’ – so they are able to provide part of the development and support process for those who may not yet be ‘job ready’.
• **Creating a ‘Candidate Group’ from which these recruits will be selected.**  
There appears to be a distinction between the ability to supply a good match (ie someone who can do the job from day 1) and the ability of a good recruit to get through the selection process. This is being exacerbated by the shift to on-line applications and many suitable candidates are not able to manage this without help. More generally this highlights the issue of digital literacy – not just about applications but the use of search engines for vacancies and the use of Universal Job Match and, in due course, Universal Credit.

A clear trend has been reported that employers are placing more emphasis on soft skills and interviews are tending to focus more on asking candidates for evidence (ie stories) of situations where they have used the desired soft skills to good effect. Many candidates struggle with this.

In addition there is strong evidence that even when the match between individual and job seems strong some recruits find it difficult to manage the first few weeks in a job and this leads to some clients dropping out during these first few weeks. This has led to the development of some approaches such as ‘Talk don’t Walk’ which encourage clients to seek support rather than dropping out.

The proposed response to the need to help clients who are job ready to get the job and then thrive in the early weeks is to develop a **commonly owned assessment or progress centre** which all CCP related providers use as a way of ensuring that candidates for jobs are both work and job ready and will be effective ambassadors for other clients.

This centre would display a number of features:

- It would be independent of providers – and provide a less familiar setting for candidates. In other words it would provide an experience more like the one that candidates will be exposed to when they go for an interview or selection process.

- It would draw on the latest insights from employers about how they recruit – for example helping clients become more prepared for competency based interviews or ‘assessment centre’ approaches – to provide candidates with the ability to perform more confidently.
It would focus on three tasks:

- Ensuring that clients are work ready and job ready
- Helping clients to perform more confidently during the recruitment process
- Helping clients gain the insights they need to survive and make a success of their early weeks in work – so reducing drop out. This could include: the skills needed to work well with Supervisors, how to integrate successfully into an existing team, and how to help clients find their way up the steep learning curve of how a particular business works.

The centre would be responsible for helping clients gain these final detailed skills to gain and thrive in work – but the financial benefit from any placements would accrue to the referring provider.

The cost of this assessment centre would need to be covered by top slicing existing funding. An expected outcome would be that employer experience would improve by providing a close and rapid match, service reputation would rise and more clients would find work. This would not be mandatory for clients – for example they clearly would not be stopped from applying for jobs. The experience of Ingeus (who have rolled out this approach for Work Programme clients) is that clients welcome the opportunity to polish up their presentational and interview skills, gain feedback on their readiness, and – where they are not thought ready for referral to employers – are able to agree a short, focused development process to get them to readiness. The process seems to enhance their confidence in going into the recruitment process and increases the success rate.

- Ensuring a *wrap around* service is offered when employers are able and willing to *meet clients half way* and take less work ready clients. These employers will be doing this to achieve some corporate social responsibility objectives (typically larger businesses) or because of the commitment of the owner (typically a community based SME).

There are two further ways in which direct engagement with employers can support the development of a strong match between supply and demand:

- Work experience is seen by many of those we talked to as a powerful way of helping clients:
  - Test their expectations and preferences
  - Develop work routines and in work skills.
We have not explored the current scale and availability of work experience but it could form an integral part of a more substantial employer engagement approach.

- The lack of joined up work around volunteering was mentioned by a small number of those we interviewed. Again, the research evidence shows that when volunteering is done well (ie there is a good match between the aspirations of a client and the placement and there is a supportive environment), volunteering can play an effective role in helping some clients make progress into work. Again, we have not explored the current scale and nature of volunteering as an option for employability clients and this may be an area which JUFJ may wish to explore in more detail.

**ACTION PLANS: Page 31 and 32**
4 Extending the Academy approach

When the ‘Academy approach’ is done well it produces strong results. From our interviews there seem to be four factors which influence the success of these approaches:

- A genuine co-design process between training providers and employers which provides the employers with recruits who have the skills, attitudes and behaviours that they value.

- Working with employers who are able to provide long term opportunities and high quality support when the job starts.

- Careful selection of candidates for the training programme to ensure that the jobs provide a good match with their aptitudes and requirements, they have a realistic appreciation of what the jobs will involve, and that they display a commitment to make a success of their future in the role.

- Follow through by the training provider after recruits start work to ensure that any ‘teething problems’ are dealt with effectively and that wherever possible there is a development route to higher skills and more secure and higher paid work.

There appears to be scope to experiment with the Academy approach in two new areas: employability skills (‘soft skills’) and skills for micro-businesses.

Both these should be co-designed with employers and employer representatives and can build on a lot of work already done on the skills valued by employers (eg by SDS for the Certificate of Work Readiness or Fife Council for the Fife Employer Standard) and the FSB work on ‘Micros Untapped’.

There will be an important difference between the proposed Employability Academy and The Micro-business Academy: they create generic skills for a wide range of businesses rather than for a specific business. So, while it will be important to co-design both Academies with employers they may not be the employers who are in a position to recruit at the end of the Academy process (either because they have already recruited or their specific needs have moved on).

---

1 Federation of Small Businesses: Micros Untapped: Realising the employment potential of micro-businesses. Rocket Science 2013
The kind of candidates for whom these Academies are appropriate for will also need to be thought through carefully:

- For the Employability Skills Academy, clients who need stronger soft skills will benefit.
- For the Micro-Business Academy, it will be important that clients want to work for a micro-business and recognise the different kind of experience that such a business offers in terms of a wider range of experience, a higher level of responsibility, the need to be highly responsive and flexible, the significance of working successfully in a small team, and the likelihood of direct customer engagement from an early stage. Figure 3 shows the significance of such an approach in terms of the numbers of businesses in the micro-business group (we estimate that there are roughly 30,000 micro-businesses in Edinburgh).

**EXTENDING THE “ACADEMY APPROACH”**

- Soft skills
- Significance of role
- Flexibility / responsiveness

**Figure 3:** *Creating a Micro-Business Academy – the significance of the market*

Figure 4 (overleaf) places the actions described so far in context:

- The Academy approach involves co-designing bespoke preparation and training of clients with employers to meet their specific needs.
The Assessment Centre (Progress Centre) for work ready candidates helps to ensure that all candidates presented by the partnership for vacancies are job ready, are able to perform confidently in recruitment processes and have the skills and insights to manage their first few weeks in work.

The CSR approach means that where (mainly larger) employers feel able to meet clients half way there is a way of ensuring that these opportunities are open to those who can most benefit from employer based support.

**ENHANCING THE FINAL MATCH**

"ACADEMY APPROACH"
Co-designed with specific employers

"ASSESSMENT CENTRE"
- Independent
- Work-like environment
- Competency based interviews
- Managing the early weeks in a job
- Presentation
- “Quality assured” clients
- Feedback and follow up support

"CSR APPROACH"
Employers meeting clients halfway

**Figure 4**: The Academy approach in context

**ACTION PLAN**: Page 33
5 Using procurement to drive the employer focus

The way in which the procurement of support for those seeking work is structured can drive an effective match between supply and demand. In other words, if the partners wish to create a stronger service focus on meeting employers needs more exactly then part of the service payment needs to be related to this – that is, to the satisfaction of employers with the quality of the match between recruit and their needs.

The most effective way of doing this to attach part of the funding to employer feedback about the quality and responsiveness of the service experienced and the quality of the match between candidates/recruit and the employer’s specific recruitment needs.

There is currently no form of systematic feedback from employers to check on the satisfaction with recruits and any aspect of the match that would help improve the matching process. However, there are some limited informal feedback systems – and ‘repeat business’ can be a good indicator of satisfaction.

Given the strong commitment of providers to a client-focused service – and the need to ensure the tailoring of the support experience to individual needs and situation – it will be important to balance this focus on meeting employers’ needs with a focus on meeting client needs. So part of the payment should be related to client experience.

These two specific aspects of feedback could be usefully complemented by a third which would provide insights into the awareness of the overall service, namely, a sample survey of employers. This means that the structure of a feedback system would look like that set out in Figure 5 overleaf. It would be made up of:

- A sample of the whole population (orange) focusing on awareness of support, sources of support used and employers experience of using them

- A full survey of those using Hub services (green), focusing on service quality and responsiveness, and the quality of the match between recruit(s) and need

- A sample of individual clients (purple) focusing on the quality and responsiveness of the support they have received and perceptions of the difference it has made to them.

The last two of these would be linked to contract payment, together (as now) with placement in work and subsequent sustainability of work.
This means that contract payments would have three components:

- Work placement and sustainability
- Employer satisfaction
- Satisfaction of individual clients.

**MANAGING THE SERVICE & DRIVING THE MATCH**

*Overall population: awareness of support; sources used; experience*

*Using Joined Up For Jobs providers: service quality, responsiveness, and quality of match*

*Service quality, responsiveness and impact*

**Figure 5:** The components of a systematic feedback process.

In implementing this approach the following factors need to be taken into account:

- The sample of both employers and individual clients needs to be large enough to produce an accurate view of service quality. In Edinburgh this will mean that it could only be used for the Hub contract.
There needs to be a process of careful collaborative design to ensure that the approach is structured in a way that drives appropriate employer focused behaviours. The main questions to be considered are:

- What proportion of income should be related to employer and client feedback?
- What should feedback seek to capture and how will it be collected?
- What are good and simple indicators of experience that could be easily gathered and used (e.g., satisfaction ratings)?
- Who would collect feedback?

**ACTION PLAN: Page 34**

6 Joining up commissioning and programme review

There are five main sources of funding for employability related provision in Edinburgh:

- Local Authority and EU funding in the form of the Hubs contract and Challenge funding to c30 local providers
- SDS Employability Fund (EF)
- DWP Flexible Support Fund (DWP)
- DWP funding of Work Programme (through the two Prime Contractors: Ingeus and Working Links)
- SFC funding of Edinburgh College provision.

There is currently an issue about the different annual timing of procurement by different organisations and specifically in terms of aligning Challenge funding, Employability Fund and FSF – all of which are funded on a year to year basis or even more flexibly in the case of FSF.

In some specific areas there are specialist groupings which help to align supply to demand – for example, the Home Care Steering Group appears to be a valuable employer focus group helping to refine provision and there may be scope to extend this to other areas of high job growth.
The alignment of commissioning and review is clearly relevant to the alignment of supply and demand across Edinburgh both in terms of ensuring that between them these sources of funding are putting together provision which meets need – but also in terms of being responsive to new or emerging need during each financial year. It would therefore make sense for the partners to ensure that they have done everything possible to align their annual funding around jointly agreed demand – and to review delivery against demand throughout the year. In terms of the latter our discussions have suggested that it would be possible to convert the EF monitoring meetings into a wider review of EF/Challenge/FSF so that any emerging needs can be responded to in a collaborative way and the flexibilities available to each fund by fully used.

Figure 6 below presents the way in which this could work by drawing on the intent of each, that is:

- EF focus on Strategic Skills Pipeline stages 2, 3 and 4
- Challenge funding focus on ensuring a ‘wrap around’ service
- FSF focus on responding to specific short term requirements and filling gaps that others might find hard to fill.

**ALIGNING / REFINING**

**Figure 6:** aligning and reviewing short term funding to strengthen the demand led approach

**ACTION PLAN: Page 35**
7 Making sense of the Strategic Skills Pipeline

The Strategic Skills Pipeline forms an important framework for the commissioning of support and training. However, our discussions have confirmed that the extent to which each stage is ‘demand led’ changes (ie strengthens) as clients move along the pipeline.

Figure 7 overleaf presents this graphically and shows:

- During stages 1 and 2 the emphasis is on understanding and helping clients with the barriers they face – often dealing with aspects of their situation that they need to deal with and/or manage before it is realistic for them to start moving towards work – this could include dealing with debt, addiction, housing, or a medical condition. During stages 1 and 2 many clients will need support from social services, housing, health or some form of money advice. While they may be on a route to work the focus will therefore be dealing with barriers that will prevent successful progress and the support will not be informed to any great extent by detailed intelligence on the opportunities available.

- During stages 3, 4 and 5 this focus changes significantly, with a growing focus on particular types of work and sectors and (in 4 and 5) on particular jobs and vacancies. So it is during these stages that the match between skills, attitudes and behaviours with the needs of employers becomes of fundamental significance in terms of ensuring a successful transition to and through work.

ACTION PLAN: Page 36
Figure 7: How the connection between the support task and demand strengthens through the SSP
4 Action Plan

In the following pages we present a detailed action plan to take forward the actions discussed in Chapter 3.

This Action Plan has been produced by developing a draft and then devoting time at the second of our stakeholder workshops to refining this draft.

The Action Plan is structured in a similar way to Chapter 3 and is presented in the following sections:

1 Early intervention
2 Transforming the quality of intelligence about jobs and careers
3 Transforming employer engagement
   • Active promotion of single point of contact to penetrate currently unreached markets particularly at lower end of SME market
   • Enhancing the quality of the final match
4 Extending the Academy approach:
   • Pilot Micro-business and Core Skills Academies
5 Using procurement to drive the employer focus
6 Joining up commissioning and programme review
7 Making sense of the Strategic Skills Pipeline.
# CCP: Growing the Supply to Meet the Demand

## 1 EARLY INTERVENTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Involving</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taking forward the recommendations of the Wood Commission Final Report (outside the remit of this assignment)</td>
<td>CEC/SDS</td>
<td>Schools, employers, Careers Academies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

## 2 TRANSFORMING THE QUALITY OF INTELLIGENCE ABOUT JOBS AND CAREERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Lead</th>
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<th>Timescale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draw on Regional Skills Assessment and other information (eg Inward Investment tracker) to identify significant areas of current and growing demand and gaps and appropriate response</td>
<td>SDS</td>
<td>Providers of regular systematic information on vacancies and skills – SDS, CEC, JCP</td>
<td>Following publication of RSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather information from businesses and networks by using short standard questions about current and emerging needs: Identify 2 or 3 key questions for all to ask; Draw on this during annual workshop</td>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>All those working with businesses: SDS; JUFJ providers; Business Gateway</td>
<td>Start by Oct 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organise initial workshop for all those working with businesses to identify current and emerging needs (recruitment and skills) and trends in recruitment processes and identify responses</td>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>Training providers, Edinburgh College, City of Edinburgh Council services, JCP, SDS, Business Gateway, FSB, CoC, Working Links, Ingeus JUFJ providers (with EE focus)</td>
<td>Following first LEP and JU4B review before second LEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce and disseminate information in forms and media appropriate for different audiences, including training providers, Edinburgh College, Ingeus, Working Links, pupils and parents/carers/support workers, teachers, training providers, MWOW.</td>
<td>CEC</td>
<td>Training providers, Edinburgh College, City of Edinburgh Council services, JCP, SDS, Business Gateway, FSB, CoC, Schools, Working Links, Ingeus</td>
<td>By December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organise follow up annual events</td>
<td>CCP JU4B SG</td>
<td>Training providers, Edinburgh College, City of Edinburgh Council services, JCP, SDS, Business Gateway, FSB, CoC, Working Links, Ingeus All JUFJ (EE focused providers)</td>
<td>Every September</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 3 TRANSFORMING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT: PENETRATING THE SME MARKET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Involving</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draw on single point of contact experience elsewhere to understand practical implications, resource needs and implications for creating a well promoted single point of contact in Edinburgh for SME market seeking full range of business advice including recruitment.</td>
<td>CCP and BG</td>
<td>CCP, JCP, SDS, BG, Edinburgh College CEC providers; CEC</td>
<td>By December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build on Business Gateway brand and ensure resources available to add recruitment/skills support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with BG and SDS to identify scope and practical implications of greater promotion of BG as the single point of contact for SME needs including skills development and recruitment issues, together with appropriate links to ‘Our Skillsforce’</td>
<td>BG with SDS</td>
<td>CCP, JCP, SDS, BG, Edinburgh College</td>
<td>By December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build, over time, a shared, clean and up to date database of employers in Edinburgh</td>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>CCP, JCP, SDS, BG, Edinburgh College</td>
<td>Progressive, starting December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with BG to create effective and up to date referral information around skills and recruitment</td>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>CCP, JCP, SDS, BG, Edinburgh College</td>
<td>By December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft launch</td>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>CCP, JCP, SDS, BG, Edinburgh College</td>
<td>By May 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with SME contacts to promote awareness – especially small business accountants and solicitors</td>
<td>BG, All</td>
<td>CCP, FSB, CoC, all JU4B partners</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3 TRANSFORMING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT: ENHANCING THE FINAL MATCH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Lead</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explore local learning from Ingeus Candidate Pool approach, progress centre, Pitch it Perfect, Routes to Market</td>
<td>CEC with Hubs</td>
<td>JCP, Hubs, Ingeus, CCP</td>
<td>By December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop agreed pilot model and content for shared ‘Progress Centre’ for clients who are considered ready for work together with referral and follow up procedures</td>
<td>CEC</td>
<td>JCP, SDS, BG, Edinburgh College, Hubs, CCP</td>
<td>By December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree possible referrals from Hub, SDS EF, JCP FSF providers and how this can be done within National models Assess volumes / capacity; Lead in time; appropriate payment model (ie not on outcomes, which will accrue to Hubs)</td>
<td>CCP working with providers Contract managers</td>
<td>SDS, JCP, providers</td>
<td>By December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source appropriate location(s) for pilot (one place?) FKRSC; St James Centre Hubs; St Andrew Square?</td>
<td>CEC JU4B SG</td>
<td>Provider delivering centre Business</td>
<td>By Dec 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify source of funding and commission independent pilot service with appropriate control group</td>
<td>CCP/CEC</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jan 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review and decide on expansion/continuation, based on results</td>
<td>CCP/CEC</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw on Progress Centre completers to provide rapid response to needs as required</td>
<td>Providers</td>
<td></td>
<td>During 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 4 EXTENDING THE ACADEMY APPROACH: Micro-business and Core Skills Academies

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work with FSB to identify small development group of microbusinesses who are planning to recruit or have recently recruited</td>
<td>LEP or JU4B</td>
<td>FSB BG JU4B CoC</td>
<td>By end December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parallel development of Core Skills academy (involving STUC, Hubs)? Draw on existing research to identify key soft skill needs of employers and convert into Academy process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw on group and Micros Untapped and other research to identify appropriate content</td>
<td>JU4B</td>
<td>FSB BG, SDS, All JU4B, CoC</td>
<td>By end Dec 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission pilots for both Micro-business Academy and Core Skills Academy</td>
<td>CCP</td>
<td></td>
<td>By March 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate and refine</td>
<td>CCP</td>
<td></td>
<td>May 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 5 USING PROCUREMENT TO DRIVE THE EMPLOYER FOCUS

<table>
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<th>Task</th>
<th>Lead</th>
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<th>Timescale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review currently planned employer feedback process when completed for lessons for more regular and systematic feedback</td>
<td>PDG</td>
<td>JCP/JU4B/CCP/JCP</td>
<td>Autumn 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop practical approach to regular feedback both from general population (sample) and employers engaged with service (75%?) Take account of difficulties in getting feedback returned; Questionnaires: national services / local services; Mechanics?</td>
<td>PDG</td>
<td>JU4B/CCP/JCP</td>
<td>Autumn 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design ways in which this can play into service refinement Employer engagement standard</td>
<td>PDG</td>
<td>Caselink providers/CCP/JCP</td>
<td>Autumn 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with providers to develop procurement approach and appropriate balance of funding related to different aspects of performance EE Feedback to LEP – impact on funding; Risk discussed with smaller providers Needs to have system of employer engagement providers are confident with; As per ITT/charter?</td>
<td>CCP working with providers</td>
<td>Contract managers...identifying relevant providers – focus on stage 3+</td>
<td>Spring 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embed in new tendering requirements. Needs to have system of employer engagement providers are confident with.</td>
<td>CCP</td>
<td></td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# 6 JOINING UP COMMISSIONING AND PROGRAMME REVIEW

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Lead</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partners work together to identify ways of working within national and local requirements to further enhance aligned commissioning and procurement of demand driven provision – in terms of both the <strong>timing and content of commissioning</strong> (to improve the complementary use of funding to meet needs in the round)</td>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>CCP, SDS, JCP</td>
<td>Summer 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners work together to identify ways of developing a practical approach to regular <strong>joint review of provision and match</strong> with current and emerging requirements – extending the brief of the current EF review meetings to cover all shorter term funding</td>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>CCP, SDS, JCP</td>
<td>Autumn 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement and review</td>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>CCP, SDS, JCP</td>
<td>Autumn 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 7 MAKING SENSE OF THE STRATEGIC SKILLS PIPELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Lead</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarify the distinction between Stages 1 and 2 and Stages 3 – 4 and the role of demand led intelligence during these.</td>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>Providers</td>
<td>By Dec 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help clients to see their graduation from Stage 2 to 3 as a significant progress milestone and celebrate this.</td>
<td>Providers</td>
<td></td>
<td>By Dec 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 1: Stakeholder interviews

We interviewed the following stakeholders:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhona McLinden, Iain Rorke, Jenny Ewing, Kate Kelman</td>
<td>Capital City Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Fenwick, Brian Martin, Jim Galloway</td>
<td>City of Edinburgh Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Harkins</td>
<td>Business Gateway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant MacDougall, Patricia Thomson, Brian Hermiston, Sam Kemp</td>
<td>Skills Development Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim McGonigle, Ken Bramham, Jim Mulholland, Callum Grigor and Julie Marshall</td>
<td>DWP (Jobcentre Plus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon Henderson</td>
<td>Federation of Small Businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Robertson</td>
<td>Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janine Botfield</td>
<td>Women onto Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Biggerstaff</td>
<td>Ingeus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Thompson</td>
<td>The Volunteer Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaby Nolan, Sandi McGeoch</td>
<td>Cyrenians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Penman</td>
<td>WEACT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon Earp</td>
<td>Edinburgh College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan McLaughlin</td>
<td>Forth Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigel Green</td>
<td>Community Renewal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John McGranachan</td>
<td>Remploy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Stakeholder topic guide

- Explore current role – in terms of what aspects of the strategic skills pipeline they are committed to providing (i.e., taking an unemployed client from stage ½ to 4/5 or just part of strategic skills pipeline? 

- What sources of information and insight do you use to guide your provision?

- How good is this information: does it provide you with what you need to ensure your clients are getting support and training (both soft and technical skills and CV and interview skills) that will help them find and make progress in work:
  - Jobs available now
  - Jobs in foreseeable future
  - Longer term generic requirements linked to job growth and replacement.

- What other aspects of information and intelligence about employer requirements or recruitment processes would be helpful for you?

- What other sources do you use to identify vacancies?

- What direct engagement do you have with employers:
  - Is this a long term working relationship? If so, how does it work?
  - Do others work with these employers? Is this a problem?

- What do you do when you can’t provide a great match with an employer’s needs, for example:
  - Talk to them about a less good match and the kind of support you can provide to bridge the gap?
  - Pass the opportunity on to a partner who may be able to fill it with their clients?

- What do you do to ensure that when you introduce a client to an employer is it a good match? What could help this match be even better?

  *This might include some final support/training related to the precise needs of a specific employer for a specific role*

- How do you follow up to ensure that the match is working?

- Do you review your performance with your employer contacts?

- What would help you better deliver clients with a great match with employers’ needs?

- What else would be helpful to our understanding of how the match between demand and supply could be enhanced in Edinburgh?
Appendix 3: Sources of information on demand

In terms of current and pending vacancies, workshop participants identified an extensive and varied set of sources of information were given, including:

- Regional Skills Assessments (about to be published by SDS)
- Skills Investment Plans (which cover the main Scottish sectors, also published by SDS)
- JUFJ network noticeboards / digest
- Social media
- Chamber of Commerce Skills Pulse surveys
- Inward investment trackers
- City of Edinburgh Council (economic development and planning sources)/LMI
- Employer engagement
  - Long term, trusting relationships managed through account management
  - Employers calling directly
- ETAG events
- Phone calls and emails between providers
- Provider relationships
- Information sessions and events
- Word of mouth
- Media
- Physical advertising, window adverts
- Information from Sector Skills Council
- Information from Scottish Funding Council
- Information from Scottish Enterprise
- Information from FSB
- Information from Community Benefits
- Cold calling, door knocking, marketing
- Airport / Fort Kinnaird
- Recruitment agencies.

Some other sources of information were identified but participants were not clear about the accessibility of this information:

- Information from JUFB
- Analysis of Universal Jobmatch
- SDS Joint industry advisory boards
- Information from WP providers.
The key points raised around information and intelligence were that:

- There is a huge volume of information around, but it is not necessarily accessible
- There may need to be limits on the availability of a joined up resource on vacancies to prevent employers being inundated
- There should be protocols on the use of a joined up resource on vacancies to prevent the wrong candidates being sent to employers
- There is a strong tendency to think in the short term in terms of vacancies
- There is a need to articulate how providers use intelligence
- More development is needed of Caselink, including deciding what bits of ensuring a match it should be expected to do and what requires the individual skill of the provider
- There is a need for better intelligence flow to schools about the expectations of employers
- Information on things other than just vacancies is essential to some providers, eg information about an individual employer’s perspective on flexible working hours
- The overall system of joined up information required to get people work ready is different from the intelligence from individual employers, eg microbusinesses, which can guide job readiness.
Appendix 4: Issues and solutions

Workshop participants were asked – “what do we need to do to ensure a great and rapid match with demand?” – and to suggest what we can do to respond to these issues.

Some of the key issues identified were:

- A need to define the customer group, knowing and understanding their skills and aptitudes
- A need to then market the product better, but also educate employers and manage their expectations
- An inconsistent approach amongst providers, eg around vacancy handling, and lack of coordination around vacancies
- A lack of intelligence about the needs of the microbusiness market
- Ineffective employer engagement
- An education system which does not prepare young people for work, especially within the JUFJ population
- A labour intensive resource for information and intelligence and a need to identify better ways of sharing intelligence
- A need for partners to understand each other’s offers, and opportunities to work better together
- A need to up-skill provider staff so that they have a better knowledge of stages of the pipeline, case management and referral processes to other providers.

When asked to single out the most important issue that needs to be solved, and how this might be tackled, there was a notable focus on improving employer engagement amongst the four participant groups:

**Group A:** There is a need for thorough integration of employers into every aspect of the service – “we’re still a long way from that”.

- Possible solutions: Ideas were raised on payment for providers’ employer engagement behaviours, not just their job outcomes, as per a previous Jobcentre Plus initiative.

**Group B:** There is a need for practical structures, which are not too onerous, to drive provider intelligence and employer engagement.

- Possible solutions were broken down into solutions focused on employers, providers and school leavers:
  - Employer focus: An employer “voice” - a city wide focus group covering all sectors, led by eg JUFB or Edinburgh Guarantee, for employers to offer
opinions and describe needs, and gain a strong understanding of city provider services.

- Provider focus: A provider network forum responsive to the needs of the employer forum to help providers plan for the long term, understand the pipeline more fully and share intelligence to meet employer needs.
- School leaver focus: A need to provide young people in schools, their teachers and their parents with better information on employer expectations, and to promote realistic opportunities to work instead of entering FE/HE.

**Group C:** There is a need to manage expectations of employers and to articulate what employer engagement should be like, at strategic level and at operational level.

- Possible solutions:
  - Improve the reward culture for providers, as set out in contracts.
  - Sell the offer better – employers are buying business benefit that comes with additional HR support and aftercare.
  - Be clear to employers that providers can only mitigate against risks and not provide perfection
  - Establish a contracted, centralised vacancy clearing house, but not to the detriment of some providers
  - Establish a single point of contact for employers – a shop front, possibly in social media format, which can provide a quick turnaround for employer’s questions.
  - Establish clearly that JUFB is the strategic employer engagement lead and JUFJ is the operational employer engagement lead.

**Group D:** There is a need to plan information collection and cascade this down to clients, and to be more reactive about future needs.