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promoting supply chain excellence

Assessment Report
For

MAXIMUS EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

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On behalf of emqc Ltd

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About the Organisation

MAXIMUS is an international leader in government services. A provider of workforce services in the US, Australia, UK and Israel Welfare 2 Work sectors and a top rated provider under the Australia Job Services star rating program. For nearly forty years, MAXIMUS has partnered with governments around the world to provide critical health and human service programmes to a diverse array of communities. With extensive experience to provide high quality services and solutions for government's clients. With a passion for public service, the 7,000 employees are dedicated to providing innovative programmes that improve the quality of life for citizens around the globe.

MAXIMUS Employment & Training specialises in helping UK citizens with disadvantages in the labour market obtain meaningful employment. Since their 2008 acquisition of WTCS, Ltd. – a UK research and training company founded in 1991 – they have helped individuals achieve sustainable employment through rehabilitation, work preparation and training.

MAXIMUS and CDG have both been Prime contract holders within the Welfare 2 Work sector and have a long and fruitful history of working together and the strategic decision was made that for the Work Programme (WP) they would form an Alliance that would bring the best of both performance and a charitable ethos thus forming the core of a quality supply chain (SC) designed to deliver quality, sustained employment performance. The Alliance bring together the international experience of MAXIMUS and a third sector organisation with existing delivery and knowledge of the Contract Package Areas (CPA's).

Assessment Methodology

It is a requirement, by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) that all Prime contract holders of the Work Programme undertake an assessment against the Merlin Standard before 29th June 2012, which includes MAXIMUS. The assessment team comprised of Eyvonne Wood (Lead Assessor) and two Team Assessors: Neil Potentier and Pat Pugh, supported by the assessment co-ordinator within the organisation.

The scope of the assessment concentrated on the Work Programme contract in CPA's 3 West London and 9 Berkshire, Oxford, Buckinghamshire and Hampshire. The assessment team spent a total of 12 days on-site reviewing documentary evidence, IT systems and undertaking interviews internally with a mix of MAXIMUS staff at all levels and externally with Supply Chain Partners (SCP's) both Tier 2 and Tier 3 either face-to-face or via the telephone. A total of 87 interviews from strategic level to front line delivery staff were conducted. A sample of those organisations that had been unsuccessful were contacted to give them the opportunity to feed into the assessment process. A formal feedback presentation was given to the management team on the last day of the on-site assessment where the outcome of the assessment was delivered.

Assessment Outcome

Overall %	67%
Overall Outcome	Satisfactory
Supply Chain Design	Good
Commitment	Satisfactory
Conduct	Satisfactory
Review	Satisfactory

Strengths

- ▲ Design of the supply chain was made with clear rationale behind the strategic decision to form an Alliance with CDG. Extensive research was undertaken to ensure it would meet the needs of the customers, commissioner and the communities in which they would deliver. (2a.1)
- ▲ The culture of MAXIMUS has ensured a level of openness and honesty that has been reflected in the feedback from the Supply Chain Partners (SCP's). (2.a.5, 3a.1)
- ▲ Effective communications strategies and how these are implemented by the management teams have resulted in the whole of the Supply Chain (SC) fostering positive and supportive relationships from the start. This was felt by the SCP's to be a real strength.(2a.1, 2a.4, 2a.5, 3a.1)
- ▲ The SC are extensively consulted at Tier 2 level ensuring they are involved in informing decisions. There are many examples of improvements that have been made to the systems and procedures from SC feedback such as the telephone system in CMAC . (2a.2)
- ▲ MAXIMUS have very clear and effective strategies to manage the TUPE process. (3a.2)
- ▲ Contracting and funding is a particular strength. MAXIMUS made a strategic decision to take on the financial risks. Negotiations were fully embraced and took full account of the different needs of all partners. (2c.1 – 2c.8)
- ▲ Equally MAXMUS have realised the importance of environmental sustainability and have undertaken a lot of work with their partners in raising awareness, delivering training and setting plans to ensure they support the whole chain.(2b.1, 3b.7)
- ▲ Security of data and assets is good and whilst this is a recognised industry requirement MAXIMUS have implemented other mechanisms which encourage adherence in a unique way that is creative and staff respond to such as the parking ticket cards. (3.b.4)

- ▲ MAXIMUS understand the needs around IAG both with their SCP's and the customers and this is firmly embedded at all levels with staff having IAG qualifications and MAXIMUS hold **matrix** accreditation and many of their SCP's either hold or are working towards **matrix** accreditation with support from MAXIMUS. (3b.3, 3d.6)

Areas for Improvement

- ▲ The provision of learning and development for staff needs to be enhanced to offer a wider provision of learning and development that meets their learning needs and supports their learning styles. In addition, the organisation would benefit from a greater depth of evaluation of training and development activities to identify the impact on the performance of the SC, the individual member of staff and importantly service delivery to the customer. (2b.3)
- ▲ There are a number of pilots and initiatives that are being designed and implemented around developing the SCP's and their staff such as the beacon status for offices. Once these improvements have been embedded this will support the whole of the supply chain further. (2b.3, 3b.8, 3d.1)
- ▲ There is a need to consider how to further develop the SC including supporting and encouraging access to additional funding streams both within the SC and externally and to encourage the partners to share such opportunities for the benefit of the SC and its evolution. (2a.3, 2b.2, 3d.1)
- ▲ Quality is satisfactory at this time due to the team changes and the many improvements within quality that are taking place, once these have been implemented and embedded this will vastly support the quality team, the SCP's and positively impact upon service delivery. (3b.1, 3b.2)
- ▲ In order for MAXIMUS and their supply chain to be able to measure the wider objectives they first need to identify what they are going to measure, how and what they want to achieve from those measurements. (4a.3-6)
- ▲ Further development of the MI system will allow more detailed reports to be produced around Diversity and Equality (D&E), customer distance travelled and enable the measurement of wider policy and objectives. (3d.4)
- ▲ D & E data and information is collected and reports are available from the MI system WorkQWEST, however, due to the already identified issues with the MI system further improvements are required. (3e.2, 3e.3)
- ▲ There is a strategic approach to ensuring environmental sustainability is embedded and monitored across the entire SC network. This approach could be enhanced further to provide data, which will enable MAXIMUS and its SCP's to demonstrate the impact on the wider policy and objectives of the commissioner. (3b.7) (4a.3) (4a.6)

- ▲ MAXIMUS would benefit from clearly defining what 'excellent practice' looks like and feels like. Decide how this will be identified look to include the SCP's extensively in this process, to be effective. How will it be documented, shared throughout the SC and how MAXIMUS can measure its effectiveness. (3b.8) (3d.2) (3d.5)
- ▲ The collection of stakeholder feedback is satisfactory but MAXIMUS have identified the need for a more structured formal process for gathering feedback from all stakeholders, including employers. (4a.1) (4a.2)
- ▲ Continue to evolve the SAR and continuous improvement process and to include all stakeholders including Tier 3 partners. (4a.2)

Areas Requiring Further Development

None identified throughout this assessment.

Assessment Findings

1 Supply Chain Design

1a) Supply chain design

MAXIMUS and CDG recognised from DWP's commissioning strategy that they could clearly demonstrate market development through forming an Alliance. Both organisations had previously worked together so it was recognised that jointly they could bring something different to the sector and equally that the difference coming from MAXIMUS being performance driven and CDG being sector driven provided the perfect compliment of styles and expertise.

A bid team was formed comprising of strategic and key operational staff from both organisations to collaboratively design the SC taking into account the requirements of the customer groups, the commissioner and the communities in which they would work. A dedicated member of staff was recruited to undertake research of the CPA's and cascade this to the bid team. The teams undertook road show communications events which enabled the teams to establish positive relationships by engaging with potential partners from an early stage and equally to understand some complex dynamics of individual areas and customer needs.

The Expression of Interest (Eoi) was advertised and allowed organisations to complete the form and identify whether they had previous delivery experience, their track record, any they had previous customer group knowledge and the contractual requirements of DWP. Areas for the potential SCP's to consider included homelessness, high deprivation, economic performance and infrastructure. MAXIMUS went to ERSA events, attended Prime Pitching events to present to third sector organisations, local authorities events and speed dating events which were all part of the engagement strategy and resultant communications plan.

The Eoi's were jointly scored by the bid team which had clearly defined the parameters and values for the scoring matrix. Following the robust selection process organisations were invited to form part of the end-to-end SC network which comprises of a varied mix of public, private and third sector organisations including, Councils, community based organisations, mental health organisations, colleges and local strategic partnerships ensuring a well established provider base within each CPA.

Unsuccessful partners were communicated via an e-mail offering feedback and how to access this feedback although not many unsuccessful organisations took this offer up instead opting for verbal feedback.

The SC strategy identified CDG as being the main Alliance delivery partner within the SC which would be complimented by additional Delivery Partners (DP's) that would deliver the end-to-end services (Tier 2) and Menu Partners (MP's) that would deliver specialist added value services (Tier 3) across the CPA's to address specific barrier interventions, vocational development and job brokering services as required. These are a range of local and national community organisations within each CPA.

At award MAXIMUS had no or limited previous delivery footprint in either of the CPA's and had to pro-actively source third sector, private and community organisations that would meet the needs of the identified customer groups. In CPA 3 DP's represent 70% of contracted delivery. There are 19 (2 of which are outreach) DP offices and 6 MAXIMUS offices. MP usage has improved since implementation due to better engagement with them at a local level from the Partnership Manager and SC Manager and this will continue to evolve the SC as customer needs evolve.

2 Commitment

2a) Collaboration, cooperation and communication

Throughout every stage of the procurement process the communications were effective and open. Communication was regular including the workshops, e-mails, 1-2-1 meetings, group meetings, telephone discussions and roadshows. There was a dedicated point of contact to answer any questions promptly and effectively following the engagement strategy and communications plan.

The understanding of the SCP's was assessed to ensure there was no ambiguity. MAXIMUS wanted to ensure the communications were truly open and transparent and the bid team was involved throughout. Weekly performance calls to DP's are conducted each Friday morning by the SC managers and are CPA specific and serve as a good extended team exercise. This enables the partners to fully understand their monthly targets and performance to date and acts as a channel to voice concerns, share ideas and identify risks on a weekly basis. The communication has resulted in a number of improvements and decisions being formed including the system WorkQWEST undergoing improvements, a new telephone system being implemented at CMAC, the call centre and Income MAXIMUS pilot, a complete money management service.

The effective communications have supported the culture that exists. Following the contract award communications with the SCP's has continued to be strong. The personal and senior level commitment ensured access to all information regarding volume, funding, expectations and time scales were discussed. There are examples of SCP's discussing requirements such as a DP requesting their first year flow to be reduced and capped. Recently one SCP has held strategic negotiations with MAXIMUS around viability and although everything has been done to support the organisation the SCP asked to withdraw from the contract and they were very positive about the support they had received from MAXIMUS.

Those organisations who had been unsuccessful during procurement were offered feedback and those who took up the offer were effectively communicated with via telephone and face-to-face meetings with the team to offer guidance on where they could improve their submitted EoI's and potentially become part of the SC in future opportunities.

Since go live formal routes of communications have been embedded including monthly performance meetings, change alerts, weekly performance call, local area operational HUB meetings, partnership meetings, site review visits and monthly management reports and the QPI audits. The roles of SC manager and partnership manager are pivotal and all SCP's were very clear about their importance to them.

MAXIMUS have recently appointed a Head of SC that has the remit of overall responsibility for all DP's and the SC managers now report directly into this new role. This strategic management role is important in meeting contractual targets and business growth needs. Twice a year the Chief Operational Officer (COO) chairs strategic meetings with DP's

ensuring that each partner is fully informed of business plans and WP performance and delivery.

Collaborative working across the SC has been effective, supporting and implementing many of the forums and groups to ensure collaboration. There is a need however, for MAXIMUS to include the MP's more.

The Contractor Management Framework (CMF) supports the undertaking of expectations that underpin the SC arrangements. MAXIMUS ask for input into improvements and the CMF covers both DP's and MP's at a level that is proportionate and appropriate to the level of delivery.

2b) Developing supply chain partners

SCP's have been able to access development opportunities including improvements around completing EoI's for other sources of funding. MAXIMUS are trying to expand MP's by trialling their services within the SC. One DP has been supported to build volumes through redirecting referrals and are identifying potential opportunities around apprenticeships. DP's have been encouraged to utilise the MP's more effectively and the Partnership Managers ensures they fully understand the services the MP's have to offer and actively promote their services both within the SC and within the local communities. SCP's have also been supported on legislative and contractual requirements such as adherence to ISO27001.

One SCP was going to access mental health training for their staff from an external source but their SC Manager discussed this and it was identified that MAXIMUS could deliver this free of charge to their partner saving a considerable amount of money and the training took place within a short time frame at DP's sites. There are good support mechanisms in place for the SCP's including the Partnership Manager working with MP's to become DP's where relevant and also supporting other organisations to be successful at being accepted onto the Approved Partner Framework (APF).

Support for SCP's is embedded through the regular meetings and reviews. The SC can access information regarding additional funding through the SC Manager, Partnership Manager and through the meetings in particular those chaired by the COO to look at strategic plans to develop the business and that of their SCP's. SCP's are made aware of funding available through the Skills Funding Agency and ESF such as the apprenticeships opportunities. Further opportunities could be realised by identifying all possible funding available and making it available to the SCP's whether it is of interest to the Alliance or not and then supporting the SCP's to write robust EoI's to maximise success. MAXIMUS actively promotes other bespoke services to their customers, the mechanism for this is the DP monthly management report that asks DP's to identify what services they can offer. This information is collated and communicated to the wider business. Pod working and sharing resources across contracts has proven effective in mitigating some identified gaps within the MP service requirements.

Training for staff has been varied covering safeguarding, H&S, Equal Opportunities, sustainability awareness, in-work calculations, mental health and the MI system WorkQWEST. Analysis of some delivery across the network has started to take place and there is an extensive initiative that has been devised around the business having Beacon Status Standards in all their sites which is being developed by the quality team.

SCP's can attend training sessions which are identified on the staff portal and this can be delivered on site to minimise disruption to the SCP. There are also a number of training materials and resources available to SCP's via the Portal. It may be supportive for staff if MAXIMUS consider conducting a learning styles analysis across the SC to ensure that all and future training packages take account of the different learning styles staff may have to ensure they are truly effective. MAXIMUS validate that all DP staff have had the basic training required to work within the Welfare to Work industry through a training matrix.

2c) Contracting and funding

The procurement processes were fair and open and this has been identified throughout the SC. The selection strategy consisted of three stages, stage 1 was to submit an EoI, at stage 2 of the selection strategy the Alliance conducted a scoring process following a clear and simple criteria, and stage 3 involved successful partners being placed on the Approved Provider Framework (APF). Face-to-face meetings took place to discuss their offer and capacity to deliver. This information was used to map the allocation of market share in each CPA based on DP capacity as well as an agreed percentage proportion of voluntary and community sector organisations to make up the design of the SC.

The EoI's were jointly evaluated by MAXIMUS and CDG. The selection criteria and scoring was a fair and transparent process. Feedback to both successful and unsuccessful organisations was offered. This supported unsuccessful organisations to learn how EoI's could be improved going forward and to build capacity.

A MP shortlisting exercise was then conducted and specific MP events were held where they met the Regional Executive Directors (REDs) who presented the MAXIMUS Work Programme (WP) delivery model. This event was aimed at giving clarity and setting expectations. Funding arrangements broadly mirrored the DWP model and SCP's have identified that there was little opportunity to negotiate funding or payment structures offered, it was a one size fits all approach. To further improve the negotiations and funding support to SCP's MAXIMUS might consider how alternative funding models can be developed in collaboration with their SCP's wherever viable.

During procurement agreeing the final contractual documentation was a two way process where MAXIMUS was receptive to change recommendations and a negotiation phase was entered into. Each contract document sets out minimum performance expectations and funding models. Negotiations of market share allocations were based on DWP forecast, referral volume data and the existing and potential new locations DP's could offer. Most DP's had existing premises that reduced their set up costs and financial risks but affected

their ability to negotiate out of area market share, however, every effort is being made to volumes against market share and to address any in-balance.

Due diligence checks were undertaken with the successful organisations. MAXIMUS sent out communications relating to the management fees, what the fees included and what that looked like in relation to the payments MAXIMUS received from DWP. MAXIMUS published payment rates at the offer stage, the SC understands what the management fee is and what is included within the fee, such as the MI system, the quality and compliance resources, training resources and the MP's, etc.

3 Conduct

3a) Demonstrating commercial and business integrity

MAXIMUS has a clearly defined code of conduct which is aligned to the business principles of the DP's and is set out within the contracts. The code of conduct is built on the highest standards of business principles, integrity and ethical conduct and adhered to through role modelling and messaged through clear, concise communications both verbal and written. This has ensured that the SCP's are fully committed to working towards the same goal. One SCP stated that they chose MAXIMUS over the other Primes they could have potentially contracted with as the values and ethos of MAXIMUS were so closely aligned to the needs of their customers and their organisations.

MAXIMUS are keen for the DP's to keep their own identities but learn from and adapt the practices that have proven successful for MAXIMUS and for this to be part of every day activities. MAXIMUS have identified that throughout the SC the core values require further embedding and MAXIMUS may wish to consider encouraging the SC to develop a charter or code of practice that identifies the behaviours the SC believes should be displayed throughout the network.

Following feedback received from staff there is now a new set of values and behaviours with measurement in place, 4 key values 1 – goes the extra mile, 2- open and honest communication, 3 -passionate and 4 -professionalism. These are measured during monthly 1-2-1's and the 6 monthly performance reviews. SCP's have been given these and have been impressed and expressed a desire to use them in their own organisation. HR is in the process of designing training materials for managers both internally and for their SCP's to ensure these values and how to assess staff against them is interpreted correctly, understood and used effectively to support staff and improve service delivery and performance.

MAXIMUS made it clear from the outset of the bidding process what the expectations of the partners would be and what the partners could in return expect from MAXIMUS. The due diligence process required partners to submit appropriate policies and procedures which were checked with the QPI team with appropriate feedback given and support where necessary. The information required from the DP's is clearly outlined in the sub contract. Prior to the contracts being signed the DP's were given the opportunity to challenge and question and all issues were addressed. The partnership team were available to respond to all questions. Group and individual meetings took place and communications via e-mail and telephone were also conducted.

DP's have direct access to the HofSC who attends the monthly partnership meetings. It is actively encouraged that any concern be escalated to the SC manager and if it cannot be resolved it would then be escalated to the HofSC. The dispute resolution procedure is clearly defined within the sub contract. DP's have direct links to the key departments within MAXIMUS enabling suggestions and issues to be resolved effectively. Across the CPA network MAXIMUS and DP's have worked effectively together, all customer complaints are managed and tracked centrally by the complaints resolution officer and all responses

reviewed. Complaints are monitored by the SC manager and the HofSC for any trends or issues that may need to be addressed by the local offices.

TUPE was handled well and took account of each partner. The HR department worked collaboratively together throughout the TUPE process. MAXIMUS used the ERSA guidelines and conducted an event to inform all SCP's of what TUPE was, the process involved and their HR expertise was offered as a resource to any SCP that needed this support. They worked on a split of TUPE requirements across the three Primes in the CPA's working with the operational staff and negotiated with the SCP's on TUPE liability. MAXIMUS took on 40% of the TUPE liability.

They had participated in the ERSA forum and had agreed a best practice process around TUPE activities and the ERSA guidelines. Across the different CPA's the Primes were trying to work together to protect the staff involved. MAXIMUS ensured people knew what they could expect if the TUPE'd into their organisation and what it would mean for them. 80% of the staff declared a desire to change to the terms and conditions of MAXIMUS within the first few months of employment.

All SCP's said that MAXIMUS staff at every level are quick to offer support. They listen to us and take action although this can sometimes be a little slow. Support and guidance offered was very good particularly at the front line level. The relationship between the SC management team and the SCP's makes for an open, honest and supportive working relationship. This relationship is pivotal in ensuring the SC feel able to communicate concerns and risks at a very early stage and feel confident to share good practice. This is evidenced in the very positive feedback that is received from the SC through the COO strategic reviews.

The DP Portal is a key resource for DP's and all contractual and policy updates are communicated via change alerts and updates directly to the WorkQWEST system. This is an excellent reference and learning resource for staff that is fully maintained by the Quality and Performance Improvement (QPI) team. DP's can e-mail the "quality" in-box with any questions around updates and contractual changes. The SC managers attend meetings with DWP and updates are provided by the SC manager during site reviews, at partnership meetings as well as on-going e-mail and telephone communications. All changes are re-enforced by the audit team during regular quality and compliance audits.

3b) Quality Assurance and Compliance

All delivery sites within the CPA's whether they are a MAXIMUS site or DP work to the same set of policies, procedures and customer journey resources. The sites utilise the same documentation which makes it easier to identify good practice and equally where improvements need to be made and this is shared across the sites through the network meetings on a monthly basis and through the change alert updates. MAXIMUS have appointed a Head of SC (HofSC) to support the impending improvements and the recent structural changes of which this role was part of.

Quality assurance and compliance is monitored throughout the SC by the QPI team where audit findings are evidenced on the QPI28 internal document. The QPI28 covers all aspects of the business to ensure that the customers are receiving a quality customer journey and that the contractual requirements are being met. The audit covers customer file checks, job outcomes, service delivery in the form of notes recorded on WorkQWEST to show distance travelled and signposting, sustainability, quality, H&S including premises and property, security, finance, staff. Marketing of SCP's, business improvement plans, partnership meetings and internal quality and compliance audits.

Each site has local MP's that they signpost their customers to for additional services. Each site monitors the service that is provided and reviews the effectiveness of the service with the individual customers. The SC is trained continuously in using the WorkQWEST CRM system. MAXIMUS hold WorkQWEST super user sessions where a representative from each DP site attends to share updates, issues and good practice.

DP's are also encouraged to participate in customer forums, the suggested return for feedback is every 6 months. The forum will be held at each delivery site with a selection of customers at different stages of their journey and feedback gained. The local Business Manager (BM) would then evaluate this feedback for purposes of identifying quality of customer service and use this information for business planning. The BM's would then pass feedback to the QPI team.

Action plans from quality and compliance audits will be produced and if required additional support visits can be arranged by the QPI team. The findings from audits are cascaded to the operational delivery teams through the business plans which are reviewed on a regular basis. All sites are currently working on the collation of customer feedback including compliments, comments suggestion cards, complaints and on-line feedback about the experience they receive at each site. Where improvements are required SCP's will have a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) in place.

There have been a number of changes that have taken place around quality recently and there is an acting Head of Quality at the present time. Due to the quite extensive but very exciting improvements that are planned, the quality activities have reduced to allow the quality team to concentrate on designing and developing the planned improvements and therefore at this time quality is satisfactory. The quality of Tier 3 partners is not fully known at this time. Compliance audits are taking place including some areas of quality but predominantly the audits are undertaken with the DP's and do not include the MP's .

The SCP's were highlighted as either holding or working towards **matrix** accreditation. MAXIMUS have recently undergone a joint assessment for both **matrix** and Investors in People accreditation. Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) is embedded at all levels and staff both within MAXIMUS and in the SC hold IAG qualifications. The IAG received by SCP's has been good from the start of the relationship and this is promoted through the regular and varied communications throughout the SC. IAG is promoted to the customers which is checked via the QPI28 audits and customer feedback.

MAXIMUS is certified to ISO 27001 standard. They have robust policies and procedures in place and share these with their SC where relevant as some SCP's have robust procedures of their own. Checks during due diligence confirmed the appropriateness of policies and MAXIMUS supported SCPs where gaps were found. DP's security plans are in place and reviewed to ensure that customer's data would be secure whilst a DP was part of the WP SC. This would also be measured in part during the QP128 audits. MAXIMUS encourages each delivery site to have a security representative. These representatives attend WorkQWEST/Security sessions where they are updated with processes and procedures. Each representative works with all staff at their site to ensure that security requirements are met.

If any issues arise staff can access the Security Manager for information and guidance when required and also have access to relevant policies, procedures and documents on the Intranet sites. There is a corrective actions reporting process in place for staff to follow in case any security incidents arise. All of the information is cascaded to the SC and change alerts sent out with any new updates of policy or process. MAXIMUS has realised that this can be quite a daunting area of the business for staff to comprehend and have instigated a yellow card system where any member of staff causing a potential incident would be issued with a card to alert them to the fact of the potential dangers. Staff have responded well to this system which is one of the many functions the WorkQWEST system supports.

Due diligence checks were carried out to ensure that SCP's have the required standard of policies and procedures in place for Health and Safety (H&S). Partners received a H&S visit from the lead at MAXIMUS. This is reviewed yearly via a site visit which is scheduled to ensure the SC sites are still compliant and have current H&S insurance policies in place, First Aid, fire and accident/risk processes in place, etc. Identified concerns or gaps are supported to ensure the provider improves where necessary. MAXIMUS requests that SCP's share their key company documents with them. This would also be measured lightly during the QP128 audits. H&S is an area that is covered during the monthly management report reviews and where support is required this will be arranged.

Safeguarding is part of due diligence and as with H&S and Security, the SCP's are required to send policies and procedures for their organisation to MAXIMUS. Safeguarding is part of the QP128 audits, enhanced CRB checks are in place as no member of staff can access any information unless they have been CRB cleared. Safeguarding training has been offered and where required delivered. There are some safeguarding officers in place within the SCP's although this requires further checking with regards to Tier 3's.

There is an environmental sustainability policy and plan in place and there are a number of initiatives that are taking place within the SC. MAXIMUS is currently in the process of putting together an environmental management system. The baseline data has been gathered and action plans being put in place. Once the data and action plan has been finalised the details will be shared with the SC and individual SCP key performance indicators set. MAXIMUS will be promoting and sharing best practice in a 360 degree approach through the whole SC, and this will be measured partly through the QP128 audits but not in any great depth. There are no targets set for environmental sustainability at this time. There has been some basic environmental awareness training take place. MAXIMUS

might consider how environmental sustainability will be part of staff and customers induction, how and what targets should be set, how it can support value for money and how it will be measured against wider policy and objectives.

Excellent practice has not been clearly defined and whilst there are many examples of sharing good practice across the SC during the operations meetings it requires clear structure. MAXIMUS should consider how to work collaboratively with the whole of the SC to identify what excellent practice looks like, how to document this, share it and how to measure it for effectiveness. The introduction of the proposed "Beacon Status" sites, should support the identification of what excellent practice actually looks like for the MAXIMUS SC.

3c) Honouring Commitments

The SC confirmed that the negotiations were fair, open and transparent and that there were many opportunities to sit down and discuss individual needs of the organisations from post tender to implementation and delivery. The designated partnership lead supported by the partnership team were responsible for communicating with and updating partners throughout the process. During the initial stages MAXIMUS/CDG met with short listed DP's to discuss the delivery model, payment profile, capacity to deliver and desired locations and set the expectations of how the relationship would develop. Information was sent to each DP prior to the meeting. Prior to awarding the contract, each DP received communication detailing the agreed delivery location and the indicative flows for each location. These were then included in the contracts.

One SCP explained how their delivery was negotiated so that they would take the whole Borough rather than split the Borough as on indicative flows it did not warrant two offices, whilst another SCP asked for year one flows to be reduced and capped. This was supported by MAXIMUS and the additional flows were redirected within the SC. The partnership lead provided full support to DP's and clarified and resolved issues raised. Effective communication has continued through the implementation and delivery stages for the DP's but not with all MP's, some partners felt that the communications between MAXIMUS and themselves had been less effective after contract award. This has however, been identified and an additional Partnership Manager has been recruited to support the MP's further.

The approach taken by MAXIMUS during negotiations has resulted in a close working relationship across the SC. The payment structures and models ensured that the post contractual negotiations were honoured. There have been some changes to the group of customers referred and the SCP's have been able to negotiate for these groups and contract variations have been agreed.

There is a clear embedded dispute resolution process which is contained in the sub contract. The DP's have direct access to the HofSC and the HofSC attends the monthly partnership meetings. It is actively encouraged that any concerns be escalated to the SC manager, then the HofSC if necessary. The opportunity to highlight concerns is provided in the DP monthly management report. DP's also have direct links to key departments within MAXIMUS and the COO is available if issues need escalating quickly. The SCP's feel that they are listened to

and that they didn't feel they would ever have to make a complaint or use the Merlin Mediation Service (MMS). MAXIMUS stated that they would be bound by all decisions from the MMS.

Clear and robust contracts are in place to ensure the clarity of expectations underpinning business relationships. On-going expectations are set through the regular communication, reviews and processes.

3d) Performance

The actual design of the SC was very well thought out even though MAXIMUS had only limited or no previous delivery footprint in either of the CPA's and therefore actively sourced a varied combination third, private and community organisations that would truly meet the needs of the customers and employers. The SC across both CPA's includes organisations that bring with them their own individual experience, additional contracts and links. Through many of the channels identified within this report, the blend of organisations within the SC highlights good practice and activities that can be effectively shared although predominantly at Tier 2 level.

A number of MP services have been piloted, this enabled the DP's to test out the services in a controlled manner and measure suitability and effectiveness. One good example of this is Income MAX. This service is now being opened up across the MAXIMUS network. Their inclusive model encourages DP's to become more innovative, to share piloted and proven best practices and develop processes to enhance all service delivery models across both CPA's. One DP is also providing MP provision through its Skills Funding Agency funding stream and delivers an exclusive 1 week vocational and employability course specifically tailored to WP customers.

Weekly performance calls are routinely diarised for every Monday morning in CPA 9 and every Friday morning in CPA 3 and are CPA specific and the SC manager facilitates the calls, their upbeat nature is appreciated by the SCP's. This ensures the DP's fully understand their monthly targets and performance to date. Monthly partnership meetings take place with all of the DP's in the CPA but not across the whole DP network. These meetings are led by the SC manager or the HofSC and are supported as and when required by other MAXIMUS departments such as the quality or H&S team. This forum is used to review delivery in the previous month, share best practice across the SC and as a forum provide solutions to any contractual queries or issues.

MAXIMUS encourages transparency and working together as a group and the partnership meetings provide a platform for openness, transparency and honesty to live and be an example of the appropriate behaviours that MAXIMUS expect to be displayed throughout the SC. Minutes are documented and communicated to all DP's, actions arising are managed and reviewed. All DP's are required to complete a Monthly Management Report (MMR) that encourages and engages the SCP's in self assessment of their delivery against strategic areas such as delivery model, staff resources, etc. This report is signed off by DP Operational Managers and then evaluated by the SC manager and the HofSC. The areas for discussion are communicated directly with the DP.

Any under-performing DP's are given a notice of performance improvement, a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is agreed and they are designed to be very specific and to work within set parameters and agreed time scales. They are designed to support the DP to achieve its contractual targets through key strategic, SMART action points that are achievable within the agreed time frames and when asked, the SCP's confirmed that although they were robust they did have a positive impact on performance. The PIPs are monitored for effectiveness, progress and achievement during the agreed period typically 60 days, through on-site reviews by the management teams. On-site reviews by the SCM and the HofSC take place regularly on an announced and unannounced basis. This gives MAXIMUS an opportunity to compare the DP delivery against their MMR and measure progress of the PIP. The reviews are documented and any agreed actions followed up by both parties and reviewed. If the agreed performance improvement has not been achieved by the end of the PIP period, the PIP is reviewed and reset.

MAXIMUS ensures their DP's receive their job placement targets based upon their contractual minimum performance levels on the first day of the calendar month. These are reiterated via the SC manager. MAXIMUS is awaiting the flight path information for year 2 so that they can communicate this information out to their SCP's.

On a daily basis the Performance Analyst (PA) cascades the performance achievement report to the whole business. This tracks how each office is doing against target and is coded Red, Amber or Green (RAG) dependent upon the level of achievement. This allows the DP's to compare themselves against other like sized offices and offices with similar demographics. It is a peer group providing total performance transparency, with the understanding that they are measured against their individual contract and not other offices. A month end and contract to date performance update is also communicated to DP's usually within 2 days of month end. This forms the basis of the PIP evaluation by the MAXIMUS SCM team.

It encourages cross office networking as managers are keen to consult with top performing offices. Job targets are issued, performance information is shared in the monthly partnership meetings across the SC and prompts discussion around best practice. DP's have access to MI reports through the staff portal which is linked to WorkQWEST. This includes detailed case load information, verified jobs and outcomes. The DP's have been advised on how to manipulate and use data to maximise case load management. MAXIMUS has identified that although the system can produce robust reports further development of the system is required which will support more detailed reports to be produced around D&E and customer distance travelled and enable measurement of wider policy and objectives. Whilst most of the DP's found the system easy to use, some DP's had found the system difficult to use and to extract reports in a format they felt comfortable using which may suggest further training on the system and reports is required.

Through the quality and compliance audits and customer feedback MAXIMUS undertakes it has been able to conclude some broad analysis of value for money (vfm). This takes into account standard and methodology of delivery, number of interventions and customer spend. This is currently being refined by the head of QPI to become fully operational. The MAXIMUS delivery model promotes distance travelled by customers through the case load

management streaming programme. The data capture elements to evaluate customer distance travelled are currently being further developed by MAXIMUS. Currently the methodology is realistic and does give an indicator of how customers are transitioned through the streams and progressing to job placement. Again, once the intended improvements have been implemented and embedded these will support the delivery, improving the ability to measure customer distance travelled in even more depth.

3e) Promoting Equality and Diversity

MAXIMUS has a clear commitment to D&E and this is embedded within due diligence and contracting processes. Due diligence procedures are robust and check policies and procedures for promotion of D&E. Promotion of D&E throughout the SC is checked during the monthly audits. It is included as an element of the Quality Framework and policies and procedures are checked throughout the SC yearly. One SCP stated that he had chosen MAXIMUS specifically because it was felt that their E&D ethos and values exactly mirrored those of their own organisation and that is why they chose to work with MAXIMUS rather than any other Prime Provider.

The SC encompasses a diverse range of specialisms particularly through the MP's which will enable the SC to meet the needs of the different customer groups and through the partnership managers and the DP's. The MP directory is constantly being added to ensuring it is fit for purpose. D&E is a key feature of the on-line training. MAXIMUS may want to consider how D&E is more robustly promoted across the SC. Particularly at Tier 3 level. The SC is committed to providing a safe, high quality, consistent, accessible and reliable service.

MAXIMUS is keen to ensure that all customers on the programmes are given an equal opportunity to achieve their aims and goals. Each DP site has an E&D representative, this individual is a point of contact for the staff to discuss any problems or concerns around the individual customer cases and the knowledge of where to signpost a customer to. There are agreements in place with MP's who can support customers who have a limited understanding of English which could prevent them from engaging on the programme. This is the same when setting up support for customers who require the support of an interpreter. All staff have received basic E&D training. The SC ensures that all differentiated resources are accessible and in use where appropriate e.g. hearing loops.

The current MAXIMUS IT systems allow for the recording of E&D data and can provide management reports for these demographic indicators. Reports can be provided to monitor the customer base against language, ethnicity, gender, marital status, disability status, lone parent status and age. This data will be monitored across each delivery site by an individual lead and ultimately measured against the national consensus data. At this time, SCP's at any level cannot access the D&E data, they have to request this information from MAXIMUS and they are not all aware of this or of who to ask for these reports. Further work on the WorkQWEST system needs to be undertaken to create comprehensive D&E reports that support the linkage to wider policy and objectives.

4 Review

4a) Supply chain review

Feedback is an integral part of the MAXIMUS stakeholder engagement policy. Feedback from stakeholders is gathered in many formats including customer questionnaires, on-line feedback, evaluation forms and comments cards. The MMR allows DP's to self assess their delivery against key strategic areas including delivery model, staffing and employer engagement. The SCP's can feedback during the various meetings. MAXIMUS would benefit from a structured feedback process that includes all stakeholders including the Tier 3's to identify how feedback will be used and how stakeholders will be informed of improvement activities.

The DP's have been included in the completion of the SAR and QIP documents. The QPI team are responsible for managing the SAR framework. The DP's have been asked to share their local SAR's with MAXIMUS and this information has been included within the MAXIMUS SAR. Once this has been agreed, it will be communicated out to the DP's. Any resultant action points are managed via the PIP or through the monthly MMR. The process could be improved by inviting the Tier 3 partners to input into this very important activity.

There are insufficiently developed mechanisms in place to measure social and community impact of the SC. Evidence of MAXIMUS's strategies is largely informal and anecdotal. The SC and MAXIMUS are currently working independently on a number of wider policy and objectives however, the whole of the SC including MP's are not fully aware of what constitutes wider policy and objectives or how these will be measured. The SC are aware of the impacts of sustained jobs.

Communications of such policies is through the COO strategic reviews and through the monthly partnership meetings. The monthly contract package reviews with DWP highlight any additional policy updates and social objectives that require communicating to the SC. MAXIMUS and their SC re-evaluate the customer needs regularly to ensure the delivery is fit for purpose. This is done through the monthly MMR, PIP and the sharing of good practice. MAXIMUS has processes in place to understand the changing needs of the commissioner and work with the SC to create manageable solutions that are not detrimental to the contractual requirements of the WP.

The well being of customers is a key aspect to the SC delivery. Wherever possible moving the customer closer into sustainable work and to have a positive impact on other stakeholders and the environment. MAXIMUS use CESI economic and employment trend analysis to ensure that vocational areas are prioritised and where possible, this will include prioritising green industries. The partnership manager role will ensure that all appropriate community inclusion links are communicated to the SC.

MAXIMUS has developed a concept that was born from the late FND contracts around Community Inclusion Plans. MAXIMUS wanted to have a more strategic approach where there were less meetings, but bigger impact on community agendas that supported improvement. These plans are in place in areas that MAXIMUS and their SCP's work. They have looked at how by joining up all the external groups they could improve peoples lives, their housing requirements and support them to stay in work. MAXIMUS have produced a Continuous Improvement Toolkit, they look at the local labour market information, which

meetings the different community groups should be involved in and MAXIMUS sit on a number of Boards and committees and many organisations now know who they are. It enables small organisations to talk to their customers as they offer them opportunities to hold surgeries at their sites to support the customer whilst utilising existing funding effectively. The ultimate goal for MAXIMUS around these plans is to have a single on-line document that would include what's going on in the local area, a who's who locally and for there to be a National Inclusion Board for each of the CPA's. In order for MAXIMUS and their SC to be able to measure the wider objectives they first need to identify what they are going to measure, how and what they want to achieve from those measurements.