



At the July meeting of the Learning and Development professional network we were joined by Rachel Roberts from Brandon and the Brandon Adventurers, a panel of experts by experience

During their presentation, The Adventurers spoke about the importance of payment for experts by experience, and Rachel has kindly offered the following information for VODG members.

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Paying individuals with lived experience for their time is crucial. Their insights are invaluable in shaping services and improving our understanding of the issues they face. It is essential that their contributions are recognized and compensated fairly.

To ensure that individuals with lived experience are compensated without negatively impacting their benefits, it is important to advise them to contact Jobcentre Plus or the Citizens Advice Bureau. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has specific guidelines under the 'experts by experience' clause. According to the Advice for Decision Makers Chapter H3, paragraphs 3160 and 3241, 'service users and carers' are exempt from the application of notional earnings, and reimbursed expenses for service user involvement are ignored.

There are many resources available to guide this process, such as those provided by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE). You can find more information at <https://www.scie.org.uk/co-production/supporting/paying-people-who-receive-benefits/>. It is vital to have a conversation with the person with lived experience, advising them to seek professional advice to ensure their benefits are not affected. The last thing we want is for them to be worse off for sharing their stories or helping improve our business.

Some organizations enrol their experts by experience as bank staff, managing their payment through the HR system. Deciding on the remuneration process for your experts by experience requires careful consideration. Ensure you have a robust process in place, and avoid giving financial advice unless you are licensed to do so, as this could lead to legal complications.