

Warwickshire County Council SEND and Inclusion

Supported Internships Guidance for Parents and Carers



Warwickshire
County Council

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What is a Supported Internship?

A Supported Internship is a full time, unpaid, work-based study programme that supports young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) in getting a paid job. It is one of many post-16 options available for your young person to enrol on to.

How do I know it is right for my young person?

- Are they aged 16 to 24?
- Do they have an **Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP)?**
- Do they want to get a paid job but aren't quite 'work ready' yet?

In a Supported Internship the young person learns 'on the job'. They do most of their learning at work and some at college. This is different from a college programme that has work experience.

A Supported Internship could look like:



One day per week completing qualifications, such as English, maths and employability. This may be in college or in work. Qualifications for this programme are flexible so if a young person has already completed their English and maths, they do not have to repeat these, and they will be supported with their employability skills and learning.



Up to four days per week in the workplace doing the job. The young person will be doing real work tasks and will typically move around in different areas/ departments, so that they can find out what they like and develop their skills.

Supported Internships usually last for an academic year and the young person will get all the same college holidays. They must last at least six months.

A Supported Internship is different to an apprenticeship. A Supported Internship is an unpaid education programme that helps young people to be 'work ready'; an apprenticeship is paid employment and young people would be expected to be work ready to access this. A young person may go on to an apprenticeship after their Supported Internship. Unlike an apprenticeship, there are no formal entry requirements or end assessments for learners on a Supported Internship, although most will work towards an accredited employability qualification.

What support will the intern get?

- The young person will be supported in their Supported Internship by a trained job coach. This job coach breaks down the tasks involved so that they are able to learn the job.
- The college can also apply for additional funding to make adjustments for the intern. If they need additional practical support and/or equipment to help them do their job, their college can apply for funding called 'Access to Work'.
- The job coach will also work with the intern to increase their confidence and make sure they have all the skills they need to get a paid job.
- They will be supported to build their confidence and self-esteem.

What is the application process?



At the beginning of the Autumn term, a letter will be sent by the SEND Assessment and Review Service (SENDAR)/your young person's Plan Coordinator asking what their choices are for the next academic year (this should be asked yearly after Year 13); this is when it can be shared that your young person would like to apply for a Supported Internship. Annual Reviews are also a great place to discuss this option and learn more about Supported Internships.



Colleges that provide the programme will advertise Supported Internships opportunities with business hosts. This gives the opportunity to find a business that interests your young person the most. For more information on Supported Internships opportunities in Warwickshire, please visit our colleges websites using the links below:

- **[Hereward College](#)**
- **[North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College \(NWSLC\)](#)**
- **[Stratford Upon Avon College.](#)**
- **[Warwickshire College Group \(WCG\)](#)**



The business and college will host an open day for your young person to attend where they can learn more about the business and roles they will be doing during the internship.



After the open day, there will be a college recruitment event where your young person can formally apply for the internship with a business host.



If your young person is successful with their application, they will be invited to attend an interview with the business host, which also provides the experience of an interview.



If your young person has passed the interview, the internship is theirs!

What support is available for my young person?

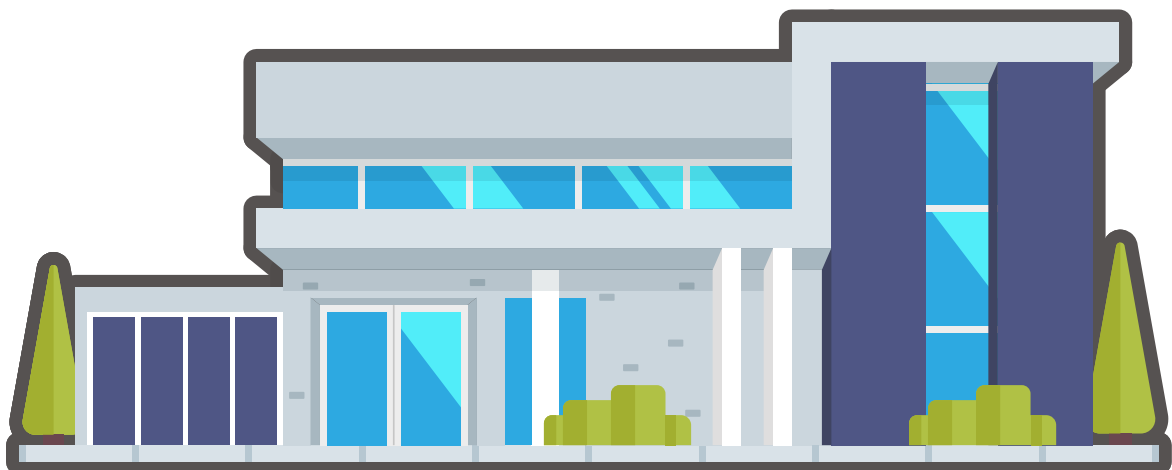
Your young person will be supported in their Supported Internship by the colleges' trained job coach and by the host business.

The job coach can:

- break down the tasks involved so that your young person can learn the job.
- work with your young person to increase their confidence.
- help build skills needed to get a paid job, such as team working.
- apply for additional funding to make adjustments for your young person. If your young person needs additional practical support and/or equipment to help them do their job, the college can apply for funding called 'Access to Work'.

The host business could:

- provide your young person with a work mentor or buddy for them to work with, observe and ask questions.



What are the benefits of a Supported Internship?

For young people:

Improved chance of finding a job - your young person has improved chances of finding employment by completing a Supported Internship.

Better work and social skills - your young person will take part in training to develop employability, functional and social skills.

Chance to work in many different areas/roles - your young person will typically complete three rotations (one per term) to experience three different roles during the internship, this gives them a chance to see which areas they like.

Improved wellbeing - previous interns report increased levels of mental wellbeing.

Valuable member of society - the work your young person will do to help the host business will provide value to them and their customers, as well as giving them the experience and skills to continue to provide value in their future roles.

Sense of community - your young person will experience what it's like to work as part of a team and feel the togetherness of working closely with different colleagues.

Build a wider social and support network - your young person will meet people on the internship that will help build new relationships and a wide support network that will help them on the programme and afterwards.

For families:

Reduction in caregiving - as your young person engages with the Supported Internship or joins the workforce, you can cut down on the potential hours spent caring for them after they have left education.

Increased opportunity to join the workforce - with your hours freed up, you could choose to re-join the labour market and enjoy associated earnings and additional social and economic benefits.

Improved health and wellbeing - the free time can provide the much-needed break for you to recharge or take up new interests and hobbies, helping to reduce fatigue and improve your own health and wellbeing.

How can I support a successful Supported Internship?

Your young person will have a lot of support around them already, but it may help them if you can also support some of their key skills and learning.

Some ways you could help would be to:

- Support your young person with attendance, hygiene/personal care and other related skills.
- Take part in progress meetings, job goal setting, and complete agreed actions.
- Support your young person with the ongoing development of employment skills.
- Actively participate in your young person's progress towards a full-time paid job in their local community.
- Complete steps needed for the interim to become eligible for services. For example, talking to college about the 'Access to Work' grant, the Job Centre about relevant benefits and accessing partner agency support, such as Prospects, Careers etc.

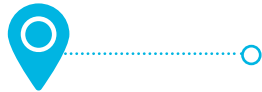


What should I expect and when

October

(Before internship)

Start discussing post-16 options/new college course. Preferences for next year will be requested



January - April

(Before internship)
Enrolment at college and Supported Internship application/interviews at host business



April - September

(Before internship)

Prepare for move into Supported Internship (transition activities) and preparation with host business



September

Supported internship begins



September - December

(Term 1 of internship)

Rotation 1 at host business and attending college



January - April

(Term 2 of internship)
Rotation 2 at host business and attending college



January - Start preparing to find employment with interview coaching and job searching. Access employment support and services and consider next steps e.g. WES, Prospects etc



April-July

(Term 3 of internship)
Rotation 3 at host business, attending college and continuation of job search



July

(End of internship)

Start paid employment or continue to look for a job if nothing secured. If in employment, EHCP will end



What happens after a Supported Internship?

The aim of a Supported Internship is to support young people in getting a paid job, but they may also find that Supported Internships can be key to:

- building their confidence and self-esteem
- increasing their health and wellbeing
- gaining friendships and a social life

Your young person could get a paid job at the same place they did their Supported Internship, or they could look for a job with a different employer.

An annual review meeting will be held towards the end of the internship, to discuss your young person's exit route from education into employment. Successful completion of the internship should result in your young person's EHCP ending. This will be discussed during the final annual review.

Your young person will be introduced to The Warwickshire Supported Employment Service as part of the internship. The service will help them to:

- find a job after their internship has finished if they haven't managed to do this
- make sure that they are successful and have all the support they need in their new job

The Warwickshire Supported Employment Service is designed to support Warwickshire young people and adults with autism and learning disabilities with an aspiration to work.

You can find out more about the support that they offer here: **[Warwickshire Supported Employment Service – Warwickshire Skills Hub](#)**

Other services that can help include:

- **[Prospects Careers](#)** offer help and advice on options for education, training and careers.
- **[National Careers Service](#)** provide careers information, advice and guidance.

Your young person may also be signposted to other people and services.

Frequently asked questions

Where can I gain more information and ask questions before enrolment?

There is lots of information online, including on [Warwickshire's SEND Local Offer](#) and the colleges own websites. The college that is providing the Supported Internship will be able to help you and answer any questions. You can also ask questions in your young person's Annual Review as this is an ideal time to look at progression pathways and next steps. You could also contact the Plan Coordinator or careers advisor for your young person.

How can I gain a clearer picture of what to expect? For example, location and size of the business, how many people work there, lunch arrangements etc

The college providing the Supported Internship will be able to give you support with this, and the host business will have an open day which will enable you to visit so you can see more of this for yourself.

Does the intern have to pay for the internship?

No, this an educational programme and will be funded through the young person's Education, Health and Care Plan and Access to Work funding.

Will they get paid whilst they are working?

No, a Supported Internship is classed as an educational programme. Supported interns are in full-time education and their supported internship work placements are part of their course. There is no legal requirement or expectation that the supported intern will be paid. Supported Internships are exempt from the National Minimum Wage regulation.

Will my young person's benefits change by taking on a supported internship?

No, any benefits will not be affected during the time of the Supported Internship as this is classed as education. If your young person progresses into paid employment, then their benefits may be affected, but we will work with you to make sure you have the benefits you are entitled to.

For more information on benefits [visit the Gov.uk website](#).

How long is the Supported Internship?

The Supported Internship is full-time for an academic year. They will spend around 70% of their time in the workplace.

Should my young person apply for college or find an internship with an employer first?

You will need to speak with a college first and they will be able to tell you who the host businesses are. Your young person will then be able to apply for the role through the college.

What happens if a host business is not available for the work my young person is interested in?

Our colleges work with lots of different host businesses. If you can't find a host business your young person is interested in, talk to the college and they will help you to look at other opportunities available.

What transport support is there for my young person to get to and from their placement?

A young person may be entitled to access support for travelling to and from their placement. This is most likely to be offered through Independent Travel Training and/or through the Access to Work grant. Some travel options include a local bus, train or bicycle. The people who are supporting the young person to access this programme will be able to talk this through with you in more detail once they have secured the work placement.

Will they have to work through the school holidays?

Supported Internships are designed to follow the academic year, however, depending upon the placement the young person may have to be flexible to the employer's needs.

What is the 'Access to Work' grant and how is it accessed?

'Access to Work' is funding available to all people in employment who have a physical or mental health condition or disability. For more information on what you can access with this, please visit the government website for more information:

[Gov.uk - Access to Work](#)

What if my young person wants to complete a Supported Internship but isn't quite ready for it yet?

Colleges will be able to determine if a young person is able to enrol on to a Supported Internship and guide them in options that are open to them. Some colleges offer courses that help support young people bridge the gap between education and getting ready for the workplace or a Supported Internship. Speak with your local college about the courses they offer and how they can support your young person.

My young person struggles with attending full time, is there support for this?

Supported Internships are full time placements, as set out by the Department for Education ([DfE Supported Internships Guidance](#)). If a young person needs more time or support to build up to this, speak with the college who will be able to discuss options available.

What is 'full time' employment?

Full time employment is classed as 16 hours or above.

Can I contact the host business?

Parents and carers can contact the host business and you can discuss with the college about how best and often to do this. There is an open event that parents and carers can also attend to view the business and see where your young person will be working.

What is 'work ready'?

Being 'work ready' is about having the skills and confidence to succeed in the workplace. Some examples are maintaining personal hygiene and working with others.

What if I don't want my young person's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to end?

Towards the end of every Supported Internship, an annual review will be held to discuss your young person's progress and next steps. For many, we hope that the Supported Internship will be successful, and they will have either secured a paid job role or be in the process of securing a role or apprenticeship.

If, for whatever reason, the Supported Internship has not been successful and your young person is not yet ready to leave education, discussions will be held about the best next step. This could be an alternative college course or social care provision.

