

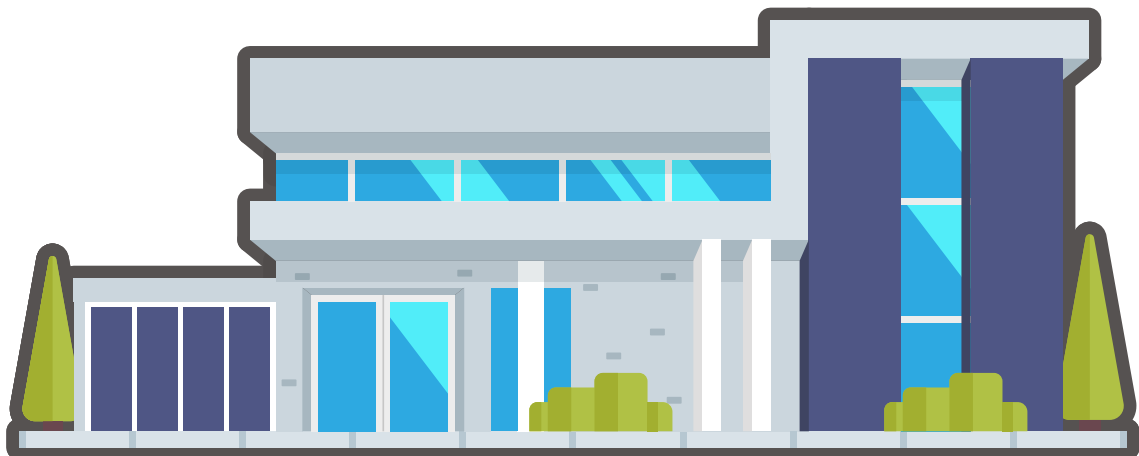
Warwickshire County Council SEND and Inclusion

Supported Internships Guidance for Colleges and Businesses



Contents Page

1. What is a Supported Internship?
2. What are the aims of a Supported Internship?
3. What are the benefits for a Host Business?
4. How is a Supported Intern identified?
5. What is the process for the Host Business and the college?
6. What is the role of the Host Business?
7. What support is available for a Host Business?
8. What is a Job Coach and their role?
9. What sort of business can offer a Supported Internship and how do I become a Host Business?
10. What happens after a Supported Internship?
11. As a business, what can I do to advocate and champion Supported Internships?
12. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



What is a Supported Internship?

A Supported Internship is an unpaid, full time, work-based study programme that supports young people with a special educational need and/or disability (SEND) in getting a paid job.

How do I know it is right for the 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?

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 One day per week completing qualifications, such as English, maths and employability. This may be in college or in work.



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.

For more information on what a good quality Supported Internship should look like, please refer to the **Supported Internship Quality Assurance Framework**



What are the aims of a Supported Internship?



The aim of a Supported Internship is to support the young person in getting a paid job, but they can also help the young person to:

- build their confidence and self-esteem
- increase their health and wellbeing
- gain friendships and a social life



The aim of a Supported Internship is to prepare the young person for working in a paid job. After their placement, they 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.



Supported Internships are not for learners who could access an apprenticeship or traineeship; these programmes differ from Supported Internships in the following ways:

- Young people on a Supported Internship are expected to require a higher level of individualised support.
- Young people are expected to need a longer programme of support than a traineeship (maximum of 6 months) before they are ready to progress onto an apprenticeship or paid work.
- 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 are the benefits for a Host Business?

Supported Internships can support your business to:

- **Grow your own talent.** For many businesses, the process of recruiting and hiring is a drain on company resources.
- **Increase productivity.** Setting up an internship program allows you to benefit from extra sets of hands and help your employees be more productive, preventing them from becoming overburdened by side projects. As well as this, it can free them up to accomplish more creative tasks or enable those who are higher-level to have more time for strategic thinking or to further develop expertise.
- **Increase employee-retention rate.** According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) 2009 Experiential Education Survey, almost 40% of employers reported a higher five-year retention rate among employees they had hired via their internship programmes.
- **Shows your commitment to equality and diversity.** Demonstrates your responsiveness to the full range of learners in your local community and ensures there is diversity in your workplace.
- **Being part of the local community.** Creating an internship program is an excellent way to give back to a community. Offering interns an opportunity not only helps young people in your community get started; research suggests customers also feel more favourable towards companies that hire people with disabilities.
- **New and different perspective.** New people bring with them new perspectives, fresh ideas, and specialised strengths and skillsets. These can also help to enhance the abilities of your workforce.
- **Raising awareness of SEND in workforce and supporting interns to find employment** – offers a positive progression route for young people with SEND to find paid, sustainable employment.

How is a Supported Intern identified?

The young person must have an **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**.

To benefit from a Supported Internship placement young people should:

- have paid employment as their focus and really want to work
- be at the right stage in their educational journey to move into employment

Other important factors include:

- Parents and carers sharing the young person's aspiration to work and wanting them to move into paid employment.
- A young person demonstrating a commitment to workplace guidelines, for example being on time.
- Young people who can practically demonstrate their value in the workplace.

Young people are not expected to be 'work ready' at the beginning of an internship. Wanting to work is much more likely to affect the outcome of the internship.

Supported Internship programmes are a work-based training programme and they should contribute to the young person's long-term career goals.

Placements will be dictated by departments where there is a real business need therefore giving the intern the opportunity to develop their skills through rotations across departments.

Supported Internships are not work experience placements. Supported Internships do not suit young people who are unsure whether they want paid work.

What is the process for a Host Business and College?

Education Lead: This is the education setting that is providing the Supported Internship programme (often this is a college).

Host Business: This is the employer that the Supported Internship is based at.

The preparation year for developing and planning for a Supported Internship programme is an academic year before the start of the placement.

Preparation		
Activity	Expectation of Education Lead	Expectation of Host Business
Agree to partner in the delivery of a Supported Internship <i>(This usually takes place the term before the academic year planning commences i.e. June/July)</i>	Identify a lead contact	Identify a lead contact
Development of Service Level Agreement <i>(This usually takes place Autumn Term 1, September - October)</i>	Develop and share the Service Level Agreement setting out the roles, responsibilities and expectations of the education lead and host business.	Acknowledge and sign Service Level Agreement
Identification of entry-level job roles <i>(This usually takes place Autumn Term 1, September - October)</i>	Support the business to identify job roles/ tasks that do not require specific qualifications or prior training to access.	Identify entry-level job roles, or tasks that can be developed into a job role, that the interns can rotate around. These job roles/ tasks should represent a real business need.

<p>Training and awareness</p> <p><i>(This usually takes place Summer term 1 & 2, April - July)</i></p>	<p>Deliver disabilities awareness and safeguarding training.</p> <p>Advise the protocol for policies and procedures e.g., Health and safety, safeguarding, GDPR, risk assessments and insurance.</p> <p>Advise on responsibilities with materials, i.e., Personal Protective Equipment and other workplace equipment and kit required.</p> <p>Share profiles of successfully recruited interns to identify support needs and any important information key employer contacts need to know.</p>	<p>Ensure key staff/teams are available to attend/catch up with training.</p>
<p>Job coach induction</p> <p><i>(This usually takes place Summer term 1 & 2, April - July)</i></p>	<p>Ensure the job coach has a good understanding of the key principles of supported internships and is trained in systematic instruction and working in line with <u>The Supported Employment National Occupational Standards.</u></p> <p>Allow job coach to visit host business and connect with departments and leads prior to placement commencing.</p>	<p>Share existing induction tools and resources for job role.</p> <p>Allow job coach access to departments, key contacts and leads prior to placement commencing.</p> <p>Allow job coach to observe work tasks being carried out by employees.</p>

Recruitment		
Activity	Expectation of Education Lead	Expectation of Host Business
Develop intern role/job descriptions <i>(This usually takes place Autumn Term 2, November - December)</i>	Present the intern role/job description using uncomplicated language and presenting it in accessible formats. Provide clear information about the working environment. Advertise the roles internally and externally.	Provide the college with a detailed description of the tasks involved in each of the intern's roles.
Recruitment event (currently known as 'Route to Work Event/ Work inspiration Week') <i>(This usually takes place Spring Term 1, January - February)</i>	Agree dates to hold the event. Develop an agenda and agree resource to facilitate.	
	Advertise the event internally and externally. Register young people for the event.	Allow access to scaled-down versions of real intern tasks. Identify key people from each department to be involved
Develop an inclusive process which allows young people to apply for a placement. <i>(This usually takes place Autumn Term 2, November - December)</i>	Allow applications to be submitted in a range of formats. Share the applications received with the host business.	Review all applications shared by the education lead and share reflections from these and observations made at the recruitment event.
Interviews <i>(This usually takes place Spring Term 2, February - March)</i>	Adapt interview to the needs of the young person. Assess the young person's suitability to a supported internship.	
	Offer placements to successful interns.	Share reflections and observations to contribute to the decision to offer placements.

Delivery		
Activity	Expectation of Education Lead	Expectation of Host Business
Intern induction	<p>Job coach learns, breaks down and teaches job tasks to interns.</p> <p>Job coach reinforces workplace expectations and 'unwritten rules'.</p>	<p>Provide job coach with the opportunity to shadow existing employees to observe the completion of tasks.</p> <p>Share tools and resources used by employees to learn and complete tasks.</p>
Intern review meetings (Ongoing and delivered half- termly from Autumn Term 1 to Summer Term 2. September – June/July)	Coordinate and facilitate a half-termly Intern Review Meeting.	Attend and contribute department observations to the meeting.
SEND Employment Forum	Attend and contribute to a SEND Employment Forum aimed at improving the employment outcomes for young people with SEND.	Attend and contribute to a SEND Employment Forum aimed at improving the employment outcomes for young people with SEND.
Job searching / planning positive progression	<p>Facilitate conversation with host business to highlight interns as candidates for positions, identify vacancies and confirm how to apply.</p> <p>Support interns to build CVs, fill-in applications, practice interview skills.</p>	<p>Consider supported interns as viable candidates for vacancies.</p> <p>Consider their own network to highlight supported interns for vacancies elsewhere.</p> <p>Provide references.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for interns to practice interview skills.</p>

<p>Annual review</p> <p><i>(This should happen in the final term of the Internship - April - June)</i></p>	<p>Establish the success of the Supported Internship and if the young person has gained employment/ is on the pathway to gaining employment.</p> <p>Any next steps for the young person and any further help and support they may need.</p> <p>Establish if the EHCP is to be ceased.</p>	<p>Provide feedback for how the Internship has gone and progress the young person has made.</p> <p>Highlight any additional support the young person is going to need ongoing in the workplace.</p> <p>Can the young person apply for a role in your business?</p>
<p>Signposting</p>	<p>Identify ongoing services to support interns to sustain employment.</p> <p>Where appropriate refer for support for ongoing job searching.</p>	



What should happen 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 is the role of the Host Business?

The role of the host business is to work with the college to host Supported Internships within your organisation. You will be offering the intern the opportunity to experience three different job roles within the three rotations typically required for a Supported Internship.

The host business is to provide the intern with an appropriate setting to carry out and complete work; ensuring that this work is varied, engaging and appropriate for the intern on the programme. In addition, although job coaches will provide much of the day-to-day support for the intern, it is important for the host business to provide effective line management, supervision and support, so the intern feels comfortable and supported by all parties.

What support is available for the Host Business?

The education provider and/or job coach will work closely with the host business to arrange inductions and ensure that the intern is fully supported while settling in and that the host business is supported during this period as well.

The job coach will also support the host business to make any reasonable adjustments needed for the intern, to ensure that their needs are effectively met throughout the internship.

What is a Job Coach and their role?

Intern:

Job coaches must be TSI (Training in Systematic Instruction) trained or working towards this certification.

The role of a job coach is to support the intern in the work placement. The job coach breaks down the tasks involved so that the intern is able to learn the job.

Job coaches will use the Vocational Profiling tool and local labour market information (LMI) from the start of the internship to support the intern's transition into sustained employment.

The college can apply for additional funding to make adjustments for the intern. If additional practical support and/or equipment is required to help the intern to do the job, the 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.

Business:

A job coach can help the host business identify what adaptations need to be made in order to accommodate the young person and any training that may be required. They will support the young person to access the work tasks and therefore may act as a 'middle' person between the business and young person.

The job coach should explore the moral responsibility with the host business to retain the intern in further employment once the programme is completed, establishing from the outset why the business wants to offer Supported Internships and what the future paid employment prospects are to ensure everyone has the right intentions.

What sort of business can offer a Supported Internship and how to become a Host Business?

A Supported Internship can be hosted by businesses from a wide range of sectors. The programme should be developed from an identified job need and represent entry-level roles that can be accessed without the need for specific qualifications or training. A business considering their suitability, might want to consider:

- Their capacity to accommodate interns and their job coach for up to five days a week (typically 3-4 days).
- The identification of job roles that allow the interns enough tasks to occupy their time each day and fulfil a real job need that ultimately contributes to the efficiency, capacity, and productivity of departments they are working in. (The education provider can support this identification.)
- Their capacity to allow department colleagues to provide mentorship to interns and contribute to their ongoing progress reviews.

Offering a Supported Internship demonstrates a business' commitment to SEND Employment and presents opportunity to:

- Diversify the workforce
- Give back to the community
- Shape job roles that respond to the needs of the business

Businesses who offer Supported Internships should do so on the basis of wanting to retain the interns in further employment, subject to performance and the interns' aspirations and readiness.

If you are interested in becoming a Host Business, we would encourage you to become a Fair Chance Employer with the Warwickshire Skills Hub. To find out more about the Fair Chance Employer scheme, visit the **Warwickshire Skills Hub website**.

We would also encourage you to contact your local college, please see a list of Warwickshire colleges below and links to their websites:

- **Hereward College**
- **North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College (NWSLC)**
- **Stratford Upon Avon College**
- **Warwickshire College Group (WCG)**

As an organisation, you could also consider becoming a Disability Confident Employer. To find out more about the Disability Confident Employer Scheme (DCES), visit the **Department for Work and Pensions DCES webpage**.



What happens after a Supported Internship?

The aim of a Supported Internship is to prepare the young person for working in a paid job. They 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.

They could also carry on training by doing an **apprenticeship**.

An Annual Review meeting will be held towards the end of their internship, to discuss their exit route from education into employment, and the ceasing of their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

EHCPs cease for young people in full-time paid employment, as the Local Authority is no longer responsible for their EHCP. It's important to note that the ceasing of an EHCP does not necessarily mean that support from social care or health services will cease. It would be important for agencies from social care and health to attend the final Annual Review, where possible.

Upon host businesses signing up for the scheme, there is an ethical expectation (agreement) of the host business to employ an intern after their placement OR support them with finding employment with business peers.

Below is the % and number of interns gaining paid employment on the back of a Supported Internship based on their age:

**Age and
Conversation
Rates to Paid
Employment**



Age	Employment Outcome %	Number
16	64.3%	9
17	64.4%	65
18	67.1%	153
19	69.4%	170
20	61.1%	129
21	63.4%	90
22	61.0%	72
23	60.0%	39
24	69.1%	38
25	71.4%	10

To support with finding employment, the 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**

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

How can businesses advocate and champion Supported Internships?

- **Local area business forums** - be part of the governance committee overseeing Supported Internships for your local area.
- **Role model** - promote supported internship models throughout your business and to partner external businesses.
- **Promote opportunities** - recruit other departments or other businesses to host internships and promote internal recruitment of interns for openings that are a good fit with their skills.
- **Share learning and experiences** - promote and help other businesses understand the culture of your organisation and share the learning and experiences gained with other business hosts.
- **Share the good news** - utilise your organisations marketing opportunities to promote the opportunities of supported internships successes and achievements within your organisation.

Frequently Asked Questions?

Does the intern have to pay for the programme?

No, this an educational programme and will be funded through their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and Access to Work grant.

Will the intern get paid whilst they are working?

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 the young person's benefits change by doing a Supported Internship?

No, any benefits the young person and/or their family receives are not affected during the time of the supported internship placement as this is still education. If progress is made into paid employment, then benefits may be affected. For more information on benefits [visit the Gov.uk website.](#)

How long is the Supported Internship Programme?

Supported Internships last for a minimum of six months, and up to a year (this is national guidance – see [Department for Education Guidance on Supported Internships.](#)

Supported interns are enrolled and supported by a learning provider, for example, a school or college, but spend most of their learning time - typically around 70% - in a workplace.

What support is there for the intern 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 the intern 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.

Will hosting an intern impact my businesses staff capacity?

Interns are an extra resource, therefore their induction would be similar to any other new trainee/ employee. Once they have mastered their role, tasks and expectations, the intern will increase your staff capacity.

What support will the business need to implement for the intern?

This will differ between the various interns and the colleges and job coaches will support you with what you will need to do.

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](#)**