

Easy Read Guide: What are Supported Internships

Supported Internships are work-based learning placements within mainstream employment settings. The aim is to secure a job at the end of the placement. Placements should last over 6 months and normally would be at least 20 hours per week.

The following resource is an easy read document designed for young people which answers the questions:

- What do I need to know about getting a job?
- What are Supported Internships?
- How can I find out about Supported Internships where I live?
- When should I tell people I want a Supported Internship?
- How do I know a Supported Internships programme is good?
- How can I get the funding and will it affect my benefits?
- Can young people with a learning disability get paid jobs?
- How does it work?
- Anything else?

This easy read guide can also be found online:

<https://www.ndti.org.uk/assets/docs/What-are-Supported-Internships-Easy-Read.pdf>



What are Supported Internships?



A Short Guide for Young People

What do I need to know about getting a job?



Many young people with additional needs want to get a job.

It can be hard for them to get a job.

Young people with more complex needs often find it very hard to get a job.



Since 2013 all young people (16- 24), including those an Education Health and Care Plan have been offered a study programme.



A study programme is a course that is put together for a young person that will:

- help you get a job and live independently
- get qualifications if that is what you need
- help you with Maths and English so you can use them in real life

What are Supported Internships?

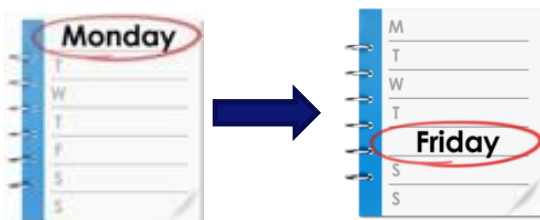


Supported internships can be a good way of having a study programme that helps you to get a job.

What makes supported Internships different is that you do most of your learning at work. This means you can **'learn on the job'**.



You may spend a little time at college each week, but most of your time will be spent on a work placement.



Supported internships run from Monday to Friday during term time.

A supported internship could be the right choice for you if you know you learn best by 'doing'.

The most important thing is that you really want to get paid work.

Supported internships are all about working towards a paid job.



How can I find out about Supported Internships where I live?

You can find out about supported internships:



- from school
- from college
- from your social worker
- Your local authority Local Offer
- Your case officer



Your Local Authority has to publish a Local Offer.

This will tell you what is available locally, including what help there is to get a paid job.

When should I tell people I want a Supported Internship?



As soon as you think you might want a supported internship you should talk to your teacher or your transition worker.

This could be at your Year 9 or 10 review at school, when you are thinking about work and work experience.

How do I know a Supported Internship programme is good?

Good, supported internships will:



- have been checked by the local employment forum
- have clear information about the internship and how it works.
- have a way for you to talk to someone who has done a supported internship and find out how it worked for them.
- spend time with you and your family making sure that the internship is right for you and that you really do want to get paid work.
- have job coaches to help you think about your skills and what you want to do.
- keep checking that things are working well.

How can I get the funding and will it affect my benefits?



If you are aged 16 to 24 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan, your local authority and colleges provide the funding for the programme.

You can get extra money called Access to Work (you will have to fill in an application form).

This money is for your support to go to work.

You will still be able to get benefits for your day-to-day life.

If you want more information about benefits and funding, you should talk to your social worker.

They will also be able to help you work out how paid work will affect your benefits.



Can young people with learning difficulties or disabilities really get paid jobs?



Yes!

You can find some stories of young people's experiences of Supported Internships here:

<https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/preparing-for-adulthood-all-tools-resources/pfa-case-studies-stories>

How does it work?



Anya is 16 and in Year 11 at school. She lives with her parents, her brother and her pets.

She found out about supported internships from her friend Marek and from her transition worker.

They talked about it at her Year 10 review in school.



Marek told Anya how college sorted out his supported internship in the local supermarket.

He has a paid job there now and really likes it.



In February, Anya went with her Mum to an information session at the local college where she heard from other young people who had been on a supported internship.

She thought it sounded great and decided that's what she wanted to do!



In March, Anya and her Mum went to a meeting with people at college to talk about the supported internship programme.

Anya had to show that she really wanted to get a job and that she would stick at the internship.

Anya's Mum had to show that she would support Anya to do this.

In June, Anya and her Mum met a **job coach** called Mary.

She helped Anya think about all the things she is good at, the things she knows about and what her dreams for the future are.

Anya loves shopping and enjoys being stylish and helping others choose an outfit.

Mary helped Anya think about the things that she was good at that could help her to have a job in fashion such as at a clothes store.





Mary and Anya talked about the things she wanted to learn about at college.



They agreed that Anya would work on understanding money better...



...keep working on her reading...



...and that she would learn to use the bus to get to her work placement and to college.



At the clothes store she will have the chance to learn about different jobs.



The first thing Anya wants to learn is how to help a customer find what they are looking for.



She also wants to practice talking to people on the phone.



Anya's internship starts in **September**...

...it will finish in **July** next year.



Anya will spend one day a week in college.

She will spend 4 days a week at a big clothing department store.

She will go to work all year, even during the college holidays.



She will agree some holiday days with the clothing store just like everyone else who works there.

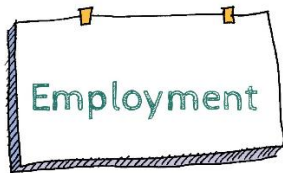


Mary will keep supporting Anya at the clothing store in and her tutor at college.

They will keep talking about the things that Anya needs to learn about at college or at work.

They will keep working towards Anya getting a paid job.

Anything else?



You can find more information about supported employment here:

<https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/preparing-for-adulthood-all-tools-resources/pfa-employment-resources>



This document was created by the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) and updated for **Internships Work**.



Internships Work is a programme designed and delivered by NDTi, British Association of Supported Employment and DFN Project SEARCH, and funded by the Department for Education.



You can find more information about Internships Work here:

<https://www.ndti.org.uk/projects/internships-work>





The images in this document are from PhotoSymbols:

www.photosymbols.com

This resource was created by the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) as part of the [Internships Work](#) programme and was updated in June 2025 following the extension of the programme to 2026.



Improving supported internship provision in England.

