

Employment 'How To' Guide



About this guide

What we were asked to do

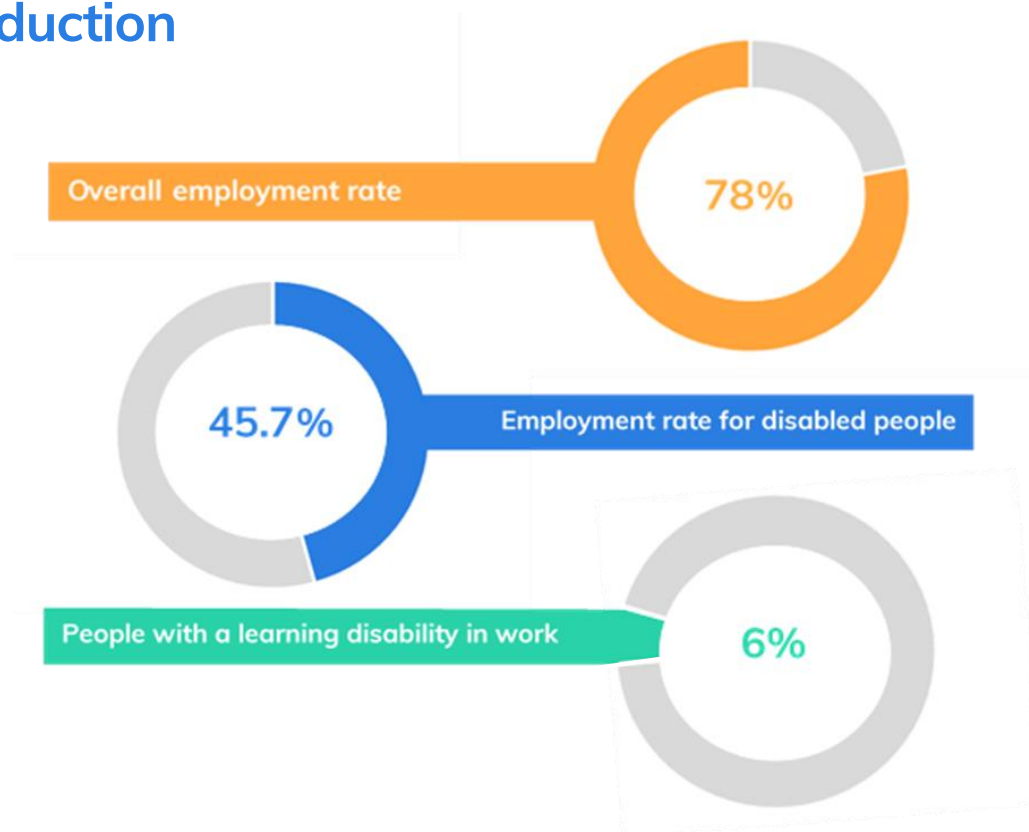
Develop resources on 'how-to' documents on the topics of job carving, working interviews and associated information agreed with EHIU to support the LDEP support programme that will be delivered in 2019/20 and 2020/21. Including key learning from COVID-19.

Aims & contents of the guide

This guide aims to provide information for staff and HR colleagues so that they are aware of the range of pathways available for people to access employment. The topics covered in this guide are raised frequently by employers.

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Introduction



The employment rate for disabled people stands at 45.7% against an overall employment rate of 78%, and yet only 6% of people with a learning disability are in work. This makes them the most excluded group from the workforce, despite over 68% of people stating that they want to work. This also means that people with learning disabilities have the lowest employment rate of any single disadvantaged group of people in the UK.

One of the primary reasons for this low employment rate is that employers unintentionally exclude people with learning disabilities through their recruitment practices. For example, an individual with a learning disability will usually find a competency-based interview asking a series of hypothetical questions particularly difficult and this is likely to prevent the candidate from demonstrating what they can do.

Employers aim to recruit the ‘best and brightest’ who impress them in interview, and then wonder why they have to recruit again when their highflier has moved on, or even worse, failed to live up to the high expectation set! The alternative approach of getting to know the individual through a different recruitment process can deliver more reliable results and positive outcomes for the employer and the employee.

Many examples from across the UK and internationally demonstrate that with the right support people with a learning disability, including those with more severe learning disabilities, can secure and keep paid jobs and be valued by their employers.

Work experience

Work experience is an important part of any young person's journey towards employment. Evidence shows that young people who have four or more quality work experience-type activities, while still in education, are five times more likely to enter into the labour market. Young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) often struggle to gain one meaningful experience of being in the workplace, and this has an impact on the current resulting employment rate statistics.

Work experience is a great way to introduce young people with SEND into your workplace. It can help an employer to access a wider range of talent and engage with your local community, with the potential of employing people longer term. It can add to any workforce development plans and be a great opportunity for staff development. Working with a diverse group of young people can provide fresh ideas, which can further support business development. It is possible to offer different types of work experience depending on the needs of the employer and the individual:

Experiential work experience where a young person accesses one or two short periods of work experience to broaden their understanding of the world of work, and to inform future study options i.e., one or two short periods of work experience or other work-related learning to test out vocational ideas connected to future study options, such as a study visit, projects and engagement with local enterprise.

The vocational model where a young person is matched to an employer linked to their longer-term employment aspirations. With a clear development plan in place, they layer up the skills needed to do the job. This is often undertaken one or two days a week, for an extended period of time.

The extended model is a part of a structured study programme, where the student is based primarily with an external employer for extended work placement, i.e., a supported internship, intended to help students obtain sustainable paid employment by equipping them with the skills for work through learning in the workplace. The internship normally lasts for a year and includes an unpaid work placement of at least 6 months.

Most work experience at schools and colleges follows the experiential model and can be important in raising aspirations. However, the vocational model can be significant in leading to real employment. Meaningful work experience for young people with SEND can be incredibly rewarding for everyone involved; where the young person, their family, and the employer all develop knowledge and learning that means they become more committed to young people with SEND working and taking part in society.

Key points (work experience)

- Raises aspirations of the young people and families.
- Demonstrates what young people can achieve and encourages colleagues to think differently about what individuals with learning disabilities can do, but also provides an opportunity to discover what you don't like to do!
- Work experience is an opportunity to introduce young people to the world of work, to build the skills needed to help them get a job in the future.

Link to the preparing for Adulthood (PfA) work experience guide:

<https://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/SiteAssets/Downloads/atdcddest636760783782688847.pdf>

Vocational profiles

A vocational profile is a way of gathering information. It is a person centred approach to finding out what a person wants to do, it provides an opportunity to understand what a person is interested in and explore why. It is a discovery document that is specifically related to work and supporting someone to find a job. It is an in-depth fact-finding tool that is all about work, what a person is good at, and helps to find out what work they have tried. For some young people, particularly those with more complex needs, if it has not been done then we don't know enough about a person in relation to their aspirations for work to get the best match of a job for them.

A vocational profile provides the following:

- An opportunity to get to know the individual really well, to understand their strengths and skills, to help someone to identify what they want to do and the steps needed to help them achieve this.
- An opportunity to find out what a person is interested in and what their skills and talents are.
- It is a way of opening doors to what is possible. It should be a motivating conversation not one that leaves young people feeling they can't succeed.
- If done well, a vocational profile should be done through a conversation or series of short conversations, ideally with someone who is going to support the person on a work placement or internship, or by a job coach in a supported employment organisation to help the person find and keep a job.

Key points (vocational profiles)

- It's a **person centred approach** to finding out what a person wants to do, it provides an opportunity to understand what a person is interested in and explores why.
- It can be **used from school year 8 or 9 as part of the school curriculum**.
- It could also be **used by a job coach** within a supported employment organisation and should be reviewed yearly.
- It is a **discovery document**, that is specifically related to work and supporting someone to find a job.
- It can provide an employer a **summary of a person's interests and experiences**.

Link to the PfA vocational profile tool and webcast:

<https://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/downloads/person-centred-planning/vocational-profile.htm>

Working interviews

A working interview is usually negotiated by a job coach who knows the individual well and knows they can do a job but would not easily succeed in a traditional interview setting. Working interviews are a useful way of observing a young person while they complete tasks related to the work role.

- Working interviews can provide the opportunity for an employer to see what a young person can do.
- This is a good way for an employee to demonstrate how well they can do the job before the employer commits to offering a paid job.
- A working interview can be used as a reasonable adjustment for a person with a disability.
- It provides an opportunity for the individual to practically demonstrate their ability to do the job and the employer can assess their skills and abilities.

Key Points (working interviews)

- Allows the individual to [demonstrate what they can do](#).
- Can be used as [a reasonable adjustment](#) for a person with a disability.
- Takes the place of a traditional interview.

Job carving

Job carving is a term for customising job duties (e.g., to create job roles by freeing up the time of specialist staff or swapping job duties to make the most of an individual's skills) and can be used in different circumstances. Job carving can be considered as a reasonable adjustment. It may be that an individual is capable of completing a high percentage of the job tasks, so employer and job coach negotiate job duties across a team so that tasks are shared in a fair and equitable way.

- Job carving can be used to tailor a job so that it is suitable for a particular worker.
- There are times where it may not always be possible to find a candidate that can complete all the tasks involved in doing a particular job.
- Job carving is a term for customising job duties and can be used in different circumstances.
- Job carving can help with considering whether an individual could carry out a role which is adapted from one or more traditional job roles. This might free up some existing staff from tasks which they don't have time to complete.

Key Points (job carving)

- Job carving is a term for [customising job duties](#) and can be used in different circumstances.
- Job carving can be considered as [a reasonable adjustment](#).
- Job carving is used to [analyse tasks](#) in a job role and swap an element of the job duties to [make the most of individuals' skills](#).

Job coach role

A job coach is an individual who is employed to help people with disabilities learn, accommodate and perform their work duties. In addition to working on skills related to performing specific tasks, a job coach also helps with interpersonal skills necessary in the workplace. The role is to support young people to enable them to learn from work placements and to make a positive progression into paid employment, even if they need high levels of support. Effective job coaching means being creative and flexible so that the person being supported gets just the right amount of support to learn the job well.

Job coaches are able to recognise when and how to provide support, and when to increase, decrease or remove it.

- The job coach liaises directly between the education provider, employer, young person and family.
- Job coaches should hold a level 3 certificate in supported employment and be trained in systematic instruction (TSI).
- Many work experience placements will not involve a job coach, and school staff will be the key liaison person with the employer.
- The job coach can provide support including visual aids, disability awareness training and job carving as a recruitment tool working with young people with SEND to support them into your workplace.

Key points (job coaches)

- The role of a job coach is to support young people to enable them to find and [learn from work placements](#) and to make a [positive progression into paid employment](#), even if they need high levels of support.
- It is a [professional role](#) and requires job coaches to be trained.
- Effective job coaching means being creative and flexible so that the person being supported gets [just the right amount of support](#) to learn the job well.
- Job coaches are able to [recognise when and how to provide support](#), and when to increase, decrease or remove it.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships combine practical training in a job with study. Depending on the level, apprenticeships take 1 to 5 years to complete. Apprentices work alongside experienced staff to gain job-specific skills. Apprentices earn a wage and get holiday pay and get time for study related to their role (usually one day a week).

Apprenticeships are available at different levels, from level 2 to level 7. As the levels get higher, the apprenticeships become more advanced. For example, a level 2 (intermediate) apprenticeship is equivalent to a GCSE, and levels 6 and 7 are equivalent to a degree. An apprentice must be 16 or over, live in England and not be in full-time education.

- In 2017, legislation came into effect which changed the minimum English and Maths requirements needed to complete an apprenticeship for people with a learning difficulty or disability who have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCp).
- The changes lower the English and Maths requirements for these apprentices to an Entry Level 3 qualification.
- It makes completing an apprenticeship more achievable for those who are able to meet all the occupational requirements to be fully competent in their role, but who may struggle to achieve English and Maths qualifications at the level normally required.
- The Government provides extra funding to support apprentices with SEND. Payments of £1,000 each are available for training providers and employers with apprentices aged 16-18, or 19-24 who have an EHC plan or were previously in care.
- Access to Work funding is also available to support apprentices in the workplace.

Key points (apprenticeships)

- Apprenticeships combine practical training in a job with study.
- Must be 16 or over, live in England and not be in full-time education.
- Apprenticeships are jobs, so employers decide who they are going to employ and what the entry requirements should be. Some employers may ask that the young person has GCSEs including English and Maths at certain grades.
- The minimum English and Maths requirements for apprentices with a learning difficulty or disability who EHC plan start at an Entry Level 3 qualification.

Further information about apprenticeships can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-guide-for-employers> and <http://www.employer-toolkit.org.uk/>.

Traineeships

Traineeships are for young people who want to work, but who need extra help and support. They offer young people training and work experience to give them the skills and confidence to get a job or apprenticeship, alongside support to improve their Maths and English.

Traineeships are open to young people aged 16-24 who are eligible to work in England; are unemployed and have little or no work experience and have qualifications below Level 3. The delivery of traineeships is generally a partnership between education and training providers and employers.

Traineeships offer a work experience placement, work preparation and English and Maths (if needed). The work placement is unpaid, but employers sometimes cover expenses for travel and meals. The programme can last up to 6 months and is funded through a provider's existing funding allocation on a per student basis by the Education Funding Agency (EFA).

Key points (traineeships)

- [Work experience placement.](#)
- [Open to young people aged 16-24 who are unemployed](#) and have little or no work experience and have qualifications below Level 3.
- They last between [6 weeks to 6 months.](#)
- [Additional support](#) to improve English and Maths.

Supported internships

A supported internship is a structured study programme based primarily with an employer. They enable young people aged 16-24 with an Education Health and Care plan (EHCp) to achieve sustainable paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need for work, through learning in the workplace.

The extended work placements for supported internships are unpaid, because participating in the internship is part of the young person's programme of study at their school or college and they last for a minimum of six months.

Wherever possible, they support the young person to move into paid employment at the end of the programme. In addition to spending the majority of their time with the employer, young people complete a personalised study programme which includes the chance to study for relevant substantial qualifications, if appropriate, plus English and Maths. They have proven to be an effective way of helping young people with additional needs into work.

Supported internships should be personalised to the needs of the young person and be flexible so that they meet the needs of the young person and the employer. The job coach will work with you to arrange the induction and settling in period and provide as much support as is needed throughout this time.

The job coach will also support the employer to make any reasonable adjustments that may be needed. These often cost nothing and can be of benefit to other employees as well. Where there is a cost, the job coach will apply for funding from the Department for Work and Pensions Access to Work fund to cover it.

As the young person becomes more confident and able, the job coach will gradually withdraw their support, but the employer will still be able to contact them at any time if any issues arise.

What role does an employer play with a supported internship?

Getting the right young person into the right job role with the right employer is critical to the success of a supported internship. The job coach will work with employers to identify a job role that fulfils a real business need for their organisation and ensure that someone is matched to the job role for the extended work placement. The role can develop over time as the employer gets to know what the young person can do.

The employer will need to provide effective line management and supervision of the intern as with other employees, although support for the individual intern will be provided by the job coach, especially at first.

Key points (supported internships)

- A supported internship means young people does most of their **learning at work** or 'on the job'.
- A **job coach will support the individual** to learn about the job and negotiate any reasonable adjustments.
- A supported internship could be the right choice if **the individual learns best by doing** (known as a 'place and train' approach) and when a person needs more time or support than would be available through a traineeship or apprenticeship.
- Previous work experience outside of school or college is also really important.

Reasonable adjustments

Employers may need to make some adjustments for an individual with a learning disability. The adjustments rarely cost anything and can actually benefit the whole workplace.

Examples of reasonable adjustments include:

- Waive the standard recruitment process and use [supported working interviews or work trials](#) instead.
- A working interview or work trial are different to work experience because there should always be the [opportunity of a paid job](#) at the end of the working interview (approx. 1-3 weeks). The candidate should be supported in the working interview by a trained job coach. The employer should enter the arrangement with the understanding that if the candidate completes the working interview successfully, they will be offered the job.
- If the employer insists on having an interview, make it as short and informal as possible and [the candidate should be supported appropriately](#) during the interview. Preferably the interview should be a formality after a successful working interview.
- [Make changes to standard procedures](#), e.g., filing systems can be colour coded; information documents could be put into easy read; operating processes could be issued in the form of photographs; and health and safety procedures could be explained through a tour of the building.
- [Support from a job coach is a reasonable adjustment and Access to Work can finance the costs and of such support](#). Access to Work is available for support during the pre-employment period, not only when someone has started a job. Contact your Access to Work team locally to find out more.
- [Natural workplace supports](#) are always a good idea. Encourage the employer to look at natural support they could provide via a workplace buddy or mentor. Again, experience tells us that this is often a very rewarding experience for a workplace colleague.

Offering employment options during COVID-19

The labour market has been adversely affected by the current pandemic but people still want to work. The following points provide an overview of what needs to be available in the workplace for employment to still be an option for people with a learning disability and to keep everyone safe.

An employer must protect people from harm. This includes taking reasonable steps to protect workers and others from COVID-19. A risk assessment should be carried out to manage risk and protect people. The safety guidelines should be clear for all individuals; if a person has additional needs, safety guideline should be explained clearly, the use of pictures may help a person better understand what is required to ensure the workplace is safe for them and their work colleagues.

Employers should identify what work activity or situations might cause transmission of the virus and think about who could be at risk. They should decide how likely it is that someone could be exposed and act to remove the activity or situation, or if this isn't possible, control the risk.

Employers should think about:

- Where and how work is carried out, consider if there are jobs and tasks that can be changed to reduce risk.
- Identify everyone who can work from home, if they can.
- Provide equipment needed for employees to work safely and effectively at home (for example laptops, mobile phones, video conferencing equipment).
- Keep in regular contact with people working from home, making sure their wellbeing is discussed and help them to feel they are still part of the workforce.
- Where it is not be possible to work from home, the guidance on social distancing and hygiene (handwashing with soap and water often, for at least 20 seconds) should be followed.
- The minimum number of people needed to carry out work tasks safely.
- Identify where people can travel alone in their own transport (or walk/cycle if it is safe to do so) when getting to and from work to maintain social distancing.
- Stagger arrival and departure times so people can keep to the social distancing rules by not using entry/exit points at the same time.
- Provide handwashing facilities (running water, soap and paper towels or electrical dryers) at entry/exit points.
- Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect workers.
- People should be able to wash their hands when they get to work and before they leave. If this is not possible, provide hand sanitiser.

Work areas

Employers should think about how work areas are organised so that people can follow Public Health England guidelines on social distancing where possible.

www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19

- Physically arrange work areas so people can socially distance.
- Mark areas using floor paint or tape to help people social distance.
- Provide signage to remind people to keep social distance.
- Avoid people working face-to-face, for example by working side-by-side.
- Where social distancing is not possible, employers should think about assigning one person per work area.
- Reduce the number of people in the work area.
- Assign and keep people to shift teams (sometimes known as a cohort or bubble); i.e., people on the same shift working in the same teams, to limit social interaction.
- Keep the number of people who cannot socially distance to a minimum.
- Use screens to create a physical barrier between people.

Keeping work areas clean

- Decide on how frequently you need to clean the work area, equipment and vehicles, e.g., cleaning at the end of each use if equipment is shared between people or between shift changeovers.
- Identify objects and surfaces that are touched regularly and decide how frequently you clean them.
- Provide hand sanitiser for people getting in and out of vehicles or handling deliveries if they are unable to wash their hands.
- Restrict the amount that people rotate between jobs and equipment.
- Limit the number of people who use lifts and work vehicles.
- Reduce the number of people in high traffic areas including lifts, corridors and walkways.
- Mark areas using floor paint or tape to help people social distance.