

## Supported Internship Executive Summary

### 1. What is a 'Supported Internship'?

**Supported internships** are structured study programmes based primarily at an employer. They are intended to enable young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to achieve sustainable, paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need for work through learning in the workplace.

**Supported internships** are unpaid, and last for a minimum of six months.

### 2. The aim of supported internships.

The aim of **supported internships** is to prepare young people with additional needs for paid employment by:

- Supporting them to develop the skills valued by employers;
- Enabling them to demonstrate their value in the workplace;
- Developing confidence in their own abilities to perform successfully at work.

Whilst the ideal outcome from a supported internship will be the offer of a paid job from an employer, other outcomes include:

- Building up experience for a CV, demonstrating that the young person has the skills and willingness to work;
- Changing the perception of employers about employing people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
- Changing the perception of the young person's family that they can work;
- Improving skills in English and maths that enable the young person to be better prepared for work, including handling money, interacting with the public, and practising interview skills; and
- Becoming independent travellers.

### 3. Can we make it easy for an employer?

The simple answer is yes. The process is fully supported. In the initial government trial of Supported Internships feedback from employers included the following points:

- Gets you involved in a new, ground-breaking project.
- Access to specialist job matching.
- We act as free recruitment company so reduce recruitment costs.
- Interns may have skills currently lacking in existing staff (e.g. high-functioning autism can result in young people having significantly above-average accuracy).
- Money-saving due to job carving.
- In-work training provided by job coach.
- It acts as an extended working interview, which gives you an increased chance of getting the right person.
- Increased diversity of workforce to reflect your customers and society.
- Disability awareness training for staff (provided by us).
- Contribution to society.
- Help achieving equality and diversity targets.
- Increased staff retention (evidence of lower staff turnover amongst people with a disability).
- Potential supervisory or mentoring opportunities for junior staff.
- Your competition is offering internships!

#### **4. What are the benefits for a young person?**

The benefits for the young people involved in a structured Supported Internship are quite simply life changing.

The overwhelming majority of young people with SEN are capable of sustainable paid employment with the right preparation and support.

The government have targeted four outcomes for young people with disabilities. They are:

- Employment
- Independent Living
- Health
- Community Participation

All four outcomes can be achieved through a Supported Internship.

#### **5. What are the benefits for an employer?**

The recruitment of quality staff poses a challenge to any organisation. Our aim is to embed Supported Internships as simply one successful recruitment tool that your organization uses.

Benefits for the employer and its employees include:

- Improved image and external reputation with a workforce that reflects the diversity of local communities;
- Team building and internal reputation with improved staff morale;
- Personal development opportunities for staff;
- Diversity-improved services and products to attract the “purple pound” - the spending power of disabled people estimated to be £80 billion in the UK;
- Improved understanding of the needs of customers with disabilities;
- Ability to recruit from a wider availability of labour to ensure they employ the best people for their job vacancies;
- Early identification of talent, and development of a local workforce that comes with values that fit their business needs;
- Reduced recruitment costs with a supported selection process;
- Improved staff retention;
- Corporate social responsibility and being seen as an “employer of choice”
- Positive change to workplace culture and practice.

**We look forward to work alongside you very soon!**