



Colleges

Employers

Interns

Deaf and
Disabled
People's
Organisations

Supported Internships

Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations:
The missing piece

A guide for employers



Making it Work



CITY
OF
LONDON

Inclusion
London

Supporting London's Deaf and
Disabled People's Organisations

“

We're now seeing a strong pipeline of our recruits being snapped up by other businesses because they can see people with learning difficulties doing complex work and being as productive as everyone else.

”

Colin Brummage, Employment Services Manager
2006-2016, Action on Disability

Making it Work is funded by City Bridge Trust as part of their Bridge to Work programme. Through this programme City Bridge Trust funds six organisations across London who are using a variety of approaches to support young Disabled people into work (<https://www.citybridgetrust.org.uk/bridge-to-work/>).

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Introduction:

What is 'Making it Work'?

It is a five year programme to improve young Disabled people's chances of employment and challenge the barriers to getting into work. Run by Inclusion London it is delivered in partnership with Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs) across London. It is funded by the City Bridge Trust.

Our programme builds DDPOs' capacity to deliver employment support for Disabled people. This includes setting up Supported Internships and creating training which uses a rights-based and social model approach.

We challenge old ideas about employment support and assumptions made about Disabled people, test out new models and support changes to policy and practice to remove barriers to employment.



**I ended up on this reception desk in January.
I worked hard and here I am today.**



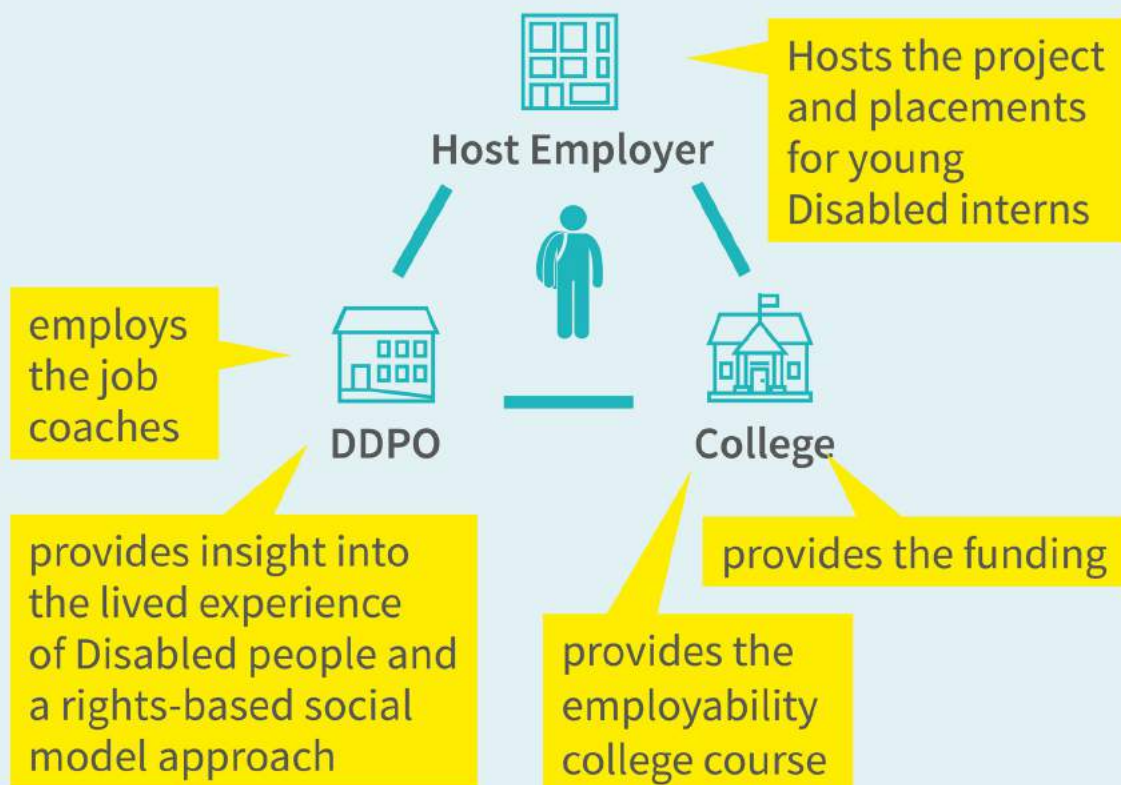
**Ian, 20, now a permanent
Receptionist at GlaxoSmithKline**

Section 1

Our Supported Internship model

Our Supported Internship model is similar to a year-long Further Education college course but it is based in a workplace. It provides an opportunity for young people with learning difficulties to learn new skills on the job, to understand workplace culture and to find out what level of support they need at work and how to ask for it. It is based on a model developed by Action on Disability, a London-based Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation.¹

The Supported Internship is a three way partnership between a host employer, a Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation (DDPO) and a college. Each internship is for 8-12 students who spend nine months with a 'host' employer. During this time they complete an accredited employability skills qualification and do three work placements (each lasting 10-12 weeks) in different parts of the organisation. There is a full time college tutor and at least one job coach on site. The job coach helps the interns to learn the job in each work placement and then to find a job towards the end of the programme.²



¹ <https://actionondisability.org.uk/>

² For official government guidance on supported internships:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-internships-for-young-people-with-learning-difficulties>



What makes this model successful?

It is **ambitious and inclusive**. The programme aims for 100% of the internship graduates to find jobs in mainstream, inclusive settings and regularly achieves over a 70% success rate. The jobs will be paid at the going rate and not seasonal or zero hours contracts. The jobs are likely to be at entry level. Graduates are encouraged to be ambitious, expect career progression and ask for training and promotion opportunities.

“

Ian [an intern] fitted in right from the beginning and we obviously saw the potential very quickly. I would say to other departments that they should give it a go because very quickly they will see the commitment that these young guys will give to the department. Ian learnt to use the systems very quickly as well so, when a vacancy came up, he was the strongest candidate for the position.

”

Belen Jones, Conference Reception Manager, Sodexo.
Ian is now a permanent Receptionist at GlaxoSmithKline

The internships are **employer-focused**. They are usually based in large employers who have a variety of potential work placement opportunities, although we are exploring ways of creating consortia of employers in similar industries to work collaboratively. The host employer provides a classroom space on site and is involved in all critical decisions. The interns learn marketable, transferable skills on the job and make a positive contribution to the employer's business outputs.



The internship partners have **shared values**. The partners are given disability equality training and support the social model of disability. They focus on a barriers-based approach to employment support and value the lived experience of Disabled people.

The internship has a **collaborative and problem solving approach**. The host employer, college and the DDPO have a collective and individual responsibility to supporting young Disabled people into work. The roles and responsibilities of all the partners are clearly defined and they are all members of a Steering Group which meets regularly, raises problems early and finds agreed solutions and ways of moving forward.

Many employers want to employ more Disabled people but find it difficult to reach, recruit and retain them. Employers can find it difficult to identify barriers within their organisation and to encourage Disabled staff to disclose their impairments.

“

When I'm here, at GSK, it still feels like a bit of a dream. My interest in fitness is because I'm very conscious about my health. Whenever they ask me to do something I make sure that I try and do it to the best of my ability.

”

Dejan, 19, Gym Assistant, Sodexo
(now a self-employed fitness instructor)



This Supported Internship model offers employers the opportunity to:

- Learn about disability equality both through training and in practice by having a cohort of Disabled people in the workplace for nine months every year
- Identify barriers to recruitment and employment within their organisation
- Work with interns and a Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation (DDPO) to find creative solutions to removing barriers
- Have access to 12 young Disabled candidates each year who know their organisation and have developed relevant skills
- Increase the numbers of Disabled people that they employ
- Improve staff morale and attendance
- Provide junior staff with an opportunity to mentor interns and improve their chances of progressing to management

“

If I'm honest with you,

the departments were kind of reluctant to take it on because they were unsure and had never worked with people with learning difficulties.

Within about three or four days they had embraced it quite passionately and actually realised what a benefit it was to them. That was just by understanding that everybody's different.

”

Lisa McGirr, General Service Manager, Sodexo

The additional value of working with

Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs)

Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs) bring additional value to this model:

- DDPOs provide **management support** to the host employer and the college and assist in coordinating, planning and the implementation of each SI
- DDPOs create **additional training and employment opportunities for Deaf and Disabled people** by employing Deaf and Disabled people to be the on-site job coaches, bringing different talents, skills and experiences to the workplace
- DDPOs provide Deaf and Disabled people with **positive role-models**
- DDPOs provide **Disability Equality Training** for the host employer and the college, helping to build a project team with shared values
- DDPOs provide **'lived' experience and expertise** around recruitment and employment issues concerning Deaf and Disabled people (e.g. Access to Work, Equality Law and 'reasonable adjustments') and reduce the bureaucracy for the host employer
- DDPOs can also provide **strategic support** if challenges arise
- DDPOs promote a **social model approach to addressing workplace barriers** which focuses on developing inclusive policies, practices, procedures and creative solutions, thus supporting social change
- DDPOs assist with **Access to Work** applications for additional support or assistive equipment/technology for the interns, if needed
- DDPOs provide SI graduates with at least **six months post-SI support** (e.g. by identifying opportunities within and outside the host employers, supporting interns to make speculative applications, requesting work trials and asking for reasonable adjustments to recruitment processes)
- DDPOs provide **additional services** that young Disabled people can be signposted to (e.g. independent living services, information and advice, peer support and advocacy)
- DDPOs work with local employers and service providers on a daily basis, providing a useful **network of local contacts** for the interns

For a short video about the DDPO Supported Internship model, please go to:

<https://youtu.be/DKs2Xin7jkl?t=27>

Action on Disability, the Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation which developed this model of Supported Internship, has successfully run internships in various organisations, including the following:

L'ORÉAL

h&f
hammersmith & fulham

gsk
GlaxoSmithKline

St George's
Healthcare **NHS**
NHS Trust

Imperial College
London

“

For many of these young people getting in touch with [a DDPO] is that gateway that they've been looking for.... It gives them a future. It gives them hope and something to aim for.

As anyone else would want. You want a career.

You want to look forward to future plans.

This is what [a DDPO-Supported Internship] does.

”

Lorna Misra, Tutor (West Thames College),
GlaxoSmithKline

Section 2

Who are the interns?

The criteria for each cohort of interns (most of whom have learning difficulties) are as follows:

- They must be between 18 and 24 years old at the start of the internship
- They must have an Education, Health & Care Plan covering at least Element 1 and 2 funding (most of the interns have learning difficulties) (NB This funding finances the Supported Internship – see page 20)

There are many reasons for focusing on this group of Disabled people. 1.5 million people in the UK have learning difficulties (approx. 2% of the population).³ However, only 6% of them are in paid employment.⁴

“

He works hard and you give him a chance,

then he can prove himself.

He's very individual.

”

Steven, 20, a former intern,
now a Porter at St George's Hospital (Sodexo)

³ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/learning-disabilities/>

⁴ <https://www.learningdisabilitytoday.co.uk/number-of-people-with-learning-disabilities-in-paid-employment-falls-to-just-6>

Young people with learning difficulties face multiple and complex barriers to employment, including the following:

- They do not have access to the same opportunities that non-Disabled students do
- They are excluded from many activities that help to prepare young people for work
- Society as a whole has low expectations of people with learning difficulties
- Many jobs have inaccessible recruitment processes, which are often unrelated to the job and unnecessary
- They often need support to use inaccessible transport
- They can experience discrimination by employers and colleagues who lack understanding because they are not used to working with Disabled employees
- The workplace often presents barriers including poor physical access, document-heavy induction processes, lack of time to break down complex tasks into simple steps, etc.

Further criteria are applied to identify the young people who will benefit most from the Supported Internship, as follows:

- Must be committed to completing both the college course and the work placements
- Must want to work and intend to accept paid work at the end of the internship (i.e. to ensure that recruits and their families see this as a step into work, not as a 'day opportunity')
- Must be available five days per week during college terms and agree to complete the programme
- Able to follow instructions
- Willing to learn in the classroom and on the job
- Willing to accept / to learn to accept the workplace culture, including time keeping, dress codes or uniform (if applicable), health and safety requirements, etc.
- Willing to participate in job searching and recruitment processes
- Willing to accept support from family and friends where appropriate

“

Before I started I went to college and I had a letter to come here.

I was very proud and I got in.

The best thing is working independently.

”

Naoise, 24,
Mailroom Staff, GlaxoSmithKline

This model of Supported Internship has many benefits for the interns:

- They gain work experience in a real workplace and work to industry standards
- They have the opportunity to try three different work placements and find out what they are good at and what they enjoy
- They gain experience of using a job coach in a work setting
- They receive good quality references
- The internship is built on the social model of disability, focusing on removing barriers from the workplace and valuing individual difference.

“

You help people if they need any help.

I like it.

”

Natasha, 19,
Restaurant Staff, GlaxoSmithKline

Is transport arranged for the interns?

No. Interns are expected to travel to the employer independently, using accessible public transport where available. If suitable transport is not available, it may be possible to get Access to Work support.⁵

Are the interns guaranteed a job at the end of the project?

No. The purpose of the programme is to prepare young people with learning difficulties to compete for paid work in the mainstream jobs sector. Obviously we hope that some of the interns may be recruited by the host employer. However, others will use the job search techniques they have learnt, alongside the work experience they have gained, references and transferable skills to get jobs with other employers. During the last term, when most interns will have finished their college course, much of the classroom time will be taken up with job hunting, speculative emails or phone calls, interviews and work trials.

⁵ <https://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/downloads/supported-internships/access-to-work-fund.htm>



Section 3

Who are the Supported Internship partners?

Roles and responsibilities and levels of staffing

Three partners are essential for this Supported Internship to succeed.

a) The college's roles and responsibilities include the following:

- Applies for, and draws down, funding from the Education Funding Agency and the local authority
- Provides a full-time special education tutor to plan and deliver the employability skills training⁶ and assist the job coach⁷
- Leads on recruiting the interns, with support from the partner Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation (DDPO)
- Creates a safe classroom environment for interns to share problems with each other and develop a circle of support for one another
- Supports the interns to understand their learning style and helps them communicate this to job coaches, mentors and managers
- Supports the job coaches (providing extra capacity, if needed)
- Contributes to the development of work placements and the coordination and monitoring of intern activities
- Advises on work place adjustments and assistive technology
- Supports family involvement activities
- Covers tutor expenses where appropriate (e.g. travel expenses)
- Organises additional access support where necessary (e.g. learning support assistants, interpreters)
- Coordinates regular operational meetings
- Coordinates intern progress meetings, including inviting SI staff, mentors and family members
- Collects, and reports on, student outcome data
- Liaises with the partner DDPO and Inclusion London on monitoring and evaluation
- Supports interns with writing their CVs, practising their interview skills and developing their portfolios

⁶ This includes workplace skills, functional skills, transition to independence, job readiness and development

⁷ The tutor and principal job coach are onsite full-time and employed during college holidays



b) The host employer's roles and responsibilities include the following:

- Provides a classroom space on site (chairs, tables, filing cabinet, white or chalk board and computer connections or wifi, phone, supplies, and access to a photocopier)
- Identifies the three work placements (usually 10–12 weeks each and at least four hours per day) across the host employer's organisation and sub-contractors so that they meet the needs of the host employer as well as provide the interns with a wide range of marketable, competitive, transferable skills
- Provides a liaison person to support work placement development, liaise between business staff and SI staff, champion the SI, attend meetings to monitor progress against targets and work with the job coaches, supervisors and mentors to ensure adherence to workplace rules
- Provides interns with access to internal vacancies and considers how artificial barriers can be removed by making reasonable adjustments
- Provides security passes to SI staff and interns
- Supports managers and mentors of work placements to give direction, feedback and evaluation to interns
- Provides assistance to SI staff to promote the project externally



What we need is for employers to take on individuals with disabilities, for a work trial, something that's a bit longer than just an interview. Because then you can gain the trust of the individual. They can understand a bit more about the job and spend longer getting to know what there is to do.

Jo Harry, UK Inclusion & Diversity Manager,
GlaxoSmithKline



Each placement should have a **mentor** who is the point of contact for the intern and takes responsibility for teaching relevant and marketable skills to the interns. This is sometimes the manager or another member of staff, depending on the size of the team. This person provides the tasks for the interns and shows them the processes and the standard the work needs to be done to.

Initially the mentoring takes some time but, as the interns learn and develop their skills, they need less time and this is balanced out by the amount of work that they produce. The onsite team of job coaches, employed by the partner DDPO, provides any additional support needed by the interns.

c) **The DDPO's roles and responsibilities include the following:**

- Provides a part-time manager to assist with coordinating, planning and implementing the project
- Recruits and manages job coaches to work with the interns on their work placements (see the job description for a job coach - page 17)
- Develops IT solutions for the part-time manager and job coach to remotely access DDPO files and emails and ensure that they are involved in staff meetings and away days, etc.
- Provides Disability Equality Training to the college and the employer
- Works with the host employer to identify good quality work placements
- Works with the host employer's staff (inc. HR staff) and the college tutor to identify job opportunities within the organisation and remove barriers to recruitment
- Assists the college tutor as required
- Assists with intern recruitment and promotes the Supported Internship
- Provides travel training, if necessary, before and during the internship
- Works with departments to identify workplace adjustments and assists with Access to Work applications (if needed) for additional support or assistive equipment / technology
- Attends team and steering group meetings
- Liaises with Inclusion London to provide all monitoring data and case studies as required

The **full-time job coach** is recruited by the DDPO. The ratio of job coaches to interns depends on the access needs of each group of interns but, ideally, we aim for it to be one coach per four interns. S/he fulfils the following roles:

- Co-ordinates work placements, carefully matching interns to the right placements based on their skills, interests and personalities
- Provides systematic instruction to the interns and trains mentors or managers in this way of developing work skills
- Learns the tasks needed for each work placement, breaking them down and teaching them to each intern (including trouble-shooting)
- Understands different learning styles and adapts instructions to meet the needs of each intern
- Liaises with the interns' parents and carers over travel to work and workplace behaviour
- Develops a progression plan for each intern with actions to achieve their employment goals
- Liaises with parents and carers to create a job searching network for each intern
- Supports interns to identify job opportunities within and outside the host employer, make job applications, request work trials, ask for adjustments to recruitment processes and prepare for interviews



The job coaches get to know the interns really well and understand how best they learn and how their impairments impact on their ability to carry out the tasks. The job coaches are experts in this. As the interns begin to work independently the amount of support provided by the job coaches gradually tapers off, although they continue to check in regularly with the interns.

“

I think employers always think that there's going to be a cost,
that there's going to be a lot of time,

and that it's very complex to hire someone with a disability.

But the beauty of having a job coach is that you won't have that worry.
You'll be able to recruit them immediately with somebody to help

and support them one to one.

It's structured coaching all the way.

”

Jo Harry, UK Inclusion & Diversity Manager,
GlaxoSmithKline

Our SI model also works on the principle that people with learning difficulties can learn to do almost any systematic task, if it is broken down into steps and taught in an accessible way. The placements are chosen very carefully to match young people's skills, qualities and interests and the teams who provide the placements make the final decisions over who comes to work with them.

“

We take great care in placing [the interns]

where we think it's suitable –

where we think they are a good match.

”

Jon Rees, Job Coach 2012-2016,
Action on Disability

If extra support is needed for the interns, an additional part time job coach will be engaged during college weeks and provide sickness and other emergency leave cover for both the tutor and full time job coach.

d) Other interested parties' roles and responsibilities include the following:

- The **local authority** may play a role in accessing Education, Health and Care Plans funding and supporting the project from other budgets if necessary
- Without the support of **parents and carers** the internship is unlikely to work so they should be involved throughout. They can also help to make connections with employers. It is a good idea to plan Parent/Family/Friend days throughout the duration of the internship
- During the SI the DDPO will build contacts with **other local employers** and their networks (e.g. Chambers of Commerce and Business Enterprise Networks)
- The DDPO will also liaise with **special and mainstream schools and youth services** for Disabled young people to build networks for recruiting future interns



Section 4

How is this model of Supported Internships financed?

This model is self-financing. The placements are unpaid, as the young people are students of the partner college.

All the interns have Education and Health Care Plans (EHC Plans) which means that the partner college can draw down 'high needs' funding from the Education Funding Agency and from the local authority for each intern. This money is pooled to pay for the college tutor, learning support assistant and job coaches.

If some of the interns need more 1:1 support than the onsite job coaches can deliver and the pooled income cannot cover the costs of an additional parttime job coach, it is possible to apply for Access to Work funding to support specific interns who need extra support. This will increase the admin requirements of the programme.

The host employer provides a learning space and a business liaison person who knows the host organisation well, can introduce the SI staff to the right people and can provide access to everything the interns need, such as passes and induction training etc. The job coaches are employed by the partner DDPO which also provides expertise on employment and disability issues and helps to minimise bureaucracy.

The funding is ongoing which means there is no need for constant fundraising or bidding for contracts.

For a sample budget, please see Appendix 1 - page 24.



Section 5

Setting up a Supported Internship: the timetable

This sample timetable outlines the pre-internship development phase and the timetable for the actual Supported Internship.

Partnership development (October - November 2018)

- Inclusion London identifies DDPOs, colleges and employers interested in being partners in the 2019-2020 Supported Internship
- Inclusion London sets up a three way partnership meeting, with a view to creating a steering group to support all partners during the planning process

Partnership planning (December 2018 - January 2019)

- Set timeline and agree steering group scope and meeting frequency
- Identify team roles and responsibilities
- Disability Equality Training for all partners
- Agree publicity strategy

Engagement with young people and families (Feb – March 2019)

- Open day/evening events for young people and parents and carers
- Pre-internship meetings for parents and carers
- Interviews and recruitment of interns
- Benefits check for recruited interns

Work placement development (January - May 2019)

- Employer teams and departments to host placements are identified
- Outsourced teams and departments are also identified
- Engagement events for managers and potential mentors

Detailed internship planning (May - August 2019)

- Agree scope and timetable of induction for the interns
- Recruitment of job coaches and tutor (start work in May)
- Disability Equality Training for managers and mentors

The internship lasts for a college academic year from September 2019 to June/July 2020 (approx. 30 hours a week in total), as follows:

September – December 2019 (First term)

- Three weeks for intern orientation / induction at the host employer
- College course in employability skills starts
- Interns begin their first work placement (4-5 hours per day)
- Inclusion London staff visit the internship (after half term)
- Two steering group meetings during the first term
- Christmas get together for interns, all the staff involved and other invitees

January – March 2020 (Second term)

- College course continues
- Interns begin their second work placement (4-5 hours per day)
- Job coaches work with individual interns to identify their work goals
- Job coaches start career planning with the interns and early job development
- Inclusion London staff meet with the staff and the interns
- Two steering group meetings during the second term
- Easter get together for interns, all the staff involved and other invitees

April – June 2020 (Third term)

- College course is completed
- Interns begin their third work placement (now 6 hours per day, including some early or late shifts, if this increases the interns' experience of what the job really entails)
- Inclusion London staff meet with the staff and the interns
- Two steering group meetings during the third term
- Inclusion London's Employer Engagement Officer provides strategic support to job coaches and interns with employer engagement and encourages all partners to be fully invested in getting the interns into paid work

July – September 2020

- Graduation ceremony for the interns, their supporters and all staff involved
- Graduates continue to receive employment support from the job coaches and the Employer Engagement Officer to prepare for interviews and work trials with employers etc. to find a job

Section 6

Monitoring of the Supported Internship and other support for the interns / graduates

Inclusion London leads on monitoring the delivery and impact of the Supported Internship, as follows:

- Monitoring data from the host employer, the college tutor, the interns and the DDPOs will be recorded and reported to Inclusion London
- All the partners will contribute to evaluation reports and events
- The progress of graduates will be tracked (with their permission) for a minimum of three years after graduation
- Graduates will receive at least six months' post-internship support from DDPOs to find employment, including:
 - Changing jobs
 - Accessing training opportunities
 - Applying for promotions
 - Accessing work benefits
 - Applying for Access to Work support
 - Re-entering the workplace if they have to take a break from work



Appendices

Appendix 1:

A DDPO-Supported Internship: A sample budget

Income (pooled)			
EFA place funding - Element 1	£48,000	12 interns @ £4000 each	All the interns have EHC Plans ('Education, Health and Care Plans') which means that the partner college can draw down 'high needs' funding from the Education Funding Agency and from the local authority for each intern. ⁸ These funds are 'pooled' together to finance the Supported Internship.
EFA high needs funding - Element 2	£72,000	12 interns @ £6000 each	
Local Authority high needs block allocation – Element 3	£48,000	12 interns @ £4000 each	
Total	£168,000		

Expenditure (pooled)			
College tutor's salary (estimated)	£52,000	Including management and admin fees	EFA / Local authority funding
Classroom assistant's salary (estimated)	£15,000	Including management and admin fees	EFA / Local authority funding
Salaries for 2 x job-coaches (1 x F/T, 1 x P/T) (estimated)	£75,000	Including management and admin fees	EFA / Local authority funding
Total	142,000		
Underspend	£26,000	Please see budgetary notes - page 25.	

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-internships-for-young-people-with-learning-difficulties>

Note 1: This budget leaves an underspend of £26,000. Inclusion London proposes that the best use of this funding would be towards additional post-internship support for the interns, to ensure a smooth and successful transition into paid work.

Note 2: The host employer provides a learning space for the interns and identifies a member of staff to be a 'liaison' person (to make introductions, coordinate passes and induction training etc.). Each department that hosts a placement appoints a mentor for the interns, to be a contact person. This is in-kind support.

Note 3: If some of the interns need more 1:1 support than the onsite job coaches can deliver and the pooled income cannot cover the costs of an additional parttime job coach, the DDPO partner can apply for Access to Work funding to support specific interns who need extra support.



Appendix 2:

'Making it Work' daily schedule: an example

It is important to have at least one hour a day of Employability Skills Training either at the beginning or the end of their day. Times will vary according to the host employer's requirements and the start and end times of the college partner.

Annual calendar: This follows the local college calendar. The host employer needs to be aware of any holiday breaks, staff professional development days and other days the interns will be absent.

Working times: Monday-Friday, 9:00 am - 3:30 pm		
9.00 – 10.00am	Employability Skills Class	Interns sign in; lessons are based on employability skills (e.g. problem solving, team work, decision making, budgeting, nutrition, CV writing)
10.00 to 12.30pm	Work placements	Interns participate in unpaid work placements throughout the host employer and onsite supply chain sub-contractors. They rotate through three different placements over the academic year and learn the core skills of each job. New skills are added as interns master basic tasks
12.30 to 1.00 pm	Lunch	Interns buy lunch or bring their own. Interns are encouraged to eat with their co-workers and peers at the internship sites
1.00 to 3.00 pm	Work placements	Interns return to their work placement department to continue to learn job-specific and employability skills
3.00 to 3.30 pm	Classroom: Interns re-group	Interns reflect on their day and further develop their planning and communication Skills. Students sign out at 3:30 pm and if available take public transport home





**Produced by Inclusion London,
November 2018**

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