

Information for Small Businesses:

Supported Internships and SEND Employability

There are currently skills gaps in the market for many sectors, for small businesses this can be especially difficult as they attempt to maintain and grow market positions in their areas.



Small businesses are already doing much in providing opportunities for people with disabilities and health conditions in the workplace, with more than half (51%) of small employers having employed someone they know has a disability or health condition in the last three years¹. Although only 5% have used the Governments Access to Work Scheme.

¹ Federation of Small Businesses (2022) Business without Barriers: Supporting disabled people and those with health conditions in the workplace



Small businesses are often able to offer flexible working, with 97% of those who employ a disabled person offering this.

There is currently an increasing amount of young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities that are moving into post 16 education and looking for opportunities to develop their skills and learning ready for the workplace.

Supported Internships are a study programme for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities who want to move into employment and need some support to do so.

Employers can work in partnership with education providers in the delivery of Supported Internships to support the development of the skills they value, to enable young people to demonstrate these skills and gain confidence in the workplace, and ultimately gain paid employment.



Small Businesses and Sole Traders can benefit from engaging with Supported Internships by:

- Gaining access to a wide pool of talented and skilled young people.
- Having the ability to meet skills gaps locally, and develop and grow small businesses, by developing previously unrecognised talent.
- Engaging and supporting the local community and gaining access to the 'Purple Pound', which attracts up to £212bn annually.
- Engaging with a free recruitment and matching service to find the right person for your business.
- Strengthening diversity and equality in the workplace.
- Improving the confidence, wellbeing, health and community engagement of young people in your community.

When engaging with a Supported Internship businesses are offered:

- Opportunities to share the requirements of the role and be supported in finding the right person for the role.
- Direct support for the young person from a specialist Job/Skills Coach both in work and as a contact for the employer throughout the placement
- Personalised advice and support to create and deliver a successful placement.
- Placements provide a great way to explore entry level recruitment options at no cost to the employer.
- Financial support for adaptations to the workplace available through the Governments Access to Work scheme, where the employer contribution is nil for businesses with under 49 employees.



If you are interested in offering a work placement you can find more information by contacting:

Your local Supported Internship Provider:



[Supported Internships | Family Information and Services Hub \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://hants.gov.uk)

Employment and Skills Hub (ESH.Shared@hants.gov.uk)

Resources:

- Access to Work Employer Guide: [Access to Work factsheet for employers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- Federation of Small Businesses – Business without Barriers Report [Business Without Barriers | FSB, The Federation of Small Businesses](#)
- [FAQ: Employing disabled workers and people with health conditions | FSB, The Federation of Small Businesses](#)

