



# Phase 2

## Pre go-live





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## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Overview of process

### This second phase is about laying the foundations for a successful supported internship programme.

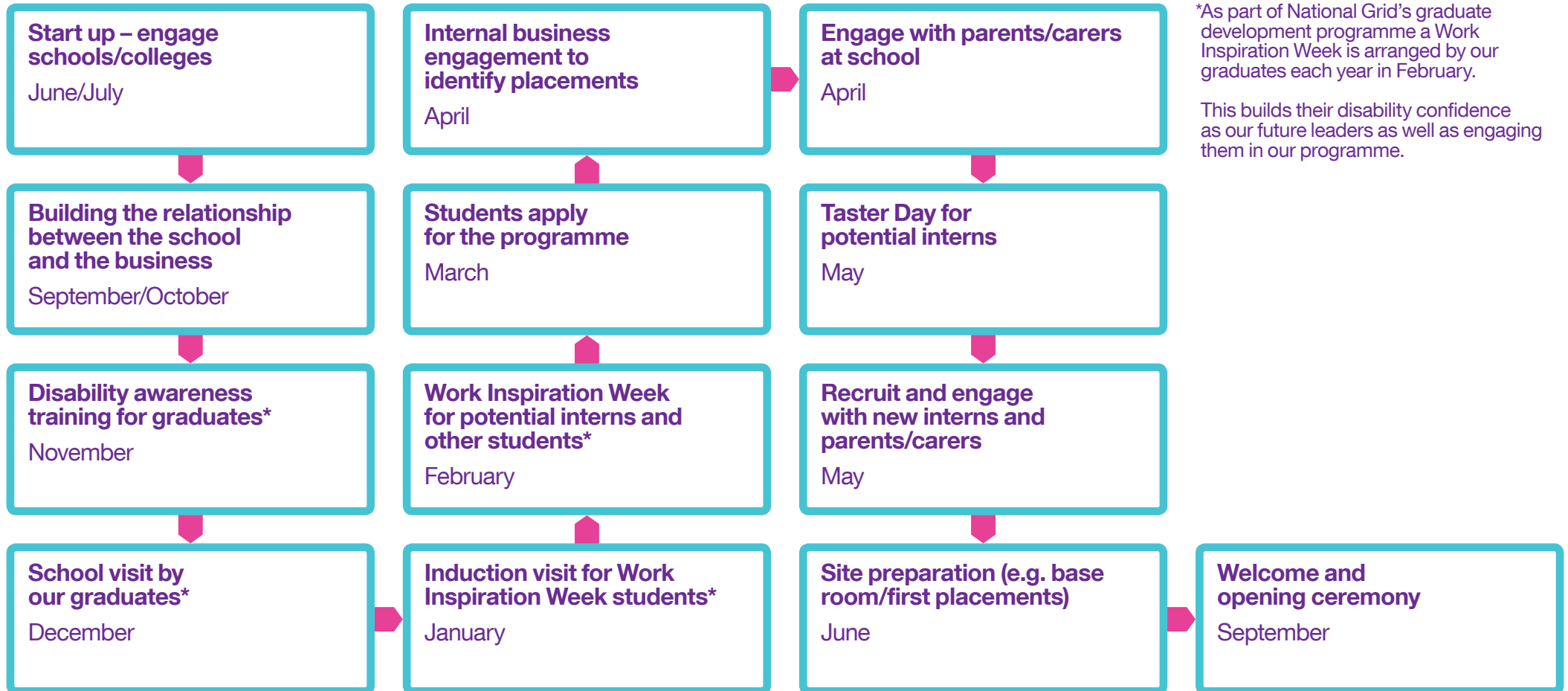
Here's a summary of the key activities we recommend you carry out, based on our National Grid EmployAbility programme experience – timeline information is shown in italics, counting down to a September go-live date:

- **build the relationship** (*September/October, 11 to 12 months before go-live*) – a chance for both partners to start finding out more about each other and getting to know each other, through a range of activities.
- **disability confidence training and awareness** (*November – 10 months before go-live*) – a great opportunity to bring in a disability expert, to increase understanding, awareness and confidence about how to approach disability issues. This might be someone with a disability who you know or from a local charity.
- **school visit** (*December – nine months before go-live*) – an informal 'meet and greet' with students from the college, and a chance for employee volunteers to find out how an SEN school works. Schools and colleges identify potential Work Inspiration Week (WIW) students and staff. This is not an obligatory part of the model and for smaller businesses, a half-day visit could be considered.
- **induction visits** (*January – eight months before go-live*) – opportunities for the WIW students and employee volunteers to feel comfortable with each other. The business establishes the right level to pitch the WIW activities. The students learn about the business through a mixture of presentations and interactive sessions. The employee volunteers learn how to communicate effectively with students, using plain English.
- **Work Inspiration Week** (*February – seven months to go-live*) – a mixture of educational visits and team-based activities designed to help the employee volunteers become disability confident and inspire the interns to work. In smaller businesses this might be limited to a half-day visit.
- **students apply for the programme** (*March – six months to go-live*) – students are encouraged by their experiences on the WIW to apply for the programme (they must have a statement of SEN or an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)). Job coaches help select the interns and host visits by the school lead to the employer, so they can see the different types of role available. Identify potential placements within the business. Students will be working towards achieving paid employment at the end of the programme.
- **internal business engagement** (*April – five months to go-live*) – EmployAbility site leads present to different departments within the business, to inspire them to get involved in the programme. Potential placements are agreed.
- **engage parents and carers** (*April – five months to go-live*) – job coaches and the school senior leadership team present the programme to parents, carers and potential interns at their school, to reassure and support all concerned that this will be a positive experience all round. Include a question and answer session. Recruit job coaches and visit a site where a supported internship is up and running.
- **taster day** (*May – four months to go-live*) – a skill-matching exercise that gives departments and interns an opportunity to meet.
- **recruit and engage new interns and their parents/carers** (*May – four months to go-live*) – recruit the interns. Candidates complete the second part of their application form. Along with a parent or carer they have a tour of the site where there is an existing supported internship in place, to help them become familiar with it. Recruited interns do team-building activities with job coaches at the business and school or college during a 'Moving up day'.
- **site preparation** (*June – three months to go-live*) – the base room is allocated within the employer's premises, and the site is prepped and ready for the arrival of the interns. Take a strategic approach to placement selection, so that the first placement in September is a gentle introduction ('soft landing') and the second placement is focused on areas where there are job opportunities.
- **go-live opening ceremony** (*September*) – an amazing opportunity to recognise and celebrate the partnership, showcase the programme to employees at the school or college and the business, raise the interns' profile at the business site, and thank the efforts of everyone who has contributed to setting up the initiative. Invite local stakeholders like your MP or Mayor.



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Operating model – Pre go-live process



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Funding

### What funding is available?

The Access to Work grant from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is designed to help pay for practical support so that disabled people can do their jobs. It is also available for supported internships.

The grant is provided where someone needs support or adaptations beyond the reasonable adjustments which an employer is legally obliged to provide under the Equality Act 2010.

### What does the Access to Work grant cover?

In a supported internship, the Access to Work funding is mainly used to pay for the job coaches. They play a vital role in the EmployAbility programme, using their specialist training in systematic instruction to break the job down into tasks, 'decoding' the job role to make it accessible for the individual interns.

Claire Cookson, Deputy Head of Woodlands School in Warwickshire, can't speak highly enough of the invaluable contribution they make:

**“We would all say, hands down, that it's the job coaches who make or break this experience. They are phenomenal at breaking the job down, nurturing that confidence in the interns and being that person who's between the business and education. It is a really skilled role.”**

As well as funding the job coaches, the Access to Work grant can be used to pay for:

- specialist equipment the intern needs while at the employer's premises
- extra fares to work if the intern can't use public transport.

There is no set amount for an Access to Work grant; how much an individual receives depends upon their circumstances. And there's no requirement to pay the money back.

There are some exceptions, of course – young people might not qualify for Access to Work if they already receive certain benefits. There's a wealth of information about this online at <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/eligibility>.

### How to apply for an Access to Work grant

The school that's delivering the supported internship or traineeship is usually responsible for applying for the Access to Work funding. Alternatively, the application can be made by a supported employment provider working on the school's behalf – if this is the case, the supported employment provider must include the name of the education provider on the application form.

You can apply for Access to Work funding up to three months before the work placement starts.

The education provider (who usually employs the job coach) will need to submit a separate application for each student, for each of their three placements, regardless of how long the placement lasts.

You should be aware from the outset that the standard Access to Work model is based on one job coach who works with one intern, with tapered support. So it's not a perfect fit with the EmployAbility model, which is based on one job coach working with two or three interns who each do three placements.

Schools do an individual assessment of need for each intern and then estimate how much time to apportion to each intern. This is then included as part of the 1:3 model that is submitted to the Access to Work funding team.

To apply for funding, complete the Access to Work form. You'll find it by clicking on the link in the guidance on the Preparing for Adulthood website

(<http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/what-we-do/supported-internships/access-to-work-fund>).

Once you've completed the form, email it to [atwosu.london@dpw.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:atwosu.london@dpw.gsi.gov.uk) – make sure you write 'supported internship application' in the subject line so that your email can be forwarded promptly to the right team. An Access to Work adviser will contact you within 48 hours of receiving your email. You also now have the opportunity to highlight if your application is part of an internship model where there may be multiple applications for the same site.

As with any funding application, there's no cast-iron guarantee of success, so make sure your Access to Work funding has been approved before you incur costs.



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Funding – Top 10 tips

**Mark McGillicuddy has been involved in EmployAbility from the outset and went on to establish the MORETHAN7 social enterprise.**

He offers the following advice when it comes to funding your supported internship programme:

- 1 Don't just talk about it amongst yourselves (leaders and staff)**  
– take the first practical steps by following our online 'How to' guides, and visiting a live model that's operating successfully... because seeing is believing
- 2 Start raising ambitions and belief about paid employment outcomes within your own special school or college**  
– EmployAbility is a well-proven and highly effective supported employment model
- 3 Don't worry about the funding for now – trust us, there will be enough pre-employment support funding available**
- 4 Get the design basics and building blocks in place first**  
– think about which employers, students and staff might be involved in your scheme, the role they will play and what your first supported internship placements will look like
- 5 Remember that one size does not fit all – each supported internship is unique, a combination of factors including the size and nature of the prospective employer, the education provider partner and the capabilities, skills and interests of the interns.**  
  
The employer size will dictate the intern:job coach ratio:  
**1:1** suitable for a small to medium-sized enterprise (using a part-time job coach)  
**3:1** suitable for a medium to large employer, like a hotel  
**6:2** suitable for a large employer (this is the National Grid EmployAbility model)  
**12:3** suitable for a large and diverse employer, like a hospital (visit [www.pluss.org.uk/services/project-search](http://www.pluss.org.uk/services/project-search) to read about the work of Project Search in Plymouth, Barnstaple and Torbay)
- 6 Demonstrate value for money and the delivery of outcomes**  
– prove the effectiveness of your proposed support model by costing it all out. Show that the job coaches' fees are based on a reasonable hourly rate, bearing in mind that their work is split across a number of students, each with different needs. Flag up that these funds are being used to supplement a shortage of DfE core education funding for functional skills
- 7 Back up your funding request with evidence – build a financial model that underpins, justifies and legitimises your Access to Work funding request.** You don't have to start from scratch: have a look at what other successful schools and colleges are already doing in terms of scheme design and what they can or cannot claim for
- 8 Show tailored reduced support**  
– you will need to be able to show progression over time (for example increased levels of student capability and reduced levels of job coaching support required)
- 9 Apply early – get your application in early and ask the DWP for guidance**
- 10 Be honest and open – let the DWP know at the earliest opportunity if anything changes.**

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# The role of the job coach

**For an intern on an EmployAbility placement, the job coach is a vital source of support and encouragement.**

The job coach, recruited and paid by the school or college, is usually responsible for three young people, either in one larger organisation or working across several smaller businesses.

Each intern has around three placements over an academic year, tailored to the student's skills and abilities. This can be flexible; for instance, a student who wants to be a chef may have all three placements in the kitchen.

The job coach is involved right from the start – from setting up the placement to delivering the BTEC work skills qualification. They support the interns every step of the way.

Job coaches will generally be experienced teaching assistants and will receive specialist training for the role. Their responsibilities include:

- setting up placements
- supporting the students in their job roles
- supporting the intern in learning placement tasks
- dealing with external recruitment organisations
- linking between the business, interns, schools, colleges and parents
- planning and delivering the BTEC work skills qualification
- attending placement reviews.

Job coaches also offer admin support such as emails, work and pupil assessments, and help students look for jobs, including help with CV writing and research.

Supporting the intern includes:

- advising on social rules and behaviour at work
- helping the student understand and follow rules and procedures
- offering emotional support
- teaching independent life skills.

The job coach's other responsibilities include:

- organising placement and graduation celebrations
- compiling EmployAbility newsletters
- attending meetings
- public speaking and networking
- hosting visits from external employers
- arranging buddy sessions
- contributing to parents' evenings and annual reviews.





## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# The role of the job coach (continued)

### Example job description

The job coach has a vital role in a successful internship. Job coaches are based at the employer's premises and co-ordinate the supported internship programme. They may be in charge of several interns, at one site or working at different sites.

Job coaches are the daily contact for the interns while they are at work, responsible for their welfare and education. They also build relationships with managers and teams at the host business.

Job coaches make sure there is good communication between work, home and school. They also make sure that interns make progress and are supported to become independent learners and workers.

The job coach's main responsibilities are to:

- deliver, assess and mark BTEC modules and functional skills for interns at the site
- maintain student records on work undertaken, curriculum, progress, communications and emotional health and wellbeing
- build relationships with interns, managers and employees on site
- liaise with managers and employees to develop roles for interns
- tell the departments the interns will be working in about the interns and their needs
- plan internship placements

- learn the different roles in the departments and make appropriate documents using training in systematic instruction (TSI) techniques
- support the interns in their placements, using TSI
- conduct parent afternoons, visits and meetings
- arrange contingency plans for any potential problems/staff absences
- use the standard operational procedures to maintain best practice and continuity across the sites
- manage the interns' professional portfolios
- make sure all company/client policies and procedures are adhered to
- prioritise and organise their own workload.

### Health and safety

The job coach is also responsible for the interns' safety at work. They will:

- support the interns' physical and emotional needs
- hold weekly tutorials for the interns
- make sure the interns can be contacted throughout the working day
- make sure the interns wear the correct PPE (if applicable)
- complete the necessary individual risk assessments on interns and get the programme risk assessment signed off by parents/guardians

- report health and safety issues
- report all accidents and near misses through the correct channels and complete the required paperwork
- promote good safety habits and methods of work
- support interns through the necessary channels with IT equipment issues
- make sure that all protective equipment is used correctly as specified by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

### Safeguarding, child protection, emotional health and wellbeing

Job coaches will:

- make sure interns are registered daily and attendance information is updated to the school or college
- make sure all employees working alongside the interns are aware of safeguarding procedures
- make sure that all concerns are recorded, supported and reported in line with school procedures
- undertake any necessary training in child protection
- complete any necessary referral paperwork.

### Support for the school

The job coaches will also report to their school or college and will take part in any training and performance management as required. They will:

- develop and maintain working relationships with other professionals
- liaise with parents/carers as appropriate
- review and develop their own professional practice
- be aware of and comply with policies and procedures relating to child protection, health, safety and security, confidentiality and data protection, reporting all concerns to an appropriate person.



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# Training for job coaches

**Schools will identify job coaches and make sure they are fully trained and prepared to support EmployAbility students as they do their work placements.**

The training facilitated by the schools will equip the job coaches with the skills they will need to help deliver the programme.

Part of this training will be in systematic instruction techniques. This specialist training is for people who work with those who need help learning practical skills for work and independent living.

Training in systematic instruction (TSI) will be delivered by an external provider, booked and paid for by the school.

EmployAbility interns may initially struggle to grasp all the skills they need for work. TSI is a structured way to teach people with additional learning needs and disabilities those skills.

Job coaches learn how to carve job roles, identifying all the skills the employer needs the intern to have. By breaking down the job into clearly identified tasks, the job coach can work with the intern to teach all the necessary skills.

The job coaches will also use systematic instruction to help the interns understand and cope with the social aspects of work, such as workplace culture, timekeeping, working with other employees, health and safety, travel and using on-site facilities like the canteen.

TSI teaches job coaches:

- the principles of systematic instruction
- to profile and assess an individual with additional learning needs and disabilities
- to analyse a job and break it down into tasks
- to plan and apply systematic instruction methods
- to identify different ways to help the interns learn tasks.

Here is a list of some TSI training providers. Please note that by including the providers in the list below, we are not endorsing their services.

<https://www.base-uk.org/tsi>

[http://www.remploy.co.uk/info/20050/training\\_courses/345/training\\_in\\_systematic\\_instruction\\_tsi](http://www.remploy.co.uk/info/20050/training_courses/345/training_in_systematic_instruction_tsi)





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# Parent and carer information evening at school

### **Each school or college offering EmployAbility placements for their students holds an information evening where parents and carers can find out more about the programme.**

You may want to give a presentation on the programme and take along current interns (if there are any).

Be prepared for parents and carers to ask many questions about the work placements. They want to know about the practical aspects – such as what interns should wear and how they will get to work – and about support and job prospects. Here are some of the questions they ask.

### **What do students need to get onto the EmployAbility programme?**

They need a positive, can-do attitude and they must be ready for the working world.

They also need a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education health and care plan (EHCP).

Students must be aged between 17 and 25 and enrolled at a school or college.

They must have a mobile phone so they can keep in touch with their job coaches and others.

### **How long does the programme last?**

Usually an academic year, from September to July, and placements start during term time.

The intern's day at work is from 9am to 3:30pm. This includes time with the job coach and breaks.

### **Will there be other interns on the programme?**

There are usually around six to eight interns on the programme, from local special educational schools and colleges. This number may be lower in smaller businesses.

### **Do students have any choice in their placements?**

While we try to meet the business's needs, we always take students' interests, personality and skills into account before we put them into a placement.

### **How will interns be supported?**

There will be job coaches there throughout the working day to support interns – usually one job coach is responsible for around three interns. Some students also have specialist support from their school or college.

### **How do the students get to work?**

We expect interns to travel independently. Colleges and schools will complete travel training before the interns start work in September.

### **What are the chances of a student getting a paid job after the internship?**

We can't guarantee that students will get paid employment after their internships, but the work experience will boost their chances. As well as gaining skills and experience, most students become more confident, positive about the future and keen to find a job. We've seen that if students apply themselves and work hard, they have a great chance of finding a job.

We'll also work with students on other options for the future, including part-time work, voluntary work or college courses.

### **Will the students receive references from the internship?**

Every intern will have a placement review and a testimonial from each of their three placements.

## Impact on benefits

Parents often wonder how their benefits will be affected if their daughter or son gets a paid job after their internship.

Explain to them that it's impossible for the school to comment on individual cases but reassure them that there is plenty of help available.

For parents who have access to a computer, the easiest way to see how benefits will be affected is to use the Government's online benefits calculator at <https://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators>.

This independent calculator shows how benefits will be affected when someone starts work.

It has replaced the Benefits Adviser service. It is free to use and anonymous.

To use it, parents will need accurate information about their:

- savings
- household income
- existing benefits and pensions
- outgoings
- council tax bill.

You can't use the calculator if you're under 18.

Parents will also be able to get help from Citizens Advice at <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/> or by visiting their local Citizens Advice office. Visiting an office is particularly helpful for people who are not used to computers or don't have access to one.

## Independent benefits calculator

<https://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators>

## Top tips

### **Have printed information for people to take away**

- If you can't answer a parent or carer's question on the evening, promise to get back to them – and do so as soon as possible
- Tell parents and carers they can contact you if they have questions after the meeting
- Be prepared for some parents to be anxious about their son or daughter going on a work placement.



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# Hosting a visit for parents and carers in the workplace

**Once interns have been offered work placements, they will be invited – with their parents or carers – to visit their workplace. This is an opportunity for the young people to see where they will be working and for parents and carers to ask questions.**

The students and their parents will have many questions for their host businesses. And parents may, understandably, be concerned about their daughter or son's first experience of work and be protective of their child in view of their disability. A friendly and informative visit will do much to allay those fears.

Your EmployAbility site lead and the job coach assigned to your new interns will be there to welcome the students and parents.

A visit could follow a format like this:

- welcome and introduction to EmployAbility – tell parents and interns a little about your business and why you have become involved in the EmployAbility programme
- show the interns where they will be working
- explain what kind of work the interns will do
- talk about the support they will receive from site leads, placement leads and job coaches
- after the tour of the workplace, have a break for refreshments

- hand out the intern kit list, handbook and holiday dates – supported internships are in line with school term dates.
- invite interns, parents and carers to ask questions.

Questions asked will probably cover the following areas:

### **How long does the programme last?**

An academic year, from September to July, and placements start during term time.

### **What hours will the students work?**

The intern's day at work is from 9am to 3:30pm. This includes time with the job coach and breaks.

### **Where will they have lunch and breaks?**

During the tour of the building, make sure you show interns and parents your catering facilities, if you have any.

### **What should the interns wear?**

Refer parents to the kit list and explain your company's expectations.

### **Who will be responsible for the interns?**

Tell parents and interns about the job coaches, site and placement leads, and add that everyone working for your company will be pleased to help the interns and answer questions.

### **Will there be other interns on the programme?**

There are usually around six to eight interns on the programme, from local special educational schools and colleges.

### **How will interns be supported?**

There will be job coaches there throughout the working day to support interns – usually one job coach is responsible for around three interns. Some students also have specialist support from their school or college.

### **How do the students get to work?**

Interns are expected to travel independently eventually but job coaches are happy to help with travel training in the beginning, using whichever form of public transport is the easiest for the intern.

### **What kind of work will the interns be doing?**

Explain that you have worked with the school or college to make sure the tasks are suited to the students' strengths and capabilities.

### **What are the chances of a student getting a paid job after the internship?**

There are no guarantees that students will get paid employment after their internships, but the work experience will boost their chances. As well as gaining skills and experience, most students become more confident, positive about the future and keen to find a job.

### **Will the students receive references from the internship?**

Every intern will have a placement review and a testimonial from each of their three placements.

## Intern kit list

Before they start work, every student will need to be smart and suitably equipped for work. Interns will need:

- a phone with credit
- a watch (not essential if the student uses a phone for time-keeping)
- a diary
- smart shirts/tops or dress
- trousers or skirt (black)
- smart shoes – interns might need safety shoes for some jobs
- pens
- notebook.

## Top tips

- Have printed information for people to take away
- If you can't answer a parent or carer's question, promise to get back to them – and do so as soon as possible
- Tell parents and carers they can contact you if they have questions after the meeting
- Be prepared for some parents to be anxious about their son or daughter.

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# Travel training

**Ideally, students should be able to get to and from work by themselves, although some may need extra help at first.**

This is one of the reasons that schools and colleges should partner with businesses that are easy to get to, on foot or by public transport.

Schools and colleges should complete travel training for all students offered internships before their work placements start in September.

Once students have accepted their supported internship place, they can work with school staff to practise getting to and from their place of work. Staff and students often do this in June and July, as part of the induction process.

Most school staff find that it helps to break down the journey into small steps following training in systematic instruction (TSI) guidelines, taking students through each step in detail to instil confidence.

Some students may need visual or photographic clues to help them make the journey to work independently.

At the start of the internship, the job coach will meet the intern at an agreed place, such as in reception or outside the train station, depending on how confident the student is feeling about the journey.

Students should have their phones on from when they leave their home to when they get home again after work, so their job coach can check on them en route.

## Travel training checklist

- Travel training should be complete by the start of September
- Staff and students should practise getting to the work placement
- Agree a place to meet on the first day
- Make sure students have their phones with them and switched on for the whole journey to and from work.



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# What makes a successful intern?

**Students chosen for an internship need the ability and – crucially – the temperament to make the most of a work placement.**

A taster day at the business gives job coaches and others a good idea of how the students will cope with life at work, but it's the school staff who know the students best and can advise on their suitability.

Students selected must be eager to get a job after the placement and their parents or carers need to support their ambitions. They must be able to access at least Entry 3 Work Skills qualifications.

They should be able to talk to and get along with other people and be able to work with people they don't know. They will also need to understand and abide by the business's code of conduct at work and behave in an appropriate way in the workplace.

Students should be travel trained or have the ability to get to work alone after travel training.

## Checklist

Students chosen for an internship should:

- want paid employment after the work placement
- be travel trained or have the capacity to be
- have parental or carer support to join the programme
- be able to control their own behaviour in a public environment
- have the capacity to access an Entry 3 or above Work Skills qualification
- have the capacity to understand and adhere to the business's code of conduct.

While most of the students who'd like a work placement will get one, some will not be suitable and may be disappointed.

The school will work with any such students to help them understand why a place on the programme is not an option for them at the moment, and to offer alternatives.





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# Work Inspiration Week: an overview (optional)

**Work Inspiration Week provides an opportunity for local young adults with learning difficulties to get a taste of what it's like to work for a company like National Grid. Large businesses will find it easier to put on a Work Inspiration Week. It is not essential if you are a smaller business; a half-day visit could be arranged.**

**This information is based on National Grid's approach to give some ideas and inspiration on what could be arranged.**

## What is the purpose of Work Inspiration Week?

Through a raft of fun, work-based activities, informative sessions and site visits, Work Inspiration Week gives would-be interns from local special schools and colleges a taste of the workplace and a broad understanding of what the company does.

But it's so much more than just a week-long taster session. Work Inspiration Week also gives everyone involved – teachers and teaching assistants from the special schools and colleges, the on-site EmployAbility job coaches and the company – a chance to observe how students are coping in the work environment and assess their suitability for an EmployAbility internship. The students are also aware that the week represents an opportunity for them to be selected for the programme.

## Where does it take place?

In National Grid, Work Inspiration Week takes place at three National Grid sites: Warwick, Solihull and Wokingham. In all, around 50 students take part each year.

The students have a 'base' room on site, where they get involved in practical activities and learn about National Grid.

*"We take the young visitors round to visit the current interns in their office, too, so they can see the sort of work they are doing," said National Grid's Angharad Williams, from Gas Markets Development.*

*"I think that's the best way to show them the practical tasks that they might be doing in the future. The job coaches are with them, to explain what the intern is doing and to answer any questions."*

And, of course, there are site visits, designed to give the students a better understanding of what National Grid does and the scale of its activities.

## How long are the days?

At National Grid, we try to keep to normal school hours for Work Inspiration Week. So the students are transported by their school or college minibus to the National Grid site, ready for a 9am start. At around 2:30pm they are then transported back to their school or college, where they are collected by a parent. Naturally, timings will depend on the proximity of the school or college to the site.

## Who organises the week?

At National Grid, we ask our current group of graduates to organise the week's activities. It's a great development opportunity for them and they are always really enthusiastic about it, and brimming with new ideas. It also helps to build Disability Confidence into their leadership DNA.

*"We encourage them to link up with the graduates who organised Work Inspiration Week the previous year – there are so many learning points to pick up on," said Angharad. "We also recommend that they touch base with the job coaches, to let them know how the planning activities are progressing."*

National Grid's Skills and Education team also has a number of board games that the graduates can incorporate within the schedule of activities for the week. The graduates sit down with the team to discuss activity ideas and learn the best way to run the games.

Your company may have resources that are used with school children that relate to your company's business that can form part of Work Inspiration Week.

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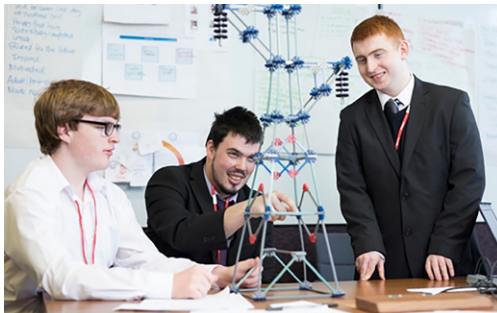
# Work Inspiration Week: one-day induction plan

**It's a very good idea to host a standalone, one-day induction on site for the students, one or two weeks before the Work Inspiration Week takes place, to allow them to acclimatise to the work environment.**

## Why run a separate induction day?

Rather than launching the students straight into a full week at the office, at National Grid we have found it really useful to invite them in for an induction day at the site, a week or two before Work Inspiration Week is due to begin.

For some students, the prospect of the Work Inspiration Week may be quite challenging. The induction day will provide a gentle introduction, to ease them in to the world of work. It's also a fantastic opportunity for the graduates who will be running the week to meet the students for the first time.



## The timetable

The induction day at National Grid is rather like a condensed, onsite version of the Work Inspiration Week:

- welcome, introduction, Team Hub
- introduction to gas and electricity and high-level overview of what National Grid does
- safety presentation and quiz
- lunch – students bring in their own packed lunch
- K'NEX pylon-building team activity – it's helpful to know in advance whether the students will be happy to be mixed up into random teams, or if they would prefer to be placed in teams with their friends
- wrap-up, Team Hub and close.

## The Team Hub tool

We use the Team Hub concept in all National Grid offices – it's a board displaying the team's wellbeing, workload, performance and problem-solving activities. This is a tool we also use during the induction day and throughout Work Inspiration Week.

The simplified version of the Team Hub provides a visual way for the students to find out who everybody is within their group, including students from other schools and colleges, and the graduates who are organising the week's activities.

It's also a chance for them to express how they are feeling about the day ahead, as well as any concerns they may have – as can be seen from the images above, students often write things like 'hungry', 'tired', 'excited' or 'happy'.

During the induction day, the Team Hub is actually a great 'catch-all' for the teaching assistants and teachers who will be involved in Work Inspiration Week. It's an opportunity for them to remind students how important it will be for them to get to bed at a reasonable time during the week of activities; to eat a proper breakfast before they are picked up from the school or college in the morning; and to dress smartly during Work Inspiration Week.

Safety is a massive part of everything National Grid does, so we also use the Team Hub to introduce the students to this concept. Examples include flagging up concerns like a student's shoelace having come undone, or the need to walk on the left-hand side when in a National Grid space.



Thirdly, we use the Team Hub to celebrate successes – student achievements, large and small, such as someone having the confidence to ask a question during a group session. It's a great way to make the students feel positive about themselves and what they are learning, and to get them used to the idea of the Team Hub from day one.

## The practicalities

Based on our own experience, here are our recommendations when it comes to setting up the induction day and the Work Inspiration Week:

- do a risk assessment before the visits – these are vulnerable young adults
- book the same room for the students to use during the induction day and the Work Inspiration Week
- give clear instructions about toilet breaks – there's no need for students to raise their hand if they want to go to the bathroom
- give each student a lanyard with identification information – we gave them a red lanyard, which signified that they had to be accompanied when on site
- get the students to bring in a packed lunch – originally we organised catering, but feedback from the school indicated that it's easier and less stressful for the students if they provide their own food
- when the students are on site, treat them as colleagues, rather than schoolchildren.

## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Work Inspiration Week: programme template

**You'll want to provide students with a rich and varied programme of activities and experiences during their Work Inspiration Week. Here we share the format used by National Grid.**

Here we share a typical Work Inspiration Week programme, organised by graduates based at National Grid's Wokingham Office.

On the first day, students spend the day gaining an understanding of what it would be like to work in National Grid. Students visit each of the interns who are working in that office, to see what placements they are doing and have a go at doing some of their tasks – things like completing fields on a spreadsheet, printing and binding a document, and tidying a meeting room.

Naturally, there is an element of presenting to the students during the week, to provide them with background information about the organisation. However, where possible, we bring things to life in a more memorable way, through work-based activities and quizzes, and by letting students try out some of our more exciting items of kit, like thermal imaging cameras and the Van de Graff electrostatic generator.

In our experience, the students really enjoy getting 'out and about' visiting different sites, to see for themselves the type of activities National Grid is involved in and the scale of work involved. For the visits, we flag up to the schools, colleges and students that sensible shoes (no open-toed sandals allowed), coats and waterproofs would be needed, as much of the day is spent outside.

The final day is largely spent preparing for the student presentations, to sum up what they have experienced and learned during their five days with the organisation. We find that putting the students in groups of four works well – they spend the morning preparing a talk of around five to ten minutes, which they then deliver in the afternoon to an audience of students, graduates, teaching staff, current interns and job coaches.

We find it works well to have a senior manager from the business kick off the afternoon session with an introduction, a summary of how the week has gone, and a thank you to all those involved in making it happen.

After the presentations, each student is presented with a certificate confirming that they have completed the Work Inspiration Week at National Grid. It's a great photo opportunity too, of course!

### Day 1 - A day spent understanding what it would be like to work at National Grid...

- 09:45** Arrival at National Grid Wokingham office
- 10:00** Welcome back, introduction, Team Hub and safety moment
- 10:20** Icebreaker and quiz
- 10:50** Activity, site tour and try on PPE
- 12:00** Lunch
- 13:00** View current interns in placements, and taster activities
- 14:15** Wrap-up and close
- 14:30** Depart

### Day 2 – A visit to Iver Environmental Centre and substation

- 10:00** Arrival
- 10:15** Welcome, Team Hub and safety moment
- 10:30** Understanding electricity
- 11:45** Walk around site
- 12:15** Lunch
- 12:45** Preparation for tour – change into PPE
- 13:00** Tour of substation
- 13:45** Wrap-up and close
- 14:00** Depart

### Day 3 – Activity day

- 09:45** Arrival
- 10:00** Welcome, Team Hub and safety moment
- 10:15** Control Room tour
- 11:20** Activity 1
- 12:00** Lunch
- 12:30** Activity 2
- 13:15** Activity 3
- 14:15** Wrap-up and close
- 14:30** Depart

### Day 4 – Visit to Didcot stores

- 10:15** Arrival at Didcot stores
- 10:30** Tour of site
- 12:00** Return to NG Wokingham
- 13:00** Team Hub and lunch
- 13:30** Quiz
- 14:15** Wrap-up and close
- 14:30** Depart

### Day 5 – Final presentation at National Grid House, Warwick

- 09:45** Arrival, welcome and Team Hub
- 10:15** Presentation preparation, with help from the graduates
- 12:30** Lunch
- 13:00** Students deliver presentations about their experience
- 14:15** Wrap-up and close
- 14:30** Depart







## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Work Inspiration Week: planning guide

**As with any five-day, multi-site event, you'll need to do a lot of planning in order to execute it well.**

Shown below is National Grid's checklist for organising a successful Work Inspiration Week – you'll need to adapt it to suit your organisation, of course, but it's a good starting point.

### Things to do – September to October:

- include the successful delivery of Work Inspiration Week in your objectives
- make your graduate coordinators aware of the week and make sure they will support you throughout
- inspire people to get involved – get your placement team on board
- decide when to host the Work Inspiration Week – check with schools and job coaches to find out which dates would be most suitable for students and interns alike
- share the provisional timetable for the week with the school – specify what information you will need (for example, the final list of students attending and the consent forms) and when
- book the entire Work Inspiration Week out in your calendar – it's a big time commitment, including setting things up every morning and recapping on the day's activities every afternoon

- link up with the Education and Skills team at an early stage – establish one point of contact from the Work Inspiration Week team
- make sure you have at least one person from each site, or who has worked at that site, to help organise the activities and visits
- have at least three people at each site to organise the week
- select a site lead for each location
- select a central coordinator covering all sites, to liaise with the job coaches and the Education and Skills team, and to organise catch-up meetings during the entire week
- book rooms for the entire week.

### Things to do – November to December:

- hold weekly telephone conferences for each individual site in the lead-up to Work Inspiration Week, to confirm progress
- receive the final list of students from the schools/colleges before the end of the year
- produce graduate and student profiles to help you to understand their likes and dislikes – you can also discuss any student preferences with teachers if you visit the students at their school, before the week

- there is no one-size-fits-all solution – tailor your week to suit your location, the schools/colleges and the students
- create a preliminary agenda – include a mix of personal development, intern-specific and organisation-specific activities (safety is a good theme if you're looking for back-up activities)
- coordinate between sites regarding the proposed activities and the resources they'll need
- if you do 'a day in the life', make sure you showcase workplace activities that the students could realistically expect to do in the future
- arrange for existing interns to meet (and possibly present to) the students during Work Inspiration Week – show the students the base room if you can (this will help them to visualise where they will be based during their placement)
- keep the school in the loop at an early stage about the activities you're planning, just in case you need to change anything, based on student needs
- link the induction day with the Work Inspiration Week – for example, run a Team Hub during the induction, then repeat the exercise each day during the Work Inspiration Week
- find out what the students are working on at school (maths, English, IT, science and so on) and tie it in with the work-based activities you'll be running

- make sure that the Work Inspiration Week supports the aims of EmployAbility and the interns programme – beware of focusing on providing site visits and activities at the expense of tying Work Inspiration Week back into the EmployAbility scheme
- aim for a ratio of one graduate to four students
- liaise with the Marketing and Communications team – they will want to prepare an article about the Work Inspiration Week
- keep student travel time down by organising site visits that are local to your Work Inspiration Week base office
- ask the school to provide the same teacher to accompany the students throughout their Work Inspiration Week
- plan how lunch will work each day, including during site visits – students are very used to bringing in a packed lunch, so this is a viable (and cost-effective) option
- ask the school to provide you with shoe and clothing sizes for the students – this will be needed so that appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment) can be sourced for the site visits
- at the earliest opportunity, block out time in guest speakers' calendars – decide on a speaker for the final day



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Work Inspiration Week: planning guide (continued)

- make sure you have obtained signed consent forms from the students for Work Inspiration Week and for photos
- obtain confirmation of the students' allergy, dietary and accessibility information
- book the visits – check for wheelchair accessibility and find out if the students will be expected to stand for long periods
- obtain confirmation from the school about any time commitments during the week that can't be moved
- visit the school before Christmas
- confirm a date for the induction day before the end of the year – ideally it needs to be one or two weeks before the Work Inspiration Week
- we recommend that all the graduates who will be leading the Work Inspiration Week complete the Disability Awareness Training course – speak to the job coaches to find out more about this.

### Things to do – January:

- be flexible with your agenda and prepare 'back-up' activities in case the students get through things more quickly than you were expecting
- do a dry run for each activity – make sure you know how it works and how long it should take, and check that you have all the resources that are needed
- prepare additional materials for back-up activities – make sure you can justify why you're doing these activities (they shouldn't just be 'time fillers', they should add value)
- confirm travel arrangements with the schools/colleges – if needed, reserve parking at office and site visit locations
- ask the sites about which PPE items are absolutely necessary, then order them as early as possible
- meet the students at their school – the more members of your site's Work Inspiration Week team that can join you on the visit, the better

- prepare a Team Hub to run with the students, including items like safety, successes and how students are feeling
- carry out risk assessments for the office-based activities and the site visits – you may need the names of each of the students before you can do this
- have an open conversation with the people providing the tours for the site visits, so they understand what level to pitch their tour at and the ideal duration.

### Things to do – the week before and during the week itself:

- provide information to the Security team before the visit – for visitor passes, parking spaces and awareness of vehicles coming on site
- prepare maps or directions for each site visit – don't rely on the satnav alone
- obtain photos of the students for use on the Team Hub
- don't be afraid to push the students beyond their comfort zones – this is an opportunity for them to experience an office environment

- during Work Inspiration Week, have a teleconference between the organisers at the different sites at the end of each day, to recap on the things that went well or not so well, and to work together to deliver and share lessons learned
- during Work Inspiration Week, ask the students at the end of each day for feedback about how they felt it went – record this information, because they students will find it useful when they come to do their presentations
- if you take photos during the week, put them on your laptop because they may also be useful to the students for their presentations
- at the end of the week, ask the schools or colleges for feedback.

## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Work Inspiration Week: activity ideas

**One of the objectives of Work Inspiration Week is to generate interest and excitement among potential interns about work opportunities within the organisation. Here we provide some National Grid examples...**

Work Inspiration Week activities at National Grid are designed to help potential interns learn about the organisation, what we do and what it's like to work here.

It's very important to pitch the activities at the right level, to make sure that they will be understood and enjoyable for the interns who will be doing them. The activities must also be safe, so you'll need to do risk assessments, particularly when it comes to external site visits.

Shown below is a selection of the activities we have run productively during the National Grid Work Inspiration Week, over and above the external site visits. You may well be able to adapt some of them to align with your own organisation.

If you'd like more information about any of the activities in our Work Inspiration Week toolkit – or if you'd like to enquire about borrowing them – please do get in touch.

## Human bingo

This very simple game is a good ice breaker.

Has been to America	Plays an instrument	Has a brother and a sister	Can roll their tongue
Has their ear(s) pierced	Has seen Star Wars: The Force Awakens	Read all the Harry Potter books	Has a pet dog
Has blue eyes	Wears glasses	Someone who has a "s" in their name	Likes chocolate ice cream
Supports Aston Villa	Is left handed	Has been to Scotland	Has their birthday in August

The students are given a sheet of paper containing generic information that's likely to apply to a number of the interns – you might like to include a few facts about the graduates who are running the Work Inspiration Week, too.

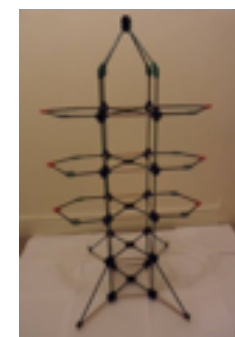
The students' task is to ask their peers (and the graduates, if appropriate) which of the facts relates to them. They then write the name of the person in the appropriate box. And when they've completed a horizontal, vertical or diagonal line, they shout 'bingo'. Simple, but effective!

## K'NEX – building an electricity pylon

To help the students understand more about National Grid's electricity transmission role, we split them into teams and get them to build their own electricity pylon out of K'NEX. It's a great chance for them to get to know the people in their team.

To do this, we provide a set of clear, step-by-step written instructions, including photographs of the K'NEX pieces required at each stage, and how to assemble them. We explain the task clearly to the students and make it clear that they can ask for help at any stage.

Once the tower is complete, it provides a fantastic physical tool to use when talking about how National Grid uses pylons to transport electricity from a power station to their house. And to promote a discussion, of course...



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Work Inspiration Week: activity ideas (continued)

### Safety quiz

Remaining with the theme of safety, this activity requires students to think about how they would react in a number of different scenarios. Again, each scenario can be used to prompt a useful discussion.

### What would you do?

Look at the pictures and read the question below each one. When you have an answer, write "yes" or "no" beside the number for each picture. Why did you decide "yes, it's safe" or "no, I need to stop and ask"?

1

Would you climb this ladder?

2

Would you carry these boxes?

3

Would you lift a bag this way?

4

Would you use this saw?

5

Would you walk through this puddle?

6

Would you use this machine without training?

7

Would you stand on this chair?

8

Would you pick up this needle?

9

Would you attend training?

10

Would you wash hands after handling chemicals?

### Identify the safety gear...

Another popular activity is a game where students match the name of the safety gear to the image on a sheet of paper. It provides a great opportunity to introduce the safety theme, which crops up many times during Work Inspiration Week.

### Can you identify the safety gear?

Hand hat  
 Apron  
 Dust mask  
 Gloves

Hearing protection  
 Safety footwear  
 Safety glasses

### Whirling windmills

Renewables are starting to play an increasingly important role in National Grid. So to introduce this topic to the students, we get them to create their own 'whirling windmills' and 'whooshing waterwheels' (abridged instructions are shown below).

These are detailed activities that require concentration, but they are always a lot of fun!

### WHIRLING WINDMILLS

**YOU WILL NEED:** Card, pencil with rubber, ruler, pin, scissors.

1. Draw lines corner to corner.
2. Make pinholes.
3. Cut halfway along the line.
4. Fold every other corner flap to the centre.
5. All pinholes line up in the centre.
6. Push pin into the centre hole and then into the rubber on top of the pencil. Be careful not to push the pin all the way through - it's sharp!

### WHOOSHING WATERWHEELS

**YOU WILL NEED:** Pre-cut plastic rectangles from plastic drinks bottle, cork with slots cut into the cork at equal distances, cut bottom from plastic bottle, two pieces of strong wire or thin dowel, scissors, jug of water.

*If you have trouble with the cutting, use materials that have been already cut by an adult.*

1. Cut 6-8 rectangles lengthways from the sides of the plastic bottle. Make sure they are all cut the same size.
2. Cut slots lengthways on the cork at equal distances around the edge.
3. Cut off the bottom half of a plastic bottle.
4. Then, cut two slots on opposite sides so the wire or dowel can sit in them.

### Wordsearch

We also use a standard wordsearch table to emphasise the safety theme too – students have to search for hidden words like 'hard hat', 'safety glasses', 'hair net' and 'ear plugs'.

### What have you learned today?

This is a really simple exercise that the students complete at the end of each day. They fill in a 'What have you learned today?' form that asks for the following type of information:

- name
- how did you feel today?
- what did you enjoy?
- what did you find difficult?
- a fact that you learned about National Grid today.

On the final day of Work Inspiration Week, the students can use the information from their completed forms to help them remember everything that they've done. This will make it far easier for them to start preparing their presentation.

## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Application forms – examples

**Part 1** – to be completed and submitted to the relevant job coaches in March after the student attends the Work Inspiration Week.

**Part 2** – to be completed and submitted to the relevant job coaches in June after the student attends a taster day and has a confirmed place on the programme.

### Part 1 – personal details Essential info (to be completed with a parent or carer)

Title	
Full name	
Address	
Postcode	
Mobile number	
Home telephone	
Email	
Date of birth	
National Insurance Number	
Ethnicity (e.g. White British, Asian British)	
Religious beliefs (e.g. Christianity, Islam, Atheism)	
Do you have a mobile phone?	
Is it a contract or pay-as-you-go phone?	
If you do not have a mobile phone do you plan on buying one?	
How many days a week are you currently doing at school/college?	

### Tell us a bit about yourself

Why do you want to do this programme?	
What do you want to achieve following this course?	
What are your strengths, skills and abilities?	
What level of skill do you have on a computer (for example, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, emails)?	
Which personal skills do you need to develop?	
Which work skills do you need to develop?	
What are your interests/hobbies?	
What are your hopes and ambitions?	
Who do you live with?	



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Application forms – examples (continued)

**Part 1** – to be completed and submitted to the relevant job coaches in March after the student attends the Work Inspiration Week.

Medical/health	No	Yes (please provide details including dates)
Have you ever had any serious illness?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you ever had a surgical operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have now, or have you ever had, fainting attacks, fits or convulsions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have now, or have you ever had, any mental health difficulties?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you need help with understanding and acting on instructions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a visual/hearing impairment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you suffer from any serious allergic conditions (for example, asthma, hay fever or eczema)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have any other serious allergies (for example, food, pollen or medicines)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you carry an EpiPen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you suffer from anxiety, panic attacks or depression?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please state any regular medication that you take, and the dose (excluding the contraceptive pill)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What is your additional need? Please provide details of needs from your statement of special educational needs or your learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) assessment report.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Disclaimer

The information provided will be passed on to your son/daughter’s work placement for their confidential use. Please note that the local authority and the school/college cannot be held responsible for any eventuality arising if you do not provide essential health information that is accurate or up to date. If there is any change in your son/daughter’s health condition, before starting their work placement, you will need to tell us in writing as soon as possible.

## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Application forms – examples (continued)

**Part 1** – to be completed and submitted to the relevant job coaches in March after the student attends the Work Inspiration Week.

### Travel questionnaire

How do you intend to travel to work?

Do you require travel training? If yes, your school or college will need to make sure you complete it before your start date.

Parent/carer: is it your aspiration for your child to gain full-time employment at the end of this programme?

Yes/ no/ part-time work

### Signatures

Parent/carer name

Parent/carer signature

Date

Applicant's name

Applicant's signature

Date

### Qualifications (to be completed with the tutor)

School/college

Subject – award/certificate/diploma

Level achieved



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Application forms – examples (continued)

**Part 2** – to be completed and submitted to the relevant job coaches in June after the student attends a taster day and has a confirmed place on the programme.

### Travel arrangements

Name

How does the student intend to travel from home to the workplace?

Travel training: please share travel arrangements with the job coach by end of June for a September start date.

### Previous attendance record

Last academic year                      %                      Reasons for absence

Number of days attending on a weekly basis?

### Work experience/work history

Employer	Dates		Job roles	Reason for leaving
	From	To		

### Please state your personal achievements



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Application forms – examples (continued)

**Part 2** – to be completed and submitted to the relevant job coaches in June after the student attends a taster day and has a confirmed place on the programme.

### Reference

#### Reference – This must be from a school/college

Name	_____
Address	_____
Email	_____
Tel	_____
Relationship to applicant	_____

### Tutor comments

Tutor comments	_____
Have there been any safeguarding concerns?	_____
Safeguarding officer	_____
Tutor name	_____
Tutor signature	_____
Date	_____

### Data Protection Act 1988

The personal and sensitive data you have provided on this form will be used by the programme for the purpose of assessing your health needs and any support you may require during your time on the EmployAbility programme. The data will not be passed on to any external third party without your consent, unless required to do so by law. The data will be stored securely and will be destroyed after five years.

### Media/photo consent

Do you consent and your parents / carers consent to you being filmed or photographed on the EmployAbility programme? These images could be used within the host company/ school / college.	Parent signature _____
	Student signature _____
By signing you are consenting to the above.	_____
Do you consent and your parents / carers consent to you being filmed or photographed on the EmployAbility programme? These images could be used to help to promote the programme externally, on the host company website and via social media.	Parent signature _____
	Student signature _____
By signing you are consenting to the above.	_____



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Application forms – examples (continued)

**Part 2** – to be completed and submitted to the relevant job coaches in June after the student attends a taster day and has a confirmed place on the programme.

### Emergency contact details

Title	_____
Full name	_____
Address	_____
Postcode	_____
Mobile number	_____
Home tel	_____
Email	_____

### Emergency contact details

Title	_____
Full name	_____
Address	_____
Postcode	_____
Mobile number	_____
Home tel	_____
Email	_____

### Signatures

Parent/carer name	_____
Parent/carer signature	_____
Date	_____
Applicant's name	_____
Applicant's signature	_____
Date	_____

### Clothing sizes (uniform will be provided for certain roles)

Shoe size	_____
Chest size (inches/cm)	_____
T-shirt (S/M/L)	_____
Waist (inches/cm)	_____
Leg length (inches/cm)	_____





## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Organising a taster day

An on-site taster day or half-day is a chance for potential interns to sample life at work and try some of the tasks they might do during a placement. As well as offering students a taste of work, taster sessions are part of the selection process to find students most suited for an internship.

Each student has two 15-minute taster sessions, chosen to suit their interests and abilities: a practical student might go to the canteen and maintenance while one interested in computing might go to two office-based sessions.

These sessions give students a real idea of what work might be like – and open their eyes to the kinds of roles that are available. For instance, a student might have an aptitude for computers but have no idea of the huge range of roles within IT.

The practical tasks and exercises arranged for the students need to be pitched at the right level. Sessions should be largely practical, rather than the sponsoring manager explaining what the department does.

Tasks could include:

- office-based tasks such as adding data to a spreadsheet, creating a poster or editing an attendance tracker
- food preparation in the Catering department
- mail room tasks such as sending a special delivery and delivering a letter

- customer liaison tasks such as getting a room ready for business and tidying vending areas
- a reprographics task such as binding a document.

Some departments, like Catering, will use their own facilities for their taster sessions but other departments will offer taster activities in a pre-booked room.

Before the taster day, site leads will work with the staff and pupils from the school or college to make sure that the tasks offered will interest the students and that they will be capable of performing them.

The school or college should provide a short profile of each student before the taster day, so that department leads and managers know a little about the young people they will meet.

The taster day should include an introduction session and breaks for refreshments.

Placement or department leads, job coaches and site leads should be there on the day to welcome students and explain the process.

Each student will need support during every taster activity. A job coach, a member of staff from the student's school or college, or the site lead from the business will be allocated to support each student in the taster.

Not all the students attending the taster day will be offered a place on the programme: the taster day is part of the selection process.

## Tips for organising a successful taster day

### Set a date well in advance to suit everyone involved:

- job coaches should liaise with schools and colleges to confirm a suitable date
- the site lead or leads from your business will contact the placement or department leads who will be working with the interns, as it's essential that they are available at the taster day.

### Tell the placement leads what will happen on the day and what you expect from them:

- remind them that it is a taster of work and does not mean that the students attending the tasters will be:
  - offered a place on the programme
  - based in their department
  - a suitable pupil for that placement.

### Ask the lead contacts from each department to confirm that they will be at the taster day.

### Book the rooms that will be needed on the day:

- book a large room for refreshments, the introduction session and ice breakers
- departments such as Catering will use their own facilities for their taster sessions but other departments will need small rooms to offer taster activities.

### The job coach and the lead contact meet to discuss activities

Remember that the practical tasks and dummy exercises arranged for the students need to be pitched at the right level. Sessions should be largely practical, rather than the sponsoring manager explaining what the department does.

Examples of tasks include:

- office-based tasks such as adding data to a spreadsheet, creating a poster, editing an attendance tracker
- mail room tasks like sending a special delivery and delivering a letter
- customer liaison tasks such as getting a room ready for business and tidying vending areas
- a reprographics task like binding a document.

### Match pupils with their skills and interests

Work closely with the staff and pupils from the school or college to make sure that the tasks offered at the taster day will interest the students and that they will be capable of performing them. School staff and job coaches will help you here.

### Send the sponsoring managers a short pupil profile

Ask staff at the school or college you are working with to generate this and send it to you. The idea is that managers will know a little about each student before the taster day.

## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Organising a taster day (continued)

### Send the sponsoring managers information about the taster day itinerary

Make sure sponsoring managers know:

- who will be attending
- what will happen on the day
- where the individual taster sessions will take place
- that they'll need to use feedback forms, which should be filled in on the day and handed back during the feedback session after the tasters.

### Allocate support for the student in the taster sessions

Each student will need support during every taster activity. A job coach, a member of staff from the student's school or college, or the site lead from the business will be allocated to support each student in the taster.

Book additional requirements:

- refreshments
- car parking.

Remember to send a list of visitors' names to reception and arrange for name badges to be created for the day.

### Feedback session

While the students are touring the building, the job coach and all the staff involved with the taster morning get together to discuss the potential interns. This session is an important part of the process to decide who will be offered an internship.

### Outline agenda

- 10am** Refreshments
- 10:10am** Welcome and introductions
- 10:20am** Ice breaker
- 10:35am** First taster session (in designated room/area)
- 10:55am** Changeover
- 11am** Second taster session (in designated room/area)
- 11:20am** Students and their staff have a tour of building (pupils and supporting staff from school and college only). Sponsoring managers/employees meet to provide feedback to EmployAbility leads on the tasters
- 11:50am** Wrap-up summary
- 12pm** End of the event



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Disability awareness training for business employees

**Working for the first time with young people who have a learning disability can be a daunting prospect. So it's a very good idea to make sure that employees who will be heavily involved in the internship programme complete a disability awareness training course.**

To help allay any initial concerns and build the confidence and awareness of employees who will play a significant role in your supported internship programme, we strongly recommend arranging disability awareness training for them.

## Why arrange the training?

There are many good reasons for this. Naturally, employees who have gained a good general understanding of how attitudes, behaviours and environment can affect disabled people will also be better placed to support the interns.

But the benefits of the training will reach far beyond the programme itself, of course.

That's because when disability awareness training participants return to the workplace, they bring with them a new-found set of knowledge and skills. Their disability confidence levels will have had a massive boost. And it's their enthusiasm and the example they set within the workplace that will inspire a positive approach to disability among their fellow employees.

A disability awareness course is a great opportunity for managers, team leaders and supervisors too, because it will equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to support disabled colleagues effectively. It will also give them the opportunity to learn about the legal requirements regarding the management of disability issues.

By arming themselves with this knowledge, they'll be able to make sure that the supported interns – and any existing or future employees with a learning difficulty or disability – can fulfil their full potential in the workplace.

## Our approach

At National Grid, we focus our disability awareness training on the new intake of graduates who organise the Work Inspiration Week, which is an important part of the selection process.

We hope that many of these graduates will go on to become the leaders of our organisation, so building their disability awareness and confidence also makes good strategic business sense.

In our experience, it's also well worth providing disability awareness training to any intern placement managers and site team volunteers who will be working closely with the interns.

## Providers

There are several disability awareness training providers and in many cases, courses can be provided at your business premises.

Although you may choose to focus on disability in its wider context, it's also well worth considering doing some training with a focus on learning disabilities or autism awareness.

Here is a list of providers – most operate nationwide but there are also likely to be local providers in your region. You may also find that it is worth contacting a local disability charity. Please note that by including the providers in the list below, we are not endorsing their services.

## Disability awareness training providers

- **Business Disability Forum**  
<http://www.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/our-services/learning-and-development/disability-awareness/>
- **Remploy**  
[www.remploy.co.uk](http://www.remploy.co.uk)
- **Disability Rights UK**  
<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/how-we-can-help/training/disability-confidence-training>
- **Illuminate**  
<http://www.illuminatevr.co.uk/>

## Learning disability training providers

- **British Institute of Learning Disabilities**  
<http://www.bild.org.uk/our-services/workplace-training/training-programmes/>
- **The National Autistic Society**  
<http://www.autism.org.uk/>
- **Autism Connect - E-learning courses**  
<https://autism-connect.org.uk/>

## Ask your partner SEN school or college

You may also find that your partner SEN school or college has trained staff who may be able to run a disability awareness session for your employees. It's well worth asking...

## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Benefits to business teams

**It's not just the intern who benefits from their supported programme, of course. Very often we find that business teams are also enriched by the experience.**

The benefits to business teams who get involved in supporting an intern are wide reaching:

- **an 'additional' resource** – because the intern is fully funded (and in National Grid, their laptops are sourced from the Corporate Affairs department's budget), they are effectively an additional resource. That's good news for the team that's supporting the intern
- **relief from the 'daily grind'** – one of the great things about having an intern on your team is that they will often relish doing some of the more repetitive – but necessary and valuable – tasks that are part of everyday work life (see Guide PGL 21: Sample role outlines)
- **use staff time more productively** – once the intern is fully up to speed with the tasks, they can be left to complete them, thereby freeing up a member of your team to work on something else
- **development opportunity** – having an intern working within the business also presents a great opportunity for some team members to develop their own leadership and management skills. By assigning tasks, explaining how to complete them, encouraging the intern to complete them to the best of their ability and dealing with any issues that arise, team members can really come on in leaps and bounds on the personal development front
- **enhanced knowledge and understanding** – regardless of their age, seniority of position and experience, it's invaluable for team members to experience working with people who have a learning disability and see the contribution they can make to the business. This knowledge and understanding may then serve them well in future roles
- **inclusion and diversity** – many people have found that having a supported intern has had an 'emotional' impact on the team, because it has made them more aware of the challenges faced by people with learning difficulties, many of whom have come from a different background. The act of getting to know, understand and appreciate the intern helps to improve the team's approach to inclusion and diversity
- **infectious enthusiasm** – going by national statistics, young people with a learning difficulty or disability have only a six per cent chance of finding long-term employment. So they are enormously grateful for the opportunity to find out what life is like in the workplace, and are so enthusiastic and pleased to be able to add value to the team. And that positivity can have a ripple effect.

**"I developed a new level of respect for people with special needs and their abilities"**

National Grid team member

**"The feeling in the team when the intern is with us is really positive; there's a lot more community spirit around the place.**

**You can really see how much of an impact you're having on the intern, just by treating them with respect and giving them the opportunity to add value and feel useful.**

**I'd even go so far as to say that it has changed the atmosphere in the team. Everyone's invested in the scheme. It's addictive."**

National Grid team member



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Intern role outlines

**There are no hard-and-fast rules about the role that a supported intern can perform in an organisation – the job coach can provide input, but it's the team that will ultimately decide on the tasks that the intern will be doing.**

Often a job coach isn't familiar with the work carried out by the team that's hosting the placement. They can advise and make suggestions, but it's down to the team to decide on the intern's tasks. The ideal solution is to arrive at a meaningful set of activities that will be useful to intern and host team alike.

Every intern is unique, in the same way that every employee is unique. The trick to achieving a successful supported internship lies in matching up the skills, aptitudes and capabilities of the intern with those needed by the business.

At National Grid, most of our supported internships are hosted by teams from within the organisation. A small number are hosted by our partners – for example, at our Warwick office, we have an intern who works as a barista in the coffee shop run by our supplier.

Broadly speaking, internships at National Grid fall into one of two categories: practical or business-focused (usually office tasks). Shown below are abridged job descriptions of some of our recent supported interns.

## Practical roles

### Customer Liaison:

- refill ink cartridges and paper in printers
- re-stock board pens and erasers
- maintained vending and seating areas
- help set up seating and audio/visual displays in the conference suite.

### Reception:

- sign visitors in and out
- answer phone calls from outside and inside the business
- make phone calls to book taxis, inform hosts of a guest's arrival and employees waiting for a vehicle drop-off
- kept the reception sitting area and drinks area well maintained.

### Reprographics:

- use various pieces of equipment for binding, laminating, guillotining, scanning, printing and PDF work
- email National Grid customers regarding their orders.

## Business-focused roles

### Information Systems:

- update and maintain the team's Performance Hub
- design and manage the team's SharePoint site
- run and send daily reports.

### Construction:

- maintain the email account for booking rooms and respond to requests
- book rooms and parking for colleagues
- support project work, using Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint
- order stationery
- write articles for the team
- coordinate the team's training data
- general administration.

### Corporate Affairs:

- use Google analytics to produce reports highlighting traffic and use of our external websites
- use web trends tool to produce similar reports relating to the intranet
- describe and tag our website content so that people using search engines can find our content quickly and with relevant descriptions
- list our video assets and compile data relating to them, like the topic and age of video
- streamline the video asset database: contact video owners to find out if content remains relevant or should be archived
- create and manage a UK YouTube channel.



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Intern placement case studies

**It's always nice to be able to see the proof of the pudding. Here we provide frank, honest information about four successful National Grid supported internships from 2017.**

We thought it would be useful for you to gain an insight into how some recent National Grid supported interns have got on during their placements.

Shown below are four mini case studies: the first two are business-focused and the remaining two are practical.

### Ismael – Global Procurement placement:

- **duration** – May to July
- **duties** – supporting the team's Performance Excellence Hub board, updating documents, designing new t-cards, sending mail to suppliers, car park bookings, electronic forms, meeting rooms and travel accommodation.

Ismael said: "I liked the fact that I had to work to high standards because the work I do is crucial to the team. I enjoy coming in to the department every day and starting my daily tasks."

A team member said: "Ismael has learned how to work systematically through his daily jobs and to check his work for accuracy. He has picked up new skills, like booking hotels, how to speak to the mail room on the phone, what information is needed, how to print addresses on sticky labels and how to speak to colleagues in emails and personally."

Sam Teasdale, Senior Buyer, Substations, said: "Ismael has been a fantastic addition to the team and everyone has enjoyed his presence. I can't speak highly enough of the programme and having Ismael on our team."



### Olivia – Corporate Affairs placement:

- **duration** – April to July
- **duties** – the main duties involved downloading, uploading and tagging photographs.

Olivia said: "I liked tagging the photographs. It was interesting seeing all the different photos and I felt useful to the team."

A team member said: "Olivia went on a training course with the team about how to tag photographs, and learned about saving documents to Brand Central and digital asset management platforms. She learned to work independently, and to email her manager for support if necessary."

Caroline Mackinnon, Brand Application Manager, said: "I have been very impressed with the quality of Olivia's work. She quickly understood the tasks and worked on them with ease. She is friendly and approachable, and her confidence has grown a lot. Having a Job Coach is a fantastic support."



### Faye – Restaurant placement:

- **duration** – January to July (two placements)
- **duties** – clearing away breakfast, setting up lunch, and monitoring and replenishing soup, jacket potatoes and rolls during the lunch period.

Faye said: "it's been a great experience. It's helped me get a job. I've enjoyed working with the team. They are so friendly and helpful."

Katrina Snaith, Restaurant Manager, said: "Faye's customer service skills really flourished in this department, her confidence when dealing with new people rocketed."

"She dealt with customers' queries and complaints politely and with a smile. She understood about the importance of setting up in the same way daily, and about the need for clearing down and hygiene in a restaurant."

"A hotel manager saw her working here and took her on, there and then."



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Intern placement case studies (continued)

### Melanie – Customer Liaison placement:

- **duration** – January to April
- **duties** – tidying floor plates including maintaining printers, setting up meeting rooms, keeping vending areas tidy and stocked, and dealing with customer needs as they arise (for example, LAN cables and paper jams).

Melanie said: “I liked changing the posters round and changing printer toners. I liked dealing with customers – I enjoy chatting to people.”

Ruth Fowler, Soft Services Supervisor, said: “Melanie’s customer service skills have improved and her understanding of how a team works together has grown. She has learned that rushing a job is not always the best way, and that slow and steady may be better at times. Melanie has picked up all routines very quickly and has gained full-time employment from this company.”



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Business – Frequently asked questions

**We've gathered together some questions that teams from the business frequently ask... as well as some answers.**

**Q How much will the supported internship cost my team?**

A supported internship is already fully funded, so it's a free resource for the team. It's a type of work experience and the interns are still in education, so there's no wage involved.

**Q How much support does the team receive during the internship?**

The intern won't turn up unaccompanied and expect to be taken on by a member of the team; the job coach will remain with the intern during their first few days of the placement, until they have settled into their role and can operate under their own steam.

For any tasks that the intern is asked to do during the first few days, the job coach will be there by their side, helping them to understand what they need to do.

If any unexpected issues arise during the internship that the team feels it can't handle, the job coach is always on hand to help – that's a core part of their role.

**Q What sort of tasks are appropriate for an intern to do?**

Read the 'Intern role outlines' guide for a good idea of typical intern role outlines. But everything will depend on the individual intern's own skills, aptitude and capabilities, of course. For some interns, you can really pile on the responsibilities and they start to blossom, while for others more of a 'gently does it' approach may be needed.

**Q How will my team benefit?**

Read the 'Benefits to teams' guide to find out about the rich and varied benefits that teams experience when they host a supported intern.

**Q How long will the intern spend with my team each day?**

The interns have quite a compressed day that starts and ends in their base room. So your intern will join your team at around 10:30, take a half-hour lunch and finish up with you at around 3pm so that they can return to the base room for a wrap-up session and then travel back home – the interns make their own travel arrangements when they are on the EmployAbility scheme and most use public transport. They don't work during the school holidays.

**Q What can I do to make sure our intern has the best possible experience with us?**

Have a dedicated person who's responsible for the intern and can keep an eye on their progress through the assigned task, and is aware of the peaks and troughs in their workload.

Make the intern feel welcome and fully involved – it's a great idea to invite them along to a team meeting, before the internship starts, to introduce them to all the team members.

If you're planning an away-day, include the intern and bear in mind that you'll need to sort out their transport arrangements (for some interns, transport is the most stressful part of the day).

But remember that although it's essential to be welcoming and supportive, there are safeguarding issues to consider. Team members should remain professional at all times, avoid being left alone with the intern for long periods and decline any Facebook friendship requests – sometimes young people with learning difficulties and disabilities can form strong attachments very quickly.

## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Steps to set up a placement

**Based on our experience at National Grid, there are six main steps you'll need to follow to set up a supported internship placement within your business.**

### **Step 1** **Open the doors**

A member of the EmployAbility site team who is responsible for organising the programme placements within the business makes contact with the managers of potential placement teams.

### **Step 2** **Promote to the business area**

The EmployAbility team representative arranges an informal meeting with (or presentation to) managers supported by a job coach and an intern, to discuss the programme and answer any questions.

### **Step 3** **Draw up the job roles**

The placement lead (the main person in the department who will be responsible for the intern) works with his or her team members and the job coach to create a bespoke job description for the placement and records it in the new placement form (see 'New placement form' guide for an example of one of these).

### **Step 4** **Arrange a 'deep dive' session**

The department hosts the intern, allowing them to learn about the business area and the types of jobs that are undertaken – this session could be an interactive task or an informal presentation.

### **Step 5** **Confirm the placement**

The job coach sends the department a personal profile of the intern, plus any additional relevant information. The job coach meets the placement lead to discuss safeguarding issues and risk assessment.

### **Step 6** **Set the start date**

The department sets the date for the intern's induction (if needed) and agrees the date when the intern will start their placement with the support of their job coach.

## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# New placement form

**It's essential to complete a new placement form before the start of any supported internship placement.**

Whereas the job description tends to be an informal, verbal agreement, the new placement form is a formal document that specifies exactly what the supported internship will involve. At National Grid, we include the following information in the form:

New placement form	
<b>Reference number</b>	
<b>Contact details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>main point of contact with the EmployAbility team and will often be responsible for setting the intern's daily tasks – name, email, telephone</li> <li>placement manager (this does not need to be someone at a managerial level) – name, email, telephone</li> </ul>
<b>Business details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>directorate</li> <li>business area</li> <li>team name</li> <li>whether or not the placement can be split across two teams – two days with one team and three days with another (yes/no)</li> </ul>
<b>Preferred start date</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>this should be one of the three school terms: September to December, January to March, or April to July. If you don't have a preferred start date, just write 'not applicable'</li> </ul>
<b>Preferred start date one-off or rolling placement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>indicate whether you could accommodate an intern for every placement period (yes/no)</li> </ul>
<b>Location in the building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>where exactly the placement is based</li> </ul>
<b>Core tasks required</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the basic tasks that the intern will need to complete, in order to contribute to this placement</li> </ul>
<b>Desired skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the basic skills that the intern will need in order to complete the core tasks</li> </ul>
<b>Additional tasks (if suitable)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>depending on the capability of the intern, what additional tasks would you like them to do?</li> </ul>

## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Site preparation

**There's very little physical preparation needed for an EmployAbility job coach and interns to work onsite.**

The minimum requirement is a base room or location for the job coaches. Job coaching is not the kind of role that can be done using hot-desking. We appreciate that it can be difficult for a company to find a spare room, but it is essential for the job coaches and interns to have a place where they can meet and discuss progress.

It's particularly important for the students to have somewhere they feel comfortable as they adjust to being in a new and – for some young people – overwhelming work environment.

Interns start and end each working day in the base room. In the morning they prepare for the day ahead, work on their BTEC qualifications and talk to the job coach. In the afternoon they complete their daily diaries there and discuss any issues that have arisen during the day.

It's also useful for the managers working with the students to know where to find the job coaches, and it gives them somewhere to talk in private.

The business should provide and set up laptops for job coaches. They will also need email addresses to use while working within the company.

## Checklist

You'll need to provide:

- a private office space for use as a base room
- a phone line
- IT support to set up email addresses.



## Phase 2 – Pre go-live

# Holding an opening ceremony

**An opening ceremony is a good way to celebrate the launch of the EmployAbility – Let’s work together programme at a new business or site.**

Opening ceremonies at National Grid sites have proved to be very special occasions. Bringing together everyone involved in the programme locally raises the profile of EmployAbility in your business and in the community.

New interns, their parents and carers, job coaches, partner schools and colleges, site leads, local community contacts and business representatives all celebrate the life-changing difference that the supported internship programme can make.

For the interns, seeing everyone celebrating the start of a new programme reinforces the significance and importance of the step they are about to take.

## The ceremony

It makes sense to start with an overview of EmployAbility – Let’s work together in the opening remarks. Tell people how and why it started and talk about its aim: to get these young people ready for paid jobs. Most audiences are surprised to hear that less than six per cent of people with learning disabilities have paid work – compared with more than 40 per cent of people with physical disabilities.

A speaker from a partner school or college can explain what the programme means to their students. And a job coach can tell the audience how the scheme works in practice and how it helps the young interns gain confidence and prospects.

The most moving speaker is usually a graduated intern from an earlier scheme – National Grid will be happy to help you find one to talk at your opening ceremony. An intern talking about how the programme made a difference to him or her really brings home the importance of EmployAbility to the lives of these young people.

A celebratory cake-cutting moment provides an excellent photo opportunity for the interns, special guests and senior leaders.



## How to organise an opening ceremony

Follow these steps to organise a successful opening ceremony for your EmployAbility programme:

- form an opening ceremony committee – eight weeks before the event, set out regular meetings to discuss progress
- confirm the invitation list – collate the list of attendees in one place
- send out invitations to:
  - job coaches
  - interns, parents and carers
  - partner schools and colleges
  - senior business leaders
  - site and placement leads
  - the mayor or local authority leader
  - leadership teams from local special schools and colleges
  - the local educational authority
  - your MP
  - key stakeholders like your local recruitment agency and your supported employment agency (such as Remploy) if there is one locally
  - local press and radio
- organise visitor passes – send a list of visitors to reception to have passes made up
- book parking for attendees – confirm registration numbers for those requiring parking
- arrange a director to host proceedings – and draft speaker notes
- make sure any health and safety risk assessments are completed
- make sure the EmployAbility logo is visible
- arrange facilities – book a business lounge or large room to host the event
- arrange the buffet – check dietary requirements
- arrange a celebratory cake – include the EmployAbility logo on the cake
- organise internal/external communications – photographer, press release, local media and an article for your internal staff magazine, intranet or website
- confirm the order of proceedings and provide details to the team.