

Guide for employers on how to mentor and support our learners

Thank-you for supporting one of our learners with a work-experience placement. You are making a real difference, supporting us to break patterns of disadvantage and we appreciate the opportunity you are giving to our learner.

To support them to be successful in their placement, here is a brief guide about the knowledge and skills we would like them to work on during their work experience, as well as guidance on how to mentor our learners.

Understanding the Purpose of work experience

During the placement, make links to real life experiences and potential future pathways (like T-levels, apprenticeships, and A-levels) that they would need to do this job. The learner will benefit from a clear outline of skills, knowledge, and experience that they will gain from this placement and how this translates to future life goals.

Managing expectations

Make it clear to the learner exactly what tasks they will be undertaking during the work placement; this will help them to feel comfortable and understand exactly what the expectations of them are. Let them know what support you will give them and what to do if they need help or guidance with a task that has been set for them to complete. Make the outcomes of the work experience clear.

Transparent Communication

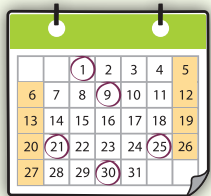
Our learners need to feel listened to. It is important that they feel you are trustworthy and that there is a transparency in communicating with them. This will support them to build a strong and positive relationship with you. Make it clear that any problems that the learner has at work can be shared and sorted together.

Helping our learners thrive

Many of our learners have experience of trauma and can therefore struggle with their emotional regulation for both positive and negative feelings. You can support our learners to thrive and feel safe through actively demonstrating your unconditional acceptance, making it clear you accept their thoughts, feelings and emotions that could influence their behaviours. Displaying warmth, openness and kindness is important; our learners say they would like to work for people that smile and are fun! Talk to them about what they have learned and celebrate their successes with them.

Support our learners to develop their executive functioning skills

These are vital life skills that support learning and function, and many of our learners need support to develop these skills. Our learners can get frustrated easily and it will help create a low anxiety environment which will support learners to be successful on work experience placements.



Planning

Support learners to plan the tasks set for them on their placement and achieve their workplace goals. Help them to keep track of what is completed and support them to meet deadlines.



Perseverance

Give our learners the encouragement to not give up on a task, and celebrate their success if they stick with it, especially when it is challenging.



Time Management

Be clear about start and finish times. Support learners to understand how long a task should take and how to use their time effectively.



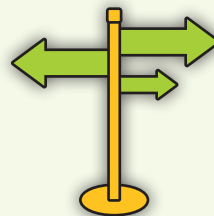
Self-control

Support our learners to regulate their emotions and actions through being kind, and demonstrating openness and warmth. Make it clear that they can ask for your help.



Organisation

Encourage learners to keep any equipment tidy. Create task lists to support them to organise their workday and keep track of their tasks.



Flexibility

Learners may struggle to adapt if there are changes during their workday. Prepare them for any changes and give them additional support as needed.



Working Memory

Support learners to develop their working memory skills through recalling what they have previously learnt with you and applying it in new tasks.



Attention

Support learners to maintain their attention on a task. Be clear about task duration with them but show understanding if they need to move away from a task. Support learners to develop their focus by gradually increasing active concentration time.



Task initiation

Support our learners to feel confident to take initiative to start a task without prompting from you.