

This information is about the different ways in which young people can make steps to prepare for employment.

The [SEND Code of Practice](#) states that:

one of the most effective ways to prepare young people with SEND for employment is to arrange work-based learning that enables them to have first-hand experience of work, such as apprenticeships, traineeships and supported internships.

So what are these, and who can access them?

Traineeships

Traineeships are open to young people aged 16 – 24 who want to work, but who need extra help and support, and have qualifications below Level 3 (below A-Level). They offer young people training and work experience to give them the skills and confidence to get a job or apprenticeship, alongside support to improve their maths and English. They last between six weeks and six months. The work experience placement is unpaid but employers sometimes cover expenses for travel and meals.

Supported Internships

A supported internship is a structured study programme based primarily with an employer. They enable young people aged 16-24 with an EHC Plan to achieve sustainable paid employment by helping them gain the skills they need for work, through learning in the workplace. Supported internships are unpaid, and last for a minimum of six months. Wherever possible, they support the young person to move into paid employment at the end of the programme. As well as spending most of their time learning on the job, young people will complete a personalised study programme which includes the chance to study job related qualifications, plus English and maths (if appropriate). Supported Internships have proved to be an effective way of helping young people with SEN into work.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships combine training in a job with study. Depending on the level, Apprenticeships take 1 to 5 years to complete.

Apprentices will:

- work alongside experienced staff
- gain job-specific skills
- earn a wage and get holiday pay
- get time for study related to their role (usually one day a week)

Apprenticeships are available at different levels, from level 2 to level 7. As the levels get higher, the apprenticeships become more advanced. For example, a level 2 apprenticeship is equivalent to GCSE level, and levels 6 and 7 are equivalent to a degree.

Young people can apply for apprenticeships while they are still in school, or when they are in college. To start one they will need to be:

- 16 or over by the end of the summer holidays
- Living in England
- Not in full-time education

Applying for an apprenticeship is a competitive process. Apprenticeships are jobs, so employers decide who they are going to employ, and what the entry requirements should be. For example, some employers may ask that the young person has GCSEs including English and maths at certain grades. But as a general rule, apprenticeships should be open to everyone over the age of 16.

For young people with an EHC Plan, there may be flexibility around the English and maths qualifications they would need to complete their apprenticeship.

Careers Advice

If you're aged 13-19 and you have a learning difficulty and/or disability, your school must offer you face-to-face careers guidance. This applies even if you do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Contact your school and ask to speak to the careers adviser.

The National Careers Service provides confidential and impartial advice to help you make decisions about training and work. If you're aged 13-18 you can phone them, email them a question or use their webchat service.

If you're aged 19 or over and you have a disability, learning difficulty or health condition, you can also get at least three sessions of face-to-face advice from a local adviser.

You can also get in touch with **MK SENDIAS Service** on 01908 254518 or email: contact@mksendias.org.uk