

# DISABLED PEOPLE'S INCLUSION WITHIN UK TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

## ABOUT THE BRITISH COUNCIL

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We do this by making a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

We work with over 100 countries across the world in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society. Last year we reached over 65 million people directly and 731 million people overall including online, broadcasts and publications. Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body.

# CONTENTS

- 2 Executive summary
- 4 Introduction
- 6 How TVET is structured and funded across the UK
- 9 What do we mean by 'disability' in the TVET context?
- 12 The legislative and policy framework for inclusive TVET
- 15 Successful models of TVET that promote positive outcomes for disabled people
- 33 Principles for effective TVET for disabled learners
- 37 Continuing barriers and areas to address
- 41 Conclusions
- 43 Recommendations

# 1

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



“I’ve learnt so much from my colleagues and the working environment. It wasn’t as daunting as I thought it would be – everybody just wants you to be successful (Disability Rights UK, 2017).”<sup>1</sup>

One of the aims of the British Council is that skills development better meets the needs of individuals and the economy, through high-quality, well-evidenced and effective provision.

The benefits of effective skills development for people facing disability-related barriers include improved income, health and well-being for individuals and broader social and economic benefits.

This report provides a summary and analysis of a range of models of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) where an objective evidence base, qualitative data and/or expert opinion from within the skills sector make a strong case for their inclusion.

It also outlines principles for effective provision, largely drawn from codes of practice setting out the legislative and policy framework in the UK.<sup>2</sup> These principles include:

- High quality provision to meet the needs of young disabled people, including those with special educational needs.
- A focus on innovative inclusive teaching practice and removing barriers to learning.
- Personalised support.
- Supporting successful preparation for adulthood.
- Effective early engagement of employers and an emphasis on work-based learning.
- High expectations and aspirations for young disabled people.

The report outlines a number of areas for continued focus and improvement. These include:

- Creating fair and effective funding for students with the highest needs.
- Investing in independence for 19 to 25 year olds.
- Personalised careers education, advice and guidance.
- Increased employment opportunities.

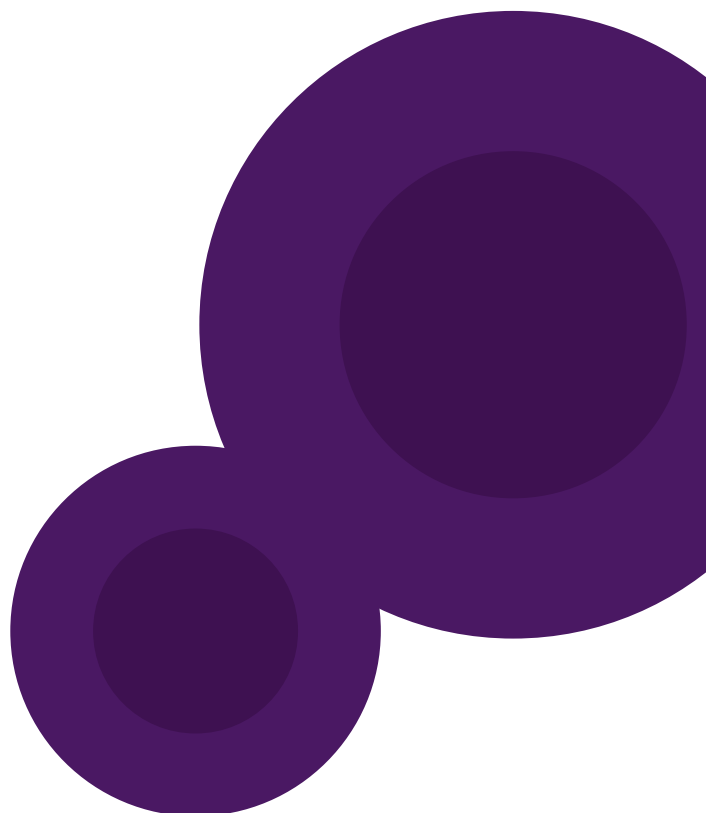
It also makes specific recommendations for governments, learning providers and employers.

The authors of this report have consulted widely with expert practitioners in the TVET sector and undertaken desk research to inform the findings of this report.

Effective TVET is central to providing people who are disabled from childhood or young adulthood the life chances to sustain them and to ensure that they can participate to the fullest extent possible.

This participation is vital, for the health and well-being of individuals and also for the health and well-being of UK society and the economy.

The UK’s model for TVET has much to recommend it and lessons that may be applicable in other countries (DWP, 2013).<sup>3</sup> Equally, the UK has much to learn from the experience of other countries.



# 2

## INTRODUCTION



One of the aims of the British Council is that skills development better meets the needs of individuals and the economy, through high-quality, well-evidenced and effective provision. An important outcome of effective skills development is enhanced employability for individuals, particularly for young people and disadvantaged groups.

This is expressed in the Global Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 8; specifically targets 4.5: “By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations” and 8.5: “By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.”<sup>4</sup>

The benefits of effective skills development for people facing disability-related barriers include improved income and health for individuals and broader social and economic benefits. For example, supporting someone with special educational needs (SEN) into employment could increase their income by 55–95 per cent, and reduce costs to the taxpayer by around £170,000 (NAO, 2011).<sup>5</sup>

There are also direct economic benefits to a local authority, for example in reduced adult social care costs. In 2016, the Department of Health reported that within the 18–64 age group, the largest expenditure was on learning disability support (£4.61 billion, 70 per cent of all spending in this age group).<sup>6</sup> Learning disability support has the highest unit cost (£1,359 per person per week for those aged 18–64, equating to £70,668 per person per annum) versus other needs (e.g. physical and mental health support).

The British Council has observed that in many countries in which we work, governments and donors are increasingly interested in addressing issues of inclusion as part of their technical and vocational education and training (TVET) reform agendas. The UK has good experience of addressing inclusion in the skills sector and the British Council has identified in this report key principles of effective approaches and specific case studies of good practice in the UK that may be relevant to the countries in which we work.

The challenges facing young disabled people in the UK have been well-documented over many years<sup>7</sup> and recent legislation and policy initiatives have sought to address the disadvantage faced by these young people. We also know that young disabled people may face additional, compound disadvantage related to their sex, ethnic or religious background and the type and range of disabling barriers that they face.

The purpose of this report is to examine established models for TVET that are effective for young people who face barriers to learning associated with disability and/or health.

This report provides a summary and analysis of a range of TVET models where an objective evidence base, qualitative data and/or expert opinion from within the skills sector make a strong case for their inclusion.

The methodology for this report includes desk research to identify evidence of effective models of practice and consultation with leading practitioners in the TVET sector, to establish a consensus on the principles of effective TVET.

Among the practitioners consulted are staff from the Association of Colleges, (AoC) the National Association of Specialist colleges (Natspec), Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) and individual Further Education colleges. Expert practitioners were asked to recommend case examples illustrating successful models of practice, which produce promising results in terms of increasing employment opportunities for disabled learners.



# 3

## HOW TVET IS STRUCTURED AND FUNDED ACROSS THE UK





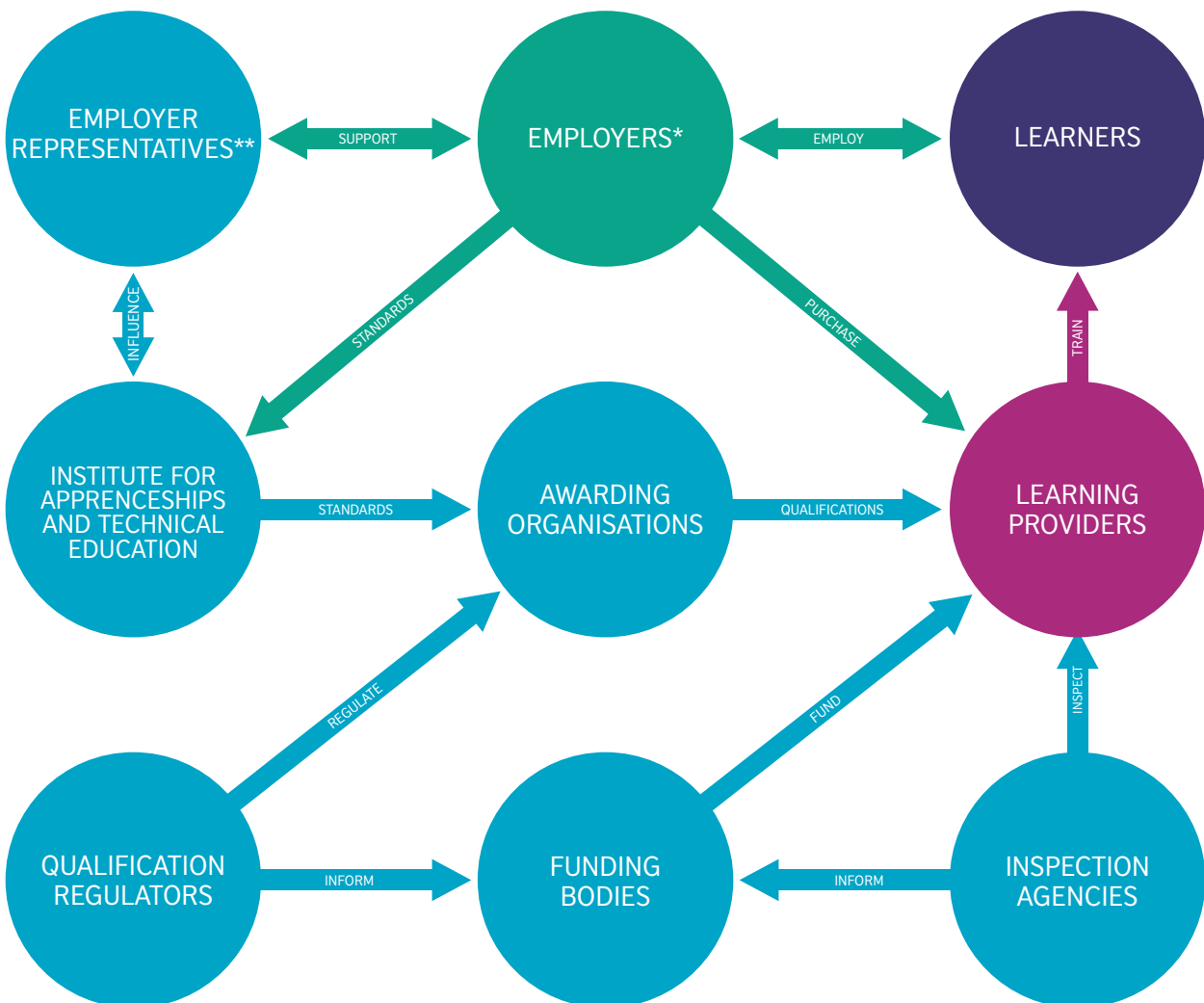
Across the four nations of the UK, England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, skills are delivered through a range of organisations within the TVET sector. The main organisations delivering skills are:

- Colleges – delivering a full range of different skills and often with links to schools to support younger pupils from the age of 14. They also support employers in developing apprenticeships in the workplace and also deliver broader employability skills training.
- Employers – many of whom provide on and off the job training opportunities, often through apprenticeships.
- Independent training providers – which deliver a range of skills but usually with a focus on the vocationally specific elements; delivering broader employability skills training, including apprenticeships.
- Schools – which deliver a range of core skills and some vocational courses, particularly for learners aged 14 to 18.

- Universities – for learners typically starting aged 18, alongside academic and higher-level technical and vocational skills, universities also deliver core skills and have an increasing focus on enterprise and employability.
- Different sectors of the economy have state funded Sector Skills Councils to support the development of appropriate skills.

### How TVET fits into the broader framework of employment, qualifications and funding in the UK

In the UK, several organisations work alongside learning providers in delivering skills. The diagram below<sup>8</sup> explains how they link to each other in relation to public sector funding and gives further information on how they work:



\*Employers purchase apprenticeship through the training levy system

\*\* Employers Representatives include Sector Skills organisation, National Skills Academies and other employer organisation

## New collaborative approaches for TVET

Recent innovation in TVET in the UK has included encouraging a range of new collaborative arrangements between learning providers to offer alternative learning environments for young people aged between 14 and 19. This has included the development of:

- University Technical Colleges (UTCs), which offer a new concept in school-based education for 14–19 year olds. These give students the opportunity to study at an institution specialising in a certain industry and equipped to a high standard. They are sponsored by universities and directly linked to industry. They deliver an innovative, high-quality education that combines technical, practical and academic learning. In doing so, they offer students an alternative to the traditional GCSE and A Level Curriculum. UTCs focus on applied learning in science, technology, engineering and Maths.
- Career Colleges are separate trusts established within FE colleges, with sponsorship from the Edge Foundation and Helping Hands, to offer a highly practical vocational and technical education designed to equip young people with the skills to enter a career in a specific industry.
- National Colleges are centres of high-tech training aiming to ensure the UK has skilled people in industries crucial to economic growth. These will focus on industries such as high-speed rail, nuclear onshore oil and gas, digital skills, and the creative industries, as part of an £80 million public investment by government.
- A number of charities such as The Princes Trust, The Sainsbury Foundation and Business in the Community provide innovation support to schools, colleges and individual learners.

## Differences between the nations of the UK

The UK is made up of four nations: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The UK Parliament is responsible for education and skills policy in England, while the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Assembly have a wide range of devolved powers, including over skills policy.

In practice, the nations of the UK have similar TVET systems, but devolution has led to some innovative differences in how skills development is delivered:

England has introduced a training levy on large employers to fund increased apprenticeship numbers and is passing increasing responsibility to regions

for determining skills needs to support economic development. England's colleges are autonomous corporations with borrowing powers and freedom to act commercially provided they protect public money. Government has encouraged a process of collaboration and merger in order to improve longer term financial stability and enhance the learner experience.

Northern Ireland has also clustered and reduced the number of its colleges and has an integrated careers service model. It has pursued a policy of 'quality' modern apprenticeships. These schemes typically last three years and are focused on specific high level growth occupations.

Scotland has maintained a stable TVET system with high quality apprenticeships and strong national careers information, advice and guidance services. It has clear skills plans for the major sectors of the economy, a consolidated college structure and a well-regarded credit and qualifications framework.

Wales has acted to reduce the number of its colleges. It has established regional skills partnerships, comprised of government, providers and employers, to address regional needs. Wales has also moved apprenticeship provision away from lower level skills to focus on higher level qualifications. Government maintains a close direct relationship with key employers in Wales and works to bring them and training providers together.

There has been an increasing trend of devolving traditional UK government powers to nations and regions within the UK. TVET policy in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales has continued to diverge, with differences in emphasis between apprenticeship systems, greater consolidation of FE College and variation in the adoption of new models of collaboration such as UTCs and National Colleges.

In England, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) have increasing influence over sub-regional skills policy, funding for adult skills development and capital expenditure. LEPs are led by employers who work in partnership with local government and other economic and social partners.

In parallel, local government across the sub-regions where the largest cities such as Manchester, Birmingham and Sheffield are located, have come together to agree wide ranging economic development strategies with national government. These include substantial employment and skills action plans linked to local labour market information, facilitated by a growing range of devolved powers.

# 4

**WHAT DO  
WE MEAN BY  
'DISABILITY'  
IN THE TVET  
CONTEXT?**

## Definitions of disability in the UK

There is no single definition of disability in use in the UK. A number of different definitions are used for different purposes.

## Models of disability

Several models of defining disability have been developed to try to address the many types of disabilities. Models of disability provide a reference for society as programs and services, laws, regulations and structures are developed, which affect the lives of people living with a disability. The primary models of disability used are the Medical Model, Functional Model, and Social Model.

**Medical Model** – The medical model describes disability as a consequence of a health condition, disease or caused by a trauma that can disrupt the functioning of a person in a physiological or cognitive way. This model is a conceptualisation of disability as a condition a person has and focuses on the prevention, treatment or curing of the disabling condition.

**Functional Model** – This model is similar to the medical model in that it conceptualises disability as an impairment or deficit. Disability is caused by physical, medical or cognitive deficits. The disability itself limits a person's functioning or the ability to perform functional activities.

**Social Model** – This model focuses on barriers facing people with disabilities instead of concentrating on impairments and deficits of the person with a disability. In this model the person is disadvantaged by the limitations imposed on them by social, cultural, economic and environmental norms and barriers. Thus, it is the way society is organised that discriminates against people with impairments and excludes them from involvement and participation.

The British Council uses a “social model” approach in its analysis of what disability is, who should be considered as disabled, and what is the best way of tackling the gaps in equality between disabled and non-disabled people.

The UK's legal framework, notably the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act in Northern Ireland, attempts to take a social model approach to disability, focusing on preventing discrimination and tackling inequality, while acknowledging that it is necessary to define who might be eligible for what are described as “reasonable adjustments” in the legislation. The definition of who is disabled for the purposes of the Act therefore does include an element of function in relation to the norm or average.

This definition is used by government to estimate the number of people who it considers to be ‘disabled’ and it is on the basis of this definition that it collates statistics on things such as the employment rate of disabled and non-disabled people.

The Equality Act 2010<sup>9</sup> applies to England, Scotland and Wales. It uses a functional definition to define those people considered to be ‘disabled’ for the purposes of the Act: anyone who has a “physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

In Northern Ireland, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995,<sup>10</sup> as amended, provides the legislative framework. It uses the same definition of disability as the Equality Act.

A range of social security benefits use different tests relating to health or impairment of function to define those who are considered to have limited capability for work; be incapable of work; have a degree of disablement caused by an industrial injury or vaccine damage; face disadvantage in getting a job; or who are “substantially and permanently disabled”.

## Disability, education and skills

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act in England, Scotland and Wales<sup>11</sup> and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005<sup>12</sup> give disabled people rights not to be discriminated against in education and training.

According to these laws and associated codes of practice,<sup>13</sup> “[a] child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions”.

Many children and young people who have SEN may meet the definition of disability in the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended, in Northern Ireland) – that is: “a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

The Equality Act definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children and young people than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as "12 months or more" and 'substantial' is defined as "more than minor or trivial".

This definition means that many people with sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, mental health conditions including depression, and long-term health conditions such as diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer will be considered to be disabled.

Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between 'disabled' children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEN definition

The combined term used in the UK is "special educational needs and disabilities" (SEND), which are defined as affecting a child or young person's ability to learn. This includes their:

- behaviour or ability to socialise, for example they struggle to make friends
- reading and writing, for example because they have dyslexia
- ability to understand things
- concentration levels, for example because they have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- physical ability.

Young disabled people face significant barriers to learning and to work. While just 9 per cent of non-disabled 16–24 year olds are not in education, employment or training (NEET), 30 per cent of young disabled people of that age are NEET.

While the overall employment rate for all disabled people of working age is around 46 per cent, unemployment is higher for people with particular impairments. For example, less than 6 per cent of adults with learning disabilities known to social services are in paid employment (HSCIC, 2015).<sup>14</sup>

This report is concerned with young disabled people aged 16–24. However, statistics are not always available just for this group when it comes to further education and skills participation.

A recent demographic summary<sup>15</sup> of engagement in further education and skills acquisition for adults aged 19+ shows that of the 2,236,800 adult learners participating in further education in 2016–17:

- 57.9 per cent were female and 42.1 per cent were male
- 16.5 per cent declared a learning difficulty and/or disability
- 21.1 per cent were from a Black or Minority Ethnic background (including Mixed, Asian, Black and Other Ethnic Group learners).

298,600 learners aged 19+ benefited from support for the unemployed in 2016–17. These are defined as those learners reporting that they were in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance – Work Related Activity Group (ESA WRAG), Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or Universal Credit (if unemployed and looking for work).

Of the 908,700 apprenticeships active in 2016–17:

- 51.2 per cent were female in apprenticeships and 48.8 per cent were male
- 9.8 per cent in apprenticeships declared a learning difficulty and/or disability, an increase from 9.3 per cent in 2015–16.
- 10.9 per cent in apprenticeships were from a Black or Minority Ethnic background (including Mixed, Asian, Black and Other Ethnic Group learners), an increase from 10.6 per cent in 2015–16.

National data for the academic year 2013–14 (with students completing their courses in 2016) show that of the total number of learners, 1,699,340:

- 262,550 reported learning difficulties/disability, 15.5 per cent
- 1,377,390 did not report any learning difficulties/disability, 81 per cent
- 59,400 did not answer the question, 3.5 per cent.

In 2016–17, 50,900 (10.3 per cent) of those starting an apprenticeship declared a learning difficulty or disability. This compares with a baseline position of 9.9 per cent in 2015–16 and a target of 11.9 per cent by 2020.

# 5

## THE LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR INCLUSIVE TVET



The legislative framework covering the UK makes it unlawful for a school or other education provider to treat disabled students less favourably than non-disabled people or unfavourably. This includes:

- direct discrimination, for example refusing admission to a student because of disability
- indirect discrimination, for example only providing application forms in one format that may not be accessible
- discrimination arising from a disability, for example preventing a disabled student from going outside during breaks because it takes too long to get outside
- harassment, for example a teacher shouting at a disabled student for not paying attention when the student's disability stops them from easily concentrating
- victimisation, for example suspending a disabled student because they have complained about harassment.

## Reasonable adjustments

A key provision of the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 is the definition of a failure to make reasonable adjustments as a form of discrimination.

An education provider has a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure that disabled students do not face substantial disadvantage. An employer has the same duty to make adjustments for employees. These changes could include providing extra support and aids (like specialist teachers or computer software).

The legislation also requires employers to make reasonable adjustments that will remove barriers to disabled people seeking to find and keep a job. Most adjustments for disabled people are inexpensive – on average an adjustment costs just £75. Making adjustments to a company's policies and procedures will remove barriers for this group of job seekers, and may well benefit others too.

An employer failing to make 'reasonable adjustments' for a disabled job applicant or employee is one of the forms of disability discrimination most frequently considered by courts and tribunals. If adjustments are 'reasonable', an employer must make them to ensure its workplace or practices do not disadvantage a disabled job applicant or employee already with the organisation.

Examples of reasonable adjustments include provision of job coaches, supporters, buddies, accessible information, job carving and adjustments to recruitment procedures.

## Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

All publicly funded pre-schools, nurseries, state schools, colleges and local authorities must try to identify and help assess children and young people defined as having "special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)".

If someone has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs, these must be reviewed annually. From year 9 the child will get a full review to understand what support they will need to prepare them for adulthood.

Children with SEND may be eligible for:

- SEN support – support given in school, like speech therapy
- an education, health and care (EHC) plan – a plan of care for children and young people aged up to 25 who have more complex needs

## Children and Families Act 2014<sup>16</sup>

SEN and disability reforms introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014 have created a greater focus on cooperation between education, health and social care services and on the outcomes that will make a difference to how a child or young person lives their life, including skills for life and work.

The Act provides for:

- a clear and transparent 'Local Offer' of services across education, health and social care with children, young people and parents involved in preparing and reviewing it
- services across education, health and care to be jointly commissioned
- Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans to replace statements and Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDAs) with the option of a Personal Budget for families and young people who want one
- new statutory rights for young people in further education, including the right to request a particular institution is named in their EHC plan and the right to appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (SEN and Disability), and
- a stronger focus on preparing for adulthood including better planning for transition into paid employment and independent living and between children's and adult's services.

## Trends in approach to disability support

Over the past 30 years, the influence of the social model and a rights-based approach to tackling the barriers and disadvantage that disabled people face in the UK, has resulted in policy trends that privilege inclusion in mainstream settings over specialist and separate provision, person-centred planning and the learner as an equal partner, alongside training providers and employers in successful skills development.

For example, many more children with SEND are educated in mainstream rather than separate “special schools” (BBC, 2016);<sup>17</sup> specialist residential colleges are fewer in number than in the latter half of the 20th century; and the ceasing of the ‘Remploy’ model of supported employment for disabled workers in specialist settings. This model meant that individuals were not part of the mainstream workforce but working in segregated factories and workshops. The Sayce review questioned this practice and has given way to providing support for disabled people to work within mainstream settings (Sayce, 2011).<sup>18</sup>

These trends are broadly supported by policy-makers and practitioners in the sector, are reflected in the UK Government’s approach and form the basis of the principles for effective provision outlined in this report.

We know from many examples across the UK and internationally that, with the right support, people with a learning disability, including those with a severe learning disability, can secure and keep paid jobs and be valued by their employers.

## Project Search<sup>19</sup>

The UK has embraced the Project Search model which has demonstrated successful outcomes since its inception. Project Search is an employer-led internship model, which has been successful in helping young disabled adults secure and keep paid permanent jobs. Because of its built-in employment support, the model is particularly suited to people with a learning disability and autism, and others who can benefit from job coach support and partnership working.

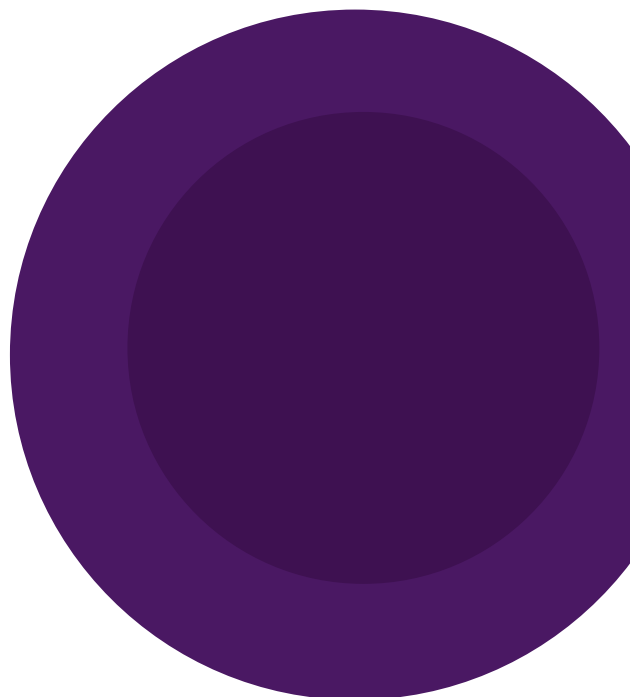
The model originated in Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Centre, USA, where it has been running since the mid 1990s, achieving high employment outcomes for disabled people. The model expanded successfully to a wide range of public and private sector employers, including banks and hospitals.

As Project Search is a fee paying licensed model, the Department for Education has enabled the approach to be delivered using core education funding by developing study programmes that incorporate the approach through supported internships based on the evidence from Project Search. This approach is demonstrated in the case study on page 31.

Evidence shows that with the right, often time limited, support, people with a learning disability can be employed; employment has a positive impact on the lives of people with learning disabilities; and supported employment can save money for the UK health and social care system.

The key elements of this support are to:

- **Raise the aspirations and expectations** of young people, their families and everyone who works with them, from birth, by showing that it is positive and possible for people with a learning disability to work
- Provide support for **person-centred transition planning** and ensure that it includes a focus on employment. This should begin in Year 9 at the latest
- **Support families to address fears and concerns, and provide good welfare advice**, as young people are more likely to go into employment if their parents view work positively and understand the benefits implications
- In education, provide a **vocational curriculum** that supports young people’s work aspirations.





# 6

## **SUCCESSFUL MODELS OF TVET THAT PROMOTE POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR DISABLED PEOPLE**

## 1. Preparing for adulthood

The Preparing for Adulthood programme is delivered by the National Development Team for inclusion.<sup>20</sup> The programme is funded by the UK's Department for Education.

The programme brings together a wide range of expertise and experience of working with young people and families, at a local and national level and across government, to support young people into adulthood with paid employment, good health, independent living options and friends, relationships and community inclusion.

The Preparing for Adulthood team previously worked on key transition programmes including the Transition Support Programme, Valuing People Now, Valuing Employment Now, the Getting a Life project, Jobs First, Aspirations for Life, Project Search and Learning for Living and Work.

The Preparing for Adulthood programme supports local authorities, education and training providers, parents, carers, young people and employers to think beyond education and to ensure the right support is in place for young people to achieve the best possible outcomes.

## 2. Effective transition programmes

A recent paper from the Careers and Enterprise Company (2017) collates the evidence base for transition programmes for young adults with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).<sup>21</sup>

The evidence suggests that transition programmes for young adults with SEND can have a significant and observable impact on behaviour, attainment and progression. Key features of the evidence include the importance of putting the individual with SEND and their family at the centre of transition programmes and the importance of facilitating supported work experience.

Transition programmes are designed to support young adults with SEND to make a successful move from school to further/higher education, training, employment or self-employment.

Traditionally, learners with SEND have demonstrated poor outcomes. Transition programmes provide opportunities to improve these outcomes by allowing young people to learn about themselves, the skills that are needed for life and the world of work. The evidence suggests that some of the elements of these programmes, particularly work experience, supported internships/employment, employee preparation programmes, self-determination training

and family involvement are well evidenced by a series of research studies and by multiple literature reviews which demonstrate positive outcomes for participants.

Other elements, for example interagency practices, are less well evidenced but can still be described as potentially effective.

There is evidence that transition programmes have a positive impact for young people with SEND across personal attributes (personal effectiveness, career readiness, employability skills and social capital) as well as personal outcomes in education and employment.

The evidence base identifies five key areas on which a successful transition programme should focus. The following areas constitute a reasonably well-evidenced description of proven practice. This does not mean that other approaches do not work. Rather, the evidence base should be used as a stimulus for further innovation.

### **I. Start young and maintain support across the life course or until the young person is established in the labour market.**

It is important that transition programmes are started early in secondary school. Like all young people, those with SEND need time and space to explore their strengths and needs, engage with face-to-face guidance, explore and develop their own skills, access meaningful employer and employee encounters and have supported work experiences over a longer period of time than someone without SEND.

This needs to be carefully planned, coordinated and managed and requires the interplay of multiple teams, organisations and/or agencies. There is evidence to suggest that taking a 'developmental' approach to transition programmes (where the individual with SEND is continually supported by a dedicated individual or team throughout school and into post-school activities) is more likely to result in a successful transition than what has been termed the 'booster' approach (where the individual with SEND is responsible for their own progression and seeks help as and when they need it).

### **II. Ensure access to support and relevant developmental activities**

(this can include career guidance, teacher support, agency support and specific skills training). Young people with SEND and their families should be aware of all the relevant support and developmental opportunities available to them in their area and where necessary access to these should be facilitated. Schools should ensure dedicated adult support for young people with SEND.

**III. Involve families in the transition.** There is strong evidence to suggest that involving the individual with SEND's family in transition programming is very important to the success of the programme. Families not only have insight into the young person's unique strengths, needs and capabilities but are also likely to be involved in supporting them through the transition. It is important therefore that they are included in the planning.

**IV. Provide encounters and experience with employers, working people and workplaces.** As with all young people, multiple encounters with work facilitate effective transitions after school. Young people with SEND are significantly more likely to be employed after school when they have had some form of work experience. To be effective, work experience should involve mentoring or individual job coaching in the workplace, have a clear, individualised/personalised training plan for the individuals with SEND and include reinforcement of work-based learning outside of work.

**V. Ensure that career and employability learning and support continues in the workplace.** Young people with SEND will continue to require work that is aligned to their evolving strengths, interests and needs and that retains precise expectations and feedback. Clear, personalised training plans that make use of on the job training are required with ongoing assessments of support needs. Mentoring or individual job coaching by trained staff is of benefit.

### 3. Specialised support within an inclusive setting

The following case studies illustrate how specialised support within an inclusive setting can lead to positive outcomes, in terms of independence, inclusion in the mainstream and increased employability. Under the new Code of Practice, SEN support has been introduced into further education, sixth form and specialist colleges. This means that where a student has a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision, a mainstream college must use its best endeavours to put appropriate support in place. Young people should be supported to participate in discussions about their aspirations, their needs, and the support they think will help them best. Support should be aimed at promoting student independence and enabling the young person to make good progress towards employment and/or higher education, independent living, good health and participating in the community.

#### **In practical terms, this means colleges will have:**

- worked with students with SEN and disabilities and their families to put in place arrangements (or structures) on how they will regularly engage and discuss progress
- explored how they will monitor and track the progress and development of young people with SEN and disabilities and identify and deliver any training needed by staff

Teachers and tutors are at the heart of the new SEND support system, with the support and guidance of specialist staff.

Teachers/tutors should:

- **Focus on outcomes** for the young person: be clear about the outcome wanted from any SEN support.
- Be responsible for meeting special educational needs: use SEN and disability specialists and learning support assistants strategically to deliver **high-quality, differentiated teaching**, evaluate the quality of support and contribute to school improvement.
- Have **high aspirations** for every student: set clear progress targets for students and be clear about how the full range of resources are going to help reach them.
- **Involve young people and parents** in planning and reviewing progress: Seek their views and provide regular updates on progress.

**Case Study 1**

S. has a learning disability. He had a very difficult time in mainstream education due to being bullied and had to move schools twice. Finally he was moved to a special school where most of the students were not entered for GCSE. S. insisted that he would like to study GCSE Science. He was the only student entered and achieved a grade B.

Although S. didn't meet the entry criteria, because of his background and the outcome of the Maths and English screening that Brockenhurst College carries out for all students the college allowed him to join its full-time Level 2 Travel and Tourism course in 2014. He flourished on the one year course, was very popular, worked extremely hard and achieved a Distinction Star at the end of the course. He also passed functional skills in Maths and English.

The following year, 2015, the college agreed he could concentrate on his GCSEs and S. achieved a total of five GCSEs with good grades, including Maths and English. In 2016 he progressed onto the Level 3 Travel and Tourism course and he was always willing to use the skills he had learnt on the level 2 course to help new students who were unfamiliar with some of the travel and tourism concepts and terminology. Alongside this he also studied GCSE Chinese and Spanish.

Presently he is working towards a grade of 3 Distinction Stars in Travel and Tourism and also continuing with the second year of GCSE Chinese. Having found that he was extremely good at the marketing and business units, as well as languages, Sam has now decided to go to university in 2018 to study a Business and Spanish Degree.

**Case Study 2**

T. was involved in a court case whilst in year 10 which caused him to miss a lot of the year, as well triggering anxiety and problems with bullying and fighting at school. He was excluded from his secondary school and had to move to another school at some distance. In his GCSEs he achieved Ds for Maths and English language, five GCSEs at grade F and three ungraded.

T. started at Brockenhurst College in September 2016 on a Level 1 construction course. His application information identified some non-specific 'mental health issues'. T's initial attendance on the course was not good so in November the college transferred T onto its traineeship programme, as it considered this would better meet his needs.

T. had some attendance issues during his traineeship, particularly with Maths and English. Working closely with T. and his family it was identified that T. suffered acute anxiety in group settings, so it was arranged for him to have one to one sessions. Difficulties at home were also supported as well as helping T. develop strategies in dealing with anger.

Reviews throughout the traineeship course identified a wider potential for T. in career possibilities and that he was far more capable than his academic history implied. A work placement was arranged in a building firm in February and T. also achieved his Construction Skills Certification Scheme card. T. was given one to one support with apprenticeship applications and interview techniques and in May 2017 started a customer service intermediate apprenticeship in a specialist shop with a view to moving forward in retail towards a management position.

### Case Study 3

P. joined Brockenhurst College in September 2014 from a Foundation Special school, with a diagnosis of high functioning autism and corrected scoliosis. His parents had been in discussions with the local authority on whether a residential setting would be appropriate for P. However, it had been decided by the local authority that a supported mainstream course at Level One should be offered to him. After visiting a more local college to his home, P decided that the Brockenhurst College offer was more suited to his needs. At school P. had achieved entry Level ASDAN qualifications, Functional Maths at L1 and partially achieved functional English at L1.

In his first year of study at college, P. completed a Level 1 BTEC in Creative Arts & Media, Level 2 functional Maths and completed the full Level 1 English functional skills qualification. The group sizes were smaller than average and learning support was available in every lesson. P. was able to use the Inspirations supported social space at break times.

During that first year P. demonstrated his encyclopaedic knowledge of the London Transport network and used this to create a similar diagram, which was then used for the College bus network and is included in the College publicity material.

In 2015, P. went on to achieve a Level 2 Technical Diploma in Art & Design alongside a Level 2 Workskills certificate with GCSE Maths Grade C and Level 2 Functional English. The class sizes were bigger but P. was still able to access generic learning support and the Inspirations Room.

In 2016 P. progressed onto the two year L3 extended Diploma in Art & Design. He achieved IGCSE English grade C in the summer of 2017 and has returned to continue his second year studies. He is now working independently in mainstream classes and accesses specialist study skills support from the college skills development team on a weekly basis. He is currently in the process of applying to Bournemouth Arts University to study on the Level 4 Arts Foundation Diploma course.

### Case Study 4

H. started at Brockenhurst College on a full-time Level 1 Plumbing Foundation course. H. struggled with his numeracy and with his hand-eye coordination. H. had 1-1 support with his reading, writing and numeracy skills and achieved his functional skills certificates, with a lot of perseverance. H. lacked the personal and social development that a potential employer would want, particularly with regard to timekeeping. However H. really wanted to get out in the workplace and was intent on leaving after his first year to 'go and get a real job'. The college got H. into a couple of extended work experience placements which ran over the summer period at the end of his first year.

The college then negotiated an apprenticeship offer with a local business, subject to H. successfully completing the first three months of a full-time Level 2 Plumbing course. During this time H. managed to have 100 per cent attendance, his tool and hand coordination improved significantly and his attitude and work ethos improved dramatically. H. is now mid-way through his intermediate apprentice route, which has taken longer than the expected time to reach the standard, but he has been rewarded for his hard work and efforts.

## **SPECIALIST COLLEGES**

The National Association of Specialist Colleges (Natspec) is the membership association for organisations which offer specialist further education and training for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Natspec is the lead organisation for specialist further education, and leads an initiative to ensure the same opportunities are open to students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This includes a number of residential specialist colleges. A number of these have been judged as outstanding by Ofsted.<sup>22</sup> Approximately 3000 young people attend specialist residential colleges. Natspec (2017) have undertaken a programme to develop pathways beyond education.<sup>23</sup> Colleges are encouraged to think about their curriculum and how it prepares young people for adulthood to support them to achieve meaningful life outcomes.

Residential specialist colleges offer education and training to young people with (often complex) learning difficulties and/or disabilities, alongside care, therapies and learning support. They have a diverse set of specialisms including those associated with a specific condition (such as epilepsy or visual impairment), a particular level of support need (such as profound and multiple learning difficulties) or a particular vocational focus (such as hospitality and catering). Some operate locally and/or regionally while others are national providers.

Natspec has 57 members, including 52 in England, that offer residential education including multi-disciplinary specialist support and expertise to enable students with learning difficulties or disabilities to make a successful transition to adult life.

Students are offered individual study programmes designed to help them develop communication, independence and employability skills, tailored to their needs, interests and aspirations. Learning takes place in a wide variety of settings including not just classrooms but the residences, the community and the workplace. Many specialist colleges offer supported internships and almost all students will undertake some form of work experience or placement.

## **SKILLS COMPETITIONS**

A few years ago Natspec, together with Derwen College and (what was then) North Warwickshire and Hinkley College, recognised there was no opportunity for people with learning difficulties and disabilities to take part and enjoy the Skills Competitions already well-established in mainstream colleges.

Working together with WorldSkills UK, a series of competitions were established: the Inclusive Skills Competitions. The competitions offer stretch and challenge and they build links between colleges, training providers and local and national businesses to showcase the skills of young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. The Inclusive Skills competitions have also been created to showcase the skills of students with learning difficulties and build links between further education colleges (specialist and mainstream), work-based learning providers and employers across the country. The competitions are open to people working up to Level 1 and are designed so that there is a clear line of sight to appropriate jobs, impacting on economic growth and personal success.

There are currently nine competitions: carpentry, health and social care, ICT, fitness instructor, hairdressing, catering, horticulture, restaurant service, and media. Natspec work with a regional model whereby regional heats take place, led by the local networks, and the winners go through to a national final at WorldSkills UK Live (formerly The Skills Show) at the NEC.

Inclusive Skills Competitions stretch and challenge young people, improve their self-esteem and confidence, help showcase their work skills, and – most importantly – show employers how they can perform under pressure to industry-standard competition criteria.

International skills competitions have been taking place since 1953, showcasing the skills of the best young people in a variety of industries. The competition brings together participants from a number of countries to showcase their skills.

## **4. ‘Place, train; not train, place’ – and place, train, sustain**

“Don’t think you can’t do the job because you’ve got a disability.”<sup>24</sup>

Articulated in journal articles from the mid-2000s and increasingly supported as an effective approach to TVET,<sup>25</sup> “place-then-train” articulates an “alternative service paradigm”, created initially for people with mental health conditions.

The key principle of the paradigm is to reverse the previous dominant model of “train-place”, which saw often repeated programmes of skills training, which did not lead to sustained or meaningful employment.

Place-train, by contrast, emphasises placing people into jobs and then training them in the skills they need to succeed, with sustained support where necessary. It is a model that has been used very effectively for people facing different kinds of barriers to work, including those with mental health conditions, learning disabilities and autism-spectrum conditions.

Another approach which often proves helpful in employing people with a learning disability is called job carving. Instead of fitting a person into a rigid job description, it can be much more effective to identify different tasks that a person with a learning disability can do, and 'carve' out a job from these different tasks.

The following case study illustrate how placing people into work with support can promote employability.

Sixteen is a small social enterprise based in Bristol. It was set up to provide high-quality evidence-based support linked to the principles of supported employment, and in response to the rising demand for trained and experienced job coaches. It was formed as a co-operative, based on the premise that quality is driven up when staff have a stake in the service. Sixteen currently supports a number of community and internship-based employment programmes.<sup>26</sup>



## Social enterprise – Sixteen Co-operative Limited

Sixteen has supported a number of disabled young people who have completed supported internships (such as Project Search hosted by Bristol City Council) and progressed into apprenticeships. Although the intended outcome of supported internships is paid employment rather than apprenticeships, sometimes this outcome has been the right one for particular individuals.

Sixteen works with partner organisation Boss Employment Community Interest Company to raise the aspirations and expectations of young people and has become part of the city's employment and skills agenda. Members of staff also work to engage employers and identify employment opportunities.

As part of this, internship programme graduates talk about their experiences at workshops. Marketing approaches that sell the benefits of paid employment have proved to work best, and this is most effectively delivered by those who have experienced it, including participants, their families and their employers.

It is important to engage families within the internship programmes, as they do not always share the view that their child is able to enter employment, so Sixteen and partners seek to engage families early, by speaking to them about employment, and running workshops for young people and their parents to explore this.

Bristol City Council champions apprenticeships as a good route into employment. This has encouraged a number of Sixteen's job seekers to progress from supported internships into apprenticeships, in areas including administration and painting and decorating. The local authority Business Liaison Partner, who forms an integral part of internship delivery, is part of the team that operates apprenticeships. This has been particularly useful for facilitating this transition.

Young people planning to progress to an apprenticeship tend to apply towards the end of their internship, receiving support from their Sixteen job coach. If successful at interview, Sixteen uses Access to Work to provide in-work support to individuals.

In addition, the Council is able to draw on its staff's firsthand experience of working with the young person to support them in their role and ensure their responsibilities are matched to their skills and strengths. If a young person secures an apprenticeship in a different department to where they completed their internship placement, their line manager can speak to colleagues about their experiences and get advice about what worked well.

Where apprentices are working towards English and Maths qualifications, Sixteen works with local training providers and assessors to advise on appropriate support. This includes providing guidance on the specific needs of individuals and any reasonable adjustments that need to be made to assessment methods.

Young people who progress from internships to an apprenticeship experience several benefits including:

- increased understanding of the labour-market and possible jobs they would be interested in;
- development of soft-skills such as confidence and team-work; and
- improved communication skills.

Importantly, some individuals who have completed a supported internship and apprenticeship have progressed to paid work, evidence that it has been a successful process.

Sixteen believes that key factors in supporting progression from supported internships to apprenticeships are:

- Engaging young people and their families early on. Recruitment processes should commence well in advance of internship start dates to raise aspirations and allow enough time to get practical arrangements in place.
- Working with local training providers to advise them on the support needs of their job seekers and to discuss the suitability of the assessment process.
- Giving job seekers the chance to demonstrate their skills to the employer through their internship and become familiar with the organisation. This has helped them to make a smooth transition to an apprenticeship and led to more informal recruitment methods being used.
- Using the knowledge and skills of job coaches, who support interns and apprentices to enter and sustain employment. This vital support includes guiding young people through applications, breaking down tasks to make them manageable and addressing concerns that job seekers or employers may have.
- Making reasonable adjustments in the workplace, to ensure that interns and apprentices have a positive experience of employment and complete their tasks efficiently.



## 5. Supported internships

The evidence-based model of supported employment underpins the Supported Internships programme:

- vocational profile: aspirations, skills, experience and job interests
- “place, train and fade” approach<sup>27</sup>
- job analysis and job matching
- in work support from trained job coaches from the college
- work with a supported employment organisation to source job coaches.

Supported internships are structured study programmes, based primarily at an employer. They enable young people aged 16–24 with a statement of SEN or an EHC plan to achieve sustainable paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need for work, through learning in the workplace.

Supported internships are only available to disabled young people aged between 16 and 24 who have an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan.<sup>28</sup> On a supported internship, a young person spends most of their time in the workplace doing a real job. They also have a personal study programme. The internship can help people with long-term career goals and develop new skills and real job experience.

Supported internships are especially helpful for improving young disabled people’s confidence. They receive support from an expert job coach to learn more about a particular job role. The job coach is a trained professional, either employed by the sector or sourced from an appropriate organisation to support the individual in the workplace. They will usually be trained in systematic instruction and have a level 3 supported employment practitioner qualification. The internship usually lasts for a year and includes an unpaid work placement for at least six months. The expectation is for the young person to move into paid employment at the end of the programme.

Alongside their time at the employer, young people complete a personalised study programme which includes the chance to study for relevant substantial qualifications, if appropriate, and English and Mathematics.

All colleges, sixth forms and independent specialist providers in England can offer supported internships as part of their study programme for disabled students. Access to Work<sup>29</sup> can be used for supported internships. This means that Government money is available to help with extra disability-related support costs in the workplace, including a job coach and extra costs for getting to work.

In November 2017, the UK Government announced £9.7 million for local authorities in England to increase the number of supported internships and other pathways to employment for young people with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities), by establishing local supported internship forums and training additional job coaches.

The aim of a local supported internship forum is to bring together all the local partners who can develop and deliver supported internships in a local area, with the goal of creating routes that will support more young people with SEND into paid employment.

Supported internships, based on the Project Search model, have been developing in the UK since 2012. In April 2018 the Department for Education, together with the Preparing for Adulthood team produced a survey to ascertain the success of the programme nationally. The survey has been distributed to all colleges and training providers to get an understanding of the impact of the programme and how successful the programme is in achieving paid job outcomes.

## 6. Apprenticeships

“My tips when applying for apprenticeships are: be yourself, don’t be ashamed to say you’re disabled; ask for help and support. Tell the employer any ways your disability has opened up new opportunities and let your colours shine!”<sup>30</sup>

Apprenticeships are a valued route into employment, but less than 1 per cent of apprentices declared a moderate learning disability in 2014/15.

A number of private sector organisations have developed a range of options for apprenticeships. For example, Barclays Bank offers Traineeships and Foundation Apprenticeships for 18–24 year olds. The foundation programme requires no qualifications and individuals have the option to progress onto an Advanced Apprenticeship. Barclay’s criteria for the programme are energy, initiative, positivity and potential. (See case study on next page.)

## Barclays Apprenticeships<sup>32</sup>

“Who can be an apprentice?”

“Anyone. You could be 16–60. Returning parents. Retiree. You might have disabilities. You might be an ex-soldier, a student, carer...”

“Meet Jane, Essential Banker, former Foundation Apprentice

“Before joining Barclays, I was very low in confidence and felt no employer would give me a chance to prove I was capable. When I came across this opportunity with Barclays, all of this changed.

“When I was 15, my local optician noticed some abnormalities to the retina at the back of my eye. I had been having problems for a few years previously so I was pleased I was finally being taken seriously. Eventually, I was diagnosed with a rare condition called Stargardt’s disease.

“I didn’t have a very positive experience throughout my final years at school, which meant I didn’t achieve the exam results I had hoped for. I started doing voluntary work for a charity in Newcastle, Henshaws Society for Blind People. Working with people there showed me that I was just as capable as anyone else at getting a job, and it gave me the confidence to apply for the apprenticeship with Barclays.

“I disclosed I had a disability during the interview stage of my application and from then, Barclays couldn’t do enough to help.

“I finished my apprenticeship a few years ago and I now work as an Essential Banker in one of the UK branches. My day-to-day role involves assisting customers with their everyday banking needs.

“I manage to do my job just the same as my colleagues; I just need a few extra tools. I use an electronic magnifier and magnification software on my computer. I could not fault Barclays as an employer, there’s nothing else they could’ve possibly done to help me.

“I would recommend the Barclays apprenticeship scheme to anyone, despite whether they have a disability or not. It is a great opportunity and Barclays is a great company to work for.”

Apprenticeships can be an effective and direct route for any young disabled person to get skilled jobs and sustainable careers. They cover a wide range of vocational areas. There are many different and flexible ways to join and recent changes to funding and entry criteria should make apprenticeships even more accessible.

The Government's commitment to create 3 million more apprenticeships by 2020 presents huge opportunities.

Apprenticeships have a long history, based on the idea of learning skills from more experienced workers, with knowledge passing from one generation to the next. In the past, apprenticeships tended to be in particular trades such as crafts, engineering and building. Now they cover a much wider range of jobs and there are many different and flexible ways to join an apprentice programme. There are also colleges, universities and training providers to support training.

Apprenticeships are open to a wider range of people than ever before, including those with a disability, health condition or learning difficulty. Almost all apprenticeships can be made accessible.

Apprenticeship funding mainly comes from the Government with employers contributing through a tax on big business (known as the apprenticeship levy), or 10% of the cost if they are a small employer.

For those aged 16–18, employers and providers each receive £1,000 towards an apprentice's training costs and where an employer has fewer than 50 people working for them, the Government pay 100 per cent of the training costs.

For those aged 19–24, the same funding is available to employers and providers if the apprentice has an EHC Plan. The extra funding is also available if the young person has been in the care of the local authority.

Providers can also claim additional funding from the Government to pay towards any extra support a young person needs to participate in the apprenticeship if they have a disability or learning difficulty.

At present, disabled people remain under-represented among those taking up apprenticeships. Barriers to getting involved include rigid expectations for some apprenticeships that people will have good GCSEs in Maths and English (which some disabled people find hard to secure, even when they would be suited to a particular occupation) and insufficient support for apprentice and employer.

In 2012, the Apprenticeships Unit commissioned a report (Little, P. & Holland, R., 2012)<sup>33</sup> examining the apprenticeship offer for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDDs).

The report found that although the total number of apprentices has risen substantially between 2005/6 and 2010/11, from 175,000 to 442,700, and the number of apprentices declaring a LDD had also risen during the same period from 19,200 to 35,600, the proportion declaring LDDs had fallen significantly, from 11.1 per cent to 8 per cent. For the 16–18 cohort 11.9 per cent declared LDDs in 2005/6. This fell to 10 per cent in 2010/11. The 19–24 cohort caused particular concern, with the proportion falling "alarmingly" to 7.9 per cent in 2010/11.

In part, this report has driven a recent focus on ensuring that the apprenticeship strategy in the UK is inclusive. This focus was renewed in 2016 by another independent report commissioned by Government, looking at the apprenticeship offer from the perspective of those with LDDs (Maynard, 2016)<sup>34</sup>.

The UK Government has committed to adopting the recommendations specifically:

Recognition that some apprentices with learning difficulties and disabilities may be able to meet the occupational standard but may struggle to achieve the English or Mathematics qualification at the level normally required as a result of the nature of their difficulty or disability.

Apprentices in this category who meet all of the conditions specified are exempt from the regular English and Mathematics minimum requirements and are instead required to achieve an adjusted minimum requirement of Entry Level 3 in the subjects.

Depending on the apprentice's individual circumstances and assessment, the adjustment may apply to one subject in isolation, or to both English and Maths. If the adjustment is only applied to one subject, the regular requirements for the non-adjusted subject will apply.

#### **CHANNEL 4**

Channel 4 launched their 360° Diversity Charter in January 2015, which puts a commitment to diversity at the heart of everything they do, on and off-screen, so that the organisation truly reflects the diversity of Britain today. As well as pursuing the 30 initiatives in their Charter, they also designated 2016 as their Year of Disability.

In 2016 they saw growth in the number of disabled applicants applying to work at Channel 4: 6% of applications were from disabled candidates. Disabled candidates are also successful in the recruitment process: 8.1% of 2016 new employees had a disability. This figure has been achieved due to several factors: targeted attraction, an inclusive hiring process, ensuring a supportive and inclusive working culture, and a successful internal communications campaign to encourage staff to disclose their diversity data.

In 2016 Channel 4 signed up to the Government's scheme 'Disability Confident' which replaces the 2-Tick Scheme and are currently classified as a 'Disability Confident Employer'. They continue to promote Channel 4 being a Disability Confident Employer and promote their opportunities in online and physical environments – they also recognise that there are a number of people who will choose not to declare a disability during the application and selection process. For people to feel confident in declaring this at the start of/or during their early employment an inclusive culture will be required. (See case study on next page.)

## Channel 4 apprenticeship<sup>35</sup>

Chloe O'Toole, Agency Sales Apprentice

"I'm 20 years old with severe hearing loss in my right ear and I'm deaf to high pitched frequencies in my left. I communicate through lip reading and speech. Although I can hear sounds and people talking, sometimes it takes me a while to figure out what they're saying, making a lot of my responses very delayed.

I found out about Channel 4 apprenticeships through a brilliant website called GoThinkBig. I was going to apply for university but somehow felt it wasn't quite right for me. I always wanted to work in television so when I came across this opportunity I just knew it was for me. I already knew about Channel 4's positive approach to disability, especially after the broadcasting of the Paralympics. In my application I told them of my deafness. When they invited me to an interview, they also asked if they needed to do anything to help which was amazing.

There were so many talented people at the interview, some having experience in TV before. I honestly thought I had no chance. We had to prepare an idea for a six-part series on All 4. I worked so hard focussing on this every day until the interview and it bagged me the deal! I was so proud, I couldn't believe it ... I'm working for Channel 4! Not only that – I'm earning good money and completing qualifications at the same time.

Since working here, I feel like a new person. Channel 4 is so supportive. They provided me with a text phone. Although I don't use the automated speech, it's much louder and clearer than the office phones. I don't feel embarrassed telling people I'm deaf. I'm proud of having achieved a wonderful role in a wonderful team. I absolutely love my job; learning about different departments, travelling, going to events and parties, even meeting celebrities, I wouldn't change it for the world.

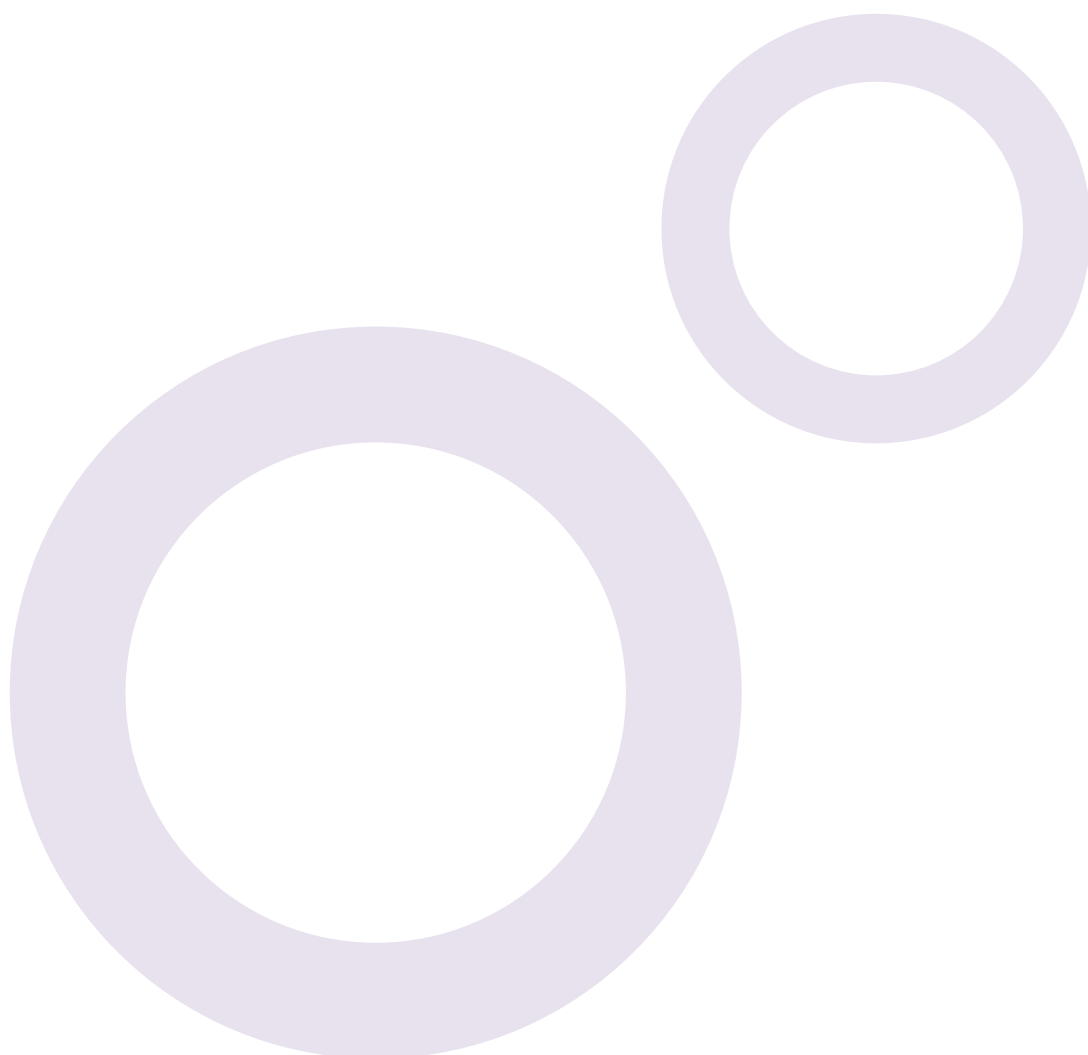
My office has already picked up on my design skills and given me lots of opportunities to show them off. I get to create posters, interactive emails, logos ... you name it! I'm also completing a Level 3 Diploma in Digital Marketing qualification. I'm definitely hoping to stay with Channel 4 after my apprenticeship has ended and I'm looking forward to what the future will bring."

## 7. Inclusive apprenticeships

The recommendations from the Maynard review have allowed a more inclusive type of apprenticeship to be explored.

The Learning and Work Institute has recently (2018) published research and proposals relating to part-time and flexible apprenticeships.<sup>36</sup> This is particularly concerned with ensuring that women are able to take up apprenticeships. The principle is an enabling one for many young disabled people who may struggle to work and/or study full-time and for those young disabled people who are also women.

The Learning and Work Institute has also, working in collaboration with the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Education, recently published an employer toolkit<sup>37</sup> to improve employment prospects for those that have historically been disadvantaged in the labour market. It provides practical information, sources of support and inspirational case studies of employers who have benefited from hiring and supporting apprentices from a range of backgrounds.



## Supported internship becomes an inclusive apprenticeship

The Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) programme (as referred to above) is funded by the Department for Education as part of the delivery support for the post-16 element of the special educational needs (SEN) and disability reforms.

In 2013, the Preparing for Adulthood East of England regional advisor, who works with schools, colleges and local authorities to improve employment opportunities, was commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council to work with four colleges to set up supported internships. Two of these internships have then led to inclusive apprenticeships. This case study explores one such instance.

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) heard about supported internships via an email that was sent to their team responsible for coordinating with local schools and organising work experience and workshops. A member of staff had heard about Project Search at the GSK main site in London, and when they visited the head office they noticed people with learning disabilities working in the building. This sparked their interest and was one of the reasons they volunteered to host a supported internship.

Working with PfA and offering a disabled young person an opportunity tied in with GSK's commitment to diversity and inclusion, and their aim to expand the Project Search approach outside of their head office.

Jamie has autism and has been on a supported internship with GSK at a local biopharmaceutical site that is part of their pharmaceuticals division. A vocational profile conducted by North Hertfordshire College identified that science was a significant area of interest to him, and so the role and employer were particularly relevant.

Jamie is working in a department with a team of 70 employees, including five apprentices, and undertakes largely lab-based work to translate early stage medicines into clinical trials.

GSK plan to offer Jamie an apprenticeship when his internship comes to an end. GSK have several early talent programmes for school leavers, undergraduates, graduates and those who have finished doctorates, and the inclusive apprenticeship would fall under this. GSK also have a well-established research and development (R&D) apprenticeship programme.

When Jamie progresses onto the apprenticeship, he will have a job coach and GSK will provide mentor support and training. The college is planning to provide support for developing soft employability skills, linked with other support that would be provided for staff more widely. This is important because GSK and the college do not want to treat individuals any differently because of their disability.

Jamie's confidence has improved as a result of the supported internship, and because of his experience of the workplace, he is more willing to learn and motivated to achieve in his apprenticeship. He has also learned that it is okay to ask for help when needed, and feels more able to use his initiative and to go out of his comfort zone when necessary, as he is less fearful and believes in his ability. For example, he recently gave a presentation to colleagues, which went well.

Jamie has also become an ambassador for the supported internships and apprenticeships programme, and has spoken at events about his experience and current role.

The option of supported internships gave GSK the opportunity to 'test' having a disabled young person on site. This has made the R&D team open to tailoring job roles for such individuals in the future, and to consider whether the adaptations offered during the recruitment process are accessible for disabled applicants.

GSK staff valued the college coming in and delivering autism awareness training to Jamie's team. This was thought to have had a very positive impact, and one person said that it made them proud to be working at the organisation.

## 8. Traineeships<sup>38</sup>

Traineeships were introduced in 2013 and are aimed at young people aged 16–24 years old, or young people with Learning Difficulty Assessments or Education, Health and Care plans up to the age of 25.

Traineeships are designed to help young people gain the skills and experience they need to get an apprenticeship or job.

The target group for traineeships are young people who:

- are not currently in employment and have little work experience, but who are focused on work or the prospect of it
- are aged 16 to 24 and qualified below level 3 and
- have a reasonable chance of being ready for employment or an apprenticeship within six months of engaging in a traineeship.

Traineeships are made up of three core elements:

- a high-quality work experience
- a focused period of work preparation training
- English and Maths if required.

## 9. Supported employment model

Supported employment refers to providing disabled people with appropriate support to help them obtain and maintain employment. Taking a person-centred approach ensures that a holistic picture of an individual's strengths and challenges is captured to ensure the best match of the person to a job.

The British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) describes it in this way:

“Supported Employment has been successfully used for decades as a personalised model for supporting people with significant disabilities to secure and retain paid employment. The model uses a partnership strategy to enable people with disabilities to achieve sustainable long-term employment and businesses to employ valuable workers. Increasingly, supported employment techniques are being used to support other disadvantaged groups such as young people leaving care, ex-offenders and people recovering from drug and alcohol misuse.

“Work plays a pivotal role in defining an individual's quality of life and must be an integral part of a person's overall life experience. Supported employment offers an innovative process that enables employment as an achievable goal for people with disabilities just as it is for non-disabled people in our society.

“Real jobs mean that the terms and conditions for people with disabilities should be the same as

for everyone else including pay at the contracted going rate, equal employee benefits, safe working conditions and opportunities for career advancement. BASE has produced definitions of some of the terms used, such as support and employment.

“The supported employment model has at its heart the notion that anyone can be employed if they want paid employment and sufficient support is provided. The model is a flexible and continuous process, designed to meet all anticipated needs. The European Union of Supported Employment has produced position papers and guides to the supported employment model.

“The model is equally applicable to supporting job retention. The ethos of supported employment services is the development and integration of adequate mechanisms to secure long term sustainable employment.”

## 10. Inclusive careers planning

“I love my current role, especially the lab work and being part of such a great team. I feel like I am fulfilling my dream.”<sup>39</sup>

Good career guidance is critical if young disabled people are to raise their aspirations and capitalise on the opportunities available to them. In 2013, the Gatsby Charitable Foundation commissioned Sir John Holman to research what pragmatic actions could improve career guidance in England and subsequently he developed the Good Career Guidance Benchmarks.<sup>40</sup>

Gatsby Career Benchmarks were adopted by the December 2017 Government Careers Strategy.<sup>41</sup>

The eight Gatsby benchmarks of Good Career Guidance are:

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

The UK Government's Careers Strategy for England places considerable emphasis on inclusion and was developed to underpin its Industrial Strategy. Its purpose is to “make the most of everyone's skills and talents” and it outlines a targeted approach for young people needing more support. There are equivalent approaches in other parts of the UK.



## 11. Disabled students' involvement in governance and in influencing policy and practice

The Equality Challenge Unit<sup>42</sup> exists to promote equality and diversity in the UK's higher education sector. It also does some work with further education providers. It has collected case studies of effective engagement with disabled students.<sup>43</sup>

The National Union of Students Disabled Students' Campaign exists to represent, and extend and defend the rights of disabled students. It is an autonomous campaign, which means it is led by disabled students in its governance and decision-making processes.

The national officer, committee, and policies are decided by disabled student representatives from across the UK at a summer conference each year. The officer and committee are bound by its policies but can make decisions on interim policies between conferences.

Throughout the year, NUS Disabled Students' Campaign work to positively impact disabled students' lives. It does this through campaigning, activism, research, and training which it delivers with the input of disabled students.

## 12. The role of disabled people's organisations

"'Nothing About Us Without Us!' is one of the most important rallying calls of the disabled people's movement. We want the voices of disabled people to be heard on the issues that affect them."<sup>44</sup>

Many organisations controlled and run by disabled people are involved in supporting disabled people to gain the skills they need to gain work and to have sustainable careers. Disability Rights UK, Disability Northern Ireland, Capability Scotland and Disability Wales work in the four countries of the UK to promote equality in all aspects of life for disabled people, providing peer support and influencing governments, employers and others involved.

"Working means I'm learning new things – it builds your confidence, is good for your health and you make new friends! I could not have done it without Breakthrough."<sup>45</sup>

Many social enterprises, community interest companies and other organisations that are led by disabled people are engaged in supporting disabled people into work. Breakthrough UK is a Manchester based disabled people's organisation. It is led by disabled people and supports other disabled people to work and live independently.

It does this by providing support to individuals and to employers to ensure successful skills acquisition and sustainable employment. Being led by disabled people provides powerful role models – changing attitudes and raising expectations of what disabled people can achieve.

## 13. Disability Confident

Disability Confident (Gov.uk, 2016)<sup>46</sup> is a scheme designed to help employers recruit and retain disabled people for their skills and talent. It was initiated by the UK Government and is led by employers.

There are three levels to the scheme – Disability Confident Committed, Disability Confident Employer and Disability Confident Leader.

The highest level requires external accreditation and includes initiatives such as targeted recruitment, guaranteed interviews for any disabled candidate who meets the minimum criteria for a role; and taking on disabled trainees and apprentices.

### **SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYERS, INCLUDING LINE MANAGERS AND HR PROFESSIONALS**

There is a significant focus within the UK on developing good employment practice to ensure that organisations are able to recruit, retain and support career progression for people facing a wide range of barriers to inclusion. The existence of legislation on discrimination and equality in the UK has driven substantial change to the premises, facilities and equipment over the past 20 years. There is also an increasing focus on inclusion that acknowledges and celebrates cognitive diversity – often described as neurodiversity. This focuses on the idea of a spectrum of strengths and is a term preferred by some people who have been given autism-related diagnoses.

The challenge is for learning providers and employers to adapt their environments, their teaching and management practices. The UK's Chartered Institute for Personnel Development has recently produced guidance on this topic (CIPD, 2018).<sup>47</sup>

## 14. Access to Work<sup>48</sup>

Access to Work is a discretionary government scheme that pays a grant to individuals. It can help with extra employment costs that result from a person's disability. It can help with putting in place adjustments, such as a job coach. It can include a workplace assessment, mental health support service assistance or fund a contribution towards specialist aids or equipment that might be required in the workplace.

## 15. TechAbility<sup>49</sup>

TechAbility is a service that provides Assistive Technology (AT) and Information Technology (IT). It includes bespoke support, peer to peer networks and sharing of practice, CPD and signposting to other services and equipment.

Assistive technology is any product or service that maintains or improves the ability of individuals with disabilities or impairments to communicate, learn and live independent, fulfilling and productive lives.

## 16. Jisc<sup>50</sup>

Jisc is a membership organisation providing digital solutions for UK education and research. It provides support to the UK higher, further education and skills sectors and is a not-for-profit organisation for digital services and solutions.

Jisc believes that inclusivity is a very important factor in assessment design as fair assessment must reflect the needs of a diverse student body.

The Quality Assurance Agency UK's quality code for higher education<sup>51</sup> has a series of indicators that reflect sound practice. Indicator ten states: "Through inclusive design wherever possible, and through individual reasonable adjustments wherever required, assessment tasks provide every student with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement."

In order to provide all students with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their learning, providers and assessors need to consider the different means of demonstrating a particular learning outcome.

Ensuring that students have variety in assessment and some individual choice, for example in the topic or in the method/format of the assessment, can lead to overall enhancement of the assessment process to benefit all students.

Jisc provides guidance on making assessments accessible.<sup>52</sup>

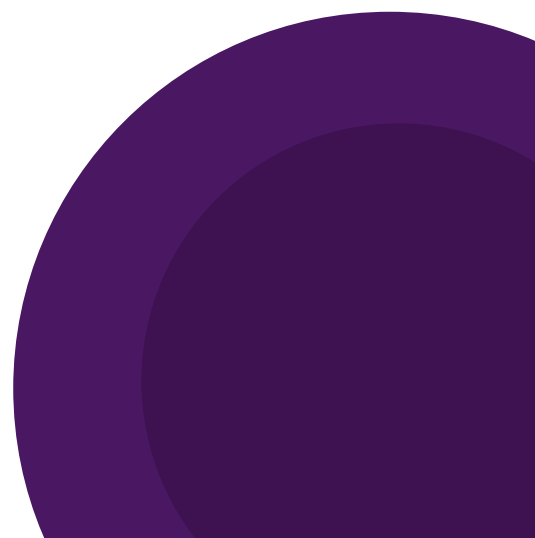
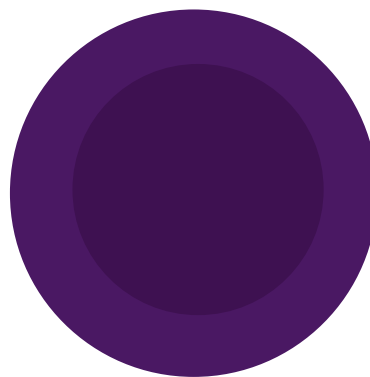
## 17. Microlink

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn." Benjamin Franklin.<sup>53</sup>

The private sector is increasingly involved in providing solutions to barriers to learning. Microlink provides workplace adjustments, assistive technology and ergonomic solutions, working with employers, employees, educators and students.

It works in partnership with educators to provide the tools and support needed by students – identifying the right communications technology for the right needs.

Microlink provides over 52 categories of products and services, associated with various levels of disability.



# 7

## PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE TVET FOR DISABLED LEARNERS

The examples of successful provision detailed in the previous section highlight the approach adopted by the legislative and policy framework in the UK – person-centred, individualised, inclusive and recognising the benefits to everyone of providing effective TVET to disabled learners.

The following principles are indicated by those examples and are consistent with principles outlined in the legislative and policy framework in the UK. They also reflect thinking within the TVET sector.

## High quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN and raising aspirations

High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will best meet the individual needs of the majority of 16–24 year olds.

Some young people need educational provision that is additional to or different from this.

Colleges should ensure that such provision is made for those who need it. Special educational provision is underpinned by high quality teaching.

Colleges should know precisely where young people with SEN are in their learning and development. They should:

- ensure decisions are informed by the insights of young people themselves
- have high ambitions and set stretching targets for them
- track their progress towards these goals
- keep under review the additional or different provision that is made for them
- promote positive outcomes in the wider areas of personal and social development
- ensure that the approaches used are based on the best possible evidence and are having the required impact on progress
- encourage all young people to have high aspirations

## A focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning

As part of its commitments under articles 7 and 24 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,<sup>54</sup> the UK Government is committed to inclusive education of disabled children and young people and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education.

The Children and Families Act 2014 secures the general presumption in law of mainstream education in relation to decisions about where children and young people with SEN should be educated and the Equality Act 2010 [and the Disability Discrimination Act in Northern Ireland] provides protection from discrimination for disabled people.

Further education (FE) colleges manage their own admissions policies and are prohibited from discriminating against disabled young people in respect of admissions. Students need to meet the entry requirements for courses as set out by the college, but should not be refused access to opportunities based on whether or not they have SEN.

The leaders of colleges should establish and maintain a culture of high expectations that expects those working with people with SEN or disabilities to include them in all the opportunities available to other young people so they can achieve well.

There is a significant overlap between young people with SEN and those with disabilities and many such young people are covered by both SEN and equality legislation.

The legislative framework in the UK is focussed on removing barriers to learning. Duties for planning, commissioning and reviewing provision, the Local Offer and the duties requiring different agencies to work together apply to all young people with SEN or disabilities.

In practical situations in everyday settings, the best colleges do what is necessary to enable young people to develop, learn, participate and achieve the best possible outcomes irrespective of whether that is through reasonable adjustments for a disabled young person or special educational provision for a young person with SEN.

When colleges, local authorities and others plan and review special educational provision and make decisions about young people with SEN, they

should consider, at the same time, the reasonable adjustments and access arrangements required for the same child or young person under the Equality Act or Disability Discrimination Act.

The presumption of mainstream education is supported by provisions safeguarding the interests of all young people and ensuring that the preferences of the young person for where they should be educated are met wherever possible.

Special post-16 institutions and specialist colleges all have an important role in providing for young people with SEN and in working collaboratively with mainstream and special settings to develop and share expertise and approaches.

Young people with SEN have different needs and can be educated effectively in a range of mainstream or special settings. Alongside the general presumption of mainstream education, parents of and/or young people with such an EHC plan have the right to seek a place at a special post-16 institution or specialist college.

## Personalised support

Students should follow a programme that stretches them, prepares them for adulthood, and supports their progression into work or further study. The type of programme offered should match their career aspirations.

Some students with SEND should be entered for stretching qualifications. For others, the study programme should concentrate on high quality work experience and other non-qualification activities to help them prepare for employment and adult life more generally, rather than on qualifications.

As part of their study programme, students should be supported to find routes through to employment, building on work experience, and independent living. Study programmes for students with less complex needs can also focus on substantive work placements and support to make them work-ready.

Study programmes should always include English and Maths, but at an appropriate level. Some students with SEND will be able to work towards achieving GCSE grade C or above, whereas others may qualify for exemption from the condition of funding.

Statutory guidance states that students can be exempt from studying standalone Maths and English qualifications but appropriate literacy and numeracy should still be included in their study programme.<sup>55</sup>

Funding for learners with high needs should be used to offer learners individual learning programmes that challenge them to develop independence and prepare for their future.

Learners should participate in good quality and individually tailored learning programmes that lead to paid employment where appropriate, and/or greater independence in their everyday lives.

All specialist support should be coordinated.

## Supporting successful preparation for adulthood

With high aspirations, and the right support, the vast majority of young people can go on to achieve successful long-term outcomes in adult life. Local authorities, education providers and their partners should work together to help young people to realise their ambitions in relation to:

- higher education and/or employment – including exploring different employment options, such as support for becoming self-employed and help from supported employment agencies
- independent living – enabling people to have choice and control over their lives and the support they receive, their accommodation and living arrangements, including supported living
- participating in society – including having friends and supportive relationships, and participating in, and contributing to, the local community
- being as healthy as possible in adult life.

All professionals should aim to enable young people to make choices for themselves from an early age and support them in making friends and staying safe and healthy. Preparing for adult life should be an explicit element of conversations as the young person moves into and through post-16 education. For young people in or beyond Year 9 (usually aged 13 or 14) with EHC plans, local authorities have a legal duty to include provision to assist in preparing for adulthood in the EHC plan review.

Provision required for preparation for adulthood should inform joint commissioning of services, the Local Offer, EHC needs assessments and plans, and education and training provision for all young people with SEN.

## Effective early engagement of employers and an emphasis on work-based learning

Teaching and learning should focus on the learner's aptitudes and interests and the availability of sustainable jobs within the economy.

Employers should be engaged at an early stage in both inclusive and specialist provision, creating opportunities to interact with disabled young people as learners, trainees and apprenticeships. The DWP Disability Confident campaign is one example of how government is trying to raise awareness on how employers can become more inclusive. The Careers & Enterprise Company is also a good example of how employers are being encouraged to be inclusive.

The Careers & Enterprise Company was established in 2015, with a focus on improving employer engagement in schools and colleges. Employer engagement can include activities such as mentoring, work experience, CV workshops and youth social action. They have done this through an Enterprise Adviser Network in partnership with Local Enterprise Partnerships, and through an investment fund. In Opportunity Areas (the twelve areas identified by the Department for Education as having the greatest need and lowest social mobility), they have also established a network of Cornerstone Employers. These are a combination of local and national businesses committed to working with schools and colleges to help create meaningful work encounters and demonstrating thought leadership support to drive other employers and businesses to do the same. They are now working with over 50 special schools to create the same opportunities for young people with SEND.

Collaboration between schools, colleges and employers is crucial to ensure a joined-up approach is taken to improving employment opportunities. The place, train model should be at the heart of technical and vocational education and training, with planned opportunities for work-based learning.

## High expectations and aspirations for young disabled people

Leaders should promote high expectations and use rigorous systems to drive improvement.

Study programmes for each learner should be planned and managed so that they provide progression, an appropriate approach to literacy and numeracy, work experience and non-qualification activities.

Learners should receive high quality impartial careers guidance to prepare them for their chosen next steps

and to enable them to make well-informed decisions about their future plans.

Learners should develop personal, social, employability and independent learning skills, and achieve high levels of punctuality, attendance and conduct, including through the contribution of non-qualification or enrichment activities and/or work experience.

Learners should understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy, both physically and emotionally.

Learners should make progress from their different starting points, remain on their study programme, achieve their core aim and make progress in English and/or Mathematics.

Learners should progress to the planned next stage in their careers.



# 8

## CONTINUING BARRIERS AND AREAS TO ADDRESS

The Children and Families Act was passed in 2014 and was the key policy driver in the major shift in dialogue about what young people might achieve with the right support. The Education Skills and Funding Agency introduced Study Programmes which allow bespoke packages of learning to be developed with routes into employment.

We know that outcomes are often poor for young disabled people, and those with learning disabilities in particular. These lower outcomes include skills and qualifications, employment, independent living, health and community inclusion.

Parents (and young people) often do not know what support is available and what could be possible for a young disabled person. There are low expectations about what young disabled people can achieve.

The intention of recent reforms to education and training in the UK is to improve outcomes for young people and to emphasise the need to raise employment aspirations and expectations of children and young people, families and everyone who supports them.

The challenge for individuals with additional needs accessing good TVET provision is that staff often have low expectations about what they can achieve. It is possible for the learners to succeed but staff have to share and promote the belief that this is achievable. The SEND reforms have provided impetus to progress the offer available to young people with additional needs. The current reforms are the biggest shift in policy in 40 years. Previously young people would have had a statement of special educational need which was very educationally focused. The Support and Aspirations Green (2010) paper challenged these assumptions and stated that we needed to consider how we prepare young people for a meaningful life beyond education.

Local Authorities and Further Education providers are having discussions about what is possible and how to identify and commission the right support to provide opportunities for young people.

There are a number of examples of how employers have become part of this pathway beyond education, for example:

- National Grid – bespoke Employability Programme
- Glaxo Smith Kline Pharmaceuticals – developing supported internships
- Barts Hospital Trust – hosting Project Search
- Great Ormond Street Hospital – hosting Project Search

These employers have seized the opportunity to create a truly diverse workforce through working in partnership with a supported employment organisation and collaborating with further education and the local authority. National Grid have created their own bespoke programme and work in partnership with local schools to offer work experience and then a supported internship programme. Barts Hospital Trust and Great Ormond Street Hospital both have Project Search programmes to allow young people to access a range of employment opportunities.

The main challenge is that employers have a pre-conceived idea of what young people with additional needs can achieve. Since 2014 there has been a major change in the dialogue about what is possible for young people to achieve, with the right support. The Learning and Work Institute research has demonstrated that there are a number of options for young people to progress into vocational opportunities including supported internships and apprenticeships.

There is a shared aim, across the nations of the UK, from governments to learning providers, employers, colleges and schools that young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities should be able to access quality education and training which supports their individual aspirations and enables them to lead happy and fulfilled lives.

There is widespread support for the ambitious intentions of the legislative and policy framework, alongside some concerns that a poorly designed funding system and excessive bureaucracy are taking the focus away from meeting the needs of young people.

In particular, these areas are identified by experts in the sector for improvements:



## 1. Creating fair and effective funding for high needs students

The current high needs funding system is complex, costly for providers and local authorities, overly bureaucratic and does not work effectively for post-16 learners or providers. Young people were intended to be at the centre of the system but are in fact subject to a postcode lottery due to variable approaches and policies of different local authorities. The system places all the responsibility with local authorities, who assess, plan, commission and fund places, creating a potential conflict of interest.

Pressures on local budgets result in a focus on short term savings and a lack of long term planning. In 2011, a National Audit Office report<sup>56</sup> noted that average lifetime costs of supporting a person with a moderate learning disability (£2–3 million) “could be reduced by around £1 million”.

The focus on costs rather than on individual needs and outcomes is also evidenced by placements at specialist colleges being increasingly driven through formal procurement practices which are inequitable and inconsistently applied.

Recommendations:

- Ensure local authority reviews of SEND provision result in longer term planning of placements and stronger partnerships between local authorities and providers so that budgets can be set and specialist places confirmed within a realistic timescale.
- Place a requirement on local authorities to work together on systems and processes, and to plan regionally to identify budgets for low incidence high needs provision.
- Either remove SEND placements from the Public Contracts Regulations or ensure that all local authorities adopt an equitable and ‘light touch’ approach to procurement for high needs places.
- Undertake research into low-incidence, complex SEND which requires highly specialised provision, to promote joint understanding of what constitutes value for money.
- Ask the National Audit Office to look again at the long-term value for money that specialist post-16 education can provide, following up the report of November 2011.

## 2. Investing for independence: provision for 19 to 25 year olds

Many young people with SEND need to stay in education and training beyond the age of 19 to make an effective transition to adulthood. Limited access to learning for young people aged 19+ remains a major concern. Recent Department for Education guidance has caused confusion and appears to conflict with the SEND Code of Practice, which states: “Local authorities must not cease to maintain the EHC Plan simply because the young person is 19 or over” (Paragraph 9.200).

Assessing whether young people have made progress or met their educational or training outcomes can only be done individually on a case by case basis. Local authorities need to be supported to make fair and consistent decisions about maintaining EHC plans beyond age 19 and undertake assessments for new plans for young people aged 19+, in line with their duties under the Act and the SEND Code of Practice.

A well-defined education programme, with meaningful and stretching targets, can result in substantial progress for many young people with complex needs over the age of 19. Living more independently, participating in their communities and having good health and well-being adds value to the lives of young people with learning difficulties or disabilities, their families and to society at large. Too often, EHC plans focus only on employment outcomes rather than these wider aspirations.

The situation for those without EHC plans is also very concerning. Funding for adult education is severely restricted and because of the costs of provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, many providers no longer run programmes for adults with LDD. Where courses do exist, learners may have to pay fees and the budget available for learning support is both limited and allocated at the discretion of the provider; it is often not sufficient to meet the needs of learners with more than moderate support needs.

Recommendations:

- Issue a clear directive on what it means to continue to make progress towards education and training outcomes which have not yet been achieved.
- Require those responsible for producing EHC plans to set stretching and ambitious outcomes emerging from annual reviews at aged 16 to 18.
- Reverse the cuts in adult education to enable young people aged 19+ with SEND but without EHC plans to access education and training in order to realise their aspirations.

### 3. Independent careers education, advice and guidance

Careers education, advice and guidance are not available consistently, and where they do exist there is not enough focus on children and young people with SEND.

The Careers and Enterprise Company, established in June 2015, made no specific reference to learning difficulties or disabilities in its first annual report.<sup>57</sup> The National Careers Service also made no specific reference to SEND issues. A committee of MPs reported on careers advice in July 2016<sup>58</sup> but did not make any specific recommendations on SEND.

There are specific issues around the content and accessibility of Local Offers and a paucity of good advice and guidance.

Government proposals for a legal duty on schools to allow post-16 providers to talk to pupils about their provision have not resulted in the required legislation.

Recommendations:

- Government should introduce this legislation and ensure it particularly references post-16 options for young people with SEND, including specialist colleges.
- Face to face, well informed and impartial advice, guidance and support should be provided for every student with learning difficulties or disabilities.
- There should be comprehensive information in Local Offers which lets users know what is available both within and beyond the local area and which guides them through the application process.
- There should be greater scrutiny of Local Offers to ensure that they are comprehensive and accessible.
- Reform of the National Careers Service is needed to properly address and include the needs of young people with SEND.

### 4. Increased employment opportunities

Existing and previous commitments to close the disability employment gap are positive, but employment rates for young people and adults with learning difficulties or disabilities remain shockingly low.

There is a particularly low percentage of people with learning disabilities in employment (just 5.8 per cent of adults with learning disabilities known to local authorities). Yet evidence shows that many people with a learning disability are excellent employees and add value to employers – they stay in jobs for longer, take less sick-leave than other employees and have better attendance rates.

There are a range of initiatives that seek to address the employment gap and to improve employment outcomes for young people with learning difficulties or disabilities. These include the option of undertaking a supported internship; the Disability Confident programme to engage with employers; and the recent Paul Maynard taskforce recommendations, 'Apprenticeships: improving access for people with learning disabilities'.

The Institute for Apprenticeships has published draft guidelines which make it a requirement for apprenticeship standards end point assessments to be capable of being reasonably adjusted in line with equality legislation.<sup>59</sup>

This is to ensure that none of the assessment methods proposed make it impossible to make reasonable adjustments and provide End Point Assessment Organisations with high-level guidance on making reasonable adjustments.

Recommendations:

- There should be continued cross-government and cross-departmental promotion of the benefits of employing disabled people.
- Avoid rigid interview and application processes e.g. allowing young people to undertake a 'working interview' supported by a job coach, to demonstrate how they can do the job in a real work setting.
- There should be a fair assessment system for the small number of disabled people who are not able to work, and a welfare system that provides them with the financial support they require in order to lead fulfilling lives, as full members of society.
- Further support and resources for providers are needed to develop supported internships and the individualised support that is needed to encourage young disabled people to aim for employment, together with a central point of information for employers regarding supported internships.

# 9

## CONCLUSIONS



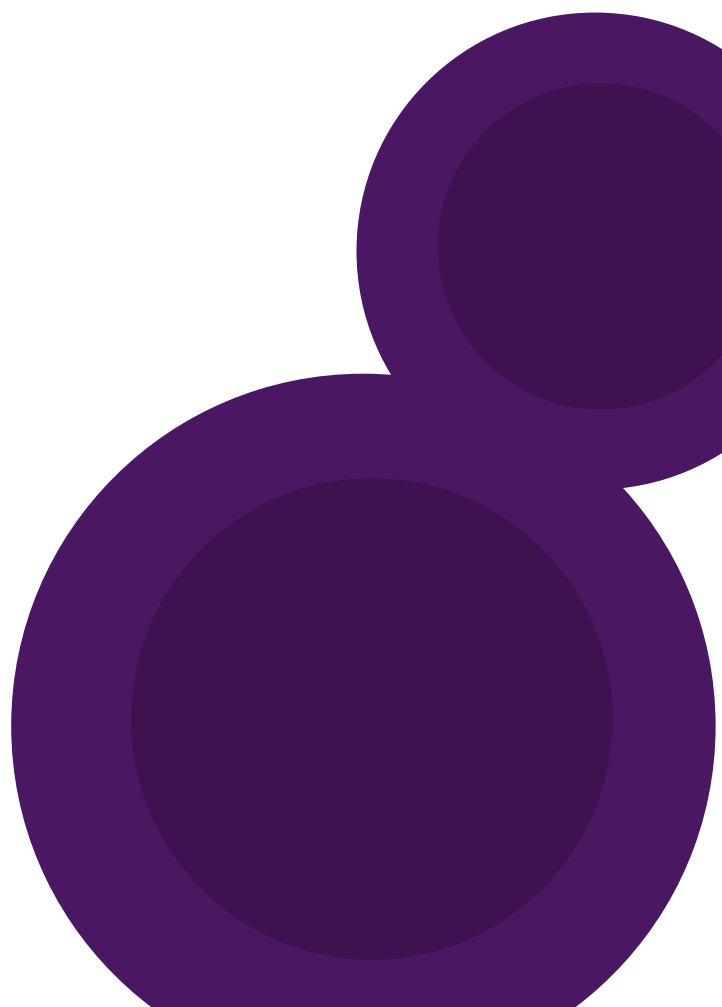
As this report has shown, effective TVET is central to providing people who are disabled from childhood or young adulthood the life chances to sustain them and to ensure that they can participate to the fullest extent possible throughout their lives.

This participation is vital, for the health and well-being of individuals and also for the health and well-being of UK society and the economy.

The UK's model for TVET has much to recommend it and lessons that may be applicable in other countries. Equally, the UK Government and providers of TVET in the UK will have much to learn from the experience of other countries.<sup>60</sup>

In the UK, the key conclusions of this review are as follows:

- Preparing for adulthood for disabled children and young people should start from the earliest years.
- Services that have a statutory responsibility should focus on how they can support children and young people to progress.
- Mainstream agencies should be inclusive and engaged.
- Young people and their families should be involved in strategic planning and service design and should support commissioners in the design and development of future services.
- Local authorities should be able to evidence positive outcomes for young people.
- Clear, accessible and proactive local information should signpost children, young people and their families to what is available locally through the Local Offer.
- The Local Offer should have a feedback and review mechanism for commissioners to capture information on where the gaps are for families.
- Young people and families should be involved in the ongoing development and review of the Local Offer.
- There should be early and sustained engagement between young people, their families, training providers and employers.
- Programmes of support should be flexible, personalised and responsive to individual needs.
- The voice and wishes of the learner should be central to planning and delivery of learning.
- All individuals and organisations involved in TVET for disabled learners should promote a culture of high expectations.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## For providers

Research evidence shows that there are a number of approaches that work:

- Raise employment aspirations and expectations of children and young people, families and everyone who supports them from much earlier.
- Person-centred transition planning with a focus on employment.
- Welfare advice, careers advice and guidance and positive work experience, so that families see that work is positive and possible.
- Vocational curriculum that supports young people's aspirations and meaningful work experience for young people in community-based settings.
- Supported employment organisations working with young people whilst they are at school, and good supported employment from 16+.
- Ensuring high quality, impartial career information, advice and guidance for young people and outlining how this can be built into the curriculum.
- Understanding the use and importance of vocational profiles, how to include their development in classroom or tutorial time and how to ensure they inform a vocational curriculum.
- Developing work experiences in real work settings in line with aspirations.
- Working with social care to maximise opportunities for holiday and weekend jobs.
- Creating more work opportunities through traineeships, supported internships and apprenticeships.
- Ensuring that employment support is of high quality, staff are appropriately trained in supported employment and Training in Systematic Instruction and there are mechanisms for monitoring success rates.
- Ensuring follow-on support is in place for young people after they leave education to maintain or gain paid work.

## For assessment bodies

Assessment procedures and methods should be flexible enough to allow adjustments to overcome any substantial disadvantage that individual students could experience. Accessible practice means:

- Ensuring that an assessment strategy includes a range of assessment formats.

- Considering the needs of disabled students with disabilities and that assessment methods are accessible.

## For UK governments

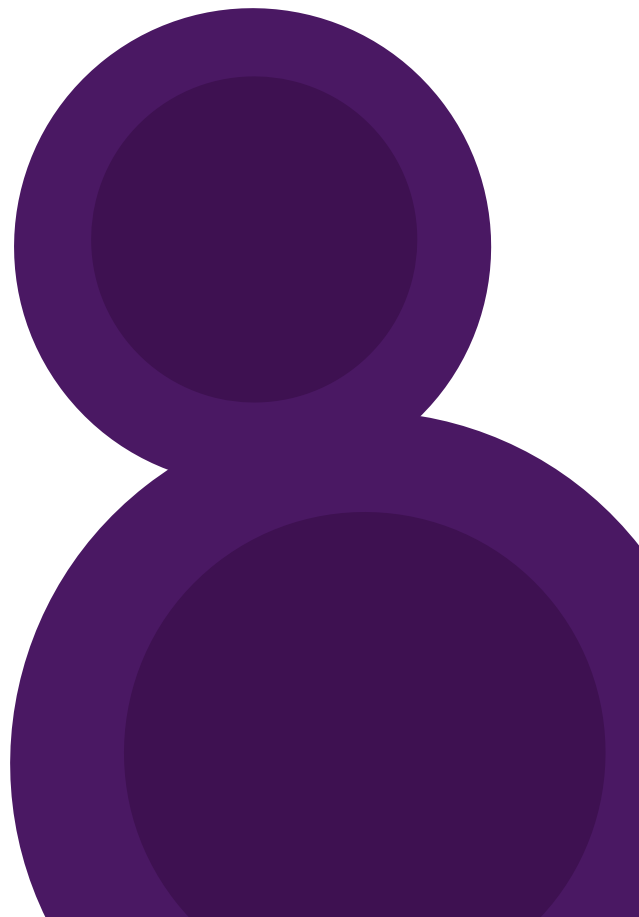
- The DfE and equivalents and DWP should review all guidance to ensure they are fit for purpose and reflect the needs of disabled apprentices, their employers and training providers.
- DWP should promote Access to Work eligibility more widely and emphasise that this support is available in situations which require more than "reasonable" adjustments.
- The DfE and equivalents and DWP should consider joining up funding streams, for example Additional Learning Support and Access to Work, so that potential hurdles are reduced and that the application is seamless from an apprentice/ employer/provider perspective.
- The DfE and equivalents should ensure Individualised Learner Records are as robust as possible in data capture by auditing providers, improving data collection, particularly on severe and mild/moderate learning disabilities.
- The DfE and equivalents and DWP should lead by example with their own apprenticeship programmes, and encourage wider Civil Service and public sector commitment to apprenticeships for young disabled people. Other ways of influencing the wider labour market that departments should consider include using public sector contracts to set expectations with regard to apprenticeships.
- The DfE and equivalents and DWP should investigate and raise awareness of the range of non-traditional recruitment practices including working interviews, job carving roles, electronic portfolios and other digital options to help disabled apprenticeship applicants. This should include investigating good practice from the Movement to Work programme<sup>61</sup> and organisations such as Mencap, as well as the situation with others that have no previous experience of employing and supporting young disabled people.
- The DfE and equivalents should revisit recommendations from the Little report (2012) and provide a response to his update with a view to making further progress in delivering against them.
- In the light of evidence that providers sometimes refuse to take on disabled people, DWP and the DfE and equivalents should undertake further work to

ensure that the system of reasonable adjustments and the availability of support, for example through Access to Work, are understood and consistently applied by providers, particularly in relation to those learners who could meet the normal English and Mathematics criteria with this help.

- The DfE and equivalents and DWP should consider the use of technology to support user-led strategies for disabled apprentices, for example the Brain in Hand app<sup>62</sup>.
- Post-legislative scrutiny of the recently implemented legal and policy framework governing TVET should be conducted by the House of Commons Education and Skills Select Committee and its counterparts within the devolved governments.

## For employers

- Employers should review their employment and training practices, to facilitate workforce diversity.
- They should familiarise themselves with the wide range of resources available to help employers to support education, training and employment of young disabled people.
- Promote the understanding of the social model of disability and to recognise that disability is the product of the physical, organisational and attitudinal barriers present within society which often lead to discrimination. Employment is a valued social role – being employed can help reverse societal devaluation, with wider positive consequences for the person.



# REFERENCES

- 1 Disability Rights UK (2017) 'Into Apprenticeships': [www.disabilityrightsuk.org/intoapprenticeships](http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/intoapprenticeships)
- 2 Gov.uk (2018) 'SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years': [www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25)
- 3 Department for Work and Pensions (2013) 'What works for whom in helping disabled people into work?': [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/266512/wp120.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/266512/wp120.pdf)
- 4 United Nations (2015) 'Time for Global Action for People and Planet': [www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/)
- 5 National Audit Office (2011) 'Oversight of special education for young people aged 16-25': [www.nao.org.uk/report/oversight-of-special-education-for-young-people-aged-16-25/](http://www.nao.org.uk/report/oversight-of-special-education-for-young-people-aged-16-25/)
- 6 Department of Health (2016) 'Personal Social Services: Expenditure and Unit Costs England 2015-16': <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-social-services-expenditure-and-unit-costs-england-2015-to-2016>
- 7 See, for example, Burchardt, T. (2005) 'The Education and Employment of Disabled Young people: Frustrated Ambition': [www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/1861348363.pdf](http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/1861348363.pdf)
- 8 [www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/bc\\_uk\\_skills\\_sector-an\\_introduction-june\\_2017\\_0.pdf](http://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/bc_uk_skills_sector-an_introduction-june_2017_0.pdf)
- 9 Gov.uk (2010) 'Equality Act 2010': [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents)
- 10 Gov.uk (2004) 'Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004': [www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2004/55/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2004/55/contents/made)
- 11 [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2001/10/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2001/10/contents)
- 12 Gov.uk (2005) 'Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005': [www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2005/1117/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2005/1117/contents)
- 13 Department for Education and Department for Health (2015) 'Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years. Statutory Guidance for Organisations which Work with and Support Children and Young People who have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities': [www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25)
- 14 HSCIC (2015) 'Measures from the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework: England 2014-15, Final Release': [www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB18657/meas-from-asc-of-eng1415-fin-rpt.pdf](http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB18657/meas-from-asc-of-eng1415-fin-rpt.pdf)
- 15 Gov.uk (2017) 'Further Education and Skills in England 2017': [www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr)
- 17 Gov.uk (2014) 'Children and Families Act': [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted)
- 18 BBC (2016) 'What is the provision for children with special needs?': [www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-36425292](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-36425292)
- 19 DWP (2011) 'Liz Sayce's independent review of specialist disability employment programmes: 'Getting in, staying in, getting on': [www.gov.uk/government/publications/specialist-disability-employment-support](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/specialist-disability-employment-support)
- 20 [www.projectsearch.us](http://www.projectsearch.us)
- 21 [www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/](http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/)
- 22 The Careers and Enterprise Company (2017) 'Transition programmes for young adults with SEND. What works?' [www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploaded/careers-enterprise-what-works-report-transition-prog.pdf.pdf](http://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploaded/careers-enterprise-what-works-report-transition-prog.pdf.pdf)
- 23 Natspec (2016) 'Evidence for the Lenehan Review of residential specialist colleges Extracts from Ofsted reports (raw data)': <https://natspec.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Residential-specialist-colleges-Ofsted-evidence.pdf>
- 24 Natspec (2018) 'Study programme design': <https://natspec.org.uk/study-programmes/design/>
- 25 Disability Rights UK, op.cit.
- 26 Corrigan, PW & McCracken SG (2005) 'Place first, then train: an alternative to the medical model of psychiatric rehabilitation' in Social Work and Corrigan, PW (2006) 'Place-then-train: an alternative service paradigm for persons with psychiatric disabilities' in Clinical Psychology Science and Practice.
- 26 <http://sixteencoop.co.uk>
- 27 In other words, place someone into a role, provide on the job training and then gradually reduce and withdraw outside support.
- 28 An EHC plan is a legal document that describes a child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs. It explains the extra help that will be given to meet those needs and how that help will support the child or young person to achieve what they want to in their life.
- 29 Access to Work is a discretionary government schemes that pays a grant to individuals. It can help with extra employment costs that result from a person's disability. It can help with putting in place adjustments, such as a job coach. It can include a workplace assessment, mental health support service assistance or fund a contribution towards specialist aids or equipment that might be required in the workplace.
- 30 Disability Rights UK, op.cit.
- 31 Gov.uk (2014) 'Equality and diversity analysis report 2013 to 2014': [www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-equality-and-diversity](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-equality-and-diversity)
- 32 <https://joinus.barclays/eme/apprenticeships/who-can-be-a-barclays-apprentice/i-have-a-physical-or-mental-disability/>
- 33 Little P and Holland R (2012) 'Creating an Inclusive Apprenticeship Offer': [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/387040/AU-CreatingAnInclusiveApprenticeshipOffer-Report-May2012.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/387040/AU-CreatingAnInclusiveApprenticeshipOffer-Report-May2012.pdf)
- 34 Gov.uk (2016) 'Independent Report: Paul Maynard Taskforce Recommendations': [www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-improving-access-for-people-with-learning-disabilities/paul-maynard-taskforce-recommendations](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-improving-access-for-people-with-learning-disabilities/paul-maynard-taskforce-recommendations)
- 35 [www.disabilityrightsuk.org/chloe-o'toole](http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/chloe-o'toole)
- 36 Learning and Work Institute and Timewise Foundation in Partnership with Young Women's Trust and Trust for London (2018) 'Exploring models for part-time and flexible apprenticeships': [www.learningandwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Part-time-and-flexible-apprenticeships-report.pdf](http://www.learningandwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Part-time-and-flexible-apprenticeships-report.pdf)
- 37 [www.employer-toolkit.org.uk/disability-3/](http://www.employer-toolkit.org.uk/disability-3/)
- 38 Gov.uk (2014) 'Traineeships': [www.gov.uk/government/collections/traineeships-programme](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/traineeships-programme)
- 39 Disability Rights UK op.cit.
- 40 Gatsby Charitable Foundation (2013) 'Good Career Guidance Benchmarks': [www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance](http://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance)
- 41 Gov.uk (2017) 'Careers strategy: making the most of everyone's skills and talents': [www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-strategy-making-the-most-of-everyones-skills-and-talents](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-strategy-making-the-most-of-everyones-skills-and-talents)
- 42 The Equality Challenge Unit is now part of AdvanceHE following the merger with the Higher Education Academy and the Leadership Foundation [www.advance-he.ac.uk/](http://www.advance-he.ac.uk/)
- 43 Equality Challenge Unit (2010) 'Strategic approaches to disabled student engagement - case studies': [www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/strategic-approaches-to-disabled-student-engagement-case-studies.pdf](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/strategic-approaches-to-disabled-student-engagement-case-studies.pdf)
- 44 From the website of Breakthrough UK: [www.breakthrough-uk.co.uk](http://www.breakthrough-uk.co.uk)
- 45 [www.breakthrough-uk.co.uk/support-into-employment](http://www.breakthrough-uk.co.uk/support-into-employment)
- 46 Gov.uk (2016) 'Disability Confident employer scheme and guidance Guidance and resources about employing disabled people and how the Disability Confident employer scheme can help your business': <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign>
- 47 CIPD (2018) 'Neurodiversity at work': [www.cipd.co.uk/Images/neurodiversity-at-work\\_2018\\_tcm18-37852.pdf](http://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/neurodiversity-at-work_2018_tcm18-37852.pdf)
- 48 [www.gov.uk/access-to-work](http://www.gov.uk/access-to-work)
- 49 [www.techability.org.uk/](http://www.techability.org.uk/)
- 50 [www.jisc.ac.uk/](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/)
- 51 Quality Assurance Agency (2018) 'The UK Quality Code for Higher Education': [www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code)
- 52 JISC (2018) 'Making assessments accessible': [www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/making-assessments-accessible](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/making-assessments-accessible)
- 53 Quoted on Microlink's website: [www.microlinkpc.com/education/](http://www.microlinkpc.com/education/)
- 54 United Nations (2006) 'United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities': <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>
- 55 Gov.uk (2018) '16 to 19 study programmes: guide for providers - Information for education and training providers on the planning and delivery of study programmes': [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/694413/16\\_to\\_19\\_study\\_programmes\\_guidance\\_updated-March\\_2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/694413/16_to_19_study_programmes_guidance_updated-March_2018.pdf)
- 56 NAO (2011) 'Oversight of special education for young people aged 16-25': [www.nao.org.uk/report/oversight-of-special-education-for-young-people-aged-16-25/](http://www.nao.org.uk/report/oversight-of-special-education-for-young-people-aged-16-25/)
- 57 Careers and Enterprise Company (2016) 'Joining the Dots 2016 - First Annual Roundup': [www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploaded/careers\\_and\\_enterprise\\_annual\\_review\\_2016.pdf](http://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploaded/careers_and_enterprise_annual_review_2016.pdf)
- 58 Business, Innovation and Skills and Education Committees (2016) 'Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance': <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmese/205/205.pdf>
- 59 Institute for Apprenticeships (2018) 'Developing an End-Point Assessment': [www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/developing-new-apprenticeships/developing-an-end-point-assessment-plan/](http://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/developing-new-apprenticeships/developing-an-end-point-assessment-plan/)
- 60 DWP op.cit.
- 61 Movement to Work is a registered charity and voluntary collaboration of UK employers committed to tackling youth unemployment through provision of high quality work experience and vocational training opportunities for young people that are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- 62 [www.braininhand.co.uk/](http://www.braininhand.co.uk/)













[www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation  
for cultural relations and international opportunities