mencap TRAINING ACADEMY

Ofsted Good Provider

Mencap Training Academy Prospectus: STAFFORDSHIRE



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WHO ARE MENCAP?

The Royal Mencap Society (Mencap) is a national charity. Our vision is for the UK to be the best place in the world for people with a learning disability to live happy and healthy lives.

To make this vision a reality, we provide lots of support like supported living services, information, advice and guidance, campaigns and support to find employment. The Mencap Training Academy is a specialist post 16 provider of education and training to young people aged 16-24 to help them find work.

In all our work, we reflect Mencap's 5 values:



We are **passionate** about making the world a better place



We are **positive** in our work and with each other



We are **brave** we challenge and try new things



We are **kind** to everyone



We are **inclusive** of everyone

- Established in 1946 by Judith Fryd, a mother of a child with Learning Disabilities.
- We work across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, supporting 1000's of people with a learning disability and their families.
- We began delivering employment-related support in 1975 with our Pathway Employment service.
- Our latest Big Learning Disability Survey found only 26.7% of people with a learning disability are currently in work.
- But 87% of people not in work, said they would like a job. Through our Training Academy, Mencap is determined to help them achieve this.
- In 2024/25, 71% of learners who completed our two supported internship programmes in Staffordshire secured a paid job outcome.



WHAT ARE SUPPORTED INTERNSHIPS?

Supported internships are programmes for young people with a learning disability and autism that help them to find work. They are full-time education programmes that run from September to July and involve:

Education

Learners attend sessions where they learn about the skills and behaviours needed for the world of work. You will also learn some English and maths and can explore taking qualifications in these.

Sessions are delivered to groups of around 10 people.

Work experience

Learners are required to complete at least 420 hours of work experience over the year. This amounts to 18 hours a week - spread across 2-3 days a week.

This can be in lots of different kinds of roles and organisations depending on what you are interested in, your skills and needs.

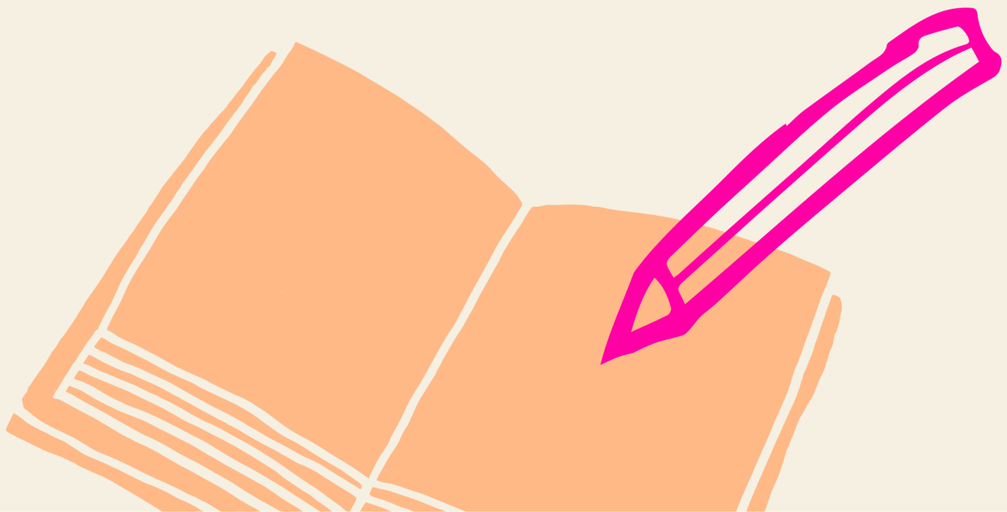
Who can do a supported internship?

To do a supported internship, the government requires learners to:

- Be aged 16-24
- Have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Want to find a job

You do not need to have any qualifications.

Supported internships are free to join and are paid for by the government and your local council. If you receive benefits like universal credit and PIP, these should be unaffected by you joining a supported internship, but you may need to complete a form to tell the government that you are enrolled on the programme.



HOW DOES A MENCAP SUPPORTED INTERNSHIP WORK?

More choice

As a national charity with a well known brand, Mencap has partnerships with lots of different employers in lots of different sectors. Our learners do work experience in areas like retail, hospitality, logistics, healthcare and administration.

If you don't yet know what kind of work you want to do, then our team and our careers advisor will help you to understand what kind of jobs would be a good fit for you based on your skills, needs and interests. There are lots of different kinds of jobs out there that you might not have even heard of before, that could be a great fit!

We can't promise that you will find your dream job through the programme, but we will help you to gain experience of work that is suited to you. Alongside our learning sessions, this will teach you transferable skills that will help you to develop a successful career.

Sectors you can work in

At the start of the programme, there are a number of different employers from across a range of different sectors that you could do work experience with. These are work experience placements with a specific employer. There should be something that you find interesting.

Depending on which sector you do work experience in, we will adapt our teaching during classroom sessions to ensure you develop the skills and behaviours needed to succeed in different types of roles and workplaces.

In Staffordshire we offer work experience opportunities in lots of sectors like:



Hospitality



Health and social care and childcare



Retail, administration and IT



Warehousing and logistics

WHAT WILL I DO IN THE CLASSROOM?

Learners on our supported internships attend sessions at our classrooms for one and a half days each week between September and July. During these sessions you will learn skills and behaviours needed for the workplace, as well as developing your English and maths which are also often needed in the world of work. Our curriculum covers:

English and communication skills

- Speaking and listening
- Communicating in an appropriate way
- Following instructions
- Engaging in meaningful discussions
- Reading
- Writing appropriate to role/career development
- Personal and life skills
- Preparation for assessments.

Behaviour and attitudes

- Personal presentation
- Keeping healthy and mental wellbeing
- Behaving appropriately at work
- Reacting to people appropriately
- Managing time
- Taking responsibility
- Keeping safe and safe relationships
- Making choices and decisions
- Understanding British Values.

Employability skills

- Finding and applying for jobs
- Writing and maintaining CVs
- Demonstrating competency in interviews
- Working in a safe way
- Working with supervision/others
- Dealing with problems at work.

Maths

- Numeracy skills relevant to learners' work experience
- Personal and life skills
- Preparation for assessment
- Money management.

English and maths portfolios

Are you someone who doesn't like exams? To help learners achieve qualifications in English and maths, we can support them to put together portfolios of work they do in class instead.

If you already have a L2 or above qualification in English and maths then you do not have to do this learning while on our programmes.



A learner on our Staffordshire supported internship braves a zip line as part of a residential trip.

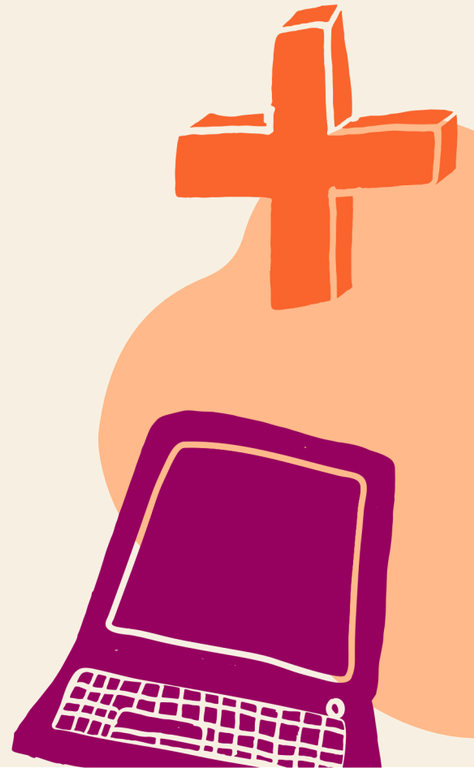
Digital

- Online safety
- Using different platforms and software like Teams, Google Docs, Word, PowerPoint

Enrichment

As part of a supported internship, you will also take part in extra curricular activities that will also help to develop your skills and confidence.

This could include visits to museums and art galleries, sport and games, trips to the theatre.



CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE (CEIAG)

During your time on our programmes, you will benefit from regular CEIAG.

All learners meet one-to-one with Mencap's qualified careers advisor at east once, while you will be supported to understand careers and what action are available to you throughout the year.

CEIAG activities include:



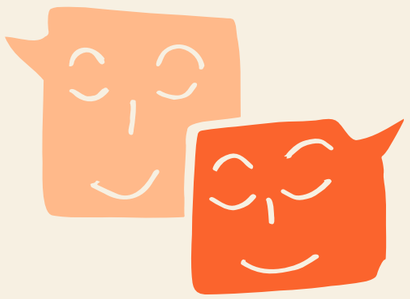
Looking at local labour market information to understand what kind of jobs are in demand in your local area.



Attending local career fairs to speak to employers and learn about what jobs are available locally.



Career themed quizzes and games like Panjango that help you to remember information about careers and different jobs in a fun way.

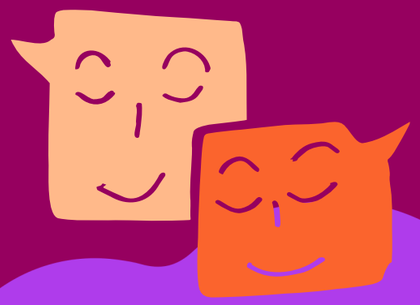


Group visits to employers' offices and guest speaker visits from employers.



PRE-INTERNSHIP STUDY PROGRAMME

We understand that for some young people, the idea of completing 420 hours of work experience in a year is quite scary and may feel impossible. We know lots of young people who really want to work may not have benefitted from much learning about careers before, or from previous work experience. We therefore offer an alternative to the supported internship in Staffordshire. This is called a pre-internship programme. Like the supported internship, it is a year-long programme that runs from September to July. But it involves slightly different things:



More education

Learners on our pre-internship programmes spend more time - 3 days a week - in our classrooms. This gives them more time to learn about the world of work and the skills and behaviours needed to succeed in the workplace.

More CEIAG

Learners will spend more time learning about the different career options available to them and on activities like meeting employers in different ways to work experience - like visiting employers' offices and guest speaker visits.



Less work experience

Toward the end of the year, pre-internship programme learners will do some work experience. But it won't be as much as supported internship learners do. By this time, you will have developed you skills and confidence so you should feel ready to begin work experience.



A pre-internship programme learner presents to their peers about their skills and career aspirations as part of careers learning and confidence building exercises.

What happens next?

Once learners finish the pre-internship programme, the aim is to move on to the supported internship. Most learners are ready to do this having built up their skills and confidence over the year. Sometimes, you can even carry on doing work experience during the supported internship that you started while on the pre-internship programme which can lead to earlier paid job outcomes!

EMPLOYER LED SUPPORTED INTERNSHIP

We also deliver another type of supported internship in Staffordshire that is a little bit different to the rest of our programmes.

We are working with a charity called DFN Project Search to deliver this programme which takes place at the Ministry of Defence's Beaconside site in Stafford. Learners on this programme will be based permanently at the Beaconside barracks, completing both the education and work experience elements of the programme there.

Learners will complete a series of rotations at Beaconside between September and July, working with a company called ESS who provide lots of different services to the MoD at the base.

Roles include:



- Hospitality/catering at the on-site cafe
- Housekeeping
- Stores
- Working in the officers' mess

A typical day will look like:



- 9am to 10am – classroom learning focused on employability skills, held at the Beaconside site.
- 10am to 3.30pm – learners complete work experience at the hospital supported by a Mencap skills coach
- 3.30pm to 4pm – return to the classroom to reflect on the day's activities.

This programme is very focused on work experience. Learners will complete around 900 hours of work experience over the year. This means you will develop lots of great experience to find a paid job, but it will most likely be best suited to learners who have already completed some work experience before and feel ready to do more.





WORK EXPERIENCE IN HOSPITALITY

Workexperiencein hospitality could include roles incustomerservice, sales, and food-related services. Your focus will be on helping to provide a positive experience for customers. This could be by helping a customer to find a product, preparing ingredients for a meal, or setting up a restaurant ready for service.



What roles are available and what skills will I need?

You could do the following roles:

- Kitchen porter
- Waiter/bar tender
- Retail assistant.

To succeed in these roles you will need to develop skills including:

- Customer service
- Numeracy
- Hygiene awareness
- Health and safety awareness.

Hospitality employers you could do work experience with include:

GREENE KING
BURY ST EDMUNDS

ACUK WHITEMOOR LAKES
YOUTH · ACTIVITIES · CONFERENCE



ALEX'S STORY

Alex previously completed our Supported Internship in Staffordshire. He expressed an interest in cooking so we found him work experience at Whitemoor Lakes Activity Centre in Lichfield, working in the kitchen as an assistant chef.

Alex threw himself into tasks like cooking curry, chicken wraps and preparing salads, as well as developing his knife skills and gaining a Food Hygiene Level 2 qualification.

When he finished his Supported Internship, Alex was offered a paid role at the centre and his team are "chuffed to bits" with his progress.

The next year, Alex also helped another Mencap learner who did work experience at Whitemoor Lakes, helping them to get a job too!



WORK EXPERIENCE IN WAREHOUSING AND LOGISTICS

Work experience in this sector is all about dealing with things that come into a warehouse. This could be food, furniture or other people's parcels. It's an active role where you'll need to move, lift, and organise things quickly, and be ok with working in an environment that could be cold, noisy or busy.

Warehousing and logistics employers you could do work experience with include:

Wincanton

What roles are available and what skills will I need?

You could do the following roles:

- Warehouse operative
- Picker/packer
- Driver's mate.

To succeed in these roles you will need to develop skills including:

- Working in a team and on your own
- Following instructions
- Working quickly.



JOEL'S STORY

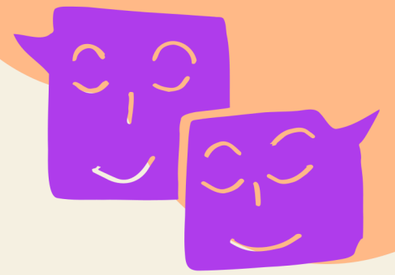
Joel previously completed our supported internship in Staffordshire, completing work experience with Wincanton.

Joel's trainers at Wincanton quickly recognised his passion for vehicles and introduced him to Material Handling Equipment (MHE) vehicle training.

They then supported Joel to pass his theory and practical tests to drive the Low Level Order Pickup (LLOP) vehicles which he now wants to do for a career!

Watch our video to find out more about Joel's journey and other learners who have done work experience with Wincanton.

HOW DO I ENROL WITH THE MENCAP TRAINING ACADEMY IN STAFFORDSHIRE?



1 Step 1: Get in touch

You can reach out and tell us a bit about yourself and why you want to enrol on one of our programmes by completing our online form which you can access using the QR code.

Or you could tell whoever manages your EHCP that you would like to join us and they can send us a consultation.

You can also email us at: employment.support@mencap.org.uk

2 Step 2: Attend an online meeting

This will be with a member of our team who will tell you a bit more about our programmes and ask you some questions, mostly about what kind of work experience you might like to do.

3 Step 3: Meet with us

This is a chance for you to see where you could be learning next year. We will also ask you some more questions about your skills, needs and interests. We may offer you a place on one of our programmes after this meeting or we may ask for a bit more information, for example, from your current school or college.

4 Step 4: Identify suitable work experience

If you join our supported internship programme we may invite you to attend one or more 'Employer Matching Days' before the start of your programme. These give you the chance to meet with employers and get a sense of the work experience you could do, so hat when you start with us, you have a placement already set up!



WHERE TO FIND US

Below you can see where in Staffordshire we deliver our programmes from. Learners on our pre-internship and supported internship in Lichfield must attend this setting 2 days a week, or 3 days a week on the pre-internship. The work experience element of these programmes takes place in different locations across Staffordshire and can potentially be sourced closer to learners' homes.

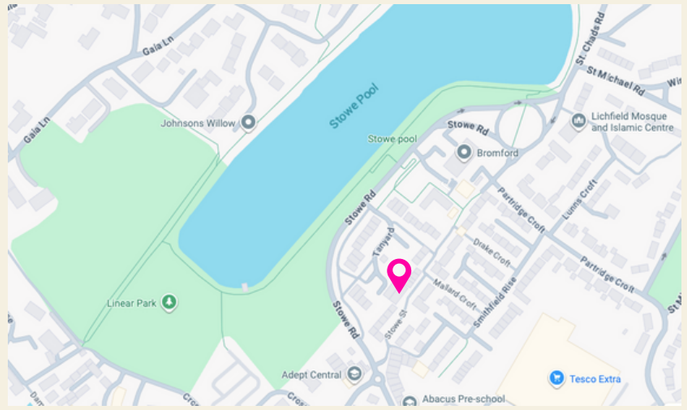
See details below about how you can find us.

Lichfield

Units E and F
Stowe Court Stowe
Street Lichfield
WS13 6AQ

Closest station:
Lichfield City (0.5 miles)

Buses: 3, 8, 12, 31, 32, 33, 36, 60, 62 (Lichfield City bus station)



Employer-led programme

Thisiswhere learners whodowork experience with ESS will access the programme. They will be based at this site all week throughout the programme.

MoD Beaconside
Stafford
ST18 0AQ

Closest station:
Stafford (2.1 miles)

Buses: 11 (Newell Avenue bus stop)

SUPPORT WITH TRAVEL

We understand that some people may not have much experience of travelling on their own and may feel nervous about finding their way to our classrooms and to their work placements.

We encourage people to come and visit our premises before enrolling to see what it's like and to get a sense of the journey from home.

You may also be able to look into getting some travel training through your local council and travel training services they commission before you start on the supported internship programme.

Mencap can also provide travel training for up to 6 weeks at the start of the programme to help learners learn the routes to their work experience placements.



mencap TRAINING ACADEMY

https://trainingacademy.mencap.org.uk

employment.support@mencap.org .uk

"Learners learn and work in friendly and nurturing environments where tutors and skills coaches care about them and their futures (...) [staff] provide effective support in lessons and at work placements so that learners can achieve their goals."

- Ofsted, October 2024.

Ofsted Good Provider

Registered charity number: 222377 (England and Wales); SC041079 (Scotland).