

Cardiff Council recognised the need for young adults with learning disabilities and or autism to be given the opportunity to have quality work experience opportunities within a working environment. As such, DFN Project Search license was purchased to accommodate school aged children and a project set up in conjunction with Cardiff Commitment, Into Work and Education/ Inclusion department and is currently funded by Cardiff Commitment/ SPF funding. The current funding is due to end in March 2025 and the Inclusion service of the Education department have confirmed funding of the project until the end of this current academic year. The host business chosen to support the project was Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and are able to offer young people a really diverse range of placement opportunities across the site. The project sees young people apply for the provision with the help of their school/ family member and attend an interview and skills assessment day. We recruit students from local special schools or schools who have a Special Resource Base attached to them. Successful applicants are then involved in a transition programme in readiness for a September start date, whereby interns meet on a monthly basis to help build rapport with staff and peers whilst also familiarising themselves with the host business site. Any student identified as needing help with travel training are put forward to undertake Travel Training with the staff and this is completed during the school summer holidays. The young people complete an academic year with us on the project whilst remaining on roll at their school and complete 3 9/10 week block placements across the school year. Each placement block is separated by a Transition Week, allowing students to prepare for their forthcoming placement by attending trial sessions and interviews. We help the interns prepare for interviews and also provide suitable clothing for them to wear should it be required. Should students be eligible for Free School Meals or EMA, this provision continues with them onto the project. In readiness for the placements, the interns complete a 6 week induction programme which consists of host business orientation activities, 14 NHS ESR mandatory training units, Employability Curriculum delivery covering modules which include Building Health Relationships, Conflict Resolution, Health and Wellness, Self Advocacy, Financial Literacy, Team Building, Workplace Safety, Maintaining Employment together with the delivery of vocational training modules in Customer Service, Food Safety and Hygiene, Emergency First Aid and Manual Handling, interview preparation, departmental talks and subsequent departmental visits allowing the young people to make an informed choice about their forthcoming placement choices. We hold monthly Steering Group Meetings allowing school to be regularly updated of progress throughout the intern's journey. The intern also regularly email their school/ teacher to 'touchbase' and to ensure they feel their relationship with school is maintained. Young people with additional learning needs often have strong bonds with their school friends and teachers and we recognise the emotions the young people as they transition into adulthood and as such these weekly/ fortnightly emails help to regulate the

interns whilst also sharing their successes and achievements. The interns are also involved in the recruitment process of future interns as current interns are invited to return to their school late in the autumn term to deliver a presentation outlining their time on the project.

Whilst in placement, interns are supported to varying degrees throughout their 9/ 10 week placement. Some students require intensive support throughout their placement whilst others require support during the initial few days/ weeks of placement before moving on to supporting the intern in reduced capacity but still supervising on a daily basis. Whilst in placement, the department/ mentor receives fortnightly evaluation sheets which allows staff to offer recommendations/ feedback to the young people in addition to the feedback offered from the support provided by project staff. Ahead of the placement, a departmental analysis and task analysis are undertaken ensuring project staff know key information about the department together with the tasks outlined for the intern. These tasks can then be practiced/ developed ahead of time/ during induction ensuring the student is competent to start their placement. The termly targets set by the staff are also informed by the tasks the interns are set aswell as being set in conjunction with their literacy/ numeracy/ social goals.

We work with a Business Liaison Manager at CAVUHB who helps secure the quality placements for our interns. Identified departments are invited to attend a meeting with project staff and a manager/ mentor handbook is provided which outlines the expectations of all parties involved in the project together with relevant contact numbers, term and rotation dates. As we are now in our fourth year of provision we are able to offer the following placements for the interns to choose between:

General Porters	Radiology Porters	Assistant Technical Officer Pharmacy
Health Records Assistant	Administration assistant	Lab technician in Cellular Pathology
Housekeepers	Linen assistants	Central Production Unit Porter
Radiology Department Assistant	ICT Service desk assistant	Meet and Greet volunteer
Ward Based Catering	Catering Assistant	Physiotherapy Outpatients Assistant
Theatre Stores Assistant	HSDU	Waste collection
Maintenance assistant	Podiatry HCSW/ admin	Transit Stores- delivery

British Association for Supported Employment (<https://www.base-uk.org/>) offer training opportunities for those individuals working with young people who are entering into the work of work. The aim of the provision is to ensure that all staff working with people with learning disabilities are all working to the same standard. Such training is free for people based in England but not for people

based in Wales. One member of the team has been able to undertake this training but due to training costs, the other members of the team have been unable to access the provision.

As a project we have helped young people overcome a number of barriers linked with employment such as helping a young person to apply for photographic ID allowing them to open/ apply for a bank account allowing them to move on to the JGW+ programme ensuring their weekly allowance gets paid directly to them rather than a family member. We have also helped a young person register with their local GP having recently moved home and family members were not able to support them. We continue to support young people find employment once they have completed their time with us on the project and regularly send out job opportunity emails to previous students and support previous students when attending job interviews. We have helped learners apply for PIP, apply for travel passes, complete DBS check and access Barrier to Work Fund allowing students to have the necessary uniform (e.g. steel toe cap boots, utility trousers). This support comes in addition to the support offered to actually search for suitable job opportunities, complete application forms and complete any relevant paperwork required once employment has been successful.

We are really proud of the impact our project has made thus far on the lives of those involved together with their families. The ripple effect of the young people’s involvement in this project has been hugely impactful and we have captured this in the attached case study/ quotes from departmental managers, students and family members. Our successes since the start of the project have been outlined below:

Academic Year	Enrolled	Completed	Outcome	Employment Status
2021-2022	7	7	6 employed by CAVUHB 1 moved on to CAVC	5 remain employed by CAVUHB 1 employed by Greggs
2022-2023	9	8	5 employed by CAVUHB 1 employed by ‘Cardiff Works for You’ in Cardiff Parks department 1 moved on to CAVC 1 moved on to Pencoed College	4 remain employed by CAVUHB
2023-2024	16	15	1 found employment at CAVUHB 7 moved on to ACT/ Jobs Growth Wales + 5 moved on to CAVC	4 remain/ moved into employment at CAVUHB 3 remain on ACT/ JGW+ but 2 have applied for positions

			1 moved on to Coleg Y Cymoedd 1 remained with us at PS for a second year to continue personal development	with CAVUHB and awaiting interviews/ shortlisting
2024-2025	7 (6 FT 1 PT)	6 (5 FT 1 PT)		

We have established a fantastic working relationship with our host business over the past 4 years and recognise the positive impact our interns are having on the work force both in their internship and employment roles. Our interns have an excellent work ethic, a strong desire to achieve, be independent and to be part of a community and as such make excellent employees.