

Wiltshire Supported Internships (WSI)

Frequently asked questions . . .

The Supported Internship year will be your last year at college and aims to help transition from education to employment.

Q. What can I do to prepare?

How can I make sure I get the best out of the opportunity of supported internships?

A. The most important thing is that you really want to get paid work



Supported internships are all about working towards a paid job.

- Practice using public transport – so you can travel to work
- Develop your skills for work – this can include good time keeping, speaking clearly, answering the phone, doing jobs around your house regularly or some volunteering
- Engage with your job coach early – commit to meeting regularly with your job coach to get to know each other. The earlier this is done, the earlier the opportunity for work
- Be open to new ideas for work – this will give you many more opportunities
- Be prepared to try new things – learning new skills and gaining new experiences will make you much more interesting to an employer

Q. How often will I be at college?

A. Two days a week at Wiltshire college

Supported internships are a lot more flexible than a normal college course. Whilst your job coach is finding you a working interview it is very likely you will have more time to yourself during the week.

Q. What will I do on the days I am not at college or in the workplace?

A. This is something you will need to think about

As with all young people at college or work, you may find days where you have spare time. This is a great opportunity to relax at home or find yourself a hobby or activity and work on your employability skills.

Q. What about travel?

A. You will be expected to learn to travel independently

Becoming an independent traveller is an important outcome. You will be expected to try and use public transport to get you both to college and the workplace. This can make your days so much easier.

You will be expected to engage with travel training, prior to starting in September. Otherwise, your place could be withdrawn.

You will be expected to travel independently from your home to any workplace, so if you are unable to use public transport this will limit your options. In exceptional cases, access to work funding can be applied for through a government scheme.

Q. What if I don't get the opportunity of a Working Interview?

A. We will work with you to improve your chances

From our experience, only a very small number of interns have not had the opportunity of at least one working interview:

- In some cases, interns are simply not ready to do a working interview, and in this case, an action plan would be put in place to tackle any challenges and improve chances for employment
- It can certainly take longer if we don't have a suitable matched employer to your choices or skills. You can help this by being flexible in what you are prepared to try.

Finding a successful working interview needs agreement from local employers to be part of the programme. A lot of employers in Wiltshire are interested in being a host employer. You will be expected to work towards meeting their business need and commit to learning the role to the best of your ability.

We are looking for paid work as a result of the year, not 'work experience'. We hope that you will have completed some work experience before you start the supported internship, but if you need to build more skills then the college may arrange this for you.

WEST are looking at a more realistic approach to work and need to consider many things including;

- Choices and skills of interns that match with employers or businesses
- That the intern can travel to work
- A willingness from employers
- A longer-term investment from employers
- Ensuring that the young person gets value from each working interview and becomes more employable

Internships are not about occupying time, interns do need to be realistic towards employment, and that is what we are trying to achieve.

Q. What happens when college finishes

A. You leave education and move into adulthood

The supported internship year will be your last year at college,

If you do not have a job as a result of your working interview(s) with WSI, then you could have the opportunity to carry on looking for work with the support of a Job Coach as a WEST customer. This is decided through a review of the internship year and based on how committed you are to finding paid employment.

Q. Can I claim any benefits whilst on a supported internship?

A. Yes – if you are eligible

WSI is a study programme, considered full time education. This means you are a student.

You will still be able to claim benefits for your day-to-day life, if you are eligible.

- You cannot apply for Jobseeker's allowance
- You can apply for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) or continue to receive DLA
- There are other options for claiming benefits for you or your parents
- To find out more please go to: www.gov.uk/browse/benefits

Wiltshire Supported Internships are a partnership between Wiltshire College and Wiltshire Council's supported employment team, WEST (Wiltshire Employment Support Team)

You can apply directly to the college via this link:

<https://www.wiltshire.ac.uk/study/supported-internships>

