

Factsheet 5: What support is available for employers who take on a person with a learning disability?

There are a number of support mechanisms available to employers who want to employ someone with a learning disability. These range from government initiatives like as Access to Work to practical support in the workplace from agencies such as Mencap or other supported employment services. For more information on how to apply for this support, please see Factsheet 6: Financial support for workplace adjustments (insert links) Funding plays a big part in what services are available in different parts of the country.

Supported employment services

Supported employment services such as those offered by Mencap provide specialised employment help for people with a disability. In particular, they will put employers in touch with candidates with a disability and can support those candidates through the recruitment process and beyond. A supported employment agency will work with both the individual and the employer to ensure success.

Some supported employment services, including Mencap, are specifically aimed at supporting people with a learning disability into paid work.

Mencap and other support providers can offer people with a learning disability opportunities for support through a range of employment programmes. Mencap have four main programmes that cater for people with a range of different needs. These include Mencap's 3 Ships model (Supported Internships, Traineeships and Apprenticeships) as well as our more bespoke employment programme, Employ Me.

Employ Me

This is Mencap's general supported employment model.

It is a modular programme tailored to individual need. We use this model with all programmes which cannot be supported through education funding. We use a place, train and sustain approach which will usually include the provision of a job coach to support in the workplace.

Supported Internships

A supported internship is a 12-month vocational programme for those furthest from the labour market. This programme involves an extended work-experience placement with an employer, supported by a job coach.

The work experience is unpaid as this is classed as an education programme. (insert link to Interns and Outcomes)

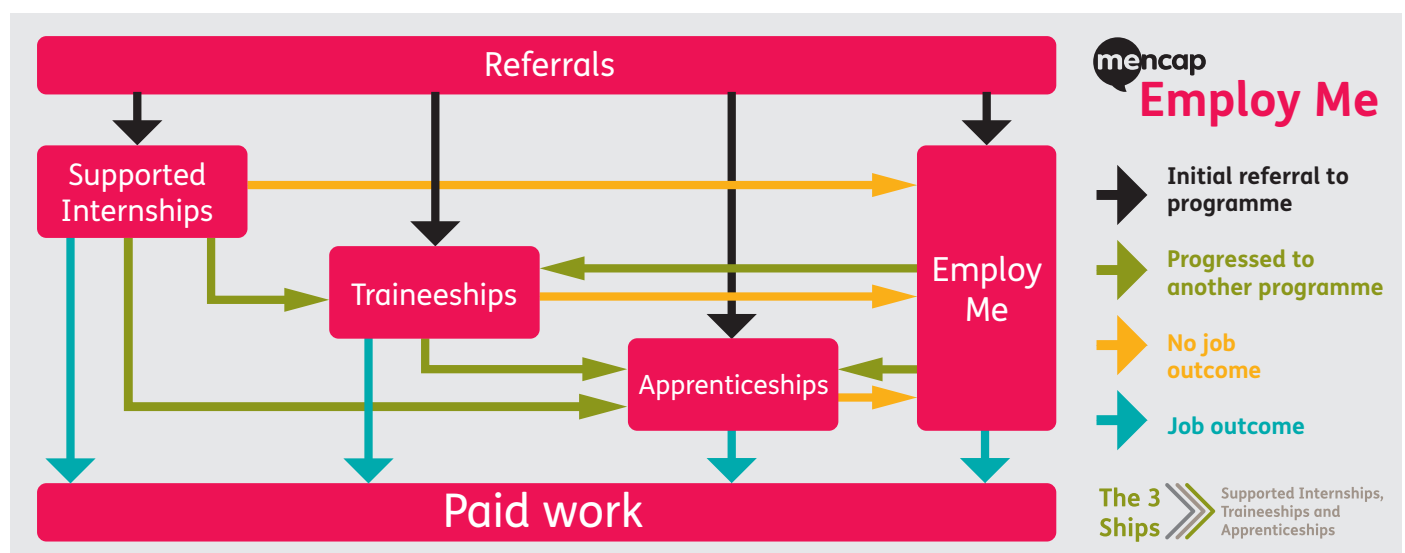
Traineeships

A traineeship can last between 6 weeks and 6 months in duration; typically Mencap's programmes last about 13 weeks. This programme is developed in partnership with an employer and incorporates a 100 hour work placement, again unpaid as it is considered education, and supported by a job coach where necessary.

Apprenticeships

Mencap has supported a number of people with a learning disability to undertake an apprenticeship. Apprenticeships can be really well suited to people with a learning disability as they are all about learning on the job. Some of the apprentices we have supported have achieved a distinction!

Mencap's ultimate aim is paid work for everyone, but there are different routes people can take to achieve this. This is how our models complement one another:



However, Mencap does not have complete UK coverage, so we cannot guarantee we currently work in your area. Please refer to the JCP, Local Authority or Local Offer for more information about what support is available in your local area.

Disability awareness session

Organisations such as Mencap can provide disability awareness sessions to your staff, with a particular focus on learning disability.

Contact us to find out more about Mencap's learning disability awareness training.

Other information

Jobcentre Plus

Jobcentre Plus is a Department for Work and Pensions agency. There are Jobcentre Plus offices throughout the country. Jobcentre Plus staff will advise on benefits and employment and can provide employers with disabled candidates.

Work Coaches in Jobcentre Plus offices are dedicated to supporting disabled people who want to find work, and can help employers who wish to employ someone with a disability. Some Jobcentre Plus sites also have a Disability Employment Advisor (DEA). DEAs can also

advise employers on specialist support services in the area.

To speak to your Work Coach, contact your local Jobcentre Plus office.

Local Offer

Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice, which can be found [here](#), there is a statutory duty on local authorities to develop and publish a Local Offer setting out the support they expect to be available for local children and young people with SEND aged 0-25. Visit your local authority website to find what is available in your area.

Local Authorities

For people outside of this age bracket there should be information about what is available on the local authority website under the heading 'Supported Employment'.

BASE

The British Association of Supported Employment (BASE) is a membership body for providers of supported employment. Information about their members can be found [here](#).