

A guide to Employment Support in South Gloucestershire

Introduction to Employment Support ¹

South Gloucestershire Council's goal is to support the residents of South Gloucestershire to reach their fullest potential. A disability should not dictate the path a person is able to take in their life including in the work place. We are committed to challenging the misconceptions that exist around people with disabilities obtaining and maintaining paid employment and improving the offer of services available.

In the past there have been many factors that have effected people's routes into employment. They include:

- Low expectations and aspirations around access to employment across the system
- Low priority given to employment as a viable option during transition to adulthood planning
- Reductions in funding for Careers Advice in schools
- No clear strategic approach across education, health and social care agencies
- Families aspirations for their young people
- Discrimination from the employment market
- Insufficient Information, Advice and Guidance services - supported employment services not known about or accessed
- Back to front approach to employment – a focus on what someone 'cannot do' rather than what they can offer

The Council is committed to improving outcomes for people with disabilities through their 0-25 Service and through their dedicated Employment Support Commissioning Officer. Although there is still development work to be done, positive changes are already being recognised through the establishment of a [Job Coach Provider List](#) and improved access to services through allocation of Personal Budgets for eligible people.

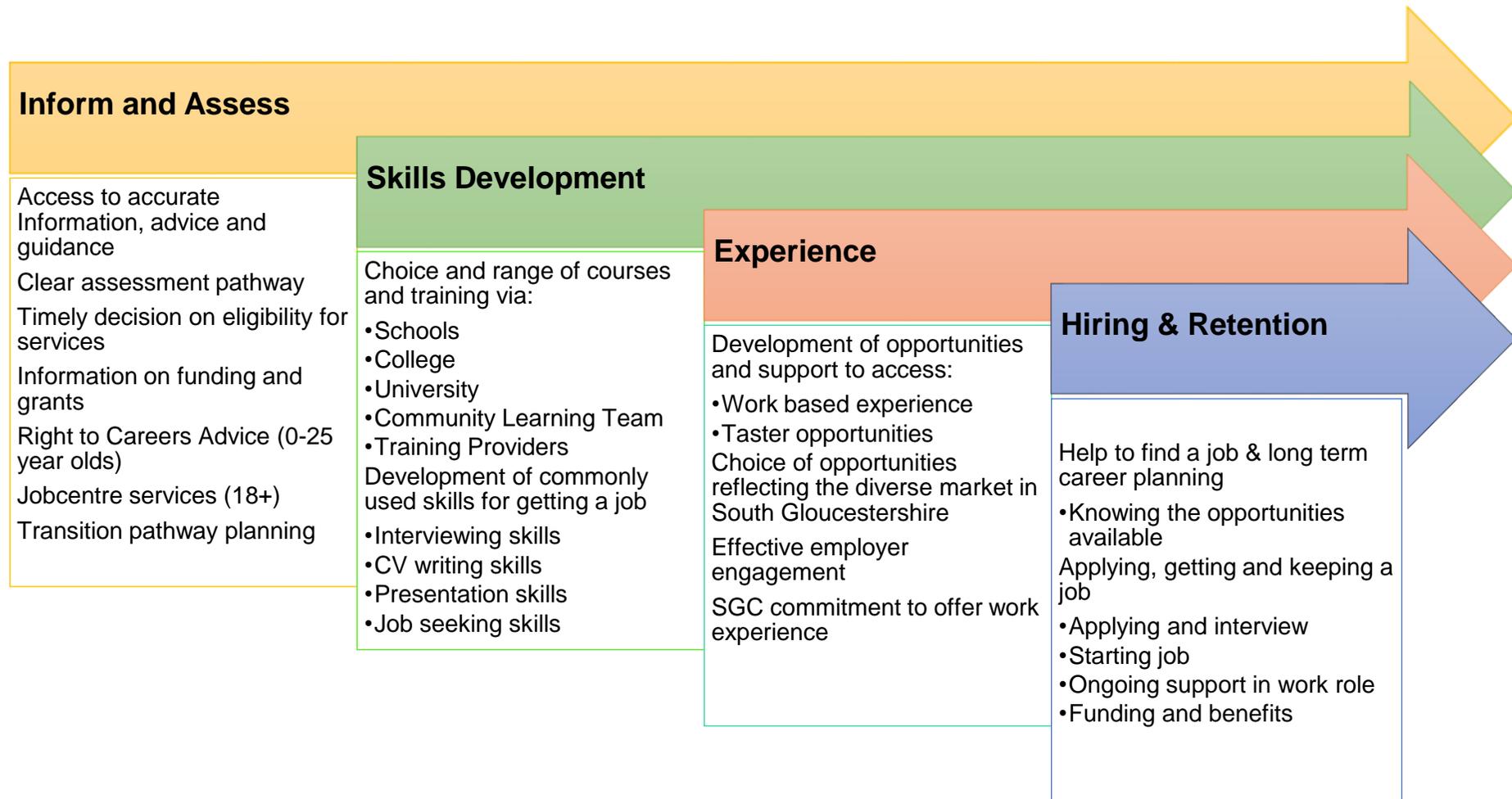
This guide is designed to give an overview of Employment Support services in South Gloucestershire. For further details of employment and training services available in the region please search our local community information directories [Well Aware](#) and [1 Big Database](#)

Finally, for impartial support and advice you may wish to take a look at [South Glos Parents and Carers](#). The organisation is run by parents and carers who have an in depth understanding of issues that face families with children and young adults who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

¹ [Pathways to Getting a Life: Transition Planning for Full Lives](#) (accessed 06/06/2017) & [Improving Lives – The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper](#) (accessed 06/06/2017)

Pathway to Paid Employment

Information is set out under the following pathway headings:



Inform and Assess

Having access to up-to-date, timely and accurate information is essential to enable you to make informed decisions about your life. The Children and Families Act 2014 made it a legal requirement for every Local Authority to publish their Local Offer online.

“Local Authorities must publish a Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans.”

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SPECIAL_EDUCATIONAL_NEEDS_AND_DISABILITY_CODE_OF_PRACTICE_JANUARY_2015.pdf

Through South Gloucestershire’s Local Offer you will be able to review the choice and options that are available to you on a range of subjects, not just Employment Support.

If you are a professional or a South Gloucestershire resident, the Local Offer should be your first stop for information on Employment Support. For further details of employment and training services available in the region please search our local community information directories [Well Aware](#) and [1 Big Database](#).

Assessment for support from South Gloucestershire Council

If you are under 25 years old, you or you parent/carer can request an Education, Health and Care needs assessment via the South Gloucestershire [Access and Response Team](#).

If you are over 18 and believe you require an assessment to consider your needs and access to Social Services then you can request a Care Act assessment. To request this you need to contact the customer service desk on 01454 868 007 or [online](#).

Preparation for adulthood planning

As you move through your Key Stage 4 education you will need to make decisions about your next phase of education or training. The Post 16 [Directory](#) will give you all the basic information you will need.

You should contact your school directly to see what support they offer, as all schools should secure access to face-to-face careers guidance to make successful transitions².

²https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/608259/Careers_guidance_and_inspiration_in_schools.pdf

If you are over 18

If you have recently left education, training, exited employment or are hoping to find employment, the Local Offer and Job Centre should be the next steps on your pathway.

To access support from the Job Centre you must be in receipt of benefits – you may wish to visit your local Job Centre for advice on this, or check out www.direct.gov website to find out if you are eligible.

“Your local Jobcentre can help you find a job or gain new skills and tell you about disability-friendly employers in your area.

They can also refer you to a specialist work psychologist, if appropriate, or carry out an ‘employment assessment’...”

Looking for work if you're disabled - DWP

<https://www.gov.uk/looking-for-work-if-disabled/looking-for-a-job>

You will be able to access a Work Coach at your local Jobcentre. The Work Coach can tell you about programmes and grants which can help you into work.

If you are over 18 years old and you are engaged in any form of Employment, Education or Training the organisation you are studying/working with will be able to guide you on your options into employment.

You may also be able to access in-work support from a [Job Coach](#) if you are eligible for a Social Work assessment under the Children's and Families Act 2014 or Care Act 2014.

There are other organisations in the area such as [WECIL](#) and [Southern Brooks](#) who also offer adults in the area a helping hand to learn skills and find work through their Journey to Employment programme.

Funding and Grants

There are an array of funding and grants available to support you into employment.

Skills Development

Regardless of your age, whether you are at school, college or unemployed you can learn the skills that will help you to find employment in the future. Once you have an idea of how your pathway into employment may look, you can start to assess what skills you need to learn, practice and enhance. There are a variety of ways you can learn and practice the skills that you will need.

There are some specific skills that you may need to practice to help you get a job:

- Control of anxiety
- Personal presentation skills, for example wearing appropriate clothing for an interview
- Writing a CV and covering letter
- Applying for a job
- Interview skills
- Communication skills and presenting what you want to say logically

You can learn these skills through a variety of education and training programmes from a range of providers in the private, voluntary and public sector.

If you are under 25 years old

You can access careers advice from your school or college Careers Advisor. They will be able to signpost you to job clubs and skills workshops and assess your needs to help you plan the services you need.

If you are over 18

If you are over 18 and not in any type of education or employment, there are a range of services that you can access in South Gloucestershire to improve your skills for employment:

- Job Centre
 - Can help you gain new skills speak to the Work Coach at your local centre.
- South Gloucestershire Council's [Community Learning Team](#)
 - The team provide a [range](#) of free courses for adults to improve their skills and qualifications.
 - There is additional support available to access this service for people with disabilities.
- Job Clubs
 - There are a range of job clubs in the area. There are also many community clubs and groups which can offer you support to find, apply and start a new job.
 - WECIL accessible job clubs

- Private and voluntary sector providers who offer training and qualifications
 - WECIL courses
 - Southern Brooks
- Voluntary work – with accreditation
 - English, maths, work experience, references

Vocational employment training can also be a useful way to gain skills.

For further details of employment and training services available in the region please search our local community information directories [Well Aware](#) and [1 Big Database](#)

Experience

First-hand experience is arguably the best way to gain a better understanding of a job role and its function. However, there are more options than just work experience in its purest form. You may wish to take part in a traineeship, internship or apprenticeship programme.

There are many terms that are used to describe a form of work experience, some of the commonly used terms are laid out below.

Work Experience

Typically, a time limited work based placement (one to two weeks) within an organisation.

The experience may include work shadowing staff to observe what they do, or getting involved in a relatively low level task.

The placement may or may not be paid depending on the organisation.

Your Social Worker, Transitions Facilitator (Transition Team), the Job Centre or Job Coach can help you find work experience.

Apprenticeships and Inclusive Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships combine practical training in a job role, with study.

You will earn a wage, get holiday pay, and have time to study whilst gaining specific skills and work alongside experienced staff.

Who can apply? To start an apprenticeship you will need to be 16 years old or older, living in England and not in full-time education. Generally, you will need to undertake a skills test before being accepted onto an Apprenticeship, however you will earn at least a Level 2 qualification as well as practical experience and expertise.

The entry level criteria will be relaxed in some circumstances in line with changing policy around creating an inclusive apprenticeship offer³.

How to apply: there are three steps to applying for an apprenticeship.

- 1) Find an apprenticeship
- 2) Create an account on GOV.UK
- 3) Submit your application.

For the most up to date guidance and support, see GOV.UK's pages on [Apprenticeships, traineeships and internships](#).

Supported Internships

³ Creating an Inclusive Apprenticeship Offer - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-creating-an-inclusive-apprenticeship-offer>

Supported internships are a structured study programme based primarily at an employer. If you are aged between 16 - 24 and have an Education, Health and Care plan, they can help you to achieve sustainable paid employment by equipping you with the skills you need for work, through learning in the workplace.

Supported internships are unpaid, and last for a minimum of six months. Wherever possible, they support 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 maths.⁴

An organisation may have an established Internships scheme or they may not.

An Internship will enable you to experience what it is like working in a particular role and sector.

In South Gloucestershire we have the following Internship Programs you can access:

- SGS (South Gloucester and Stroud) College Supported Internship Program
- Project Search

Your school or Social Worker will be able to put you in touch with these initiatives.

Traineeships

A Traineeship is an education and training programme with work experience. It is designed to give young people the skills and experience that employers are looking for.

Designed to help young people aged 16 to 24 who don't yet have the appropriate skills or experience, traineeships provide the essential work preparation training, English, maths and work experience needed to secure an apprenticeship or employment.⁵

Traineeships are advertised regularly on the GOV.UK [website](#).

Employers

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Department for Education have produced [guidance](#) if you are an employer and interested in offering opportunities to young people and people with additional needs.

There is also [guidance](#) available for employers around employing disabled people and people with health conditions.

Locally, SGS College have developed a Supported Internship Employer Handbook for information on offering Internship opportunities. For further details please contact [South Gloucestershire and Stroud College](#)

⁴ Information adapted from <http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/what-we-do/supported-internships>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/traineeships-programme>

Vacancy information and opportunities

For the most up to date work experience, apprenticeships, traineeships and Supported Internships take a look at [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

Hiring and Retention

By this step you should have an idea of the type of work you would like to do. South Gloucestershire boasts a wide range of small and medium sized businesses in a range of sectors. From manufacturing to engineering to warehousing and distribution, through to the services industry such as hotels, restaurants and retail. Finding a job that suits you and remaining in that role rests on many factors:



You may find you are able to find employment through partaking in work experience, an internship or other training. However, there are a range of agencies who keep and update lists of employment opportunities. The Jobcentre Plus are a good place to start if you are unsure. If you want to contact your nearest office, you can find their details using the [local office search](#).

Further support and advice can be found in the Department for Work and Pensions guidance [document](#) on supporting young disabled people to find and stay in work.

Job Coaching in South Gloucestershire

One of the most effective ways of retaining an employment placement is through Employment Support services such as Job Coaches and financial support through the Department for Work and Pensions.

[Access to Work](#) can fund a job coach or if you are eligible through a [Care Act assessment or EHC Plan](#), through a Council Personal Budget.

There is a wealth of information to help support the recruitment and retention of disabled employees:

- www.skillsforcare.org.uk/recruitment
- <http://base-uk.org/employers>
- www.realising-potential.org
- www.hse.gov.uk/stress
- www.shift.org.uk
- www.time-to-change.org.uk
- www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Links (make sure these are on the Local Offer in their own right)

- Access to Social Care
- Employment related benefits
 - [Universal Credit](#)
 - [Job Seekers Allowance](#)
 - [Housing Benefit](#) or [Council Tax Reduction](#)
 - [Working Tax Credit](#)
 - [Income Support](#)
 - [Employment Support Allowance](#)
 - [Access to Work](#)
 - [Blind Person's Allowance](#)
 - [Disability Living Allowance](#) (adults)
 - [Disability Living Allowance](#) (Children)
 - [Disabled Students' Allowance](#)
 - [Independent Living Fund](#)
 - [Permitted Work](#) (if you have received, are receiving Permitted Work benefit and you have any questions you must contact the DWP using the helpline number on their website. If you require a Job Coach or professional to countersign the form please get in touch with your Social Worker initially).
 - [Personal Independence Payment](#)
 - [Specialist Employability Support](#)
 - [Work Choice](#)
 - [Work Programme](#) (Jobcentre Plus)

<http://www.nexus46.co.uk/>

<http://www.burleyinclusive.co.uk/>

<http://www.optionssupport.com/>

<http://www.t2apprenticeshipacademy.co.uk/traineeship.html>

<https://www.wheelsproject.org.uk/>

<https://didac.co.uk/>

<http://www.sandbaa.com/>

Appendix – 14-25 transition from school to employment flow chart

