

Into Employment Programme



Into Employment is a 12-month programme provided by the School of Rock and Media in partnership with Bradford Council.

The programme is for young adults aged between 16-25 with a disability. The programme provides training, skills, qualifications and work experience to lead to permanent paid employment.

“When we asked people who use our services what they wanted – they told us clearly they wanted to be able to work. We have found loyal employees for the companies who have engaged with us so far – and we want more people with disabilities to have a job and a career.”

Iain Macbeath, Strategic Director, Department of Health and Wellbeing, Bradford Council

Bradford has one of the youngest populations in the UK, and young adults, specifically those with disabilities, are massively underrepresented in the workforce.

The programme focuses on strengths and building the confidence of our students to enable them to do what they do best every day.

There is a culture we are trying to change being that adults with learning disabilities are often expected to be okay with volunteering in a role their able-bodied peers are paid to do.



“The percentage of adults with learning disabilities in paid employment was 3.8% in 2021/21, which is a tiny percent compared with the general population. Into Employment is a vital programme which aims to rebalance some of those inequalities and I am proud to be a part of it.”

Jock Skinner, Assistant Service Manager, Learning Disabilities Team, Bradford Council



Here’s what our students have said:

“No judging, no bullying. I feel happier. I can be me. I fit in.”

“Everyone is given a chance”

“I would be scared to apply for a job or go for an interview. This way I can show what I can do in a place I feel comfortable”

“I can be myself for the first time in my life”

“Just want to say a massive thank you for everything you have done for me. I am going to make you proud in the future. Thank you for helping me become more confident”

“I love seeing our students open up, develop and flourish after coming to our safe, accepting and supportive environment. We help people do what they do best every day and the impact on their wellbeing is massive. We listen to them, involve them and help them remove any barriers in their way - and their progress is amazing to see.”

Jo Binns, Into Employment Lead, School of Rock and Media



“When I started the Into Employment Programme I was nervous but as time came on I felt better. Now I am enjoying it, it’s such a relaxed and friendly place and I’m the boss of the group!”

Hafsa, Into Employment Programme student



“Into Employment Programme is a life changing programme and place to be. Whilst here I’ve overcome so many of my fears and doubts, and finally found somewhere I fit in. I’m 26 this year and this is the first year I’ve felt normal.”

Matty, Into Employment Programme student

Person centred and strengths based practice is at the heart of the Into Employment Programme.

We work with our students to focus on their strengths and aspirations and support them in finding a work placement that utilises their strengths.

We tailor support to our individual students and support transition into placements with accompanied visits, regular reviews and learning support in the workplace and in the classroom.

Our whole ethos is centred around our students – hearing their voice; and supporting them to achieve their hopes, dreams and aspirations.

“I saw that the people we support were not given the chance to work within the Local Authority and the numbers was zero. We know how important it is for the people we support to have their wants, dreams and aspirations heard, and a choice of paid employment. The first cohort had 6 young people – 3 are now employed by the Local Authority and the other 3 students have progressed to higher education. All students passed their qualifications which was great. I personally believe that the Into Employment Programme is the right person centred approach to support our students bright future”

Tony Saunders, Director, School of Rock and Media



Work placements



We work with teams across Bradford Council and local businesses across the District to provide work placement opportunities for our students. We encourage placements to support our students in feeling part of a team as they have told us they want to contribute and feel like they belong.

Our students are given choices based on their strengths and their interests – we want people to be able to do what they do best every day.

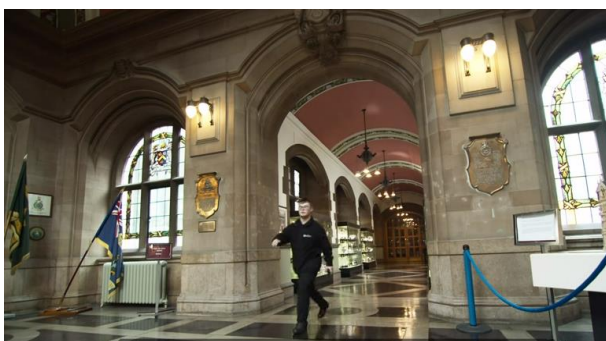
Flexibility is really important for our programme and we give students the flexibility to try a range of placements if they choose to do so.

We work closely with our students and placement staff, and hold regular placement reviews to ensure that our students are progressing towards becoming employment ready.

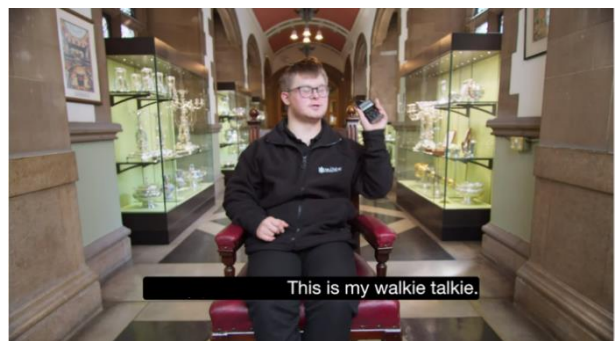


“Benjamin is a refreshing addition to the team. He brings his unique style and personality, and he is quite an engaging character. In terms of health and safety, Benjamin is very proactive. Things that we might miss out of being blasé, Benjamin picks up immediately. Be open, don’t be defensive. Don’t make decisions too hastily. I think that’s the same for everybody and not just unique to someone with a disability. See the individual themselves either surprise you or if they are struggling give them encouragement the same as you would to another person whose moving into a new role”

Len Palmer, Facilities Manager, Bradford Council



Job Carving

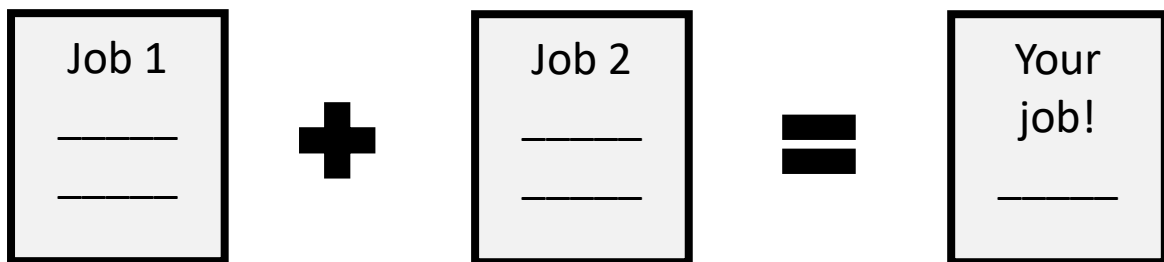


We encourage a job carving approach to employment.

Job carving is where you take elements from multiple job profiles and tailor them to create a job role focused on the skills and strengths of an individual to create a role for them.

The end goal of the work placement is for the intern to apply for a position within the team – so there is a long term commitment.

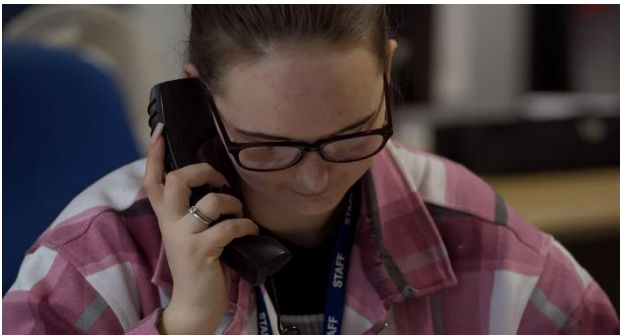
We aim to change the perception that adults with learning disabilities are often expected to be okay with volunteering in a role their able-bodied peers are paid to do.



“Jazzmin is great at supervising and helping customers which has been really great for us. She is brilliant. She is approachable and really friendly – these are the qualities you need in this line of work. Being so front of house and interacting with customers on a regular basis, having these qualities is really helpful. As long as you have the capabilities, it doesn’t matter if someone has a disability. Don’t see a disability as a barrier, just embrace it. Be open minded.”

Daniel McLellan, Operations Manager, Sports and Leisure, Bradford Council





“It’s really important that the work place represents the wider community. In Bradford we have a really young population. It’s nice to see different people from different backgrounds in a team. It’s also nice to see a person develop their skills in the workplace. Seeing where Caitlin was to where she is now and it’s only been a few months, her confidence has really improved – I think that’s one of the main reasons it’s nice to have a project like this”

Charlotte Goss, Team Manager, Preparation for Adulthood, Bradford Council

Bursary

Whilst on programme, our students receive a bursary every 4 weeks. Students have the choice to spend this how they decide and are supported on the programme to learn about budgeting, saving and building independence. As it is a bursary and not a wage, our students EHCP and benefits are not impacted.

“The people who we support tell us that having a job and being economically independent is one of the most important things to them. Supporting people to train for and hold down meaningful occupation with real wages enables people to experience more freedom and confidence to live fulfilling lives and helps people to better ensure that their rights are upheld and their voices are heard.

Into Employment is a wonderful programme that offers young people aged up to 25 an opportunity to experience work, gain skills, learn on the job and showcase their amazing talents to potential employers. The service goes from strength to strength because it is built on the unique contribution that every intern brings with them and because of the value base and dedication of all those involved.”

Rob Mitchell, Principal Social Worker, Bradford Council

For more information: <https://sormlearninghub.com/into-employment/>

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Twitter: [@IntoEmpBradford](https://twitter.com/IntoEmpBradford)

