

A photograph of a small green seedling with three leaves growing out of a crack in dry, brown soil. The background is a blurred field of similar soil and vegetation.

Supporting the economic recovery with work and skills initiatives – A Guide For Managers

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Foreword

During the pandemic, some people have been affected more than others.

It's affected not only the way we live but also livelihoods and our young people's education.

We can play our part to support the recovery.

More than that it's actually a great opportunity for us to attract the talented and diverse workforce that we need to deliver our services.

So I am delighted to say we have a range of work and skills initiatives to allow services to be involved. These initiatives have been carefully developed to ensure you have the support you need as well as the individuals.

In this brochure we are presenting all the information in one place to help you as a manager to consider your options.

I would encourage you to consider being involved in as many initiatives as you can.

Thank you for your anticipated support with this, together we can make a real difference!

Deborah Lucas
Head of People Services

Employment and Skills Strategy overview

We want to ensure Kirklees is a great place to live, learn and work.

We have high performing colleges, a world-class university and renowned innovation and training assets. Our diverse business base includes world-renowned textiles manufacturers, precision engineering firms and a fast-growing creative sector.

Our Employment and Skills Plan for Kirklees explains how the council, working closely with partners across the borough, will support and invest in the local employment and skills system over the next three years. The plan draws on feedback from over 250 local businesses and education providers.

It celebrates our past, acknowledges the unusual and challenging nature of the present but, most importantly, looks boldly ahead to a bright future.

We have a number of important learning, skills and employment challenges that require a concerted, partnership-based effort if they are to be addressed. This includes achieving inclusive growth by addressing inequalities.

The council as one of the larger employers in Kirklees can play its part.



Kickstart

Kickstart is a government-led scheme to create new roles for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit who are at risk of long term unemployment.

Employers receive funding to offer 25 hours a week paid work for 6 months (at national minimum wage).

Additional funding is available to cover any specific costs, such as equipment and training.

A Kickstart vacancy must be a new role and should help a young person to gain experience through hands-on work and being part of a team.

To help our Kickstarters to get the best outcome we have put in place wrap-around support with Career Boost delivered by C&K Careers and a chance to complete a Duke of Edinburgh award.

For more details, please contact
youth.employment@kirklees.gov.uk



Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a way for individuals to earn while they learn gaining valuable skills and knowledge in a specific job role. The apprentice gains this through a wide mix of learning in the workplace, formal off-the-job training and the opportunity to practise new skills in a real work environment.

Hiring an apprentice is a productive and effective way to grow diverse talent and develop a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce.

Employers who have an established apprenticeship programme say that productivity in their workplace had improved by 76 percent, whilst 75 percent reported that apprenticeships improved the quality of their product or service. Other benefits that apprenticeships contribute towards include: increasing employee satisfaction, reducing staff turnover and reducing recruitment costs.

In the council we have a great track record for our apprenticeship programme with lots of services already involved.

For more details, please contact
Council.Apprenticeships@kirklees.gov.uk



Project Search

Currently adults with learning disabilities make up just six percent of the workforce in the UK. In Kirklees we have nine percent of the workforce who identify themselves as having a learning disability. We have a lot of work to do to bridge the gap of inequalities and disadvantage and this is why we have chosen to work with Project Search.

Project Search is a tried and tested programme that started in the US in 1996, which has since gone from strength to strength. It's a twelve month internship programme for adults aged 18 to 25 who have learning difficulties and/or Autism. The aim is to provide the interns both theory and practical experiences to get them 'work ready' at the end of the programme. Throughout the programme the interns will have the opportunity to rotate into three different job roles that support their interests, skills and strengths.

The council will be running the programme at the end of 2021. Services can get involved by providing internships and these come with full support.

For more details, please contact
KirkleesCouncilProjectSearch@kirklees.gov.uk



Job Design

Job Design is focused on providing paid employment opportunities for adults (18+) with a learning disability, lasting for a maximum period of nine months.

Job Design involves identification of a work opportunity and then looking at what an individual can do (their strengths, interests, skills, experience).

A Job Design opportunity offered by a service does not displace existing roles. They are additional opportunities for which a service must have available budget to support it.

This scheme is supported by REAL Employment which is an internal council service focused on identifying and supporting Realistic Employment for Adults with Learning Disabilities into volunteering, training and paid employment.

Job Design is for customers of REAL only. REAL advisors use a 'Vocational Profile' tool which considers what is involved in a Job Design Opportunity against information held about individuals.

Over the course of the nine months 'in work', support will be provided by REAL to ensure the Job Design opportunity is going well, and the individual is being supported with their next steps.

Job Design is a great opportunity for adults (18+) to gain valuable work experience and hopefully progression into other opportunities such as an apprenticeship, Job Carve, job within the Council or the Job Design opportunity could become permanent.

For more details contact **01484 221581** or email **RealEmployment@kirklees.gov.uk**



Virtual Work Experience

The pandemic has affected school pupils in Kirklees as it has all over the world. The impact is not just on classroom based activities, but also wider ones including work experience opportunities to support future work aspirations.

Recognising this gap we have developed a virtual way to provide opportunities for Year 10 students, initially as a pilot and here is what students had to say:

“The council has many opportunities in jobs and there is a very wide variety of jobs to choose from.”

“I would consider applying for a job in the council due to the amount of important work they do and the amount of experience they offer.”

“The sessions were informative, interactive and enjoyable.”

We had nearly 70 students for the second programme, as well as a specific programme for young people in care.

The response from our services has been very impressive with lots of innovative ideas to get their message across.

For more details, please contact
WorkPlacements@kirklees.gov.uk

CASE STUDY

“I’m a Principal Engineer for the council. I presented a virtual work experience workshop to year 10 students from Colne Valley High, Upper Batley High, Westborough High and Batley Girls High earlier in the year.

The day was a huge success. I talked about what Civil Engineering is, the different specialist teams we have within highways at Kirklees Council, what mine and my colleagues current roles entail and our paths into civil engineering. We also talked about ways into the industry such as the Institution of Civil Engineering (ICE) accredited apprentice program that we run at Kirklees Council. This was all finished off with a presentation about bridges.

The afternoon was where the fun began – making bridges out of spaghetti and marshmallows! There were some great creations from the students, some of whom had definitely put some prep work in to make sure they created a strong bridge.

Our final group activity was a group discussion which led to some great suggestions. The overall lesson learned was that sometimes it’s good to just ask someone who knows the answer, look up the answer or take inspiration and use elements from something that you’ve done before. Not all engineering is about building the biggest and the best, sometimes it’s just about getting the job done.

What started out as quite a daunting afternoon for me – we’re all used to virtual meetings now but virtual work experience was something else entirely – was really fun and massively rewarding when we saw the students creations, and the attempts to break the bridges by piling more and more objects onto them!

Hopefully we’ll have inspired at least one young person to think about pursuing a career in Engineering, but even if we’ve had the opposite effect and ruled it out for some, then in my mind it was still worthwhile as we’ve helped to concentrate minds on their future choices.”

Louise Hewlett

Principal Engineer