

Supplementary Data

Themes and subthemes from intern and job coach interviews, with illustrative quotes

Themes	Sub-themes	Intern Quotes	Job Coach Quotes
1. A Meaningful Experience	a) <i>Social factors, teamwork, and friendship</i>	‘Included in the team, in the training classroom, I enjoyed it. I’m part of that team, yes’. (I5)	‘They’ve grown a lot in the social sense ... .. they all used to come for lunch in the restaurant but now a lot of them are having lunch in their own departments’. (JC2)
	b) <i>Independence</i>	‘Yes and one time she let me do everything by myself’. (I4)  ‘I want to be independent. I’m working towards that’. (I5)	‘[To] see them emerge as kind of ultimately self-sufficient adults who are exercising their own choices and developing their own careers and subsequently their lives ... I think it is just remarkable’. (JC1)
	c) <i>Ambassadors (for public and others with disabilities)</i>		‘Someone with a disability seeing someone else being a water host on their ward could like, “Oh look, I could do that too”’. (JC2)  ‘It’s about expectations ... employers don’t get the opportunity to learn and work alongside people with learning disabilities and autism ... ’. (JC1)
	d) <i>The mutual value of work experience</i>		We have a wealth of history that shows people aren’t very successful in employment because they don’t get enough

			of it'. (JC1)  'One of my criticisms for the secondary education system is that because it is segregated, young people with learning disabilities or autism are not learning alongside people who may ultimately become their employer'. (JC1)
2. Self-Development	a) <i>Improved work and life skills</i>	'It serve me like life skills: how to manage your money, how to do work, how to behave in a work environment, and how to follow fire safety procedures'. (I4)	'... To see that change in 9 months, becoming very aspirational, beyond their wildest dreams, ... it's a privilege to be connected to that'. (JC1)
	b) <i>Communication</i>	'I improve myself, my communication skills ... Talking more people, it helps to improve my communication'. (I5)	'At the beginning I had to encourage them to speak louder, speak slower, but now they're very confident which is so, so good to see'. (JC2)
	c) <i>Confidence building</i>	'This is a good internship and it gains you confidence'. (I2)	'It's about that confidence, the belief in themselves, self-worth, that's the biggest transformation'. (JC1)
3. A Strong Support Network	a) <i>At school</i>	'A teacher assistant of mine showed me how you can apply for it and it came straight from there'. (I4)	
	b) <i>From family</i>	Researcher: 'Who helps you at home?'  'My mum, my dad, my brother'. (I2)	'Every 6 weeks, there's an employment – planning meeting, which is where the parents come in'. (JC2)

	<i>c) From Project SEARCH</i>	<p>‘Job coaches are always there to help you. If you have a problem, you go to them’. (I1)</p> <p>‘[If I found something difficult, I would ask] my teacher or my job coach’. (I7)</p>	<p>‘[the most important thing about your role is] just supporting the young people, Without this, most of them wouldn’t even think about working or getting a job ... So I think it’s just about keeping them motivated and keeping them on track, and helping them through the difficult stages of working, making sure they’re not put off by what goes wrong ... Like anything can be overcome so just being their support system is really, really important’. (JC2)</p>
4. Ambitions for the Future	<i>a) Keen for subsequent employment</i>	<p>‘My goal is to get a job, get a paid job’. (I1)</p> <p>‘My goal is to get a job’. (I3)</p>	<p>‘I feel there is an end goal and we’re so motivated to get them to the end goal and get a job, so this is really good for me to have a goal and do anything I can to help them’. (JC2)</p>
	<i>b) Higher expectations</i>		<p>‘These young people probably until that point of joining a PS programme probably have very low expectations of themselves, as do generally their families and those around them’. (JC1)</p>
	<i>c) Barriers to competitive employment</i>		<p>The hardest thing, to be honest, is employer-engagement. I think that part of the role is really difficult because there is a lot of rejection ...</p>

			<p>we are always trying to break that barrier and to be honest I think that's the hardest thing about it and it's the constant rejection'. (JC3)</p> <p>'I find it quite unfair, because we know how they work, but an interview won't show them that, as they're so nervous'. (JC2)</p>
	<i>d) A journey beyond employment</i>		<p>'It seems to be that securing the job for many people, particularly families, is the end result. That's it, we've done it. But we have to say, no, no, no it's going to open up a whole can of worms ... Getting a job is merely the start, not the end of the process'. (JC1)</p>
5. Challenges Along the Way	<i>a) Social interaction</i>	'They [customers] can be rude. They are shouting, they put pressure on me'. (I5)	
	<i>b) Communication</i>	'You can't understand what they want, no they say they want this no they want this, no they want that, so it's kind of hard to understand them'. (I1)	<p>'Maybe some of them, their communication isn't great ... The biggest [barrier] I think of all of it is about communication, really ... the thing that would probably make our job a lot, lot easier if the interns were able to say what they needed help with ... it's about not being able to say if and when they need help'. (JC3)</p>

	<i>c) lack of manager support</i>	‘[I would like] More help ... To get more into the job and to know the rules, what they do in a job’. (I2)	‘Possibly they don’t have quite enough time to provide the support they want’. (JC1)
	<i>d) Underestimation of intern abilities</i>		‘In the café I showed a video of him like frying chips so then they were like “oh, he can actually do more”, so now he’s prepping salads’. (JC2)  ‘If you treat them like kids they won’t respond to you well so just be patient and be like an adult, and realise they do understand if I’m patient with them’. (JC2)
	<i>e) The need for an individual approach</i>		‘[Challenge is] how different all the interns are. If they all have the same problem, you can’t deal with them all in the same way. It’s very individualised, which can be a challenge’.  ‘ ... This is very, very individualised’. (JC2)