

## Maisy's SEND Employment Forum Newsletter – January 2026

The [Oxfordshire Supported Internship](#) is a partnership between:

- [Activate Learning](#)
- [Abingdon and Witney College](#)
- [Oxfordshire Employment](#)

**Who Can Participate?** Young people aged 16-25 with an [Education, Health and Care \(EHC\) Plan](#). Supported internships offer real work experience and skill-building, usually lasting 6-12 months, with most time spent in the workplace.

### What Will You Learn?

Participants will learn job-specific skills in the workplace and demonstrate their value to employers. Traditional learning, such as English and Maths, may be included where appropriate. Check out our [Supported Internship \(SI\) info pages](#)

### Pay and Qualifications:

You may be offered pay or achieve a work qualification. Every internship is personalised, and not all offer paid opportunities.

## Employee Spotlight Niall Kingsnorth, IT Apprentice, OCC

“Since I began my apprenticeship and role in Oxfordshire County Council in February 2024, my confidence has improved so much. My usual day consists of dealing with outstanding tickets and general IT Support. The team has a daily huddle and every other day we have a meeting to make sure we're on top of everything IT related and raise any issues we have experienced.

- I found the prospect of talking to high-ranked members within the organisation daunting. It took a while and wasn't easy but eventually I became more used to these
- My reasonable adjustments, for example, my height adjustable desk means working day-to-day is far easier and less frustrating when working independently.
- Alongside this, My Fire Evacuation process is assessed monthly, and multiple people are trained and tested to ensure my safe evacuation during a fire or emergency.

“If I had 3 words to describe my job and apprenticeship overall, they would be: hectic, fun and unpredictable”!

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On the 11<sup>th</sup> of November, I had the privilege of meeting the current students on the Supported Internship (SI) course at City of Oxford College. I went to the campus and conducted individual interviews with four SEND students. My eight questions were based on their own, personal experiences of the Supported Internship. My hope is to engage more employers to engage by showcasing varied experiences and give readers a true scope of just how personal, rewarding and scary this process can be.

### Here's what they had to say:

Q1: How many days do you spend at college each week?

**Everyone attends college one day a week.**

Q2: How do you feel about spending time with other students at college? Is there anything you enjoy doing together, like talking, playing games, or working on projects?

**Henry: I like being with friends, especially at the break and lunchtime. In class, we get into groups and talk as well.**

Q3: Is there a task at work or college that you really enjoy? Have you ever helped someone with a task?

**Eunice: Helping people is something I enjoy. At lunchtimes, I have helped to organise a group called Christian Union. We meet to talk about Christianity and the Bible.**

Q4: Can you tell me about something you're proud of that you've done at college or work?

**Henry: Since I started my Supported Internship here, I have matured and grown a lot and feel it's made a difference.**

Q5: Can you tell me about a time when you needed help at college or work? Who did you ask, and how did they help you?

**Eunice: I would talk to my teacher Ali or, if it was a safeguarding issue, I'd reach out to Student Support.**

Q6: What is one new skill you've learned at college, and is there something else you'd like to learn in the future?

**Leonard: Work has improved my transport skills. After getting used to the route, I now travel independently to my job at Grundon!**

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Q7: What is something you would like to do or achieve in the future, either at college, at work, or in your life?

**Owen:** I want to be more proud of myself and grow my confidence.

Q8: Have you ever met a customer who was difficult or upset? What did you do, and did anyone help you? If you haven't, what would you do?

**Leonard:** I would try to sort it out myself and talk with the customer. if that didn't work, I'd find my manager.

### Maisy's Reflection and Next Steps

This edition is a testament to just how crucial it is for people in charge to hear directly from SEND Young People. The Supported Internship course only succeeds when people are willing to give their raw & honest feedback and for employers to engage. In terms of what's next, I'm already working towards a second visit to City of Oxford for a student interview and reaching out to some organisations to include an employer's perspective within the next SEND Employment Forum Newsletter. **Watch this space!**



For more information: [please contact the Oxfordshire Employment Team.](#)  
Check out the [Supported Internship Notice Board](#) for more information

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