

**KICKSTART**  
**SCHEME**

**spark!**  
KICK  
STARTING  
CAREERS

EMPLOYABILITY AND  
WRAPAROUND  
SUPPORT PACKAGE

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# About Spark!



Formerly the Education Business Partnership in Hounslow, Spark! is now a charity working across London and beyond, with 40 years experience of partnership with schools, communities and alongside a large and diverse range of local and national employers.

We enhance young people's employability skills, knowledge, and experience, so that they are better prepared for and able to effectively transition into the workplace, finding and keeping a job.

We provide:

- a range of employability skills development opportunities
- high quality work experience placements and internships
- inspiring careers mentoring relationships
- an online careers platform

We believe it's possible for every young person to be ready and equipped to enter the world of work, and with youth unemployment rapidly rising, there's never been a more important time for our services.



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# How Kickstart support will work



- A significant and important element of the Kickstart initiative is for all young people on placement to be provided with 'employability support'.
- This support encompasses:
  - the development of the young person's employability skills
  - the provision of careers guidance
  - meeting pastoral support needs
  - help in transitioning into permanent employment
- For each placement that the employer hosts, they will be provided with £1500 on top of salary costs. This is allocated to cover costs related to the employability support, as well as any onboarding and practical costs associated with the employment.
- Each employer will naturally have different levels of resource, time and expertise to effectively support their Kickstart employee/s to excel in their role and beyond. Spark! is therefore working with West London Business to provide flexible and consistent support and guidance, to both employees and employers.
- The following pages explain the support package and each of the different elements that Spark! will provide.

# Objectives



- 1.** Employers understand their role and responsibility for their Kickstart employee, and create best practice in supporting young people to excel in their job.
- 2.** Kickstart employees are well prepared for their role, and understand the expectations and requirements needed for them to succeed. Including planning transport to and from work, ensuring reliable attendance, and good timekeeping.
- 3.** Kickstart employees embrace their role, responding appropriately to new responsibilities and challenges, adopting positive employment and workplace conduct.
- 4.** Kickstart employees display a willingness and enthusiasm to learn and develop their employability and work readiness skills.
- 5.** Kickstart employees develop the skills and knowledge required to succeed on their placement, and to transition effectively into permanent employment, including effective communication and teamwork. (Mapping work readiness skills against the [SkillsBuilder framework](#)).
- 6.** Kickstart employees plan for work after their Kickstart placement, exploring career options, setting goals, taking part in additional training, developing a well presented CV and interview skills, with the aim of securing permanent employment.

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# Employability support package summary



The 6 month work placements will be supported through a holistic provision from Spark!, encompassing employability skills development, pastoral support and guidance, work readiness, and transition support. The support package is divided into workshops, remote guidance and learning, and progression support, spread throughout the length of the placement term.

<b>Employer workshop &amp; network</b> A chance for employers to come together at the beginning of the Kickstart placement process Peer support and best practice sharing Exploring what to expect, and how to effectively support young people while on placement Planning a schedule of activities and interactions <b>Page 12</b>	<b>Employee workshops &amp; peer group</b> Start of placement employability skills workshop, inc. skills analysis and goals Mid-placement workshop, including reflections and further employability skills development CV development, online profile and networking workshop End of placement workshop, inc. interview skills and finding a job <b>Pages 13 - 16</b>	<b>Additional support &amp; learning</b> A named Spark! Champion who will meet the employees a minimum of 3 times, to check progress, and provide 1-to-1 guidance and support Access to online employability, career and job searching tools and resources, and CV building tools. Spark Champions available for ad-hoc pastoral support and guidance as required, for employees and employer <b>Page 17 - 20</b>	<b>Progression &amp; training support</b> Guidance and support in identifying and applying for further training and qualifications Signposting to Apprenticeship and other employment opportunities Support with job applications and preparation for interviews <b>Pages 21</b>
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The employer will need to commit to doing all they can to support their employees' development and transition into permanent employment. As the employer you are expected to provide:

- Technical on the job training and supervision.
- Support for line managers to effectively supervise Kickstart employees to excel in their placement and beyond.
- Provide the space and time for Kickstart employees to engage in their development and learning, including participating in all Spark! led activities.



## EMPLOYER WORKSHOP

Employers' kick-off workshop, inc. what to expect and how to effectively support their young employee/s, sharing good practice and peer support.

BASIC

ENHANCED



## KICKSTART EMPLOYEE WORKSHOPS

Start of placement employability skills workshop, inc. skills analysis and goal setting, and formation of peer support network.



Mid-placement workshop, including reflections and further employability skills development.



CV development, online profile, job applications, and effective networking workshop.



End of placement work readiness workshop, inc. interview skills, finding and keeping a job.



## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND LEARNING

Access to online employability, career and job searching resources. Designed to support individuals in effectively transitioning their career, covering all aspects of job search and career paths.



Scheduled contact between employee and their named 'Champion', to check progress, offer 1-to-1 guidance and support.



Spark 'Champions' available for additional ad-hoc and as required pastoral support and guidance for the Kickstart employee.



Spark staff available for ad-hoc and as required support and guidance for the employer.



## PROGRESSION SUPPORT AND FURTHER TRAINING

One to one guidance and support in identifying and applying for further training and qualifications, signposting to employment opportunities and support with applications. (Cost of further training and qualifications not incorporated)



£550

£750

# Which package is right for which employer?



Which of Spark!'s Employability Support packages an employer chooses will largely depend on how much time, resource and expertise they already have in place to effectively support their Kickstart employee/s.

- The **basic package** will provide a rounded programme of support for each young person, and is ideal for employers with the capacity, and expertise to support their young employees' pastoral needs and career progression. Additionally, the employer will not require support themselves in order to effectively structure their employees' experience and to manage the Kickstart placement/s.

## **Employer commitment:**

- Technical on the job training and supervision.
  - Provide as required pastoral support and advice for the employee/s.
  - Support the employee/s to access and apply for further training and qualifications
  - Ensure employee/s are supported to apply for further employment
  - Support line managers to effectively supervise Kickstart employees to excel in their placement and beyond.
- The **enhanced package** is for employers with little time, resource or knowledge to support their employees' pastoral needs and career progression. and who would also benefit from further support for themselves and staff, in appropriately working with and managing their Kickstart placement/s.

## **Employer commitment:**

- Technical on the job training and supervision.

**For both packages, Spark! will provide additional guidance for the employer on their responsibilities and commitments.**



# Employer engagement workshop<sup>\*</sup>



This 2 hour face-to-face or online employer engagement workshop will be a chance for schools and colleges to come together at the beginning of the Kickstart placement process.

It will include:

- An introduction to the Good Youth Employer Charter
- Expected challenges and how to respond
- Processes and systems which will support their Kickstart employee to excel
- Planning a schedule of activities and interactions
- Peer support and sharing of best practice

<sup>\*</sup> Enhanced package only

# Start of placement workshop



Kickstart employees will be divided into cohorts of between 10 to 20 for their workshops.

This group will form their peer support network, in which they can share their experiences, inform each others learning, and support reflective practice, as they develop and enhance their employability skills.

3 hours of face-to-face or online facilitated learning, including:

- Establishing expectations and responsibilities on placement
- Employability skills analysis
- Goal setting
- Team employability tasks followed by reflective practice
- Introduction to Spark! online career tools

# Mid-placement workshop



A 3 hour online or face-to-face workshop, approximately at the 3 month mark, including

- An opportunity for each peer group to come together in a supportive and reflective space
- Progress to date and reflection on challenges
- Confidence building exercises
- Team building exercises
- Inspiring guest speaker/s
- Business challenges
- Building employability skills and work readiness

# CV and online profile workshop

In order for the young people on Kickstart placements to successfully transition into permanent and full-time employment, their CV, public profile and networking skills will be essential tools.

This 2 hour workshop will include:



Developing the content and layout of CVs

Understanding a job person specification

How to structure an application cover letter



Building a LinkedIn profile

How to effectively use LinkedIn to network and find a job

Developing and making the most out of social capital

# End of placement workshop



Within the final month of their placement, employees will attend this workshop.

A 3 hour online or face-to-face workshop, including

- How to search for and apply for relevant work in the current job market
- Exploring the current London Labour Market
- Team employability tasks followed by reflective practice
- Competency based interview practice
- Building aspirations and confidence
- Setting goals and establishing pathways into permanent employment



# Spark! Champion / 1-to-1 guidance



The Spark! team will connect each Kickstart employee with a named 'Champion', who will have a minimum of 3 scheduled one-to-one contacts during the 6 month placement, offering bespoke support responding to the challenges and experiences of each young person.

These phone calls will last between 30 - 45 minutes, and take a coaching approach, offering careers education information, advice and guidance.



# Online career resources and tools



Our platform is a powerful, interactive and intuitive career tool. It is designed to support individuals in effectively transitioning their career, covering all aspects of job search and other career paths, such as self-employment and contracting, as well as personal branding.

Covering a multitude of areas, including helping individuals build their career and supporting them to better understand their strengths, development areas and career preferences, as well as boosting confidence, knowledge and skills, and enabling individuals to make the right decisions about their careers and next move.

## Key features



24/7 access



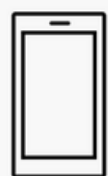
Wide range of media, inc. videos, podcasts and text based modules, inc. CV building tools & interview practice



Over 500 e-learning courses and webinars



Job market information and access



Mobile application



Large database to support job search and interview preparation

# Online career resources and tools

The screenshot shows the Spark! homepage dashboard for a user named Matt. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: My Dashboard, My Pulse, My Tools, My Career, My Learning, and My Jobs. A prominent blue banner features the article "11 INTERVIEW TYPES YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT" with a "LAUNCH" button. Below this, a "Welcome Matt" section includes "LATEST NEWS", "YOUR COACH" (with contact info), and "YOUR PROGRESS" (showing activity for Learning Modules, Career Tools, Job Searches, and Jobs Viewed). A grid of eight tiles represents different career resources: KEY ACTIONS, CV & JOB APPLICATIONS, INTERVIEWING, JOB HUNTING, CAREER ASSESSMENTS, CAREER MANAGEMENT, SELF-DEVELOPMENT, and BUSINESS SKILLS. Social media icons for LinkedIn, Twitter, and Google+ are at the bottom left.

This screenshot displays the "CAREER ASSESSMENTS" section. The header reads "UNDERSTAND YOUR MOTIVATIONS, PREFERENCES & VALUES". Below the header is a progress bar showing "Your Progress" at 0%. A text block explains that the assessments take 10-15 minutes each and provide tailored recommendations. There are two visual icons: one with lightbulbs and another with a tree growing inside a head profile.

The screenshot shows the "Job Search" interface. It includes a search bar with "retail" in the keywords field and "hounslow" in the city field. A "SEARCH JOBS" button is visible, along with a "Save this search" option. Below the search bar, a blue banner indicates "2756 found" for "retail jobs in hounslow". A specific job listing for "Store Assistant (Fixed Term)" is partially visible.

This screenshot shows the "CV Builder" tool interface. It has a navigation bar with tabs: Welcome, Details, Profile, Education, Work, Skills, Interests, References, and Other. A "Download" button is present. The main content area includes a "Welcome" message and instructions: "Create a professional, ATS-friendly CV to suit your skills and experience. Getting started: 1. Watch the video for a useful overview of how to create a CV, 2. Work through the sections, following the advice provided, 3. Pick your template, download your CV & tailor it for each role." A "Start" button is at the bottom left. On the right, there's a video thumbnail titled "Creating your CV EXPLAINED".

# Ongoing ad-hoc support<sup>\*</sup>



## **For young people**

Each young person on a Kickstart placement will have a named Spark! 'Champion', who they can connect with as and when they require.

This responsive approach will be essential for those young people on placement with minimal work experience, and will be an opportunity for young people to tap into support and guidance as and when they find certain elements of their work challenging.

This will also prove vital for employers who don't have the time, resource or expertise to provide their Kickstart employees with the ongoing pastoral support they will need to succeed.

## **For employers**

Things won't always go to plan during the Kickstart placement.

If employers have any concerns or are experiencing challenges with their employee, Spark! will be on hand to talk through the issues, offer guidance, and if necessary, address concerns directly with the young person on behalf of the employer.

<sup>\*</sup>Enhanced package only

# Progression and training support\*



During their placements, Kickstart employees will be encouraged, signposted towards, and supported to apply for additional vocational training and qualifications.

These may include, but are not limited to, accredited courses for:

- Cyber and digital skills (e.g. cyber security, network engineering, GDPR)
- Web development
- Business and administration
- Sports and recreation
- First Aid at Work
- Teaching English as a Foreign Language
- Health and Safety
- Outdoor Education

Towards the end of their placement Kickstart employees will be supported with their job hunting and be signposted towards Apprenticeships and other employment opportunities. Their Spark! Champion will also support them with job applications and interview preparations.

\*Enhanced package only



# What next?



1. Inform West London Business of your intention to work with Spark!
2. Spark! will be in touch shortly afterwards to confirm your details.
3. Once the placements are confirmed with a start date, we will share with you the schedule of support, and also liaise directly with your Kickstart employee.
4. Unspent funds from your £1500 per placement allocation can be transferred to you to cover any onboarding and other practical costs associated with the employment.
5. Before the placements begin Spark will schedule set-up phone calls with both the Kickstart employees and each employer, in order to outline the support in place, and to discuss challenges and bespoke needs.

**You might also want to read Spark!'s [guide on what makes a good Kickstart placement](#) for young people and their employers.**





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