



**CHOICES COLLEGE**  
STEPS TO SUCCESS

# Learn with Choices College



## Information for Learners, Parents and Family Carers

*Looking for support to get into paid employment?*

*Looking for real hands-on work experience and more career opportunities?*

*Motivated to get work experience to find a paid job?*

*Choices College can help!*



## What is Choices College?

NHS England Choices College is a national specialist **college** providing tailored **educational support**, **work experience** and **supported internships** for young adults aged 16-24 with learning disabilities/difficulties and/or Autism.

We partner with NHS, local organisations, and private businesses to create supported and meaningful work placements for our learners.

Our person-centred approach ensures support is tailored to meet each learner's needs, with placements sourced based on individual's skills and interests.

During the internship learners spend 1 academic year attending up to three, 12-week placements to increase their vocational knowledge, skills and experience. This is supported by bespoke classroom sessions where Maths, English and Employability Skills are embedded.

The College is hosted by the NHS England as part of the ongoing commitment to improving employment outcomes for vulnerable groups.

## Our Approach

Choices College has been supporting Interns for over 15 years. These are our values:

**Person-centred** - consider the individual needs of all Choices College stakeholders to enable our interns get the best start to their working careers.

**Outcome Focused** - create positive outcomes for the interns and business partners.

**Quality driven** - ensure that we maintain a high standard of support and education.

**Excellence** - be the best in our field and transforming societal expectations of people with additional needs.

# The Choices College Impact

Choices College interns use the course as a pre-entry level qualification to move into apprenticeships, work or further education.

In 2021 – 2022 academic year, of the Choices College interns that completed the course.....

59%

entered **paid employment, apprenticeships, or volunteering** roles.

20%

went on to complete **further higher education**



## Our College

Choices College is a registered specialist college and provides Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) educational support nationally.

All our education provision is subject to OFSTED inspection and Department for Education (DFE) regulations.

We teach an Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) approved curriculum and National Council for Further Education (NCFE) accredited provision.

Our curriculum includes:

- Employability Skills
- Functional Maths and English
- Preparation for Adulthood
- CV, interview, and job search preparation

# Our Support

We support young people to gain work skills through a phased stage of development to access employment.



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## PFA

- Preparing for adulthood sessions delivered in classroom from Y10
- Virtual work experience platform - [Springpod](#)

## Work Experience

- One ½ day per week for 6 weeks on a practical work experience placement
- Suitable for anyone aged 16 and above
- This is coordinated with the learner's school/college

## Supported Internship

- Full time college course
- 1 day classroom delivery functional skills maths and English, and employability skills
- Up to 4 days per week on a practical work experience
- 3 rotations of placement, each 12 weeks in length

## Transition

- Paid employment
- Further Education
- Apprenticeship
- Supported Apprenticeship
- Meaningful
- Volunteering



*“This high-quality Supported Internship programme creates an ambitious challenge for a successful future for the interns.”*

**- OFSTED Report (Jan 2020)**

## Work Experience Support

- For learners aged 16-24 still in school or college
- Classroom PFA sessions lead by our team according to the individual school/college need.
- One half day placement per week for 6 weeks.
- Support is organised through the school/education provider.
- Choices College Work Experience Leads will meet with the learner to talk about what kind of work experience they want to do. They arrange different placements dependent on learner interest and suitable environment.

## Supported Internship Support

- Choices College runs 5 days a week, Monday to Friday over an academic year, September to July.
- Each week, interns attend up to 1 full day of education (maths, English and employability lessons) and up to 4 days of professional placements.
- We provide full transition support and can tailor education and placements to suit the interns needs.
- Placements with Choices College business partners are tailored to each interns skills and interests.
- Interns are given a 2-week full-time induction prior to starting any placements with educational learning including confidentiality, inclusion and diversity and professional expectations.
- Interns attend all additional training as required by their placement partner.
- Local Coordinators complete weekly/fortnightly reviews and work with partners to develop and maintain the intern placements.

## Transition & Employment

- Support with job applications and interview practice
- Support with formal discussions with the employer around reasonable adjustments in the recruitment process
- Pastoral Support
- HR Issues (reorganisation, conduct, performance etc.)
- Any ad hoc issues that may arise throughout the 5-year period after leaving Choices College

# Eligibility & How to Apply

To join, Choices College interns must meet each of the following eligibility criteria.

- Live within one of our current Local Authority partnership areas (see our locations)
- Be aged 16 – 24 years.
- Have an approved and active Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

To apply, go to our website and complete the online form or download and send us a hardcopy application form.

See the website for application details.

## Our Locations



We are growing every year. Contact us to find out more how to start a Choices College group in your area.

## Megan's Story

Megan has special education needs and disabilities including a genetic disorder called 22Q11 Deletion Syndrome (or Di George Syndrome) and ADHD.

She commenced the Choices College Internship in September 2019, and completed two placements at the in her local NHS Hospital.



Megan overcame challenges relating to self-confidence and made excellent progress on the Internship, receiving positive feedback from both placements.

In February 2020, she secured a job as a domestic services assistant at ENGIE Soft Services, supporting the NHS during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Dom's Story

Dom has Asperger's Disorder and had turbulent time after mainstream education with low attendance.

Since graduating from Choices College in 2018, Dom has sustained full time employment in facilities with NTH Solutions, a subsidiary company of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust.

After working at the trust for four years he expressed an interest in becoming a mentor for the new students on the programme. He has taken them under his wing to introduce them to the workplace and be a central contact should they have any issues or concerns.



In June 2023, NTH Solutions celebrated Dom's achievements with an Outstanding Contribution Award and acknowledged that he has not only overcome his own challenges but is now using his experiences to help others to do so.



If you would like further information about Choices College please get in touch with our team at the address below:

## Contact Us

**Email:**

**Address:**

Choices College Supported Internship College  
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Scan QR code with  
your phone camera to  
link to website.

**Contact your local Choices College staff member:**

**Area Manager:**

**Email:**

**Phone:**