

Young person

For the young person



For the young person

This section is for autistic young people. We know that planning your next step can be scary, whether you're thinking about going on to college, university, a training course or employment.



We know that having time to plan your options is key to success. It's also important for you to have support from somebody who understands your needs.

Career planning

The first step when thinking about your future is often to talk to a professional, such as a post-16 professional (see [glossary of terms](#)). In the first part of this section, you will find two templates that you can fill in and bring to a pre-placement discussion to help you explain what you'd like to do and the support you need to do it.

Pre-placement discussion summary



Use this template to explain your skills and experience. It may be helpful to fill this out with someone who knows you well, for example, a parent, carer or support worker. Your post-16 professional should send you this template ahead of your pre-placement discussion with them. If for some reason they do not, it will still be helpful to fill this out and bring it along so that you can tell them about your career goals.



Employee profile



Once you have been matched with a work experience placement, use this template to tell the employer all about yourself. You can discuss this with your post-16 professional during your session and then it can be shared with the employer so that they understand you and can put in place any support you may need.



Preparing for a work experience placement

The second part of this section contains information and support for those taking part in work experience placements.

Interview preparation



This section contains advice and support on preparing for a job interview.



Communicating in the workplace



This section contains advice and support on explaining to your employers how you prefer to communicate at work.





Pre-placement discussion summary

Use this template to identify your skills and experience. You should read it ahead of your pre-placement discussion meeting and you may find it useful to prepare for the session by completing the form in advance, perhaps discussing the questions with someone who knows you well or getting help to complete it.



If you have a CV (curriculum vitae), you should bring it with you to the session to help complete the skills and qualification sections of your plan or use it to complete the form in advance.

1 **Name of young person:**

2 **Date:**

3 **Introductions**

Post-16 professional to explain their role (including data protection, safeguarding and confidentiality as appropriate).

4 **What is your current situation?**

(Include all that apply)

Studying ☐

Working ☐

Volunteering ☐

Unemployed ☐

5 **Education**

Which subjects have you studied and what grades did you achieve?





Pre-placement discussion summary (continued 2/7)



Which subjects did you enjoy the most?

What did you enjoy most about your studies?





Pre-placement discussion summary (continued 3/7)



6 Future employment

What kind of work would you like to do?

Do you want to achieve a qualification while at work?

Do you have preference for working hours and days?

7 Previous employment

Have you had any work experiences (including voluntary work)?

What was your role?

What responsibilities did you have?

What skills and knowledge do you have or did you learn?





Pre-placement discussion summary (continued 4/7)



8 Training

Have you undertaken any training for a job?

What did you do?

Did you enjoy it?

9 What are your interests?

Creative, technical, problem-solving

TV programmes, films or computer games

Researching a particular area or topic

Animals or nature

Other





Pre-placement discussion summary (continued 5/7)



10 Past experience

Have you looked for work before?

Where did you research jobs to apply for?

Did you face any barriers or challenges when applying for jobs and attending interviews?

Have you had feedback on unsuccessful applications?
If yes, what was the feedback?

What do you think you are good at?

What do other people say you are good at?

Have you experienced any barriers or challenges in the workplace?
If yes, how could they be avoided in a future workplace?





Pre-placement discussion summary (continued 6/7)



11 Future work placement

What kind of work placement are you interested in?

What would you like to learn from a work placement?

What would you like to happen once the placement is completed?

12 Any further questions?

How confident do you feel about a future work placement? (Please select one option)



not very
confident

0

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10



very
confident

Any concerns or worries?





Pre-placement discussion summary (continued 7/7)



13 Agree actions

By who and by when. Insert relevant weblinks for researching.
You may want to agree to discuss or explore what would make the young person feel more confident about a future work placement in your next meeting.



Discussions about your future are important. Watch this message from Sam:





Employee profile

Use this template to tell your future work placement manager or employer all about yourself. The information can be shared with the employer so that they understand you and can put in place any support you might need. You should read this ahead of your pre-placement discussion meeting, and you may find it useful to prepare for the session by completing the form in advance, perhaps discussing the questions with someone who knows you well, or getting help to complete it.



The employee profile is a confidential document and only the relevant people in the placement organisation, who you agree to in advance, will have access to it, for example, your line manager and HR. Other colleagues can be informed if you feel this is required, when appropriate.

Employee profile

My name is:



Section 1.1: About me



My skills

(Tick all that apply)

Attention to detail

(eg being thorough, accurate, detecting errors)

Artistic skills

(eg drawing, visual arts)

Music and sound skills

(eg ability to think and understand in patterns, creative thinking)

Listening skills

(eg ability to absorb and retain facts)

A strong sense of morality

(eg honesty, lack of judgmental attitude)

Maintain focus when engaged in repetitive work

(eg not getting distracted or bored)

Conscientious and diligent

(eg organised, punctual)

Mathematical abilities

(eg processing numbers, calculations)

Social skills

(eg face-to face interaction with others)

Online communication skills

(eg email and text interaction with others)

Creative talents

(eg identifying improvements)

Analysing information

(eg detecting patterns in data)

Technical abilities

(eg computer skills, engineering)

Trustworthiness

(eg doing what you say you will do)

Loyalty

(eg staying with a friend, or course or organisation)

Emotional intelligence

(eg self-awareness, empathy)

Kindness

(eg helping others)

Good memory

(eg recalling facts)





Employee profile (continued 2/8)



Anything else not covered above:



My strengths and other things I am good at

Use information gathered in the pre-placement discussion summary or any other additional information, such as the young person's EHC plan if you have access to this.





Employee profile (continued 3/8)



Section 1.2: How to prepare me in the best way for my work experience

(Tick all that apply)

I would benefit from receiving a plan, schedule of work or list of tasks I am expected to do each day or week.

☐

I would benefit from visiting my work experience placement before starting.

☐

I would benefit from meeting my manager before starting my placement.

☐

I would benefit from seeing where I am going to sit and where I can have my lunch.

☐

I would benefit from knowing the address of my work experience placement so that I can practise undertaking my journey.

☐

I would benefit from understanding the job role, the tasks I am expected to undertake and the hours I will be working, including breaks.

☐

I would benefit from discussing flexible work hours, so that I can avoid travelling during rush hour.

☐

I would benefit from knowing whether there is a dress code or what standard of dress is expected.

☐

Any other information:





Employee profile (continued 4/8)



Section 1.3: The best ways of communicating with me in the workplace the best way

(Tick all that apply)

I would prefer to be introduced to new people one at a time.

☐

I do not like making phone calls.

☐

I prefer to communicate verbally.

☐

I may have times when I am focusing and cannot be disturbed (and I will use the four-step traffic light system).

☐

I prefer to communicate via email and written communication.

☐

I appreciate frequent feedback.

☐

I enjoy talking with people.

☐

I like to ask lots of questions until I am familiar with a task.

☐

I prefer them to start the conversation.

☐

I benefit from regular scheduled meetings with my manager (eg weekly).

☐

I would prefer it if people didn't talk to me about non-work-related topics (eg at lunchtime).

☐

I would prefer not to attend face-to-face meetings.

☐

I prefer to avoid eye contact.

☐

I would prefer not to attend online meetings.

☐

I prefer to talk to only one person at a time.

☐

Add your own

Say my name to get my attention.

☐

Add your own

I do not like answering the phone.

☐

Any other information:





Employee profile (continued 5/8)



Section 1.4: The best ways to give me instructions and tasks

(Tick all that apply)

I need instructions backed up in writing.

☐

I need information or questions in advance before discussing them.

☐

I prefer visual information, for example, flow charts and diagrams.

☐

I prefer to concentrate on one task at a time.

☐

I need to record instructions, so that I have time to process the information and to support my memory.

☐

I am more comfortable completing the same task repeatedly.

☐

I need one question or instruction at a time.

☐

I prefer to have a bit of variety in the tasks I am undertaking.

☐

I need instructions given to me in prearranged meetings rather than when I am concentrating on something else.

☐

I need advance notice of changes and help to manage these changes (including time to get used to them).

☐

I need help to structure my daily tasks, including breaks.

☐

I need time to process what you have said.

☐

I may need some extra time to complete tasks or flexibility in relation to deadlines.

☐

I need to do something else while listening, for example, use a fidget toy.

☐

Add your own

Add your own

Any other information:





Employee profile (continued 6/8)



Section 1.5: What you might see me do and what this means

(Tick all that apply and provide some further information)



When I am happy, I:

- talk a lot ☐
- jump up and down ☐
- move about or dance ☐
- hum or sing. ☐
-
-



If I become overwhelmed, have a meltdown or shutdown, I need:

- to be left alone ☐
- to be allowed to leave ☐
- to be checked on by someone ☐
- to be allowed to sit somewhere quiet ☐
- my parents or carers to be contacted. ☐
-
-



When I am unsettled, I:

- start scratching or picking ☐
- stop talking ☐
- leave the room ☐
- look angry ☐
- become upset or sad. ☐
-
-

Any other information:





Employee profile (continued 7/8)



Section 1.6: My preferred environment

(Include all that apply and provide some further information)

I can be distracted by background conversation, office talk, the sound of air conditioning, fans etc.

☐

I benefit from taking frequent breaks.

☐

I can find office lighting too bright.

☐

I benefit from having access to a quiet space.

☐

I can find the temperature too warm.

☐

I use ear defenders, ear plugs or noise-cancelling headphones.

☐

I can find the temperature too cold.

☐

I wear tinted glasses or sunglasses in the office.

☐

I can be distracted by smells such as strong perfume or aftershave, cleaning products or office kitchens.

☐

I prefer to work remotely if possible.

☐

I can be distracted very easily, for example, by people walking past me or doors banging.

☐

Add your own

Add your own

Any other information:





Employee profile (continued 8/8)



Section 2: Agreed workplace adjustments

This section is for the employer to agree workplace adjustments.

It may be useful to follow STEPS in order to agree adjustments with the young person.

STEPS were based upon and adapted from the work of the [Centre for Applied Autism Research](#), and Natalie Jenkins and Sue Fletcher-Watson.

Agreed workplace adjustments:

(For example, flexible work hours to avoid commuting during rush hour, allocated desk (in an otherwise hot-desking environment), designated quiet space, noise-cancelling headphones)

Agreed by:

Employer:

Young person:

Date:

/ /

Date for review:

(review every two months)

/ /





Interview preparation

You may want to go through all this information in advance with someone who knows you well to help you prepare, ask questions or get support.



1 Before the interview

As soon as you have been invited to an interview, email the person who contacted you (this could be a member of the HR team) to find out more about what to expect. Ask only about any relevant information listed below which has not been clearly outlined in the invitation to interview document you should have received from the employer.

2 Ask about the format of the interview

Will there be a task ☐ or assessment ☐ as well as questions? ☐

If there is an English assessment, will it be verbal, written or both?

Yes ☐ Verbal ☐ Written ☐ Both ☐

If there is a maths assessment, what type of exercises will there be and how long will I have?

If there is a group assessment, how many people will be in the group and how long will I have?

How many people?

How long will I have?

3 Ask about the interview panel

How many people will interview me?

How long will the interview last?

What will be the questions or the topic of questions?

Once you have more information about the interview you can ask for workplace adjustments.





Interview preparation (continued 2/10)

Examples of workplace adjustments:

- ✓ Questions in advance for the interview and written assessment (which can allow you time to prepare and seek clarification on any questions you are not sure about)
- ✓ More time to answer verbal and written questions, if needed
- ✓ More time for any tasks
- ✓ You can request a different interview format if you have been invited to a group assessment.

You can share your **employee profile** with the people who will interview you if you feel this would be useful for them to help understand and support you during the interview. You can send the document to the HR team or the contact on the interview invitation.

Interview questions

During the interview, you will be asked some questions, some of which will be **competency questions**. This is when you need to provide a specific example of how you match the competency being assessed.

Show me an example of good customer service.

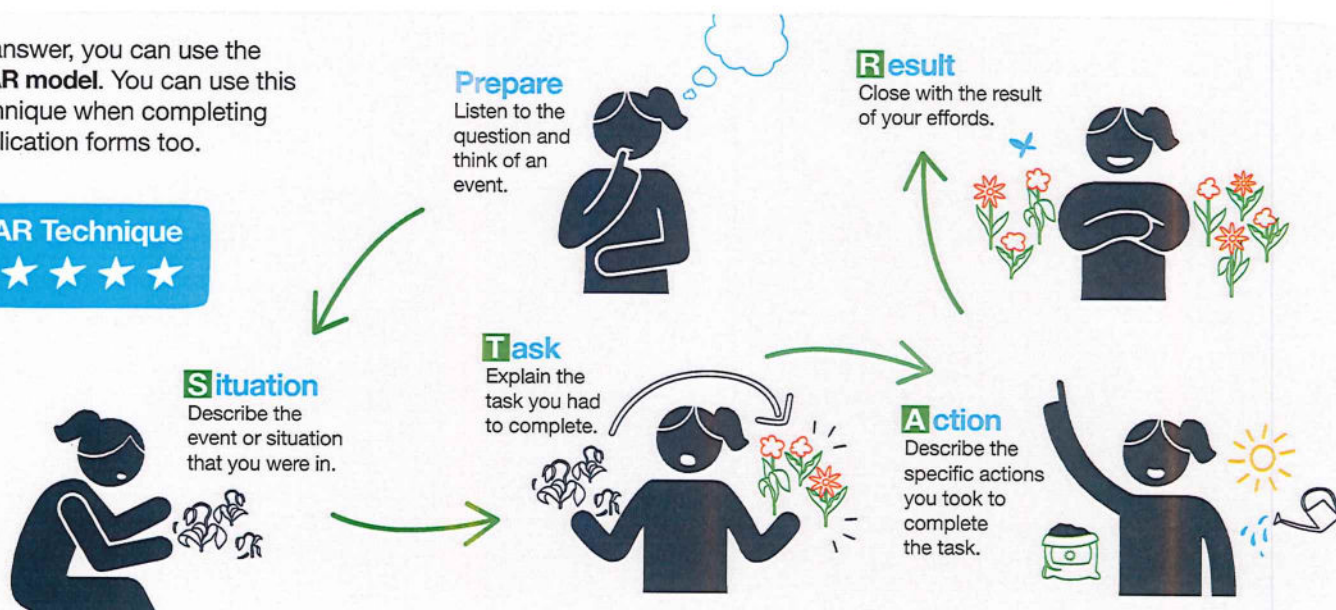
Describe a time when you worked as a part of a team.

Please give us an example of a situation where you have had to prioritise tasks.

Here are some examples of competency questions:

To answer, you can use the **STAR model**. You can use this technique when completing application forms too.

STAR Technique





Interview preparation (continued 3/10)

4 Attending an in-person interview

Before the interview



- a** Plan your journey. You may have been sent instructions in advance to help you do this.



- b** Give yourself enough time and allow extra time for delays. For example, if the journey takes an hour, allow at least another 15 minutes in case of delays.



- c** Have a backup plan. For example, if the train is not running, what will you do instead?

- d** Prepare for the interview in advance. The HR department will have provided information about the questions you will be asked and explain the interview format, including any tasks to be completed. This information will be included in the **invitation to interview** you have received. It will be beneficial to prepare your responses to these questions and how you will undertake potential tasks. You may find it useful to prepare with someone who knows you well. Also take notes of this preparation to reflect upon before your interview.



- e** Prepare one or two relevant questions in advance that you would like to ask the interviewer (or interviewers) about the potential role and the organisation. This will demonstrate to them your interest in the position.



- f** Make sure you have your clothes clean and ready (including your shoes).



- g** Pack a bag and include anything you have been asked to take for the interview, for example, your passport or other identity documents.



- h** Go to sleep early.



- i** Set your alarm to give you enough time to get up and get ready.



- j** Include in your bag any items that will help you to relax while on your journey and waiting for the interview, eg music player and headphones, interview preparation notes, magazine, book, newspaper and stim toy.





Interview preparation (continued 4/10)

Attending the interview

On the morning of the interview or before the interview if during the afternoon





Interview preparation (continued 5/10)

When you arrive for the interview



- a** When you arrive at the building, follow the instructions provided in the invitation to interview: where you need to go in the building, what you do when you approach the reception area, or receptionist, if there is one; this will include informing the receptionist who you are visiting.



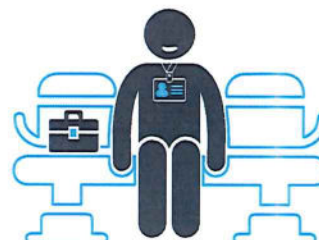
- b** Follow the instructions provided by the receptionist; sign in, place your visitor's lanyard around your neck (if you're comfortable to do so), or place the name label on top of your clothes around your chest area.



- e** While waiting, you may find it beneficial to use some of the items you have brought with you in your bag to help you relax and prepare for the interview.



- d** Ensure that your mobile phone is in silent mode or turned off during the interview.



- c** Once the receptionist has directed you to the waiting area, find an empty seat and sit and wait until the person you are visiting comes to get you from the waiting area and takes you to where you are meeting for the interview.



- f** When you first meet the person you are visiting, say hello, smile and shake their hand, by way of a formal, professional greeting (if you are comfortable shaking hands with the interviewer). If you would find it uncomfortable shaking hands with the interviewer, explain this beforehand to HR, so they know why you do not do this, ensuring mutual understanding in advance.





Interview preparation (continued 6/10)

During the interview



- a** When you arrive in the interview room, greet the other interviewers, say hello, smile and shake each person's hand, one at a time (if you are comfortable shaking hands with the interviewers).



- b** The interview will be led by the interviewers. They will ask questions, one at a time, and you will need to provide appropriate answers after each question. Remember, you will have been given the questions in advance, so refer to your preparation to answer the questions.



- d** Towards the end of a formal interview, you will be asked by the interviewer if you have any questions you would like to ask. This will now be the opportunity to ask the question (or questions) you have prepared in advance about the potential role and the organisation.

- c** The interview format, which you will have been informed of in advance, may also include one or more tasks for you to complete individually or in a group to assess your skills and knowledge. You will have been able to prepare for such scenarios in advance; remember to reflect upon and use this preparation.

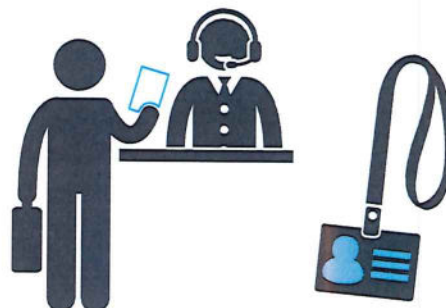


- e** When the interview finishes, say goodbye to the interviewers, thank them for their time and shake hands (if you are comfortable doing so); this is a formal and professional way of saying goodbye.



Interview preparation (continued 7/10)

When you leave the interview



- a** After the interview has finished and you have said your goodbyes, one of the interviewers will take you back to reception. If you are comfortable doing so, shake hands or wave goodbye.

- b** The receptionist will ask you to sign out and you will leave behind your visitor's lanyard or name label.



- d** Ensure that you have all your personal belongings.

- c** Thank the receptionist for their help.



- ✓** Leave the building and begin your journey home.





Interview preparation (continued 8/10)

5 Attending a virtual or phone interview

Before the interview



- a** Practise using the virtual meeting software, eg Zoom, Teams or Skype, with someone who knows you well.



- b** Ensure that you have received the meeting invitation and link, including any passwords.



- c** Prepare for the interview in advance. The HR department will have provided information about the questions you will be asked and explained the interview format, including any tasks to be completed. This information will be included in the **invitation to interview** you have received. It will be beneficial to prepare your responses to these questions and how you will undertake potential tasks. You may find it useful to prepare with someone who knows you well. Also take notes of this preparation to reflect upon before your interview.



- d** Prepare one or two relevant questions in advance which you would like to ask the interviewer (or interviewers) about the potential role and the organisation. This will demonstrate to them your interest in the position.



- e** Make sure you have your interview clothes clean and ready.



- e** Go to sleep early.



- f** Set your alarm to give you enough time to get up and get ready.





Interview preparation (continued 9/10)

On the morning of the interview or before the interview if during the afternoon



a Get up.



b Have breakfast.



c Have a shower.



f Put your clothes on and clean shoes.



e Brush your hair.



d Brush your teeth.



g Make sure your device is fully charged and a charger with a nearby power source is available.



h Make sure that you log in to the virtual meeting at least five minutes before the scheduled start time. This will allow time to resolve any potential technical issues.



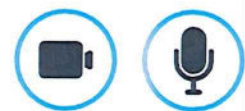
i Make sure you have pen and paper available for completing tasks (if required).



l When you arrive at the virtual interview or meeting, greet the interviewers, say hello and smile.



k You may have to wait for the virtual interview or meeting to start; a pop-up will inform you of this.



j Ensure that your camera and audio (sound) is turned on once you join the meeting.

continue on next page





Interview preparation (continued 10/10)

On the morning of the interview or before the interview if during the afternoon

continued from previous page



m The interview will be led by the interviewers. They will ask questions, one at a time, and you will need to provide appropriate answers after each question. Remember, you will have been given the questions in advance, so refer to your preparation to answer the questions. Sometimes the internet connection may drop out and the virtual meeting will stop, which will not be your fault. Ask the interviewers at the beginning of the interview what you should do if this happens.

n The interview format, which you will have been informed of in advance, may also include one or more tasks for you to complete, eg a presentation, to assess your skills and knowledge. You will have been able to prepare for such scenarios in advance; remember to reflect upon and use this preparation.

Thank you



p When the interview finishes, say goodbye to the interviewers and thank them for their time.



o Towards the end of a formal interview, you will be asked by the interviewer if you have any questions you would like to ask. This will now be the opportunity to ask the question (or questions) you have prepared in advance about the potential role and the organisation.



q The virtual interview will now finish, and the meeting will end.





Communicating in the workplace

The four-step traffic light system



There may be times in your workplace when you need to concentrate on a particular task, or you don't feel like talking. That is OK, but it is important that you communicate this to your colleagues. The traffic light system can help you do this.

You can personalise the text boxes and print them out to use as badges to put on your desk or a lanyard. It is important that your employer and your colleagues understand what these badges mean and that they respect the rules. You can discuss this with your post-16 professional or employer.

This communication system may also be incorporated within a virtual workplace (working remotely or from home), through your computer, eg Microsoft Teams status, colour coding status regarding availability and set status message.

A **red badge** means that you do not want to talk to anyone; you will approach others if you require support.

An **orange badge** means that it may not be a good time to talk, and that is OK; you want to talk only to a few people whom you recognise.

A **yellow badge** means that you may want to talk to others if you feel you can; the approached people can then talk back to you in that case. You would prefer it if people started a conversation with you.

A **green badge** means you want to talk to other people. You may start a conversation with someone if you feel able to, but you would prefer to have someone start a conversation with you.



A **red badge** means that you do not want to talk to anyone; you will approach others if you require support.



An **orange badge** means that it may not be a good time to talk, and that is OK; you want to talk only to a few people whom you recognise.



A **yellow badge** means that you may want to talk to others if you feel you can; the approached people can then talk back to you in that case. You would prefer it if people started a conversation with you.



A **green badge** means you want to talk to other people. You may start a conversation with someone if you feel able to, but you would prefer to have someone start a conversation with you.





Communicating in the workplace (continued 2/2)

The four-step traffic light system

You can edit the four-step traffic light system, by including your own personalised statements in the editable text boxes below.



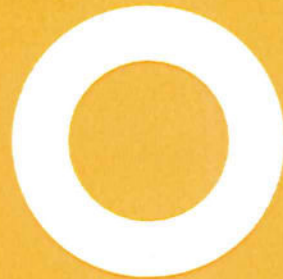
Please
don't talk
to me for
now



This isn't
a great
time to
chat.



Say
hello if
you
want to!



Free to
chat!

