



Kickstart Report

October 2022



KICKSTART
SCHEME

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Introduction

Young people accounted for 46% of the labour market fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic despite only representing one in nine of those in work (IES, 2021).

In response to these rising levels of youth unemployment, the Department for Work & Pensions launched the Kickstart scheme in September 2020. The scheme aimed to provide funding for employers to create quality six-month work experience placements for young people aged 16-24 years. Through this funding businesses were able to provide a life changing opportunity for young people who were at risk of long term unemployment and benefit from their energy and new ideas.

Impact People & Change became a registered Gateway, to help employers through the application process and provide wrap-around support to develop young people's skills whilst on placement. The Kickstart scheme closed on 30th September 2022 and we are proud to highlight in this report the contribution we made.

To inform this report we gathered feedback from employers and young people via survey and focus groups. We have also presented attendance rates and feedback scores gathered throughout our delivery of the scheme.

With thanks to the young people who helped in the creation of this report.



Founder Foreword

Our Founder, Natasha Chadwick, explains why we got involved in the Kickstart scheme.

“ I didn't know what I wanted to do when I was younger. The career options available to me weren't clear but I knew I liked being with people and I wanted to make a difference. After studying psychology at university I was lucky to start working with young people in schools, providing careers guidance and personal support. Moving to support adults out of work, I saw the impact that worklessness had - and also the joy that work could bring.

Fast forward to the pandemic and when the Kickstart scheme was introduced I felt compelled to get involved. I knew I could use my experience leading employability programmes in the UK and abroad to make a difference to young people accessing Kickstart placements. I know how difficult it can be to navigate these kind of schemes and I wanted to also support businesses in my network to take advantage of it. I'm proud that as a micro-business we have been able to play our part in the wider eco-system of tackling youth unemployment through our role as a Gateway.

”



Our Kickstart Team

Meet the team



Natalie, Associate, supporting young people through career coaching



Hannah, Project Assistant, supporting the design and delivery of our workshops.



Natasha, Founder, leading our Kickstart offer



Jen, Associate, providing young people with mental health support



Ralph, Associate, supporting our employers to provide quality and meaningful work experiences.



Wrap-around Support

As a Kickstart gateway, we provided the wrap-around support to young people on behalf of many of our employers*. This was an essential part of the Kickstart scheme aimed at helping young people develop their skills as well as experience gained on placement. Our offer included coaching sessions and group workshops which we delivered online due to Covid-19 restrictions. The aim of this was to **develop skills for work such as teamwork and communication**, and to provide **support to find further employment through jobsearch, CV and interview advice**.

Here are some reflections from young people who received our support:



I definitely feel more confident talking to people will be much easier, especially over meetings, interviews, anything that involves social interaction.



I feel more validated about sharing my ideas. gained more knowledge about how to communicate with employers/customers etc.

*One employer who supported 6 young people into Kickstart placements delivered wrap-around support themselves and they are excluded from the outcomes shared in this report.

One-to-one Coaching

Each young person accessing our wrap-around support was offered up to six sessions of **one-to-one coaching** with our associate, Natalie who has a background in supporting college students with their career choices. Sessions included exploration of skills and strengths, advice on jobsearch and CV writing, and interview preparation. Other topics included managing time, working from home, and self employment. We asked each young person to complete a short survey before and after coaching and found that confidence in future career opportunities increased by up to 30%.

Where appropriate, young people were able to access specialist support from our associate, Jen, an Occupational Therapist who specialises in supporting **young people's mental health**. In these sessions young people gained tips and techniques on topics such as staying motivated at work, dealing with failure, and disclosing a mental health condition to their employer.

“

'Helping young people realise their potential and personal power is hugely rewarding. I get a real buzz supporting our Kickstarters to grow and develop. I love seeing how they become more confident, and their smile when they've done something they thought they couldn't. I really do have the best job in the world!'

- Natalie





One-to-one Coaching

When asked what they wanted to get out of one-to-one support, the top answers were:

- **Encouragement and support**
- **Help to define goals**
- **Feedback and mentoring**

Our survey showed that coaching had helped young people maintain or increase their motivation to achieve what they want in their personal/work life.

Here two young people share their experiences of one-to-one support:



I really found the coaching useful for identifying goals and having that opportunity to talk through my experiences and growth with someone. This helped with seeing things in a more positive light.
-Coachee



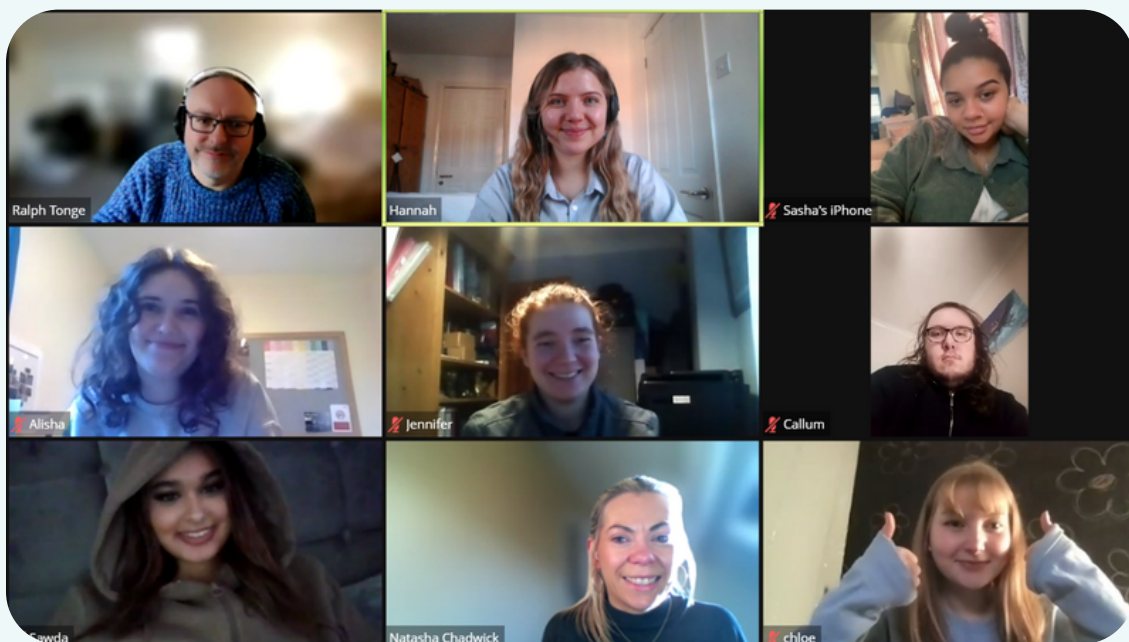
I received really useful advice to support me with my anxiety and identifying coping strategies to keep me motivated and calm.
-Attendee from a mental health support session

Workshops

Our skills workshops were delivered online as stand-alone sessions and in the form of a conference. 'Kickstart to 22' aimed to help young people to develop **confidence, communication and team work skills through workshops and a group social action project**. Feedback from young people who attended showed that they felt “very connected to everyone”. They found they were able to share their ideas with the reassurance that their contributions were being listened to and encouraged by the rest of the team.



“Kickstart to 22 was the most inclusive conference I could have imagined. Everyone was extremely welcoming and I truly felt like I was part of a team and community.



100% of those who attended the Kickstart to 22 conference said they would recommend our conference to someone else.



Workshops

In our interactive workshops, young people explored topics such as **understanding strengths, critical thinking, organisation and planning, and creative problem-solving**. The aim was to enable young people to apply the skills on their Kickstart placements and in future jobs.

Young people shared that understanding their strengths helped them see how they could fit into a business and contribute their ideas. Other key learning points include learning about the steps involved in problem-solving and the importance of other valuing other people's perspectives.

Alongside the skills-based workshops we provided practical sessions on **building resilience and mindfulness**, which were ran by our associate, Jen. In these sessions young people explored strategies for managing stress at work and dealing with anxiety and rejection when applying for jobs for the future.

Here young people share what they gained from our workshops:

I am much more prepared in terms of knowing my strengths, learning and improving vital areas such as critical thinking and working together as a team remotely.”



“I feel like I have a better understanding of myself and what I can offer to at work. I feel confident that I will be able to bring up the skills I've learnt and experiences this has given me in future interviews”





Skill Development

Communication

Problem-solving

Leadership

Listening

Teamwork

Mindfulness

Appreciating my
strengths

Confidence

Presenting back



I will be able to apply problem-solving skills in my current role in writing content and marketing for different audiences.



I will be able to apply skills such as critical thinking to my job as well as when working in a team.



I believe it will have helped me communicate better in future jobs and will have given me more confidence to share my ideas and strengths.

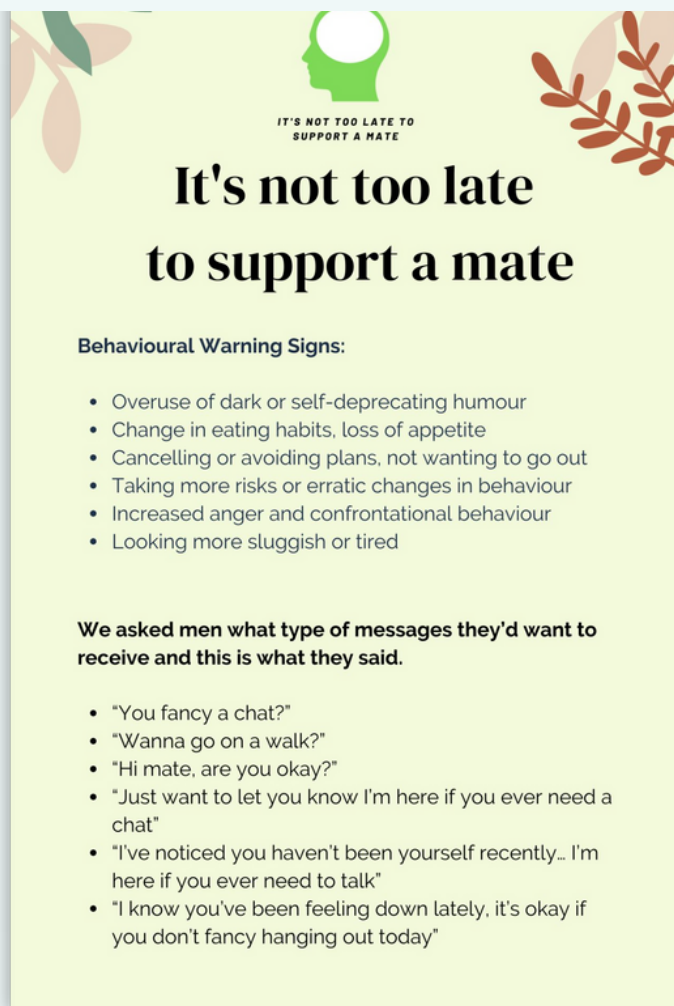


When there are meetings in real life or online, I will not hesitate to speak up - I usually never speak and let other people speak. My own employer said I looked more confident when I was in a team meeting with her, I was more chatty and bright.

Social Action Project

Following completion of our workshops, young people were invited to participate in a **social action project**. The aim was to identify an issue in the community they wanted to resolve and find a solution by using the skills gained in the workshops. The social action project provided another way of developing skills for work such as teamwork and communication.

The group focused on men's mental health, recognising the personal mental health challenges that some had experienced through the pandemic. They worked together to produce a high quality pack about **men's mental health** and used it to raise awareness via social media!



It's not too late to support a mate

Behavioural Warning Signs:

- Overuse of dark or self-deprecating humour
- Change in eating habits, loss of appetite
- Cancelling or avoiding plans, not wanting to go out
- Taking more risks or erratic changes in behaviour
- Increased anger and confrontational behaviour
- Looking more sluggish or tired

We asked men what type of messages they'd want to receive and this is what they said.

- "You fancy a chat?"
- "Wanna go on a walk?"
- "Hi mate, are you okay?"
- "Just want to let you know I'm here if you ever need a chat"
- "I've noticed you haven't been yourself recently.. I'm here if you ever need to talk"
- "I know you've been feeling down lately, it's okay if you don't fancy hanging out today"



Ways to support men's mental health

Actively supporting mental health brands and sharing posts on mental health indirectly show your friends and family that you are there to help them if they need it.

- Brands to support:
- Boys get sad too
- ManHealth
- 304 Clothing
- Blissfulstarclub on Etsy

Helplines:

Manhealth:
manhealth.org.uk - offers virtual peer support group or manshealth.org.uk/chat/.
Online chat from 6pm-10pm, 7 days a week.

Samaritan:
24/7 free services call: 116 123

The mix:
Under 25 years old, Call 0808 808 4994 - Open 3pm-Midnight

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK: 9TH - 15TH OF MAY



Our Impact

3-6

Coaching sessions were delivered to each young person on placement

SIX

Young people who accessed our wrap-around support completed a **social action project**

Young people reported up to

30%

Increase in **confidence about future career opportunities** following coaching

18

Young people successfully **secured Kickstart placements** with the support of Impact People & Change

78%

Young people attended **skills development workshops**

9

employers hosted Kickstart placements

FOUR

Young people received one-to-one support from a mental health professional

3

Young people were offered continued work with their employer following their Kickstart placement

57% of young people who completed our outcome survey had **found another job** or **moved into self-employment** after completing their Kickstart placement



Case Study – Vishakha

Vishakha graduated from university with a master's degree but had trouble finding work due to the impact of the pandemic. Eager to increase her experience, find where she fits within a business and identify her top skills, Vishakha enrolled on the Kickstart programme and started work as a business assistant.

The placement allowed Vishakha to develop her communication skills, which helped her interact directly with clients. She also took part in various business tasks, which allowed her to develop technological and financial skills that she feels will be useful in business development. During the placement, Vishakha found that she enjoys engaging in project management processes such as creating Trello boards.

Vishakha says she will look back on her Kickstart placement with no regrets and pointed out the importance of starting from the bottom up to develop a great career!



“My employability skills have developed massively - on a whole new level. I have explored different processes, systems, and finance management. I have enhanced my employability. I have had support career-wise and fit into a team role”
- Vishakha





Case Study – Callum

Callum wasn't sure what he wanted to do with his career and saw the Kickstart scheme as an opportunity to expand his skills and find a direction.

Callum has found working with a small business beneficial as he has taken on higher levels of responsibility and formed a good relationship with his employer. As a result, he has seen his confidence increase and he has developed skills in customer service, which will help him speak to new clients in the future.

Some of Callum's favourite tasks whilst on placement included sending emails relating to sales and promotions and practising the process of content distribution. Callum sees his Kickstart placement as a necessary stepping-stone and an enjoyable experience, and he now has an idea of where he wants to take his career next. Upon reaching the end of his placement, he was offered a new contract to continue working with his employer and is now a critical member of the team!



"I have a niche degree and wanted to broaden my horizons, see if marketing is for me, see what areas interest me. My CV is now bulkier, and I am no longer just relying on education. I have acquired practical skills and experience"

- Callum





Impact on Business

The employers we worked with found the Kickstart scheme a good opportunity to access young talent to help grow their businesses. Throughout the programme employers were supported by our associate, Ralph, who previously lead youth programmes such as National Citizen Service, through regular **one-to-ones and group sessions** which brought employers together to share ideas and learn from each other.

Support was tailored to the individual needs of employers and included best practices for inclusive recruitment, effective onboarding, structuring a meaningful work placement.

80% of employers who completed our outcome survey rated the support, they received from Impact People & Change as 'Excellent'.

Many employers provided feedback on the positive difference that attending workshops and coaching had on the young people they worked with. All employers shared that Kickstart had allowed them to provide an employment opportunity they otherwise would not have had the funds or capacity to do.

80% of employers who completed our outcome survey felt that their employee's confidence has improved and their skills had developed



With the help of the Kickstart scheme, I have been able to not only grow my business but also significantly improve my work life balance as an owner of a small business. Natasha and her team have offered brilliant and regular support throughout the process, always organised and have the right information when needed.

- Jave, Kickstart Employer



Final Words

We are proud to have supported young people in the East Midlands and beyond to access meaningful work experience, and to enable many small businesses to grow through access to Kickstart funding.

We know that the Kickstart scheme was not without its challenges and want to include our lessons learned to ensure that we are presenting a balanced picture of our Kickstart journey.

Most notably employers cited the length of time they were required to wait for funding to be released as a challenge. They reported mixed experiences of DWP support and valued the role that we played as a gateway to advocate on their behalf where needed.

In the delivery of our wrap-around support, we found that engaging young people to attend coaching and workshops was where we focused much of our energy. We also found that employers who used Kickstart to hire their first employee required a lot of support at the start of the placement to set themselves and the young person up for success. In future, more support will be required during the onboarding phase for both employers and young people to maximise success across the placement.

We have captured our learnings from our time as a Gateway and intend to incorporate these into our future delivery.

We look forward to playing an active role in other schemes which aim to support young people into employment.





Interested in our other programmes? Get in contact!



<https://impactpeopleandchange.co.uk/>



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