

Community Jobs Scotland and Activity Agreements



ST completed an Activity Agreement through East Dunbartonshire Council. Prior to this, he had disengaged from formal education and was referred to Activity Agreements by Social Work for employability support to overcome a number of barriers to re-engagement. These included dyslexia and the impact of a family history of anti-social behaviour and low-level criminality.

ST's Activity Agreement was planned and designed to create a relevant pathway towards employment. His trusted professional supported him to identify his strengths and needs and identified appropriate activities and learning. S identified an interest in working outdoors and took part in a programme, through one of the Activity Agreement Third Sector partners, where he gained practical skills in horticulture and hard landscaping. He also learned to work as part of a team. Alongside these activities, he was able to access numeracy and literacy support and received one-to-one support and guidance from his trusted professional.

His trusted professional played a key role in transition planning and helped S identify that he wanted to move into employment. He was also keen to further his own learning and development in the horticulture and hard landscaping sector, but not within a formal learning environment. An opportunity became available within the partner organisation S had been participating through, for a Community Jobs Scotland position. This would allow him to continue to develop his skills in a supportive, familiar environment. S's trusted professional and staff within the organisation worked in partnership to support him to apply for the position, guiding him to complete the application form and preparing for interview. This included helping him to purchase suitable interview clothes. At this time he continued receiving literacy and numeracy support and working with his trusted professional.

The skills and experience S gained during his Activity Agreement helped him secure the CJS position. His trusted professional maintained contact with him throughout his period of employment and liaised with his supervisor to ensure they were working together to support S, particularly with his dyslexia.

His employer provided S with a great deal of support and opportunities for development. For example, he was able to undertake an SVQ in Horticulture and continued to receive literacy support. S excelled in this working environment and felt valued as a part of the team. The friendships he developed with colleagues were important to helping him sustain the post.

Following completion of the CJS placement, S was successful in securing a one-year employment contract with the same organisation. He continues to receive literacy support and additional time to complete his written assessments for SVQ due to his ongoing challenge with dyslexia.

CJS gave S his first experience of working, along with the skills and knowledge he gained during that time. He grew in confidence and gained a level of maturity previously not apparent in his behaviours. He clearly will encounter barriers in the future due to his dyslexia however gaining the CJS role and being taken on for another year by the organisation will be a positive when he is seeking other opportunities in the future.

Margaret Harkins, CLD Youth Services Lead at East Dunbartonshire Council is clear about the crucial role CJS opportunities have in supporting the employability journey of young people furthest from the labour market; *“Many young people who come through the door to Activity Agreements tell us that they just want a job. We support them to overcome their barriers, explore their options and develop the competencies employers are looking for. When they are ready to move on CJS provides them with an attractive pathway option into sustained employment - it’s not another course, it’s not formal classroom-based training, it’s a ‘real job’. The opportunity to gain experience and skills from undertaking a ‘real job’ for up to a year, combined with support towards long-term sustained employment, is a key factor to young people sustaining participation and continuing along their career pathway.”*

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