

# Valuing Employment Now



## PATHWAY INTO EMPLOYMENT – OVERVIEW

This is an overview of the 'Pathway into Employment' work and the graphic representation of the pathway, also included in the first batch of Valuing Employment Now (VEN) resources.

A full document about the pathway is being developed, and will be included in the second batch of VEN resources.

The pathway into employment for young people with learning disabilities has been developed with the 12 Getting a Life (GAL) demonstration sites, which are now working to implement it. They are beginning by building on what they are already doing well.

The pathway brings together five processes, each of which is important for making sure that young people move into adulthood with jobs and full lives. These processes do not always work together to deliver coherent support to young people and their families.

The five processes are:

- transition planning
- personalisation
- supported employment
- curriculum
- strategy and commissioning.

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The full document will describe how each of these processes can better support young people into adulthood. It will also describe how elements of each can work together at each stage of the transition journey, from the school year when young people turn 14.

The graphic representation of the pathway is a 'model' based on research and good practice. It is intended to support local areas to develop their own pathway, based on local circumstances and stages of development.

## Background

Employment is a key part of *Valuing People Now* (VPN)<sup>1</sup>. This is because it is where the least progress has been made for people with learning disabilities<sup>2</sup>. In England, only 7.5% of adults with moderate and severe learning disabilities are in any kind of work. In 2007, ministers announced the Getting a Life (GAL) programme to explore why young people with learning disabilities do not go into employment on leaving school and/or college. The learning from this fed directly into the cross-department employment strategy for people with learning disabilities, *Valuing Employment Now* (VEN)<sup>3</sup>, in 2009.

The Government is committed to achieving equality for all disabled people by 2025<sup>4</sup>, and to radically increase the number of people with moderate and severe learning disabilities in real jobs by 2025. We know from places where it already happens that this is possible, and we know that 65% of people with learning disabilities would like a paid job<sup>5</sup>.

GAL is one of a number of Government demonstration programmes designed to bring about fundamental system change so that people with learning disabilities can get jobs and careers:

- Project Search is an internship model based in a host employer.
- Jobs First will work to help people with learning disabilities use their personal budgets to buy the support they need to get and keep a job.
- There is also an Employability Hub, based in Kent, that will show how people with complex needs can get a job.

More information on these is available at:

**[www.valuingpeople.gov.uk/venresources](http://www.valuingpeople.gov.uk/venresources)**

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1 *Valuing People Now: a new three-year strategy for people with learning disabilities*, Department of Health (2009)

2 *Valuing People, The Story So Far*, Department of Health (2005)

3 *Valuing Employment Now – real jobs for people with learning disabilities*, Department of Health (2009)

4 *Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People*, Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (2005)

5 *Adults with Learning Difficulties in England 2003/4*, Eric Emerson (2005)

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In addition, the Right to Control trailblazer sites will:

- test the most effective way of delivering choice and control to disabled people
- test how to align and streamline different funding streams to achieve agreed outcomes for disabled people
- provide robust evidence on the Right to Control for evaluation by the Office of Disability Issues.

More information is available at:

**[www.officefordisability.gov.uk](http://www.officefordisability.gov.uk)**

Employment will be the focus of the full document. We know, however, that people with learning disabilities experience poor outcomes in all areas of their lives, and young people in transition need to be supported to plan holistically for their future. *Valuing People Now and Transition*<sup>6</sup> sets the employment pathway in the context of broader, comprehensive transition planning, including for independent living, friendships, community involvement and good health.

The full document will be about what we have learned in the GAL demonstration sites. It will set out the pathway into employment that has been developed with the sites, which the GAL sites are now working to implement.

The pathway is 'work in progress' and we welcome feedback on it.

The pathway is being published with the VEN resources so that it can be shared across the country. It represents 'best practice' in transition planning, based on what research and practice have shown to work. Nowhere in the country is delivering the whole pathway. We are expecting that local areas will use it to analyse their current systems and to work out how to improve outcomes for young people with learning disabilities. The key elements are:

- starting planning for jobs and careers earlier and providing employment support from age 14
- raising expectations and aspirations throughout the system
- using all available resources effectively to support young people to achieve good life chance outcomes, including employment
- embedding self-directed support in transition planning, so that there is a clear link between planning for a career and life, and bringing resources together.

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<sup>6</sup> *Valuing People Now and Transition*, Department of Health, 2010

We plan to test the pathway out in the field and develop it further. If you have comments or ideas please contact:

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Valuing Employment Now: real jobs for people with learning disabilities

For further resources please visit [www.valuingpeople.gov.uk/venresources](http://www.valuingpeople.gov.uk/venresources)

Email [venresources@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:venresources@dh.gsi.gov.uk)

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