

## Inspirational interns: Nuneaton youngsters win permanent roles after completing pioneering National Grid scheme

Four young people with learning needs offered permanent roles at Hinckley offices

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- National Grid to expand the EmployAbility – Lets Work Together programme after intern success
- Calls to other companies to widen the scheme throughout the region

Four young people with learning needs and disabilities have been offered permanent jobs after completing a pioneering National Grid scheme.

The EmployAbility - Let's Work Together programme, which was launched last year, is specially designed to help such students to find employment.

Three pupils from the Oak Wood Secondary School in Nuneaton – Megan Moran, Harry Potten and Mac Wright – and Beth Asher and Matthew A'Hearne-Kehoe from the Dorothy Goodman Academy in Hinckley, successfully completed their internships.

Megan, Harry, Mac and Matthew will be staying on at National Grid Hinckley in permanent roles. Beth has chosen to pursue her passion for performing arts and is looking to enroll on a college course.

David Tilley, National Grid's control centre manager, said: "We are absolutely delighted to welcome these youngsters into our team. They have shown great maturity and perseverance during their time with us, and have secured jobs through hard work, merit and skills. They have been inspirational and demonstrated some special talents."

And Kevin Latham, head teacher at Oak Wood Secondary School added: "We are incredibly proud of our pupils' achievements. They were given a fantastic opportunity by National Grid and all of them grasped it with both hands and worked hard and well. They thoroughly deserve this life-changing chance."

Following a successful first year National Grid is expanding its EmployAbility programme from September with 20 students being offered internships in four of its locations across the country.

But, National Grid is aware that there is a limit to how many opportunities it can offer and that many more life changing openings can be created by working with other companies that may want to adopt the model. More companies are needed in Leicestershire and the East Midlands to join EmployAbility and build on its achievements.

National Grid is one of a few UK companies with a specially designed strategy to help students with learning disabilities.

In partnership with local special needs schools, the company has created a simple model for EmployAbility; a number of roles are identified that interns can fill. The interns then spend a full academic year performing two or three roles each, supported by full time job coaches from the schools. People on the company's graduate scheme take lead roles in organising and supporting the interns and in turn develop their own skills and disability awareness.

The Department of Education says that a student with learning disabilities has only a seven-per-cent chance of finding paid work. The cost to the community of supporting someone who doesn't get into employment through their life is £1 million per person.

For more information on the scheme go to: <http://employabilityletsworktogether.com/>

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Notes for editors

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#### National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

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- > [Gas](#)
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- > [Biographies](#)

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- > [Our business](#)
- > [Operating responsibly](#)
- > [Investor factsheets](#)
- > [Presentations and webcasts](#)
- > [Annual reports](#)
- > [Biographies](#)