



L-r Duncan Chapman, Nigel Coates and Mark Copsey.

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Northumbria internship scheme is providing a boost for local business

A paid internship scheme, run by [The Business Clinic](#) at Northumbria University with funding from Santander Universities UK, is providing crucial support to small businesses across the North East of England.

The Santander Universities SME Internships Programme provides Northumbria students and graduates with the opportunity to secure paid summer internships in small to medium sized business.

The scheme, which is designed to boost enterprise, employability and innovation, has placed a record 85 graduates with a range of businesses on two to 10 week placements this summer.

It gives students and graduates the opportunity to put theory into practice, working in a real business and providing valuable support to organisations in a range of areas from strategic operations and brand development to digital marketing, social media strategy, logistics and IT.

Nigel Coates, Business Clinic Director at Northumbria University, said: “The purpose of Northumbria University’s internship programme with Santander Universities UK is to help people and businesses prosper.

“Initiatives like this provide our students and graduates with new opportunities to secure valuable work experience and benefits employers at the same time through fresh perspectives, new ideas and insights which helps to drive growth in local SMEs.”

Northumbria University secured funding from Santander Universities UK to support a range of initiatives across the University, enabling the Business Clinic to fund paid student placements and internships with SME clients across the region. Since the partnership began more than 160 students have completed internships with SMEs and last year 78% of placements resulted in an offer of employment.

Matt Hutnell,  Director of Santander Universities UK, commented: “Santander is committed to supporting higher education as well as local communities across the UK. We’re delighted that our SME internships programme continues to be successful in both supporting local businesses and providing students the opportunity to get to know the business environment and gain some fantastic experience which will have an impact beyond their university years.”

Kyran Parker, director at Red Kite Innovations, a York-based business training and development consultancy, has taken on intern Duncan Chapman, 22, from Wetherby, to work in the business on a 10-week placement this summer.

He said: “This is my first year working with a Northumbria University intern.

They are extremely high quality and I would recommend the University to others for proactive, enthusiastic and highly skilled students.

“I’ve been blown away by the energy, enthusiasm and ideas Duncan is bringing to the business. He’s great with our clients and has already identified some exciting new areas where we can target our expertise. It’s also very rewarding for us to be able to provide a meaningful summer internship that offers a genuine learning experience.”

Describing the motivation behind his internship with Red Kite Innovations, Duncan said: “The Santander Internship with the Business Clinic jumped out to me as a great opportunity to continue to apply my knowledge and experience of consultancy. Working for Red Kite Innovations has been the perfect experience of transitioning from student life into the world of work.

“I’m gaining valuable experience and making great contacts along the way, and of course, the income is helping me save up to fund some traveling! I’d highly recommend it to anyone who is thinking about completing a similar internship in the future!”

This year, due to wider engagement work being undertaken by staff at the Business Clinic, the University has been able to place students with a large number of nurseries across the North East and has developed new partnerships in the sector which could form the basis for long term collaboration.

The nursery sector is currently undergoing rapid and significant transformation as a result of changes to government funding. Through the internship scheme, nursery operators are being encouraged to tap into the skills and expertise of students who can provide assistance in key areas, including marketing, finance and business planning.

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