



The L'Arche Internship

A year of growth, care, and relationship



Contents

Page 3	The L'Arche Internship Role
Page 4 - 5	A day in the life
Page 6	Who is the L'Arche Internship for?
Page 7	Skills you'll develop
Page 8	Our Vision and Values
Page 9	The Application Process
Page 10	Key Words

“

*I find life
in the lots of small moments
spent with core members.
Seeing one of them smile,
another get up and dance when
Strictly is on, another start
dancing at a funeral.*

”

James, L'Arche Kent



The L'Arche Internship Role

Job title:	L'Arche Internship
Start date:	From November 2026
Hours:	34 hours a week of offering support and care to people with learning disabilities, 6 hours a week on a bespoke training programme
Stipend:	Room and board covered (including rent, meals, and bills), plus a monthly allowance to cover additional expenses of £365.41 (£416.58 in London)
Where could I do the internship?	Canterbury (Kent), Edinburgh, Ipswich or Inverness (Highland)
Would I get holiday?	Of course! 28 days in England, 29 in Scotland (including bank holidays)
Do I need care experience?	No, you will receive training and support as part of the Internship. We just ask that you come willing to learn!

What would I receive?

- A fully funded training programme to equip and qualify you as a support worker.
- Additional Internship sessions focused on reflection, power, activism, spirituality, and personal growth. These are weekly in the first 6 months while you find your feet and monthly in the second 6 months to support your continued growth.
- Daily meals, a private bedroom, all bills covered.
- Allowance of at least £365.41 a month.
- Belonging in a values-led community where diversity is celebrated.
- The chance to build relationships with a wide range of people.
- Time and space for personal growth and reflection.
- Disclosure check certificate (DBS/PVG)
- Lots of support from your leaders
- Two residential retreats over the year

PLEASE NOTE!

We cannot offer visa sponsorship for this role. You must have the right to work in the UK until August 2027 to be eligible for the Internship.

What would I offer?

- Your support – helping people with learning disabilities with every aspect of daily life from getting dressed, using the toilet, and taking medication, to joining in with community life, making art, and going out.
- Assistance with household tasks like cooking and cleaning. You don't need to be an expert but we need you to take initiative and be proactive!
- Your skills – empathy, listening, sensitivity. We also encourage interns to share their interests and hobbies like making music, art, or cooking!
- Willingness to build relationships and be part of a vibrant community.
- Openness to learning, growth, and challenge.

What kind of support would I receive?

Interns have four supporters:

- Line manager – a leader based in your house who would help you to develop in all aspects of your work in L'Arche. Your first port of call.
- Community Leaders – one of the Community's senior leadership team will meet with you and the other interns every month to talk about your experience and receive any feedback.
- Accompanier – an experienced member of L'Arche who would meet with you monthly to reflect on where you're learning, growing, or struggling.
- Other interns – peer-to-peer reflection is a core part of the programme and current interns report this as particularly helpful.

A day in the life

Interns live in a L'Arche house full-time for the year and spend 5 days a week (40 hours) working for L'Arche. 34 hours a week are spent offering support and care to members with learning disabilities. 6 hours a week are spent on the Internship learning programme, developing your skills, self-knowledge and reflective practice. And 2 days a week are days off.

What will my 34 hours supporting members with learning disabilities look like?

This involves a mixture of different activities: personal care (e.g. supporting people to go to the toilet), accompanying people on trips, giving medication, cooking, cleaning, sharing life. Offering support and care in this way involves some hard work and resilience, as well as lots of fun and laughter. It's a chance to build deep, trusting friendships with people with learning disabilities. As members of a team, live-ins work with salaried Care Assistants to facilitate the wellbeing and independence of people with learning disabilities. On the right of this page is an example of a day in the life for Danny, who lived in our Manchester community a few years ago:

What will my 6 hours on the Internship learning programme look like?

The programme is designed to complement your induction and training as a support worker by offering space for reflection, peer support, and learning about topics such as disability activism, power relations, interpersonal dynamics, self-regulation, spirituality, and L'Arche's history.

In the first half of the year, you will have weekly online meetings with the other interns from across the UK and facilitators, offering a space to explore a topic and share your experiences, as well as 'community time' where you will put your learning into practice and work on community projects. This time will be coordinated by a leader in your community and the activities shaped to make the most of your talents and interests. In the second half of the year, as you find your feet in the community and identify what you could contribute, the 6 hours each week will be mostly focused on these community projects, with monthly online sessions with the whole cohort. There's also two residential retreats over the year, a shorter one in the autumn and a longer one at the midpoint of the year.

MORNING

Danny

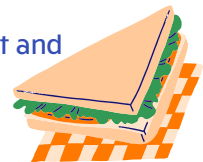
Made a special breakfast for everybody



Assisted core member with showering, getting dressed, brushing teeth, medication and combing his hair

Weekly team meeting

Another assistant and I made salad and sandwiches for lunch, along with some Core Members



Assisted a Core Member to join a Zoom meeting

Core member and I chatted together while doing some tidying and cleaning

Finished rota at 4.30pm

AFTERNOON

EVENING

Spent the evening hanging out with other assistants and eating together in the garden

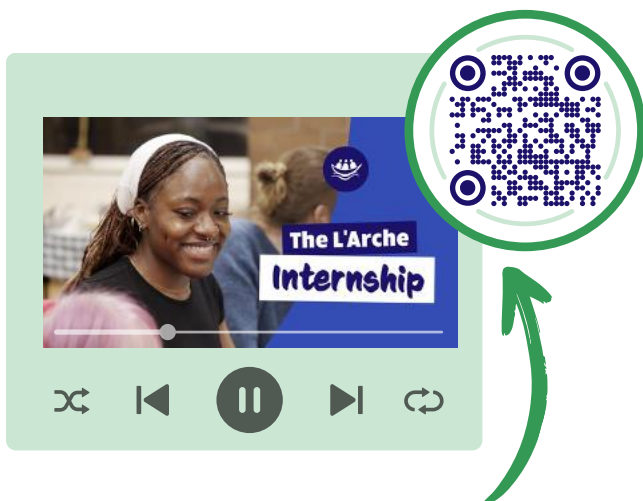


A day in the life... continued.

What's the connection between care and community and spirituality?

For over sixty years, people have been transformed by the experience of living and working in L'Arche. L'Arche Communities aim to be places of authentic relationship and connection, where the care offered to members with learning disabilities is integrated into the life of the community. Living in L'Arche is about allowing yourself to be shaped by the experience of caring for others and allowing others to care for you in different ways. It's about learning to recognise the meaning in the everyday activities of sharing meals, helping people in the bathroom, going on trips, celebrating birthdays, giving medication, et cetera. It's about recognising that caring for others is at the heart of a meaningful life. It's about challenging a society which defines people by their possessions and achievements, rather than who they are.

L'Arche offers an opportunity for all of us to learn more about ourselves, build strong relationships with others, and connect to a deeper meaning. That is how we understand spirituality in L'Arche - as connecting us more deeply to ourselves, others, and whatever is beyond (which for some of us might be God, for others nature or the universe or a deeper love). The L'Arche Internship is designed to give you the time and resources to grasp this opportunity and grow personally and professionally.



Meet some of our Interns and find out what they got out of the programme. Watch by using the link below:
www.larche.org.uk/internship
Or Scan the QR Code.



“The connections I have formed with core members is a relationship unlike anything I have ever experienced. It is something that is certainly a friendship but also combined with an understanding that I find difficult to put into words. It is something that definitely will stick with me for the rest of my life.”

Lucy, L'Arche Edinburgh

Who is the L'Arche Internship for?

The L'Arche Internship is for anyone looking for an experience of challenge, community and growth. There's no requirement of care experience or faith (although lots of people in L'Arche do belong to a faith). All we ask is that you are open to learning, relationship and being outside of your comfort zone.

Here are a few of our previous Interns talking about what the L'Arche Internship offered them at their stage in life:



Funmi, 21, is a student at Aston University.

'As a Psychology student, I was really keen to use my placement year to develop my people skills. I wanted to develop my ability to listen and respond how the person in front of me needs me to. The things I learned in my degree were generally about neurotypical people; I'm now learning to apply that to people with learning disabilities.

The year-long programme has helped me to develop my learning; without that day of reflection a week, I wouldn't be able to respond to core members how they need me to.'



James, 42, is taking a sabbatical from his work as a teacher

Coming to L'Arche has been a chance to slow down the pace of life and find the connection and community that is so often lacking in working life. Teaching, whilst rewarding, was so busy and often stressful, whereas here, even in my working time, it's possible to just 'be'. I've found space to reflect on what came before L'Arche and what is coming after.



Tom, 21, finished his undergraduate degree at Cambridge University last year.

'The L'Arche Internship has worked so well as a transition out of university and into whatever comes next. After three years of sitting at my desk at university, it's been great to do something practical where the impact of my work is clear in the short term.

It's taught me skills I didn't learn at university around teamwork and improvising under pressure. This appealed to me so much more than the office-based grad schemes that many of my friends were going to do.'



Eve, 18, is taking a gap year

'After finishing my A-levels last summer, I think it's been healthy to be immersed in a community which gives me a sense of purpose totally unrelated to academic success. For anyone moving away from home for the first time, I'd really recommend moving into a community.

It's made it much less scary. I feel like L'Arche and the other interns have really looked after me.'



Skills you'll develop

The skills you will develop in each aspect of the programme are highly transferrable to other roles and experiences.

Element of programme	Outcome
Support worker (or 'assistant' in L'Arche's language) induction programme in first 3 months of year	Development of core value of person-centred care, and key care and support skills (e.g. first aid, Makaton, giving medication). You will receive a Care Certificate or Scottish Social Services Council registration (depending on if you are in a Scottish or English community).
Living with and offering support to people with learning disabilities	A deep understanding of the experience, gifts, and support needs of people with learning disabilities. Development of skills such as accessible communication, empathy, and patience.
Participation in a professional team of support workers including line management by an experienced leader	Development of professional skills, such as self-assessment, reflection, resilience, confidentiality and holding difficult conversations with care.
Internship learning sessions, retreats, and accompaniment	Development of skills such as active listening, emotional intelligence, self-regulation, and conflict management. Gaining knowledge on topics such as disability rights, power dynamics, intentional community, spirituality, and the experiences of disabled people internationally.
Community development and engagement work	Development of skills around event planning, people and resource management, and time management.

“ The people I've met through this programme have been so understanding and supportive. The challenges I've faced have helped me to grow as a person. ”

Talia, L'Arche Edinburgh

Our Vision and Values

L'Arche is an international federation of communities of people with and without learning disabilities sharing life together.

There are eleven communities in the UK, from London, to Manchester, to Inverness.

We began in the 1960s, based on the vision of the world Jesus describes in the Beatitudes: a world where the first are last and the last first, and societal hierarchies are turned upside-down. Today, relationship, celebration, and reflection are at the heart of what we do. We are deeply inclusive of people of all faiths and none, all classes, all identities, and we are committed to LGBTQ+ inclusion.

Each community is made up of a handful of houses where our members live together, an office, and sometimes workshops. As a L'Arche Intern, you would be living with a small group of people with and without learning disabilities in one of our houses. Our houses are normal, neighbourhood homes with kitchens, sitting rooms, private bedrooms, and bathrooms. They're warm and hospitable.

People with learning disabilities are at the centre of our communities so we call them 'core members'. Our members without learning disabilities spend between fifteen and forty hours a week on rota supporting our core members. This support might involve cooking meals, cleaning, accompanying them to activities, helping them in the shower or in the toilet, or just chilling and chatting. Some of these supporters are live-out assistants (people who live outside of L'Arche but spend their days with us) and others live in the community. You can read L'Arche International's Mission and Identity statement online, and here is L'Arche UK's Vision and Values statement:



L'Arche has a **Charter** and an **Identity and Mission Statement**, saying what we are across 37 countries worldwide. In the UK, we wanted to say something more specific too about what we want for L'Arche here and now.

The final wording below was co-produced by a group of L'Arche leaders based on listening to feedback and suggestions they received from people with and without disabilities across L'Arche.

OUR VISION

L'Arche is here to show that everyone belongs.

- **We create Communities where people with and without learning disabilities live, share and grow together.**
- **We build relationships with people in our neighbourhoods.**
- **We work towards a world where people with learning disabilities are included and valued.**

OUR VALUES

With and without learning disabilities, we try to:

- **be welcoming and kind**
- **be committed to each other**
- **bring out the best in each other**
- **celebrate being different and diverse**
- **encourage one another's spirituality.**

To find out more about the co-production process, view our "Easy Watch" version, and read our Charter and Identity and Mission statements, use the links below.

Charter

bit.ly/larche-charter_EN



Mission and Identity

bit.ly/mission_and_identity



Easy Watch

bit.ly/vision_and_values



Application Process

We welcome applications from people at all stages of life and no experience of professional care-giving is necessary. The application process is designed to help both you and L'Arche decide if this is the right next step for you. It's not a competitive process and we're not trying to catch you out.

In the application process, we will be looking for candidates with the following attributes:

- **Motivation:**
You will be someone who is excited by the possibility and challenge that this programme offers, and who is seeking community and reflective spaces. We will want to know that you have understood the different aspects of this programme.
- **Relationship-building:**
You will be someone who relates to people with empathy, generosity, and respect, and someone who has the capacity to connect with people who are different to you.
- **Self-awareness:**
You will be someone who has the ability to understand and reflect critically on how you relate to others, your learning, and your past experiences.
- **Adaptability and initiative:**
You will be someone who is resilient to change and is comfortable with the unexpected. You are willing to take initiative even when you're doing something new to you.
- **Communication:**
You will be someone who can communicate effectively and respectfully with people from different backgrounds and with different ability levels, some of whom may be nonverbal.

There are three stages to the process:

1. **You submit an application by answering the brief questions on our online form. Please note there are different application inboxes for each Community; please choose one to apply to and indicate in your application if you are interested in multiple locations and we will bear that in mind.**
2. **We invite you to visit the Community in-person for an interview. There are two stages to this interview: first, a standard spoken interview; second, an immersive interview where you join the activities in a house or workshop for a few hours. This is a chance for us to get to know you and see how you reflect the attributes we're looking for, and for you to see what life in a community is like. We will reimburse all reasonable travel costs.**
3. **Subject to an acceptable criminal records check and references, we offer you the role.**

QUESTIONS?

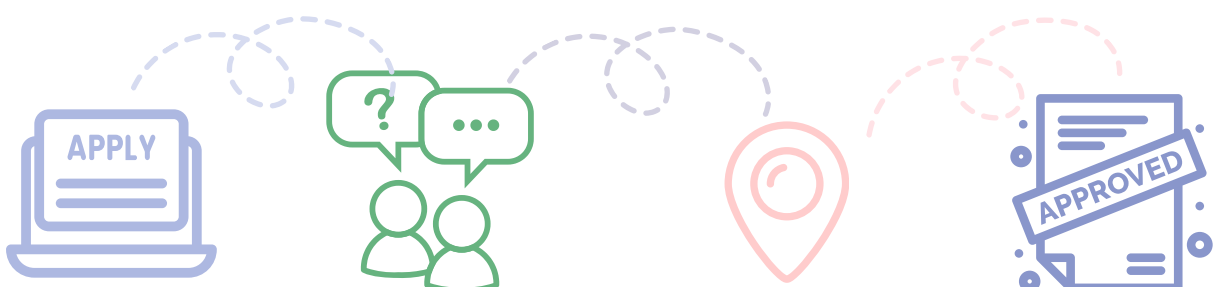
If you have any questions for us, come along to one of our drop-in Zoom Q&As with one of our facilitators on all Thursdays in May, June and July at 4pm. Register here: bit.ly/larche_intern_reg



EXTRA SUPPORT

If you want some support with preparing your application, have a look at this page on our website.

www.larche.org.uk/how-we-recruit



Key Words

Accompanier

An accompanier is someone who you meet 1-2-1 monthly to reflect confidentially about your experience and learning in L'Arche. They are someone who is experienced in helping people to reflect and often has significant experience of life in community.

Assistant

The overarching term for people who live in our houses and work on rota. Live-outs (people who don't live in L'Arche but spend their days with us) are usually called support workers. You would be called a 'live-in', an 'assistant', or an 'intern'.

Care

Care is at the centre of the human experience. It includes everything from relationship, to love, to professional support. We believe good care is grounded in relationship, and is something done with people rather than to people.

Care certificate / Super Certificate

The nationally recognised care qualification that all our assistants earn.

Core member

L'Arche's term for our members with learning disabilities.

Intentional community

A group of people who commit to living by a shared set of values.

Learning disability

A learning disability affects the way a person learns new things throughout their life. It can be different for everyone and may be caused by things such as brain development, genes, or health conditions.

Reflective practice

'Learning through and from experience towards gaining new insights of self and practice.' (Linda Finlay, 2008)

Rota

Other employers might call this a 'shift' but we find this phrase too transactional. Your rota is when you are scheduled to be supporting a core member. You might say you're 'on rota' or you are 'rota-ed' or that you 'have your rota for next week'.

L'Arche Internship

A year-long programme of living in a L'Arche community which combines supporting people with learning disabilities, community-building, and a reflective practice programme.

Spirituality

The practice of connecting deeply to yourself, other people and the wider world, and whatever you believe is beyond us, be that God, nature, the universe, or something else. Some of us practice our spirituality through worship and rituals like going to church or praying, others through practices like walking, being silent, creating, or being with other people. In L'Arche, we believe everyone has a spirituality but what this looks like varies depending on your faith background.



“

*The community is a bit like a family;
it has been incredible to experience
the vulnerability that comes with
recognising your interdependence
with other people.*

*We experience joy, laughter, and
sadness every day in L'Arche.*

”

Funmi, L'Arche Manchester

