



Into Further Education 2017

For anyone with learning, health
or disability issues



Free to download

Printed copies £3.99

Into Apprenticeships

The guide for disabled people

Doing an apprenticeship is a great way to earn a salary, get qualifications and develop your career. This guide is designed to help disabled people, parents and advisers answer the key questions about applying for apprenticeships in England.

The guide includes:

- The benefits of an apprenticeship, how to apply, find vacancies, and what support is available in the workplace
- Case studies where disabled students write about their own experiences
- A resources section listing helpful websites, publications and organisations

“We wrote Into Apprenticeships to deal with all the common questions we receive about how to find an apprenticeship and whether the training will be accessible. The stories written by disabled apprentices about their experiences are really inspiring and we hope this guide will help you make the right choices and get the support you need”

Tony Stevens, Careers guidance specialist and adviser

You can buy our publications online at www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Disability Rights UK: CAN Mezzanine, 49-51 East Road, London N1 6AH. Telephone 0207 250 8181. Registered charity No 1138585



Expert training and advice for colleges and universities

Disability Rights UK is a registered charity with expert trainers and advisers on disability issues. We have a unique perspective as we are led by disabled people and support people across the UK with every type of impairment.

Our services for education providers include:

- Disability Confidence and Equality Act training
- Benefits training for student advisers in FE or HE
- Disability advice line services for employees and HR professionals
- Membership packages including access to our range of helplines and free copies of our education publications

For more information please contact:

Jason Jaspal

Telephone: 020 7250 8182

jason.jaspal@disabilityrightsuk.org

Into Further Education 2017

| | |
|-----------|---|
| ● Preface | 2 |
|-----------|---|

SECTIONS

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| 1 Introduction | 3 |
| 2 Choosing your course | 7 |
| 3 Returning to education | 11 |
| 4 Funding in further education | 15 |
| 5 Work experience | 21 |
| 6 Being open about your disability | 25 |
| 7 Getting support on your course | 29 |
| 8 After you start | 31 |

RESOURCES

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| ● Websites | 35 |
| ● Publications | 36 |
| ● Organisations | 37 |

STUDENT STORIES

| | |
|-------------------|----|
| ● Peter Mackman | 10 |
| ● Chloe Smith | 14 |
| ● Declan Ball | 16 |
| ● Gagandeep Kaur | 26 |
| ● Daryl Jones | 28 |
| ● Jonathon Lennon | 32 |

Preface

Further education offers lots of exciting opportunities for adults as well as young people straight from school. This publication is for anyone with a health condition, learning difficulty or disability thinking about studying in further education in England.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Into Further Education aims to answer common questions such as whether colleges will be accessible to disabled students, how to choose a course and what support will be available.



In the student stories, six people living with a health condition, learning difficulty or disability write about their own positive experiences, as well as any challenges they have faced. They provide a valuable insight into what it's like being a disabled student studying in further education.

As well as taking advantage of the support on offer, the students talk about the importance of their own creativity, perseverance and motivation.

The guide also contains a useful resources section listing further websites, publications and organisations which can help.

Further education is a great way to improve your skills, gain qualifications and develop your career. The personal and social benefits of learning can also help you to fulfil your potential and have more choice and control in your life.


Disability Rights UK supports the right of disabled people to participate in and benefit from learning at any age. We hope that Into Further Education will help you make the right decisions and get any support you need.

This guide sits alongside our other publications Into Higher Education and Into Apprenticeships which encourage people living with a disability, health condition or learning difficulty to go to university or do an apprenticeship.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to everyone who assisted with this publication, the students who shared their stories and people who helped find them.

For free information and advice for anyone living with a health condition, learning difficulty or disability, visit the Disability Rights UK website. The How we can help area contains information about education, skills and employment.

 www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Introduction

Further education in 2017 can provide a fresh start, different ways of learning and the chance to gain new skills. Whatever your age, further education can open up more career opportunities and make it easier to find a job that you'll enjoy.

WHAT IS FURTHER EDUCATION?

There are a number of ways you can stay in education and increase your skills, knowledge and qualifications when you leave school. Most people also need to update their skills as adults to find work, move into a new job, or to learn a new hobby.

The great things about further education include its variety and flexibility and a strong commitment to supporting all students to fulfil their potential. Almost any kind of course can be made accessible and having a health condition or disability should not restrict your choices.

Don't be put off by people assuming you can't do something because of your impairment.

- Visually impaired students can take graphic design courses
- Deaf people can study music
- People with dyslexia can train to support teaching and learning in schools

Colleges, 6th form colleges, training centres, adult and community education centres and local voluntary organisations all run programmes and courses.

FE colleges

Local colleges are often called FE colleges. They provide a wide range of courses, both academic and vocational, for young people and adults of all ages, both full and part-time, day and evening. Sometimes they have more than one site, with some programmes available in smaller local community centres and others on a large campus.

Colleges often have links with companies so that students studying vocational courses can combine classroom learning with work experience. They all produce a prospectus, usually online, where you can find out what courses they run, entry requirements and how to apply.

6th form colleges

6th form colleges also offer programmes suitable for young people who have recently left school after Year 11 or 12. They don't run courses for adults over 19. Not all areas have 6th form colleges because the schools themselves have 6th forms. They normally specialise in academic courses to help prepare students for higher education.

Training centres

Training centres or providers are usually smaller than FE colleges or 6th form colleges. They often work with colleges and employers to provide practical training. They specialise in work-related courses and typically offer apprenticeships and traineeships which allow you to get skills training and qualifications on a part-time basis. As an apprentice you can study while working in a real paid job. Traineeships involve high quality work experience. Some colleges also offer apprenticeships and traineeships, so you need to research all of them to decide which provider is best for you.



Community learning

Community learning takes place in local venues such as libraries, community centres, local schools in the evenings, or at a college. They usually offer short courses and part-time options, both day and evening.

Voluntary organisations

Courses to help people with a particular need, like finding accommodation, help with personal finances or finding a job are sometimes run by voluntary organisations. They tend to be smaller local organisations that know the area well, and are particularly expert in helping the people they focus on. This includes local Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs).

Specialist colleges

There are also some specialist colleges which support day and residential students. They employ a wide range of specialist staff such as assistive technology experts, physiotherapists and speech and language therapists.

Many students significantly develop their independent living skills alongside vocational or academic skills with work experience. They can move on to live in their own or shared homes without relying on their parents to provide all their care needs.

WHY GO TO COLLEGE OR TRAINING?

There is strong evidence that higher or work-related qualifications open up more career opportunities and make it easier to find a job that you'll enjoy.

Employers like young people to show they have the practical skills and experience which many college courses now provide. Adults can also take the opportunity to retrain for other jobs.

Further education can also help you learn independent travel and living skills to give you more choice about where you live and your care and support.

Going to an FE college can enable you to move on to university and have the opportunity to live away from home for the first time.

30% of students who enter higher education come through FE rather than straight from school.

Even if you want to leave full-time education after completing Year 11, FE can help you combine part-time learning with working or volunteering at least 20 hours per week.



Further education can make all of these possible, for adults with previous work experience as well as young people straight from school. Further education can provide a fresh start, new opportunities, different ways of learning and the chance to gain new skills.

LEVELS AND QUALIFICATIONS

There are many different qualifications to choose. These include:

- **Entry Level and Level 1 Courses**
Entry Level Awards, Diplomas and Certificates. These are all included in Foundation Learning programmes.
- **Basic Skills**
Skills for life, Functional Skills in English, maths and ICT, Essential Skills, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).
- **Vocational/work-related courses**
OCR Nationals in applied subjects, National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), BTEC Awards, Diplomas and Certificates and tech levels.
- **Academic Courses**
GCSEs, AS and A levels, International Baccalaureate.
- **Access courses**
Access to Higher Education Diplomas provide a good grounding in the knowledge and study skills needed to succeed in higher education. These are equivalent to A levels, but for people who haven't studied for a while.

As well as qualifications, study programmes for young people can also include work experience such as Supported Internships, traineeships and progression to apprenticeships. These are described in Section 5.

There are thousands of community learning courses for adults covering all kinds of subjects such as introductory IT, cooking on a budget, health and well-being, photography, car maintenance or learning another language.

Family Learning can help you learn alongside supporting your children.

These are often quite short courses. They don't usually lead to a formal qualification but are ideal for developing an interest or getting back into education after a break.

Comparing qualifications

The table on the following page shows the level of some of the most common qualifications available for young people leaving school and adults with work experience. Qualifications in England are grouped into levels, from entry level to level 8.

The table includes some common examples of past and present qualifications and their level on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RCF). This framework is used by colleges and employers to help compare the level of difficulty and content of different qualifications. It also helps you see how one qualification can allow you to progress to another. You can also search the Register of Regulated Qualifications at www.gov.uk/find-a-regulated-qualification to find out if a qualification is officially recognised and what level it is on the framework.

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)

NVQs are nationally recognised work-related qualifications which are available to anyone at any age or stage of their career. Flexible and accessible NVQs can be tailored to your particular role allowing you to gain recognition for your existing skills. This can be useful for adults who have significant work experience but no related qualification. NVQs also give you the opportunity to gain a qualification in a broader range of expertise. How well you do the job is what counts, more than general academic ability.

| Level | Qualification examples |
|--------------|--|
| Entry levels | Entry Level Award, Certificate, Diploma English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Skills for Life Functional Skills (English, maths, ICT) Essential Skills |
| Level 1 | GCSEs (grades D-G) Award, Certificate, Diploma (City & Guilds, CACHE, OCR, BTEC/ Edexcel/Pearson ¹) English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) NVQ Level 1 First Certificate Functional Skills Essential Skills Music (grades 1-3) |
| Level 2 | GCSEs (grades A*-C) O Levels (grades A-C) Award, Certificate, Diploma (City & Guilds, CACHE, OCR, BTEC/ Edexcel/Pearson ¹) English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) NVQ Level 2 National Certificate/Diploma Intermediate Apprenticeship ² Functional Skills Essential Skills Music (grades 4-5) |
| Level 3 | A Levels (grades A-E) AS Levels Award, Certificate, Diploma (City & Guilds, CACHE, OCR, BTEC/ Edexcel/Pearson ¹) Tech levels Technical Baccalaureate (TechBacc) Access to Higher Education Diploma Foundation Diploma (Art and Design) NVQ Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship ² National Certificate/Diploma International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Music (grades 6-8) |
| Level 4 | Higher National Certificate (HNC) Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) NVQ Level 4 ³ Higher Apprenticeship ² |
| Level 5 | Higher National Diploma (HND) Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) Foundation Degree |
| Level 6 | Degree with Honours (eg BA Hons, BSc Hons) Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma Ordinary Degree (without Honours) |
| Level 7 | Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma Master's Degree (eg MA, MSc, MBA, MPhil) Integrated Master's Degree (eg MEng) Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) NVQ Level 5 ³ |
| Level 8 | Doctorate (eg PhD, DPhil, EdD, DClínPsy) |

Comparing qualifications

There is a wide range of qualifications available for young people leaving school and adults with work experience. This table is only a guide. The National Careers Service can answer any questions you may have about your own qualifications, the education and training choices available and any funding implications.

References

- 1 There is more than one awarding body for these qualifications – these are listed as examples.
- 2 Apprenticeships are work-based training schemes, which include a qualification and can be accredited at Levels 2, 3 or 4.

See Section 5 and our Into Apprenticeships guide.
(www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/2014/april/our-new-apprenticeships-guide)
- 3 Many NVQ Level 5s expect you to be working at management level. You may have a Level 7 postgraduate qualification but be doing NVQ Level 5 through a professional body (or even NVQ Level 4 if you don't have much work experience).

Choosing your course

Further education courses come in all shapes and sizes. It's important to make an early start on researching all the options. Talk to other people, including professional advisers, if you need help finding the right education provider or career path.

FINDING OUT ABOUT COURSES

If you're under 25, your local authority must identify education, social support and health care services in your area and make this information available in an information directory called the Local Offer. You can search for services, schools and colleges in the Local Offer directory. This has to be available online and in other formats so everyone can use the information. The Local Offer should be up-to-date and comprehensive. The local authority also has to provide an information and advice service to support you and your parents.

It will also be useful to talk to friends, parents, school staff, support workers and careers advisers – as many different people as possible.

Once you have a list of local colleges, 6th form colleges and training providers from the Local Offer, you can check out what courses they offer using their websites and prospectuses.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

If you're currently at school, you need to start thinking about what courses might interest you well before you leave.

Find out as much as possible so you can make your choices based on what you know and how well they suit your strengths and interests. It's important to visit colleges and training providers, ideally more than a year before you may want to go there. Before visiting a college think about what you would like to find out, the questions to ask and the people you would like to meet. You may want to visit the college with a friend or relative with whom you can discuss important issues later.

Whatever your age, you should find out the entry requirements and if there is an application deadline.



It's important to know what funding will be available – Section 4 has detailed information on this. You may need to think about how you would travel to the college or training provider, the travelling time involved and any arrangements you will need to make. If you need independent travel training or extra mobility support, find out what the college or your local authority can provide.

If you need social or health care at college, you'll need to discuss your needs with your local authority and college staff. It's important they can work closely with social or health services, for example speech and language, physiotherapy or personal care.

All colleges have a Disability Adviser or Student Services team. Tell them about any adjustments or additional support you've already had with your learning. They can help you think through what you need for a college environment or particular course. They may be able to suggest other types of assistance. The process of getting support is described in more detail in Section 7.

Sometimes it's difficult to find a local provider with the specialist expertise you need. Many local colleges work closely with staff at Special schools or specialist colleges so you can go to a local course but still have specialist support. Some students go to a specialist college for part of their training then complete their qualification locally. Check what partnerships exist in your area. The Local Offer has to include specialist colleges from an approved government list called Section 41.

Make sure to tell your school and local authority which course and college you'd prefer at any meetings from Year 9 onwards. This includes any annual reviews if you have a Statement or an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan.

The Children and Families Act 2014 provides for many aspects of the support system described here. Recommended resources such as Council for Disabled Children information for young people are listed in the Resources section at the back.

EHC ASSESSMENTS AND PLANS

Since September 2014, young people with a Statement of special educational needs (SEN), who are leaving school, will have a review in their last year. This should help clarify:

- what you want to do when you leave school and in the future, including your job ideas
- which college or training provider you prefer
- what social and health care you need
- where you want to live
- what support you need
- who will be your key worker and what steps everyone will take next

The review will draw together all the professionals who've worked with you already. It should also include college staff if you're considering moving on to a college or training provider. They'll work with you to assess your support needs, with reference to the specific course you choose and its work experience and assessment methods.

After the review, if you previously had a Statement, you're likely to have an EHC plan summarising your support needs. You can name the college, training provider or specialist college you want in your plan. In most cases the local authority must follow your wishes. They have a duty to 'secure' the place you want and a general responsibility to ensure 'suitable provision' in the area for all young people aged 16 to 19 and possibly up to 25 for those with an EHC plan.

You can also request a Child's Needs Assessment from adult social services at any time while you're planning your future options. This means you should know what type of support they'll make available when you're 18, and the likely budget allocation.

If you have an EHC plan you can request a personal budget. Personal budgets can give you greater choice and control about how you buy your support whilst you're studying. For more information visit:
www.disabilityrightsuk.org/personal-budgets

If you don't agree with the college or course your local authority is offering, you can appeal to the local authority or First Tier Tribunal. You and your parents can also discuss reaching agreement with a mediator.

If you don't have an EHC plan

Not everyone with a special educational need or disability will have an EHC plan. However you may still need extra help, for example with organising work, note taking, extra time, regular rest periods or a quiet exam area.

Your school or college has a responsibility to make sure you're supported to achieve your best and participate in the full curriculum. This includes school trips and social events. They must also help you understand the full range of options available when you leave school and help you make an informed choice.

How to get an EHC plan

If you need extra support when you leave school, but don't have a Statement or an EHC plan, you can request an assessment from your local authority. You can do this any time up to age 25. Some people first develop a health condition or disability in their teens, so need different help when leaving school. Other people may find a college or training centre environment more difficult compared to the routine of school, for example work experience placements or assignment deadlines. The local authority must tell you within six weeks if they're going to do an assessment leading to an EHC plan. You can appeal if they don't agree to carry out an EHC assessment or issue a plan.

You can get help from your local Information Advice and Support (IAS) service and Independent Supporters. IAS services have a duty to provide information, advice and support to disabled children and young people, and their parents. Every local authority in England should have an IAS service. Contact details for IAS and Independent Supporters should be in your Local Offer.

CAREERS ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Careers advice and guidance can assist you to think through what your strengths are and what you enjoy doing. It can help you understand what skills different jobs require, and the training routes to develop those skills. It should also inform you about what local opportunities exist, how to apply and what support you can expect.

Careers advisers can't tell you what's best. However they can assist you to think through all the options and find relevant information to help you make up your mind. They should also be able to put you in touch with the Disability Adviser at college, local employers and training providers.



Schools must make sure all Year 8 to Year 13 pupils receive independent careers guidance. Colleges have a similar duty to provide guidance for all students up to age 25 who have an EHC plan. Careers guidance should include information about all the opportunities available – at school, college, apprenticeships and jobs with training. The advice and guidance should be impartial and promote your 'best interests'.

Schools must give you an outside perspective, for example through providing an external careers adviser, organising college and employer visits or using websites and helplines. Colleges can also provide careers advice and guidance; when you apply, during your course and when you leave the college.

The National Careers Service provides careers advice through text, webchat, email and a telephone helpline to everyone aged 13 and over. If you're aged 19 or over (or 18 and receiving an out-of-work benefit) you can also get face-to-face advice. The website includes a section for young people with advice on choosing GCSEs, going to college or university, apprenticeships and traineeships.

National Careers Service

To contact the National Careers Service:

T 0800 100 900

W nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

Peter Mackman

Access to Higher Education Diploma,
Westminster Kingsway College

I'm currently taking on a Level 3 Access to Health and Human Sciences course, as well as IGCSE double science and geography. I'm also re-doing a higher tier mathematics GCSE to hopefully improve my previous B grade to an A grade. An A grade for GCSE mathematics means a lot to me, because it shows that the more difficult higher tier exams were taken.



I wouldn't be where I am today were it not for all the brilliant teachers at Westminster Kingsway College. Last year I was an inpatient at The London Autistic Spectrum Centre receiving care and support to learn new skills and coping strategies. The treatment I received at this Centre was excellent and I was supported by the multidisciplinary team to restart my education. I already had five good GCSE grades, three high AS grades and two good A-Level grades.

Even though I have some disabilities, the support I've received at Westminster Kingsway College makes me feel well equipped to succeed.

My disabilities don't stop me continuing to do well on the courses I'm taking. I've so far obtained two passes and three merits on the Access to Health and Human Sciences course. I'm taking the IGCSE's exams in the Excel Centre in Stratford. I've never taken on this amount of academic responsibility in the past, so I know that all the support I'm receiving is of the highest standard.

“

Once you've started your course keep optimistic during challenging times, always put in 100% effort and be on time. If you give it your all, you're bound to succeed!

I recently applied to five universities to study geography. I've received an unconditional offer from Birkbeck, University of London. As unconditional offers are a sure security of a good university place, I wasted no time in accepting the offer. I've always had a strong interest in geography and I would like to eventually teach geography in a school or college.

My advice to anyone with a disability who would like to restart their education is; ensure you're receiving the most support you can receive and prepare thoroughly before you take on your course. Proper preparation prevents poor performance.

Once you've started your course, keep optimistic during challenging times, always put in 100% effort and be on time. If you give it your all, you're bound to succeed!

Returning to education

There are many good reasons to take up further education as an adult, including career development, participation in the community and the opportunity to learn valuable life skills. Colleges and training providers welcome people who return to learning later in life and can provide support to help overcome any disability-related barriers.

RETURNING AS AN ADULT


There is a long history of further education for adults in the UK. Colleges and training providers recognise that people who return to education later in life are usually well motivated and bring valuable life experience. They also won't necessarily expect you to meet their minimum entry requirements if you have work experience.

According to research by NIACE (now part of the Learning and Work Institute), one in five adults are currently learning and 41% have taken part in learning in the last three years.

However it's understandable to have concerns about what it will be like, especially if it's a while since you left school or you only recently acquired a health condition or disability.

Being clear about why you want to study or train can help overcome any barriers. This section explains how to get advice from the National Careers Service. There are also some excellent websites listed at the back of this guide.

Disability Rights UK has a publication called *Taking Charge*, which is a general guide to planning and managing your life if you have a disability or health condition. It includes information on 'what you have a right to expect' from services and provides advice on what to do if you don't get what you need. To order a copy visit

 www.disabilityrightsuk.org/takingcharge

Timing is also important. If you've recently developed a physical or mental health condition, just been given a life-changing diagnosis or your health is starting to worsen, there might be lots of other changes going on in your life.

You might need to sort out other things before you're ready to study, such as getting any benefits you're entitled to and making sure your accommodation is secure.

Careers and work

Many disabled people return to education because they want to start learning about a particular area that may lead to a new job.

As the economy starts to recover, further education can be a great way to learn new skills for work. There will be an estimated 13 million job vacancies over the next decade, but only 7 million young people entering the labour market. Adults who can re-train, keep learning new skills and stay in work for longer will be able to fill that gap.

When choosing a new career, it may be useful to reflect on your experiences of disability or any health challenges. For example, overcoming cancer may have given you greater resilience and determination, the ability to manage change and build relationships with people. Alternatively through having a personal budget you might have learned about managing money and planning and managing your own support.



Free to download

Get back to where we do belong

An employment skills guide for people with newly acquired disabilities or health conditions

This guide will help you keep working, get back to work, work differently or learn new skills and find new opportunities.

The guide includes:

- Managing change
- What to expect from employers
- Careers advice, information and advice
- Education and training
- Welfare benefits you might be able to claim
- Getting support from other disabled people

"This document should find its place on every employer's and manager's desk, or better, in their pocket."

Professor Dame Carol Black, Expert Adviser to the government on Health and Work, Chairman of the Nuffield Trust, Principal of Newnham College Cambridge

You can buy our publications online at www.disabilityrightsuk.org



Free to download

Into Higher Education 2017

For anyone with learning, health or disability issues

This guide is designed to help disabled students make the right decisions about studying in higher education. It deals with common questions: whether the college or university will be accessible, how to choose a course and what support will be available.

The guide includes:

- The student finance system, tuition fees, repayment methods and the support that will be in place
- Case studies where disabled students write about their own experiences
- A resources section listing helpful websites, publications and organisations

"A great resource focused on the needs of disabled learners. The case studies are extremely useful, providing an insight into applying to and progressing through university. Highly recommended."

Undergraduate Recruitment and Widening Participation Coordinator, University of Manchester

You can buy our publications online at www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Don't assume that having a physical or mental health condition means certain careers are now closed to you. Some occupations have 'fitness' requirements but even these will usually be fine if you're well enough to work. Disability should not be a reason to restrict your career choice and support should be available in the workplace.

Community participation

As well as skills for work, further education can be a very beneficial step for disabled adults. It can help you to participate in the local community and develop the confidence to take control of your life. Whatever your age, there are courses to help you, for example, re-connect with learning, follow an interest, prepare for more formal classes or learn how to support your children.

Life skills

Life skills include reading, writing, English, maths, using computers and the internet. These are all an important part of lifelong learning and can help you to participate in and contribute to society.

CAREERS ADVICE FOR ADULTS

Professional careers advisers can provide individual advice and support to help you choose or change your career. They can help you reflect on your life experiences so far, identify your transferable skills and match to suitable types of jobs. They can also help you find courses and training schemes and develop an action plan to overcome any barriers you face.

The National Careers Service provides careers advice through its website, an email service and a telephone helpline. Adults aged 19 or over (or 18+ if on out-of-work benefits) can also get face-to-face advice.

T 0800 100 900

W nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

Colleges also provide careers advice and guidance when students apply, during their courses and when they leave the college.

MONEY ISSUES

You might not have to pay tuition fees or at the very least you may get financial help towards the cost. Students aged 19 or above can apply for Advanced Learner Loans to pay the fees for courses at Level 3, 4, 5 and 6. See Section 4 for more on funding for tuition fees.

Whatever your age, if you're taking a course of further education and you have additional needs or costs related to your disability, your college or training provider should be able to help. Speak to the Disability Adviser or Learning Support Adviser. Any extra support you get doesn't depend on your income.

The Disability Rights UK student helpline often receives calls from adult learners worried about losing their welfare benefits. In fact many disabled people take further education courses without any effect on their benefits. You can study part-time and claim benefits as long the basic conditions for the benefit are met. Normally it's fine to study full-time and receive certain means-tested benefits if you already receive a qualifying benefit such as Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP). The rules are described in detail in Section 8.

Some bursary or discretionary hardship funding may be available, including funding for childcare for adults aged 20 upwards.

FESTIVAL OF LEARNING

This campaign celebrates learning and aims to reach and engage more adult learners. There are many ways to get involved, including:

- Nominating inspiring learners, tutors, projects and employers for the Festival of Learning awards.
- Organising 'have a go' events, taster sessions and other learning activities during May and June.
- Celebrating learners and learning throughout the year using the #lovetolearn hashtag.

Chloe Smith

AS levels, King Edward VI College, Stourbridge

Ever since I started my GCSEs I couldn't wait to get to college. Not only did I think that the learning would be more focused and in-depth, but I thought that I'd absolutely love every second. I wasn't wrong. I've been in college for a term now and I love it.

I'm studying English Literature, History and Film Studies at AS level and I love how each course is much more focused and in-depth compared to GCSE. I've also always loved writing – which is a big part of all three courses – and that's what I want to do as a career one day!

College was difficult to begin with – just as it was for everyone else. You have to have a settling in period with anything new.

Now I feel comfortable with the environment and what we're learning. However if I could go back and give myself a piece of advice when I was starting college, taking into account all that I know now, I'd say one thing – expect problems. Not daunting, massive ones but maybe a few, small challenges in the first few weeks.

As a wheelchair user who needs additional support with things like meeting me from lessons and help with my bag, I had the mentality that there would be nothing, no problems.

“

College was difficult to begin with – just as it was for everyone else. Now I feel comfortable with the environment and what we're learning.

However I found that my support was a little late some days or teachers might forget to tell me I needed my word processor or that we were doing an essay. Also my safety in case of a fire had to be clarified.

These things were all sorted with a few meetings. Then that was it – done. So that's why I suggest anyone with a disability should start further education expecting hiccups because then you're already in the right mindset to deal with any that crop up and move on.

Most of all – enjoy it! The settling in period will soon be over and you'll feel like you've always been part of this new place. Trust me. It'll be great – even with the odd hiccup.



“

If I could go back and give myself a piece of advice when I was starting college, taking into account all that I know now, I'd say one thing – expect problems. Not daunting massive ones but maybe a few, small challenges in the first few weeks ... Then you're already in the right mindset to deal with any that crop up and move on.

Funding in further education

It's important to think about funding before you enrol on a course. There are many sources of financial support, depending on the type of course you're doing and your personal circumstances. The information in this section assumes you meet basic eligibility criteria such as nationality, residency and other funding rules.

WHO FUNDS FURTHER EDUCATION

Local further education (FE) and sixth form colleges are independently run, and are sometimes called 'sector' or 'maintained' colleges.

Colleges charge tuition fees for courses and receive money from government funding bodies to run courses and subsidise tuition fees for some students.

In England there are two main funding bodies.

Education Funding Agency (EFA)

The Education Funding Agency (EFA) funds learners between 16 and 19 years old.

For young people with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, funding for providers comes through both the EFA and the local authority. In such cases, funding can extend up to age 25.

Skills Funding Agency (SFA)

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) funds colleges and training providers to offer further education to adult learners aged 19 and over. This includes adults under 25 without an EHC plan, who self-declare a learning difficulty or disability, and those over 25 with an identified support need.

In some geographical areas, there are proposals for the Adult Education Budget, which includes SFA funding, to be gradually transferred to local government areas through devolution agreements.

Colleges and training providers must follow the funding guidelines of these agencies and make sure they are meeting the needs of disabled learners.

FUNDING FOR TUITION FEES

In England you can receive free education up to the age of 19. After that age you may have to pay for your course yourself. However, there are certain groups who may not have to pay any fees or who can at least get some financial help.

If you have an EHC plan, full funding can be extended up to the age of 25. This depends on whether the course meets the aims in your plan.

If you start another course, funding may depend on you progressing or achieving the next level. However in some cases the course can be funded at the same level, for example if it builds on your learning and is necessary for you to achieve the outcomes in your plan.



Declan Ball

The Manchester College, Supported Internship at Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

I had a difficult time through my school years because I moved around and went to lots of different schools. Some teachers treated me nicely, others not so much. I was really scared of making a mess up when going to college.



I visited an open day at the Manchester College; I enjoyed it so I decided to go and enrolled at the college on a Preparation for Independence course.

The staff have been helpful in supporting me with travel training and I have become an independent traveller. I have had extra support in my course with reading, writing and spelling.



“

The advice I would give others is whatever course you go on, stick to it till the end and have a positive attitude.

My best experiences have included a project to mentor ESOL students in understanding English and twice taking part in the Six Book Challenge. I have also enjoyed learning to be independent on public transport as this has helped me develop an active social life. The biggest challenge due to my Aspergers was getting on with a wide range of people in college.

My personal tutor really believed in me and recommended that I should move on to a work-based course called a Supported Internship. This was an excellent choice for me and I feel really proud of myself considering I am working in a new and challenging environment in the hospital.

Before I started I would have liked more links sessions to help me get to know people. But the advice I would give to others is whatever course you go on, stick to it till the end and have a positive attitude.

You may qualify for full funding if you're aged 19-23 and studying:

- Entry Level or Level 1 and don't already have a higher qualification
- Your first full Level 2 qualification
- Your first full Level 3 qualification

You might also qualify for full funding if you're unemployed and studying:

- English for Speakers of Other Languages
- A course to help you progress to Level 2
- Your first full Level 2 qualification

'Unemployed' means someone who is getting Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), Employment and Support Allowance (work-related activity group) or Universal Credit and regarded as unemployed by JobCentre Plus.

Other people who can get full funding:

You can get full funding to take GCSE English or Maths if you don't already hold a grade A*-C in these subjects. (there are different rules for apprentices). Funding is also available for Functional Skills and stepping-stone qualifications to help you get to that level.

If you're not in any of the above groups, you might still get help with course fees up to Level 2. This is at the discretion of the college or training provider and usually depends on you getting benefits. We always recommend asking for help with fees if you can't afford to take a course that would improve your employment prospects.

Advanced Learner Loans

From August 2016 tuition fee loans are available to all learners aged 19 and above for qualifications at levels 3 and 4. Loans are also available for courses at levels 5 and 6 which provide a clear route to develop high-level technical and professional skills. The loans are administered through the Student Loans Company. Course fees in further education vary depending on the type of course and the provider.

You start repaying your loan when you're earning over £21,000 per year. You pay 9% of your income above this level. For example, if your salary is £25,000, you pay 9% of £4,000 (£30 per month) taken through the income tax system.

Some things to bear in mind:

- Interest will continue to be added to your loan whether you're repaying it or not.
- You don't repay anything while you're earning less than £21,000 – this includes if you start repaying but then your income goes down or you lose your job.
- The SLC will write off any outstanding amount for a student who studies an Access to HE course and then moves into and completes a course of higher education.
- After 30 years any remaining debt will be wiped clear.

Funding for apprenticeships

Employers can apply for funding to cover the cost of training an apprentice. At the moment this money goes to the training provider.

The amount depends on your age:

- Age 16-18: fully funded – 100% of the cost paid.
- Age 19-24: usually 50% of the cost paid but will be 100% for apprentices with an EHC plan.
- Age over 24: co-funded.

Apprenticeship funding supports individuals to progress to higher levels of learning. If you already have a qualification at Level 4 or above, you will only be eligible for funding for a higher apprenticeship at Level 5 or above. You won't be eligible for funding for an intermediate level or advanced level apprenticeship.

Extended funding is available for apprentices aged 19-24 who have not been available to enter learning before their 19th birthday, due to exceptional circumstances, including having a serious health condition.



Employer grants (AGE Grant) of up to £1,500 (and up to £2,450 in some geographical areas depending on the size of the employer) are currently available if you're aged 16 to 24 and your employer has less than 50 employees, and the employer has not started an apprentice in the previous 12 months.

From April 2017, some employers will be required to contribute to a new 'apprenticeship levy', and there will be changes to the funding for apprenticeship training for all employers. All employers can benefit from this investment – the funds can potentially be used towards any extra training and assessment costs of disabled apprentices.

FUNDING FOR SUPPORT COSTS

Colleges and training providers are not allowed to turn students away due to the cost of their support, nor are they allowed to charge students for their support. Under the Equality Act 2010, they must make reasonable adjustments to avoid disabled students being placed at a 'substantial disadvantage'. They receive money from the EFA and/or SFA to meet the costs of reasonable adjustments. In colleges this is usually called Learning Support and it is provided in a way to enable them to be flexible in the way they support all their students.

If you're aged 19-24 and have very high support needs you'll likely have an EHC plan and get individual funding from your local authority. If not, the college can apply for extra money called Exceptional Learning Support.

Whatever your situation, you can expect extra disability-related study costs to be covered by the education provider under the Equality Act. Examples of support include:

- additional teaching for students with learning difficulties
- an interpreter for deaf students
- materials in alternative formats
- specialist computer software.

If you need specialist equipment, such as a computer with assistive software, the college should be able to make this available for use on campus. However, it will remain the property of the college and it's unlikely that you'd be able to take these items home.

TRANSPORT

Local authorities

Local authorities must make sure young people aren't prevented from attending college because of transport difficulties.

In England, councils must publish a Transport Policy setting out the support they offer to all young learners aged 16-19. The council also has a duty to encourage and assist disabled young learners with participating in education up to the age of 25. It is therefore good practice for councils to include information about transport arrangements for disabled young learners up to the age of 25.

If you don't feel you're getting enough help with transport, there is no other legal remedy apart from a judicial review. However, you may wish to make a formal complaint to the relevant department at the local authority.

If you have an EHC plan, it should include your transport needs.

Social Services

Under the Care Act 2014, your local Social Services or Social Work Department has a duty to support you with transport. This can include help getting to and from college.

Social Services should carry out an assessment of need and agree a personal budget. It will then be up to you how you spend the budget in your personal support plan. In practice this might sometimes mean a trade-off between spending your budget on personal care needs or transport.

Free and Concessionary Bus Passes

There are free and concessionary Bus pass schemes for disabled people across the UK. The terms and conditions of the schemes vary.

To find out more contact your Local Authority in England, Scotland and Wales or Translink in Northern Ireland.

OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING**16-19 Bursary Fund**

If you're aged between 16 and 19 years and think you might struggle with the costs for full-time education or training you may receive a bursary. The scheme is made up of two elements.

**1: A bursary of £1,200 per year if you're considered to be vulnerable**

You're considered to be vulnerable if you're: in care or a care leaver; getting Income Support or Universal Credit; receiving Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and also getting Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP). If you qualify your school or college will pay you. You can read more about ESA and other benefits in section 8.

2: A discretionary award if you face financial barriers

This can include if you're struggling with the costs of transport, meals, books and equipment. Your college or training provider is responsible for deciding who is eligible, how much to pay and how regularly to pay it. They'll usually want to see evidence, for example a letter about your benefits.

Discretionary Support Funds

Funding bodies give colleges money so that they can make hardship grants to their students. These funds are aimed at helping disadvantaged students with the costs of further education, for example, because they have a low income or have a disability.

Each college has their own policy on who is eligible for funding and what they will provide grants for. Grants can cover the cost of:

- childcare and related transport costs
- course related books and equipment
- transport to and from college
- course field trips
- examination fees.

Contact your Student Support or Welfare Officer at the college for further information and help in applying.

Childcare funding is only available to students aged 20 upwards. If you're 19 years old and need help to pay for childcare costs you should apply to the Care to Learn programme.

To get an application form, contact the Learner Support helpline:

T 0800 121 8989



Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund

There is a bursary fund for students who take out Advanced Learner Loans. This fund provides support similar to Discretionary Learner Support but colleges have flexibility to respond to students' needs and local circumstances. The fund can also be used to support learners with learning difficulties and disabilities, for example support workers, specialist equipment and necessary adjustments under the Equality Act.

Apply to your college or training provider – each one has its own application process. Speak to student services if you need support with your application.

Professional and Career Development Loans

Professional and Career Development Loans are bank loans to pay for courses and training that help with your career or help get you into work. You may be able to borrow between £300 and £10,000.

Loans are usually offered at a reduced interest rate and the government pays the interest while you're studying. You start repaying the loan one month after leaving your course. You should apply three months before starting your course to give the bank enough time to process your application. For more information call the National Careers Service on 0800 100 900 or visit www.gov.uk/career-development-loans/overview.

Charitable trusts

If you have costs which can't be covered by funding from any other sources, you could try applying to a charitable trust such as the Snowdon Trust www.snowdontrust.org. Snowdon bursaries are made for one or two years and can be up to £2,500. Applications for funding can be made from 1 February to 31 August for the academic year starting in September. The panel also meets in October to consider late applications – funds permitting.

For more information

Disability Rights UK produces a free factsheet called Funding from charitable trusts. You can find it on our website:

W www.disabilityrightsuk.org

SPECIALIST COLLEGES

You can ask for a specialist college to be named in an EHC Plan. You don't have to be refused a place at a local FE college before making your request. However the specialist college must be suitable to meet your needs and it should be an 'efficient use of resources'.

Funding for a place at a specialist college will only be considered if your EHC plan review has identified that your needs are best met at a specialist college and this is stated in your Plan. If your Plan names a specialist college which is on the S41 Secretary of State's approved list, the local authority **must** secure the place and the college **must** admit you.

If you have an EHC Plan and don't agree with the named college or course your local authority is offering, you can appeal to the First Tier Tribunal. You and your parents can also discuss reaching agreement with a mediator.

There is no guarantee that the Tribunal will make a decision in time for you to start your course in September. Early negotiation with your local authority on the named college and course is strongly advised.

Work experience

Work experience can help you become aware of jobs you might not have thought of and improve your skills and employment prospects. Adult learners can also benefit from taking up work experience opportunities alongside their studies.

STUDY PROGRAMMES

Study programmes for young people should include academic or vocational qualifications and a substantial amount of work experience. You'll also be expected to continue with English and maths if you haven't yet achieved a GCSE A*-C in that subject.

Programmes for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities can focus on work preparation training including Supported Internships or traineeships.

Supported Internships

Supported Internships are only available to disabled young people aged between 16 and 24 who have a statement of special educational needs, a Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan.

On a Supported Internship, you'll spend most of your time in the workplace doing a real job. You'll also have a personal study programme. The internship can help you with your long-term career goals by giving you new skills and real job experience. Supported Internships are especially helpful if you want to improve your confidence. You receive support from an expert job coach to learn more about a particular job role. The internship usually lasts for a year and includes an unpaid work placement for at least six months.

All FE colleges, sixth forms and independent specialist providers in England can offer Supported Internships as part of their learning programme for disabled students.

Traineeships

Traineeships are designed to prepare you for paid employment by helping you to become 'work ready'. They include work preparation training, maths and English and work experience to help you move into a job or apprenticeship.

The advantages of traineeships include that they give you real work experience, knowledge, confidence and skills to succeed at work. Employers should give you an 'exit interview' when you finish, or a job interview if a role becomes available. You also get a reference at the end of the placement.

You won't usually get paid on a traineeship but employers are encouraged to cover expenses such as transport and meals. (subject to benefit rules).

Traineeships are available in England for young people aged 16 to 24, or up to the age of 25 with an EHC plan. They run for up between six weeks and six months.



APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprenticeships can be a great, direct route to getting a skilled career. They allow those aged 16 and over to receive practical training by working in a real paid job at the same time as studying.

As an apprentice you will:

- work alongside experienced staff
- gain the skills necessary for work
- study for a particular qualification
- earn a wage

**Types of apprenticeships**

The main levels of apprenticeship are:

- Intermediate Level: level 2 – equivalent to five GCSE passes at grade A* to C.
- Advanced Level: level 3 – equivalent to two A Levels.
- Higher Apprenticeships: levels 4 to 7 – equivalent to a foundation degree and above.
- Degree apprenticeships: levels 6 to 7 – equivalent to a full bachelor's or master's degree.

Apprenticeships include jobs in:


- Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care
- Arts, Media and Publishing
- Business Administration and Law
- Construction, Planning and the Built Environment
- Education and Training
- Engineering and Manufacturing
- Technologies
- Health, Public Services and Care
- Information and Communication Technology
- Leisure, Travel and Tourism
- Retail and Commercial Enterprise

How much do apprentices earn?

Apprentices who are between 16 and 18 or those who are 19 or over but in their first year of an apprenticeship are entitled to a minimum wage of £3.30 per hour. After the first year those aged 18 to 20 earn £5.30 per hour and those aged 21 and over earn £6.70. These are the minimum wages and some apprentices earn significantly more. In 2014 weekly earnings averaged £257 for level 2 and 3 apprentices and £480 for level 4 and 5 apprentices.

For more information

To read more about apprenticeships visit:

 www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships

Training

Apprenticeships are designed with the help of employers in the industry. They offer a carefully structured programme that takes you through the skills you need to do a job well.

Most of your training takes place 'on the job' working with a mentor to learn job specific skills in the workplace. The rest takes place at a local college or training provider. You usually complete this 'off-the-job' training one day per week. It could also be done over a number of days in a block.

Most apprenticeships include the following qualifications:

- An appropriate work-based qualification such as a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at either Level 2, Level 3 or Level 4.
- A technical qualification such as a BTEC or City & Guilds progression award (relevant to the specific apprenticeship).
- A knowledge based qualification such as a higher national certificate (HNC), higher national diploma (HND) or a foundation degree.
- Functional Skills Qualification in Maths and English and an ICT qualification if required by the sector.

Colleges and training providers work with employers to help them recruit apprentices and support your training.

It's a good idea to contact local colleges to find out what vacancies they're recruiting for. Your Careers Adviser should also be able to recommend training providers in your area.

You can ask the college or training provider questions to help decide if they're right for you. For example:

- Can they help you to find and apply for an apprenticeship that suits your skills and interests?
- What support with your disability will they provide during your apprenticeship?
- Do they offer any alternative routes such as Supported Internships or traineeships?
- Can they help and advise you on next steps after you successfully complete your apprenticeship?

For more information

The Disability Rights UK publication *Into Apprenticeships* has detailed information on finding and applying for apprenticeships.

 www.disabilityrightsuk.org/sites/default/files/pdf/IntoApprenticeships.pdf

SUPPORT DURING WORK EXPERIENCE

On a study programme or apprenticeship, the college or training provider should take the lead in helping you. You could be spending a substantial amount of time in the workplace so it's important that support is tailored to your job role. You might also need to discuss with the employer the best way of supporting you.

Depending on the type of work experience, employers may have to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people. This means that, as well as not discriminating against you, they're expected to provide support and make changes to the workplace.



Common reasonable adjustments include:

- making adjustments to buildings
- flexible working hours
- providing specialist equipment
- changing parts of your job description
- job coach.

In the case of Supported Internships, traineeships and apprenticeships, the Access to Work scheme can help make sure that support costs are not a barrier to gaining work experience.

Access to work

Access to Work is a government scheme run by Jobcentre Plus. It can help in a number of ways, for example by paying towards:

- communication support at interviews
- special equipment to suit your needs
- a support worker or job coach to help you in your workplace
- additional costs of taxi fares if you can't use public transport to get to work
- disability awareness training for your work colleagues.

Access to Work can cover all of the agreed costs for anyone starting a Supported Internship, traineeship or apprenticeship.

Your college or training provider should be able to help coordinate your Access to Work support.

To get help from Access to Work, call or visit the website below. An adviser will then contact you and your employer to find out what support is needed.

T 0345 268 8489

W www.gov.uk/access-to-work/how-to-claim



OTHER TYPES OF WORK EXPERIENCE

There are lots of other ways you can look for work experience alongside your further education course.

Volunteering

Volunteering is a great way to learn skills and meet new people. There are many organisations looking for people to give their time.

There tends to be greater flexibility in working arrangements when volunteering. Opportunities can vary from a few hours a month to full time.

Make sure you agree the time commitment before you start. Find out also what training the organisation will provide and if they will cover expenses such as travel or lunch. While there is less obligation for the organisation to support you, one of the great things about volunteering is that it's a partnership. You and the organisation work out what's best between you and you'll find most organisations are very supportive.

Jobcentre Plus programmes

If you're out of work and claiming benefits, there are various Jobcentre Plus schemes that can improve your chances of finding work. These include volunteering opportunities through the Work Together programme and work trials. You may be able to get help from Jobcentre Plus for costs related to work experience such as travel and childcare.

Finding your own work experience

You can look for work experience, including voluntary work, using the Do-it website www.do-it.org.uk or by contacting the Prince's Trust www.princes-trust.org.uk to ask about their Team programme or Get Into courses.

When it comes to choosing a placement, think about how much time you can realistically give. It may also be helpful to make a short checklist of what could make the experience rewarding for you, for example:

- build up your confidence
- try out career ideas
- get skills to help you get into paid work
- work for a cause you feel passionately about
- gain experience for your CV
- get a reference.

Being open about your disability

You might be unsure whether to tell the college or training provider about your disability or wondering about the best time to do this. It can be helpful to think about what you expect to happen and who you might tell. The focus should always be on the support you need to overcome any barriers, not the details of your disability or health condition.

WHEN TO MENTION YOUR DISABILITY

Some students are happy to be open about their disability, learning difficulty or health condition because they had support at school.

Colleges and training providers have application forms and online application processes which should give you an early opportunity to tell them about any access or learning support needs.

They should also give you further opportunities to be open about your disability throughout the enrolment and induction process and during your course, for example in the run-up to exams or before you start work experience. Whenever you choose to tell the college or training provider, you should contact the Disability or Learning Support Adviser.

How do I decide whether to tell people?

Remember that it's up to you whether or not you tell people.

It can be hard to be open about your disability, health condition or learning difficulty because:

- You might think people will be less likely to offer you a place or that they'll treat you differently;
- You might not want to be labelled as a 'disabled person';
- You might think your disability makes no difference to your ability to study, so why should anyone else know about it?

However, in further education there are some definite advantages to being open with the college or training provider.

1: The right to equal treatment

Under the Equality Act 2010, all colleges, training providers and employers have a duty to give equal treatment to disabled people. They also have to make changes called 'reasonable adjustments' to help you access the course and any work-based training. If you don't tell them you're disabled, it can be harder to complain if they don't treat you fairly.



2: Funding for support costs

In further education each student's funding assumes an element for support, which includes extra disability-related costs. Similarly the Access to Work scheme can pay towards additional help needed on apprenticeship programmes, Supported Internships or traineeships. Section 7 has more details and examples. If you're open about your impairment, it's usually easier to arrange individual support.

Gagandeep Kaur

Childcare Apprenticeship, West Thames College

I was born in India to hearing parents. It wasn't until I was 3 years old that my parents found out I was Deaf. I had a very lonely start in life being unable to communicate with family or friends.



At school I felt very isolated and cried most days. At home I made up signs desperately wanting my family to understand what I wanted. I remember one day running in very excited trying to get my aunt to understand I'd seen a snake. I pointed to myself, then outside, and made a shape of a snake with my arm and hand. My aunt got very emotional.

I came to England at age 7. The hospital found I was profoundly Deaf in one ear with some hearing in the other. I went to Gifford Primary School which had a Deaf unit. I learnt British Sign Language (BSL) and with a hearing aid I could hear speech even though distorted.

After leaving school I wanted to work with children so looked around for a college with a child care course. I chose West Thames College as it had the best atmosphere and a Disability Support unit which has met my

needs and been so supportive during my time at college. They provided me with a BSL communication support worker and a note taker. I also had one to one support with my English which was very helpful for assignments.

I've completed a Level 1 Child Care Course and a Level 2 Health and Social Care. I did my work placement at my old primary school which was a great experience. I was very involved in helping two Deaf boys with phonics and sign language. My work placement in year 2 was in a nursery with hearing people.

The nursery was so pleased with me, how well I used my initiative and integrated with children and staff, that they offered me an apprenticeship. I'm now at McMillan Nursery Monday to Thursday. On Fridays I go to college where I'm now doing Level 2 Child Care and will continue to Level 3.

“

With the support of a BSL communication support worker, I've been able to achieve the same as any hearing student.

I've excelled since coming to West Thames College and made lots of friends. The students have been very kind and never discriminated against me. In the first year I had one close friend Iqra. Even though we're not on the same course now, we're still best friends. I taught Iqra sign language and she's now fluent.

With the support of a BSL communication support worker, I've been able to achieve the same as any hearing student. I'm no longer a lonely isolated child but an outgoing teenager with lots of confidence.

3: Show your strengths

It's also the case that some of your experiences as a disabled person could make you a stronger candidate for a course or training scheme. You might want to tell education providers how the skills which you've learnt in managing your disability actually make you particularly suitable.

WHO CAN I TALK TO FOR ADVICE?

You could start by talking to whoever is advising you about your next steps. If you're at school, this might be a teacher or the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). Otherwise it might be a Careers Adviser or someone in Job Centre Plus such as the Work Coach. Colleges have support staff called Learning Support Advisers or Disability Advisers and you should be able to have a confidential discussion with them.

WHEN SHOULD I TELL PEOPLE?

Ideally tell people as soon as possible. The earlier colleges and training providers know what you need, the easier it is to put the right support in place.

You might think the course won't present any barriers and decide not to say anything at the beginning. If you find there is a problem later, you should start by talking to whoever at the college or training provider you feel most comfortable with.

If I tell one person about my disability, does it mean that everyone will know?

No. Under the Data Protection Act your personal information should be kept private and confidential. However, it sometimes makes sense for other people to know in order for your support needs to be met. For example, if you need materials in large print, everyone who teaches or manages you will need to be aware of this. It's important that you talk with your tutor about who needs to know and how much they need to know.

What about if I'm asked about my disability on a health questionnaire?

Some courses, for example in health and social care, have 'fitness to practise' rules. You could be asked to fill in a health questionnaire to make sure you can carry out these roles. It's best to give straight and honest answers to these questions. However, no one should assume that having a disability would make you unfit to practise. Colleges and training providers should focus on putting in place any support and reasonable adjustments you need to succeed with your studies.



Daryl Jones

North Warwickshire and Hinckley College,
Vehicle Technician Listers Volkswagen

I'm 17 years old and live in Nuneaton, Warwickshire. I've always had an interest in cars as my dad worked at Jaguar and we regularly attended family open days.



At school I had a Statement of special educational needs because of dyslexia and speech and language difficulties. I find it difficult to concentrate, remember information and follow long instructions. These difficulties affect my self-esteem and I'm hesitant about trying new things.

At school I had to work extra hard and had support throughout year 10 and 11. I completed a Car Maintenance and Repair Level 1 qualification via a Young Apprenticeship with Jaguar Land Rover. Additional support and extra time in exams really helped. When I left school, I enrolled on a Level 2 Motor Vehicle course with North Warwickshire and Hinckley College.

During my further education course I had the opportunity to do a Supported Internship. Initially I was wary but I realised it was an opportunity to prove myself. Following meetings with me, my mum and college staff, an interview was arranged at Listers Volkswagen, a family owned business of 35 years. I was really nervous so a

Job Coach came with me to the interview which really helped.

Listers agreed to a four-week work experience placement at their Nuneaton site. This was successful and led to a full internship placement. The staff were very supportive and agreed to break down and list instructions clearly so I didn't forget things. I still make notes constantly. During the internship, with my manager's help, I applied for an apprenticeship position. There were four applicants and I was the successful one!

“

I always had to work harder than others to get to the same level but that work now seems to be paying off.

I still get confused with some of the technical work and find it a stressful when the workshop has multiple jobs with lots of instructions and tight deadlines. The other Listers technicians I work with are patient and understanding. They constantly teach me new things and don't mind me asking questions. I've already attended an open day at the VW National Learning Centre in Milton Keynes, where I'll complete my block release apprenticeship training for five weeks per year. I'm still a bit quiet but my confidence has increased and I felt a huge amount of pride when I signed off my very first job card. I also recently passed a Level 2 assessment in diagnostic testing.

I always had to work harder than others to get to the same level but that work now seems to be paying off. I would advise anyone who wants to succeed in anything to work hard, get as many qualifications as you can and get a good grounding through work experience and voluntary work.

Getting support on your course

Education providers offer a range of services in addition to the teaching or training arrangements. These include learning support or disability advice services. As well as wanting all students to fulfil their potential, most colleges and training providers have a good understanding of their duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled learners.

If you have a disability, you may need extra support to help you successfully complete your course or training.

The legal definition of disability is very broad and includes specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, medical conditions, visual or hearing impairments, and mental health conditions such as depression.

You don't have to accept the word 'disability' as a label, but it can be used as a way to get support. It's important to remember that anyone can ask for help.

HOW DO I GET SUPPORT FROM THE COLLEGE OR TRAINING PROVIDER?

All colleges and most large training providers have staff members responsible for supporting disabled students. They are usually called the Learning Support Adviser or Disability Adviser. You should be able to have a confidential discussion with them about your individual needs.

Some colleges will arrange a more formal needs assessment. This is a face-to-face meeting with someone who understands how to support disabled students, including those with health conditions or learning difficulties. The assessor can make additional recommendations, with your agreement, and write a report summarising the support you need.

If you have an Education, Health and Care plan it can be shared with the college to help them provide the necessary support.

Support can include many different things, for example:

- specialist equipment, such as a voice-activated computer
- sign-language interpreters
- digital recorder for keeping notes
- extra tutorial help
- changing the height of desks
- providing handouts on different colour paper, or in a larger font.



The level of support depends on the nature of your disability and the course of study.

Under the Equality Act 2010, colleges and training providers have to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students. This means that, as well as not discriminating against you in the application process, they're expected to provide support and make changes to help you learn. They receive money from their funding bodies to pay for extra support that learners might need. This funding is described in more detail in section 4.

For more information

Our factsheet *Adjustments for disabled students* contains lots of suggestions on the kinds of support that might be helpful.

www.disabilityrightsuk.org/adjustments-disabled-students



GETTING SUPPORT FOR EXAMS

In further education, most qualifications such as Functional Skills, GCSEs, A levels, BTEC Awards and NVQs are awarded by ‘external’ exam bodies. You have the right to ‘reasonable adjustments’ in exams. This means that colleges, training providers and exam bodies have a duty to make certain changes so you’re not disadvantaged

Exam support for students with a health condition, learning difficulty or disability can include many different things, for example:

- Extra time to complete the exam
- Supervised rest breaks if you have fatigue or side effects of any health treatment
- Someone to read the questions or write down your answers
- Specialist equipment such as a laptop or voice recognition software
- Taking the exam somewhere else, for example at home or in a separate room at college
- Assessment of coursework instead of a timed written exam.

Exam boards usually call these changes ‘access arrangements’. The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), which includes the seven largest providers of qualifications in the UK, describes how changes in arrangements should enable you ‘to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment’.

This means you still have to meet the standard, but exam boards can change the way they ask you to show your skills and knowledge.


You should make your request for adjustments through the place where you’re studying. Your education or training provider should contact you in the run up to exams if they know about your disability. However it’s best if you’re proactive in telling them about any extra support you need.

If you’re under 18, a parent or guardian can contact your school or college on your behalf to discuss exam support. In some circumstances, in order to comply with the Data Protection Act, the education provider may ask your permission to do this.

At college the Learning Support Adviser or Disability Adviser should speak to the Exams Officer on your behalf. The exams officer is responsible for liaising with the exam body and putting adjustments in place.

For more information

You can download the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidance on supporting disabled candidates from:

 www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration

After you start

Starting a new course can be very exciting, but you might also feel a bit nervous. Allow yourself time to settle into a routine. If you experience any difficulties connected with your health condition or disability, remember that learning support or disability services are there to help.

When you first go to your college there should be opportunities to meet people and get to know your surroundings. These could include social activities to meet fellow students or tours of the library. You may also have a chance to meet the tutors on your course.

Most students have an enjoyable experience right from the beginning. Sometimes there are practical difficulties but these can usually be resolved without too much trouble.

Talk to the tutors about your progress and any problems you're having with the course. It's not unusual for students to miss classes and fall behind with their work from time to time.

Most student support services can help arrange study support to help you with managing coursework or organising exam revision. However, sometimes students experience difficulties connected with their disability. If this happens to you, remember that learning support or disability services are there to help.

BEING OPEN ABOUT YOUR DISABILITY

If you haven't already told them, you may want to speak to the college about any support you need. The pros and cons of doing this are discussed in Section 6.

If people can see or know you have a disability, you may find they ask questions about it. This can be a good thing if they're asking about the kind of support you need, for example, if you need a larger font size, better lighting or your desk at a different height.

Occasionally you may have to deal with personal questions. People might ask about physical things such as "Can you use your legs?" or "When did you become disabled?". They may not think about less obvious issues – such as the fact that on some days you might feel better than others

If you can relax, this will help other people to relax around you. However, if you feel uncomfortable about anything that's said, speak to the Disability Adviser. You're protected by the Equality Act 2010 against any comments you find offensive.

IF YOUR SUPPORT ISN'T IN PLACE

Sometimes it might take a while to put in place the support you need. It can take a few weeks to get into a routine with interpreters or notetakers. You might need time to learn to use any new equipment or people may not immediately adapt their teaching style enough to meet your needs. Try to be patient at the beginning.



Jonathon Lennon

BTEC National Diploma, Oaklands College

I have high-functioning autism. This has often led to teaching staff spending time clarifying tasks for me. When something isn't clear I sometimes misinterpret what I need to do. This can be a problem when I have to produce a significant amount of work. At secondary school my condition was misunderstood to the detriment of my education. This made me more determined to succeed. I left school with three GCSE's at grades D-G.



For my further education I attended Oaklands College. I first achieved a GNVQ Foundation followed by BTEC First Diploma and National Award in IT. I chose this college because it provided a positive learning environment for young disabled people.

I decided to study IT as I was interested in developing my skills and wanted to find out how computers work. I was very pleased to get a place on the First Diploma as it raised my chances of achieving a bachelor's degree in the future. There was one tutor who was unsympathetic to my learning needs but I worked very hard at convincing them that I had the ability to learn and progress.

Throughout my studies my Transition Worker Ela Nisbet helped me develop my career prospects. I had support to get as much exposure to the world of work as possible. This helped me build my confidence when communicating with people. For me to do well in life, I had to understand my condition and find ways to manage it.

“

I had support to get as much exposure to the world of work as possible. This helped me build my confidence when communicating with people. For me to do well in life, I had to understand my condition and find ways to manage it.

Following my achievements at Welwyn Garden City campus, I moved to the Art and Design Department at St Albans City campus. I found the tutors here more sympathetic. I took another BTEC National Diploma in Interactive Media because I wanted to develop myself as a creative computer user. During my last two years I was elected as a Student Representative. I was responsible for dealing with issues raised by fellow students and suggesting improvements for the college's intranet. After completing my course with a triple distinction I received the Chair's award in recognition of my achievements. I also passed my Functional Skills Maths and English Level 2 in order to progress to university.

Looking back it seems that, whenever I had the full support, encouragement and understanding of tutors and mentors, my experience of further education tended to be very good. I was able to achieve good grades, valuable skills and greater self-confidence and gain a place at the University of Hertfordshire to study Interactive Media Design.

At the same time, talk to your college or training provider about your progress and let them know of any difficulties, especially if you start to fall behind. Don't wait until it becomes a big problem.

THE EQUALITY ACT

The Equality Act 2010 has been mentioned a few times already in this guide. This is the law that protects people against discrimination. It covers all areas of studying including applying, exams and work placements.


Colleges and training providers must not discriminate against you either directly or indirectly, or for any reason connected with your disability. You are also protected against harassment and victimisation. They should make reasonable adjustments to make sure that you're not disadvantaged during your course.


If you feel that a college or training provider has discriminated against, you can contact the Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS) for information and advice. The EASS can support you to resolve the issue informally. In some cases they may write to a college or training provider on your behalf to try and bring about a resolution.

 www.equalityadvisoryservice.com

For more information

The Disability Rights UK Student Helpline can give you advice on informal ways to resolve the situation and how to make a complaint if necessary.

 0800 328 5050

 students@disabilityrightsuk.org

As the personal stories in this guide show, disabled people usually have very positive experiences in further education. Most colleges and training providers have excellent support arrangements and any difficulties can be quickly resolved.

DISABILITY AND WELFARE BENEFITS

Part-time study won't usually affect welfare benefits except in a few limited circumstances. If you're getting Jobseekers' Allowance (JSA) you can study part-time but you still need to be available for and actively seeking work. You may also be asked to complete a 'Student Questionnaire' to test your eligibility.

Most people can't claim welfare benefits if they're studying full-time. However, if you're living with a health condition or disability, you may still be able to receive the following benefits as a full-time student.

It's important to tell the Benefits Agency, Jobcentre Plus and other relevant agencies that you're starting a course as this counts as a change of circumstances. For individual advice it's best to speak with a welfare rights specialist at your college or try your local Citizens Advice Bureau.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

You can continue to receive DLA as a student. Starting college or university does not usually result in DWP reassessing your entitlement. If your condition has changed in a way that means you qualify for a different rate, or your award is due to end, you may have to claim PIP instead.

If you go to a residential college you can keep the DLA care component for the first 28 days you're there. You will then lose the care component for any day you spend in a residential college. Two or more periods in a residential college are added together towards the 28 days if 28 days or less separates them.

DLA is gradually ending for people of working age. Most people with a current DLA award will start to be contacted about Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and re-assessed by the end of October 2018.




Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is for people who need help taking part in everyday life or who find it difficult to get around. Sometimes the activities you do as part of your course can suggest that your daily living or mobility needs have changed and you can be asked to undergo a reassessment.

If you go to a residential college the same rules described above for DLA will apply.

For more information

Disability Rights UK has a publication called *Personal Independence Payment – A guide to making a claim*. You can download the guide for free:

 www.disabilityrightsuk.org/personal-independence-payment-pip

Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

As a full-time student you can only claim income-related ESA if you also receive DLA or PIP.

If you're a qualifying young person you'll also have to pass the work capability assessment. You're a qualifying young person if you are under 19, or are 19 but were under 19 when you were accepted on, enrolled on or started the course. You'll be treated as having a limited capability for work without having to pass the work capability assessment if you are aged 20 or over, or are 19 and were already 19 when you were accepted on, enrolled on or started the course. You may still have to complete an ESA50 form and attend a face-to-face assessment but this should only be to determine whether you meet the criteria for the work related activity group or the support group.

Housing Benefit

Some students can claim housing benefit studying full-time. This includes students who receive any part of DLA or PIP, if you have had limited capability for work acknowledged for the last 28 weeks (although you do not have to be receiving ESA to qualify), if you're registered blind, or receive Disabled Students' Allowances because you're deaf.

Universal Credit

Most full-time students are not able to claim UC, but there are exceptions to this rule. For example, if you are disabled, assessed as having a limited capability for work and receive either Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment. UC has not yet been rolled out to all areas and your benefits office will be able to confirm if you are required to claim Universal Credit or not.


CPAG Scotland has produced a detailed factsheet on students and universal credit. While it is written for Scottish students the situation is very similar in England and Wales. UC will not be rolled-out to Northern Ireland until 2017.

 www.cpag.org.uk/content/universal-credit-and-students-1

Further education students who get DLA or PIP and have 'limited capability for work' should be eligible for Universal Credit. They will be placed in the 'no work-related requirements' group while they're studying. Over the summer vacation you can be subject to work-related requirements. Capability for work can only be decided after looking at individual circumstances.

For more information

Disability Rights UK produces a range of factsheets on studying and claiming benefits. You can find them on our website:

 www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Resources

WEBSITES

Access to Higher Education

www.accesstohe.ac.uk

Information about the Access to Higher Education Diploma which prepares people without traditional qualifications for study at university.

Advice Guide

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Information from Citizens Advice on money issues, benefits, health, housing and legal advice.

back on course Scotland

www.backoncourse.ac.uk

Information service for people who have withdrawn from higher education. Useful if you're interested in returning to education or exploring other options.

Bright Knowledge

www.brightknowledge.org

Resource library with information about apprenticeships, health, money and careers.

Careers Wales

www.careerswales.com

Careers information and advice as well as contact details for local careers centres in Wales.

Council for Disabled Children

www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/resources

SEND reforms: What children and young people need to know. Series of factsheets, films and posters to help disabled young people understand the key themes of EHC plans, Post-16 support, the Local Offer and making decisions.

Find an apprenticeship service

www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch

Database of vacancies.

Get in, Go Far

www.getingofar.gov.uk

Information on apprenticeships, resources to help with applying for apprenticeships and online videos.

Information Advice and Support Services

www.iassnetwork.org.uk/find-your-iass

Local Authorities have a duty to provide information, advice and support to disabled children, young people and their parents. Use this website to find your local IAS service in England.

Money Advice Service

www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

Free and impartial advice service to help people manage their money.

National Careers Service

nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

Career planning, information and advice service for students in England. The website offers a range of information including a Skills health check, CV builder, over 800 job profiles, information on courses and sources of funding.

Not Going to Uni

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk

Online guide that offers advice on how to become an apprentice, as well as gap years programmes and distance learning.

Skills Development Scotland

www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk

Information on education opportunities, career planning, Individual Learning Accounts and finding a local careers centre in Scotland.

The Student Room

www.thestudentroom.co.uk

Forum and discussion areas for sharing experiences and thoughts about studying. Includes forums on apprenticeships and alternatives to university.

Transition Information Network (TIN)

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/transition-information-network>

News, resources and events on issues relating to transition, designed to be useful to disabled young people, parents/carers and professionals.

PUBLICATIONS

Disability Rights UK publications

Factsheets for disabled students covering the Equality Act, funding and adjustments for disabled students. Disability Rights UK also produces *Into Higher Education* and *Into Apprenticeships*.

- W www.disabilityrightsuk.org/how-we-can-help/education-skills-and-employment/education

Engaging employers to find work experience for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Guide for post-16 providers produced by the Preparing for Adulthood programme.

- W preparingforadulthood.org.uk/media/387941/guide_to_employer_engagement.pdf

Engaging people with learning difficulties in workplace learning

Guide on making workplace learning more inclusive for disabled employees.

- W www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/302778/engaging_people_with_ldd_in_workplace_learning_-_providerguidance.pdf



Everybody Included: The SEND Code of Practice explained

Explanation of what young people with SEN and disabilities should experience during transition.

- W www.sendgateway.org.uk/resources

Helping you meet the costs of learning and training: disabled students

Produced by the Scottish Government.

- W www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education

Learning difficulties/disabilities: supported internship evaluation

Findings from the 2013 evaluation of the supported internship trial.

- W www.gov.uk/government/publications/learning-difficultiesdisabilities-supported-internship-evaluation

Mid-life Career Review

Materials created by NIACE and hosted by XtLearn to disseminate resources from the Mid-life Career Review project to careers guidance practitioners.

- W www.xtlearn.net/p/mlcr

Richard Review of Apprenticeships

Independent review considering what an apprenticeship should be and how they can meet the needs of the changing economy.

- W www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-richard-review-of-apprenticeships

SEND: guide for further education providers

Guide for providers on the support system for young people with SEN and disabilities.

- W www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-further-education-providers

SEND: guide for parents and carers

Guide for parents and carers on the support system for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

- W www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-parents-and-carers

ORGANISATIONS

EDUCATION

Department for Education

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

T 0370 000 2288

Textphone 18001 0370 000 2288

W www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education

Web contact form:

W www.education.gov.uk/contactus/dfe

Education Funding Agency

53-55 Butts Road, Earlsdon Park, Coventry CV1 3 BH

W www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-funding-agency

The Education Funding Agency can investigate complaints against FE providers who support students aged 16 to 18 and up to age 25 where they have an EHC plan. Initial complaints can be made on the Contact Us form on Gov.uk.

Learning and Work Institute

3rd Floor, 89 Albert Embankment, London, SE1 7TP

T 0116 204 4200

E enquiries@learningandwork.org.uk

W www.learningandwork.org.uk

The Learning and Work Institute was formed through the merger of NIACE and the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion. It aims to promote lifelong learning, full employment and inclusion.

NUS (National Union of Students)

NUS UK, Macadam House, 275 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8QB

T 0845 5210 262

E Complete an online contact form

W www.nus.org.uk

Gives advice and information for students.

NUS-USI (Union of Students in Ireland)

42 Dublin Road, Belfast BT2 7HN

T 028 9024 4641

E info@nus-usi.org

W www.nistudents.org

NUS Scotland

1 Papermill Wynd, McDonald Rd, Edinburgh EH7 4QL

T 0131 556 6598

E mail@nus-scotland.org.uk

W www.nus.org.uk/scotland

NUS Wales/UCMC

2nd floor, Cambrian Buildings, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff CF10 5FL

T 02920 435 390

E office@nus-wales.org.uk

W www.nus.org.uk/wales

Skills Funding Agency

Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry CV1 2WT

T 0345 377 5000

E info@sfa.bis.gov.uk

W www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-complaints-procedure-about-providers

The Skills Funding Agency can investigate complaints against an FE college or apprenticeship scheme.

Student Finance England

Advanced Learner Loans, PO Box 302

Darlington DL1 9NQ

T 0300 100 0619

Phone line open Mon to Fri 8.00-20.00,
Sat and Sun 9.00-16.00

W www.gov.uk/advanced-learning-loans

Provides information and services to students who normally live in England.

UKCES

Renaissance House, Adwick Park, Wath upon Dearne, South Yorkshire S63 5NB

T 01709 774800

E info@ukces.org.uk

W www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-commission-for-employment-and-skills

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) is a publicly funded, industry led organisation providing strategic leadership on skills and employment issues in the UK.

DISABILITY

Action on Hearing Loss

19-23 Featherstone Street, London EC1Y 8SL

T 0808 808 0123

Textphone 0808 808 9000

Phone line open Mon to Fri 9.00-17.00

SMS 0780 0000 360

E informationline@hearingloss.org.uk

W www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Campaigns and lobbies to raise awareness of hearing loss and tinnitus and provides support services for deaf and hard of hearing people.

Ambitious about Autism

The Pears National Centre for Autism Education,
Woodside Avenue, London N10 3JA

T 020 8815 5444

E info@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk

W www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk

Provides services, raises awareness and understanding and influences policy. Aims to enable children and young people with autism to learn, thrive and achieve.

Arthritis Care

Floor 4, Linen Court, 10 East Road, London N1 6AD

T 020 7380 6500

Helpline 0808 800 4050

E info@arthritiscare.org.uk

W www.arthritiscare.org.uk

Services include a confidential helpline, self-management and awareness training for people with arthritis and healthcare professionals, and local activity and support.

British Dyslexia Association (BDA)

Unit 8 Bracknell Beeches, Old Bracknell Lane,
Bracknell RG12 7BW

T 0333 405 4555

Helpline 0333 405 4567

Phone line open 10.00-13.00

Tues to Thurs.

E helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk

W www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

Offers information, advice and support to people with dyslexia.

Capability Scotland

11 Ellersley Road, Edinburgh EH12 6HY

T 0131 337 9876

Textphone 0131 346 2529

F 0131 346 7864

E Complete online contact form

W www.capability-scotland.org.uk

Provides free confidential advice and information on a range of disability issues including advice on cerebral palsy.

DIAL UK

T 0808 800 3333

E helpline@scope.org.uk

W www.scope.org.uk/dial

A network of disability information and advice lines. They can give advice on issues such as welfare benefits, community care, equipment, independent living and transport.

Dyslexia Scotland

2nd Floor, East Suite, Wallace House,
17-21 Maxwell Place, Stirling, FK8 1JU

T 01786 446 650

Helpline 0844 800 8484

Open Mon to Thurs 10.00-16.30

and 10.00-16.00 on Fri

F 01786 471 235

E helpline@dyslexiascotland.org.uk

W www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk

Enables and encourages people with dyslexia to reach their potential in education and employment.

Epilepsy Action

New Anstey House, Gate Way Drive, Yeadon, Leeds
LS19 7XY

T 0808 800 5050

Phone lines open Mon to Fri 8.30-17.30,

Fri 9.00-16.00

E helpline@epilepsy.org.uk

W www.epilepsy.org.uk

Offers a range of services including information and advice.

Equality Advisory Support Service

FREEPOST FPN4431

T 0808 800 0082**E** Email through Contact Us form on website**W** www.equalityadvisoryservice.com

The EASS provides information, advice and support on discrimination and human rights issues to individuals in England, Scotland and Wales.

Equality and Human Rights Commission (England)

Arndale House, Arndale Centre, Manchester M4 3AQ

T 0161 829 8100**F** 0161 829 8110**E** correspondence@equalityhumanrights.com**W** www.equalityhumanrights.com

Produces government information booklets on equality and human rights issues including the Equality Act.

Equality and Human Rights Commission (Scotland)

151 West George Street, Glasgow G2 2JJ

T 0141 228 5910**F** 0141 228 5912**E** scotland@equalityhumanrights.com**W** www.equalityhumanrights.com**Equality and Human Rights Commission (Wales)**

Block 1, Spur D, Government Buildings, St Agnes Road, Gabalfa, Cardiff, CF14 4YJ

T 02920 447710**F** 02920 447712**E** wales@equalityhumanrights.com**W** www.equalityhumanrights.com**Lead Scotland**

Princes House, 5 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh EH2 4RG

T 0131 228 9441

Textphone 18001 0131 228 9441

F 0131 229 6941

Information service 0800 999 2568

E enquiries@lead.org.uk**W** www.lead.org.uk

Enables disabled adults and carers to access inclusive learning opportunities. They also run an advice service for disabled students in Scotland.

Mencap

123 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0RT

T 020 7454 0454**E** helpline@mencap.org.uk**W** www.mencap.org.uk

Supports people with a learning disability, their families and carers. Produces an easy read guide for children and young people called 'Changes to special educational needs and disability support'.

Mind

15-19 Broadway, London E15 4BQ

T Mind infoline 0300 123 3393

Open Mon to Fri 9.00-18.00

E info@mind.org.uk**W** www.mind.org.uk

Provides an information service and information booklets about mental health.

Multiple Sclerosis Society

MS National Centre, 372 Edgware Road, London NW2 6ND

T England and Wales: 020 8438 0700

Scotland: 0131 335 4050

Northern Ireland: 028 90 802 802

Helpline 0808 800 8000

Open Mon to Fri 9.00-21.00

E helpline@mssociety.org.uk**W** www.mssociety.org.uk

Information and support to anyone affected by MS from their network of over 350 local branches.

National Autistic Society

393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG

T 020 7833 2299

Helpline 0808 800 4104 open Mon to Thurs
10.00-16.00 and 9.00 to 15.00 Fri

F 020 7833 9666**E** nas@nas.org.uk**W** www.autism.org.uk

Information, advice and support to people with autism and Asperger syndrome and their families.

National Deaf Children's Society

Ground Floor South, Castle House, 37- 45 Paul Street, London EC2A 4LS

T 020 7490 8656

Helpline 0808 800 8880

Open Mon to Fri 09.00 to 17.00

E ndcs@ndcs.org.uk

W www.ndcs.org.uk

Information, free Helpline and regional support for deaf young people leaving school, on FE, HE, apprenticeships and finding work.

Natspec

T 0117 923 2830

E chair@natspec.org.uk

W www.natspec.org.uk

Promotes specialism and expertise for students with learning difficulties or disabilities. Membership association for specialist colleges and provides advice to parents, young people, professionals. Lists all specialist colleges approved by DfE for funding (S41 list).

RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People)

105 Judd Street, London WC1H 9NE

T 020 7388 1266

Helpline 0303 123 9999

Phone line open Mon to Fri 8.45-17.30

E helpline@rnib.org.uk

W www.rnib.org.uk

RNIB offers advice and specialist DSA assessments in study needs and access technology for blind and partially sighted learners.

RNIB Cymru

Jones Court, Womanby Street, Cardiff, CF10 1BR

T 029 2082 8500

E cymru@rnib.org.uk

W www.rnib.org.uk/wales

RNIB Northern Ireland

Victoria House, 15-17 Gloucester Street, Belfast BT1 4LS

T 028 9032 9373

E rnibni@rnib.org.uk

W www.rnib.org.uk/northernireland

RNIB Scotland

12-14 Hillside Crescent, Edinburgh EH7 5EA

T 0131 652 3140

E rnibscotland@rnib.org.uk

W www.rnib.org.uk/scotland

Scope

6 Market Road, London N7 9PW

T 0808 800 3333

Open Mon to Fri 9.00-17.00

E helpline@scope.org.uk

W www.scope.org.uk

Services for disabled children and adults, with a focus on people with cerebral palsy or those whose support needs are not met elsewhere.

Scottish Sensory Centre

Moray House, School of Education, University of Edinburgh, Holyrood Road, Edinburgh EH8 8AQ

T 0131 651 6501

F 0131 651 6502

E sscmail@ed.ac.uk

W www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk

An information service and training organisation for those interested in the education of children and young people with sensory impairment.

Trailblazers

61a Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0BU

T 020 7803 4846

F 020 7401 3495

E trailblazers@muscular-dystrophy.org

W www.mdctrailblazers.org

National network of more than 400 young disabled people. They aim to fight the social injustices experienced by young disabled people and ensure they gain access to education and employment.

Volunteering Matters (formerly CSV)

The Levy Centre, 18-24 Lower Caption, London E5 0PD

T 020 3780 5870

E Complete online contact form

W <http://volunteeringmatters.org.uk>

Involves people in high quality volunteering and learning opportunities. Places young people as volunteers to work as personal assistants.



Help is at hand for aspiring students with disabilities or learning difficulties

Are you thinking about going to college but worried that you won't receive the learning support you may need?

Or are you a teacher or parent supporting someone moving into Further Education?

Don't let a learning difficulty or disability be a barrier to further education or a dream career.

Randstad Student Support works with colleges, students, teachers and parents throughout the UK to ensure that together, we raise standards in student support.

We do this by deploying Additional Learning teams made up of specialist support staff into colleges, across the entire curriculum. It's our sole ambition to support students – whether full time, part time or on apprenticeship – throughout their studies to ensure that they reach their full potential.

We will then guide and advise students throughout their transition into the workplace or on to higher education, where support can continue if required.

As a leading provider of Additional Learning Support in the UK, we help more than 25,000 individuals with learning difficulties or disabilities each and every day. This support is provided by our team of more than 3,500 specialist support workers.

It's our job to ensure that every student gets the best out of their time in education and to make sure that every student feels supported in the transition to higher education or work.

To find out more, please contact a member of our specialist team on 0845 130 4655 or email studentsupport@randstad.co.uk

www.randstad.co.uk/student-support/

ABOUT DISABILITY RIGHTS UK

Disability Rights UK is a charity. We work for a society in which everyone can participate equally.

We are disabled people leading change and we aim to be the largest national pan-disability organisation, led, run and controlled by disabled people.

Disability Rights UK has three main priorities:

- 1 Independent living – getting a life
- 2 Career opportunities – getting work, education and skills
- 3 Influencing public attitudes and behaviours – seeking a sea change in perceptions of disability and tackling hostility, bullying and hate crime.

Other publications

We are authors of the *Disability Rights Handbook*, our annual guide to welfare benefits and services.

We also publish *Taking Charge*, a practical guide to living with a health condition or disability and a range of other guides and information, much of which is free to download from our website. These include *Into Apprenticeships*, *Into Higher Education*, *Get back to where we do belong* and *Doing Careers Differently*.

Our factsheets for disabled students cover various topics including the Equality Act, funding from charitable trusts and postgraduate education.

Advice and information

Through our various helplines we provide information on benefits, tax credits and direct payments, including individual budgets, funding from social services in relation to care needs and advice on employing personal assistants.

Disabled Students Helpline

We provide free information and advice for disabled students, covering further and higher education, employment, apprenticeships and volunteering. Our helpline is open Tuesday and Thursday 11.00-13.00.

T 0800 328 5050

E students@disabilityrightsuk.org

Policy and campaigns

Disability Rights UK is a campaigning organisation. This includes working to influence decision-makers on issues of access and support for disabled people taking apprenticeships or studying in further and higher education.

Membership

Join Disability Rights UK and help us strengthen the voice of disabled people. We are a membership organisation with over 1,300 members, including universities, colleges and individual students. You can sign up for membership on our website:

W www.disabilityrightsuk.org/membership/how-join

Into Further Education 2017

ISBN: 978-1-903335-75-8

Published by Disability Rights UK © 2016

Registered Charity No. 1138585

Written by Tony Stevens, Andrea Lewis and Rundip Thind

Main photography by Dick Makin Imaging

Photos of Gagandeep Kaur by Jonathon Lennon

Disability Rights UK

CAN Mezzanine

49-51 East Road

London N1 6AH

Telephone: 020 7250 8181

Email: students@disabilityrightsuk.org

www.disabilityrightsuk.org



For free information and advice for disabled students visit the Disability Rights UK website.

Design and production by Anderson Fraser