



Disability support in further education

Further education at college or sixth form can be a great way to pick up new skills, open up new career options or prepare for higher education.

Further education and your prospects

Whether you are 16 or 60, a huge variety of courses is available. Options range from entry level courses covering the basics of reading, writing and numbers, through level 2 courses such as GCSEs and BTEC first diplomas to level 3 courses such as BTEC national diplomas and AS/A levels. There are also opportunities through NVQs and apprenticeships to get into work-based learning.

Being disabled or having a specific learning difficulty need not limit your choices, but you will need to take special care choosing the course and institution that are right for you.

Support at college or sixth form

Colleges and sixth forms have to make 'reasonable adjustments' so that disabled people don't suffer a substantial disadvantage. They might, for example, provide one-to-one support, a sign language interpreter or copies of documents in other formats.

The type of support available varies, so it's important to check beforehand. It's a good idea to visit the place so you can see what's available for yourself. The college's Learning Support Adviser or Special Education Needs Coordinator will be able to give you details.

You can also get a copy of the college or school's Disability Equality Statement. This sets out how it plans to promote equal opportunities for disabled people. If you require support that is not covered in the Disability Statement the college may be able to provide it, so you need to ask.

Going to a specialist college

If your local college cannot offer a course to suit your disability-related needs, you may be able to get a place at a specialist college. Most of these colleges are independent and cater specifically for students with disabilities or learning difficulties. They are often residential.

Useful websites

For detailed information:

[National Union of Students](#)

www.gov.uk/rights-disabled-person/education-rights

