



**The Disability Rights UK magazine, resource, and toolkit
co-edited with and for young people**

**Stay informed with news and information on your
journey through education, training and work**

Post - 16 education, training and work option

If you are sixteen at the end of June, you have the following options:

- Stay in full-time education at school, sixth form or further education college
- Start an apprenticeship or traineeship
- Spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering while also doing part-time education or training

You could take a range of subjects that lead to qualifications

- **A Levels**
- **T Levels**
- **Technical and vocational qualifications**
- **Applied qualifications**
- **Exam retakes**

There are many different types of vocational qualifications in a wide range of subjects at all levels, from Entry Level right up to Level 8 - you can look at the **Careerpilot Qualification Planner** to view all qualifications and levels.

You can also combine work and study and gain practical skills, get work experience and a qualification.

- **Traineeships**
- **Supported internships**
- **Apprenticeships**
- **School leaver schemes**

For more information on post -16 options, go to: **National Careers Service** or **UCAS**

Your local authority has a duty to make sure you are offered a suitable place by the end of September.

If you have an **Education Health and Care (EHC) plan**, you can get support to choose your next steps and extra help when you are in education, training or work.

You may be eligible for the **16 to 19 Bursary Fund**, which can help with things like books, travel or equipment if you will struggle with education or training costs.

Here are some of the **common queries** we receive concerning disabled students.

For further information on Further Education, tuition fee loans, bursary funds, transport issues or charitable trusts, go to our DR UK **Funding Further Education Factsheet** or contact our helpline:

- Opening hours: 11am-1pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- Telephone: 0330 995 0414
- Email: **students@disabilityrightsuk.org**

Students and the Equality Act 2010

The Equality and Human Rights Commission have produced a **student guide** explaining that Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) institutions have legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010, which means that they cannot discriminate against, harass or victimise you if you are a student.

This includes all students whether full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, e-learners, international students as well as prospective students when applying to the institution and, in some limited circumstances, former students.

The Act protects you from discrimination and harassment based on your 'protected characteristics'. The protected characteristics for the further and higher education institutions provisions are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

If you are disabled, your Further or Higher Education institution:

- Must not treat you unfavourably because of something connected to your disability where they cannot show that what they are doing is objectively justified. This only applies if the organisation knew or could reasonably have been expected to know that you are a disabled person. This is called discrimination arising from disability.

- Must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that you can use the education and other benefits, facilities and services provided as far as is reasonable to the same standard as non-disabled students.

To be protected under the Equality Act, you must meet the legal definition. Disability is defined as:

‘A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

The definition is designed to be as broad as possible and there are a wide variety of conditions and impairments that will be covered.

Some impairments automatically meet the definition from the point of diagnosis. These are cancer, HIV and Multiple Sclerosis. People registered as blind or partially sighted are also automatically regarded as disabled under the Act.

If you meet this definition, you will be protected if someone discriminates against you because of your impairment.

There is no need for you to have a medically diagnosed cause for your impairment; what matters is the effect of the impairment on you.

More information for students on the Equality Act 2019, reasonable adjustments and complaints from:

- [Disability Rights UK](#)
- [The Equality and Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Reasonable Adjustments](#)
- [Making a Complaint](#)

National Youth Theatre



The National Youth Theatre (NYT) has plenty of opportunities for Disabled people, ensuring a safe place to ensure their best work and make the most of young people's potential.

If you sign up as a member you become part of the National Youth Theatre Hub which includes applying for workshops, resources and auditions.

Go to: [**Inclusive Practice NYT**](#)

There is also a Creative Leadership Programme offering different training, bursary supported or paid roles facilitating their targeted programmes towards disabled and neuro-diverse young people.

Go to: [**Creative Leadership NYT**](#)

Disabled at University: Where Is Right for Me?

By Zan

Choosing where you plan to study for a degree can be a stressful task for any student – scanning prospectuses to find a course that suits your interests, visiting different cities and speaking to alumni are all familiar experiences that many go through when deciding where they want to go for Higher Education.

But for disabled students, there is the added complication of researching how universities can support you and your conditions. For some, these worries mean that they may choose to stay local and study at home rather than risk aggravating their illnesses or losing their closest support network, which is an entirely valid option for many disabled students.

However, becoming independent at university is a large draw for a lot of prospective students, and so it's important that you look into where is right for you based on your needs and level of support you require. Here are some tips to get you started:

- **University Disability Support Services**

Explore your chosen institution's website for their disability support services; these will typically fall under your university's welfare and/or wellbeing team, and provide advice, guidance, and support to both prospective and current students.

These specialist staff work with disabled students, their academic departments and central services to recommend available support and adjustments. You'll need to make sure you contact your Disability Support Service before attending university so that they can register your details and ensure there is no delay in receiving support when you begin your studies. This normally requires you to submit a Prospective Student Form and provide evidence of your disability.

- **Counselling and Mental Health**

Many universities now offer free counselling sessions for students who may be struggling with mental health issues, homesickness, anxiety and much more. You can self-refer to these sessions, which typically last up to 6 weeks with a qualified counsellor.

Services can offer in-person, telephone and/or video appointments, so it's important to see what your chosen university offers in case you require a specific kind. It is also likely that other wellbeing services will be available to students, such as chaplaincy one-on-ones for students of faith, or free online counselling on platforms like Kooth Student. Make sure you investigate what your university offers and look up student testimonials to see if you think these services would benefit you.



- **Check the Area's Accessibility**

We're fortunate that the age of smartphones has made it even easier to check what venues are accessible to us as disabled people. That being said, it can still feel daunting moving to a new place and having to figure out where can accommodate your needs.

When looking into different places of study, use websites such as **Accessible** to research accessible locations in the area. You can search by place, town or postcode, and the map will show you what accommodations various venues offer, such as Blue Badge parking areas, level access and/or ramps, assistive listening services, accessible toilets, quiet zones and much more. You can also contact your chosen university's admissions team to check what facilities are available on campus.

- **Apply for Disabled Students Allowance – Early!**

When you apply for your Student Finance to help fund your degree and living costs, it's important that you also apply for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) as soon as possible.

The DSA covers any study-related costs you have because of a mental health problem, long term illness or any other disability, and you do not need to repay it during or after your studies. The type of support and how much you get also depends on your individual needs, not your household income, so you can get access to free support such as specialist equipment, a non-medical helper and/or travel bursaries. Once your eligibility for DSA is confirmed after you provide evidence of your condition/s, you may be asked to contact an assessment centre so they can work out what help you need.

Find out more about applying for DSA at:

Disabled Students' Allowances

Applying for Disabled Students' Allowances

Training Opportunities

Results days can be a daunting prospect and this year is no different as Students wait for their teacher assessed grades (TAGs) for GCSEs and A-levels. Owing to Covid-19, it is the second consecutive year exams have been stopped, leaving many people unsure of what their imminent future looks like, but a CEO of leading national Recruitment and Training Solutions Provider, says 'this should not be a barrier to success'.



Joe Crossley heads up a recruitment and training solutions provider that encourages raw talent to be seen through Traineeships, Apprenticeships, and other educational programmes. He says: 'It is important young people know the range of learning paths available to them and understand that school, college, and university are not the only credible routes out there. Not passing exams does not equate to failure. I left school without any qualifications and now sit as a CEO at one of the top

training providers in the UK. My top advice for those expecting results who are not able to or do not want to continue in conventional education is:

Look at alternative ways of learning and earning. A Traineeship is a training programme designed to prepare you for your future career, not only will a Traineeship help you build your CV, but they offer you:

- Work experience with a guaranteed interview at the end of your placement.
- Work preparation training, giving you the skills and confidence needed to take the first step in your career, and Maths and English support so you can develop these skills further, if required.

If you want to work but feel a little unsure of your skills and would benefit from some hands-on experience, a Traineeship could be just right for you. All you need is to be keen to work, unemployed or working less than 16 hours a week, aged 16-24 with no qualifications at Level 3 (qualifications from college or sixth form), and a positive attitude.

You won't get paid doing a Traineeship, although your Employer will sometimes cover the cost of things like food and travel (expenses). However, your Employer will be covering the cost of the Traineeship programme and associated qualifications.

For more information go to:

- [Qube Learning](#)
- [DR UK traineeship leaflet](#)

Speakers for Schools Virtual Work Experience



This project provides Disabled people with the opportunity to work remotely with an employer gaining valuable work experience without the stress of travelling or the long commute.

This programme works with both young people, schools and colleges to the employers themselves ensuring everyone benefits out of this vital project.

This programme involves attending live presentations with the company, joining interactive and collaborative online tasks to meeting professionals from the employer's organisation.

There are so many benefits to this scheme, adding to your CV and building your professional networking circles to experiencing the world of work first-hand all virtually without the stress of travel and a commute.

To date Speakers for Schools has helped over one million people and work with seven hundred employers, one of the largest projects of its kind in the UK ensuring Disabled people with disabilities are represented in the working community.

For more information go to: [Speakers for Schools](#)

Blended Learning – The New Normal?



By Zan

Working in the Higher Education sector has certainly been interesting during a global pandemic. Whilst some of my colleagues were furloughed or struggling to adapt to working from home, my team and I were able to modify all our training and workshops to work online.

Through livestreams, mobile apps, and lots of TikTok content, we were amazed at just how engaged our students were with our online offerings and were able to reach far more students than we ever could in person. For example, students at our satellite campuses that would never be able to travel to our main campus could now take part in our online workshops, and disabled students who may not feel well enough to come in for a physical session could easily attend an awards event from the comfort of their home.

As we get back into the academic year, the phrase ‘new normal’ comes up frequently when we discuss blended learning. The latter is defined as having a mixture of in-person and online teaching offerings, in order to minimise the number of students on campus and thus help reduce the spread of COVID.

I’ve heard many a groan from staff and students alike that they would prefer solely in-person content (often boiled down to “Why am I paying so much in fees in learn online?”), however as a former disabled student myself, it frustrates me to no end when others are so quick to forget everything we have learnt during these unprecedented times.

For many disabled students, the COVID lockdowns over the past two years have been frustrating for numerous reasons. Seeing able-bodied peers complain about being stuck indoors for so long could certainly be annoying, but worst of all, reasonable online adjustments for disabled students that were once considered ‘too hard to implement’ were now readily available. Lectures that couldn’t be recorded were now commonplace, reading materials were uploaded in advance and attendance monitoring was a thing of the past.

There is still plenty of work to be done to make online learning fully accessible – teachers should ensure video content has captions, images should have alt text, and documents need to be legible by screen readers. But for thousands of students – distance learners, parents, carers, those with jobs, and of course disabled people – having even the option of blended learning can ensure they are on par with their peers in terms of quality of teaching and overall wellbeing during their studies.

So yes, blended learning is the ‘new normal’, and should stay that way. I will continue ensuring all my own work has in-person and digital versions, so it is accessible to everyone, and I urge you to pressure any teaching staff and/or education institutions you know to do the same.

Nature in Miniature

By Caroline McHardy

Lilac Moon

My miniatures and I have been on many adventures, through dense woods surrounded by the orchestra of bird song to the huge fields full of overgrown grass when it was summer. Taking photographs for my Instagram account called [carolinesminiatureworld](#) I include tiny people figures to animals, bringing them to life in my hand and through my lens. Sometimes I create miniature scenes; my favourite is taking them on my nature walks. The best time is after the rain, huge puddles of water reflecting the trees like a painting.

Miniatures have helped my autism and mental health hugely; it has taught me to be proud of my differences as well as the amazing escapism it brings. A world I can escape into that is of my own creation. I have a range of animal figures too all with their own names and personalities, one being my sloth bear in this photograph, she looks like she is smiling amongst the autumn leaves. There is a huge range of possibilities with miniatures. Woods are my favourite, enjoying a stream near my house the rain makes it higher up than usual. My autism loves the sound as I step into the water with my shoes whilst photographing my miniature deer who intently stares back at me, dappled by the woodland sun. The tiny people take a lot of patience and work, some are tiny hikers who love to explore the giant unfurled leaves above their heads. Like my Instagram it's my world that I have filled with miniatures, and miniatures have not only given me hope, but they have also taught me autism is my superpower. It has enabled me to bring them to life, capture them and explore through their eyes in a giant world.



[Home | Photography \(wixsite.com\)](#) [@carolinesminiatureworld](#)

Woodland
Wander



Self-determination Training

Practitioners and researchers established some time ago that self-determination training is a key best practice for effective transitioning. Having self-determination means having agency and taking responsibility for the self and the future.

Training programmes designed to develop self-determination might help the individual develop their decision and choice making skills, problem solving skills, goal setting and action planning skills, learn about risk taking and safety, become more self-aware, reflective and evaluative, promote self-advocacy and leadership and develop an internal locus of control (believe that the individual is the core agent of change). Self-determination training for those with learning disabilities may allow them to set achievable goals and understand their learning disability.



Your Therapy Source states, *‘these skills help students with disabilities to make powerful purposeful major decisions and daily choices in their lives.’*

Self-Determination for Students with Disabilities - Your Therapy Source

Gallery

Get Ahead continues to show talent from young people!

These are the pictures of Jimmy aged 22



Boats at sunset in Thorpe Ness, Suffolk



Lily sitting in a giant chair in Lavenham, Suffolk



Zan's needlework

The co- editors of the Get Ahead magazine



Roxanne



Cody



Zan



Luke



Finley



Scott



Dylan



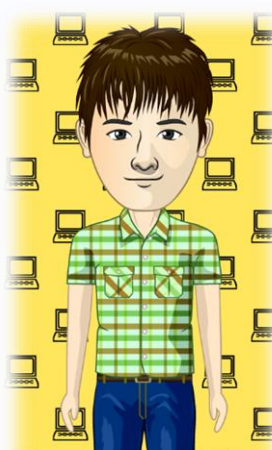
Noel



Chayse



Caroline



George



Catherine


Contact Us



 Email: getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

 Twitter: [@GetAheadDRUK](https://twitter.com/GetAheadDRUK)

 Instagram: [@GetAheadDRUK](https://www.instagram.com/GetAheadDRUK)

 Videos: [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/GetAheadDRUK)

 [Get Ahead webpage](https://www.getahead.org.uk)

 [DR UK website](https://www.dr-uk.org)

We like to hear from you!

Give us your feedback and contact:

[**Getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org**](mailto:Getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org)

For a text-only and large-print version of the Get Ahead newsletter:

email: [**getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org**](mailto:getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org)

Access the Get Ahead newsletters and magazines on our [**Get Ahead webpage**](https://www.getahead.org.uk)

To receive notifications about the Get Ahead publications please sign up [**here**](#)

Disability Rights UK

We are Disabled people leading change, and the voice of young Disabled people has to be central to that change.

Disability Rights Handbook ONLINE

We are delighted to announce the launch of a new digital version of our handbook. Created to support remote working, this new format for our flagship publication sits on the well-established AskCPAG platform.

Order your copy now!

