



The Disability Rights UK newsletter co-edited with and for young people

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

What is an Apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a real opportunity to work and study at the same time. They are available for a wide range of job roles across many different industries. Almost any type of apprenticeship can be made accessible, and support is available while you learn and work. They are a great way to gain new skills and gain access to employment and careers.

You spend most of your time doing on-the-job paid work and the rest working towards a nationally recognised qualification. This could range from GCSEs, up to a master's degree, depending on the apprenticeship level you start at.

We have published a free guide to help navigate apprenticeships if you have a health condition or disability. Download the [**Into Apprenticeship Guide**](#).

Disabled apprentices have shared their apprenticeship experiences with us. Read their stories in [**My Apprenticeship Experience**](#).

Can I do a part-time apprenticeship?

Yes you can. Part-time apprenticeships are available.

As a part-time apprentice, you'll work fewer hours over a longer period of time. A part-time degree apprenticeship might last four to six years instead of the usual three to five.

What support and adjustments are available doing an apprenticeship?

It is important that people of all ages and backgrounds can undertake apprenticeships as they offer excellent career development and progression opportunities.

Some people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities may need support or adjustments to be able to fully undertake some of the learning and activities involved with an apprenticeship.

This support may require additional resources or equipment, for example:

- Additional staff to support apprentices
- Extended or more frequent assessor visits
- Specialist equipment
- Additional time on exams/tests

There is a new piece of guidance which has been developed to support providers to confidently identify and assess the needs of apprentices. It also provides clarity on how to claim funding to provide support and adjustments.

Learning support funding for apprentices with learning difficulties and disabilities

What are Reasonable Adjustments?

Disabled apprentices can ask their employer, university or training provider for reasonable adjustments so they can access the same opportunities and services as non-disabled people. See **Equality Act 2010 Guidance** for more information.

Adjustments are different for every person, so let the employer, university, or training provider know what you need.

Reasonable adjustments could be:

- making changes to the workplace
- changing someone's working arrangements
- finding a different way to do something
- reading materials in different formats
- providing equipment, services or support

See also: **Employing disabled people and people with health conditions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)**

What is Access to Work?

Access to Work is an employment support grant scheme that aims to support Disabled people start or stay in work. It can provide practical and financial support for people who have a disability or long term physical or mental health condition. Support can be provided where someone needs support or adaptations beyond reasonable adjustments.

For more information go to: **Access-to-work**

New rule for level 2 apprenticeships

Information on the new rule for level 2 apprentices who do not have level 1 in English and maths to prioritise achieving level 1 in these subjects and only work towards level 2 English and maths where they have time remaining to make meaningful progress, once they have achieved level 1, can be found in:

[Apprenticeship Funding Rules for Main Providers August 2022 to July 2023](#)

Apply for an apprenticeship: **[Applying for an apprenticeship \(apprenticeships.gov.uk\)](#)**

Hints and tips to apply for an apprenticeship: **[PDF-a-guide-to-apprenticeship-applications \(ctfassets.net\)](#)**

Get the Jump



Explore your education and training choices on the Get the Jump website

Whether you know where you're heading or not, knowing about the different routes open to you is a great place to start.

[Get the Jump: explore your education and training choices | National Careers Service](#)

Also see: **[Skills for Life - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)**

Children with special educational needs and employment

There are almost a million and a half children of all ages in the school system who are recorded as having special educational needs or with disabilities.

Around 12.6% of all pupils are receiving some special educational need (SEN) support and a further 4% have an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a Statement of SEN (Office of National Statistics), which means they have been assessed as being entitled to additional support.

Unfortunately, not all children are identified as having a SEND need and not all children get access to the additional help they need, in school or from their local NHS or local council

But what can these children expect when they enter the world of work?

Unfortunately, statistics show that young people with SEN are significantly less likely to be in work and, on average, have much lower earnings 15 years after Key Stage 4

Read the full article:

[Children with special educational needs and employment | Children's Commissioner for England \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#)

New research highlights barriers to SEND support

Two new research reports have been published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and the Disability Policy Centre (DPC) exposing the barriers that Disabled young people are facing when trying to access reasonable adjustments and support in education. Read [the full SEND support story](#) on our website.

Travelling by train



There has been an increase in the number of students and young people travelling by rail in the post pandemic period.

As the Rail Policy Adviser for Disability Rights UK, I do have concerns at the low number of the Disabled Persons Railcard cards in use by people under 20 years of age, who are missing out on some important benefits.

The rail companies agree that there are many young people, particularly students, who are users of the '16 – 25' Railcard.

But there are a significant number of disabled students who don't know about the benefit of use of the Disabled Persons Railcard which allows not only the holder but also one person travelling with the cardholder to get 1/3 off most rail fares at any time of day, and not just as with other cards after 9.30.

It is worth checking this underused facility and while we know there is some eligibility criteria which may be slightly confusing, your ability to apply can be found on the DPRC website at <https://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/are-you-eligible/> .

We are pressing for a wide review, particularly in terms of fluctuating or progressive conditions, but we would always advise that you check and apply.

At the same time, we do suggest that you use the Assisted Travel facilities available to all disabled passengers available for ticket and seat reservations, which can be applied by some companies only two hours before boarding with exiting assistance and journey support, on all but lights rail and Underground train services.

The on-line details and the APP which can be set on your phone is available at [Assisted travel - Network Rail](#)

What would be useful is for you to help us in our work on rail policy at Disability Rights UK would be to share your thoughts and experiences, good and bad, of rail travel, so please do contact us at Getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org and note your email to DRUK Rail Policy Adviser.

The Autistic Girls Network

The Autistic Girls Network have produced a book called 'Autism, Girls, & Keeping It All Inside'.

In it they discuss many issues including misunderstandings about autism and different ways of presenting, processing and diagnosis.

Download a copy:

<https://www.autisticgirlsnetwork.org/keeping-it-all-inside.pdf>



SEND in Museums

SEND in Museums provides clear guidance for museum, heritage or other arts and cultural professionals, on supporting the inclusion of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Send in Museums

British Sign Language (BSL) Interpretation at Hull Museums

British Sign Language (BSL) Interpretation at Hull Museums - Send in Museums`

T- Levels

The Department for Education published the T Level Transition Programme national technical outcomes for subject areas aligned to wave 4 T Levels introduced from 2023, available here on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk), in:

- Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care
- Catering and Hospitality
- Creative and Design
- Hair and Beauty

The T Level Transition Programme provides a high-quality route onto T Levels which is so important for those young people who will benefit from the additional study time and the support the programme gives them to prepare for their next step and to achieve their aspirations and T Level ambitions.

This is not the end of the journey. The national technical outcomes will also inform our next phase of work. As part of the review of post-16 qualifications at level 2 and below, we are considering whether the national technical outcomes should, in the future, form the basis of the content for qualifications designed to support progression to T Levels. We will continue to engage with providers, employers and other stakeholders on this over the coming months. The Government's response to the level 2 and below consultation will be published later this year.

Further information on the T Level Transition Programme and next steps is available on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

Your stories

Get Ahead shares the unique talents and stories of young people who are doing apprenticeships, traineeships, supported internships, work experience or have done something special they want to share.

You too can get involved! Send your story to Getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

Kelly

My name is Kelly, and I completed a Learning and Development Practitioner level 3 apprenticeship this year passing with a distinction.

Since I was a young girl, I have struggled with my speech and went to speech specialist when I was in primary school to identify what was going on.

It was decided that I had a stutter and attending speech and language therapy helped me understand how to control my stutter and use coping mechanisms for when I was in a stressful or new situation, where my stutter would be at it's worse.

Over time I attended speech therapy again when I was in secondary school, as this was a particularly stressful point in my life.

I left education without any real qualifications and went straight into full time work after 2 years of college.

I had always tried to put myself in situations where I felt outside of my comfort zone. After several years I found myself drawn to the training world and learning and development. This involved me talking to large groups of people that I did not know.

I had not got any formal qualifications in Learning and Development, and it was only when I joined the NHS in 2020 that my line manager spoke to me about doing an apprenticeship to support the knowledge, skills and behaviours not only for my role, but also for my personal confidence and development.

I was enrolled and had a meeting with my training provider. I was open from the start to share that I had a stutter and how it may affect my apprenticeship. As I was doing a Learning and Development apprenticeship my end point assessment involved me creating and delivering a piece of training to a group of people.

We spoke any about reasonable adjustments I needed, and both my training provider and employer was extremely supportive throughout all 18 months of my apprenticeship.

In terms of reasonable adjustments in work and training: I was made to feel that I could raise any issue if I was not comfortable with a task. For example, it may take me longer to feel I was able to talk in a large group, especially when I first started in my role.



For my apprenticeship and my End Point Assessment, I was offered to be recorded by my training provider instead of someone observing me, and that would be used to be marked. This helped me, as being monitored in an already nervous situation can bring on bad periods in my speech.

My apprenticeship has supported me greatly in my Learning and Development career as it has allowed me to understand the theory behind Learning and Development provisions and then meant I can put it back into practice in my role.

Since completing my apprenticeship, it has given me the confidence to apply for my next role, which I am pleased to say I have been successful in and am now moving into a Learning and Development Specialist role with a new organisation next month.

My advice to anyone looking to do an apprenticeship to go for it. Do not let your disability hold you back! You can achieve anything you want to!

Emma



Emma was referred to the Employment Service by her Social Worker on 11th March 2020, to get support with gaining part time employment. Emma has a visual impairment where she has 0% vision in her left eye and 17% vision in her right eye.

Emma had a good career in a jewellery shop, which she really enjoyed but had to give that position up because she could not complete the work without full vision.

Emma stated that her barriers were looking "normal" but having a cane and people making

fun of her, laughing at her and making comments like 'what benefits is she trying to blag' and actually being reported to Walsall's fraud team about being a fake blind person and again blagging the benefit system.

This really knocked her confidence. She was scared to leave the house at one point; even now, she still does not like using her cane because of what people say about her, she feels she battles that every day. She had struggles getting help in shops and buying clothes etc. because of her age and the way she looks, people did and still do look at her and laugh and say she's fake. Emma says she still lacks in confidence even though she acts as if she is full of confidence.

Emma attended her appointment at the Civic Centre with myself, we sat down and discussed what work she wanted to go into, she mentioned retail or customer services because she felt she was limited in what she could apply for because of her vision and the lack of experience in other jobs.

I asked Emma if she would like to attend a jobs fair after the appointment with me, which was taking place at Walsall College, she agreed to go there once we had

completed the paperwork. Whilst walking around the jobs fair Emma had the opportunity to talk the employers that were in attendance, she was told by quite a few employers that they would consider employing her, which helped her to broaden her horizons with her job search, which she would never have done before.

A few weeks later we had lockdown because of Covid-19, Emma could not really apply for work because she had to isolate and look after her child, I kept in touch with Emma every four weeks to see how she was getting on and if there was anything I could support her with.

In April 2021, I sent Emma a link to an administration apprenticeship for Walsall Council. Emma completed the application form and e-mailed it back to HR, she was shortlisted for an interview so I helped her with interview preparation and we discussed questions which could be asked and what questions would be good to ask in the interview. Emma's interview went well and later that day she was contacted by the interviewer to say they would like to offer her the position.

Emma has come a long way since the first appointment I had with her, she not only applied for jobs she never dreamed of applying for but she also gained a full time position, when she only wanted to get a part time position to start with to ease her back into work. Emma not only completes her work to a high standard, but she is also supporting new staff even though she has only been employed for a short period of time. Emma's confidence has improved, and she feels she has a purpose and she is part of the community again.

Emma:

"It only takes one person to show you a different path to explore instead of being on one you thought you was stuck on, Sue Adams you are this person! I thought my working life was over when I lost most of my sight, but you showed me that no matter what situation your life is in, people will always give you a chance if you just believe in yourself."

Simon Bacon, Rehabilitation Officer Visual Impairment:

"I am so pleased that Emma has found new employment, given all she has had to cope with due to her sight loss, and having to give up her previous job. Gaining new employment in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic is also impressive." Very big thanks for your role in helping her.

Congratulations to Emma, who was a winner at the Black Country Apprenticeship awards – not only winning her category but the Overall Apprentice of the Year Award!!

Orla

Hello, my name is Orla, and I am a journalist for our brand-new School Newspaper 'Watson... What's on?'

The journalism club meets once a week to cover important stories and we write and produce this for our school community. Whilst being able to write about topics that are important to us it also means that we are working on our Teamwork, Creativity and Communication skills which will help us as we get older!

Since becoming a member of the journalism club, I feel like I have gained more knowledge and grown more confidence. The club has also made me realise that when I grow older, I would like to become a journalist.

In this club we use skills such as Teamwork, Listening, Creativity, and Staying Positive to create articles covering a wide range of topics, such as Cartoons, Star Wars and Puzzles. My favourite article I created was my very first article, Turtle Talk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this paragraph about our work as a club, and my article.

Fun Fact – “By the way we came up with the name ‘Watson, What’s On?’ because our school used to be the home of Sherlock Holmes author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Watson was Holmes best friend, our therapy dog is also called ‘Watson’ and we love him!

Here is my very first article, I hope you enjoy it!

Turtle Talk



6 out of 7 turtle species are threatened with extinction.

Ways to help stop them becoming extinct are:

1. Stop using single use plastic, as if this gets into the ocean it can seriously harm turtles and other animals. If swallowed or eaten it can choke them and make them ill.
2. Don't buy any souvenirs made with or containing Hawksbill turtle shell.
3. Adopt turtles at WWF starting from just £3 a month, and get your own cuddly toy, photo and much more! More information about turtles at WWF.co.uk and Greenpeace.

A video on turtles and their declining numbers is available on Greenpeace's YouTube channel or website. Just type: Greenpeace Turtle Journey. Please go watch and help as much as you can.

Referring to my 3rd point about helping turtles, when you adopt a turtle, you get an adoption pack which has the recipe for turtle shaped cookies. (not real turtles don't worry!) You can bake them for yourself or you could sell them and your proceeds can go to a charity helping turtles, such as WWF. Happy Baking!

By Orla, turtle enthusiast.

Watch the amazing vimeo stories from 4 young people!

Stepping Stones is a school which opened in 2004 to support young people with mild to moderate disabilities and has since expanded into the impressive facility known as Undershaw.

This series was filmed and produced by another previous Stepping Stones student, Joe Johnson, and showcases some of the incredible stories, talents and achievements of these young people.

Joe Johnson

“I wanted to make these films as I feel it's really important for young people with disabilities to have the opportunity to see the multitude of directions in which they can lead their lives.

There is a homogeneous tendency in the representation of disabled people, showing one, rather limiting path. With these films, I've had the pleasure of interviewing individuals all blazing their own trail and thriving in their various fields.

I've found the experience of making these films incredibly inspirational and inspiring and I really hope they connect with others in a similar way. I hope to make more films exploring disability with the aim of breaking down barriers and challenging portrayals and representations.”

Prepare to be inspired and to have your perception of disability challenged as these individuals follow their dreams.

Ollie

“We can do so much more in life if we break things down into smaller chunks.”

Ollie describes himself as being a very broken child in an awful place at that time. Talking openly about his journey rebuilding himself, it's clear that Stepping Stones played an important role whilst he was there, both as a student and also during his time afterwards when he returned to work there. Ollie is currently studying Psychology at Sussex University, something that ten years ago he thought would never be possible.

Alumni Series - Ollie Jones on Vimeo

Sorcha

Sorcha Galvin moved to Stepping Stones at the age of 15 after being in mainstream education from the age of 4. She talks about the challenges before and during the transition and how the right environment allowed her to build her confidence and belief in what was possible.

“Before I came to Stepping Stones, I really wasn't confident but now I'm more confident and I'm loving my life now.”

During lockdown she made the move from her family home, achieving a level of independence she never thought possible. She works in Marketing at Chichester

College and enjoys a busier life with the confidence to travel the world, including a trip to California earlier in the year.

"I've really come into my own since moving out. I've got a better quality of life."

Alumni Series - Sorcha Galvin on Vimeo

Ola

Born in Belarus, Ola's disability was a result of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, where the radiation caused a lot of damage to people around the area and affected a baby's development when the pregnant mother came into contact with it.

At two and a half years old, Ola was adopted to England and after originally attending a mainstream school, she moved to Stepping Stones. Ola went on to college before starting in the world of work and after building in confidence and finding her independence she now has a great job at an IT firm and lives with her fiancé Ben at their house in Surrey.



Alumni Series - Ola Morgan on Vimeo

Joe

"Art welcomes disability because it's individual, unique perspectives and that's where art thrives."

In 2018 Joe graduated from UCA Farnham with a 2:1 BA (Hons) degree in Fine Art and has since established himself as a contemporary multimedia artist. His experience of having a disability does not define his artwork, but it does influence his ideas and visual voice.

"The great thing about art is there is no wrong answer."

Alumni Series - Joe Shaw on Vimeo

The **COINS Foundation** aims to influence the way the next generation thinks about poverty, disability and injustice. The Foundation supports a wide range of social change projects in the UK and in Africa.

Business and disability groups invited to test a new online employer advice service on health and disability



The Government has been building and testing a new online service for employers which provides advice and guidance on managing health and disability in the workplace. The service explains your legal obligations and good practice. This may be particularly helpful for smaller businesses without in-house HR support or access to an occupational health service.

We are supporting the development of this service and we'd like your help to test it.

By taking part, you'll receive free information and guidance on disability and health-related employment issues. You could use it to help manage a current case, or simply look around the site to see what's useful and identify improvements.

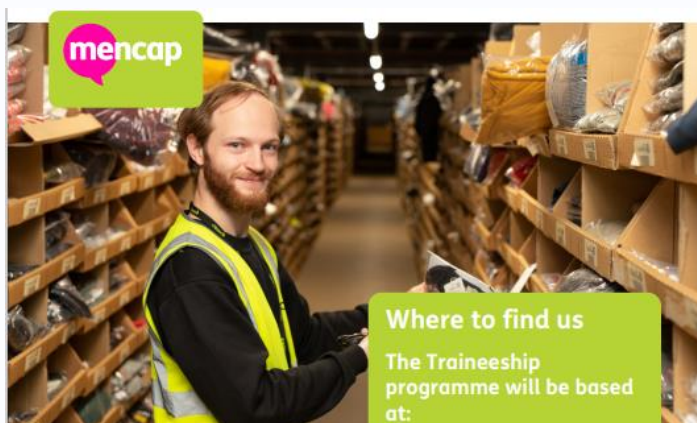
However, you choose to take part, please take the time to provide feedback. Your views will be vital in supporting the continued development of the service. You can make a real difference, ensuring the new service is user-friendly and meets the needs of your business and your employees.

Go to the test site **[Support with Employee Health and Disability](#)** and make your voice heard.

Mencap traineeship opportunities for people aged 19-14 with a learning disability, learning difficulty or autism

The programme lasts 16 weeks. 8 weeks in a makeshift classroom on site and 8 weeks in placement. We have a tutor and a caseworker. The Caseworker provides job coaching once the trainees move into placements.

Watch a video of trainees: <https://youtu.be/bk6VvRp4h-Y>



Where to find us

The Traineeship programme will be based at:

GXO
5310 Hunter Boulevard
Lutterworth
LE17 4XR

Contact:
Marie 07855 975 503

YOUR LOGISTICS CAREER PATHWAY

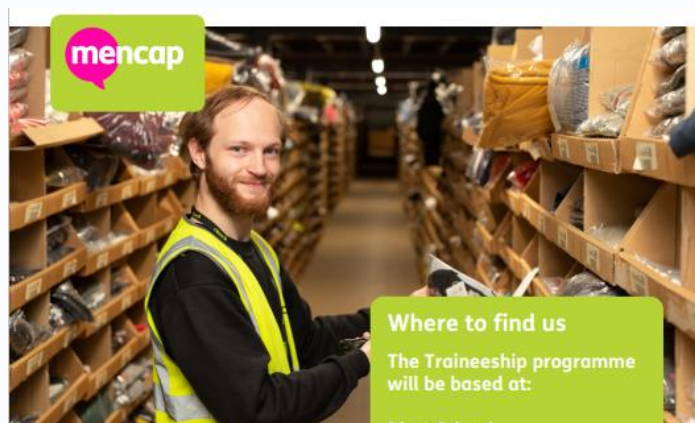
Mencap is offering a 16 week traineeship programme for people aged 19-24 with a learning disability, learning difficulty or autism in Lutterworth.

Our partnership with GXO Logistics, provides training and support for trainees to learn on the job with an opportunity to secure paid work.

marie.ford@mencap.org.uk | mencap.org.uk

Registered charity number: 222377 (England and Wales) SC041079 (Scotland)

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Where to find us

The Traineeship programme will be based at:

River Island
Magna Park
Fen St.
Milton Keynes.

Bus routes 3/3a
from: Snelshall West via
Westcroft, Shenley Edge,
Central Milton Keynes,
Coachway (Willen for 3a),
Brooklands, and Kingston

Contact Craig: 07815475790

YOUR LOGISTICS CAREER PATHWAY

Mencap is offering a 16 week traineeship programme for people aged 19-24 with a learning disability, learning difficulty or autism in Milton Keynes.

Our partnership with Clipper, provides training and support for trainees to learn on the job with an opportunity to secure paid work.

craig.harding@mencap.org.uk | mencap.org.uk

Registered charity number: 222377 (England and Wales) SC041079 (Scotland)

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Helpline for students, apprentices and trainees



Disability Rights UK runs a **Disabled Students Helpline** which offers information and advice to disabled students, apprentices and trainees by phone and email on a range of topics including:

- applying to college, university and apprenticeships
- telling people about your disability
- financial assistance
- adjustments for disabled students and apprentices
- rights in post -16 education and training under the Equality Act 2010
- how to resolve any disagreements.

The helpline supports disabled students, apprentices, parents and carers and professionals supporting disabled students aged over 16 in England.

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

In addition to the helpline, Disability Rights UK also produces a range of free **education factsheets and guides** for disabled students, trainees and apprentices on post 16 education and training.

Disability Rights UK's **Into Apprenticeships 2022 guide** deals with common questions such as how to find an apprenticeship, whether the training will be accessible and what support is available in the workplace.

There are several inspiring stories written by disabled apprentices about their own experiences and the challenges they have faced. The guide also contains a useful resources section listing further websites, publications and organisations which can help.

Personal Budgets Helpline

Telephone: 0330 995 0404

Opening hours: 9.30am-1.30pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays

personalbudgets@disabilityrightsuk.org

Welfare Rights Helpline for Member Organisations

Telephone: 0203 687 0779

Opening hours: 10.30am-12.30pm Tuesdays and Thursdays

ken.butler@disabilityrightsuk.org


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)

We like to hear from you!

Give us your feedback and contact:

Getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

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

email: 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 2022-23

Pre-order your copy today for
delivery in May 2022!

Provides in-depth,
**comprehensive guidance on the
benefits system, explains how
social care operates around the
UK and includes information
about other services and
resources for disabled people.**

DISABILITY RIGHTS HANDBOOK

Edition 47
April 2022 - April 2023

A guide to benefits and services
for all disabled people, their families,
carers and advisers



DISABILITY RIGHTS HANDBOOK UPDATER 2022-2023

- Disability Rights Handbook updates
- Significant recent case law

