

Improving access to Higher Education for disabled students



Mental
Health
Difficulty



Dyslexia
SpLD



Large
Print

Information for staff working in Sixth Form and Further Education Colleges

Recent research by Lancashire AimHigher Disability project has identified the following questions and sources of information that it may be useful to consider when thinking about how you support disabled learners who are studying for level 3 qualifications and / or show potential to study for a Higher Education (HE) qualification.

? Information, Advice and Guidance

- Are students aware of their HE options?
- Are students encouraged to visit HE institutions when making their UCAS choices?
- What help and guidance is available in your institution to assist students with UCAS application forms and Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) forms?
- What advice do you provide for students about disclosing their disability? (e.g. Are students encouraged to disclose their disability and made aware of the potential benefits of disclosure?)
- Is there an opportunity for students support needs to be assessed?
- Do you have access to sources of information about funding or support that might be useful for disabled students considering higher education?
- Do students know that you can study for a HE qualification at home, as well as some Further Education (FE) and HE Colleges and university?
- Are these pupils aware that the qualifications they study after their GCSEs will influence their access to HE – even if they are not sure about studying in HE ... we all change our minds and so it is better to leave doors open where possible?

Skill – National Bureau for students with disabilities

National campaigning organisation offering a helpline, range of detailed information sheets for students wanting to study in FE and HE

<http://www.skill.org.uk/>

Case Studies giving individual student experiences of student life

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/ouch/about.shtml>

Aimhigher

General information covering: applying for a course, universities & colleges, careers, finance, and student life

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/DG_073697

Specific advice about disability

National Association for Disability Officers

For disability and support staff in FE and HE <http://nadp-uk.org/index.html>

Additional Financial Support for Disabled Students

In HE disabled students may apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance, which provides funding for equipment, transport, personal and academic support to enable access to their chosen course in HE.

Resource

Disabled Students' Allowance Fact sheet:

<http://www.open.ac.uk/disability/disabled-students-allowance.php>

? Summer Schools and HE Preparation

Disabled learners remain an under-represented group in HE. Summer schools provide an ideal opportunity for a young person to experience HE study. They give disabled learners the chance to find out about the support available and how this is funded and organised in HE. Summer schools are organised by Aimhigher and individual HE institutions.

- Do you and your students know about Summer Schools and HE Preparation programmes including those organised by Aimhigher?
- Are disabled students given information (e.g. publicity material and access to briefing sessions) about these taster experiences
- Is there support available to fill in application forms and discuss their concerns about summer schools?
- Do your students considering a Foundation Degree know that many courses have an induction programme preparation?

Resources

North West Summer Schools

For information about summer schools or to discuss how they might support a particular pupil

http://www.summer-schools.info/power_search.php?pflag=search®ion=North+West

Action on Access Summer Schools

Details of support for staff organising or interested in knowing more about how summer schools are catering for the needs of disabled students

<http://www.actiononaccess.org/index.php?p=18>

Foundation Degree and HE Preparation Programmes

Organised via Aimhigher or by individual HE institutions,

Foundation Degree Forward <http://www.fdf.ac.uk/>

Passport to HE www.lancs.ac.uk/depts/conted/passport/lancaster.htm

Other LAD Information Sheets that may be of interest:

- LAD Information Sheet 1 Learning support staff and disability advisors' contact details
- LAD Information Sheet 6a Websites: Information, Advice and Guidance
- LAD Information Sheet 6b Websites: Institutional Issues and Staff Development
- LAD Information Sheet 6c Websites: Teaching and Learning

Prepared on behalf of Lancashire Aimhigher

For further information about supporting disabled learners, or copies of other resources, contact:

✉ Lancaster University, Department Educational Research, REAP: Researching Equity, Access and Participation, County South, Lancaster, LA1 4YD

☎ 01524 593684

✉ Jess Walmsley: j.m.walmsley@lancaster.ac.uk or

✉ Ann-Marie Houghton: a.houghton@lancaster.ac.uk to change contact details

🌐 <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/projects/REAP/projects/LAHDDisability.htm>