

How can colleges better support disabled learner progression through learning levels?

LEAD conference: 'Can We Make Things Better? YES WE CAN!!'

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Background to the research: data

Higher the level of study, the less likely disabled learners are to take part

40.4% learners at SCQF level 3 disclosed as disabled

8.6% learners at SCQF level 7 disclosed as disabled

Disabled learners clustered at SCQF levels 5 and below

70% of disabled learners studying SCQF levels 5 and below

57% of non-disabled learners studying at SCQF levels 5 and below

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Background to the research: Wood Commission



Young disabled people are likely to be offered a limited range of education and training opportunities

Young disabled people have a similar level of career aspiration at the age of 16 to their wider peer group

At 26 disabled people are nearly 4 times as likely to be unemployed

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Methodology

Research questions

Why are disabled learners are not progressing through learning levels as well as non-disabled learners?

What are the learning barriers that disabled learners experience?

Survey

141 learners and 107 parents/carers

Interviews

14 parents/carers, 15 learners, PAMIS

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Recommendations

Offer a broad range of courses at all SCQF levels which meet the needs and aspirations of disabled learners

“If the children don't learn the way the college teaches, the college should teach the way the children learn”. Parent

Put the learner at the centre of all processes and decisions affecting their learning journey

“Talk and listen to the students themselves, we want to learn and you can help us”. Learner

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Recommendations



3. Recognise that parents often have a key role to play when identifying the learner's support package

“Professionals should be able to recognise that parents have a key part to play”.

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Recommendations



4. Ensure that all teaching and support staff undertake regular training to ensure they have a good understanding of the way in which different impairments may affect individual learners

“There is a lack of specialist training and understanding amongst college staff as to how best to support many of the students in their care, thus leading to a skewed version of individuals’ needs”.

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Recommendations



5. Ensure that all disabled learners have access to a named staff member / keyworker as a means of helping them identify and address any learning barriers, and having someone to talk to during periods of difficulty

“Students need one person they can deal with – it’s too difficult dealing with 10 teachers, IT staff, department heads, support staff, etc”. Parent

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Recommendations



6. Aim to anticipate a wide range of reasonable adjustments which disabled learners may require, while still responding to individual requests for support

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Recommendations



7. Put in place a wide range of pre-entry support measures

“The college did not offer any support until weeks after the course had started, I had to find out how to get support, despite having declared my disability on my application and on enrolment. Support should have been made available immediately. The support I did get was too late and I am now leaving my course”. Learner

8. Aim to develop and improve partnership working with relevant agencies

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Discussion



= Select 2 of the recommendations:

- What does your organisation do in this area?
- What are the challenges?
- What are the successes?

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Resources



= [Link to research on LEAD website](#)

= [Link to research on ECU website:](#)

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