

Thinking about starting an apprenticeship

At the end of Year 11/12/13 you will be considering your options.

If you are thinking of starting an apprenticeship, we would no longer be able to support you directly, but we can help signpost you to sources of funding and help before you move.

Whilst you are at school the SEN Code of Practice means that your placement must make 'reasonable adjustments' to make sure you can access lessons and learning.

Once you start your apprenticeship this counts as a work placement. But don't worry... employers have similar responsibilities to make those 'reasonable adjustments' under the Equality Act 2010.

You can help them to help you by explaining the little things that make all the difference, like being able to see the speaker's face and being well positioned, with minimal background noise.

You can still access a radio aid by applying to Access to Work for funding to buy one.

Looking around Placements

Consider

- Has the placement had experience of training deaf apprentices? Perhaps they have supported apprentices with other extra needs.
- Find out about the training and how it is delivered (will there be small group and 1:1 tutorials or will it be in larger groups?)
- What are the acoustics like? Would the company be able to make small adaptations to improve this? (E.g. adding blinds to the windows or rubber feet to metal chairs, dividing screens in large open plan rooms)
- Get contact details (email address) of key staff members who can answer any questions or queries you may have.

Talk to your Teacher of the Deaf before you finish at school or college, and we can signpost you to ensure you have the support and equipment in place before you start..

Is there an opportunity for a taster session or trial day? - This may identify any areas which present a challenge and your ToD may be able to suggest ways to

Interviews

You do NOT have to tell a potential employer that you are deaf or have a hearing loss before your interview, but it is advised to do so in order for the employer to put in place any reasonable adjustments which will support you.

Employers are NOT allowed to discriminate against you during their recruitment process under the Equality Act 2010.

If a deaf person needs communication support, it is the employer who must provide this. They can apply for funding from Access to Work as it may be very expensive. The employer gets the money back even if the deaf person being interviewed doesn't get the job.

Support and Funding

If you have an Education Health and Care Plan this will cease in the workplace however the advice and the support in the EHCP or previous reports will be useful for your employer who may also wish to carry out specialist assessments and a self-evaluation of your support needs including requesting specialist advice. (e.g. a ToD). Your college or school may also run supported placements where they support your move into work or an apprenticeship.

Any equipment you need (e.g. a radio aid) can be funded by applying for Access to Work support to pay for this. Use your EHCP as evidence of the support and equipment that you need. It may help your employer if you share a copy with them too.

Access to Work will come out to your workplace to make their assessment. They are looking at your needs in the workplace, whereas an EHCP and other reports will have always looked at your needs to enable you to access learning in an educational environment.

This may mean that you have two assessments.

Supporting your learning

Your course tutor should make reasonable adjustments to help by:

- Making sure you are in a good seating position so that you can see them clearly
- Providing materials in advance
- Using subtitles on video clips
- Making sure you can take part in group work (e.g. provide a quiet space, use your radio aid)
- Provide a note taker if you have been using one at school or college
- Provide/use electronic note takers
- Provide radio aids/a sound field system/loop systems via Access to Work funding
- **Access arrangements for assessments. You should agree these before you start.**
They may include:
 - A quiet place to complete the assessment
 - Extra time – usually 25%. You may also agree extended time deadlines for coursework.
 - Adjusted papers where the language of the assessment is modified to make it easier to understand (by an exam board or a Teacher of the Deaf)
 - A live speaker for listening assessments
 - An Oral Language Modifier who is trained to clarify language in exam questions
 - Social support, as having a hearing loss can be socially isolating, perhaps by setting up a peer mentoring system, offering to introduce you to other deaf apprentices or other deaf role models
 - Patient tutors and mentors who are happy to explain or clarify anything that you may have missed

Helpful Information for Employers:

<https://www.ndcs.org.uk/?returnUri=%2fdocuments-and-resources%2fsupporting-the-achievement-of-deaf-young-people-on-apprenticeships%2f> (NDCS is FREE to join so this can be accessed)

Related sheets:

- Post 16 – Going to College
- Post 16 – Apprenticeship
- Post 16 - T-levels

Related links:

<https://www.berkshiresensoryconsortium.co.uk/>
www.ndcs.org.uk