



What people with an intellectual disability think about higher education



Higher education is when you carry on learning when you have finished school or college. It is usually for people who are older than 18.



People get higher education at universities or colleges.



You study on a course to get a qualification. This might be a degree or a certificate.

Who we talked to



We have spoken to lots of students with an intellectual disability about higher education.



This includes students who are thinking about doing a course or who have already done one.



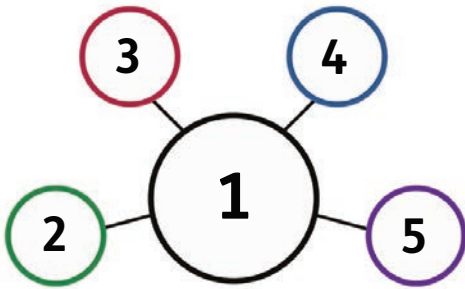
We also spoke to their parents or carers.



It is really important to find out what students think.



It will help us to understand what people need and how to make our universities and colleges better.



The people we spoke to talked about 5 main areas around higher education.

This booklet tells you what they said.

1. Why people with an intellectual disability want to go to university or college

Students said they want to go to university or college to:



- learn new things with other people



- learn new life skills. This might be things like:

- getting the bus to go to university



- talking to other people



- doing tests



- live **independently**.
Independently means doing things by yourself or with some support



- have more **confidence**.
Confidence is feeling like you can do something



- feel included and take part in higher education



- show other people what people with intellectual disabilities can do

2. Student experiences



Students talked about their experiences of going to university or college. This is what they told us.



More information

Students said they wanted more information about what courses they can do.



Students also wanted more information about things they can do after they have finished their course. Things like training or getting a job.



People said they need this information when they are thinking about going to university.

More chances to do other things

Students want the chance to:

- do projects with students from other courses around the university

and

- speak out for disability **rights**.
Your **rights** are things you are allowed to do and how you should be treated



Changes to courses and tests to help students learn

Flexible learning means choosing when you learn to meet your needs.

For example, having lessons later in the day or learning online.



Students said it was really important to have flexible learning.



Reasonable accommodations are small changes that can help people with a disability to be treated equally.



Students said it was important to have small changes made to tests. This might be things like:

- extra time for tests



- taking a break in the test



- giving information in a way that people can understand. For example, in sign language or easy read



Chances to do work experience

Work experience is when a person works for a company for a short amount of time.

This helps them learn new skills and get ready for getting a job.

Better experiences of being a student

Being a student is more than just going to lessons. It means doing things outside the classroom as well.



Things like:

- taking part in clubs and groups



- joining a gym or using the library





- meeting other people and making friends



Students wanted more chances to do these things when they were at university.

3. Support at university



People said it is really important to have the support they need when they are at university. Things like:



- devices that help people write things down in lessons



- someone to support them in the classroom



- someone to help them get around the university



- support with mental health

Support with travel



A **barrier** is when something stops you or makes it harder for you to do something.

Barriers stop people from having the same chance in life as other people.

Students with an intellectual disability face barriers with travel to university.

The main barriers are:

- getting to and from university
- and
- the cost of getting the bus or train



Students often have to get their parents or carer to drive them to university.



Students said they need more support with travel to and from university.

Support with money

People said they needed more support with money for things like:



- paying course **fees**. A **fee** is an amount of money you have to pay

and

- to help with the **cost of living**.



The **cost of living crisis** is when the prices of things like food, gas and electricity go up. But people's wages stay the same.



This means people might not have enough money to buy everything they need.

4. What students want to happen in the future



Students talked about what they wanted to happen after they finished their course.

They wanted support with:

- finding out what courses they could do next
- doing courses at different levels. This might be a degree or another certificate
- finding out what job they can do when they finish their course.



Students said getting a paid job helps them feel as part of the community.

5. Meeting everyone's needs



Different people have different needs.



Universities and colleges should offer different types of courses. This would help to meet more people's needs.