

DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING MODULE

Foreword

This training module was developed within the framework of the Erasmus+ "Let's Study!" Project in order to achieve the project's goal – to increase accessibility to Vocational training and education (VET) and higher education (HE) for persons with special needs and/or disability via (1) developing of suitable training module meeting the special needs of all students, (2) providing support means and information to the pedagogues dealing with persons with individual needs for support.

It is a concise and structured combination of theoretical knowledge and good practices.

The aim of the module is to reveal the concept of disability from the human rights perspective, to explain concepts of equal opportunities to take a closer look at the cases of discrimination on the basis of disability.

The module also introduces various types of disability and provides suggestions on how to adapt the learning environment to individual needs. The parts of the module comprise a set of interrelated parts, each part can be applied separately or in different combinations (e. g., discussing basic concepts + discussing situation of people having a certain disability + *Equality Quiz* for better affirmation of material), when needed.

PART ONE. INTRODUCTION TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

What is diversity and equal opportunities?

- **Equal Opportunities:** associated with the elimination of unlawful and unfair discrimination against particular groups. *Equality = a state of being equal.*
- **Diversity:** based upon the concept of recognizing, respecting and valuing difference.

Equality is not in regarding different things similarly, equality is in regarding different things differently.” Tom Robbins, novelist.

Equal opportunities are the implementation of human rights regardless of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, belief or attitudes, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, religion.

Diversity is the respect for the differences, their recognition and appreciation.

If equal opportunities protect us all, this diversity reflects us all.

SECTION 1.1.

LEGAL CONTEXT OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

The grounds for the prohibition of discrimination are a part of the identity that may be more vulnerable or subject to limitations.

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Under the **European non-discrimination directives**, it is prohibited to adopt a different approach based on certain "grounds for non-discrimination" and they include a fixed, non-discriminatory framework for sex inclusion (Directive implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and the right to use of goods (Directive on equality between women and men), gender equality directive (recast), sexual orientation, disability, age, religion or belief (Employment Equality Directive), racial or ethnic origin (Racial Equality Directive).

Meanwhile, the **European Convention on Human Rights** (ECHR) contains a non-exhaustive list, which is identical to, but not limited to, the lists contained in the directives. Article 14 of the ECHR stipulates that there must be no grounds for discrimination on grounds of "sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, membership of a national minority, property, birth or other basics ". The "other grounds" category allowed the European Court of Human Rights to include (among others) the grounds that are clearly protected under the non-discrimination directives, namely disability, age and sexual orientation.

SECTION 1.2.

MORAL / ETHICAL CONTEXT OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

- Aim for people to behave correctly.
- Aim to create an inclusive environment.

Vocational training in accordance with the principle of **inclusion** means:

- A culture of respect for differences and diversity should be fostered; the opportunity to "be yourself", to openly reveal your identity and needs (only when you reveal and identify your individual needs, the student acquires the right to demand adequate satisfaction);
- Students and staff with special features will be supported, revealing their talents and opportunities;
- The entire community of educational institutions would benefit from (knowledge, experience) working and learning diversity in an open environment;
- Better understandable, harassment and bullying are detected and prevented before;
- Ensuring freedom of speech, at the same time combating hate speech;
- Prevention of discrimination and the introduction of the principle of equal opportunities in the culture of the organization, with responsibility for the entire community of the educational institution (students and staff).

In some countries (United Kingdom, Wales), each educational institution is obliged to prepare and implement a **Strategic Equity Plan** that includes actions to help ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of age, disability, gender identity or sexual orientation, religion or belief, etc.

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Data are also collected and analysed on the effectiveness of the implementation of the measures envisaged and their impact on the various learner groups.

For example, in Wales, measures are being taken to ensure equal opportunities for the people of the Welsh language (minority language).

In many countries, Strategic Equality Plans provide for equal opportunities measures for sign language users and learners with other individual needs.

The **goals of the principle of equal opportunities** are:

Positive changes in the institution's internal culture – a culture based on respect for every human dignity and moral principles that manifests itself in appropriate behaviour.

The principles of equal opportunities and respect for diversity are introduced in the teaching process and internal communication.

Monitoring and evaluating the way in which representatives of the sensitive groups (learners and staff) are sensitive to discrimination.

In the educational process, an inclusive environment is being created and individualized support is provided – both learners with individual needs and all other learners win it.

The principles of equal opportunities and respect for diversity apply not only to the teaching process but also to the evaluation, recruitment, community representation, etc. processes.

The role of **student council** in this process is also important – all students must be represented, with equal attention and effort all students are addressed, thus bringing together and strengthening the community.

In addition to the principle of equal opportunities, Student Representations in their activities should follow the principle of academic community integrity, identify systemic disadvantages that impede access to education or vocational training services for an environment (informational and physical) accessible to everyone.

SECTION 1.3. DISCRIMINATION

Direct discrimination occurs when, because of certain prohibitions against discrimination, a person is treated less favourably than another in the same situation.

For example, a Higher School of Disabled Persons requires a medical certificate that their state of health allows them to study, while such certificates are not required from those who do not have a disability.

Direct discrimination also includes cases where a person is treated less favourably because he is *mistaken* for a particular vulnerable group.

Direct discrimination also covers situations where someone is treated less favourably because they are *perceived* to have a protected characteristic or are *associated* with someone who does:

Example 1: A placement coordinator thinks that a student teacher is gay, though in fact he is straight. She decides not to offer him a placement at a Catholic school because she doesn't think the school will be a supportive place for a gay student.

Example 2: The placement coordinator knows that the student teacher is straight, but decides not to offer him a placement at a Catholic school because the student has appeared in local press campaigning for gay rights, and therefore she doesn't think the school will be supportive of him.

Indirect discrimination – where an apparently neutral rule or practice is applied to everyone, but it puts people who share a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.

For example, animals are prohibited at the educational institution; such a situation would indirectly discriminate against a student using the guide dog.

Important: In order to assess whether a person has been discriminated against, it is necessary to compare situations, i. e., how, in such a situation, it would be treated with another person (there are no identical situations, therefore, the situation is as closely as possible).

Exception – indirect discrimination can only be justified if:

- the rule or practice is adopted in order to pursue a legitimate goal;
- the rule or practice is an appropriate means of achieving the goal;
- there is no other less discriminatory way to achieve the goal.

This is called an **Objective Justification**.

Example: No dogs are allowed in the School of Pharmacy's clean manufacturing facility. This would not be unlawful discrimination against a guide dog user, because keeping the facility sterile is a legitimate goal, and excluding dogs is the only way to achieve it.

According to the case law of the Court of Justice, discrimination is the application of different rules to a similar situation or the application of the same rule to different situations.

SECTION 1.4. HARASSMENT, VICTIMIZATION AND STEREOTYPES

Harassment is intentional, recurrent, aggressive, abusive behaviour, humiliation, intimidation or pain (physical and / or emotional).

Harassment on the grounds of vulnerability (prohibition of discrimination) is prohibited by the Equality Acts (e.g., Law on Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Lithuania).

For example, in the audience, a couple of students are loudly dissatisfied with the fact that students with disabilities have unjustifiably added extra time to perform a control task, the backward / inactive students do not have any privileges. This behaviour in the audience creates a climate of intimidation and humiliation, which is harassment due to disability.

Victimization is a variety of negative effects for a person who forms the person's self-awareness as a victim. It is an unfavourable, blaming behaviour with a person who strives for equal opportunities for self-assurance or has helped another person to achieve equal opportunities.

Stereotyping is a generalized assessment of a particular social group, often erroneously or superficially attributing certain qualities to this group.

Prejudice (preconceived) is an opinion we make about another person without his / her knowledge, and by attributing us to unfamiliar qualities as weaknesses. Preliminary provisions may be positive or negative; negative prejudices can lead to discriminatory behaviour.

Visible features for the prohibition of discrimination are just the tip of the iceberg – appearance, sex, skin colour, visible disabilities, age...

Everything else – **features we do not see** – sexual orientation, religion / beliefs, values, life experiences, invisible disabilities...

How to deal with stereotypes and prejudices?

- Challenge yours and your educational institution's attitudes, habits, culture of social interactions.
- Commit to creating an "open" environment at a training institution.
- Never discriminate or tolerate exclusion, excessive caring or other humane behaviour.
- Do not treat people like you would like to deal with you, but the way a particular person wants them to be treated.

Some examples of Barriers to Inclusion:

- negative attitudes;
- lack of understanding;
- poor (and inappropriate) ways of giving information/ poor communication;
- no consultation processes;
- lack of opportunities in study and work;
- poor physical access;
- poor study environment.

SECTION 1.5. DISABILITY

People with disabilities are people with long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, which can interfere with various obstacles to enable them to participate fully and effectively in society on an equal footing with others.

Under this definition, the law protects individuals:

- having visual, hearing impairment;
- long-term or recurring mental disorders;
- having developmental / intellectual disabilities;

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- long-term or physical / mobility limitations (e.g., spinal cord injury);
- specific learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia);
- long-term congenital or acquired conditions (e.g., cerebral palsy, arthritis).

These people, while receiving individualized treatment, reducing conditional conditions or using compensatory measures, do not stop protection against discrimination on the grounds of disability.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities stipulates that discrimination on grounds of disability means any exclusion, rejection or restriction of disability which is intended to worsen or rebut or worsens or denies the recognition, implementation or use of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political arena, economic, social, cultural, and civic or any other area. Such discrimination involves all forms of discrimination, including the abandonment of the right to adapt to the individual needs;

Reasonable accommodation of the conditions are necessary and appropriate modifications and adaptations that do not impose a disproportionate or unreasonable burden and are necessary in a specific case to ensure the enjoyment by persons with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others or the possibility of exercising these rights and freedoms.

Educational institutions are obliged to create suitable conditions for the training of people with disabilities.

Eligible conditions could include a variety of tools for facilitating admission to learning, learning and the right assessment of achievements (including the recognition of competences acquired in other institutions).

For example, the lecturer distributes printed material to the students before the lecture, and at the end of the course provides a link to the course synopsis in electronic format. Adequate adaptation of the conditions for a student to the blind would be a presentation of the syllabus in an electronic format before the course was taught so that he / she could prepare it using text read and voice synthesis programs.

SECTION 1.6. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

"Inclusion of education is an educational practice based on the conviction that all learners, both with and without the disability, have the right to study with their peers, and this form of education is mutually beneficial to the communities of general education schools. Teachers, parents and the community, working together and using the resources available, can flexibly interpret and adapt the curriculum for each individual learner's individual needs." Prof. Gary Bunch, Ontario

Right to education, according to UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is recognition that:

- Primary education shall be compulsory and available free to all;

- Secondary education [...] shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education;
- Higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity [...] and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education; [...].

Inclusive education is to be understood as:

- (a) A **fundamental human right** of all learners. Notably, education is the right of the individual learner and not, in the case of children, the right of a parent or caregiver. Parental responsibilities in this regard are subordinate to the rights of the child;
- (b) A principle that values the well-being of all students, respects their inherent **dignity and autonomy**, and acknowledges individuals' requirements and their ability to effectively be included in and contribute to society;
- (c) A means of realizing other human rights. It is the primary means by which persons with disabilities can lift themselves out of poverty, obtain the means to participate fully in their communities and be safeguarded from exploitation. It is also the primary means of achieving inclusive societies;
- (d) The result of a process of continuing and proactive commitment to eliminating barriers impeding the right to education, together with changes to culture, policy and practice of regular schools to accommodate and effectively include all students.

The **core features of inclusive education** are:

- (a) A “whole systems” approach: education ministries must ensure that all resources are invested in advancing inclusive education and in introducing and embedding the necessary changes in institutional culture, policies and practices;
- (b) A “whole educational environment”: the committed leadership of educational institutions is essential for introducing and embedding the culture, policies and practices needed to achieve inclusive education at all levels and in all areas, including in classroom teaching and relationships, board meetings, teacher supervision, counselling services and medical care, school trips, budgetary allocations, any interaction with the parents of learners with and without disabilities and, when applicable, the local community or wider public;
- (c) A “whole person” approach: recognition is given to the capacity of every person to learn, and high expectations are established for all learners, including learners with disabilities. Inclusive education offers flexible curricula and teaching and learning methods adapted to different strengths, requirements and learning styles. This approach implies the provision of support, reasonable accommodation and early

intervention so that all learners are able to fulfil their potential. The focus is on learners' capacities and aspirations rather than on content when planning teaching activities. The "whole person" approach aims at ending segregation within educational settings by ensuring inclusive classroom teaching in accessible learning environments with appropriate supports. The education system must provide a personalized educational response, rather than expect students to fit the system;

(d) Supported teachers: all teachers and other staff receive the education and training they need to give them the core values and competencies to accommodate inclusive learning environments, which include teachers with disabilities. An inclusive culture provides an accessible and supportive environment that encourages working through collaboration, interaction and problem-solving;

(e) Respect for and value of diversity: all members of the learning community are equally welcome and must be shown respect for diversity irrespective of disability, race, colour, sex, language, linguistic culture, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, indigenous or social origin, property, birth, age or other status. All students must feel valued, respected, included and listened to. Effective measures to prevent abuse and bullying are in place. Inclusion takes an individual approach to students;

(f) A learning-friendly environment: inclusive learning environments are accessible environments where everyone feels safe, supported, stimulated and able to express themselves and where there is a strong emphasis on involving students in building a positive school community. Recognition is afforded to the peer group in learning, building positive relationships, friendships and acceptance;

(g) Effective transitions: learners with disabilities receive support to ensure the effective transition from learning at school to vocational and tertiary education and, finally, to work. Learners' capacities and confidence are developed and learners receive reasonable accommodation, are treated with equality in assessments and examination procedures, and their capacities and attainments are certified on an equal basis with others;

(h) Recognition of partnerships: teacher associations, student associations and federations, organizations of persons with disabilities, school boards, parent-teacher associations and other functioning school support groups, both formal and informal, are all encouraged to increase understanding and knowledge of disability. The involvement of parents or caregivers and the community is viewed as an asset that contributes resources and strengths. The relationship between the learning environment and the wider community must be recognized as a route towards inclusive societies;

(i) Monitoring: as a continuing process, inclusive education must be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that neither segregation nor integration are taking place, either formally or

informally. According to article 33, monitoring should involve persons with disabilities, including children and persons with intensive support requirements, through their representative organizations, as well as parents or caregivers of children with disabilities, where appropriate. Disability-inclusive indicators must be developed and used in a manner consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Four key questions in planning an inclusive educational environment

- In developing a lecture plan, what basic knowledge should each learner receive? What perception of the subject they should take from the audience?
- How do my students learn best, what are their learning styles, how can each of the learning styles provide the most effective teaching material?
- What changes in the lesson plan would allow all learners to effectively participate in the lesson?
- How can learners demonstrate that they have mastered the material? How to assess learner achievements, emphasizing strengths, but not weaknesses?

Benefits for students using inclusive education:

- Not to be disadvantaged or experience negative behaviour for a reason relating to your protected characteristic.
- To study/live in an environment that allows you to 'be yourself' and be open about your identity and needs.
- To have a more 'global' and diverse student experience that will help you to gain a wider range of knowledge and experience.
- To better understand people's needs in relation to subject matter, e.g. medical students understanding the needs of disabled patients, which can later be used in research or employment.
- To be better prepared for employment (diversity & equality policies of an employer).
- To understand fairness and inclusivity in VET and HE practices.
- To understand procedures for addressing harassment / bullying.

Important Factors creating inclusive environment:

- The VET and HE establishment does not tolerate harassment and bullying including offensive language.
- Open and constructive debate are central to academic life, and the establishment encourages the free exchange of ideas, materials and arguments. However, those exercising freedom of speech must not breach other laws, for example, those relating to harassment or incitement to hatred in the way ideas are delivered.

- Compliance with equality legislation and policies is the **responsibility of all students and staff**.
- Students and staff have a responsibility to act in a manner that does not unlawfully discriminate.
- In order to identify any support requirements, students should discuss their specific needs with the establishment.

SECTION 1.7. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION (ADJUSTMENTS)

One of the **cornerstones** of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability is **accessibility**, which is considered to be a cord of independent people with disabilities in the community of life, as well as a condition for participation on equal terms (opportunities).

The following characteristics apply to an **individual application**:

- The need to adapt the conditions for a **particular person** with a disability in an **individual situation**.
- Burden, adaptation is proportional and adequate,
- Adaptation is a condition for the full enjoyment of all of its human rights with all.

Example: A history lecturer gives students printed hand-outs in the lecture, and only provides an electronic version afterwards. It would be a reasonable adjustment to give the electronic copy to the blind student in advance, so that he has time to use text-to-speech software to read it before class.

Example: A Deaf student who lip-reads needs to be able to watch people's faces when they speak. It would be a reasonable adjustment for her tutor to arrange the seats in a circle and require students to speak one at a time.

In this way, adaptation is an integral part of the content of individual human rights, i.e. intended to realize the individual right to e.g., science.

Key features seeking for reasonable accommodation:

- vision and values based on an inclusive ethos;
- a 'can do' attitude from all staff;
- a pro-active approach to identifying barriers and finding practical solutions;
- strong collaborative relationships with students and parents;
- a meaningful voice for students;
- a positive approach to managing behaviour;
- strong leadership by senior management and governors;
- effective staff training and development;

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- the use of expertise from outside the school;
- building disability into resourcing arrangements;
- a sensitive approach to meeting the impairment specific needs of pupils;
- regular critical review and evaluation;
- the availability of role models and positive images of disability.

PART TWO

INTRODUCING DISABILITIES AND GOOD PRACTICES

SECTION 2.1. INTRODUCTION TO LEARNING DISABILITY

Empowering the learner – Person centred planning

View from the person's perspective	View from other's perspective
My strengths are	They think my strengths are
I like, I want, I am interested in...	They presume I am interested in...
You can best support me...	They presume they can best support me...

MEDICAL MODEL THINKING	SOCIAL MODEL THINKING
Person is faulty	Person is valued
Diagnosis	Strengths and Needs defined by self and others
Labelling	Identify Barriers and develop solutions
Impairment becomes Focus of attention	Outcome based programme designed
Assessment, monitoring, programmes, of therapy imposed	Resources are made available to ordinary services
Segregation and alternative services	Disability Equality Training for All
Ordinary needs put on hold	Encourage Social Relationships
Re-entry if normal enough OR Permanent Exclusion	Diversity Welcomed Disabled Person is Included
Society remains unchanged	Society Evolves

(Adapted from Micheline Mason 1994, R. Rieser 2005)

People can often find the term *'learning disability'* confusing because there are several different explanations about what a learning disability is. Learning disability and learning difficulties are terms that are commonly used in the UK. These two terms are often interchangeable when

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used in the context of health and social care for adults. Some people with learning disabilities prefer the term learning difficulties.

There are several definitions of learning disability used in the UK. A commonly used one is from *Valuing People: a new strategy for learning disability for the 21st century*, the government White Paper for England about health and social care support for people with a learning disability (2001). It explains that a **learning disability includes the presence of:**

- a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information or to learn new skills;
- a reduced ability to cope independently;
- an impairment that started before adulthood, with a lasting effect on development.

This means that the person will find it harder to understand, learn and remember new things, and means that the person may have problems with a range of things such as communication, being aware of risks or managing everyday tasks.

In UK education services, the term '**learning difficulty**' includes children and young people who have 'specific learning difficulties', for example dyslexia, but who do not have a significant general impairment of intelligence.

The Special Educational Needs codes also use the terms 'moderate learning difficulty', 'severe learning difficulty' and 'profound multiple learning difficulty', which relate to general impairments in learning of different severity. These could be seen as interchangeable with the term 'learning disability' which is used in health and social care, and the groups of mild, moderate, severe and profound learning disabilities explained below.

When thinking about different definitions it is important to know that the UK is the only country that uses the term learning disability in the way described above. In other English speaking countries the term '**intellectual disability**' is growing in usage.

In other European countries, e. g., in Estonia, there is not a separate definition of learning disability. Children and adults are declared disabled on 3 different levels – **profound disability, severe disability and moderate disability**. The decision is based on a questionnaire defining what daily activities the person is able to do without external help, whether the assistance need is 24h, during daytime or occasionally.

The Estonian Association of People with Intellectual Disabilities is explaining the condition of learning disabilities as follows: a learning disability is a neurological disorder. In simple terms, a learning disability results from a difference in the way a person's brain is sorted out. Children with learning disabilities are as smart as or smarter than their peers. But they may have difficulty reading, writing, spelling, and reasoning, recalling and/or organizing information if left to figure things out by themselves or if taught in conventional ways.

A learning disability can't be cured or fixed; it is a lifelong issue. With the right support and intervention, however, children with learning disabilities can succeed in school and go on to successful, often distinguished careers later in life.

The Estonian education system is defining children with special needs in 2 separate groups – the 1st group is requiring more moderate support systems like speech therapist, there will be cases of dyslexia etc. The 2nd group is requiring complex and expensive support services to be able to cope.

There are special schools (and vocational education), special classes in mainstream schools and supported learning is mainstream class. Currently (2016/2017) 23 633 learners are described with educational special needs, making up 16,8% of all learners. 76% of the above-mentioned are studying in mainstream school and class. 9% are organised in special classes in the mainstream school and 15% are studying in a special school.

Good Practice Example, United Kingdom

The following is an example of a comprehensive menu of learning activities divided into subject modules which can be used for people with Learning Disabilities.

Step 1: Defining category of Learning Disability – determine learning module and subject area to be chosen from the menu.

Categorising people into groups on the basis of their disability is almost as bad as labelling them. In many ways it is for the convenience of those planning and delivering services, and it often does not benefit the people being placed into a certain group.

However, if you are to understand learning disability then you need to know that in the UK we have been categorising people in relation to the nature of their needs or level of disability for over 100 years.

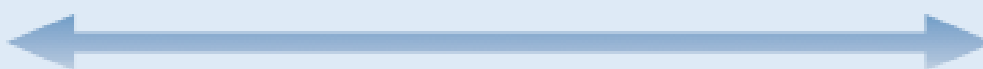
We currently use the terms profound, severe, moderate and mild to make a distinction between different levels of need (for learning purposes can be called Level 1, Level 2 etc..).

These categories are not rigid and there are no clear dividing lines between the different groups. Equally, there is no clear cut off point between people with mild learning disabilities and the general population. It is always helpful to remember that you must see the person first and that labels and categories are ways that individuals and society have sought to identify and plan for particular groups of citizens.

The section below concentrates on the medical and social models of disability and this will show that the labels and categories we use have been developed from deep rooted attitudes to people with disabilities.

Profound – People with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities, or profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD), can be some of the most disabled individuals in our communities. They have a profound intellectual disability, which means that their intelligence quotient (IQ) is estimated to be under 20 and therefore they have severely limited understanding. In addition, they may have multiple disabilities, which can include impairments of vision, hearing and movement as well as other challenges such as epilepsy and autism. Most people in this group need support with mobility and many have complex health needs requiring extensive support. People with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities may have considerable difficulty communicating and very limited understanding.

Mild learning disability – Moderate learning disability – Severe learning disability – Profound learning disability



Many people express themselves through non-verbal means, or at most through using a few words or symbols. In addition, some people need support with behaviour that is seen as challenging, such as self-injury.

Severe – people with a severe learning disability often use basic words and gestures to communicate their needs. Many need a high level of support with everyday activities such as cooking, budgeting, cleaning and shopping, but many can look after some if not all of their own personal care needs. Some people have additional medical needs and some need support with mobility issues.

Moderate – people with a moderate learning disability are likely to have some language skills that mean they can communicate about their day to day needs and wishes. People may need some support with caring for themselves, but many will be able to carry out day to day tasks with support.

Mild – a person who is said to have a mild learning disability is usually able to hold a conversation, and communicate most of their needs and wishes. They may need some support to understand abstract or complex ideas. People are often independent in caring for themselves and doing many everyday tasks. They usually have some basic reading and writing skills. People with a mild learning disability quite often go undiagnosed. Most people still need appropriate support with tasks such as budgeting and completing forms.

ASDAN is used by non-profit organisations, educational establishments such as schools and colleges in the United Kingdom as part of formal learning accreditation for children, young people and adults with learning disabilities.

Step 2: Defining the Learning Environment and Subject

If we use the example of the Wyvern School in Ashford, Kent which was visited by the project partners, we saw that the school had set up an apartment within the school for learning purposes with kitchen, bedroom, living area and toilet. The apartment is used as the Learning Environment for staff to then take the children / young person through certain tasks (now called **CHALLENGES**) which count towards accredited units for certification.

The Challenges are offered at different levels, and this is then reflected in the certification the child or young person receives, which is recognised throughout the United Kingdom.

Step 3: Accessing the subject focussed modules

Organisations must be registered with ASDAN to offer accredited modules. Staff members must log into a special website called *LifeSkills Challenge* which is a sub website of ASDAN. This website gives the opportunity to use the different challenges possible, this is then tracked as part of the student's achievement record.

Go to the following website: www.lifeskillschallenge.org.uk (this is part of ASDAN) you will be on the Homepage.

Click on **Challenges**

You will see lots of boxes with different subjects.

Click on **Independent Living**

In the **Find a Challenge** box, write the word **Cooking** (press Green search button)

You will now see a menu of alternative challenges all linked to the word cooking – everything from buying food, using money, using microwaves etc.

If you click on the **Preparing a simple snack** you will then see a box which gives you an overview of the

learning outcomes and assessment criteria, time expected etc.

If you scroll down you can see lots of other modules all linked to the initial word Cooking. You could do the same for other words such as **Cleaning** etc.

Now you can see the clear link between the physical apartment at the Wyvern School and the actual learning modules as described here, all when completed result in fully accredited certification for the individual with learning disabilities.

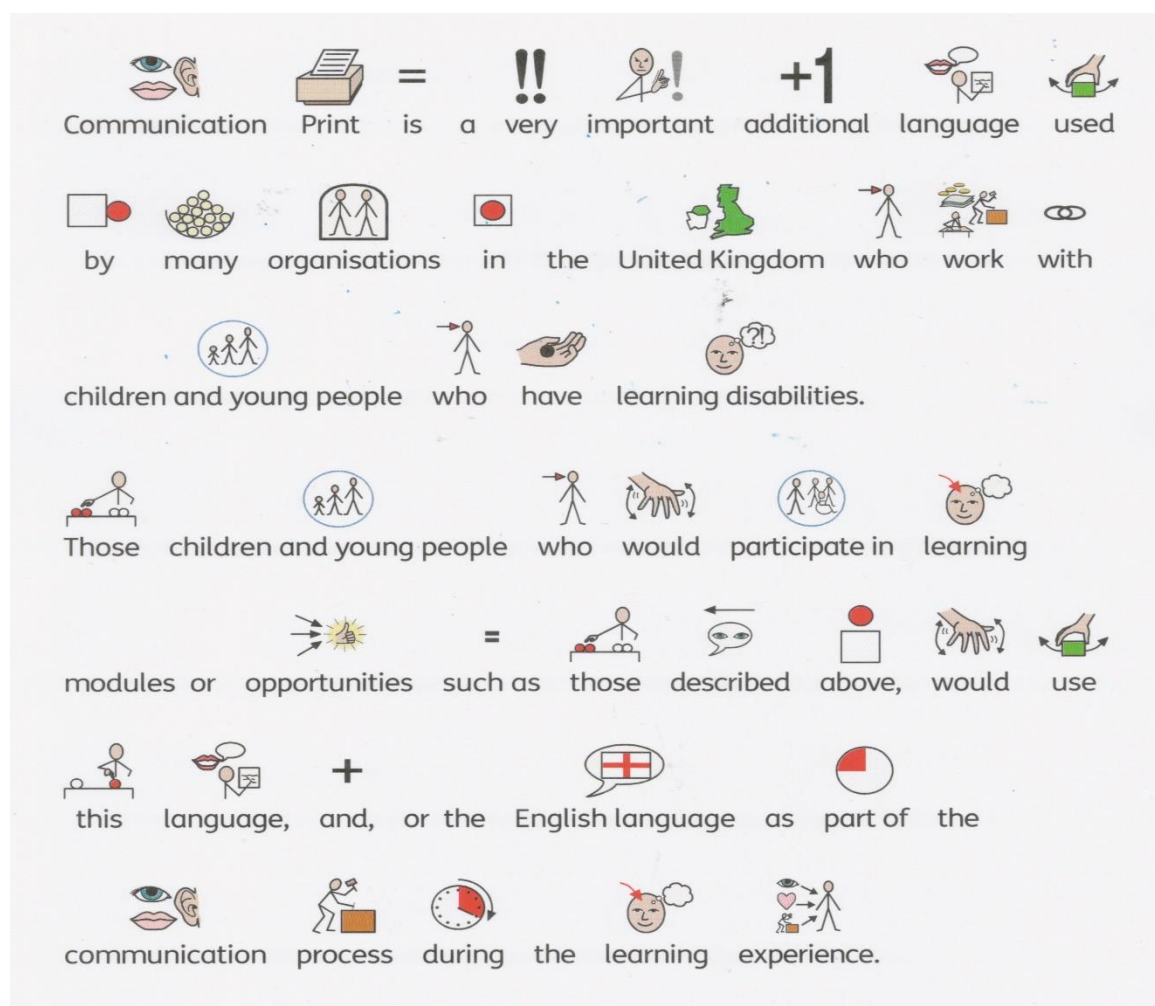
This system permits access to literally hundreds of easy to follow learning modules for those with learning disabilities, irrespective of the level of disability.

Communication Print

Communication Print is a very important additional language used by many organisations in the United Kingdom who work with children and young people who have learning disabilities.

Those children and young people who would participate in learning modules or opportunities such as those described above, would use this language, and, or the English language as part of the communication process during the learning experience.

Here is an example of communication print:



Good Practice Example, Estonia

Since 1st of September 2014, in all counties (altogether 16 centres) of Estonia *Rajaleidja* /Pathfinder centres were opened with the aim of supporting learners with learning (intellectual) disability to find their carrier path, but also for supporting children with special educational needs attending mainstream schools.

The initiative was backed up by Foundation Innove and European Social Fund. The centrally organised support systems would help the schools to end in shortage of specialists, as there might not be sufficient demand in one school to keep the support system alive. Joint efforts instead are enabling better coverage of the special support needed (<https://rajaleidja.innove.ee>)

The 3 steps for children and adults with learning disability for education and independent living

Step 1: Entering the education system in special school or mainstream school for children with educational special needs (including the ones with learning disabilities).

The family in close co-operation with the municipal specialists and education units (pre-schools, schools, vocational education) are defining where the child with learning disabilities would be studying. Often the solution is based on what is offered at specific location.

There are in bigger towns, in particular Tallinn and Tartu, private schools organised by parents of children with special educational needs, where the studying is organised in a suitable manner for the learners. Special schools for children with learning disabilities are as well run as state schools.

During school vacations, there are providers of child care (respite care), in order to organise the time of the family so that adult family members can remain and enter the labour market. *Estonian Agrenska Foundation* www.agrenska.ee is one of the biggest providers of such respite care services.

Tartu Maarja School and *Maarja Support Center* is offering special school service and back-up for children and young adults, for whom the obligatory and as well voluntary study offers are already exhausted.

The ones who have followed a simplified study programme for the obligatory basic education, there is a possibility to have one extra year of basic education, and in case of having studied on a basic skills programme, there will be possibility for three extra years. All that is helping the transfer from the obligatory basic education to the extended studies, i.e. in the vocational education system.

Step 2: Vocational education system (and possibilities for people with learning disabilities)

Similarly to achieving basic education, the organisation of vocational training for the youngsters with special educational needs is organised so, that there are special educational institutions for only that target group, there are groups and study programmes in mainstream vocational education and finally back-up for learners who are attending ordinary vocational training.

The most prominent and best equipped special educational institution for vocational training for youngsters with learning disabilities is the *Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Center*, located in Tallinn.

The Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre www.astangu.ee is a unique centre in Estonia, providing rehabilitation services and vocational training programmes to working-age people with disabilities, developing the field of rehabilitation in Estonia and sharing competences with other service providers. Astangu center is running the following programmes:

Prevocational training programmes offer our clients the opportunity to develop their social and practical skills necessary for coping with everyday life. These programmes help clients to develop a learning readiness for vocational training and to choose a career.

Vocational Training Programmes:

Action Type: Strategic Partnerships for Vocational Education and Training

Project Reference Number: 2015-1-LT01-KA202-013489

Project Title: Let's Study! – Development of Training Module about Disability for VET and HE

- Cleaning and Home Maintenance
- Bakery
- Carpentry
- Cook's Assistant
- Software Development
- Accounting

The objective of vocational training is to help our clients gain work skills according to their capabilities in their chosen studies, develop their social coping skills and to prepare themselves for competing in the labour market.

The objective of the **Traumatic Brain Injury Programme** is to support the client's return to active life by helping them adjust to a health condition caused by brain injury. The course develops and supports self-awareness, coping with everyday activities, physical conditioning, social skills and the achievement of personal goals.

Sheltered workshops in Astangu are designed for people who are experiencing difficulties in finding or keeping a job, with the aim of helping them obtain work skills and develop their work habit. In the workshops, clients have the chance to do work assignments according to their abilities, with their special needs considered.

In addition to Astangu, there are several mainstream vocational education institutions, in Tallinn, Tartu and other Estonian locations, where programmes and groups for youth with special educational needs are run.

Finally, a feature of the study possibilities what is an important one for youth with learning disabilities is, that it is possible to enter several vocational training programmes after each other, meaning that if one ended study showed that employment was not achievable with that curriculum, it is possible to start another study at the same or at another educational institution. This is also helping the transfer from childhood/youth into adulthood.

Step 3: Transfer from childhood to adult life and different options available for making this transfer as smooth as possible.

The most challenging step on education for people with learning disabilities is to learn, how to transfer from being a student to enter the adult life of employment and occupation.

Recent year, developments in the support systems for enabling employment for people with disabilities, including people with learning disabilities, have taken place in Estonia. Since 1st of January 2017, services for adults of working age, who have been declared with work capacity, is dealt with **Estonian Unemployment Board** www.tootukassa.ee

Simultaneously other processes, backed up by European Social Fund and other instruments for helping to be an adult with a learning disability are taking place. ESF is supporting **de-institutionalisation**, with the aim of moving people out from bigger institutions into smaller service provision units. This process needs to continue, in particular for backing up for initiatives of independent living, what are started by family member of people with learning disabilities.

Secondly, also a **long-term sheltered employment** tender is implemented, another planned with the aim of offering people who for various reasons cannot enter the open labour market, possibilities to have a meaningful everyday existence, where the persons can contribute to the society.

Backed up by European Economic Area/Norwegian funding for NGO development, Estonian Agrenska Foundation was leading a project in 2014-2015, with the aim of promoting the idea of sheltered workshops throughout the country. Several newcomers were supported to start offering employment-related rehabilitation services.

A mapping of current situation was made. Throughout the country, in 2015, there were 90 NGO-s,

Foundations and municipal or state run offers for employment-related rehabilitation. Unfortunately, the coverage is very uneven as well as is the equipment level. Some sheltered workshops like the one mentioned earlier of Astangu, are very well equipped, while most are not having the same large spectre of technical back up and human resources available.

One of the **combined living in the community and employment** opportunities created by grass-root, by families of children and youth with learning disabilities, is **Maarja Village** in Põlva county, South-East of Estonia.

Maarja Village www.maarjakyla.ee offers a home to 33 young adults with learning disabilities. Here they try to live an active and independent life with the support and friendship of assistants and teachers living and working together with them.

The village has 5 different family houses, a workshop building and a vegetable and fruit garden. Too often this kind of children just stay with their family after they grew up and everything is done for them. In Maarja village they learn to become more independent. They learn how to take care of themselves and can develop new skills in different workshops. As adult people they learn to live without mother and father next to them. Many of them still visit often their families of course, but in the same time Maarja Village has become like a family for them.

Usually life in the village just goes on like everywhere else. After breakfast everybody has their activities to do: courses of gardening school, village work that has to be done (in the garden, forest or workshop), taking care of the vegetables and fruit that we grow ourselves, preparing lunch and dinner.

After work there is also time to socialize, to do some sports, cultural activities or just to relax together. In the evening we sit together to watch a movie or to play a game. Once a week to the swimming pool. Often it is also just party time to celebrate birthdays, midsummer or the New Year for example.

Similar provisions are either already active or planned in several different locations of Estonia. It is crucial to develop both the independent living (living in the community) and the employment support further, to see that all the major locations (county centres) are having adequate service available.

Worth to mention that in some countries intellectual disability is no more an obstacle to seek for higher education. With certain support and reasonable accommodation learners with intellectual disability seek for University degree.

Good practice example, Iceland

Since 2007 at the University of Education in Iceland a programme of university education for people with intellectual disabilities had been initiated.

The programme was launched on October 1, 2007 within the Department of Social Education and its goal is to be inclusive.

The students are not taught within a special unit but study alongside the general student population and take the same courses.

The programme is organised as an action research-based development project for the duration of two years for 60 ECTS. There is a strong collaboration between instructors, support staff, and students to choose a work-related focus and coursework according to interests and educational needs. Each student is individually supported to identify goals and receives any needed assistance required to maintain their programme of study.

The programme also includes a **mentor system** whereby each student may have individualised support from a fellow student. General students within the Department of Social Education, as well as other departments such as the teacher and early education, can choose a university elective course—a mentor course—which

is tied to the diploma program where they become mentors for the disabled students. The students taking the mentor course meet once a week and participate in seminars and receive consultation from their teachers.

An internal review of the first group of students to progress through the programme—a total of 23 students—found that many of the students had anxieties about the higher educational setting as well as cooperative work with other students. Many were not used to inclusive educational settings as the result of their prior segregated experiences in special education.

Despite some isolated negative experiences that were reported, overall the students reported that they felt valued, respected and included by their fellow students at the university and had acquired new knowledge and skills. Most of the parents of the students reported that their sons and daughters appeared more self-secure and self-reliant, though some parents were somewhat sceptical about the idea of inclusive education.

The first cohort of the programme has graduated with only one person withdrawing from the programme. A new cohort has since begun, but the programme still retains its experimental status and is not fully integrated as a programme at the university.

SECTION 2.2. INTRODUCTION TO AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

Earlier years it was included into learning disability class; nowadays Autism spectrum disorders are considered separately. It is a very broad spectrum of disorders, including social, communicational and behavioural challenges that educators face and need knowledge how to cope with.

Autism Spectrum includes:

- Asperger's syndrome – this is the milder end of the spectrum. A student with it may be very intelligent and independent (high functioning).
- Pervasive developmental disorder – includes most children whose autism is more severe than Asperger's syndrome.
- Autistic disorder – includes the same types of symptoms as pervasive developmental disorder but a more intense level.
- Childhood disintegrative disorder – most severe part of the spectrum.

Around one third of people with autism have an intellectual disability.

Certain medical and mental health issues frequently accompany autism. They include gastrointestinal disorders, seizures, sleep disturbances, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety and phobias.

Challenges in the process of training of learners with autism spectrum disorders (ASD):

The following symptoms of **behavioural and communication difficulties** are distinguished:

- persons with autism seem to be distracted from the environment;
- have difficulties to comprehend cause-consequence relationship;
- insufficient perception of danger;
- better understand visual than verbal information;
- sometimes crying, anger, sadness, laughter and seizures occur without a

recognizable reason.

The following **language and communication difficulties** are distinguished:

- difficulties expressing their wishes and feelings;
- difficulties expressing both verbally and nonverbally (more than half of persons with ASD have language disorders);
- unable to maintain conversation;
- unusual interests.

The following **sensory integration challenges** are distinguished:

- in addition to the information provided by trainer, person with ASD hears surrounding sounds, and this aggravates concentration, comprehension and leads to misconduct;
- tries to touch even well-known objects, sometimes ignoring the prohibitive signs - the other body's language, written instructions, etc.;
- smells and tastes uneatable objects.

The following **difficulties of the cognitive process** are distinguished:

- extremely attentive to the details, but difficult to link them;
- limited ability to distinguish essential things from minor ones;
- difficulties in understanding the meaning;
- difficulties in perception of the sequence, organization of work;
- failure to combine several ideas or concepts;
- failure to focus on more than one item at a time.

However, the ASD manifests itself in a very different ways and the consequences in managing the disorder may be the most varied.

Practitioners in Lithuania working with autistic learners highlight the excellent method of **structured training**.

Good Practice example, Lithuania

Specialised educational centre for autistic learners is established in Kaunas, Lithuania. Structured training method in combination with behavioural correction programs are applied.

Structured training is a dynamic and flexible program for autistic learners, specialising on autistic world perceptions. Essence of structured training – a clear and vivid presentation of the surrounding environment and the clearly planned and presented activity structure (on visualised agenda or task sheets).

Structured education is a kind of educational system that leads towards constructive access to behavioural problems, reduces stress, anxiety, disappointment and increases the autonomy of learners with ASD.

The main **features of structured training** are:

- clearly outlined the structured the surrounding environment
- clearly planned activities, displayed on agenda and/or task sheets.

The main elements of structured training:

- Adaptation of the educational environment – it should be as constant as possible, thus creating a sense of security. There should also be room for relaxation.
- Creating an agenda – for a learner with an ASD a routine is necessary. Due to the peculiarities of language usage and communication, visuals should be used (usage of visual agendas helps to better manage the time, tasks and activities to be performed). Visual agendas cause less stress facing necessary changes in the scheduled agenda and helps to transit from one activity to another much smoother (e. g., better accepts unpleasant activity when seeing a picture depicting the next – favourite activity). Visual training tools are understood and accepted better by most of trainees, especially ones with ASD as they get audible information poorly due to language and communication difficulties.
- Behavioural modelling – it is very important to find out the reasons for misbehaviour and try to remove the provocative factors. The **social stories** is a very suitable tool for correction of undesirable behaviour (developed in 1991 by Carol Gray, special pedagogue). Social story is a tool to capture a situation, analyse it and develop a clear instruction what kind of behaviour is suggested in this situation.

Each social story is a social rule, it is created for a certain person for his/her unique context. Social stories assist to comprehend the contextual information for learners with ASD, which is usually missing. Information in social stories should be presented in meaningful and safe way (safe socially and emotionally), with due respect and hope. It is useful to supplement a social story with visuals (drawings, photos).

Example of a social story created for a 12 year old boy:

'I am learning to listen'

Listening is an important skill to learn. I am learning how to listen to Mum. Mum knows lots of things to tell me. Mum knows how to keep me safe. Mum knows good stories, too!

Mum knows I am listening when I am looking at her. I may find it uncomfy to look at Mum's face. Mum understands that this may be uncomfy for me.

Mum and I have made a plan to keep me comfy. I may look at her for just a short time (count three penguins: *one penguin, two penguins, three penguins*) and then look away. In a little while I may look at her again.

Looking for a short time is called 'glancing'.

When Mum talks to me I will try to glance at her face. Then Mum will know I am listening and I may feel comfy. Mum will be pleased with me.

SECTION 2.3. INTRODUCTION TO VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

People with visual impairment can be **blind** or **visually impaired**. Blind are people who don't see anything, visual impairment are people who have a visual perception.

Vision loss may be due to a reduction of visual acuity or to a narrowing of the visual field.

Most European national laws and practise defines the concepts of:

- **Blind absolute**: the person who sees nothing or at best is able to perceive a light source or the movement of a hand placed before the eye;
- **Partial Blind**: a person with a visual acuity of less than 1/10;

- **Severe low vision:** person who has a visual acuity between 1/20 and 1/10 or a visual field reduction between 50% and 60%;
- **Moderate to severe low vision:** person who has a visual acuity between 1/10 and 2/10 or a visual field reduction between 30% and 50%;
- **Mild low vision:** person who has a visual acuity between 2/10 and 3/10 or a visual field reduction between 10% and 30%.

Behaviour and habits:

- People with visual impairments learn analytically, must create mental maps of the world around them.
- The visually impaired must precociously develop ways residues: especially touch and smell.
- Learning should be real and not just a verbalism.
- The environment must be organized so as not to have changes that disorient the visually impaired.
- For visually impaired people brightness and contrast are important. Too little or too much light can make worse. More increases the contrast, more things are seen by a visually impaired person.

General etiquette:

There is no special rules to communicate orally with visually impaired people. The specificity is about writing communication that happens through Braille code.

General adjustment:

For visually impaired the environmental adjustments are not necessary in indoor space: it is up to person to create his own preference points.

For outdoor space, there are different solutions: for example, tactile information and ICT devices.

Good Practice Example, Italy

Italian law defining the method of assistance and education of students with disabilities is Framework Law for the assistance, social integration and the rights of disabled persons. Articles 12 rules the right to education and instruction to children with disabilities in kindergarten sections, in mainstream classes of educational institutions of all levels and in universities.

The law requires the preparation of a **functional dynamic profile of student** at the beginning of every school order. This profile is checked every year by operators of units' local health and education systems and families. The purpose of the assessment is to check the effects of the previously proposed actions.

Inclusive education of students with disabilities is a strong point of the Italian school.

The education system aims to be a welcoming community in which all students, regardless of their functional diversity, can achieve experiences of individual and social growth.

The full inclusion of students with disabilities is a goal whether school pursues through an intense and complex projects.

Students with disabilities are accompanied into the school by the teacher's support figures regarding the educational aspects and educator regarding educational / social aspects.

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The teacher for support activities is a specialized teacher assigned to the class of the student with disabilities to facilitate their integration process. The support teacher, in collaboration with the family and services draws up an **individual educational plan**.

Students with disabilities receive adaptations of the environment and materials that facilitate the study and social integration.

Blind and visually impaired students who use Braille will have transcribed books, if they use ICT will support PC station with speech or braille display.

After the high school people with visual disabilities have more chances: study at the university, study at the Vocational Training course or, in some case attend a sheltered laboratory.

Italian law requires to hire blind switchboard operators in public places switchboards. So the typical vocational training course for blind people is for switchboard operators.

Good practice example, Greece

Greek colleges and Universities have established specialised programs for higher education access for people with disabilities, while in the country there are many specialised Institutes of Vocational Training (IVTs) and Life Long Learning – Training Centers (LLTCs).

The specialized skills students who are visually impaired learn include:

- Technology and computer proficiency—using computer equipment, such as a screen reader, to read information on monitors or in print
- Literacy—reading and writing with Braille, large print, optical devices, or training in effective use of available vision
- Age-appropriate career education—exploring career preferences, participating in job experiences using nonvisual methods
- Safe and independent mobility—using specific orientation and mobility techniques, long canes, or other mobility tools
- Social interaction—understanding body language and other visual concepts
- Independent living skills—learning specialized techniques for personal grooming, food preparation, money management, and other tasks

Braille code

Braille is a system of raised dots that can be read with the fingers by people who are blind or who have low vision. Teachers, parents, and others who are not visually impaired ordinarily read braille with their eyes. Braille is not a language. Rather, it is a code by which many languages—such as English, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, and dozens of others—may be written and read. Braille is used by thousands of people all over the world in their native languages, and provides a means of literacy for all.

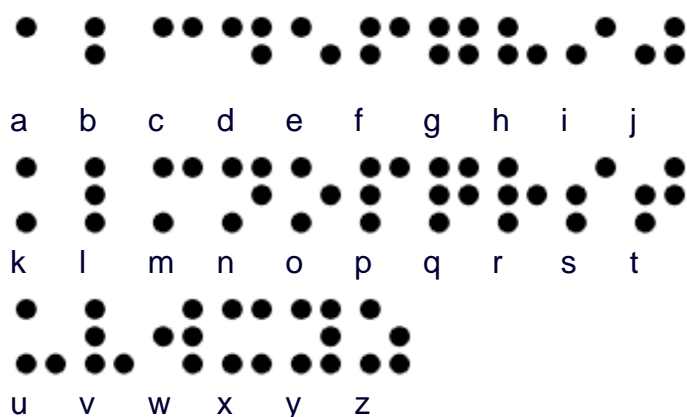
Braille symbols are formed within units of space known as braille cells. A full braille cell consists of six raised dots arranged in two parallel rows each having three dots. The dot positions are identified by numbers from one to six. Sixty-four combinations are possible using one or more of these six dots. A single cell can be used to represent an alphabet letter, number, punctuation mark or even a whole word.

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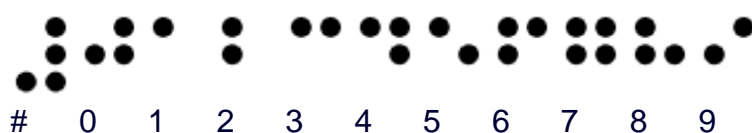
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Braille Alphabet:



Numbers:



Just as printed matter can be produced with a paper and pencil, typewriter, or printer, braille can also be written in several ways. The braille equivalent of paper and pencil is the **slate and stylus**. This consists of a slate or template with evenly spaced depressions for the dots of braille cells, and a stylus for creating the individual braille dots. With paper placed in the slate, tactile dots are made by pushing the pointed end of the stylus into the paper over the depressions. The paper bulges on its reverse side forming dots. As they are inexpensive and portable, the slate and stylus are especially helpful for carrying to jot quick notes and for labelling such things as file folders.

Braille is also produced by a machine known as a **braillewriter**. Unlike a typewriter which has more than fifty keys, the braillewriter has only six keys, a space bar, a line spacer, and a backspace. The six main keys are numbered to correspond with the six dots of a braille cell. Because most braille symbols contain more than a single dot, combinations of the braillewriter keys can be pushed at the same time.

When the blind person writes with the slate, he writes from right to left; when he writes with the braille writer, he writes from left to right.

The reading is always done from left to right.

There are some important prerequisites of space: top-bottom, left-right as well as laterality.

Technological developments in the computer industry have provided and continue to expand additional avenues of literacy for braille users. Software programs and portable electronic

braille devices allow users to save and edit their writing, have it displayed back to them either verbally or tactually, and produce a hard copy via a desktop computer-driven braille embosser. Because the use of computers is so common in school, children learn both the braille contractions and also how to spell words out letter for letter so they can spell and write using a keyboard.

Technologies for visually impaired

When you think of technology from the perspective of people with vision loss, you can think of two broad categories:

- **General technology:** such as computers, smartphones and mobile phones, GPS devices, etc., these are used with screen readers or with screen magnifiers
- **Assistive technology:** items designed specifically to help people with vision loss or other disabilities including everything from screen readers for blind or screen magnifiers for low vision computer users, video magnifiers and other devices for reading and writing with low vision to braille watches and braille printers

How to prepare for the examination procedure with visual impairment

The exams for VIP students are provided through digital or braille format. Students may need help to read adapted text.

VIP students are entitled to a longer time because the Braille reading or screen reader reading is slower.

How to prepare the workplace of visually impaired workers

The visually impaired switchboard operator has the right to see his own workplace to be adapted with screen readers or/and with screen magnifiers or /and braille display.

The visually impaired employee needs an orientation and mobility training to move independently in his own working place.

Italian law provides to blind people a grant and obliges employers to hire blind switchboard operators in public phone places: so the main professional/vocational training for visually impaired in Italy is switchboard operator.

There are also grant for transport: blind people have a discount on ticket and they are entitled to ask for assistance on trains and planes.

SECTION 2.4. INTRODUCTION TO DEAF CULTURE

People who are deaf tend to prefer to be called "**Deaf persons**" because they believe Deafness is not a disability. They do not like to be called "hearing impaired" or "hearing handicapped" and term „mute“ sounds offensive for them. While for most others with disabilities, the most respectful terminology uses person first language (e. g., person with disability), many Deaf

people who believe Deafness is a cultural attribute are more likely to consider this a defining feature and are therefore comfortable with "Deaf person" as a label.

Deaf people consider themselves being a **cultural and linguistic minority group**. They share a common language – **Sign language**; also, deaf people share common history which makes the background for their identity.

One possible definition of **Deaf culture** is a social, communal, and creative force of, by, and for Deaf people based on Sign Language. It encompasses communication, social protocol, art, entertainment, recreation (e.g., sports, travel, and Deaf clubs), and worship. It's also an attitude, and, as such, can be a weapon of prejudice—"You're not one of us; you don't *belong*."

The language used by an ethnic, religious, or geographical community reflects its values and world-view. Each ethnic culture possesses a native language. Subgroups have their own dialects.

Sign language is the native language of Deaf. However, most deaf people have hearing parents and siblings. The vast majority of Deaf people don't come from Deaf families.

Historically, schools for the deaf have served as the hubs of the Deaf community. Although enrolment has been declining, due to the growing inclusion of deaf pupils/students in to mainstreaming schools, this still holds true. Deaf children have traditionally learned Sign language from other students, and gained their first exposure to the norms of Deaf culture—for example, everybody takes turns participating in sports; no one is left out.

While deaf students are legally free to enrol in the college of their choice, a large number of them choose to attend the particular educational establishments for best communication and feeling; it's possible for a deaf student to go through an entire VET or HE establishment career without learning how to sign or having any social interaction with other deaf people.

What every parent and professional should know:

A key point for consideration is communication opportunities. Deaf children of Deaf parents have access to both Sign language and national language.

Language access is not described in terms of the use of one language, independently of any other. Instead, families should seek out communication opportunities in Sign language and oral language and other ways of communicating that engage, educate and benefit their child.

It is important to provide a Deaf child with access to visual technology. These tools, such as video phones with access to video relay services (VRS), cell phones or pagers with data plans for emailing and texting, light flashers connected to doorbells and phones, and closed captioning on the television, create an environment that is compatible with a Deaf worldview, and making them a permanent facet of a Deaf child's life provides him or her full access to the environment.

Cochlear implants have been on the forefront of Deaf cultural discussions for two decades. While implantation can be seen as a hot-button issue, it is important to make several distinctions. First, implants are a product of a medical philosophical model that views deafness as an impairment to be cured/fixed. The person is measured in terms of hearing "loss" and

reasonably expected “gains”. While this is seen to be in direct opposition to a Deaf cultural model, members of Deaf culture recognize and embrace the diversity of the Deaf community. People with cochlear implants are not permanently “cured,” and cochlear implants regardless of their ability to improve access to information through “hearing” do not change a deaf person into a hearing person. Sign language and Deaf culture can and should continue to play an important role in self-identify.

Good Practice Example, Lithuania

Sign language in Lithuania is recognised to be the native language of people born deaf. It is an essential and indispensable element, as it has materialized deaf human connection method of communication with another deaf person since the birth, with the world.

Sign language is a visual language. This "independent" language, as "independent" are spoken English or Lithuanian. Sign language, the language in which gestures-signs serve as words. Hand and arm movements transmit sound colloquial elements. Eyes instead ears receive messages. Sign language has its own grammar and syntax. It consists of five parameters: the fingers and hand positions, movements, positioning and facial expressions. It also includes syntax (place, characters, action) and grammar. Each country has its own sign language, so it is not universal.

Good Practice Example, Lithuania

Vilnius Technology Training and Rehabilitation Centre

After re-organisation of the Centre for the Deaf Rehabilitation and Vocational Training (established in 1948) Vilnius Technology Training and Rehabilitation Centre was founded.

Previously a specialized centre for the deaf, now it welcomes students with different educational needs and disabilities: learning (intellectual) disability, deaf and with complex developmental disorders. The centre provides integrated social skill program besides other common services: profession orientation, consultation, rehabilitation, psychologic counselling, training and mediating between potential employers.

Training programs are adjusted to the individual needs of trainees: individualized and differentiated.

Programs suggested:

- Cook
- Cook's assistant
- Handcraft manufacturer
- Printing house employee (assistant)
- Carpenter
- Finish decorator (construction sector assistant)

Abovementioned VET programs have no entrance exams, duration of training – 3 years. Youngsters who are 16 years or over can enter the programs if they have graduated from secondary or special school, also youngsters who have not completed the basic education program.

Sign language interpreters for deaf students are available up to 4 hours per day.

Spoken national language as a Second Language

For many pre-lingual deaf students, those born deaf, spoken language is their second language; Sign Language being their first. However, unlike other students who do not have

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one more oral language as their first language, pre-lingual deaf students are physically unable to learn oral language the way a German or French native speaker learns English. They cannot be immersed in the language around them for they cannot hear it. In addition, since Sign Language is entirely visual, deaf students do not have a written or spoken language on which to base their second language learning.

Linguistic Difficulties

It is not surprising, then, that deafness often leads to linguistic problems. Difficulties manifest themselves most obviously in written work, where mistakes may be found with sentence structure, verb tenses, word omissions etc. When one considers a lifetime of not hearing articles, determiners, word endings and prepositions the mistakes become more understandable. To exacerbate the problem, carrier language, all those words which tie language together (it, them, and, with etc.), is often “hidden” in fluent speech and therefore impossible to lip-read. The lack of audition and auditory memory severs the means by which to rehearse what is put down on the page.

Communication

The various channels for communicating with deaf persons include speech, writing and gestures, or sign language. However, such communication is usually impeded for both parties to the communication process. Efficient communication with the deaf, and with persons with hearing impairments, therefore requires both understanding and being understood.

Reading Difficulties

Research shows that the reading age of deaf students leaving school is below the national average. Reading remains a very laborious task for deaf students, as their vocabulary is usually considerably restricted in comparison with their hearing peers.

Common Traits

Deaf Students in Vocational training and Higher Education may exhibit some or all of the following traits:

1. Difficulty in reading for meaning; including lecture notes, assignments and reference texts.
2. Restricted vocabulary shown by: (i) acceptance of particular words as having fixed meanings relating only to previous experiences, (ii) understanding and use of a far more limited range of words than one would expect, (iii) difficulty and/or delay in absorbing and using 'new' technical terminology or the application of everyday words in specific technical contexts.
3. Misinterpretation of information which is presented, particularly where there is possible ambiguity in terminology or phraseology.
4. Incorrect verb endings and spelling mistakes in written work.
5. Errors in syntax – e.g. incorrect word order, words missed out, or included unnecessarily and other abnormalities.

6. Inappropriate or immature styles of writing in assignments.
7. Difficulty in producing discussion in depth, or discursive elements of an assignment, particularly where they depend upon abstract thinking rather than practical observation.

What can help?

1. Handouts which are written in a clear, precise style.
2. Assignments which give clear information and state exactly what tasks are to be achieved.
3. Examination questions or assessment briefs which leave no room for ambiguity and which avoid the inclusion of words that are not strictly necessary.
4. Recognition by tutors that peculiar errors in a deaf student's written work are likely to be a direct result of his/her disability, not merely the result of carelessness.

Sign language interpreters

If a deaf student or a student with hearing impairment needs sign language interpreting services to be able to participate fully in classes or lectures, such services can be provided by the School/University/state. A sign language interpreter accompanies a deaf student to classes, interpreting both for the student and the teacher.

Academic teachers might find the following **suggestions** useful when **cooperating with sign language interpreters**:

- (a) In the presence of a sign language interpreter, the teacher should address the student directly. Forms of address such as "Tell him" or "Ask her" should not be used.
- (b) Normal speed of speech and tone of voice ought to be used. It should be remembered however that it takes more time before translated information is taken in by the student.
- (c) In conference and lecture rooms, the interpreter and the student with a hearing disability often sit far apart, the interpreter usually located near the lecturer.
- (d) If audio-visual aids are to be used during a lecture or presentation, the interpreter should be informed in advance.
- (e) If a lecture takes longer than an hour, the interpreter should be allowed to take a short break so that he / she can work effectively later on.
- (f) Where a lecturer is writing information on the board, the interpreter should be seated in a convenient location to be able to see the board. When explaining the information written on the board, the lecturer should use specific language such as "In the last line" or "In the top left-hand corner" rather than general language such as "Here" or "There".

SECTION 2.5. INTRODUCTION TO PHYSICAL DISABILITY

Definition of Wheelchair (people with reduced mobility) users. As wheelchair users form a small part of people with reduced mobility, usually definition of **reduced mobility** is used, defining that this is a person whose mobility is reduced due to any physical disability (sensory or locomotor, permanent or temporary), intellectual disability or impairment, and / or any cause of disability, or age, and whose situations need appropriate attention and the adaption to his/her particular needs.

Restricted mobility might be caused by variety of reasons – ranging from problems with physical activity to total paralysis. Some disabilities are congenital; others are a result of an illness or accident. Mobility disability is not solely limited to wheelchair-users, though it is quite commonly associated with this group of people.

Among **wheelchair users**, it is possible to distinguish two main groups of people, depending on their degree of disability:

- Tetraplegics (persons experiencing paralysis from the neck down caused, for instance, by damage to the cervical spine). Tetraplegic persons have a partial loss of the use of their arms and legs; in many cases the loss of use of the arms and legs is total. Such persons are often dependent on electric wheelchairs,
- Paraplegics (experiencing a condition whereby the lower part of the body is paralyzed and cannot move. This is usually the result of an injury to the middle part of the spinal cord). Paraplegic persons usually rely on manual wheelchairs, and usually have undiminished hand functions.

Among other causes of mobility disabilities we can distinguish:

- amputation – the removal of a body extremity, e.g., by trauma or surgery,
- arthritis – a group of conditions that affect the health of the bone joints causing pain and swellings and often leading to mobility impairment,
- spine disorders – which may impair sitting, standing, leaning or heaving. The disorders include discopathy, spine degenerations, and scoliosis.

Good Practice example, Latvia

Children in wheelchair in special school and in mainstream school

Latvian Cabinet of Ministers 9 October 2012 Regulation No. 695 'Procedure for granting and funding assistance services at educational institutions' - In Latvia, children from 5 to 18 years of age, have the opportunity to receive State-funded **personal assistant services** for mobility and self-care at pre-school education, general basic education, vocational basic education, trade education, general secondary education and vocational secondary education institutions (except special education institutions receiving maintenance costs from the state budget).

Assistant services may be received by students throughout all compulsory education stages – children from 5 to 18 years of age, and adults in the disability group I or II, who have received an opinion issued by the State

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Medical Commission. The assistant provides assistance up to 40 hours per week. The assistance is available throughout the school year.

However, to produce assistant services in Latvia we didn't solve all problems for children disability. Till now in Latvia and especially in Riga (capital city in Latvia) people in wheelchairs can't go to mainstream schools but mostly in special schools or stay at home – home teaching. In Riga have 4 mainstreaming schools for children in wheelchairs. In Riga is difficult to find mainstream school, which is accessible for wheelchair users.

Education in vocational education and training schools

Professional qualification levels in the Latvian vocational education: The Vocational Education Law (1999) stipulates that there is a system of five professional qualification levels in the Latvian vocational education:

- Level 1 – theoretical and practical training that prepares students for performing simple tasks in a certain area of practical activity (assistant cook, carpenter etc.);
- Level 2 – theoretical and practical training that allows the holder to perform qualified work independently (carpenter, hairdresser, cook, welder etc.);
- Level 3 – advanced theoretical and professional training which enables the holder to fulfil certain tasks, including planning and organizing work (various technicians, car mechanics, hotel service specialist etc.);
- Level 4 – theoretical and practical training that enables the holder to perform complicated tasks as well as to organize and manage others in their work;
- Level 5 – the highest qualification of a specialist in a field that enables the holder to plan and perform research and scientific work in the field.

Good Practice example, Latvia

Social Integration State Agency (SIVA) – keeps and updates the register of disabled people who need professional rehabilitation, provides professional rehabilitation services, offer vocational, vocational secondary, professional and college level training programs and prepare specialists who can provide social care services, keep and update the register of people who need social rehabilitation services, provide social rehabilitation services, including medical treatment.

Professional rehabilitation – a set of activities that ensure the acquisition of a new profession, professional knowledge or skills, according to the type of level of functional disorders of a person and taking into account his/her previous education and professional qualification.

Professional rehabilitation consists of professional adequacy and job simulation tests, training programs, psycho-social assistance, providing assistance in placement and job finding, driving lessons and car adaptation for people with disabilities

Steps of professional rehabilitation:

- individual interview to establish the applicant's motivation to study and his/her professional interests
- determination if the health status of the applicant complies with the chosen profession
- definition of learning ability (comprehension and understanding skills, ability to remember new information)

- test of Latvian language skills
- simulation of practical jobs to establish specific skills linked to the potential profession professional
- create an individual recommendation for the acquisition of professional training

Proposed programs:

- Accountant
- Computer Systems operator
- Technician
- Retail worker
- Wholesale worker
- Hospitality service worker
- Bookkeeper
- Secretary
- Electronics assembly operator
- Cook

College level programs

- Human Resource Manager
- Accountant
- Marketing and Sales Manager
- Hotel Service Manager
- Computer System and Network Administrator
- Programmer
- Sign Language
- Interpreter

PART THREE

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRAINERS WORKING WITH DIVERSE GROUPS OF TRAINEES

Consider the goal of inclusion at all the stages of the process:

1. Pre-planning information

Have you been given information on the nature and degree of impairment and the access needs of the disabled pupils in the class?

Have you been shown or do you know how these disabled pupils access needs and personal care needs will be met in the class?

If you don't know how the disabled pupils needs will/can be met seek advice from SENCO, Head or Deputy or from other agencies such as Educational Psychologists, Advisors or Health Professionals.

2. What preparation have you made with the class/ group for:

- one to one peer support

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- collaborative teaming
- group work
- valuing difference of race, gender, ethnicity, disability, age or religion

How do you ensure that mutual respect is encouraged within your classroom? Are you clear about how to deal with bullying and harassment in the class? Does the establishment have a consistent policy?

3. Lesson planning: how will you support the needs of all learners?

- timing,
- variation of activities,
- types of activities (concrete/abstract),
- reinforcement of key ideas,
- extension work, recall of previous work, links to future work and clear instructions.

Will the content of the lesson engage all pupils from the beginning? Will there be sufficient variation in activities and pace to engage all?

Are you able to access specially adapted equipment for some pupils to enable them to participate fully?

If not, can an alternative way be found?

Will the diversified and differentiated work allow all pupils to experience success at their optimum level?

4. What different teaching styles are you going to use?

Visual e.g., use photos, mind maps, maps and diagrams, pictures, film clips, digital cameras, wall displays?

Auditory e.g. use storytelling, talking, effective questions, problem solving, clear sequencing, music, singing?

Kinaesthetic e.g. use movement, role play, artefacts, use the environment.

5. Preparing materials

Are written materials accessible to all: formats; readability; length; content?

Scaffolding (practical materials) e.g., writing frames, pictograms, sounds, pictures, objects, artefacts, word lists, number lines, etc., are they accessible to all?

Appropriate use of augmented communication and ICT.

6. Self-presentation (hidden curriculum)

Have you thought about how you will: react to situations of stress, humour, seriousness, embarrassing questions; offer encouragement to all; challenge the behaviour not the pupil?

Are all the pupils aware that you might approach the behaviour of some students in a different manner to the rest of the class?

How will you use your voice in the lesson, e.g., volume, tone, and make sure all children are understanding you?

Where will you position yourself in the classroom and when?

Who will you question and when?

7. Use of support staff

Have you met with or at least communicated with support staff before the lesson?

How are you going to use other support in the lesson?

Does their use allow all pupils to be equally included in the class activities?

If you are using support staff for withdrawal, how do you know the pupils are gaining from this?

If you are using withdrawal, how are the groups organised?

When do you take small groups and support take class?

8. Classroom organisation

Is seating carefully planned and/or the activity accessible for students with:

- mobility impairments e.g., circulation space, table height;
- hearing impairments e.g., sight line for lip reading/ interpreter/ no glare;
- visually impaired e.g. maximise residual sight, if touch can reach;
- challenging behaviour e.g., in adult gaze; at front for eye contact;
- short attention span/easily distracted, e.g., sit on own;
- learning difficulties who need a lot of support, e.g., next to peer supporter;
- short attention span, e.g., distraction free zone.

What seating plans are you using and why?

Will seating plans make use of peer support and how?

9. How will you organise and group pupils in lessons?

- Friendship groupings?
- Mixed gender/same gender groupings?
- Mixed ability/same ability groupings?
- Specific pairs of pupils working together, e.g., stronger reader/weaker reader?
- Disabled and non-disabled students?
- How do you decide which grouping to use for what?

10. How will you deal with unexpected incidents?

Are you aware of the systems for dealing with unexpected incidents, e.g.:

- evacuation,

- fainting or fits,
- psychotic incidents,
- argues,
- incontinence,
- medical emergencies?

11. How will you ensure that all pupils feel equally valued through their experiences of:

- the allocation of teacher and support staff time;
- being listened to/ paid attention to;
- being respected;
- achieving;
- interacting with their peers
- being free of harassment.

12. How will you assess the outcomes?

Do you have a scheme for assessing the achievements of all?

Have you looked at alternative forms of assessment? E.g., video recording progress, peer evaluation, self-evaluation?

How will you involve pupils in assessing their progress and their peer's progress?

ANNEX 1

It is better to affirm new information via interactive exercises.

Let's perform **Equality Quiz!** – Let's Study!

Question 1	<p>"Equal Opportunities" is about treating everyone the same?</p> <p>A: True</p> <p>B: False</p>
Answer 1	<p>"Equal Opportunities" is about treating everyone the same?</p> <p>A: True</p> <p>B: False</p> <p>Explanation: Equal Opportunities is about treating everyone according to their specific needs and requirements. For example some disabled students will require 'reasonable adjustments' to provide equal access (a 'level playing field').</p>
Question 2	<p>Students with disability feel they need additional time to complete their exams because of their disability. How would you advise them?</p> <p>A: They are not entitled to this as this would not be fair for other students;</p>

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	<p>B: They should ask for this (via Disability Service or Disability Office) as a <i>'reasonable adjustment'</i></p> <p>C: They shouldn't tell the University that they are disabled.</p>
Answer 2	<p>A student feels they need additional time to complete their exams because of their disability. How would you advise them?</p> <p>B: They should ask for this (via Disability Service or Disability Office) as a 'reasonable adjustment'</p> <p>Explanation: Students can ask for reasonable adjustments to meet their needs in relation to disability. This may include additional time in exams.</p>
Question 3	<p>A student has changed their gender identity from male to female and would like to use the women's toilets. Are they entitled to do this?</p> <p>A: No – they must use the male toilets</p> <p>B: No – they should use the accessible ('disabled') toilet</p> <p>C: Yes – they can use the women's toilets</p>
Answer 3	<p>A student has changed their gender identity from male to female and would like to use the women's toilets. Are they entitled to do this?</p> <p>C: Yes – they can use the women's toilets</p> <p>Explication: From the time they present as a woman (e.g. dress like a woman, refer to themselves as female, etc.) a student can use the women's toilets, changing rooms etc.</p> <p>Students don't have to undergo medical procedures (e.g. operations, hormone treatments) or produce documentation to be recognised in their new gender. Only disabled students should use the accessible 'disabled' toilets and non-disabled people should not be instructed to use these as gender neutral toilets.</p>
Question 4	<p>A student tells you that they are being 'bullied' by another student via social media sites. Can they ask the Vocational school or University to take any action?</p> <p>A: No, this is an external matter</p> <p>B: Yes, this would come under the School's and University's Dignity at Work and Study policy</p> <p>C: Yes, but only if it relates to a protected characteristic</p>
Answer 4	<p>A student tells you that they are being 'bullied' by another student via social media sites. Can they ask the Vocational school and University to take any action?</p> <p>B: Yes, this would come under the School's and University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy</p>

	<p>Explication: The School's and University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy applies to all behaviour that could amount to harassment and bullying. If the behaviour is in relation to a protected characteristic e.g. using sexist or racist language this may be 'harassment'. However, 'Bullying' does not have to be in relation to a PC. If the behaviour amounts to a criminal offence e.g. 'stalking' this may also be addressed externally.</p>
Question 5	<p>A student keeps using the term 'that's so gay' meaning 'that's so stupid'. When he is confronted about this he says it's only a joke and he is not homophobic. Is this acceptable?</p> <p>A: Yes – it is only used as a joke</p> <p>B: No – this could be perceived as a form of harassment/bullying</p> <p>C: It is only harassment/bullying if the person complaining is gay</p>
Answer 5	<p>A student keeps using the term 'that's so gay' meaning 'that's so stupid'. When he is confronted about this he says it's only a joke and he is not homophobic. Is this acceptable?</p> <p>B: No – this could be perceived as a form of harassment/bullying</p> <p>Explication: For someone to make a complaint of harassment it is the effect of the behaviour and not the intention of the perpetrator that is important. Harassment is behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.</p>
Question 6	<p>Engineering studies wants to encourage more women to study with them as women are underrepresented on the courses. What can they do?</p> <p>A: Have a positive action campaign including targeting open day sessions for women, holding workshops for girls at schools (widening access)</p> <p>B: Nothing – they would have to treat men and women equally</p> <p>C: Offer places to all women that apply regardless of their entry qualifications</p>
Answer6	<p>Engineering studies wants to encourage more women to study with them as women are underrepresented on the courses. What can they do?</p> <p>A: Have a positive action campaign including targeting open day sessions for women, holding workshops for girls at schools (widening access)</p> <p>Explication: A positive action campaign in this situation is likely to be justifiable as there is underrepresentation of women studying engineering. Offering places regardless of qualification however is unlikely to be</p>

	considered as a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim' and will be discriminatory for men.
Question 7	<p>A student complains that all of their lectures are held in the evening when it is difficult to arrange childcare. The information available when applying for the course had not advertised the course as having evening lectures. Can anything be done about this?</p> <p>A: No – the student has to make an effort to attend all lectures</p> <p>B: Yes – the student should discuss their needs with the School or University and where reasonably practicable the School or University should look to offer an alternative</p> <p>C: Yes – the student has a right to have the time changed as this would be sex discrimination</p>
Answer 7	<p>A student complains that all of their lectures are held in the evening when it is difficult to arrange childcare. The information available when applying for the course had not advertised the course as having evening lectures. Can anything be done about this?</p> <p>B: Yes – the student should discuss their needs with the School or University (via their personal tutor) and where reasonably practicable the School or University should look to offer an alternative.</p> <p>Explication: The practice of holding all lectures in the evening may be indirect discrimination if this cannot be justified as proportionate and legitimate. The University should consider offering alternative times if this is possible.</p> <p>(Note: the legal requirement to implement 'reasonable adjustments' only applies to disability and is a stronger requirement than considering alternative arrangements for other groups)</p>
Question 8	<p>A student attending social activities complains that the activities are all based around alcohol and this is problematic for their religious belief. What can they do?</p> <p>A: They should talk to the Students' Union (or organiser of the activity) to discuss their concerns</p> <p>B: They should refrain from attending these activities and socialise with students with similar beliefs</p>
Answer 8	<p>A student attending social activities complains that the activities are all based around alcohol and this is problematic for their religious belief. What can they do?</p> <p>A: They should talk to the Students' Union (or organiser of the activity) to discuss their concerns</p>

Explication: the University and Students' Union have a duty not to discriminate directly or indirectly, to consider the needs of students and to promote good relations between students with different protected characteristics. Activities should not indirectly exclude certain groups from participating and a range of activities including some alcohol-free activities should be provided.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATION

Inclusion Is:

- Learning to live with one another
- A Human Right – we are all born in
- Being with – not just in
- Self Determination
- Living with Paradox

Inclusion is NOT:

- A complicated concept – It is very hard work
- About disability – It's about all of us
- A label – 'the inclusion kids'
- A programme – It's life
- Easy – It's necessary