



Disabled Working Group Access And Outreach For Disabled Learners

Advise, Guide, Support

Chairs: Khasiba Omar & Laura Bradnam

3rd Meeting on Tuesday, 5th March 2024

Between 10:00am – 11:30am

Overview



News and Updates



Student Finance Speaker



Transition to Higher Education (HE)



**Group Activity:
Good Practice**



Questions

News and Updates

University of Bristol v Abrahart

- **Natasha had a known history of social anxiety** and staff were aware she had **missed or struggled to participate in several oral assessments during that academic year.**
- In a landmark case that has deep implications for other higher education institutions, the parents of **Natasha Abrahart successfully sued the University of Bristol under the Equality Act.**
- **The University's appeal against a May 2022 ruling by the Bristol County Court that the University contributed to the death of Natasha Abrahart, by discriminating against her on the ground of disability contrary to the Equality Act 2010.**



News and Updates

- **On 14 February 2024** ruled that the University of Bristol failed to make **reasonable adjustments** for a **20-year-old female student** who suffered **social anxiety**.
 - The court stated that she had been **indirectly discriminated against** and **discriminated against on the grounds of disability**.
1. [The University of Bristol loses its appeal over the Abrahart case](#)
 2. [Dying for a Degree - BBC1](#)



News and Updates

- The **key elements of the EA 2010** which relate to this case are:
 1. **Failure to make reasonable adjustments**
 2. **Indirect discrimination**
 3. **Discrimination arising from disability**
- It is useful to note that the EA 2010 is **designed not to enable litigation but to ensure that a certain level of support** is offered to people with disabilities.



**Ben Rutter, Guest
Speaker From Student
Finance (DSA):**



Disabled Students' Allowance: Information Session Resources

- Ben has shared his presentation slides along with the below links: Speakers' scripts, questions and answers documents. Please see the PDF document (SFE Disabled students Allowance Updates) which contains these slides.
- SLC hosted two Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) Reforms Information Sessions which were delivered on Tuesday 6 February.
- The attendees sent their questions during the sessions and agreed to publish a question-and-answer document addressing the key points raised. Please now find these resources below and download the presentation to view the speakers' script in the comments:

1. [Presentation and speakers' script](#)
2. [Questions and Answers](#)



Disabled Students and the Transition to Higher Education (HE)



What do we mean by the transition period?



Application stage



Offer Stage



Enrolment Stage



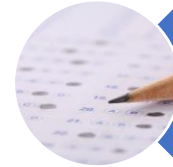
Orientation Stage



Assessment Stage



Top 5 Transition Barriers



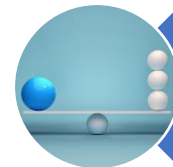
Assessments



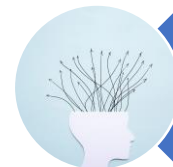
Socialisation



**Lack of Academic
Support**



**Balancing
Responsibilities**



Health and Wellbeing



Top 5 Transition Barriers

Group Discussion

How might these common barriers to students transitioning into HE be experienced by disabled students?

Please refer the PDF document that accompanies the slides. This document provides a brief overview of points that were discussed and shared in the meeting regarding the good working practice under 5 top transition barriers.



Have we missed anything? Let's focus on disabled student's experiences specifically. Use the different stages of the transition cycle to help us.

Enrolment Stage



Orientation Stage



Assessment Stage



Case Study: Get Ahead at the University of Derby

- Two-day transition event for incoming disabled students called 'Get Ahead'.
- Running for 15 years, 100+ students annually.
- Student mentors: trained, paid, previous Get Ahead attendees.
- Smaller gaps between disabled and non-disabled students than sector average in retention and academic attainment.
- Identified two groups who weren't benefiting: students with specific learning differences (SPLDs) and students with autism.

Case Study: University of Derby – transition events for disabled students

Forward Thinking

- Focussed on students with SPLDs.
- A neurodiversity-based approach to increase confidence, independence and belonging, and thereby improve learning and engagement.
- Includes a one-day event before arrival and a series of workshops during term.

The Bridge

- Focused on students with autism.
- Includes a range of support prior to arrival:
 - Support to attend Get Ahead and Open Days,
 - An additional summer school event,
 - Training for academic staff,
 - Co-development of strategies to better support the academic performance of individual students.



Good Practice

1. Socialisation support.
2. Familiarisation with HE logistics and support available.
3. Opportunity to complete practical tasks and set up support early.
4. Use a neurodiversity approach so students feel understood as individuals.



Persona Case Studies

What could we do to make the transition process smoother?

Hardeep is 18 and has a hidden disability – social anxiety. He is moving from his hometown of Manchester to study at Leeds full time.

Heather is 45 and a mum. She is physically disabled and uses a wheelchair. She has chosen to study part-time at Birkbeck and commutes in from Essex.



neon

The logo features the word "neon" in a bold, dark blue, lowercase sans-serif font. The letters are partially overlaid by a network of thin grey lines connecting several small, colorful spheres (blue, purple, pink, orange, yellow, red) in a molecular or network-like arrangement.

Any Questions





References

1. <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/the-university-of-bristol-loses-its-appeal-over-the-abrahart-case/>
2. <https://vimeo.com/339953058>
3. [Reasonable adjustments: University of Derby – transition events for disabled students | Advance HE \(advance-he.ac.uk\)](#)
4. [Disabled students need to be prioritised, not generalised | Wonkhe](#)