

# COMMUNITY LEARNING AND SKILLS

## Our commitment to you

Community Learning & Skills (CLS) welcomes learners with disabilities. We want everyone to enjoy learning with us. We aim to provide a safe place to learn where everyone is welcome and treated with respect and dignity. We are committed to ensuring all learners, wherever they attend our courses, are aware of their rights and responsibilities in creating a safe learning environment. Everyone has the right to be safe. We recognise that those with learning difficulties and disabilities have the same rights of access to education and training as other people. We have a wide range of courses at many venues and online.

Every year we have many learners with disabilities who successfully complete their courses and achieve their goals. This includes adults with physical and sensory disabilities, medical conditions, adults with learning disabilities and those recovering from mental health difficulties. We make every effort to respond to individual and diverse needs. We hope to work with you so your experience and expertise help us to make the adjustments you may need to help you succeed in your course.

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a “substantial physical or mental impairment that has an adverse and long-term effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”. This definition may not cover some people who have difficulties with learning. CLS aims to support all learners on an individual basis, whether you have rights under the law or not.

## Who can I contact?

Our staff are here to help you, from the first time you contact us until the end of your course. They have a wide range of skills and expertise and will do their best to make sure you are happy and well supported. Our programme managers and course staff can help you with specific information and advice about your course, such as content, level, costs and progression to other courses and qualifications. Our centre staff will be pleased to help you with general enquiries about their centres and refer you to the right person to help you with more detailed enquiries about programmes. If you have any individual issues that arise outside the classroom, workshop, or training venue, such as the use of any of our facilities, or taking part in outside visits, please also discuss this with us.

For more information about a particular centre, please call 03000 41 22 22 or look at our website [www.kentadulthoodeducation.co.uk](http://www.kentadulthoodeducation.co.uk) For more information about Kent Training and Apprenticeships please call 0800 731 4297 or visit our website [www.kenttrainingandapprenticeships.co.uk](http://www.kenttrainingandapprenticeships.co.uk)

Will you keep personal information about my disability confidential?

We will ask you if you have a disability or any additional support needs and if you would like to discuss it with a member of staff.



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We always ask you for your permission to pass on any information you give us about your disability, or any other personal information that is relevant to your attendance on your course. We will only pass it on to the staff who need to know, to put special arrangements in place, with your agreement. If you do not wish this information to be passed on, please inform a member of staff. This may mean that we are limited in any special arrangements we can make. If there are health and safety issues involved, we will discuss this with you at the time. All our records are kept secure and confidential, in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Let the tutor know if you need extra help.

## How can I have a say?

We are always pleased to hear your views, as this can help us improve what we do. You can leave a note in your centre or with your tutor or speak to any member of our staff. If anything is troubling you in relation to your course or the use of our facilities, please talk to your tutor or any member of our staff at an early stage as we aim to sort out problems as quickly as possible.

You can make a complaint either in person, by letter, by phone, or by e-mail. Please give as much information as you can. We will acknowledge and respond to your complaint within 3 working days and give you a full response within 20 days. If you wish, you can write directly to a manager at your local centre or our Head of Service.

If you need additional support in making your complaint, such as the use of a signer, translator, or interpreter, please speak to us as early as you can. We want to involve all learners, including those with disabilities, in improving our services. We are currently looking at new ways to involve learners, locally and via our website, so we can hear your views directly. If you have any ideas or are interested in working with us, please get in touch.

## Are your centres accessible?

The reception areas of all main centres are fully accessible, with level access, lifts or ramps. All reception counters are fitted with hearing loops. Some centres have lifts, accessible toilets, and special parking. Details of these services can be found on our website. If there is a difficulty in accessing your class, workshop, or training venue, we will do our best to move it to an accessible room and discuss any other options with you. If you have a disability that may affect you leaving the building in an emergency, please discuss this with us. Your safety is very important to us.

## What support is available?

At many of our centres, we have adjustable desks and chairs, portable hearing loops and conversers, additional task lighting and assistive software and hardware for computer use (subject to GDPR)



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compliance). Please contact your local centre to find out more. If you need handouts in large print or on coloured paper, please ask your tutor as soon as you can. If you have difficulty with things such as note-taking or exam preparation, you may be able to join one of our free classes. Talk to your tutor or ask for an appointment to see a Curriculum Leader. If you have difficulty with reading, writing, numeracy, or communication we have colleagues who can help you. Your tutor or Curriculum Leader will discuss options with you. We offer a range of classes and may be able to arrange a Teaching Assistant.

## Can I bring someone with me to class if I need to?

We understand that for some people, attending class without additional support can make attendance very difficult and sometimes impossible. If this is the case and you wish to bring someone with you to provide personal care one-to-one support in your class or workshop, please discuss this with us to make the necessary arrangements. We will ask your assistant to sign an agreement that explains responsibilities.

## Can I make access arrangements for exams?

If you think you may need access arrangements for exams, please speak to your tutor as soon as you can. We can then help you make special arrangements with the awarding body. These adjustments could be extra time, large print papers, a scribe, or a separate room.

## Can I get help with fees?

Reduced fees are available for some courses for learners who receive certain benefits. We also have a Learner Support Fund that can help learners who would otherwise find it difficult to join a course of their choice. This fund may help with the costs of fees, and in some cases transport, books and childcare.

Please check on our website or speak to one of our staff in the centres.

## How can I enrol?

You can enrol in person, by telephone, or via the website. If you find this difficult, you are welcome to enrol with someone to support you.

