

# Supporting You at College

A Guide for young people with additional needs on support in Scotland's further education colleges



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**Leaving school and going to one of Scotland's colleges is an exciting time.** It is a chance to develop interests in new subjects and experience learning in a different environment. It can also be a challenging time, especially if you need additional support to help you access and take part in learning. The support you will receive in college might be different to the support you are used to at school. This guide will help you understand what kind of support is available to you while at college and who has responsibility for providing it. There is also a list of contact details for organisations and agencies that may be able to give you advice and guidance.

### **Where can I go?**

There are many colleges in local areas all across Scotland. In every town or city and also in remote and rural parts of the country, there are colleges all offering a wide range of courses, in a number of subjects and levels of study. (Contact details for all of Scotland's colleges can be found at the back of this guide).

Many colleges also offer the option of studying through flexible or distance learning courses. These courses allow you to study at times that suit you, often without visiting the college campus. Most colleges have outreach centres offering the opportunity to learn within your own community. The college prospectus or website will give details of courses offered on flexible or distance learning.

### **What will it be like?**

Colleges are much bigger than schools and can often have campuses or buildings in more than one area of the town or city. There are a lot more students at college, and because of this it can be much noisier and busier than you may have been used to at school. You will have the chance to mix with young people and

adults from a wide variety of backgrounds and who have had very different life experiences than you. Some will have just left school, while others will be returning to education after working or taking care of family, and are learning a new subject or updating their existing knowledge. Some students will attend on a full time basis while others will be part time.

If you have not yet visited the college that you think you might like to go to, speak to your guidance teacher at school or the student advice centre at the college to arrange a visit.

### **What will I be able to study?**

All colleges offer courses such as Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) and academic courses up to Higher National level (HNCs or HNDs) in a range of subjects. Many of these courses will give you a qualification that will help you go on to more study or to get a job.

In mainstream courses, classes are generally made up of a large number of students, and there is additional support available for students who need this in order to make the most of their learning.

Most colleges also have courses that are designed specifically for students who need additional support to help their learning, including courses on life skills. These programmes have less students than a mainstream class and all the students on the course will need additional support to help their learning. You should discuss your own needs with the college as soon as possible.

Some courses will be full-time, while others will be available on a part time basis. For some courses you will need certain academic qualifications to get in, for example Standard Grades or Highers, while for others there will be no entry requirements. The college prospectus will give detailed information about the courses on offer

and specific entry requirements. However, each college will have staff available to speak to you about the options available.

### **When should I apply?**

When you decide which course you would like to take, it is best to apply to the college as early as possible, for two main reasons. Firstly, it gives the college time to consider your support needs and secondly, because certain courses are very popular and spaces in these courses are filled quickly. The earlier you apply, the better chance you have of getting a place on the course of your choice.

### **How do I apply?**

You can get an application form from the college, a Careers Scotland Advisor or from the guidance staff at school. In the application form the college may ask if you have a disability or additional support needs. The college asks for this information to make sure they know what support you need. Information on your support needs will be kept private and will not be passed onto anyone unless you have given your permission for this to happen. By letting the college know about your support needs at an early stage, you are giving the college time to consider your application and what changes, if any, would need to be made to help you if you are successful in getting a place. If you do not tell the college about your support needs before you start the course, these changes might not be in place for you at the beginning of term or it may not be possible to make the appropriate changes at all. All information given to the college about your support needs is private and will not be used to discriminate against your application, as that is against the law.

When you apply, if you have not already visited the college, you might find it helpful to arrange a visit and meet with a member of the support staff. You can talk with them about the kind of support you might need, and ask them any questions that you might have.

### **What kind of support is available in college?**

There are lots of different kinds of support available in college. For example, some students have support such as sign language interpreters, one-to-one help in the classroom, accessible computer equipment and software, help with going to the toilet, help at lunch-breaks, a flexible timetable, and so on.

Sometimes the support will be the same as you have had at school; sometimes the support will be different.

### **How do I find out what support I need?**

To find out about the support you need, you should first speak to the support staff in the college. Every college has at least one member of staff who advises students who need additional support. They can talk to you about your course, the support you have used before and any new support that might be available. They will tell you how the college can help you. They may ask you to undertake a formal assessment of your needs, at the college or a separate ACCESS centre, to make sure you get the support necessary to help you study on your course. This will help you and the college.

If you are a disabled person, you can ask your local authority for an assessment of your need for care services, including any healthcare that you need and any care that you need whilst at college. The care services that are to be provided will then be agreed and noted in a care plan. But you may already have a care plan in place from school.

## Who provides support in college?

A number of different organisations provide support in college. As there are so many different organisations, you may be unsure about who to contact. Here is a summary of who does what:

- Careers Scotland can help you to work out which education, training or employment option suits you best, and can help you to coordinate support from different organisations.
- The college is responsible for providing educational support. Some examples of educational support are a sign language interpreter, learning materials in alternative formats, a scribe, equipment and adaptations, or assistive technology. However, these are only some examples - the support given will depend on your individual support needs as assessed by the college.
- If you have been assessed by your local authority as being in need of personal care support then, in general, it is the responsibility of the local authority to provide this support at college. Examples include help going to the toilet, assistance with the preparation of food and help with taking medication at required times.
- If you have been assessed as having a healthcare support need, your NHS board will be responsible for providing that support. An example of this support would be if you need someone to give you medication for conditions such as asthma, diabetes or epilepsy.
- Voluntary organisations, such as Lead Scotland, might provide other kinds of support such as advocacy, private tutoring, help to find work experience, and so on.

Although different organisations provide different support, they should be working together to ensure that the support you need is provided in college.

### **What if I need to take medication at college?**

If you need to take or be given medication during your college day then the college must make sure that you are able to do so and not placed at a disadvantage. The college may also ask you to provide them with a note of your medication requirements and details of the procedures to be followed in case of an emergency. It is important that the college knows about your need for medication.

### **Can I bring my own support worker/ Personal Assistant?**

You may have had the same support worker/ Personal Assistant throughout your time at school or they may be a family member or friend, who you would like to bring with you when you move onto college.

Each college has different arrangements for support workers within the college, some employ people to provide support, others have agreements that the local authority or another organisation provide care within the college, while there are different arrangements in other colleges. Therefore, it is best to speak with the college to find out what arrangements they have in relation to support workers/personal assistants and ask if it is suitable to bring your own assistant with you when you go to college.

### **What about transport?**

If, as part of your Disability Living Allowance (DLA), you receive a motability component (either funding or a car) then this should be used to provide you with transport to and from college.

If however, you do not receive DLA motability allowance and your support needs mean you need specialist transport services to get to and from college this will be discussed by the college, your local

authority and NHS board and it will be agreed who provides this service, so that you can attend college. Although, it is important to know that a local authority, college or NHS board does not have to provide transport just because you live far from the college. Transport may be provided when your disability or additional support needs prevents you from travelling independently.

### **What about support when I'm planning to leave school?**

In the year or so before you plan to leave school, your school will consider if you need additional support to help you get ready for post-school opportunities. For example, this might include arranging a meeting with college staff, early assessment of your needs, a place on a college link or transition course, or additional work experience. Your school should consider if you need information from other agencies about post-school support, and if so, they should also ask you for your views about the support you need to prepare for after school life. To find out more about planning for the transition from school, contact the Skill Scotland Information Service or Enquire (contact details at the back of this guide).

### **Why is college different from school?**

At school, you were in a class with others who were in the same age group. Because of this many things would have been decided on or organised for you by the school, your teacher or even your parents. However, college is different as it provides education for people of all ages. So, young people and adults of all ages and from different background might be at the same college or even in the same class as you. The college therefore has to provide it's education in an adult environment, allowing students to be independent,

responsible and able to make their own choices. Your parents may still be your carers at home and have a concern for your well-being at college, but you will be expected to be responsible for things that previously your school, parent, teacher or carer may have organised for you. However, depending on the nature of your needs, staff in the college may sometimes involve your parents in certain decisions. Remember though - staff in the college are there to guide and support you, so you can ask them for any help that you need.

### **Will I receive a bursary or financial support?**

Once the college has confirmed that your application has been accepted, they will send an application for funding known as a bursary with the acceptance. It is best to complete the application and return it to the college as soon as possible, so the college can consider your bursary application. Most student bursary support is through means tested discretionary grants. These are given out by the college and are not guaranteed to all eligible students. You can often keep your entitlement to any welfare benefits when you are on a further education course.

If you are studying for a Higher National qualification at college, rather than receive a bursary, you may be eligible to apply for financial support given out by the Students Award Agency Scotland (SAAS). Application forms are available from the college or from SAAS. Skill Scotland has produced an information booklet 'Helping you meet the costs of learning: funding for disabled students 2005-06' for the Scottish Executive, which gives further information on funding and benefits you can receive while at college. The booklet is available from Blackwells, Bookshop, 53 South Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1YS or alternative formats are available from Skill (contact details are at the back of this guide).

## **VOLUNTARY AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

Voluntary organisations and other agencies, for example, training providers have experience of helping people who need specific forms of support. They can offer direct support but also offer information and advice.

### **Careers Scotland**

Careers Scotland employs specialist advisers who support people with additional needs in accessing education and training opportunities. You may wish to speak with an advisor if you have an additional support need that may affect or influence your career choice. Specialist Advisors will help you make the most of your skills and strengths when looking for a career.

Careers Scotland have an office within most colleges, where an advisor is available on a full or part- time basis. But you can also contact them outside college. Contact details are given at the back of this guide.

### **Skill Scotland**

Skill Scotland: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities is a charity that exists to promote opportunities for people with any kind of disability in post-16 education, training and employment across Scotland.

The **Skill Scotland Information Service** provides information and advice to disabled people, parents and professionals about any aspect of going into college or university, employment or training. Skill Scotland can provide information such as how to go about getting additional support; the types of support that is available; funding and benefits; disabled people's rights; the roles and

responsibilities of different agencies; and where to go for further information.

Skill Scotland also produces publications and a regular e-newsletter for students, and runs events to inform disabled people and to promote good practice.

### **Lead Scotland**

Lead Scotland is a national voluntary organisation which enables disabled adults, aged 16 and over to access education and lifelong learning opportunities. Lead can offer transition support into college, for example through advocacy; providing a buddy; or volunteer support with flexible learning.

Lead's Local Organisers offer home visits to give educational guidance and develop an individual learning plan. Lead focuses on providing support at home, loaning accessible ICT equipment and other appropriate help. Learning is monitored and reviewed to identify any gaps or update the action plan.

### **More information on coordinating support**

If you would like further details on the roles and responsibilities of agencies to provide support in college, you can read the Scottish Executive publication 'Partnership Matters: a Guide to Local Authorities, NHS Boards and Voluntary Organisations on Supporting Students with Additional Needs in Further Education'. This is available on the Scottish Executive website or from Pamela Kellock-Shetty, Scottish Executive, ETLLD: Higher Education and Science Division, 450 Argyle Street, Glasgow G2 8LG or 0141-242-0108 or [Pamela.Kellock-Shetty@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Pamela.Kellock-Shetty@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

## Helpful Contacts

### North

#### Colleges

Inverness College, 01463 273000, [www.inverness.uhi.ac.uk/](http://www.inverness.uhi.ac.uk/)

Lews Castle College, 01851 770000 [www.lews.uhi.ac.uk/](http://www.lews.uhi.ac.uk/)

Moray College, 01343 576000, [www.moray.ac.uk/](http://www.moray.ac.uk/)

North Highland College, 01847 896161 [www.nhcscotland.com](http://www.nhcscotland.com)

Orkney College, 01856 569000 [www.orkney.uhi.ac.uk/](http://www.orkney.uhi.ac.uk/)

Sabhal Mor Ostaig, 01471 888000 [www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/beurla/](http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/beurla/)

Shetland College, 01595 771000 [www.shetland.uhi.ac.uk](http://www.shetland.uhi.ac.uk)

#### Local Authorities

Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar Council, 01851 709500,  
[www.cne-siar.gov.uk/](http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/)

Highland Council, 01463 702838, [www.highland.gov.uk/](http://www.highland.gov.uk/)

Moray Council, 01343 563001, [www.moray.gov.uk/](http://www.moray.gov.uk/)

Orkney Islands Council, 01856 873535, [www.orkney.gov.uk](http://www.orkney.gov.uk)

Shetland Islands Council, 01595 744500, [www.shetland.gov.uk/](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/)

### South

#### Colleges

The Barony College, 01387 860251 [www.barony.ac.uk/](http://www.barony.ac.uk/)

Dumfries and Galloway College, 01387 261261 [www.dumgal.ac.uk/](http://www.dumgal.ac.uk/)

Borders College, 08700 505152 [www.borderscollege.ac.uk](http://www.borderscollege.ac.uk)

#### Local Authorities

Scottish Borders Council, 01835 825005, [www.scotborders.gov.uk/](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/)

## **East Colleges**

Aberdeen College, 01224 612330 [www.aberdeen.ac.uk](http://www.aberdeen.ac.uk)

Angus College, 01241 432600 [www.angus.ac.uk](http://www.angus.ac.uk)

Banff and Buchan College, 01346 515777 [www.banff-buch.ac.uk](http://www.banff-buch.ac.uk)

Dundee College, 01382 834834 [www.dundeecoll.ac.uk](http://www.dundeecoll.ac.uk)

Edinburgh's Telford College, 0131 332 2491 [www.ed-coll.ac.uk/](http://www.ed-coll.ac.uk/)

Elmwood College, 01334 658800 [www.elmwood.ac.uk/](http://www.elmwood.ac.uk/)

Forth Valley College, 01324 403000, [www.falkirkcollege.ac.uk](http://www.falkirkcollege.ac.uk)

The Adam Smith College, Fife, 01592 568182, 01592 640225,  
[www.adamsmithcollege.ac.uk/](http://www.adamsmithcollege.ac.uk/)

Jewel and Esk Valley College, 0131 660 1010 [www.jevc.ac.uk/](http://www.jevc.ac.uk/)

Lauder College, 01383 845000, [www.lauder.ac.uk/](http://www.lauder.ac.uk/)

Newbattle Abbey College, 0131 663 1921  
[www.newbattleabbeycollege.co.uk/](http://www.newbattleabbeycollege.co.uk/)

Oatridge College, Edinburgh, 01506 854387 [www.oatridge.ac.uk/](http://www.oatridge.ac.uk/)

Perth College, 01738 877000, [www.perth.ac.uk/](http://www.perth.ac.uk/)

Stevenson College, 0131 535 4600 [www.stevenson.ac.uk/](http://www.stevenson.ac.uk/)

West Lothian College, 01506 418181 [www.west-lothian.ac.uk/](http://www.west-lothian.ac.uk/)

## **Local Authorities**

Aberdeen City Council, 01224 522501, [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/)

Aberdeenshire Council, 01224 655402, [www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/)

Angus Council, 01307 461460, [www.angus.gov.uk](http://www.angus.gov.uk)

Clackmannanshire Council, 01259 452001,  
[www.clacksweb.org.uk/index.php](http://www.clacksweb.org.uk/index.php)

City Of Edinburgh Council, 0131 469 3002, [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/)  
Dundee City Council, 01382 434201 [www.dundee.gov.uk/](http://www.dundee.gov.uk/)  
East Lothian Council, 01620 827200 [www.eastlothian.gov.uk/](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/)  
Falkirk Council, 01324 506002 , [www.falkirk.gov.uk/](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/)  
Fife Council, 01592 413999 [www.fife.gov.uk/](http://www.fife.gov.uk/)  
Midlothian Council, 0131 271 3002, [www.midlothian.gov.uk/](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/)  
Perth and Kinross Council, 01738 475009, [www.pkc.gov.uk](http://www.pkc.gov.uk/)  
Stirling Council, 01786 443321, [www.stirling.gov.uk/](http://www.stirling.gov.uk/)  
West Lothian Council, 01506 775000, [www.westlothian.gov.uk/](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/)

## **West**

### **Colleges**

Anniesland College, 0141 357 3969 [www.anniesland.ac.uk/](http://www.anniesland.ac.uk/)  
Ayr College, 01292 265184 [www.ayrcoll.ac.uk/](http://www.ayrcoll.ac.uk/)  
Cardonald College, 0141 272 3333 [www.cardonald.ac.uk/](http://www.cardonald.ac.uk/)  
Central College of Commerce, 0141 552 3941,  
[www.centralcollege.ac.uk/](http://www.centralcollege.ac.uk/)  
Clydebank College, 0141 952 7771 [www.clydebank.ac.uk/](http://www.clydebank.ac.uk/)  
Coatbridge College, 01236 422316 [www.coatbridge.ac.uk/](http://www.coatbridge.ac.uk/)  
Cumbernauld College 01236 731811 [www.cumbernauld.ac.uk](http://www.cumbernauld.ac.uk)  
Dumfries and Galloway Council 01387 260000 [www.dumgal.ac.uk](http://www.dumgal.ac.uk)  
Glasgow Metropolitan College, 0141 566 6222 [www.gcbp.ac.uk/](http://www.gcbp.ac.uk/)  
Glasgow College of Nautical Studies, 0141 565 2500 [www.glasgow-nautical.ac.uk/](http://www.glasgow-nautical.ac.uk/)  
James Watt College, 01475 724433, [www.jameswatt.ac.uk](http://www.jameswatt.ac.uk)  
John Wheatley College, 0141 778 2426 [www.jwheatley.ac.uk/](http://www.jwheatley.ac.uk/)

Kilmarnock College, 01563 523501 [www.kilmarnock.ac.uk/](http://www.kilmarnock.ac.uk/)  
Langside College, 0141 649 4991 [www.langside.ac.uk/](http://www.langside.ac.uk/)  
Motherwell College, 01698 232323 [www.motherwell.ac.uk/](http://www.motherwell.ac.uk/)  
North Glasgow College, 0141 558 9001 [www.north-gla.ac.uk/](http://www.north-gla.ac.uk/)  
Reid Kerr College, 0141 581 2222, [www.reidkerr.ac.uk/](http://www.reidkerr.ac.uk/)  
South Lanarkshire College, 01355 270750,  
[www.south-lanarkshire-college.ac.uk/](http://www.south-lanarkshire-college.ac.uk/)  
Stow College, 0141 332 1786 [www.stow.ac.uk/](http://www.stow.ac.uk/)

### **Local Authorities**

Argyll and Bute Council, 01546 602127,  
Web: [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/)  
East Ayrshire Council, 01563 576002 [www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/](http://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/)  
East Dunbartonshire Council, 0141 578 8000,  
[www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/](http://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/)  
East Renfrewshire Council, 0141 577 3009  
[www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/](http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/)  
Glasgow City Council, 0141 287 4739, [www.glasgow.gov.uk/](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/)  
Inverclyde Council, 01475 712701, [www.inverclyde.gov.uk](http://www.inverclyde.gov.uk)  
North Ayrshire Council, 01294 324112,  
[www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/](http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/)  
North Lanarkshire Council, 01698 302452, [www.northlan.gov.uk/](http://www.northlan.gov.uk/)  
Renfrewshire Council, 0141 840 3601, [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk)  
South Ayrshire Council, 01292 612170,  
[www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/)  
South Lanarkshire Council, 01698 454545,  
[www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/](http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/)

West Dunbartonshire Council, 01389 737000,  
[www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/](http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/)

### General Contacts

Scottish Executive, Student Inclusion and Access Team 0141 242  
 0108 [www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)

Capability Scotland 0131 313 5510,  
<http://www.capability-scotland.org.uk/>

Careers Scotland 0845 8 502 502,  
[www.careers-scotland.org.uk/](http://www.careers-scotland.org.uk/)

Dyslexia Scotland 01786 446650, [www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/](http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/)

Direct Payments Scotland 0131 558 5200,  
[www.dpscotland.org.uk/](http://www.dpscotland.org.uk/)

ENQUIRE 0131 222 2400, [www.enquire.org.uk/](http://www.enquire.org.uk/)

Disability Rights Commission 0131 444 4300, [www.drc-gb.org/](http://www.drc-gb.org/)

Independent Living Funds 0115 942 8191

Scottish Association for Mental Health , 0141 568 7000,  
[www.samh.org.uk/](http://www.samh.org.uk/)

The Scottish Funding Councils for Further and Higher Education,  
 0131 313 6500, [www.sfc.ac.uk](http://www.sfc.ac.uk)

Skill Scotland **Information Service** Freephone Tel/Text: 0800 328  
 5050

(Monday-Thursday 1.30-4.30pm, [www.skill.org.uk](http://www.skill.org.uk), email:  
[admin@skillscotland.org.uk](mailto:admin@skillscotland.org.uk)

The Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS), 0845 111 1711,  
**[www.saas.gov.uk](http://www.saas.gov.uk)**

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