easy read

More chances for students with intellectual disabilities to take part in higher education

How universities and colleges can apply for money to support students with intellectual disabilities

What is higher education

Higher education is when you carry on learning when you have finished school or college.

It is usually for people who are older than 18.

People get higher education at universities or colleges.

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

Programme for Access to Higher Education

We are called the Higher Education Authority. We make sure places like universities and colleges work in the best way.

We are taking part in a programme called **Programme for Access to Higher Education**.

The programme is called **PATH** for short. We say it as **path**.

The programme wants to make sure that everyone has the same chances to have higher education.

In this part of the programme, we are looking at higher education for people with an intellectual disability.

What we want to do

We want people with intellectual disabilities to have more chances to take part in higher education.

We are working together with some universities and colleges on the programme.

You can find a list of the universities and colleges we are working with on pages **18 to 19**.

We want these universities and colleges to write a plan about how they will support students with intellectual disabilities.

We will look at all of the plans.

We will give some money to the universities and college with the best plans.

They can use the money to make their plans happen.

After 3 years we will see if their plans work or what things need changing.

Other universities and colleges can use what we find out.

This will help to make higher education better for people with intellectual disabilities in future.

Things that the universities and colleges might put in their plan

Universities and colleges might:

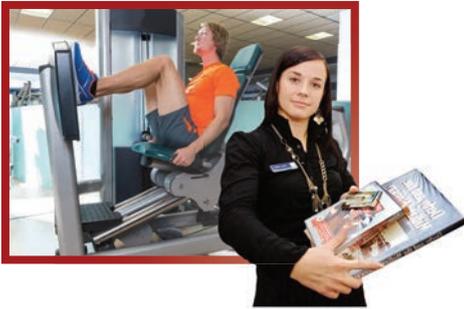- offer extra places to people with intellectual disabilities

- set up new courses

- offer different types of courses. For example, courses that take place on only some days of the week or online courses

- offer **work experience**. **Work experience** is when a person works for a company for a short amount of time.

    This helps them get ready for getting a job

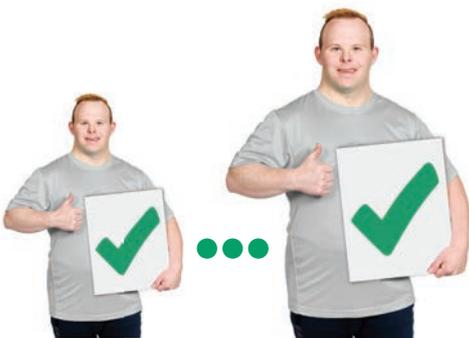As part of their plan, the universities and colleges might also support students to do other things like:

- joining a gym or using the library

- meeting other people and making new friends

- taking part in clubs and groups

The universities and colleges might already be doing lots of these things.

They can still apply and tell us how they want to do things better.
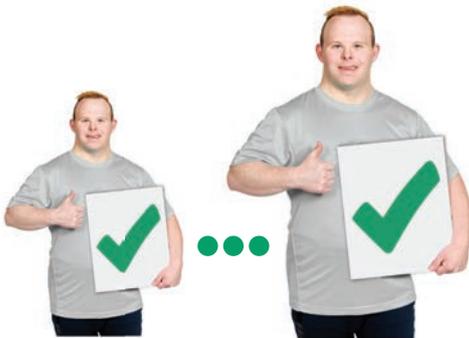
What should be in the plan

There are 4 important things the universities and colleges should put in their plan:

1. What they are going to do

The plan should include:

- things they are already doing and things they want to do better

- new things they want to do

- how many students the plan is for

- how much the plan will cost

● how the universities and colleges will tell people with intellectual disabilities how they can take part

● who they will work with to make the plan happen. This might include:

— organisations and local businesses

— schools and colleges

— other universities
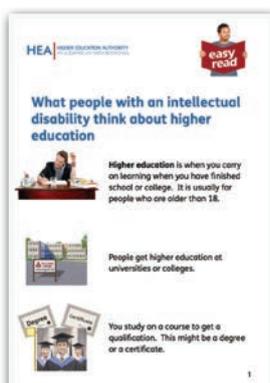
2. How they have listened to students

It is really important for universities and colleges to listen to students about what they want and need.

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

Universities and colleges can use what people told us. This will help them find out what is important to students.

You can read about what people told us in our easy read booklet.

Universities and colleges need to speak to students too. This will help them make sure they are meeting people's wants and needs.

3. What universities and colleges want for students in future

Outcomes means things that happen for students after they have finished their course.

Things like getting a job or doing another course.

The plan should say what outcomes universities and colleges want for students with intellectual disabilities.

4. How they will change how they work to meet everyone's needs:

The universities and colleges should show how they will:

- give everyone the same chances to learn

- change how they teach to meet different people's needs

- support students with an intellectual disability

- help students to take part and feel included

The plan should also say what will happen after 3 years.

The universities and colleges should say how they will keep working on the plan in future.

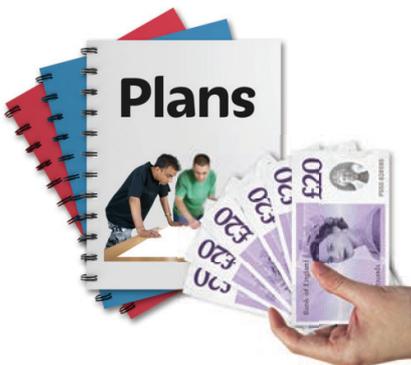The plan must be agreed by the big boss from the university or college.

What happens next

Universities and colleges need to send us their plans by
Thursday 12th October 2023.

We will ask some **independent** people to look at all of the plans.

Independent means they are separate from us and from the university.

These people will help us decide which are the best plans.

We will give some money to the universities and colleges with the best plans.

How universities and colleges can use the money

We will give the university or college some money every year for 3 years.

The money must be used up by September 2026.

Any money that is not used must be given back.

The money can be used for:

- staff. But universities must make sure they can keep paying staff after the plan finishes

- telling people about the new courses

● support for students at university. This could be for things like:

– the cost of doing the course and any travel

and

– support with interviews to come to university

● support for students in the classroom. This could be things like:

– a person to support the student with their lessons

or

– devices like a smart pen to help write things down in lessons

- training for staff and students about supporting people with an intellectual disability

Checking the plan is working

Universities must tell us how things are going and how they are spending the money.

They should also speak to students and organisations they are working with often. This is to check the plan is working well for everyone.

Universities and colleges should share good things they are doing with other universities and colleges.

Universities and colleges that can write a plan for the programme:

- Atlantic Technological University

- Dublin City University

- Dundalk Institute of Technology

- Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dún Laoghaire

- Marino Institute of Education

- Mary Immaculate College

- Maynooth University

- Munster Technological University

- National College of Art and Design

- RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences

- South East Technological University

- St. Angela's College, Sligo

- Technological University Dublin

- Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest

- Trinity College Dublin

- University College Cork

- University College Dublin

- University of Galway

- University of Limerick

Easy read written by Easy Read UK