Headway

the brain injury association

factsheet

Returning to education after brain injury

Introduction

Returning to education after brain injury can be a great way of acquiring the skills and qualifications necessary to return to employment. Studying can also provide pleasure and a sense of purpose, even for those who might not be able to return to work.

Reasons for returning to education include:

- Improving knowledge and skills
- Gaining qualifications
- Increasing your confidence
- Meeting new people
- Finding out what you can do and what you need help with

Returning to full-time courses can be hard after brain injury, as learning new information is often more difficult. Part-time courses are often the best way to start if you have not been in education for a while.

Sources of help and support

There are a number of sources of help and advice available to help you get back into education.

- **Local college Learning Support Advisor** – It is a good idea to discuss the options before deciding what course to do, especially if you have a new career in mind. Spending time finding out if the course is suitable for you is worth it in the long run. If you are considering a course at a local college, ask to be put in touch with the Learning Support Advisor.

  The advisor's job is to help people who may experience problems and they are often extremely helpful and knowledgeable about strategies to use. They can advise on suitable courses and any support that is available. They can also help you to access services provided to help people find the correct classroom, develop systems for getting organised, get help with note-taking and receive extra time in exams.

- **Tutors** – When starting a course it is useful to meet with the tutors and tell them about your injury and how it has affected you. They will often be able to provide extra help, such as providing handouts so you don't have to take notes, giving you advanced preparation for future study and allowing extra time for assignments.

Headway

the brain injury association

factsheet

- **Learn Direct and the Open University** – These organisations provide a wide range of online courses which may be suitable for those who have difficulty attending college. They are very supportive of students with disabilities and people on benefits can often get reduced course fees, or even free courses (see 'Useful Organisations' for contact details).

- **The Get On** Helpline – A government run service that provides help with finding free courses (see 'Useful Organisations' for contact details).

- **Next Step** – A government run service that provides advice and information on most aspects of adult education and employment and can help to find the right course for you (see 'Useful Organisations' for contact details).

- **Skill - National Bureau for Students with Disabilities** – Charity that provides a range of support services to help people with all kinds of disabilities to study (see 'Useful Organisations' for contact details).

Financial support for returning to education

There are a number of options available to get help with the costs of studying. College's often have discretionary funds that you can apply for and your local college will be able to tell you about any help they can provide.

There are a number of government grants and loans available, such as:

- Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)
- The Adult Learning Grant (ALG)
- Care to Learn
- The Sixth Form College Childcare Scheme
- The Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work scheme
- Dance and Drama Awards
- The Residential Support Scheme for people studying away from home
- Professional and Career Development Loans
- Residential Support Scheme
- Fifty Plus In-Work Training Grant
- Individual Learning Account (Wales and Scotland only)

The availability of these funds varies in different regions of England, Scotland and Wales. For more information on these grants and the eligibility criteria visit http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/FinancialHelpForAdultLearners/index.htm.

Headway
the brain injury association

factsheet

The UK governments also provide the following services which give free advice on all aspects of adult education. The helplines can tell you what funds you are entitled to and can start the application process:

- Next Step (England) - Tel: 0800 100 900 Web: https://nextstep.direct.gov.uk
- Learndirect Scotland - Tel: 0808 100 9000 Web: www.learndirectscotland.com
- Careers Advice Wales - Tel: 0800 100 900 (from Wales) Web: www.careerswales.com

Northern Ireland

The adult education system and financial support schemes are different in Northern Ireland. Further information on education and funding in Northern Ireland can be obtained from the Department of Employment and Learning (DELNI). Visit their website at www.delni.gov.uk or telephone 028 9025 7777.

Useful resources

- The organisation Family Action run the Educational Grants Advisory Service and can provide people on benefits or low incomes with educational grants of £200 - £300. For more information visit their website at www.family-action.org.uk or call 020 7254 6251.
- The Directory of Social Change publishes the *Educational Grants Directory*, which is updated every year and contains about 1,500 sources of financial help for students. The book can be ordered online at http://www.dsc.org.uk/Publications/Fundraisingsources
- **COPE** Directory – This is a comprehensive directory of post-16 residential education and training for young people with disabilities. Available from www.lifetime-publishing.co.uk.

Bradbury House,
190 Bagnall Road,
Old Basford,
Nottingham NG6 8SF

Helpline: 0808 800 2244
Email: helpline@headway.org.uk
Website: www.headway.org.uk

Headway
the brain injury association

factsheet

Useful Organisations

Careers Wales
Tel: 0800 100 900 (from within Wales)
Web: www.careerswales.com

Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI)
Adelaide House
39 – 49 Adelaide Street
Belfast BT2 8FD
Tel: 028 9025 7777
Email: del@nics.gov.uk
Web: www.delni.gov.uk

Family Action
501-505 Kingsland Road
London E8 4AU
Tel: 020 7254 6251
Web: www.family-action.org.uk

Get On Helpline
Tel: 0800 660 800
Web: www.direct.gov.uk/geton

Learndirect
PO Box 900
Leicester LE1 6XJ
Tel: 0800 100 900
Web: www.learndirect.co.uk

Learndirect Scotland
Tel: 0808 100 9000
Web: www.learndirectscotland.com

Learner Support Helpline
Tel: 0800 121 8989
Web: http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DI1/Directories/UsefulContactsByCategory/EducationAndLearningContacts/DG_173410

Next Step
Tel: 0800 100 900
Web: https://nextstep.direct.gov.uk

Headway
the brain injury association

factsheet

The Open University
PO Box 197
Milton Keynes MK7 6BJ
Tel: 0845 300 60 90
Web: www.open.ac.uk

Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities
Unit 3, Floor 3
Radisson Court
219 Long Lane
London SE1 4PR
Tel: 020 7450 0620
Email: skill@skill.org.uk
Web: www.skill.org.uk

Skills Funding Agency
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry
CV1 2WT
Tel: 0845 377 5000
Email: info@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk
Web: www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk

Young People's Learning Agency
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry
CV1 2WT
Tel: 0845 337 2000
Email: enquiries@ypla.gov.uk
Web: www.ypla.gov.uk

To discuss any issues raised in this factsheet, or to find details of our local Groups and Branches, please contact the Headway helpline free of charge on 0808 800 2244, or by email at helpline@headway.org.uk. You can also find more information and contact details of Groups and Branches on our website at www.headway.org.uk.

Headway produces a range of booklets and factsheets covering brain injury related issues. Booklets can be ordered from the website or on 0115 924 0800. Factsheets are freely downloadable from the website.

Published November 2010