

# Post-School Education and Training

## Information on Options for Adults and School Leavers with Disabilities



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**National Council for Special Education**

1-2 Mill Street

Trim

Co. Meath

**An Chomhairle Náisiúnta um Oideachas Speisialta**

1-2 Sráid an Mhuilinn

Baile Átha Troim

Co. na Mí

T: 046 948 6400

F: 046 948 6404

E: [adulthoodeducation@ncse.ie](mailto:adulthoodeducation@ncse.ie)

[www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie)

*This booklet provides general information about the main programmes and supports in education and training of people with disabilities. The information is up to date at June 2014.*

*This booklet was prepared by NCSE in co-operation with the National Disability Authority which also provided funding towards publication costs.*

## Table of Contents

<b>Glossary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. Introduction and Summary</b>	
Introduction	9
Summary	9
Guidance and information	10
Access to services	11
Re-organisation and change	11
Validation of courses	11
Further education	11
Vocational training	12
Higher education	12
Rehabilitative training and adult day services	12
Intreo	12
<b>2. Guidance and Sources of Information</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>3. Access</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>4. Reorganisation and Reform</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>5. Certification of Outcomes and Progression</b>	<b>29</b>

<b>6. Further Education</b>	<b>33</b>
Introduction	33
Full-time further education programmes	33
Post Leaving Certificate (PLC)	33
Youthreach	34
Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)	34
Part-time further education programmes	35
Back To Education Initiative (BTEI)	35
Adult literacy	35
Community education	36
Fund for students with disabilities (PLC programmes)	37
Childcare Education and Training Scheme	37
More information	37
Some important links and contacts	38
<b>7. Vocational Training</b>	<b>41</b>
Introduction	41
Certification of vocational training	41
How vocational training programmes are delivered	41
Access to vocational training	41
Specialist training provision	42
Information about training options	43
Types of vocational training programmes	43
Local training Initiative	44
Some important links and contacts	44

<b>8. Higher Education</b>	<b>47</b>
Introduction	47
National plan for equity of access to higher education	47
Access plans in individual higher education institutions	48
Disability/access services in higher education institutions	48
Fund for students with disabilities	48
Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)	49
Other inclusive initiatives by higher education institutions	49
Springboard Programme	49
Some important links and contacts	50
<b>9. HSE Rehabilitative Training and Adult Day Services</b>	<b>53</b>
Introduction	53
How to apply	53
HSE occupational guidance service	54
Rehabilitative training programmes	54
HSE adult day services	55
New Directions	56
Further information	57
<b>10. Services Provided by the Department of Social Protection for People with Disabilities</b>	<b>61</b>
Intreo	61
Citizens' Information Board	61
Supports for people with disabilities seeking work	61
EmployAbility	62
WAM – Willing Able Mentoring	62
The Disability Activation Project (DACT)	63
Some important links and contacts	64



## Glossary of Acronyms

<b>AEGI</b>	Adult Education Guidance Initiative
<b>AHEAD</b>	Association for Higher Education Access and Disability
<b>Aontas</b>	National adult learning organisation
<b>BTEI</b>	Back to Education Initiative
<b>BMW</b>	Border, Midlands and Western region
<b>CAO</b>	Central Applications Office
<b>CETS</b>	Childcare Education and Training Scheme
<b>DACT</b>	Disability Activation Project
<b>DARE</b>	Disability Access Route to Education
<b>ESF</b>	European Social Fund
<b>ETB</b>	Education and Training Boards
<b>ETBI</b>	Education and Training Boards Ireland
<b>FÁS</b>	National training authority (abolished)
<b>HELS</b>	Higher Education Links Scheme
<b>HSE</b>	Health Service Executive
<b>Intreo</b>	National Employments and Entitlements Service, Department of Social Protection
<b>IST</b>	Introductory skills training
<b>LTI</b>	Local training initiative
<b>NALA</b>	National Adult Literacy Agency
<b>NCGE</b>	National Centre for Guidance in Education
<b>NCSE</b>	National Council for Special Education
<b>NFQ</b>	National Framework of Qualifications
<b>PLC</b>	Post Leaving Certificate
<b>QQI</b>	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
<b>SOLAS</b>	Further Education and Training Authority
<b>SST</b>	Skills specific training
<b>VTOS</b>	Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme
<b>WAM</b>	Willing Able Mentoring



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## Section 1

# Introduction and Summary



## Section 1 Introduction and Summary

### Introduction

Access to accurate and relevant information is essential for people considering further and higher education or training options and pathways.

Students need this information as they begin to prepare for transition from school to further and higher education and training. Similarly, adults need it when deciding to return at a later stage to education or training.

Sometimes people with a disability may have difficulty getting clear information and advice on the options and pathways that are available and appropriate for them and about the supports available for their particular needs.

This NCSE booklet summarises the main national programmes and supports in education and training available for adults with disabilities. It also indicates how to access further information and guidance.

The NCSE developed this guide in collaboration with the range of relevant responsible authorities and providers at national level including the National Disability Authority. The NCSE wishes to thank these bodies which co-operated in this project.

All organisations will change their programmes and/or supports from time to time. The information provided here is correct as of June 2014 and will be updated from time to time<sup>1</sup>.

### Summary

This booklet provides general information about post-school education and training options and supports for people with disabilities.

A wide range of programmes and supports in post-school education and training is available for people with disabilities. These generally aim to assist people with disabilities;-

- in accessing education and training appropriate to their needs,
- in making the transition from schools and in progressing successfully through the various post-school pathways in further and higher education and training.

Various pathways are available. The individual's choice needs to be accurately informed about the availability and suitability of the various options and supports.

<sup>1</sup> The NCSE will welcome comment and feedback in regard to the content of this booklet which may be forwarded to [adulteducation@ncse.ie](mailto:adulteducation@ncse.ie)

Many providers offer these services and supports around the country. Relevant education and training services are provided in distinct sectors which may be broadly categorised as:

- Further education.
- Vocational training.
- Higher education.
- Rehabilitative training.
- Adult day services.

Within each of these, a range of education/training services and special supports is relevant to people with disabilities. Detailed information on these services is available from individual providers.

These services are provided by various bodies such as the higher education institutions, Educational and Training Boards (ETBs) or the Health Service Executive (HSE). The services may be directly delivered by the relevant State bodies or delivered by contractors or not-for-profit organisations engaged by some of these bodies. There are differences in service delivery arrangements, nationally and locally, and some of these services are currently being reorganised.

Variation and complexity in organisational arrangements and provision of services and supports, may make it difficult for individuals to fully understand the options on offer which best meet their specific needs.

This booklet generally summarises key features of the main programmes and supports for people with disabilities in each of the sectors, provides links to more detailed web site sources and indicates where more information may be obtained.

## Guidance and information

Guidance and advice are crucial for people with disabilities and others when considering available and appropriate options. Guidance ranges from basic information provision to more intensive individual support and counselling.

Guidance is provided for students in schools. In addition there are specific guidance and information services for adults including people with disabilities. These services include the Adult Education Guidance Initiative (AEGI), the Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD), the occupational guidance services of the HSE, the Department of Social Protection/Intreo and the Citizens' Information Board (see **Section 2** for a more detailed summary).

## Access to services

In general people with disabilities attend post-school education services or training courses on the same basis as people without disabilities. However, sometimes they may need changes to accommodate their individual needs. Course providers make reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities.

Special education and training services and supports for people with disabilities may also be provided. Public services providers must supply an access officer to help people with disabilities to avail of services (see **Section 3** for further information on access).

## Re-organisation and change

Much re-organisation and change is happening in further education, vocational training, qualification validation, rehabilitative training, adult day services and employment support. Some information on this can be found in **Section 4**.

## Validation of courses

People, including those with disabilities, need clear information when making choices about education and training courses that best meet their needs. This is facilitated through the validation of courses under the National Framework of Qualifications or other recognised validation arrangements.

Further information about course validation and progression routes can be found in **Section 5**.

## Further education

**Section 6** describes various further education programmes and supports with particular reference to people with disabilities. The main further education programmes and schemes include Post Leaving-Certificate courses (PLCs), Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS), Youthreach, Back to Education Initiative (BTEI), adult literacy and community education.

## Vocational training

**Section 7** outlines vocational training programmes along with available programmes and supports of relevance to people with disabilities. In addition to mainline programmes, which are open to people with disabilities, there are specialist programmes for people with disabilities who require more support. These are accessed via local Department of Social Protection/Intreo offices.

## Higher education

Higher education programmes, policies and supports are outlined in **Section 8**, including the Fund for Students with Disabilities, the disability support services in individual higher education institutions and the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) scheme.

## Rehabilitative training and adult day services

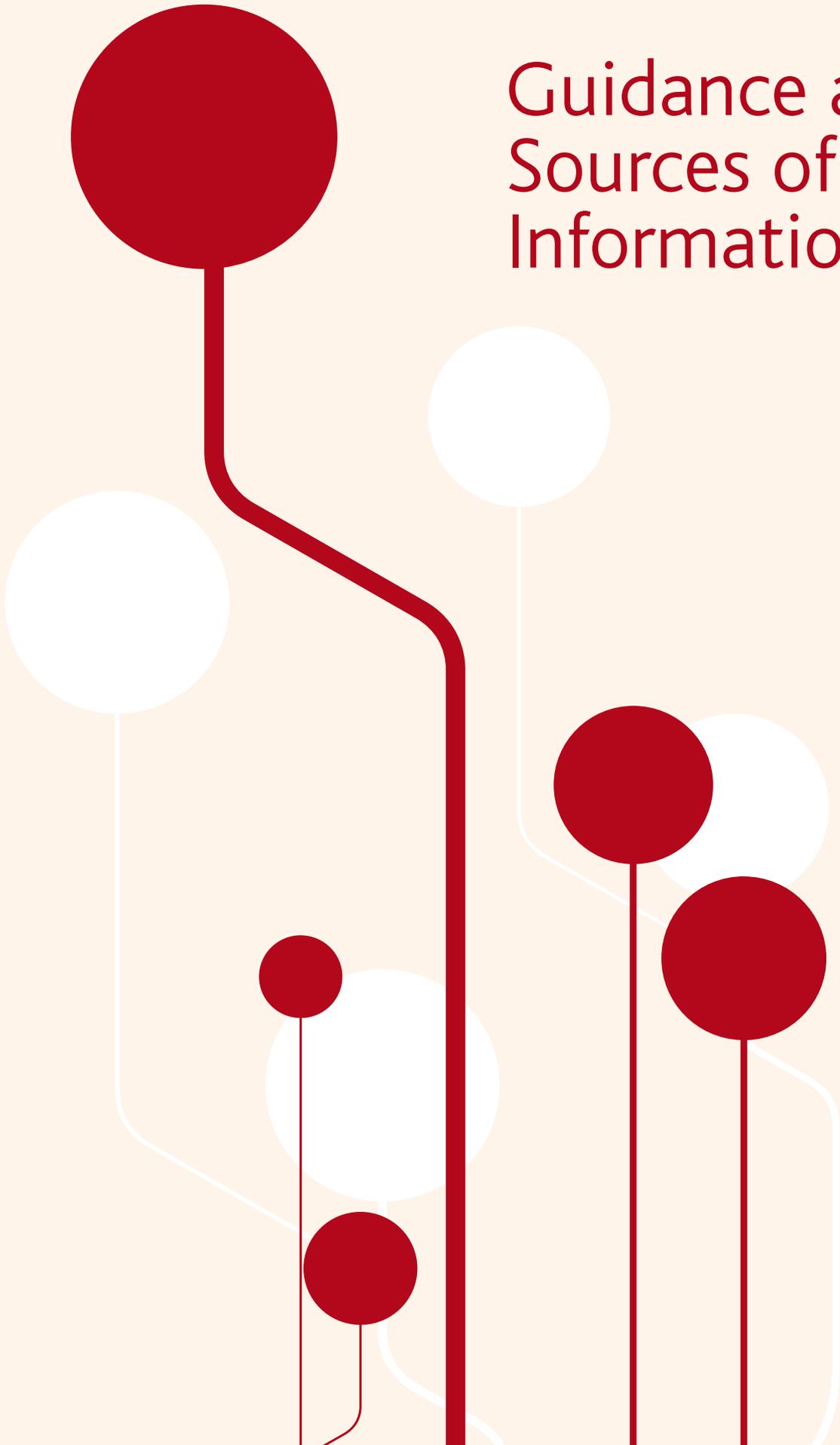
**Section 9** describes the HSE rehabilitative training and adult day services. These may be accessed and more information provided through local HSE disability services including the occupational guidance service.

## Intreo

The Department of Social Protection has established a new national employment and income support service (Intreo – see **Section 10**). Intreo's role includes providing advice and information on income support, training and development opportunities, employment support and career guidance for job seekers. This service, which focuses on job seekers generally including those with disabilities, provides links to further education and training opportunities to support people starting or returning to work.

## Section 2

# Guidance and Sources of Information





## Section 2 Guidance and Sources of Information

### Introduction

School guidance services help prepare students for leaving school and assist them as they move from school to work, education or training. Other services also provide guidance, including higher education institutions, the Department of Social Protection through the [Intreo](#) Service, the HSE occupational guidance service, the Adult Education Guidance Initiative, the Citizens' Information Board and AHEAD. Their focus varies, ranging from information provision to more detailed one-to-one counselling.

### School Guidance Service

Schools (including primary, post primary and special schools and PLC colleges) through their [school guidance plans](#) seek to ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices. Guidance generally aims to assist students to transition into adulthood with the skills necessary to participate in society, in an inclusive way consistent with their abilities.

Guidance is a whole of school activity which should include provision for liaison with relevant agencies including Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and the HSE. Young people with disabilities may require particular support to achieve their full potential and to become aware of the range of suitable career and education/training options available to them.

### Adult Education Guidance Initiative

The [Adult Education Guidance Initiative](#) delivered by ETBs, provides nationwide guidance for learners before, during and after they participate in adult literacy and community education programmes and including also the Vocational Training Opportunity Scheme (VTOS) and the Back to Education Initiative (BTEI). The target group for this initiative/ service includes people with disabilities. The AEGI service provides adult education information, one-to-one and group guidance to enable informed educational, career and life choices. It includes personal, educational and career guidance and covers the pre-entry, entry, ongoing and pre-exit stages of these programmes. This adult guidance service may be contacted through local ETBs.

### HSE occupational guidance

The HSE occupational guidance service aims to provide one-to-one advice, support and guidance to enable individuals with a disability aged 16 to 65 to make an informed choice about their rehabilitative training and occupational options. It is accessible through local [HSE disability services](#). The local area HSE health centre can also supply local contact information.

## Intreo

Adults/school leavers with a disability who wish to avail of vocational training in their search for work may contact their local [Intreo](#) office to meet an employment services officer who will provide information and advice.

## AHEAD

[AHEAD](#)<sup>2</sup>, the Association for Higher Education Access and Disability, provides an information (phone and online) helpdesk. It also runs the annual Better Options Fair to provide information on services and supports in higher education to post-primary students with disabilities, their parents and guidance counsellors.

## Citizens' Information Board

The [Citizens' Information Board](#) is the statutory body which supports the provision of information, advice and advocacy on a broad range of public and social services. It provides the Citizens' Information website and supports the network of [Citizens' Information Centres](#) and the Citizens' Information phone service. This website includes information on [entitlements for people with disabilities](#).

## Other Sources

[Careers Portal](#) is a very useful web-based guidance resource for all adults and young people provided by a public/private partnership. It includes information on the needs of people with disabilities.

<sup>2</sup> AHEAD is an independent non-profit organisation working to promote full access to and participation in further and higher education for students with disabilities and to enhance their employment prospects on graduation. It provides information to students and graduates with disabilities, teachers, guidance counsellors and parents on disability issues in education. It has developed and published guidelines and information resources. AHEAD publishes and distributes Access Success: A Brief Guide to Accessing Third Level Education for Students with Disabilities and Specific Learning Difficulties as well as a Guideline for Students with Disabilities on Disclosure. In collaboration with the providers, AHEAD has developed and published '[Ahead start](#)' which is an online training programme for professionals on supporting students with disabilities in higher and further education.

A campaign entitled [One step up](#) promotes lifelong learning. It is managed by [Aontas](#) on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills and a steering committee which includes the ETBI<sup>3</sup>, NCGE<sup>4</sup>, [NALA](#), and Léargas<sup>5</sup>. A [website](#), a national free-phone helpline and an interactive online calendar of learning events are included in the campaign.

NALA<sup>6</sup>, the National Adult Literacy Agency operates a free-phone helpline and a free-text service<sup>7</sup> to provide information to adults with literacy difficulties.

### Some important links referenced in this section (details as above)

Hyper Link (as shown in text)	Main web-site address	Agency/ Initiative	Phone No
<a href="#">Adult Education Guidance Initiative</a>	<a href="http://www.ncge.ie">www.ncge.ie</a>	NCGE/ETB	Various (see the " <b>Further Education</b> " tab on the website)
<a href="#">AHEAD</a>	<a href="http://www.ahead.ie">www.ahead.ie</a>	AHEAD	01 7164396
<a href="#">Aontas</a>	<a href="http://www.aontas.com">www.aontas.com</a>	AONTAS	01 4068220/1
<a href="#">Citizens' Information Board</a>	<a href="http://www.citizensinformationboard.ie">www.citizensinformationboard.ie</a>	Citizens' Information Board	076 107 9000
<a href="#">HSE disability services</a>	<a href="http://www.hse.ie">www.hse.ie</a>	HSE/Disability Services	1850 24 1850
<a href="#">Intreo</a>	<a href="http://www.welfare.ie">www.welfare.ie</a>	DSP/Intreo	1890 66 22 44
<a href="#">NALA</a>	<a href="http://www.nala.ie">www.nala.ie</a>	NALA	1800 20 20 65
<a href="#">One step up</a>	<a href="http://www.onestepup.ie">www.onestepup.ie</a>	One-Step-Up	1800 30 36 69

<sup>3</sup> [Education and Training Boards Ireland](#).

<sup>4</sup> [National Centre for Guidance in Education](#).

<sup>5</sup> [Léargas](#), the national agency for managing national and international exchange and cooperation programmes in education, youth and community work, and vocational education and training.

<sup>6</sup> [NALA](#) is an independent charity which helps people with literacy and numeracy difficulties to fully take part in society and have access to learning opportunities that meet their needs. Its activities include tutor training, developing teaching materials, distance education services, policy-making, research and campaigns to raise awareness of the causes, extent and responses to adult literacy difficulties in Ireland.

<sup>7</sup> NALA free-phone helpline 1800 20 20 65 and free-text 50050.



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## Section 3

### Access



### Section 3 Access

People with disabilities can face particular challenges in accessing education and training services which appropriately meet their needs. Disability has many levels of severity and forms including physical, sensory (visual or hearing), intellectual or mental health impairment. Access issues therefore vary and need to be clarified and considered on an individual basis.

Under the Equal Status Acts, both public and private sector service providers must do all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of a person with a disability. In general, this means providing special assistance or facilities in circumstances where it would otherwise be impossible or unduly difficult for a person with the disability to avail of the service. The provider must consider and provide special assistance where this is necessary, practical and appropriate.

The [Equality Authority](#) has published guides to [the Equal Status Acts](#) and to the requirement of [reasonable accommodations](#). In addition, AHEAD has published guidelines on accommodations for people with disabilities. The [National Disability Authority](#) (NDA) also provides expert advice on disability policy and practice, and promotes universal design in Ireland.

All public bodies are specifically required to have at least one officer acting in the capacity of [access officer](#). This person is responsible, where appropriate, for providing or arranging for and co-ordinating assistance and guidance to those with disabilities in accessing the services provided by that body. Public body responsibilities also include ensuring [information](#) is accessible.

#### Some important links referenced in this section (details as above)

Hyper Link (as shown in text)	Main web-site address	Agency/ Initiative	Phone No
<a href="#">AHEAD</a>	<a href="http://www.ahead.ie">www.ahead.ie</a>	AHEAD	01 7164396
<a href="#">Equality Authority</a>	<a href="http://www.equality.ie">www.equality.ie</a>	Equality Authority	0505 24126
<a href="#">National Disability Authority</a>	<a href="http://www.nda.ie">www.nda.ie</a>	National Disability Authority	01 608 0400



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## Section 4

# Reorganisation and Reform



## Section 4 Reorganisation and Reform

### Introduction

Further education and training services have been undergoing major processes of reorganisation and reform.

### Education and Training Boards

Sixteen [Education and Training Boards](#) (ETBs) were established in July 2013, replacing the pre-existing 33 County and City Vocational Education Committees (VECs). They have responsibility for the management of schools, further education programmes and other related services. From 2014, ETBs also have responsibility for training services, with the management of [SOLAS](#) (former FÁS) training centres transferring to ETBs.

### SOLAS

FÁS has been dissolved and a new further education and training authority, SOLAS, was statutorily established in October 2013. SOLAS has responsibility for developing and overseeing the management of a coherent national strategy for further education and training. It also has overall responsibility for the strategic direction and funding of the training and the further education programmes delivered by ETBs.

### Quality and Qualifications Ireland

[Quality and Qualifications Ireland](#) (QQI), established in November, 2012, is now responsible for the external quality assurance of further and higher education and training and validates programmes and makes awards in these sectors. QQI makes awards based on the [National Framework of Qualifications](#).

### HSE day services

The report of the review of HSE day services<sup>8</sup> (New Directions) has proposed radical changes in future day service provision for people with disabilities which are being implemented. The new approach in delivery emphasises person-centeredness, community inclusion, active citizenship and quality.

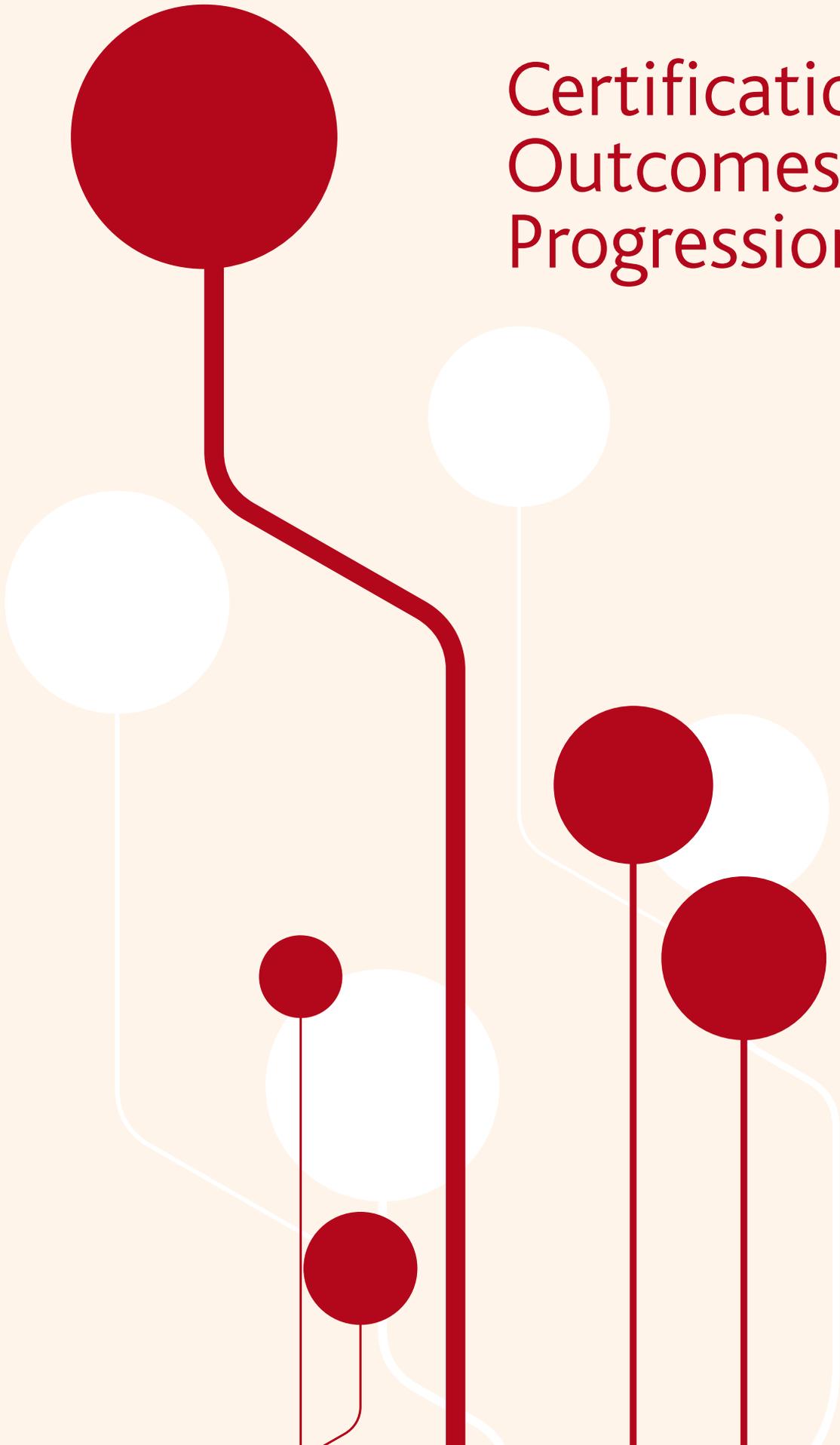
<sup>8</sup> New Directions, Personal Support Services for Adults with Disabilities (HSE, 2012).

Some important links referenced in this section (details as above)

Hyper Link (as shown in text)	Main web-site address	Agency/ Initiative	Phone No
<a href="#">Education and Training Boards</a>	<a href="http://www.etbi.ie">www.etbi.ie</a>	Education Training Board	Various (see the “ <i>ETBs</i> ” tab on the website)
<a href="#">National Framework of Qualifications</a>	<a href="http://www.qqi.ie">www.qqi.ie</a>	QQI/NFQ	01 9058100
<a href="#">Quality and Qualifications Ireland</a>	<a href="http://www.qqi.ie">www.qqi.ie</a>	QQI	01 9058100
<a href="#">SOLAS</a>	<a href="http://www.solas.ie">www.solas.ie</a>	SOLAS	01 6070500

## Section 5

# Certification of Outcomes and Progression





## Section 5 Certification of Outcomes and Progression

### National Framework of Qualifications

The [National Framework of Qualifications](#) (NFQ) provides a framework to validate educational and training programmes.

It is an awards framework of ten levels aligned to the European Framework of Qualifications. Based on standards of knowledge, skill and competence, it incorporates awards made for all kinds of learning, from initial learning to doctorate, wherever the learning is gained. For example, the new Junior Certificate will be at NFQ levels 2 and 3, apprenticeship qualifications are at NFQ level 6, the honours bachelor degree is at NFQ level 8 and the doctoral degree is at NFQ level 10.

The framework provides a structure to compare and contrast the level and standard of different qualifications. This helps the learner to make informed decisions about course and qualification choices and to consider available progression opportunities. The NFQ also makes it easier for learners to explain to others what qualifications they hold, or are studying for. This is important when considering further learning or applying for a job.

### Qualifax

Comprehensive information on all further and higher education and training courses certified by reference to the NFQ is available on [Qualifax](#), the national learners' database maintained and managed by QQI. More information on certification of outcomes and progression is available from the individual course providers as well as from guidance services.

### Higher Education Links Scheme

The [Higher Education Links Scheme](#) (HELS) links a number of NFQ level 5 and level 6 awards to a variety of third level courses in participating higher education institutions. Holders of these NFQ awards may apply through the [Central Applications Office](#) (CAO) for admission to first year of higher education programmes. Further information on this scheme is available directly from the relevant higher education institutions.

Some important links and contacts referenced in this section (details as above)

Hyper Link (as shown in text)	Main web-site address	Agency/ Initiative	Phone No
<a href="#">Central Applications Office</a>	<a href="http://www.cao.ie">www.cao.ie</a>	CAO	091 509800
<a href="#">Higher Education Links Scheme</a>	<a href="http://www.fetac.ie">www.fetac.ie</a>	QQI/HELS	01 9058100
<a href="#">National Framework of Qualifications</a>	<a href="http://www.qqi.ie">www.qqi.ie</a>	QQI/NFQ	01 9058100
<a href="#">Qualifax</a>	<a href="http://www.qualifax.ie">www.qualifax.ie</a>	QQI/ Qualifax	01 9058100
<a href="#">Quality and Qualifications Ireland</a>	<a href="http://www.qqi.ie">www.qqi.ie</a>	QQI	01 9058100

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## Section 6

# Further Education



## Section 6 Further Education

### Introduction

The term further education describes education after post-primary school which is not part of the third level system.

It prepares students for work by giving them specific skills and training and also acts as a stepping-stone to higher level qualifications.

Its principal objectives are:

- To meet the needs of early school leavers.
- To provide second chance education for people who did not complete upper post-primary school level.
- To provide vocational preparation and training for labour market entrants and re-entrants.

Further education courses are listed on [Qualifax](#) where details are provided on each course. Information is also available through [Careers Portal](#). More information about particular further education courses and programmes, including access information for people with disabilities, may be obtained by contacting the relevant [ETB](#) or local course provider, whose contact details are also given on the [Qualifax](#) website. Full and part-time courses are open to all, subject to prescribed course requirements.

Full-time further education programmes are:

- [Post Leaving Certificate](#) (PLC).
- [Youthreach](#).
- [Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme](#) (VTOS).

Part-time programmes are:

- The [Back to Education Initiative](#) (BTEI).
- [Adult literacy](#).
- [Community education](#).

### Full-time further education programmes

#### Post Leaving Certificate (PLC)

Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses provide vocational skills for employment and/or progression to other studies. The programme caters for learners aged 16 and over who have completed their Leaving Certificate and adults returning to education.

There are about 33,000 PLC places and most are provided by ETBs with some also in other post-primary school settings. There are PLC courses in more than 60 disciplines provided in about 200 approved centres nationwide.

Most courses are of one year duration but some last two years. Certification is generally at NFQ level 5 or 6. Some offer certification from other bodies, such as City and Guilds and BTEC<sup>9</sup>.

### Youthreach

[Youthreach](#) programmes usually provide two years integrated education, training and work experience for unemployed early school leavers without any qualifications or vocational training who are aged 15 to 20. Programmes vary, but are typically certified at NFQ level 3-5.

Basic skills training, practical work training and general education are features of the programmes provided. The application of new technology is integrated into all aspects of programme content. There is a strong emphasis on personal development, on the core skills of literacy/numeracy, communications and IT, along with a choice of vocational options and a work experience programme. Individual action plans for learners are agreed and developed with participants while on the Youthreach programmes.

About 6,000 Youthreach places are available nationwide and are provided in just over 100 ETB Youthreach centres and in up to 40 [community training centres](#) now transferring to ETBs.

Youthreach participants are entitled to training allowances based on age. Additional allowances for meal, travel and accommodation are also available. More information is available from the local ETBs.

### Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)

The [Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme](#) (VTOS) provides for second chance education/training courses of up to two years duration for those aged 21 or over including people with disabilities, who have been unemployed for at least six months. VTOS aims to give participants education and training opportunities which develop and prepare them for paid employment or further education and training opportunities leading to employment.

About 6,000 places are available nationwide. VTOS participants are included in either general PLC courses or in specific courses provided for them. The courses are provided at [NFQ](#) levels 3-6.

<sup>9</sup> [City & Guilds](#) and [BTEC](#) are internationally recognised bodies which validate vocational education and training programmes.

If eligible, participants receive a training allowance<sup>10</sup> in lieu of certain social welfare payments as well as travel and meal allowances and can access childcare and guidance supports. Tuition, books and material are free-of-charge.

## Part-time further education programmes

### Back To Education Initiative (BTEI)

The [Back to Education Initiative](#) funds part-time further education programmes for adults and young people. The initiative gives people an opportunity to return to learning. Anyone who has left full-time education can take part, but priority is given to people who left school early and who don't have the Leaving Certificate (NFQ 4-5). Overall, the BTEI aims to increase the participation of young people and adults with less than upper post primary education in a range of part-time accredited learning opportunities leading to NFQ awards to facilitate their access, transfer and progression to other education or employment pathways.

The BTEI funds courses leading to certification at NFQ level 3-5, which provide a link to full-time further education and training and offer progression from literacy and community education programmes. These courses also facilitate participation in ICT training. The BTEI supports individuals and groups, including people with disabilities who experience barriers to participation and find it more difficult to engage in the formal learning process.

### Adult literacy

Many adults, including people with disabilities, need help with reading, writing, numeracy or ICT skills. The [adult literacy](#) programme provides options for adults who wish to be competent and confident in a range of skills essential for full and effective participation in society.

Adult literacy programmes target adults whose literacy and numeracy skills do not match those at NFQ level 3 and are offered free-of-charge to any person aged 16 and over who fulfils the criteria. These programmes generally focus on learning outcomes at NFQ level 1-3. Minor awards<sup>11</sup> at NFQ level 4-5 may also be provided.

<sup>10</sup> Details of [approved rates](#) for VTOS participants are available from the Department of Social Protection.

<sup>11</sup> NFQ minor awards recognise learners who achieve a range of learning outcomes but not the specific combination of learning outcomes required for a major award. These awards allow learners to build up units of learning at their own pace to meet their own needs.

Tuition is provided flexibly during the day or evening, either to groups or on a one-to-one basis, in traditional or atypical settings. Literacy programmes for people with disabilities also include the Deaf and people with specific learning disabilities.

Further information may be obtained from the AEGI or the adult education officer in the local ETB.

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) operates a free-phone helpline and free-text service to provide information to adults with literacy difficulties<sup>12</sup>. It also provides distance learning initiatives including the online programme [Write On](#).

### Community education

Community education provides informal and non-formal education for adults whose needs have not been met through more formal provision. It aims to enhance learning, foster empowerment and contribution to civic society.

The State delivers community education through a range of providers, including independently managed not-for-profit groups and statutory organisations (such as ETBs) in a wide variety of settings including, community projects, resource centres and voluntary organisations nationwide. Up to 140 community education providers are members of the Aontas<sup>13</sup> community education network.

While community education is open to all, providers generally focus their programmes on people who experience disadvantage or have been out of education for some time, including people with disabilities.

It offers diverse courses to meet the needs of a diversity of learners including:

- Courses leading to certification from NFQ level 1-4.
- Informal and non-formal courses which are not accredited.
- Introductory courses of one morning per week for eight weeks to full-time year-long programmes.
- Courses in everything from life-skills to professional qualifications.

In ETBs, community education is coordinated through locally based [community education facilitators](#). More information on community education may be obtained by contacting local ETBs, the local adult education guidance service or Aontas.

<sup>12</sup> Free-phone helpline 1800 20 20 65 and free-text 50050.

<sup>13</sup> [Aontas](#) (National Adult Learning Organisation) is a Non-Government Membership Organisation which advocates quality learning for all adults.

## Fund for Students with Disabilities (PLC programmes)

Students with disabilities who participate in PLC programmes in ETB further education colleges may need some additional services and supports. The [Fund for Students with Disabilities](#) allocates funding to further education colleges for the provision of services and supports to these full-time students with disabilities. These may include assistive technology (equipment and or software), personal or academic support and transport.

Further information, including a list of the colleges of further education providing PLC courses and an outline of eligibility criteria, is available on the [student finance website](#).

Funding is not means-tested and a claim under the fund is made on behalf of a student by a college following an assessment of need, including consideration of evidence from relevant medical specialists. Following an assessment of the claim for funding from each college, funding is allocated annually to the college by the [National Access Office](#). Each college is responsible for managing the funding approved for eligible students.

While most colleges of further education currently have no dedicated disability/access office<sup>14</sup>, each one should have a member of staff with specific responsibility for liaising with students with disabilities. A person with a disability should contact the course coordinator for further information or a referral. Relevant contact details are available on [Qualifax](#), on [Careers Portal](#) or from the college of further education.

## Childcare Education and Training Scheme

Parents may need a childcare service to participate in further education. Under the [Childcare Education and Training Scheme](#) (CETS), subsidised childcare places on a full, part-time or after-school basis may be available for eligible applicants on approved courses. Places are limited and allocated on a first-come first-served basis. Participants on Youthreach, VTOS and some BTEI courses may be eligible and should let the course provider know if they need childcare support.

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs manages the scheme via local city and county [childcare committees](#).

## More information

More information on further education programmes and supports may be obtained directly from relevant course providers and from local ETBs. The [Adult Education Guidance Initiative](#) (AEGI), provided by ETBs, provides nationwide guidance for learners before,

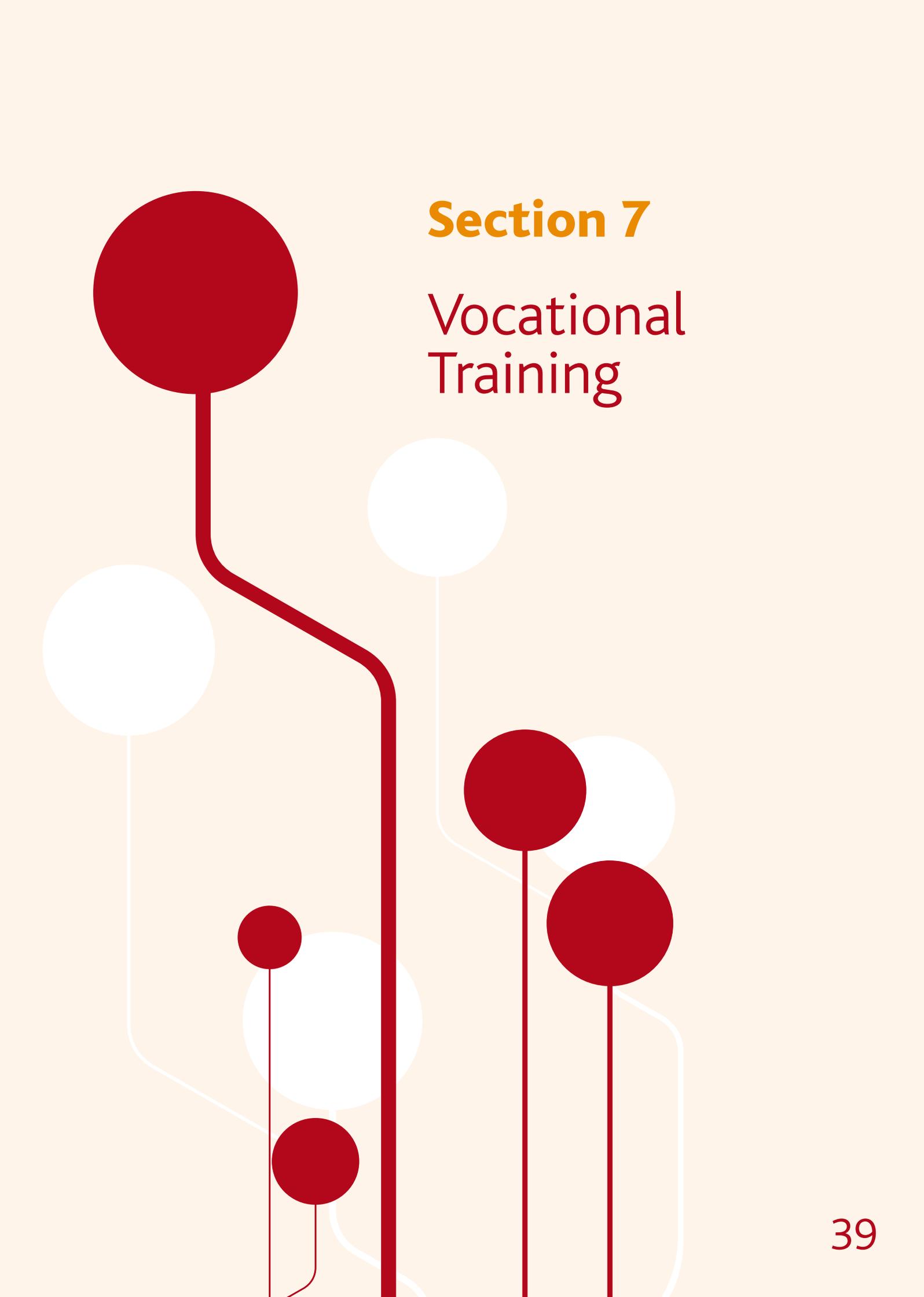
<sup>14</sup> Some ETBs have disability support services, established in collaboration with the National Learning Network.

during and after they participate in adult and community education programmes such as adult literacy, community education, VTOS and Back to Education Initiative.

**Section 2** contains more information about AEGI and other important sources of guidance and information.

**Some important links and contacts referenced in this section (details as above)**

Hyper Link (as shown in text)	Main web-site address	Agency/ Initiative	Phone No
<a href="#">Adult Education Guidance Initiative</a>	<a href="http://www.ncge.ie">www.ncge.ie</a>	NCGE/ETB	Various (see the " <b>Further Education</b> " tab on the website)
<a href="#">Adult Literacy</a>	<a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a>	ETB/Adult Literacy	Contact local ETB
<a href="#">AONTAS</a>	<a href="http://www.aontas.com">www.aontas.com</a>	AONTAS	01 406 8220
<a href="#">Back to Education Initiative</a>	<a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a>	ETB/BTEI	Contact local ETB
<a href="#">Careers Portal</a>	<a href="http://www.careersportal.ie">www.careersportal.ie</a>	Careers Portal	01 4402314
<a href="#">Childcare Education and Training Scheme</a>	<a href="http://www.dcy.gov.ie">www.dcy.gov.ie</a>	Department of Children and Youth Affairs	01 6473000
<a href="#">Community Education</a>	<a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a>	ETB/ Community Education	Contact local ETB
<a href="#">Education and Training Boards</a>	<a href="http://www.etbi.ie">www.etbi.ie</a>	Education Training Board	Various (see the "ETBs" tab on the website)
<a href="#">NALA</a>	<a href="http://www.nala.ie">www.nala.ie</a>	NALA	1800 20 20 65
<a href="#">Post Leaving Certificate</a>	<a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a>	ETB/PLC	Contact local ETB
<a href="#">Qualifax</a>	<a href="http://www.qualifax.ie">www.qualifax.ie</a>	QQI/Qualifax	01 9058100
<a href="#">Student Finance website.</a>	<a href="http://www.studentfinance.ie">www.studentfinance.ie</a>	Student Finance	See Website
<a href="#">Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme</a>	<a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a>	VTOS	090 6483600
<a href="#">Write On</a>	<a href="http://www.writeon.ie">www.writeon.ie</a>	Write On	See Website
<a href="#">Youthreach</a>	<a href="http://www.youthreach.ie">www.youthreach.ie</a>	Youthreach	Contact local ETB

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## Section 7

# Vocational Training



## Section 7 Vocational Training

### Introduction

Vocational training is provided by [SOLAS](#) and the [Education and Training Boards](#) (ETBs). Following the transfer of SOLAS training centres in 2014, ETBs are responsible for management of training delivery.

Vocational training comprises a range of training programmes (as described below) that provide industry/occupation specific skills as well as preparatory training to enable unemployed people access job opportunities or progression opportunities to further/higher education/training.

Training is primarily aimed at those who have lost their jobs, as well as those who find it difficult to enter or re-enter the labour market. Job-seekers on these programmes, including people with disabilities, range from those with no qualifications to highly qualified learners requiring new skills.

### Certification of vocational training

Most training courses are certified under the [National Framework of Qualifications](#) (NFQ). Others are certified by recognised awarding bodies such as [City and Guilds](#).<sup>15</sup>

### How vocational training programmes are delivered

Vocational training programmes are delivered during the day, the evening and online. Programmes are provided through the SOLAS/ETB [network of training centres](#), community training facilities and training organisations contracted for the purpose.

### Access to vocational training

Vocational training programmes are open to all job seekers who meet the entry criteria. Any specialist equipment or adaptations needed for a person with a disability on a vocational training course will be arranged where possible and appropriate. Specialist vocational training (see section below) is also provided for those who may need additional support.

<sup>15</sup> City and Guilds is an internationally recognised vocational education and training organisation providing services to training providers, employers, and trainees across a variety of sectors to meet the needs of today's workplace. Other vocational training courses provide vendor-approved certification such as [ECDL](#) and [CompTIA](#).

To access vocational training options, job seekers, including those with disabilities, must register with [Intreo](#) where all options can be explored.

[Intreo](#) employment services officers give information, advice and guidance to all job seekers, including people with disabilities, on training and employment options including information about any entitlements to a training allowance and/or welfare payments. Additional support requirements on training courses may be identified as part of this process.

## Specialist training provision

Some people with disabilities require a greater degree of support in pursuing suitable vocational training options.

A range of specialist training providers is contracted by SOLAS/ETBs to deliver courses to meet this need.

In general, the following three broad types of special training needs are addressed by specialist training providers:

- Needs relating to access.
- Needs relating to training content and duration.
- Non-occupational training-related needs.

Specialist courses encompass introductory skills training (IST) and skill specific training (SST) and lead to awards at [NFQ](#) level 3-5. Specialist training offers supports in the form of individualised training and progression plans, literacy and numeracy support and individualised career planning.

Other features of specialist vocational training may include:

- Additional training duration.
- Adapted equipment.
- Enhanced programme content.
- Trainer to learner ratio.
- Specialist qualifications of staff.
- Additional opportunities for assessment.

Over 2,000 places on specialist training courses in about 50 locations statewide cater for people with disabilities. Specialist training includes in-centre, employer based and blended learning approaches to accommodate student needs.

## Information about training options

Detailed information about the mainstream and specialist training options are provided on the [SOLAS/ETB websites](#) and on [Qualifax](#) which include information on where courses are delivered, their content, eligibility and certification. Information is also available through [Careers Portal](#). [Intreo](#) employment services officers also provide information, advice and guidance on training and employment.

## Types of vocational training programmes

The main types of vocational training programmes include:

- **Apprenticeship** is the recognised means for training craftspeople.
- **Specific skills training** is intended to skill job seekers in specific areas of industry across a range of sectors. These courses take a few months or more to complete and are fully certified leading to a [NFQ](#) award or certification from a recognised external accredited body.
- **Traineeships** provide occupation-specific training and integrate formal training and workplace coaching with a host employer. All programmes lead to [NFQ](#) level 4-6 awards or certification from a recognised external accredited body.
- **Short modular type courses** of about 10 weeks enable individuals to upgrade their skills and programmes and lead to awards on the NFQ or are externally certified.
- **Evening courses** of typically 30 hours' duration provide short upskilling modules.
- **Blended learning courses** are designed as a flexible response to the specific skills needs of job-ready individuals who require training interventions with certification to help them re-enter the labour market. These courses offer a range of online training with enhanced learner supports including telephone, email, e-tutor and instructor-led workshops.
- **Online learning** caters for individuals who are IT literate and wish to work at their own pace and in their own time and have no requirement for additional supports. Learners can get more information and register online for these SOLAS [e-college courses](#).
- **E-learning at the library**. In partnership with the Library Council of Ireland this programme makes learning available to clients through their local library. The programme aims to provide local support to aid individuals to develop IT competence and skills.
- **Labour market education and training fund (MOMENTUM)**. As part of the Government's policy statement on activation Pathways to Work, funding has been provided for training of those who are long-term unemployed, particularly for 18 months or more.

## Local training initiative

Under the [local training initiative](#) (LTI)<sup>16</sup>, community and voluntary organisations may apply to local ETBs for grants to support projects which provide training and work experience. The LTI enables local organisations to carry out valuable and necessary projects of benefit to their communities, while at the same time training is provided for participants in areas related to the project so that they can go on to gain employment or progress to further training.

Unemployed people, including those with a disability, primarily those aged 16 to 35 and with no formal qualifications or incomplete post primary level qualifications are eligible to apply. Help is provided discreetly and sensitively to people with literacy difficulties who wish to improve these skills.

### Some important links referenced in this section (details as above)

Hyper Link (as shown in text)	Main web-site address	Agency/ Initiative	Phone No
<a href="#">e-college courses</a>	<a href="http://www.ecollege.ie">www.ecollege.ie</a>	SOLAS/ e-college courses	01 2043732
<a href="#">Intreo</a>	<a href="http://www.welfare.ie">www.welfare.ie</a>	Intreo	1890 66 22 44
<a href="#">Local Training Initiative</a>	<a href="http://www.fas.ie">www.fas.ie</a>	ETB/Local Training Initiative	Contact local ETB
<a href="#">MOMENTUM</a>	<a href="http://www.momentumskills.ie">www.momentumskills.ie</a>	SOLAS/ MOMENTUM	01 607 0500
<a href="#">National Framework of Qualifications</a>	<a href="http://www.qqi.ie">www.qqi.ie</a>	QQI/NFQ	01 9058100
<a href="#">Qualifax</a>	<a href="http://www.qualifax.ie">www.qualifax.ie</a>	QQI/Qualifax	01 9058100
<a href="#">SOLAS</a>	<a href="http://www.solas.ie">www.solas.ie</a>	SOLAS	01 607 0500

<sup>16</sup> The local training initiative programme may support community-based non profit organisations engaged in a wide variety of activities including for example genealogy, environment, heritage, tourism, arts, sports and leisure.

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## Section 8

# Higher Education



## Section 8 Higher Education

### Introduction

Higher or third level education is provided by higher education institutions including universities, institutes of technology, colleges of education as well as other State-aided and non-aided bodies. Courses provided are mainly undergraduate and postgraduate at levels 6-10 of the [National Framework of Qualifications](#) (NFQ).

There is a wide variety of courses in areas such as finance, science, business, engineering, health, education, law, art, music and languages. Higher education courses are listed on [Qualifax](#) where comprehensive details are provided on each. More detailed information on particular higher education courses and programmes, including access information for people with disabilities, may be obtained by contacting the relevant [higher education institutions](#) and [AHEAD](#).

Generally, applications for undergraduate courses in Ireland are made through the [Central Applications Office](#) (CAO). Applicants must have a certain level of education to be eligible and special access arrangements may be made for people with disabilities on some courses. Details of arrangements to apply for places and eligibility requirements, together with information about courses, are available on the [CAO](#) website.

### National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education

The Government wants more people, including those with disabilities, to be able to access higher education. The aim of the [National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education](#) is to increase equality of access to and participation in higher education by under-represented groups in the sector. For example targets have been set to increase the number of students with sensory, physical and multiple disabilities. The [National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education](#), known as the National Access Office<sup>17</sup>, works with publicly funded higher education institutions in the development and implementation of plans to achieve these national targets.

<sup>17</sup> The access office functions include:

- Developing and implementing a [National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education](#).
- Managing a range of funding programmes, including the Fund for Students with Disabilities.
- Monitoring progress on national targets to increase access to higher education by students from under-represented groups.

## Access plans in individual higher education institutions

Higher education institutions have developed access and lifelong learning plans, including strategies for the development of services and supports for students with disabilities. This work is led by the disability/access service of each institution.

All colleges have equality policies in place and students have an entitlement to receive [reasonable accommodations](#) (see also **Section 3**).

Students should use their disability/access service to ascertain eligibility for support under the [Fund for Students with Disabilities](#). A student does not have to be in the first year of a course to be eligible to apply for the fund and a first-time application can be made during any year of study on an approved course (subject to a closing date). A full list of participating institutions and colleges and an outline of eligibility criteria for funding are available on the [student finance website](#).

## Disability/access services in higher education institutions

The main functions of the disability/access services in higher education institutions are:

- Conduct a needs assessment to determine the type and level of reasonable accommodations required, for example educational support workers (note-takers, scribes, Irish sign language (ISL) interpreters) and assistive technology and to provide information on the availability of educational supports.
- On behalf of the student, apply to the [Fund for Students with Disabilities](#) to acquire additional supports or accommodations.
- Liaise with academic, administrative, library and examination staff to co-ordinate various supports as required, including examination, teaching and learning, accommodation and library supports.
- Organise assistive technology and related training and support.
- Communicate the reasonable accommodations required for each student to academic and college staff, and ensure that accessibility requirements are met.

## Fund for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may require additional support to enable them access and participate in courses. For example they may need assistive technology. The [Fund for Students with Disabilities](#) supports the provision of services and accommodations to eligible students with disabilities participating in full-time programmes of study.

Funding is not means tested and a college makes a claim on behalf of a student following an assessment of need, including consideration of evidence from relevant medical specialists.

## Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)

The [Disability Access Route to Education](#) (DARE) is an admissions scheme which offers places in certain higher education institutions on a reduced points basis to school leavers with disabilities. DARE is for school leavers with the ability to benefit from, and succeed in, higher education but who may not be able to meet the points for their preferred course due to the impact of their disability. Not all higher education institutions are part of the DARE scheme but may operate supplementary entry routes and have disability supports in place. For further information about these supplementary routes it is necessary to contact the relevant institution directly.

## Other inclusive initiatives by higher education institutions

From time to time, inclusive initiatives, including courses for people with intellectual disabilities<sup>18</sup>, are delivered by some higher education institutions. Information about these special initiatives is available directly from the institutions. A limited number of places is provided and applications are made directly to the higher education institution, which determines eligibility and appropriate college accreditation and which will provide full information to interested persons.

## Springboard Programme

Launched in 2011 as part of the Government jobs initiative, the Springboard programme provides free, part-time places on some higher education courses. These are in areas where employers have identified skills needs. Target participants are jobseekers with a previous history of employment who require upskilling or reskilling so they can re-enter the jobs market. To be eligible for a Springboard course, participants must be in receipt of a relevant payment from the Department of Social Protection (including the disability allowance).

<sup>18</sup> Examples of recent initiatives developed by higher education institutions include:

- [Certificate in General Learning and Personal Development](#) in Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick.
- [Certificate in Contemporary Living](#) in Dublin University.
- [Certificate in Contemporary Living](#) in University College Cork.
- [Going to College Initiative](#), NUI Galway.
- [Inclusive Learning Initiative](#), NUI Maynooth.
- [Certificate in Skills for Independent Living](#) in Dundalk Institute of Technology.
- [Certificate in Life Skills](#) in St Angela's College, Sligo

As Springboard courses are part-time, participants are not eligible under the fund for students with disabilities. Course providers must ensure equality of opportunity for all learners. In addition, they must ensure that higher education facilities, course-related equipment and materials are accessible to learners with disabilities. Further information, including updates, is available on [www.springboardcourses.ie](http://www.springboardcourses.ie).

**Some important links and contacts referenced in this section (details as above)**

Hyper Link (as shown in text)	Main web-site address	Agency/ Initiative	Phone No
<a href="#">Access Office</a>	<a href="http://www.hea.ie">www.hea.ie</a>	HEA/Access Office	1890 200 637
<a href="#">AHEAD</a>	<a href="http://www.ahead.ie">www.ahead.ie</a>	AHEAD	01 7164396
<a href="#">Central Applications Office (CAO)</a>	<a href="http://www.cao.ie">www.cao.ie</a>	CAO	091 509800
<a href="#">Disability Access Route to Education</a>	<a href="http://www.accesscollege.ie">www.accesscollege.ie</a>	DARE	Various (see the " <b>How do I contact DARE</b> " tab on the website)
<a href="#">Fund for Students with Disabilities</a>	<a href="http://www.studentfinance.ie">www.studentfinance.ie</a>	HEA/Student Finance	Various (see the " <b>Check how to apply</b> " tab on the website)
<a href="#">Higher Education Institutions</a>	<a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a>	Higher Education Institutions	Various (see the " <b>Learners</b> " tab on the website)
<a href="#">National Framework of Qualifications</a>	<a href="http://www.qqi.ie">www.qqi.ie</a>	QQI	01 9058100
<a href="#">Qualifax</a>	<a href="http://www.qualifax.ie">www.qualifax.ie</a>	QQI/Qualifax	01 9058100
<a href="#">Springboard</a>	<a href="http://www.springboardcourses.ie">www.springboardcourses.ie</a>	SOLAS/ Springboard	1800 303 523
<a href="#">Student Finance website</a>	<a href="http://www.studentfinance.ie">www.studentfinance.ie</a>	HEA/Student Finance	See Website





## Section 9 HSE Rehabilitative Training and Adult Day Services

### Introduction

Some people with disabilities may have difficulty in achieving their goals through mainstream education and training services and need additional individualised support provided by the HSE in rehabilitative training and adult day services.

Rehabilitative training and adult day services are delivered by service providers in local centres either directly by the HSE or by organisations supported by the HSE. In 2008, a review of HSE funded adult day services found about 80 organisations were providing services to 25,000 service users in 800 locations across the State.

These are provided for adults with the following disabilities:

- Intellectual disability.
- Physical disability.
- Sensory disability.
- Mental health difficulty.
- Autistic spectrum disorder.
- Life-changing illnesses such as heart attack and stroke.

### How to apply

Applications are made to the local [HSE Disability Services](#)<sup>19</sup> and places are for school leavers<sup>20</sup> and others with disabilities who need support to achieve their full potential and live as independently as possible. Applications are processed by the HSE disability services including the Occupational Guidance Service (OGS), following individual profiling and consultation. Enquiries on how to contact these services can also be made at the local HSE health centre. Training allowances may be available on some rehabilitative training courses and more information is available from the local HSE Disability Services. Information about welfare payments is available from Intreo.

<sup>19</sup> From 2014 HSE is establishing a central applications system in each of its four regions.

<sup>20</sup> In the case of students who need these services and who are leaving mainstream or special school in any year, applications should be made before the end January of that year. Closing dates and application arrangements are determined by the HSE.

## HSE Occupational Guidance Service

The HSE Occupational Guidance Service provides one-to-one advice, support and guidance to enable people with a disability to make informed choices on training and occupational<sup>21</sup> options. This service, structured differently in individual HSE areas, is accessible through local [HSE disability services](#).

For school leavers, the occupational guidance adviser works closely with the school; meets the person and their family/advocate as appropriate; assists in identifying and clarifying personal goals and individual needs; explores the training and development options most suited to their needs and supports the individual in accessing their selected service options. Some people will have needs which can be appropriately met by HSE rehabilitative training programmes; others may have needs which can be met by other HSE adult day services and others may be included in mainstream education or training services.

## Rehabilitative training programmes

The focus of rehabilitative training is on the development of life skills, social skills and basic work skills with the objective of enhancing quality of life and general work capacity. The services provided vary in line with the needs of participants.

Rehabilitative training services aim to support people experiencing barriers to participation in occupational and vocational areas of life and in social opportunities in their communities. This training facilitates participants to sample a range of rehabilitative options and to develop the skills, knowledge, confidence and resources to access employment, further training and opportunities in the wider community. Places for these approved programmes are allocated by the HSE Occupational Guidance Service and usually take from two to four years. NFQ major and minor<sup>22</sup> awards at level 1-3 and other certification are available for these training programmes.

Participants are expected to have the potential to participate and engage effectively in small group activity with a low level of supervision. Following an initial course determination period of three months, each participant is facilitated to develop an individual training plan to follow for the duration of the programme.

<sup>21</sup> The term "occupational" in this context describes all the things we do to take care of ourselves and others; socialise and have fun; and work and contribute to society.

<sup>22</sup> NFQ minor awards provide recognition for learners who achieve a range of learning outcomes but not the specific combination of learning outcomes required for a major award. These awards allow learners to build up units of learning at their own pace to meet their own needs.

## HSE adult day services

The wide range of HSE adult day services (some delivered in co-operation with bodies in other sectors) may include personal support services for care, activation/activity, community participation and inclusion, supported employment, education, voluntary work and therapeutic work programmes.

The aim is to help people with disabilities make choices and plans to support their personal goals; to have influence over the decisions which affect their lives; to achieve personal goals and aspirations; and to be active, independent members of their community and of society.

Possible programme components within these adult day services are:

- **Day care programme:** These high support services focus primarily on providing a health care service to meet the specific needs of individuals.
- **Day activation/activity:** This day programme is essentially a support and therapeutic service to meet the needs of people through individual plans. It provides a range of skills and activities such as independent living skills, personal development, education classes, social/recreational activities and health related and therapy supports.
- **Active community participation/inclusion:** These programmes and supports specifically target inclusion and active participation in mainstream community programmes and activities. This includes educational opportunities, sport and recreation involvement, social events, local partnership projects and advocacy initiatives. A range of supports that promote and facilitate inclusion are provided to individuals and groups, such as accessing services, liaison, planning, co-ordinating and supporting attendance and active participation.
- **Supported employment:** This paid employment in the open labour market has ongoing supports with minimum wage and full employee status applying. Participants may engage in the [supported employment programme/employability](#)<sup>23</sup> or in locally based service provider supported employment initiatives for those who do not meet the entry criteria for the Department of Social Protection "Employability" service.
- **Education programme:** This includes teaching/educational inputs provided by ETBs into some HSE day services. This may cover topics such as numeracy, literacy, communications, personal development, cookery etc.

<sup>23</sup> Employability scheme is provided by the Department of Social Protection/Intreo (see **Section 10**).

- **Voluntary work:** The participant may work as a volunteer in the community or for the benefit of natural environment. This encourages social/community engagement, staying active and a sense of personal value in society.
- **Sheltered work therapeutic:** This is a centre-based programme designed to provide constructive occupation for an individual or group where work activity is a key element of the programme. Examples of this could be a day service that focuses on cooking/baking or art/craft. The product is consumed within the service and participants may also hold coffee morning to showcase their work and sell some of their products at nominal cost.

## New Directions

The report of the review of HSE day services<sup>24</sup> proposed radical changes in future day service provision for people with disabilities. Three essential and interlinked core values underpin the new approach, namely:

- Person-centredness.
- Community inclusion and active citizenship.
- Quality.

This new approach to adult day services is known as New Directions. The traditional, segregated services are making way for community-based services where the service seeker will be supported in exploring individual choices, rather than being limited to the options offered by any one service provider.

The service provider will work with each individual to provide personal supports in line with their individual choices, needs and abilities to include one or more of the following:

- Support for making choices and plans.
- Support for making transitions and progressions.
- Support for inclusion in one's local community.
- Support for accessing education and formal learning.
- Support for maximising independence.
- Support for personal and social development.
- Support for health and wellbeing.
- Support for accessing bridging programmes to vocational training.

<sup>24</sup> New Directions, Personal Support Services for Adults with Disabilities (HSE, 2012).

- Support for accessing vocational training and work opportunities.
- Support for personal expression and creativity.
- Support for having meaningful social roles.
- Support for influencing service policy and practice.

In future, a New Directions model of service provision should be available to all adults regardless of their level of disability.

## Further information

Information on services available and appropriate to an individual's needs may be discussed with the HSE disability manager who can be accessed via local [HSE disability services](#).

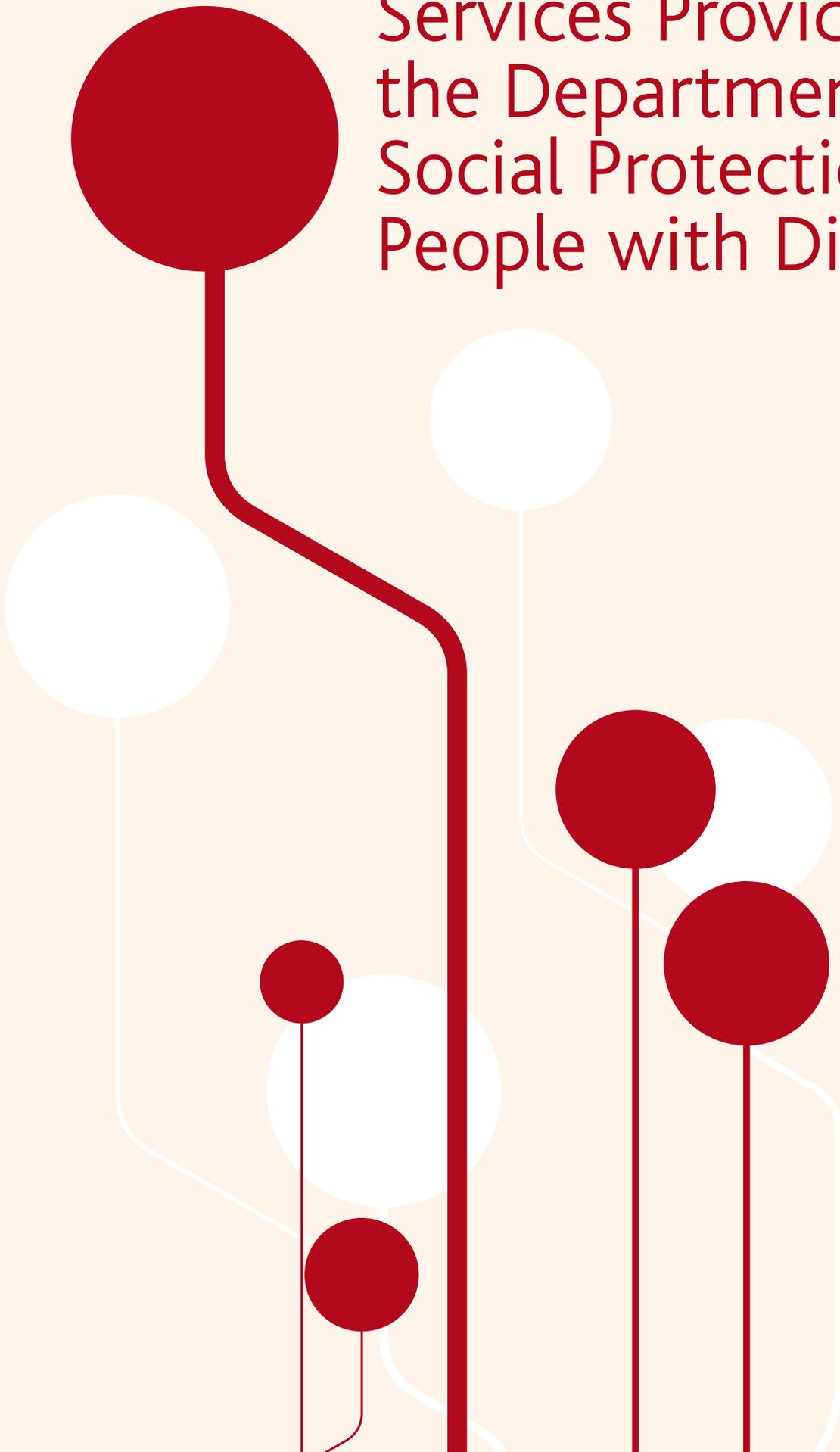
### Some important links referenced in this section (details as above)

Hyper Link (as shown in text)	Main web-site address	Agency/ Initiative	Phone No
<a href="#">HSE disability services.</a>	<a href="http://www.hse.ie">www.hse.ie</a>	HSE/ Disability Services	Various (see the tab on the website)
<a href="#">Supported employment programme/employability</a>	<a href="#">Intreo</a>	Intreo	1890 66 22 44



## Section 10

# Services Provided by the Department of Social Protection for People with Disabilities





## Section 10 Services Provided by the Department of Social Protection for People with Disabilities

### Intreo

A new national employment and entitlements service ([Intreo](#)), created by the Department of Social Protection, is being rolled out nationally during 2014.

The service is establishing local one-stop-shops for job seekers providing more integrated and streamlined access to employment services and benefit payment services. These were previously provided by HSE Community Welfare Services, the former FÁS employment services and the Department of Social Protection welfare offices.

Intreo is an activation service, to help employers recruit suitable staff and to help people find suitable work. It is targeted at job seekers who are available/ready for work and provides them with the relevant supports to assist in job search, based on individual needs and tailored to personal circumstances. This will include advice and information for job seekers from Intreo employment services officers on training and development opportunities, employment supports and career guidance services.

[Intreo](#) employment services officers inform, advise and guide all job seekers, including those with disabilities, in relation to training and employment options.

### Citizens' Information Board

The Citizens' Information Board under the Department of Social Protection supports the provision of information, advice and advocacy on a broad range of public and social services. It provides the [Citizens' Information](#) website and supports the network of Citizens' Information Centres and the Citizens' Information phone service. This website includes information on [entitlements for people with disabilities](#).

### Supports for people with disabilities looking for work

The Department of Social Protection provides a range of [supports for people with disabilities looking for work](#). These services, accessed through the local Intreo office, include vocational guidance, supports for employers on accommodations/wages, a supported employment service (EmployAbility, see below) and various social welfare entitlements. More information about these supports is available from a local Intreo office and from a local [Citizens' Information Centre](#).

## **EmployAbility**

[EmployAbility](#), formerly known as the Supported Employment Service, is an open labour market programme to support people with disabilities to access and retain paid employment.

It is implemented by sponsor organisations on behalf of the Department of Social Protection which employs job coaches to provide a range of supports tailored to the individual needs of a jobseeker with a disability. The ultimate outcome is that the employee becomes independent of job coach support.

The service is available to people with disabilities aged 18 to 65 who are “job ready” and need job coach support to obtain employment in the open labour market. The range of supports provided through these specialist coaches include:

- Individual needs assessment and drawing up an individual employment plan.
- Vocational profiling and career planning.
- Individual employment plan.
- Job sourcing (including matching the job seeker with a suitable employer and job).
- On-the-job support and coaching.
- Advice and support for employers (including advice, assistance with job design and assistive technologies).
- Follow-up support and mentoring to both employers and employees.

Applications for participation in the programme are made to the local Intreo office, where full information is available.

## **WAM – Willing Able Mentoring**

AHEAD operates the [WAM programme](#) offering fully paid six- to nine-month internships to further and higher education graduates at appropriate skill levels. Funded by the Department of Social Protection, it offers support to employers and graduates including competency job specifications, needs assessment and mentoring.

## The Disability Activation Project (DACT)

The [Disability Activation Project](#) under the auspices of [Pobal](#) is jointly funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Department of Social Protection and is targeted at the Border, Midlands and Western region (BMW). The Disability Activation Project (DACT) aims to increase the capacity and potential of people on disability/illness welfare payments to participate in the labour market. The target group is people with a disability aged 16 to 65 who are receiving disability/illness welfare payments and live in the BMW region.

Following a call for applications from organisations experienced in working with people with a disability, over €7 million has been committed to [13 projects](#) under four key strands as follows:

- Strand 1 – Improving Access to Employment.
- Strand 2 – Progression Programmes for Young People.
- Strand 3 – Support for Progression and Retention of People with an Acquired Disability.
- Strand 4 – Innovative Employer Initiatives.

More information may be obtained from Pobal or from any of the 14 approved project sponsors.

[Training options](#) is the largest of the DACT projects and is operated throughout the BMW region by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

Some important links referenced in this section (details as above)

Hyper Link (as shown in text)	Main web-site address	Agency/ Initiative	Phone No
<a href="#">Citizens' Information Board</a>	<a href="http://www.citizensinformationboard.ie">www.citizensinformationboard.ie</a>	Citizens' Information Board	076 1074000
<a href="#">Disability Activation Project</a>	<a href="http://www.pobal.ie">www.pobal.ie</a>	POBAL	01 511 7000
<a href="#">EmployAbility</a>	<a href="http://www.welfare.ie">www.welfare.ie</a>	DSP/ Employment Support	1890 66 22 44
<a href="#">Intreo</a>	<a href="http://www.welfare.ie">www.welfare.ie</a>	DSP/Intreo	1890 66 22 44
<a href="#">POBAL</a>	<a href="http://www.pobal.ie">www.pobal.ie</a>	POBAL	01 511 7000
<a href="#">Training Options</a>	<a href="http://www.ictu.ie">www.ictu.ie</a>	ICTU	01 8897777
<a href="#">WAM programme</a>	<a href="http://www.ahead.ie">www.ahead.ie</a>	WAM	01 7164396



