

**INFORMATION TO SUPPORT
CONNEXIONS PARTNERSHIPS IN THEIR
WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE WITH
LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND
DISABILITIES**

**CONNEXIONS SERVICE NATIONAL UNIT
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Introduction

Extending opportunity and equality of opportunity is one of the eight key principles that underpin the new Connexions Service. It is ultimately a human rights issue. It cannot be treated as a one off project or a series of activities that can be grafted onto the Connexions Service's functions. It is something that must permeate the whole of the Service – that is, it must be part of each organisation's culture and core practice. Connexions Services will ensure that young people have access to services wherever they live, and that these services are effective whatever their background, gender, religion, race, ability, disability, or sexuality.

Who is this information for?

This information pack is for Connexions Partnerships. It replaces the 'Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Supplementary Guidance' issued in May 2001. It provides information to support Connexions Partnerships in taking forward their responsibilities for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. It is particularly relevant for personal advisers working with young people with learning difficulties and disabilities, those involved in their management and support and for personal advisers who need to be aware of the range of support available and how to access it. It is also useful for other Connexions staff who are involved with other agencies at a strategic level eg developing partnership agreements for delivery of support/services.

Why is it needed?

The Connexions Service has specific responsibilities for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. These are set out in the Services for Young People section of the Connexions Business Planning Guidance and have, in part, been informed by responsibilities set out in the DfES SEN Code of Practice and the Learning and Skills Act 2000. The paragraphs below provide a brief insight as to why a specific focus on this particular client group is necessary.

The DRC Disability Briefing; May 2002 (www.drc-gb.org) provides some key facts and figures:-

- **Disabled people are twice as likely as non-disabled people to have no qualifications.** This difference is consistent across all age groups.
- **Disabled people are only about half as likely as non-disabled people to be in employment.** There are currently around 3.3 million disabled people in employment: they make up 12% of all people of working age in employment.

The Government recognises that young disabled people will need additional support if these figures are to improve, and has taken the following active steps to ensure that additional support will be provided:-

DRC - They have established the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) as an independent body to help secure civil rights for disabled people. Its statutory duties are:-

- To work to eliminate discrimination against disabled people
- To promote equal opportunities for disabled people
- To encourage good practice in the treatment of disabled people
- To advise the Government on the working of the disability legislation (the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 and the Disability Rights Commission Act 1999)

Valuing People – The White Paper *Valuing People: a new strategy for learning disability for the 21st century* was published in March 2001. It sets out the Government's proposals for improving the life chances of children, young people and adults with learning disabilities and their families. It also sets out proposals for a person-centred approach to planning services for adults with learning disabilities, through Learning Disability Partnership Boards. (More details are included in the section – Legal and Policy Framework)

SEN Code of Practice – The revised SEN Code of Practice came into effect on 1 January 2002. It reflects developments that have taken place since the 1994 Code was published such as the Learning and Skills Act and the establishment of the Connexions Service. (More details are included in the section – Legal and Policy Framework)

Learning and Skills Act 2000 – Section 140 of the Learning and Skills Act sets out the statutory provision for the assessment of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Connexions Services will provide this assessment. (More details are included in the section – Legal and Policy Framework)

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 – The Act places an important series of duties on the DfES and therefore Connexions Partnerships, as employers and providers of services, to be proactive in achieving race equality. Guidance on implementation was issued to Connexions Partnerships in July 2002.

Of particular concern are those individuals who are affected by multiple disadvantages such as disabled people who are from a black and minority ethnic group. The Connexions Service must be sensitive enough to be able to identify and address the needs of these individuals.

All of the above provide a framework that is consistent with Connexions and supports its goals for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

What is included?

There are currently 3 sections following this introductory section:-

Working with young people with learning difficulties and disabilities

Pages (6 – 15) – This provides some basic information together with signposting to more detailed information. It will be of particular interest to personal advisers working with young people with learning difficulties and disabilities and their managers.

Working with other agencies to support young people with learning difficulties and disabilities (Pages 16 – 23) – This section provides information about agencies and organisations that personal advisers and other Connexions staff will or may need to work with on strategic, planning and day-to-day bases to support and meet the needs of young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. Partnership working is one of the key principles of the Connexions Service.

Legal and policy framework (Pages 24 – 30) – This section provides information about Government action and legislative duties that are having an impact on improving support and services to young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

We are also working on 2 additional sections that will be added at a later date:-

Additional sources of information and support – This section will provide information about other organisations that are able to provide specific and/or specialist information and support and how they might be able to support Connexions partnerships.

Specific categories of disability and learning difficulty – This section will provide information about different types of disability and learning difficulty.

What information has already been supplied to Connexions Partnerships by CSNU?

Learning difficulty and disability specific information –

- Cross – partnership co-operation – Government Office Action Note GO4 – issued 20 July 2001
- Section 140 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 – Government Office Action Note GO38 – issued on 29 January 2002. An updated Action Note is due to be issued on 30 September 2002
- Guide to special educational needs: A reader for the diploma for Connexions Personal Advisers (issued to personal advisers who have undertaken Diploma training)

- Management Information - Section D of the Connexions Management Information Guide 2002-2003
- Disability Discrimination Act - Government Office Action Note GO76 – issued 8th August 2002.

Linked information (available on the Connexions website www.connexions.gov.uk under Publications-Connexions Publications-Delivering Connexions:guidance, consultations and reports) –

- Equal Opportunities Best Practice Principles
- The Connexions Framework for Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Review - Guidance for Personal Advisers
- Human Rights Act: Guidance for Connexions Partnerships
- Race Relations Amendment Act: Guidance for Connexions Partnerships

How can Connexions Partnerships help CSNU to support them?

Connexions Partnerships will have developed, and will continue to develop, good practice in meeting the needs of young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Evidence based practice is a key principle of the Connexions Service and CSNU would like to hear from Connexions Partnerships, on an ongoing basis, about any good practice they would like to share with other Partnerships, and that we could link to this information pack.

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WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Introduction

The Connexions Service has specific responsibilities for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. These have, in part, been informed by responsibilities set out in the DfES SEN Code of Practice and the Learning and Skills Act 2000. The Connexions definition of learning difficulties and disabilities, which is consistent with the Learning and Skills Act 2000 is:-

A person has a learning difficulty or disability if:

- a. he/she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of persons of his/her age, or
- b. he/she has a disability which prevents or hinders him/her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided by institutions providing education or training for young persons of his/her age

This section of the guidance aims to provide Connexions Partnerships, and in particular personal advisers, with the essential information they will need to help in their planning for provision of the best support possible to these young people. It should be read in conjunction with the Services for Young People section of the Connexions Business Planning Guidance.

Personal advisers working with young people with learning difficulties and disabilities must understand the implications of these difficulties and disabilities for young people and their families in adolescence, transition and options in adult life. Partnerships must ensure that personal advisers working with this client group either have, or have access to, the expertise to deal with issues arising from these implications.

Detailed below is a suggested timetable for action, followed by information relevant to this action. The information covers:-

- Assessment and action/transition planning
- Information sharing
- Working with young people in residential establishments
- Direct Payments to 16/17 year olds
- Young people in colleges
- Benefit claims
- Transition to adult services
- Transition to adult care (Social Services)

Timetable for action

This timetable is based on recommended good practice for Connexions Partnerships within Government Office Eastern Region. Further guidance on processes is given in the paragraphs following the timetable.

Year 8 - suggested activity

- Personal advisers to ensure that they are aware of all pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Personal advisers should liaise with the school to ensure that, as part of information-sharing and referral arrangements, agreement is reached over who supports those young people with learning difficulties and disabilities and how it is organised

Year 9 - suggested activity

- With reference to those young people known to need more sustained support, use the APIR Framework to assess needs of statemented and non-statemented pupils including those not in school
- Provision of information on KS4 and post-16 options by personal adviser/school. Connexions Service has ongoing responsibility to assist the young person and their parents to identify the most appropriate post-16 provision, provide counselling and support, and have continuing oversight of, and information on, the young person's choice of provision
- Personal adviser must be invited to and must attend year 9 review of a young person's SEN statement – Headteacher's responsibility to convene. LEA convenes review for pupils educated other than at school. This is a requirement of the SEN Code of Practice
- Personal adviser contributes to and oversees delivery of the resulting transition plan as part of the wider Connexions concern to oversee and monitor the student's progress towards adult life
- Headteacher together with Connexions Service should facilitate transfer of relevant information to ensure access to specialist support
- For young people in residential establishments ensure systems are in place for a coordinated approach between home and host partnership

Year 10 - suggested activity

- Ongoing access to information, guidance and oversight of delivery of transition plan; development of APIR process for those with and without statements, including review of progress of young people whose cases are managed via APIR
- Personal adviser attendance at annual review if appropriate

Year 11 - suggested activity

- Ongoing oversight of delivery of transition plan, access to APIR, careers education and guidance, and information on post school options
- Personal adviser should attend review
- Provider of post 16 (non-school) placement should be invited to review
- Section 140 assessment – for young people likely to leave school this year to undertake post-16 education or training or higher education
- Build on process of sharing Section 140 information with LSC to agree range of provision and access

- Ensure transition plans are passed to post-16 provider
- Consider appropriateness of direct payments

Post 16 in school - suggested activity

- Ongoing support to implement the transition plan and to carry out Section 140 assessment in final year of school – for young people likely to undertake further education or training or higher education

Post 16 in college and training - suggested activity

- Continue the process of APIR/action planning in the new learning environment, including Section 140 assessments where appropriate
- Personal adviser to set up meetings to arrange transfer to appropriate adult support agency, starting soon after 19th birthday
- Ensure successful transition to post-16 provision

Post 16 not engaged in learning - suggested activity

- Continue process of action planning to try to reengage in learning
- Help 16/17 year olds with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in receipt of Jobcentre Plus benefits find employment or training; lead responsibility for 18+ in receipt of Jobcentre Plus benefits lies with Jobcentre Plus – ensure transfer of information
- Support those in receipt of other benefits, health and/or social services provision and exchange information as required
- Ensure successful transition to post-16 provision

19-25 - suggested activity

- Section 140 assessments where appropriate
- Continue process of review and transition planning to facilitate transfer to appropriate adult agency, starting when appropriate after the 19th birthday, and in accordance with the needs of the young person

Assessment and action/transition planning

APIR

The Connexions Framework for Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Review (APIR) has been developed to assist personal advisers in their one-to-one work with young people, providing guidance and supporting materials to help them identify need and take action to meet that need. The key aim of the Framework is to ensure a personal adviser takes a holistic view of a young person and produces an action/transition plan that the young person can call their own. There is a strong focus on seeking information from other professionals, so that assessment processes are not duplicated and that specialist services and resources of all relevant agencies are co-ordinated to benefit each young person.

Section 3.3 of the APIR guidance makes specific reference to working with young people with learning difficulties and disabilities and is essential reading for personal advisers working with this client group. It is important to recognise that young people with learning difficulties and disabilities may also face other barriers to making a successful transition and the APIR process will assist with the identification of these.

Personal advisers may also use other tools and mechanisms to contribute to the transition plan, but the use of APIR as the overarching case management framework is strongly recommended.

SEN Code of Practice

A Connexions Service representative must attend the Year 9 annual review of a young person with a statement of SEN. The SEN Regulations lay the formal duty for writing the Transition Plan, which comes out of the review, with the head teacher where a child is in school. If responsibility for writing Transition Plans is agreed with Connexions, through the framework of the Partnership Agreement between Connexions and the school, the Transition Plan should be the result of co-operative effort with school staff, including the SENCO and other professionals. Chapter 9 of the SEN Code of Practice and Section 10 of the SEN Toolkit emphasise the importance of multi-agency involvement in drawing up the Transition Plan at Year 9, recommending who should be invited. Mandatory invitees include an LEA representative and a representative of the social services department so that any parallel assessments under legislation can contribute to and draw information from the review process.

The Connexions Service should oversee the delivery of the Transition Plan. There will be circumstances where it is not possible or appropriate for the personal adviser to ensure delivery eg where delivery of parts of the plan depend on budgets of other agencies or where the transition plan or young person's statement refer to school provision. The personal adviser will need to negotiate and support the implementation of the transition plan, ensuring that the young person's ownership and centrality to the process is maintained. However there will also be a role for managers in supporting their personal advisers and negotiating at a more strategic level, in particular the Partnership Agreements with schools and with other agencies.

Connexions will be invited to subsequent reviews following the Year 9 review and are expected to attend the last review before the young person leaves school. Section 140 of the Learning and Skills Act requires an assessment of the young person in the final year of compulsory schooling, where this person is likely to move on to post-16 education or training, or higher education. This will be the culmination of an ongoing assessment and review process, geared to towards the production of an action plan, which builds on and updates the Transition Plan that has been in place since Year 9.

Further information on the SEN Code of Practice is given in the Legal and Policy Framework section

Section 140 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000

It is important that all young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are undertaking or are likely to undertake post 16 education or training or higher education receive assessments of their educational and training needs as and when appropriate. Section 140 of the Learning and Skills Act sets out the statutory provision for these assessments from Year 11 onwards.

For the purposes of Section 140, an assessment of a person is an assessment resulting in a written report of:-

- a. his/her educational and training needs, and
- b. the provision required to meet them

Government Office Action Note GO 38, issued on 29th January 2002 provides more information about Connexions Partnerships' responsibilities under Section 140, together with guidance to help Partnerships with the implementation of the requirements. An updated Action Note is due to be issued on 30 September 2002.

Further information is given in the Legal and Policy Framework section.

Information sharing

The Connexions Service will have to take care that its practices in processing and sharing information comply with the Data Protection Act. The personal adviser must consider the client's right to confidentiality and the release of information only on a 'need to know' basis.

Some information about a young person with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, such as the client's basic details and a statement of SEN, may already be shared with other agencies. Other information can be complex and sensitive. It is considered good practice that wherever possible the young person, perhaps through an advocate or guardian, is consulted about the information that is held and the use to which it is being put.

Information Sharing Guidance is available in draft form on the Connexions website, under 'Publications'. A revised version of the document is due to be published in September 2002 by the CCIS team within CSNU (tel 0114 259 1062).

The SEN Code of Practice covers transfer of information at paragraphs 9:63 and 9:64 as follows:-

The Connexions Service should seek the agreement of students and parents to the transfer of information (including statements) from school to the continuing education sector or other provision, and explain the importance of

such information and the desirability of the transfer.

The Connexions Service should ensure that where a young person has a statement of special educational needs, a copy of the statement together with a copy of the most recent annual review, and the Transition Plan, is passed to the social services department and any post 16 provision that the young person will be attending. Where a decision might need to be taken about the placement of a student in a specialist college, a copy of the Transition Plan should be sent to the local Learning and Skills Council.

Working with young people in residential establishments

Many young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will be in residential establishments outside their home area. It is essential that the Partnerships in the young person's home and host area work closely together to ensure that the young person receives the support they need – wherever and whenever it is required. Government Office Action Note GO4 (Cross-Partnership cooperation), issued on 20th July 2001, provides guidance to Partnerships on the arrangements necessary to ensure the support of young people in residential establishments away from their home area.

Working with young people in residential provision includes supporting those in specialist colleges. Personal advisers will be involved in the assessment and application procedure. This will include providing support for the individual, making referrals to specialist colleges and liaising with providers to ensure that the young person is going into appropriate provision, as well as being involved in accessing funding.

The LSC Circular 0214 'Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities: Arrangements for Placements at Specialist Colleges' was published in August 2002. This guidance will highlight the important role that the Connexions Service will have in supporting young people who are seeking placement at a specialist college and in ensuring effective links with their local LSC. It will also provide guidance on the timescales for requests for placements at specialist colleges, which will assist Connexions Partnerships in their planning.

Direct Payments to 16/17 year olds

The Carers & Disabled Children Act 2000 introduces direct payments for disabled 16 and 17 year olds. Such payments may be a good way of enhancing a young person's independence. A young person may request a direct payment in lieu of a service received from a social services department. Personal advisers should be aware of the direct payment provisions and be able to identify where a direct payment may be appropriate. Further details are provided in the Legal and Policy Framework section.

Young people in colleges

When a young person with learning difficulties or disabilities leaves school

and moves on to further education or training, where possible the personal adviser should continue to support the young person in their new learning environment. Where this is not possible, arrangements should be made for handover to another personal adviser to ensure continuity of support for the young person. Connexions Partnerships have Additional Pastoral Support Funds to support successful transition and retention into post -16 learning (see CXP16 issued on 11/2/02) and personal advisers will need to ensure a smooth transition into and out of colleges, including specialist colleges, and other training.

Benefit claims

It will be important that personal advisers are able to advise and support (or provide access to advice and support for) young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in claiming benefits and other financial support to which they may be entitled. This includes identifying potential eligibility for benefit, advising how and where to make a claim, and providing assistance, as needed, to help the young person cope with the benefits processes. Relevant benefits might include JSA, Incapacity Benefit, Income Support, Disability Living Allowance, Disabled Person's Tax Credit, EMAs, Travel to Interview Scheme, Jobfinders's Grant. Partnerships will wish to explore how they link with other agencies to provide the advice and support necessary. As well as Government agencies, this may include local welfare and disability agencies.

Connexions has a statutory role to play in claims by 16/17 year olds to certain benefits eg. JSA. The Benefits Liaison Instructions (Published by CSNU – last issued March 2001, revised edition due end Sept 2002) gives more detail about these obligations, and on partnership working with Jobcentre Plus.

See also page 14 of this information pack for advice on claimants aged 18 or over making the transition to adult services delivered by Jobcentre Plus, and page 22 for information on Jobcentre Plus Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs)

Transition to adult services

The service will need to make arrangements for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are coming to the end of their involvement with the Connexions Service. Transition arrangements may also be necessary for young people who claim Jobcentre Plus benefits at age 18 and continue to see their Connexions personal adviser.

This section covers transition in terms of receiving guidance, advice and support from Connexions to receiving it from Adult Services such as Jobcentre Plus and Information Advice and Guidance Partnerships. The point at which transition will take place is dependent on an assessment of the needs of each young person and will not necessarily be triggered by the young person having begun to access other adult services, for example college or training course.

Young people are considered under 3 different categories:-

Those who can make the transition before their 20th birthday
Those who will make the transition after their 20th birthday
Those claiming Jobcentre Plus benefits

Those who can make the transition before their 20th birthday

As part of the first review between the personal adviser and client soon after the client's 19th birthday (or earlier for young people claiming Jobcentre Plus benefits), the personal adviser should commence discussion with appropriate agencies and local organisations. These will include Jobcentre Plus and the LSC, and could include local adult Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) providers, social services and local voluntary support organisations. Where the outcome of the review indicates that they will need help beyond their 20th birthday, the personal adviser should make arrangements to liaise with a named contact to agree with the client the support they will need, at what stage and from whom, in order to effect a smooth transition.

Those who will make the transition after their 20th birthday

There will be circumstances when a young person with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is not ready to access the adult services provided locally, and will require continued support from the Connexions Service beyond the age of 20. For many this will be because their education has been delayed as a result of their learning difficulty or disability. It is likely that the majority of people with learning difficulties may need to make the transition after their 20th birthday. In these situations the personal adviser should arrange a case conference with the young person (and their representative/parent/carer, if necessary) and the appropriate agencies, local organisations and specialists (including health specialists) soon after the person's 19th birthday. The aim of the case conference should be to agree what the support needs are and which organisation should lead on that support. The Connexions Service may continue providing support, including any ongoing assessments, until the person's 25th birthday. However, there should not be an assumption that the Connexions Service is the organisation that must provide the support. The arrangements should be reviewed at least annually with the express aim of helping the client make use of the adult services and thereby reduce their dependency on the Connexions Service. These reviews should involve the young person, their representative/parent/carer (if necessary) and appropriate agencies, specialists and local organisations. It is considered good practice that the lead for managing the reviews and providing the support will pass over to the agreed adult service in a phased way.

Young people claiming Jobcentre Plus benefits

Some young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities may be claiming JSA, which carries with it a responsibility to actively seek employment. In the case of 16/17 year olds claiming JSA there is also a requirement that they actively seek training. For this reason the Connexions Service has the lead responsibility for helping the young person to seek employment and training, and the young person is required to register with Connexions for work and training before they can claim JSA. 16/17 year olds claiming non-JSA Jobcentre Plus benefits are required to attend a Learning Focussed Meeting with the Connexions Service as a condition of entitlement. For a young person aged 18 or over, the lead responsibility for helping the young person access the labour market lies with Jobcentre Plus. In all cases it is important that there is discussion and agreement between the Connexions Service and Jobcentre Plus about the role of each organisation in supporting the young person, and how this will operate in a client-centred, coherent manner. It will also be important, in respect of claimants reaching age 18, or already aged 18 or over when making their claim, for Jobcentre Plus to be in a position to acknowledge and build upon any work the Connexions Service has already done with the young person – this means the Connexions Service will need to pass relevant information across to Jobcentre Plus, assist as appropriate in deciding the young person's next steps, and agree what role Connexions will have (if any) in supporting the young person alongside Jobcentre Plus. Further details about the working relationship with Jobcentre Plus in this context can be found in the Benefits Liaison Instructions and Good Practice Guidelines for Connexions Services (latest issued March 2001- revised edition due end September 2002).

Further guidance about joint working on learning difficulties and/or disabilities issues is contained in Annex 1.

Transition to adult care (Social Services)

In order to maximise life chances it is important that there are effective links in place between children's and adult's services in both health and social care. Some young people are not transferred from children's to adult services with adequate health care plans, which result in their exclusion from adult services. This is likely to affect young people with severe learning disabilities and complex health needs in particular. Local agencies will be expected to have introduced person-centred planning for all young people moving from children's to adult's services by 2003. The Learning Disability Partnership Boards have a responsibility to ensure that good transition services are in place. It is therefore important that Connexions Partnerships take an active part on these Boards.

Because Connexions will be working with young people up to the age of 19, or for some young people with learning difficulties and disabilities up to their

25th birthday, it will be important for Connexions Partnerships to make links with adult social services teams. In particular, personal advisers should be familiar with how to work with the social services teams working with people with disabilities and mental health problems, including awareness of

- The circumstances in which a person is likely to receive services from adult teams
- The type and level of services available locally
- Local policy and practice guidelines

Similar considerations apply to mental health issues, where young people may need to transfer from Child and Adolescent Mental Health services to adult provision.

WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES, ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

Introduction

The White Paper *Valuing People: a new strategy for learning disability for the 21st century* sets as a specific Government objectives:

As young people with learning disabilities move into adulthood, to ensure continuity of care and support for the young person and their family; and to provide equality of opportunity in order to enable as many disabled young people as possible to participate in education, training and employment

By:

Sub Objectives

Ensuring that each Connexions Partnership provides a full service to learning disabled young people by identifying them, deploying sufficient staff with the right competencies and co-ordinating the delivery of appropriate supports and opportunities
and

Ensuring effective links are in place within and between children's and adult's services in both health and social services.

To fulfil the first sub objective above, and hence to meet the needs of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, it will be important for Connexions Services to work in close partnership with a range of people, not least families and carers, and a range of agencies and organisations.

This section will be of particular interest to personal advisers and other Connexions staff in their work with individuals, agencies and organisations on strategic and planning issues and on a day-to-day basis, to support and meet the needs of young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

It contains some general principles for joint working and provides information about a number of agencies/organisations/individuals that Connexions Partnerships might work with and the circumstances in which contact might arise. The following agencies/organisations/individuals are covered:-

Parents/Carers

Parent Partnership Services

Learning Disability Partnership Boards

Learning and Skills Councils (National and Local)

Local councils with social services responsibilities, Health Authorities and

NHS Trusts which include Primary Care Trusts

Voluntary and Community Organisations

Jobcentre Plus

Local adult Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) provider

Learning Partnerships

General principles for joint working

Partnership working is one of the key principles of the Connexions Service. Agencies collaborating together achieve more for young people, parents and communities than agencies working in isolation. Partnerships will need to consider what type of mechanisms/monitoring systems should be in place to achieve effective joint working. Strategic processes for planning and evaluating provision should be in place and agreed by key partners. Partnerships should draw up local statements of co-operation or partnership agreements in relation to services for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Jobcentre Plus/Connexions Service Statement of Working Arrangements, which is required to be put in place at Jobcentre Plus District/Connexions LMC level, is an example of joint working and covers the full range of clients and issues that the two services have in common.

Connexions Services can influence planning and evaluation of provision through offering management support and co-ordination. It will also be important to keep others involved and informed of available provision, such as head teachers, those who will have regular contact with young people such as special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) in schools and youth workers.

In working with the LLSC, social services and providers Connexions Services should consider:

- Provision for the wide range of needs, including for example, young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Availability of people to work with young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Availability of “follow-on” provision
- Provision from other agencies such as Social Services, Jobcentre Plus and voluntary and community organisations.
- Transport, including ‘mobility training’ for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Arrangements for progression towards the individual’s personal post-learning goals – including employment, supported employment, independent living etc.

The basic principles of joint working cover:-

Common Goals, Awareness/Understanding, local named contacts, local liaison groups, labour market and other information, management information and transfer of client records.

Further guidance about joint working is attached at Annex 1.

Parents/Carers

Parents and carers are key partners who have a real and major part to play in the transition planning process.

Parents and carers offer a valuable perspective on a young person's situation that will contribute to the assessment process. This may include what they expect of the young person's adult life; what they can contribute in terms of helping their child develop personal and social skills, an adult life-style and acquiring new skills; whether they will experience new care needs and practical help in terms of aids, adaptations or general support during these years.

Parent Partnership Services

There are parent partnership services in each LEA. The service may take different forms according to local needs, but each service should

- Give parents access to information, advice and guidance and enable them to make informed decisions and choices in relation to their children's special educational needs
- Work in partnership with other services, including voluntary and community organisations
- Help parents work effectively with professionals
- Ensure that parents have access to an independent parental supporter, if they so wish. Independent parental supporters may be drawn from a wide range of backgrounds and the parent partnership services should be responsible for recruiting, training and supporting independent parental supporters.
- Further information is available in the SEN Code of Practice pages 20-21

Learning Disability Partnership Boards

Councils have set up Learning Disability Partnership Boards with members drawn from local agencies, people with learning disabilities and carers. The role of the Partnership Boards is to plan and improve multi-agency services for learning disabled people (adults). A key responsibility is to ensure that arrangements are in place to achieve a smooth transition to adult life for learning disabled young people. Boards are expected to identify a member with lead responsibility for transition issues. Guidance issued in August 2001 on the implementation of Valuing People and the role of Partnership Boards set out that boards should consider whether or not there are effective arrangements in place to enable young people to move smoothly from children's to adult services in all relevant agencies, and should make recommendations where necessary. The Government's aim is to ensure

continuity of care and support so that as many learning disabled young people as possible take part in education, training or employment. The Connexions Service should work closely with local Partnership Boards to assist with transition planning. Further details are provided in the Legal and Policy Framework section under Valuing People.

Learning and Skills Councils (National and Local)

Local Learning and Skills Councils (LLSCs) will ensure provision exists to meet the needs of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who have been assessed by the personal adviser. LLSCs will need to perform the following tasks in relation to people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities:

- Where appropriate manage placements at specialist colleges.
- Liaise with and advise providers on charters, policies and disability statements.
- Map provision for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities from all post 16 providers within the locality.
- Advise providers on the introduction of the new common arrangements for additional support. Assess the impact of the new system.
- Ensure (where appropriate) and advise on compliance with relevant disability legislation.
- Participate in local planning including liaison with schools sector.
- Liaise with national LSC on policy, data collection, analysis and reporting
- Ensure best practice on equal opportunities underpins the work of the Council
- Ensure providers have proper regard for personal adviser assessments
- Devise and maintain opportunities for relevant consultation with community groups on learning difficulties and/or disabilities including with service users

Contact will arise for a range of purposes including: during the assessment of an individual's need and provision:

- The development of the assessment process
- Referral and placing into suitable provision;
- Continuing review of progress and re-assessment of needs as the individual progresses in their chosen learning;
- Planning and evaluation of provision;
- Transition to adult services;
- Co-operation with the assessment of people who are under 25 but outside the Connexions Service client group

Local statements of co-operation between LLSCs and Connexions Partnerships should reflect the national memorandum of understanding between the LSC and Connexions, which will be published shortly and circulated to all Connexions Partnerships.

We expect LLSCs to have named officials with whom the Connexions Service

personal advisers should work closely in order to provide feedback on the learning provision.

Local councils with social services responsibilities, Health Authorities and NHS Trusts which include Primary Care Trusts

Learning Disability Partnership Boards will include both health and social services officials with whom Connexions Partnerships can liaise over transition planning. Every Strategic Health Authority and Primary Care Trust should also have a member of staff who should have responsibility for commissioning children's healthcare services locally.

For young people with significant needs who are already involved with statutory agencies, the personal adviser has an important role to play in ensuring that they receive the coherent support they need to participate and progress successfully in learning. Equally, where a young person is not already in contact with social services and the personal adviser's assessment indicates that they may be a child in need, it may be appropriate to refer them to social services for further assessment.

Following a child in need assessment, it should be decided which agency will be most suitable to take lead responsibility for implementing the resulting plan. This may be social services if, for example, the child's name has been placed on the child protection register or if they are looked after by the local authority. In other cases, it might still be for social services to lead, or for another agency to do so, depending on a child's needs or circumstances. Those other agencies might, for example, be education, health, or the Connexions Service.

Local councils with social services responsibilities, Health Authorities and NHS Trusts, including Primary Care Trusts, provide expert support and resources to enable young people with disabilities to gain maximum life chance benefits from health care and social care and to enable as many disabled young people as possible to participate in education, training or employment.

Contact will arise in a range of circumstances including:

- Consultation with young people and parents;
- Assessment of an individual's need and provision;
- Planning and provision of social services for families of disabled young people including short breaks and specialist equipment;
- Integration of disabled young people into mainstream leisure and culture activities;
- Planning and provision of specialist health service support through primary and secondary health services;
- Joint Investment Plans

Voluntary and Community Organisations

Voluntary and community organisations are key partners in the successful

delivery of Connexions and offer a reservoir of specialist support, resource and advice targeted at individuals with specific needs.

Contact will arise for a range of purposes including:

- The delivery of services within Connexions to individual young people including, in some cases, specialist assessments and support to families
- The mapping of local services for young people
- Running specific targeted projects through grant funding from Connexions
- As referral agencies for the provision of specialist resources and advice
- As providers of personal advisers, volunteers and other support staff
- As training providers
- As employers
- Through input to Connexions training programmes
- As partners in joint funding bids
- In the running of projects under the Neighbourhood Support Fund, and Millennium Volunteers
- As members of Local Liaison Groups, Connexions Boards and Local Management Committees

Partnerships are also encouraged to build links with existing local or regional voluntary and community fora or with sector umbrella organisations such as Councils for Voluntary Service (CVSs), Councils for Voluntary Youth Services (CVYs) and Rural Community Councils (RCCs). These organisations can help to map and build links with the many thousands of small, often isolated, community groups who may have much to offer to Connexions.

In working with voluntary and community organisations it is important to acknowledge the limited resources and infra-structure of smaller groups and to respect their independence. The *Compact on Relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector in England* and its associated *Codes of Practice* are a good basis on which to build effective working relationships.

The booklet *Working Together: Connexions and Voluntary & Community Organisations* provides more detailed information and advice on what Partnerships should be doing to involve the sector and is also useful to voluntary and community organisations that want to know more about Connexions and how they can contribute. It provides a range of case studies and practical advice which you should find useful.

Jobcentre Plus

Jobcentre Plus Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs) offer information, advice and guidance to help people with disabilities obtain and retain work or appropriate training. DEAs also work closely with employers to support them in the adoption of positive policies and practices in the recruitment and

retention of disabled people. DEAs work as part of a local Disability Service Team (DST) and play a key role in helping jobseekers with more complex barriers to employment associated with disability find and keep jobs.

Contacts will arise between the two services for a range of purposes including:

- Assisting young people to make claims for benefits;
- To identify continuing educational and training needs;
- To obtain medical guidance and consult about the extent of disclosure;
- To determine availability and eligibility for Workstep (previously called Supported Employment) – or other programmes;
- For advice and guidance on aids and adaptations in connection with applications for funding Further Education placements;
- To seek and give information about the Disability Discrimination Act;
- To signpost young people to other sources of information, advice and guidance;
- When there is a transfer of responsibility from one service to another (e.g. where the young person wishes to take advantage of a wider range of opportunities than those available through the Connexions Service). The two services have joint responsibility for this transition running as smoothly as possible, and Jobcentre Plus through their involvement with the LSC's Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) networks will co-ordinate an appropriate package of support beyond the Connexions Service.

Jobcentre Plus Disability Service have produced a booklet (ref DS20) and tape (ref DS2 0AT) called 'Getting and keeping a job – how the Jobcentre can help you if you have a learning disability'. These items can be ordered through local Jobcentres.

Local adult Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) providers

Information, advice and guidance services (IAG) for adults are currently provided through the Learning and Skills Council. Services for adults are provided at local level through IAG partnerships, which may include members from Higher Education, Further Education, careers companies, Connexions, Jobcentre Plus and voluntary and community organisations. It is also available through Ufi's **learndirect** helpline and web based services, and the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) **worktrain** which provides internet based information services on jobs, training courses and other career help.

The intention is that between them, local IAG services, **learndirect** and DWP (including Jobcentre Plus) should provide a coherent and as far as possible seamless IAG service to members of the public. The arrangements for handling referrals and sharing information between the three – and the development of effective working relations, particularly at local level – are therefore critical. It is equally important that there are effective referral systems between IAG adult services and the Connexions Service for young people at key transition points. The current Connexions and IAG for adults planning guidance requires Connexions Partnerships and IAG partnerships to

ensure effective co-ordination between the two services, and also with Higher Education Careers Advisory Services.

For further information on IAG services in your local area you should contact your local Learning and Skills Council.

CSNU and the LSC are currently developing some good practice guidance on managing the transition from Connexions to adult services.

Learning Partnerships

A network of 101 Learning Partnerships, pump-primed by DfES, has been in place since early 1999. Responsibility for them passes to the LSC from April 2003 and Ministers have confirmed two new core roles of:

- Promoting provider collaboration in support of lifelong learning; and
- Maximising the contribution of learning to local regeneration

They are non-statutory, voluntary groupings of local learning providers (ranging from voluntary sector to Further Education and Higher Education institutions (FE/HEIs)) and others such as local government, Connexions/Careers Service, trade unions, employers and faith groups. Learning Partnerships have helped create a culture of provider collaboration and have been prominent in drafting local learning plans.

They have been involved in follow-up to Area Inspections, the Green Paper proposals for 14-19 and a range of initiatives around Basic Skills, workforce development, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and progression into HE. They contribute to local regeneration strategies and many have become the 'learning arm' of the Local Strategic Partnerships. There will be even closer alignment with the LSC from April 2003 and they will work in consultation with their local Learning and Skills Councils to ensure that the voice of the learner is heard in local planning.

www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/llp holds general information on Learning Partnerships together with contact details.

LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

This section provides information about Government action that is having an impact on improving support and services to young disabled people

It covers the following:-

Green Paper '14-19: Extending Opportunities, Raising Standards
Valuing People: a new strategy for learning disability for the 21st century
SEN Code of Practice
Learning and Skills Act 2000
Carers & Disabled Children Act
Disability Discrimination Act

Green Paper '14-19: Extending Opportunities, Raising Standards'

The Green Paper '14-19: Extending Opportunities, Raising Standards' was published in February 2002. The proposals set out in the Green Paper include some major changes to the 14-19 phase of education, bringing much greater choice and flexibility for young people. This should enable more young people to meet their individual aspirations and reduce the number who become disengaged from learning. It is designed to improve attainment at 19 and inspire more young people to aim for participation in Higher Education. This greater choice and flexibility will have significant implications for the roles of both careers education in schools and impartial advice and support from guidance professionals.

The Green Paper trails the new, non-statutory national specification for careers education that CSNU is currently developing. It also sets out some potential new roles for Connexions personal advisers, in particular, in relation to helping vulnerable young people, their parents/carers and teachers in developing individual learning plans at the end of Key Stage 3 and reviewing them during the 14-19 phase. There are also possible new roles in relation to supporting young people who adopt non-traditional learning packages, involving mixed academic/vocational options and/or involving learning across different institutions.

The new 14-19 phase, with its increased range of opportunities, will be the key to engaging or re-engaging students at risk of social exclusion through providing different styles, content or places of learning and the prospect of achievable, meaningful and universally-recognised qualifications. However, some groups of young people will be in need of extra support if they are to benefit from the new phase. These include those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Learning Difficulties and Disabilities/SEN specific references include:-

- A proposal for ' a 14-19 phase that is more responsive to those with special educational needs; to those from a range of ethnic backgrounds; to those from low income families; to those in danger of social exclusion; and to those for whom high achievement comes naturally'.
- A statement that ' the curriculum must challenge the most able, and it must also be accessible to young people, such as those with special educational needs, who may face obstacles to learning and progress'.
- A statement that 'current arrangements which allow disapplication specifically for young people with statements of special educational needs will be retained'.

The Government organised a wide-ranging consultation on the Green Paper, involving a range of stakeholders, including young people themselves. This ended on 31 May 2002. Consultation responses are being analysed, with a view to making an announcement on next steps in the Autumn.

Valuing People: a new strategy for learning disability for the 21st century

In March 2001 the Government published its White Paper *Valuing People: a new strategy for learning disability for the 21st century*. This sets out the Government's proposals for improving the life chances of children, young people and adults with learning disabilities and their families. It recognises that transition is often difficult and stressful for young people and their families and sets a specific objective with two sub-objectives (set out below) to provide clear direction for all agencies.

'Government Objective: As young people with learning disabilities move into adulthood, to ensure continuity of care and support for the young person and their family; and to provide equality of opportunity in order to enable as many disabled young people as possible to participate in education, training and employment.

By

Sub-Objectives

Ensuring that each Connexions Partnership provides a full service to learning disabled young people by identifying them, deploying sufficient staff with the right competencies and co-ordinating the delivery of appropriate supports and opportunities

and

Ensuring effective links are in place within and between children's and adult's services in both health and social services.'

It also sets a specific employment objective:

'Government Objective: To enable more people with learning disabilities to participate in all forms of employment, wherever possible in paid work and to make a valued contribution to the world of work.

By

Sub-Objectives

Ensuring that more people with learning disabilities find appropriate employment, including supported employment, which makes the most of their talents and potential

and

Making sure that people with learning disabilities are actively helped to access employment related advice and guidance through mainstream and specialist advisory services

and

Ensuring that public services provide a lead in the employment of people with learning disabilities

Valuing People sets out the Connexions headline target for young people at risk (including young people with learning disabilities), which is: participation and achievement over time to converge with those in the population in the same age group.

Implementing *Valuing People* involves action at local level as well as at national level. At local level services for disabled children and young people (up to age of 18) will continue to be addressed through the children's services planning structures. For services for adults, local councils have been asked to set up local Learning Disability Partnership Boards with members drawn from local agencies, people with learning disabilities and carers. The main responsibilities include ensuring that arrangements are in place to achieve a smooth transition to adult life for learning disabled young people. Boards will be expected to identify a member with lead responsibility for transition issues.

The White Paper also sets out the Government's proposals for a person-centred approach to planning services for adults with learning disabilities. Local councils will take the lead in ensuring that local Learning Disability Partnership Boards responsible for planning and commissioning services for adults agree a framework for the development of person-centred planning. The Government issued guidance "Planning with People – Towards Person Centred Approaches" on person-centred planning for adults with learning disabilities in January 2002, copies of the guidance are available on the Department of Health's website at www.doh.gov.uk/learningdisabilities. Local agencies will be expected to have introduced person-centred planning for all young people moving from children's to adult's services by 2003. Connexions Partnerships need to ensure that personal advisers and their managers develop links with the Learning Disability Partnership Boards as well as with Children and Adult Social Services. In particular there is a need to ensure that

assessment and planning for a young person undertaken by Connexions is properly linked to and part of developing a person-centred plan for that young person and procedures to ensure that this happens will need to be developed.

SEN Code of Practice

A revised SEN Code of Practice came into effect on 1 January 2002. The revised Code reflects developments that have taken place since the 1994 Code was published, such as the Learning and Skills Act and the establishment of the Connexions Service. It sets out the head teacher's formal duty for writing a Transition Plan for a child in Year 9 with a statement of SEN, where the child is in school. Connexions must attend the Year 9 annual review of the statement and will also be invited to subsequent reviews and are expected to attend the last review before the person leaves school.

The non-statutory 'SEN Toolkit' is also available and provides practical advice on implementing the SEN Code of Practice for schools and LEAs. Section 10 provides guidance on transition planning for those working with young people aged 13-19. The Code and Toolkit can both be ordered from DfES publications centre on 0845 60 222 60 – Code Reference 581/2001, Toolkit Reference 558/2001. The Code and the Toolkit are also available on website www.dfes.gov.uk/sen

Learning and Skills Act 2000

Section 140 of the Learning and Skills Act sets out the statutory provision for the assessment of young people with learning difficulties and disabilities who are undertaking or likely to undertake post-16 education or training or higher education.

The legal requirement for these assessments is placed upon the Secretary of State. Connexions Services will deliver it.

The following is the extract from the Learning and Skills Act that covers section 140:-

140 (1) Subsection (2) applies if-

- (a) a local education authority maintains a statement of special educational needs for a person under section 324 of the Education Act 1996, and
- (b) the Secretary of State believes that the person will leave school at the end of his last year of compulsory schooling to receive post-16 education or training (within the meaning of the Education Reform Act 1988)

(2) The Secretary of State must arrange for an assessment of the person to be conducted at some time during the person's last year of compulsory schooling.

- (3) The Secretary of State may at any time arrange for an assessment to be conducted of a person-
- (a) who is in his last year of compulsory schooling or who is over compulsory school age but has not attained the age of 25,
 - (b) who appears to the Secretary of State to have a learning difficulty (within the meaning of section 13), and
 - (c) who is receiving, or in the Secretary of State's opinion is likely to receive, post -16 education or training (within the meaning of Part 1 of this Act) or higher education (within the meaning of the Education Reform Act 1988)
- (4) For the purposes of this section an assessment of a person is an assessment resulting in a written report of-
- (a) his educational and training needs, and
 - (b) the provision required to meet them
- (5) A local education authority must send a copy of a statement maintained by it under section 324 of the Education Act 1996 to the Secretary of State on his request

Under Section 13 of the Act, the Learning and Skills Council has a particular duty to have regard to the contents of these assessments and the needs of the young person assessed when discharging its functions for those under 25 years of age who have learning difficulties.

Government Office Action Note GO38, issued on 29th January 2002 provides more information about Connexions partnerships' responsibilities under Section 140 together with guidance to help partnerships with the implementation of the requirements. An updated Action Note is due to be issued on 30 September 2002.

Carers & Disabled Children Act

The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 gives local councils with social services the power to offer direct payments to 16 and 17 year old disabled young people to enable them to arrange the provision of services that meet their assessed needs under the Children Act 1989 rather than rely on direct service provision from the local council. The Carers and Disabled Children Act also introduces direct payments for parents of disabled children

Direct payments are able to bring about improvements in the quality of life of people who would like to manage their own support. They promote independence, and aid social inclusion by offering opportunities for education, leisure and employment. The Children Act 1989 (schedule 2 para 6) requires local councils to provide services to minimise the effects of children's disabilities and give them the "opportunity to lead lives which are as normal as possible". The extension of direct payments to disabled 16 and 17 year olds will enable young people to take advantage of the flexibility of direct payments

where this is in their best interests.

As part of the transition to adulthood, some young people may wish to have a direct payment to manage parts or all of the elements of their care package to improve how these elements are delivered. This will also apply to young disabled people leaving care. The option of a direct payment would have been discussed with those with parental responsibility.

The Transition Plan drawn up under the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice is a key document relevant to health, social services, education, the Connexions Service and other agencies. It should inform decisions made about direct payments to disabled young people.

The existing direct payments policy and practice guidance provides the framework for guidance about the decision to make a direct payment to a disabled 16 or 17 year old. In making that decision the council should balance, as they do now (in relation to providing direct services) the young person's wishes and feelings and the views of those with parental responsibility. The overriding requirement is that the intervention of the local council, whether by providing a service or a direct payment, should promote and safeguard the welfare of the young person.

Where there is a difference of views between the parents and disabled children aged 16 and 17 and provided that the children have sufficient understanding to make informed decisions, local councils should give precedence to their views. It follows that there may be situations where it would be right for a young person to receive a direct payment whether the parents agree or not. For example a young woman with a physical impairment or learning disability may move away from home to go to college and may want to engage her own personal assistant to help her get ready for college in the mornings, rather than rely on the local council home help service. Parents may have their own reasons for not supporting their daughter's decision: perhaps they did not want her to leave home; perhaps they have fallen out with her over some other matter. But decisions about such a young woman's personal care should be for her to make, provided that implementing these will promote her welfare.

Also there will be situations where disabled young people will express their wish to manage direct payments but it is apparent to their parents and to the local council that they do not at the moment have the capacity to exercise this level of control in a way that will promote their welfare.

Disability Discrimination Act

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) became law in November 1995. It has recently been substantially amended by the introduction of the Special Needs and Disability Act 2001.

There are two core elements that are common to all parts of the Act. The first makes it unlawful to treat a disabled person less favourably than someone

else for a reason related to his/her disability without justification. The second requires reasonable adjustments to be made to facilitate a disabled person's access to employment, goods and services and education. Connexions has responsibilities under Parts 2, 3 and 4 of the Act. Part 2 covers Connexions Services in their capacity as employers and in situations where Connexions acts for employers. Part 3 covers Connexions Services in the services they provide to the public eg in respect of access to Personal Adviser support, premises, resources and materials, and referral to learning opportunities and jobs. Part 4 of the Act covers discrimination in education. Connexions Services will have to comply with Part 4 whenever they form contractual arrangements with schools or colleges to deliver services to disabled clients in education.

For further information see Government Office Action Note GO 76, issued 8th August 2002.

Good Practice On Joint Working

The basic principles of joint working are:

Common Goals

Joint vision, targets, monitoring and review with a high level of commitment from all parties.

Awareness/Understanding

Co-operation in organising awareness raising sessions and training for their staff at local level e.g. training visits to each organisation and others of mutual interest, work shadowing, secondments, regular staff meetings.

Local Named Contacts

Agreeing local named contacts to whom other organisations can refer queries and whose contact details can be passed on to young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These contacts should be experienced with a good working knowledge of their respective organisation's roles.

Local Liaison Groups

Using local liaison groups or establishing new groups, membership of which could include Connexions Service, Jobcentre Plus Disability Service, local FE/HE suppliers, voluntary and community organisations, employers and others as appropriate.

Such groups should, at the earliest opportunity, determine how frequently they should meet and define their remit as clearly as possible, as it is important to avoid inappropriate formation of liaison groups and unnecessary meetings.

Groups should seek to:

- Share information on current policies, practices and procedures specifically affecting young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and align these where possible;
- Seek to collaborate on projects such as the production of local leaflets and literature which will help the transition from school to work to training for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
- Discuss, develop and implement ways of improving services to young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
- Evaluate how well the enhanced arrangements are working;
- Review joint agreements on an annual basis.
- Keep data on destinations of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure individuals and groups are not falling

between services

Labour Market and other Information

Agreeing on the procedures adopted by both to accommodate a shared systems for providing information appropriate to young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For example, include details of specific job opportunities, thus enabling young people to apply for and be offered such opportunities. As a result, services can ensure that any procedure is as streamlined as possible. Services should collaborate on existing arrangements and agree what information each organisation will provide to the other. Services should also work together, for example, in encouraging employers/opportunity providers to become involved with, and offer help to, young people with learning difficulties and disabilities

Contacts

Collaboration over links with linked organisations, for example employers/opportunity providers, on respective ways of working with those bodies to maximise effect and minimise duplication of effort.

There should be agreement on what information they should share, ways in which they will try to ensure that clients and employers are fully aware of the services available and encourage them to use the service to its full potential.

Management Information

Seeking to share, and where possible align information from management information about their client services and programmes systems to enhance the development of their respective service.

Transfer of Client records

Where appropriate, transferring effectively client records. Local arrangements should ensure that where this happens organisations are fully aware of the requirements of each other and each young person when transfers take place and always adhere to each others rules about client consent and confidentiality.