



Disability Statement

At Gateshead College we work hard to deliver a first class service to ensure all students receive the help, guidance and information they need to enjoy their time with us.

This statement outlines the level of support you can expect from us, the laws and guidelines we follow and the standards we have put in place to ensure you receive a high level of service.

It also explains what we need to know from you about your disability and how to apply for a course.

Our purpose: to shape and nurture the most highly prized students in the jobs market.



OUR CAMPUSES.

Our multi million pound campus provides an up to date and accessible place to learn.

Baltic Campus

In a prime location on Gateshead Quays, our £39million main campus is a bright, spacious and modern building. Spread over four floors facilities include workshops and studios, a salon and a 200-seat theatre.

Skills Academy for Construction

The £6million academy on Team Valley provides industry level training for vocational qualifications, apprenticeships, work-based learning and further education.

Academy for Sport at Gateshead International Stadium

Our cutting edge £15million facility offers unique opportunities to students. Our sport students and academy members train alongside elite athletes, in a centre which features world class training, scientific, medical, and coaching facilities, comparable to anywhere in England.

Skills Academy for Automotive, Engineering, Manufacturing and Logistics

The state-of-the-art academy on Team Valley boasts the most up-to-date facilities for automotive and engineering disciplines.



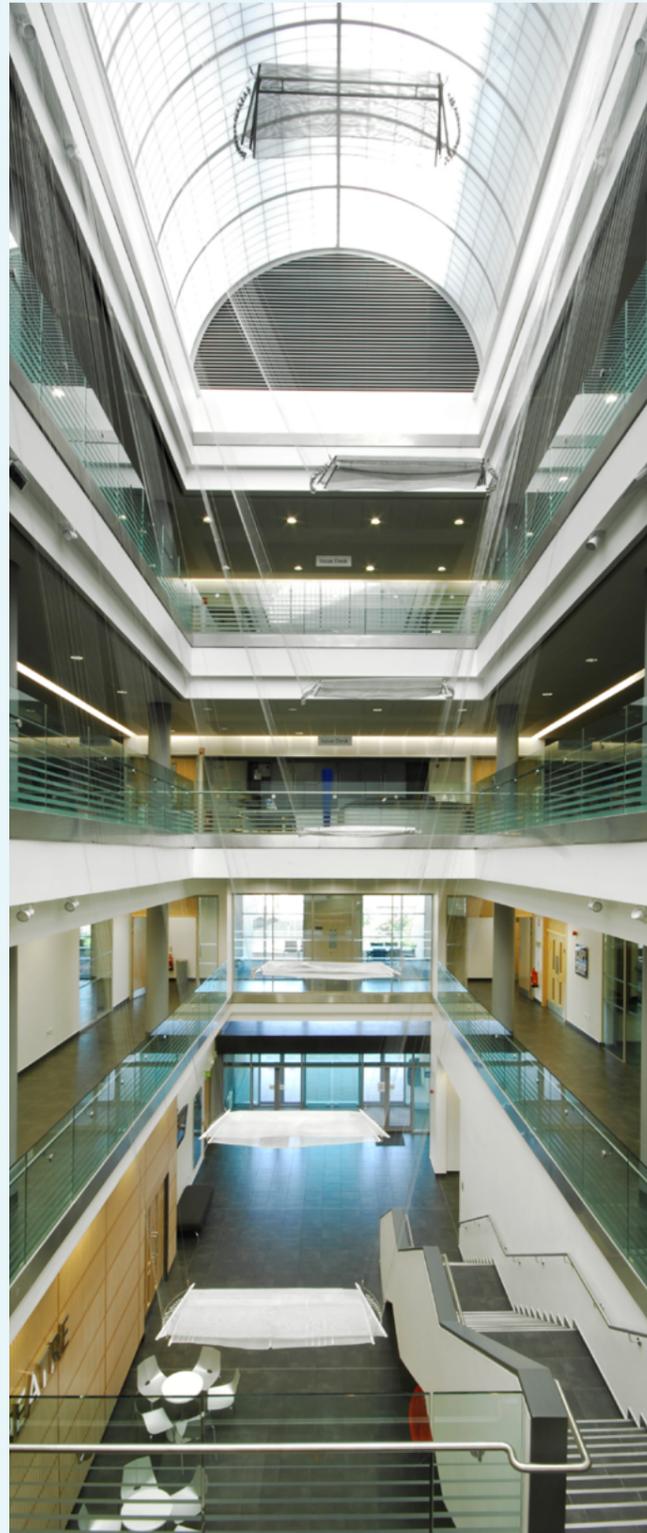
GETTING AROUND.

Gateshead College is committed to the principle of universal access and is actively working towards providing reasonable access to all its services, buildings and facilities.

Our modern and stylish new buildings offer improved access for people who have mobility issues and/or wheelchair users.

There are designated accessible parking bays available at all sites. If parking is a problem for you, please contact us as soon as possible and we will try to make any necessary adjustments.

Getting to and from and in between our campuses couldn't be easier with our dedicated bus route. The 93/94 Loop runs every 10 mins between campuses and Gateshead Interchange.



OUR STANDARDS.

We follow a range of duties and standards and have our own policies in place to ensure you get the best service possible and the support you need.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 echoes our college mission to promote equality and diversity. The Act provides a modern, single legal framework with clear, streamlined law to more effectively tackle disadvantage and discrimination.

The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty provides a way for colleges and other public authorities to deal with disability discrimination in a practical way by introducing policies and procedures that actively promote opportunities for disabled people and so prevent discrimination taking place.

In particular, we recognise our responsibility to meet the requirements of the duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations
- Positive action provisions permits proportionate action to overcome disadvantage, meet needs and tackle under representation

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The college has a multi-cultural community with students and staff from all walks of life. All members of the college community have a responsibility to make sure that students and staff are free to pursue their college lives without any kind of harassment or discrimination. We'll continue to develop our Equality and Diversity Policy and practices so that we can continue to improve college life.



We have systems in place to make sure every student receives the same high level of service in and out of the classroom and that everyone's experience of college is positive.

We continuously review our services and performance and we collect feedback from our students on a regular basis so we can continue to improve. Internal systems and management arrangements are in place and monitoring reports are presented to the Executive Team and the Board of Governors. We are subject to external inspection, quality review and provider review from OFSTED, examinations awarding bodies, QAA (The Quality Assurance Agency for HE), The Office for Students (OfS) and Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA.)

Our Students' Charter outlines what you can expect from us.

We will treat all of our students fairly and with respect.

Our college values are positivity, purposefulness, partnership, excellence, respect and achievement. Our staff work towards these values, they underpin what we expect of our students and any complaint of personal harassment will be dealt with sensitively.

You will, as a student of the College, be given opportunities to give us feedback on your experience and to get involved in a variety of college activities.

Full copies of the Students' Charter are available on request.

Learner Voice

Gateshead College is committed to engaging with learners to support the continuous quality improvement of both our curriculum provision and the services we deliver, as well as ensuring that learners' needs are met.

The views of learners will be used in self assessment, quality improvement processes and safeguarding considerations and will have a demonstrable impact on improvement in all aspects of college provision.

Our objective is to engage learners to ensure that:

- The needs of the learners are met.
- Better quality information is available about the views of learners which can then be used along with other sources of data to inform developments and quality improvement.
- Learner engagement supports continuous quality improvement, driving up standards to improve:
 1. Achievement rates
 2. The quality of teaching and learning
 3. Improvements in learners' overall experience
 4. The delivery of timely and effective support services.

Current learner involvement arrangements include:

Providing opportunities for feedback through a diverse range of verbal, IT and paper based practices, including but not exclusively:

1. Course and service review and evaluation
2. Learner satisfaction surveys (FE and HE)
3. National satisfaction survey
4. Online initial student survey
5. Complaints process
6. Focus groups
7. Disabled Students Access Group
8. Learning Walks
9. Learner Journey Reviews

Student representation on:

- Students' Union and Union Parliament
- Board of Governors
- Courses/programmes
- College forums

Participation in diverse activities such as open events, representing college and extracurricular enrichment activities.



BEFORE YOU START.

We need to know about your disability before you start college to ensure you get the correct support.

It is important that you tell us if you have a disability. Even if you think your requirements may be minor it is worth letting us know these in advance of you studying with us. Unfortunately, if you do not tell us about your disability it may be difficult for us to be able to provide individual support to you.

If you are due to leave school soon and have a disability, the college is able to:

- Attend school leavers'/transition reviews
- Liaise with school and careers staff
- Arrange visits to all of our campuses for you and your parents/carers
- Arrange guidance interviews
- Assess your individual support needs
- Offer support at college admissions interviews/open events

If you are a disabled adult, the college is able to:

- Assess your individual support needs
- Speak to other professionals/agencies to assess your needs
- Arrange visits to all of our campuses
- Arrange guidance interviews
- Offer support at college admissions interviews/open events

When you apply for your course you'll complete a Learning Agreement form (if necessary we can help you complete this form).

If you have a disability, it is important that you indicate this on the form. If you do, we will ask you to fill in a referral form and to tell us the best way to contact you to discuss any support needs you may have.

There's a range of things we can provide including:

- Help getting around college
- Assistance with personal care and at meal times
- Individual or small group learning support to help you reach your learning goals
- Dedicated learning support staff available in vocational study areas
- Access to sign language interpreters (this can take a long time to arrange so please give us plenty of notice)
- Large print and Braille materials on request
- Specialist support for dyslexic students
- A mental health specialist
- Adapting curriculum materials
- Access to advice from external specialist agencies
- A wide range of support resources and specialist equipment
- Help with travel planning



ASSESSING YOUR SUPPORT NEEDS.

Before you start college, at the beginning of your course, or if you request support during your studies, we will undertake some assessments to discover how best we can support you.

- We believe students' views are the most important part of the assessment process, so we will ask you to think about what support you may require.
- If you are a school leaver we may ask you to provide us with a copy of your 'Statement of SEN' and/or we may ask your school/local authority to provide us with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) to help decide what type of support is most suitable to your needs.
- We may ask you to provide us with a copy of any recent Educational Psychologist assessments you may have.
- We may also have to undertake more specialised assessments. This will only be done with your agreement, and/or the agreement of your parent/ carer if you are under 18 years.
- If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies due to your ability with English and maths then you will be able to access additional English and maths support.

- If you are experiencing difficulties due to a lack of study skills or specific skills such as ICT then you will be able to access achievement support.
- If English is not your first language, then additional support is available in or outside of class.
- You may decide that you do not want to receive support.

All students who are supported by our Learning Support Service will have a Student Support Plan which will describe the agreed support strategies. The plan will be developed with you and college staff together to make sure the support you receive is appropriate and where possible meets your needs.

Mental Health Support

Our Mental Health Co-ordinator works directly with students who have mental health issues affecting their access to learning and progression. In addition, support is available to tutors to identify reasonable adjustments including differentiated teaching strategies, behaviour and classroom management technique.

Our Mental Health Co-ordinator can be contacted by visiting Student Services at the Baltic Campus or by calling 0191 490 2339.

Specific Learning Difficulties (including Dyslexia)

Our Specific Learning Difficulties Co-ordinator can provide advice and support where a learner has disclosed a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD), has expressed concerns about a possible SpLD or has been identified by teaching staff as possibly having an SpLD. Our Specific Learning Difficulties Co-ordinator can be contacted by visiting Student Services at the Baltic Campus or by calling 0191 490 2248, or email spld@gateshead.ac.uk



WHEN YOU JOIN US.

When you join us you will be taught and supported by our team of dedicated and professional staff.

They are all trained in disability awareness and our specialist teaching and support staff undertake ongoing professional development to enhance their skills and knowledge. We also know that college life is about more than education, it's about meeting people and having a good time. We'll encourage and support you to be as independent as possible.

Personal tutors

If you're studying full-time you'll have a personal tutor who is there to help you with any worries you have about your course or your time at college. Your tutor will review your progress and support arrangements with you on a regular basis. Advice and guidance is also available if you think you might want to change your course. If you're not on a full-time course there'll still always be someone available to talk to you about any concerns you have.



CAREERS ADVICE.

Our careers advisors can help you make an informed decision about which course would be best for you.

We can provide you with course information and arrange for you to see a Careers Advisor for specialist careers advice. Information about grants, finance or allowances is also available and we can inform you about further opportunities in education, training, and employment at Gateshead College and elsewhere.

You'll also be able to get help in completing application forms and preparing for interviews.

If you would like to book an appointment with a Careers Advisor please either drop in or call Student Services (0191) 490 2216.

You can also contact our careers advisors by telephone on (0191) 490 2216 or email career.guidance@gateshead.ac.uk.

Support for examinations and assessments

If you have difficulties completing assessments and examinations, we may be able to provide you with additional support such as extra time, a reader or writer, specialist equipment such as a PC or laptop computer or enlarged print notes.

There are special arrangements set out by examining boards to help you if you have a specific learning difficulty (e.g. dyslexia) If you require exam dispensation you'll need a psychological assessment report and/or a medical certificate. In most cases, the examining boards need to see assessment reports up to three months in advance of the assessment or examination. If you need further details, please contact either the Learning Support or Examinations Teams or email spld@gateshead.ac.uk

Going on work placement

Some courses will require you to complete a work placement. This is an exciting part of your learning experience and will offer you the opportunity to put what you are learning into practice. Some work placements may be in college and others will be with local employers. Our Workplace Vetting Officer will work with course staff to find a placement that is suitable for you.



APPLYING FOR A COURSE.

To apply for a course you need to complete an application form and, where appropriate, we will arrange an interview for you with the Course Leader. If you attend an interview, you are welcome to bring someone along with you. If you need support, it can be arranged at the interview.

College enrolment events are held regularly throughout the year, further details can be found on our website or by calling us on 0191 490 0300 or by emailing start@gateshead.ac.uk. Please let us know prior to your visit if you require any special arrangements.

All students must satisfy the course entry requirements. It is your responsibility to inform us if you have a disability. Please provide this information on your Learning Agreement form. Where appropriate our Learning Support Service will then make contact with you to discuss individual needs.

Sometimes the admissions process can take quite a long time, particularly if you need any specialised assessments, so make sure you plan well in advance. Most courses begin in September.

Applying for Higher Education

You don't have to go to university to learn at a higher level. We offer HNCs and HNDs in a range of subjects. Going into higher education is a big step but it's worth taking. You'll make new friends and increase your skills and knowledge.

Disabled Students' Allowance

If you have a disability and are considering a higher education course, you may be eligible for Disabled Students' Allowance. These are grants to help meet the extra course costs students can face as a direct result of a disability, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty. They are aimed at helping disabled students to study on an equal basis with other students.

Full-time, part-time and postgraduate students can apply for Disabled Students' Allowance

The amount you get doesn't depend on your household income. Disabled Students' Allowance is paid on top of the standard student finance package and doesn't have to be paid back.

Disabled Students' Allowance can help with:

- Specialist equipment you need for studying - e.g. computer software
- A non-medical helper, such as a notetaker or reader
- Extra travel costs you have to pay because of your disability
- Other costs - e.g. tapes or Braille paper

For further information, or to download a copy of the application form, visit www.direct.gov.uk. Copies of the application form are available from your local council/Education Authority office.

The college has established connections with a range of local and national agencies, these include:

- Gateshead Learning Disability Partnership Board
- Mind
- Changing Places
- Local Safeguarding Boards



NEXT STEPS. CONFIDENTIALITY. COMPLAINTS.

The next steps

Once you've accepted an offer of a place we'll invite you to come into college for an induction where you'll find out more information about your course and college services and get to meet curriculum and support staff and other students.

Together we'll complete your Learning Support Plan. This will record your course details, any equipment/resources needed, exam information, in and out of class support, agreed hours of support per week and review dates. Copies of the Learning Support Plan are available to you and your course tutor if agreed. Individual student Learning Support Plans are reviewed each term and evaluated at the end of the course.

Confidentiality

We're committed to meeting the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 and, with this in mind, will ask you to provide information about your disability and support needs; it is your responsibility to tell us. If you don't tell us then we cannot reasonably be expected to meet any specific support requirements you have.

In accordance with the Data Protection Act, a disabled person can request that their disability remains confidential. Please be aware that if you decide to request confidentiality this may limit the human or technical support that we can provide you with.

Complaints

Our aim is to provide a high quality service to all of our students and customers. Unfortunately, things can sometimes go wrong and we need to know when you are not happy with our service, so we can make changes for the future.

We promise to:

- Deal with your complaint quickly and fairly.
- Tell you how we will deal with your complaint.
- Provide our response within set timescales, keep you informed throughout the complaint procedure and if further time is required.
- You can expect an acknowledgement within two working days, following receipt of a written complaint.
- A personal response to any formal complaint within 10 working days.

To make a complaint, please call into any campus reception, call 0191 490 0300 or email start@gateshead.ac.uk.

If you need help to do this, please contact the Head of Student Services and Customer Experience, Gateshead College, Baltic Campus, Quarryfield Road, Baltic Business Quarter, Gateshead NE8 3BE.

Please remember that we would like the opportunity to make things right for you. Please talk to your tutor, Learning Support Officer or a member of Student Services and we will do everything we can to put things right.

USEFUL CONTACTS.

Gateshead College
Baltic Campus
Quarryfield Road
Baltic Business Quarter Gateshead
NE8 3BE

Tel: 0191 490 0300

Email: start@gateshead.ac.uk

www.gateshead.ac.uk

For help, guidance or more information call into our Information, Advice and Guidance Centre at our Baltic Campus.

Alternatively call one of our advisers on:

Learning Support

0191 490 2253 / 0191 426 4329

learningsupportstaff@gateshead.ac.uk

Mental Health Co-ordinator

0191 490 2339

Specific Learning Difficulties

Co-ordinator

0191 490 2331

spld@gateshead.ac.uk

Careers Advice

0191 490 2216



If you require an electronic copy of this document or in large print or Braille, please contact Learning Support on 0191 490 2253 / 0191 426 4329 or by emailing spld@gateshead.ac.uk



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