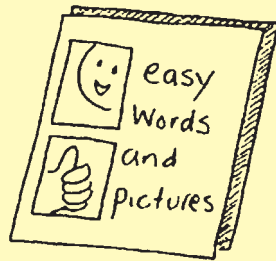


You can do it!

Do you want to take up adult learning?

Easy read version



What is this leaflet about?



This leaflet is about adult learning.



NIACE wrote this leaflet.

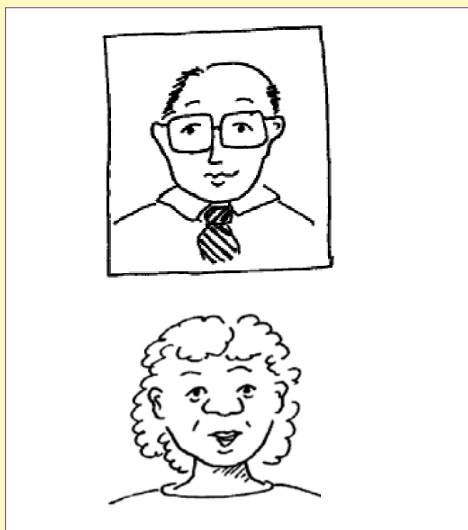
NIACE is the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education.

NIACE tries to help more people take up adult learning.

NIACE also helps to make adult learning better.



You should read this leaflet if you have a mental health difficulty.



At the end of this leaflet you can read about George and Natalie.

George and Natalie took up adult learning and it really helped them.

Words used in this leaflet

This leaflet uses some long words.

This is what they mean.



Adult learning

Adult learning is any course or training or studying you do when you are 16 years old or older.

It is not learning at school.

It is usually learning at college or a learning centre.



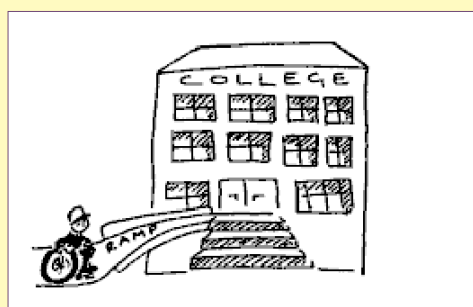
Mental health difficulty

A mental health difficulty is where you have thoughts or feelings that make your life very difficult a lot of the time.

If you have a mental health difficulty you might

- feel very sad or angry or nervous
- worry a lot about talking to people
- find it very difficult to leave your home.

A lot of the time you get help from a doctor or take medication.



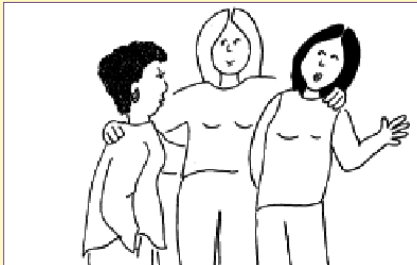
College or learning centre

A college or learning centre is a place where adults go to learn, like

- further education college
- university
- community centre
- day centre that runs classes.

What is good about adult learning?

Adult learning can



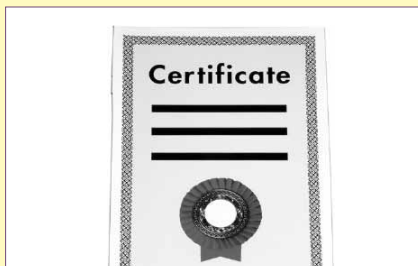
help you meet new people.



help you learn new things.



help you feel better about yourself.



help you get a qualification, like a Level 2 certificate or a GCSE or NVQ.



help you get a job.



be lots of fun!

What could I learn?

There are lots of different classes and courses you could do, like



arts and crafts



computers



reading and writing – this is called literacy

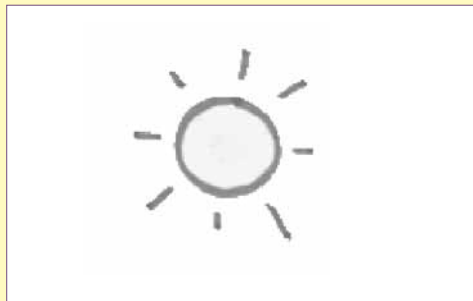
$$5 \times 11 = ??$$

maths and numbers – this is called numeracy

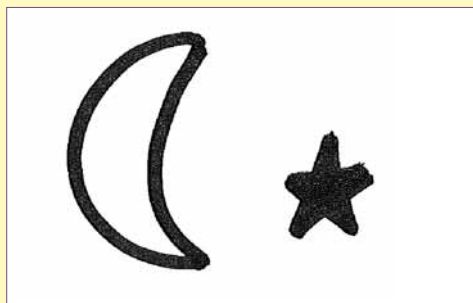
and lots more.

When could I learn?

Courses and classes run at different times, like



daytimes



evenings.

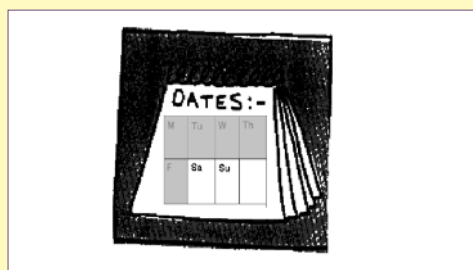


You could do an online course.

This is a course you do over the Internet.

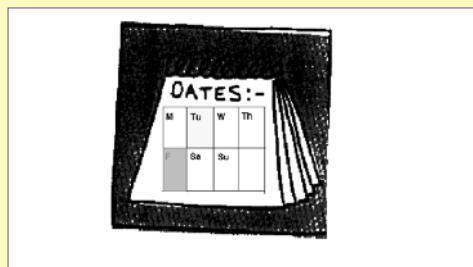
This means you can choose when you do your learning.

Learning can be



full time

or



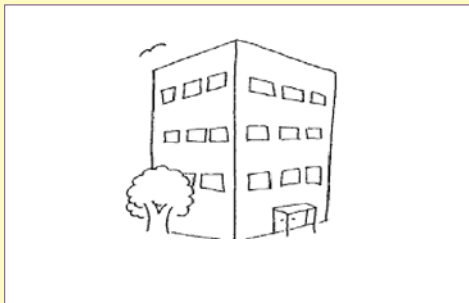
part time.

Where could I learn?

Adult learning can take place in



colleges



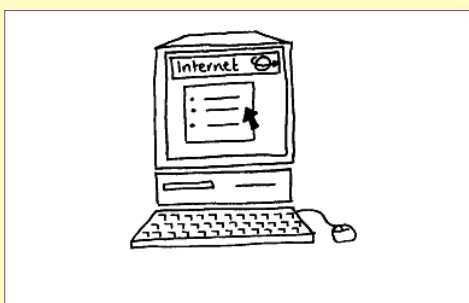
universities



libraries



community centres



online.

Will it be expensive?

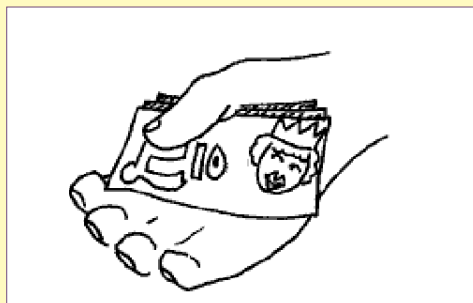


Some learning does not cost anything, like

- learning on your own at a library
- learning on your own using the Internet
- joining a book club.



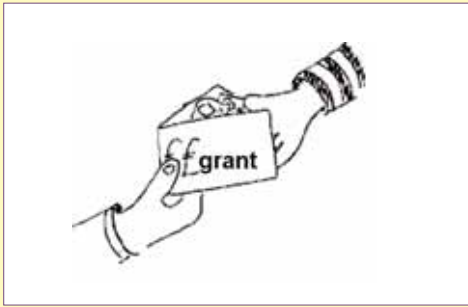
If you want to do a course or class, then the college or learning centre might ask you to pay a fee.



Sometimes you can get help paying the fee

- if you are getting benefits
- or
- if you want to do a course in literacy or numeracy.

Sometimes people can get grants or loans to help them, like



- Adult Learning Grant
- Learner Support Funds
- Career Development Loan.

A grant is money you **do not** have to pay back.

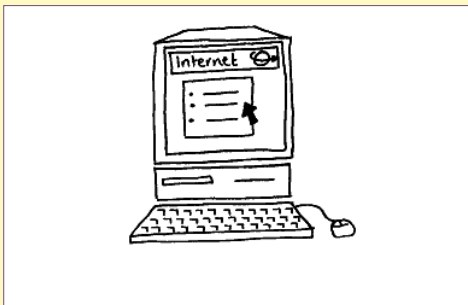
A loan is money you **do** have to pay back.

There are different rules about how much learning costs and whether you can get any help like a grant or a loan.

To find out more you should



- Talk to somebody who works in 'learner support services' at your local college or learning centre.



- Go to **www.direct.gov.uk** on the Internet and click on 'education and learning'.



- If you have a support worker or nurse or care coordinator, you should get some help from them.

What are my rights?

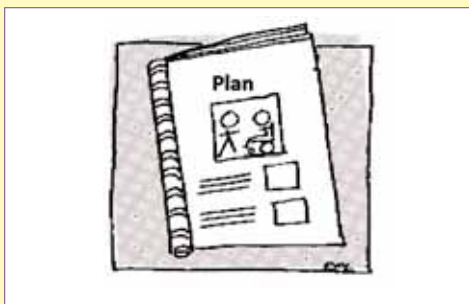


The **Disability Discrimination Act** says it is against the law to treat disabled people unfairly.

This includes people with learning difficulties, learning disabilities and serious and long-term mental health difficulties.



This means a college or learning centre should not treat you badly because you have a serious and long-term mental health difficulty.



The college or learning centre should have a plan about how to support disabled people.

This might be called a 'Disability Equality Scheme' or a 'Single Equality Scheme'.

There are lots of different ways a college or learning centre might help you, like

- helping you plan your learning
- making things better for you in exams, like making sure you can have a break
- giving you a note taker or support worker if you need one
- making sure you work in small groups, not big groups
- making sure other staff or learners do not treat you badly
- staying in touch with you if you are ill.

Your college or learning centre may not do **all** of these things, but they must do all they can to help you.



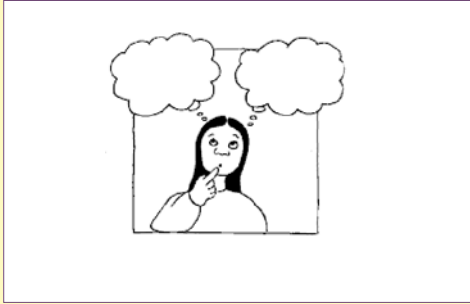
You should talk to someone who works in 'learner support services' at your local learning centre or college to find out more.



If you have a support worker or nurse or care coordinator, you should get some help from them.

What should I do now?

If you want to take up adult learning, you should



Think about what sort of learning you want to do.

Look at page 4.

What do you enjoy?

What have you always wanted to try?



Find out what college and learning centres you could go to.

Do this by

- talking to friends, family and support workers
- looking on the Internet
- looking in the phone book.

Write the names of your local colleges or learning centres here.



Get help and ideas from friends and family.
If you have a support worker or nurse or care coordinator, you should get some help from them.

Find out what courses or classes you could do at your local college or learning centre.

Do this by

- looking at their website
- looking in their prospectus

(This is a book that tells you what courses they offer.

You can call them and ask them to post it to you.

Or you might find it on their website.)

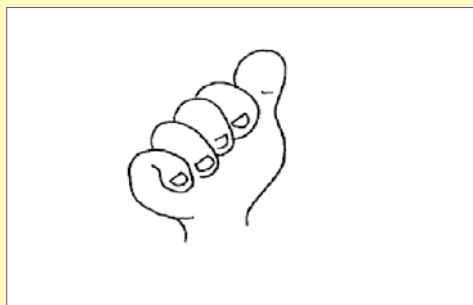
- visiting the college or learning centre and asking what courses they offer.

See if you can talk to the 'learning support manager'.

- telephoning, emailing or writing to your local college or learning centre.



And finally...



Good luck!



We hope you really enjoy adult learning.



NIACE

www.niace.org.uk

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CHANGE Picture Bank

<http://www.changepeople.co.uk>

Charlie's Graphics

www.charliesgraphics.com

Freefoto

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George's story



George had mental health difficulties.
He also had a stroke.



He joined a college and did courses in

- art
- computers and
- personal development.



Because George had a stroke he found it hard to speak and communicate.

The art class helped him communicate with people in a new way.



George even had some of his art work displayed in an art show.



George made new friends at college.
Now he goes on trips with other students.



Adult learning helped George feel better about himself.

Natalie's story



Natalie went to college to do a confidence-building course.

She had depression.



She was really pleased that the college offered small classes.

She did not think she was ready for big classes with lots of people.



She got a lot of help from a support worker at the college.



Now she has done three different classes.



Adult learning has helped Natalie feel more confident to talk to people.

It has helped her feel better about herself.