

## Education

# Applying - Interviews and Auditions

Discrimination after telling them  
you're disabled



**RIGHT TO  
PARTICIPATE**

## Useful knowledge

The Equality Act 2010 protects you from discrimination when you apply for education or training course. The provider can't refuse you a place solely on the basis of your disability.

If you're asked to attend an interview as part of the application and selection process, the interview should focus on your relevant skills and experience, not your disability or health condition. Make a discrete note of any questions you don't think the provider should be asking or write them down straight after if that's easier. This means you have a record of what happened if you believe you've been discriminated against and want to do something about it.

## Useful knowledge

- Effective communication
- Negotiation skills
- Writing clearly
- Decision making
- Record-keeping

## Ways to assert your legal rights

1. If you've been refused admission to a course, you can ask for written reasons for the decision. You could also ask for a copy of the interview panel notes if there were any. Ask the provider if there is an appeal process and a copy of the procedure to be followed.
2. If you aren't happy with the reasons provided, you should follow the appeals process. If there isn't one, you could write to admissions staff highlighting your concerns about the way the interview was conducted, the questions that were asked and the subsequent decision.

Give the facts of the case, being specific and clear. Make sure to describe the disadvantage you've experienced. Be clear about the outcome you

seek. It's a good idea to engage with the staff member responsible for disability within the institution. This person is usually called the learning support adviser, inclusive learning coordinator or disability adviser.

3. If you aren't happy with the outcome of informal discussions you can make a formal complaint. You can usually find information about the internal complaints procedure from your student handbook or the college or university website. They must make the complaints procedure available to you in your preferred format.

If you've exhausted the complaints process and are still unhappy with the outcome, you may be able to take legal action. Taking court action can be a long, stressful and sometimes very expensive process. There are strict time limits for taking legal action under the Equality Act. You will have six months minus one day from the date of discrimination to make your claim in the County Court. The court can consider claims outside the time limit if it considers it 'just and equitable' to do so. You should take legal advice should you wish to pursue this through the legal route.

## You can have confidence in the process because

Colleges and universities have been covered by the Disability Discrimination Act since 2001 and the Equality Act since 2010. Most have a good understanding of their legal duties and well developed systems for making sure disabled students progress in their studies.

## You can get more help from

The [Equality Advisory & Support Service \(EASS\)](#) runs a free helpline assisting individuals with equality and human rights issues across England, Scotland and Wales.

**Telephone** • 0808 800 0082  
**Text phone** • 0808 800 0084  
**Email** • [through websites form](#)

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Disability Rights UK [student helpline](#)

Telephone • 0330 995 0414

Email • [students@disabilityrightsuk.org](mailto:students@disabilityrightsuk.org)

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Disability Rights UK free factsheets on  
[Understanding the Equality Act](#) and  
[Making a complaint](#)