What is the Disability Awareness Guide?
The Disability Awareness Guide has been designed as a pack to work through as part of training and development in working with disabled people. It is designed to provide information about disability issues, implications of an impairment or condition, and how this can be managed in work, education and training. There are activities and action points to help test learning and development as well as the opportunity to build up an excellent bank of contacts and resources to enable referral of disabled people to the right places.

Who is the Disability Awareness Guide aimed at?
The resource is aimed at anybody who is advising disabled people, including nextstep advisors, the Careers Advice Service and advice and guidances practitioners in post-16 education and those working in the broader information and guidance (IAG) services.

Why is this Guide needed?
Those who are providing careers advice to disabled people need to be aware that there may be additional barriers that disabled people face in accessing education, training or employment. They also need to be aware of the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act, not only so that they can advise disabled people of their rights when entering education or employment, but also to ensure that they do not discriminate in their own work.

What is the purpose of the Guide?
It is important to understand that there are many reasons why disabled adults may need additional career guidance. Some will be less likely to have appropriate qualifications, due to underachievement or discrimination at school. Others may have become disabled later in life and need to retrain. Whereas some disabled people are unable to work because of their condition, there are many who want to go into, or return to, work but face additional barriers in doing so. With appropriate information and advice, good opportunities for studying and training, coupled with education providers and employers who are positive about disability, it should be possible to help more disabled people to train and enter employment. Whilst there are some professions that have their own fitness to practice regulations that relate to the demands of a profession or particular health and safety requirements, it should never be assumed that a disabled person cannot enter a specific career. This is because it is not a person’s particular impairment or condition that is important, but the effect that this has on the person and his or her work or learning.
What are the main issues that the guidance covers?

- **Impairments and their effects.** This chapter includes the most common impairments, what the implications are for careers advisors and what reasonable adjustments might be needed.
- **The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005 (DDA).** The chapter on the DDA outlines the principles of the DDA, which is designed, firstly, to protect individual disabled people from discrimination in employment, access to goods and services, education and using transport. Secondly, it places a Disability Equality Duty (DED) on the public sector to eliminate disability discrimination and to ensure that disabled people’s needs as a whole are considered from the outset and built into all of a public body’s decision-making processes.
- **Who is a disabled person under the Act and disclosing a disability** covers who may be considered a disabled person under Part 1, and what disabled people may wish to think about when deciding whether to disclose an impairment or condition.
- **Issues when entering post-16 education** include where and what to study; whether their impairment may affect their choices; what mode of study; what the entry requirements are and whether they meet these; and what support may be available at the college or university. Studying at post-16 level, particularly higher education, often presents different challenges to those faced before, and there may be certain facilities, specialist equipment or support services which will help students with their studies.
- **Specific issues in further education (FE) and work-based learning (WBL).** This section introduces the options for study in FE/WBL, explains the funding mechanisms and outlines the various grants and sources of funding available, both generic sources and those specifically for disabled learners.
- **Specific issues in higher education (HE)** This section introduces the options for study in HE outlines the various fees, loans and grants available, both generically for all students and those specifically for disabled learners.
- **Seeking and entering employment as a disabled person.** This section outlines the transition issues that disabled people may face when entering employment, the support that is available from JobCentre Plus, such as the Access to Work Scheme and the various job introduction schemes, and the signs that an organisation has a particularly positive approach towards disabled people, such as having the Two Ticks Symbol, awarded by JobCentre Plus.
- **Welfare Benefits.** There are many means and non-means tested benefits and allowances available to disabled people, in work or not, which may all have an affect on each other. People who require in-depth advice should be referred to a local Welfare Rights Service, Citizens Advice Bureau or other specific benefit advice agency.
- **Useful Contacts.** Finally there is a list of useful national contacts for general disability organisations, impairment-specific organisations and subject-specific organisations.

**The information in this guide**
The content of this Disability Awareness Guide has been updated in Spring 2008 and has been thoroughly checked for accuracy. However, some information is liable to change quickly, including contact details.

**This guide has been produced on behalf of advice-resources by Skill:**
National Bureau for Students with Disabilities