



Support for students with autism

At Blackpool Sixth Form College, we promote equality of opportunity for the development of potential, regardless of individual differences and abilities.

Additional Learning Support

What support is available?

At Blackpool Sixth Form College we are delighted to enrol young people who have autism.

Our Additional Learning Support (ALS) Department is staffed by an experienced, inclusive team, who are passionate about equality of opportunity for all. As well as supporting your studies, we are keen to help to develop the social and independent skills you will need as you prepare for your future in Further / Higher Education or in the workplace.

The ALS Team are based in the FOCUS Centre, a welcoming support zone, where you can work, ask for advice or meet up with friends before class.

“All support was extremely helpful and on-hand whenever I needed it. The staff are all fantastically understanding.”

Laurence Beer, currently studying BA (Hons) Ancient History at the University of Liverpool.

Before you come to college

We hope to meet you before you apply to Blackpool Sixth Form College. We would like to talk to you, your parents or carers and your school teachers to find out as much as we can so that we can support you straight away, as effectively as possible.

The transition from school to College is a big change for any young person, and if you are on the autistic spectrum this move can present extra challenges. You may benefit from an individualised transition plan, which will help you to feel more confident about the transfer from school to college. As well as visiting school, we will invite you to come into college to find out what you would like to study, and to get a ‘feel’ for College life.

While you are at college

We aim to integrate students with autism into College life, and encourage you to participate in the varied activities on offer. An individual assessment will be made to establish how best to support you. You may benefit from the following support:

- In-class support with a member of the ALS Team
- Out-of-class support, in the FOCUS centre
- A social skills, emotional literacy or other relevant programme
- Support at lunchtime

Your progress will be monitored and reviewed at regular intervals, and provision adapted as necessary, in order to meet your needs.

“One of the most important things that the ALS team gave me was the confidence to ask for help, something that I would never have done at high school, as I didn’t have a strategy. This meant that instead of getting anxious about work, I felt more relaxed which in turn allowed me to achieve. I felt like the support workers understood my needs, and made me feel at ease, as I knew that if I was struggling with a concept or a piece of coursework there was always someone that could ‘reformat’ the information in a way that would help me understand and learn.”

Robert Leonard – Currently in his second year studying a BSC (Hons) Forensic Science at UCLAN.

Preparing for the future

One of the most important decisions you will make at College will be about your future. We will discuss your options and intentions, and support you in your chosen path in a variety of ways including:

- Accompanied careers interview
- Accompanied visits to Universities/other institutions
- Contact with disability officers at universities/colleges to aid in the transition

Frequently asked questions

How many courses do I have to do?

In most cases, Blackpool Sixth expects students to undertake the equivalent of four courses. In exceptional cases, as a result of negotiation with your school SENCO, students may be offered a place to carry out fewer courses.

Can I still have the same arrangements I had at high school for my exams at Blackpool Sixth?

You can still have these provided your needs are approved by the ALS Team. Discuss this in the Focus Centre at college before 1st October.

Will I automatically get provided with an iPad or a laptop?

No – we will consider the provision for computer use within the subjects you have chosen. If we believe that an iPad is suitable, you will have the option to purchase or borrow one through one of the college's iPad schemes.

What about lunchtime?

Dedicated staff and students run a 'friendly' table throughout the lunch period. There are also buddy mentors – students who will meet up with you, help you to settle in and introduce you to new friends.

"The Additional Learning Support team have helped me to achieve greatly, and have calmed me down at stressful times. They have been imperative to my University application success and without that support I would have had real difficulties."

Ben Moulton, currently studying a Foundation Degree in Policing at the University of Central Lancashire, Preston.

This leaflet is available on the website:
www.blackpoolsixth.ac.uk

If you need this information presented in a different way or for further queries, please contact: learningalert@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk or Additional Support on **01253 394911**

