

# Accessible...

## Practice-Based Environments

**The following points of advice will support staff involved in all aspects of work in laboratories, workshops and other practice-based environments to ensure that accessibility issues are considered as part of the learning and teaching process.**

- Always consult the students' Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and individual students about their needs and make reasonable adjustments where recommended.
- Identify potential health and safety issues, although do not assume that students with disabilities will be less careful or pose a greater hazard than other students when working in practice-based environments.
- Consider the accessibility of practice-based environments, including lighting, noise and workspace. If necessary, conduct a full audit.
- Develop health and safety rule sheets, and produce them in a range of formats.
- Where appropriate, position eyewashes so they are accessible to all students.
- Provide students with an outline of what is involved in all practical tasks well in advance of each session. Produce this outline in a wide range of formats.
- It might be necessary for some students to direct an educational support worker through the process of practical tasks as a reasonable adjustment, which will be highlighted in the ILP. For more information about this, contact the DRC.
- Give students an opportunity to familiarise themselves with each environment before the first session. Students with visual impairments may need an individual tour of the environment and familiarisation with equipment etc prior to the start of the first session. In this way and issues arising can be identified and strategies discussed before the sessions begin.
- If a practice-based environment is not accessible for a student, consider alternative activities that will enable the student to fulfil the learning objectives, e.g. virtual events on CD-ROM or videos.

**The Disability Resource Centre is available to discuss any aspect of accessibility and is committed to supporting staff in developing awareness and best practice.**