BIFE welcomes applications from learners with additional needs and will endeavour to provide appropriate supports and services for all learners with disabilities or specific learning difficulties to access its courses, within the limits of available resources.

Funding may be available from the Irish Government and the European Social Fund under the Higher Education Authority (HEA) Fund for Learners with Disabilities. Learners with a wide variety of disabilities are supported including those with a Visual Impairment, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Physical Disability, Mental Health Conditions, Specific Learning Difficulties, such as Dyslexia and Developmental Co-ordination Disorders such as Dyspraxia and significant ongoing illnesses. Applicants to the Disability Fund must meet certain nationality and residency criteria. The services and supports available to individual learners will depend on the approval of a grant allocated by the HEA.

**Procedure for application**

**IMPORTANT** 1.1: Please tick the Learning/Other Disability Section on the BIFE Student Application form. This implies consent for us to apply to the HEA for funding from the Fund for Learners with Disabilities.

**IMPORTANT** 1.2: Bring a copy of relevant evidence to your course application interview and leave it at reception marked for the attention of the Disability Officer. You can also post it in.

 ***For Guidelines on acceptable evidence please see the HEA Guidelines below***

1.3: Learners need to also bring a copy of the Department of Education’s accommodations letter they received in 2nd level. This is required for any special considerations for examinations

1.4: Failure to disclose relevant information at application stage could result in the lack of provision of additional supports and services which are designed to meet your needs.

1.5: The Disability Officer will assess if your evidence meets the HEA guidelines

1.6: When you have accepted an offered place in BIFE and have Student Status an interview with the Disability Officer will be arranged by email to process your application. This interview is often on Registration Day but can be in April/May if you already have Student Status.

1.8 The initial deadline for applicants is the end of October

* 1. Late applicants can be accepted up the 3rd week in December

2.0 The type of Support is purely for educational purposes and consists of mainly

* Additional learning support /Personal Assistant while in BIFE
* Transport to and from the college
* Assistive technology equipment
* Use of a sign language interpreter
* Examination Considerations (scribe, reader, use of word processor in exams)

2.1: The level of services and support learners receive will depend on the grant allocated by the HEA and the recommendations in the consultant’s reports

2.3: Funding usually comes through in November/ December each year

2.4: Funding is not provided for any costs associated with assessment or diagnosis of a disability. More general information is available from the Higher Education Authority (HEA), www.hea.ie.

2.5: Learners have the right to appeal to the HEA, if refused a grant.

3.1: Learners who require special assistance (e.g. a sign language interpreter, personal assistants) when attending an interview or advisory meeting are requested to provide their own assistant.

3.2: It is important to note that if the applicant is unable to attend for interview at the scheduled time that adequate cancellation notice for this service can be given.

3.3: Further Education does not have any provision for a Disability Office from the end of the summer term in May to the start of the Academic year in August. Any queries or correspondence will have to be dealt with outside of that time.