

## **CDEC wins AGCAS Diversity Award**

The Career Development & Employment Centre (CDEC) has won the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services ([www.agcas.org.uk](http://www.agcas.org.uk)) AGCAS Diversity Award for the ***Welcome to your future*** audio resource pack for visually impaired students joining the Universities of Sussex, Brighton and Chichester. The project was led by CDEC and the award was announced at the AGCAS Biennial Conference in Birmingham on the 6<sup>th</sup> September and presented by Anna Ruewell, Head of UK Graduate Resourcing, BP, and Margaret Dane, Chief Executive of AGCAS.

***Welcome to your future*** was funded by The Blatchington Court Trust - a local voluntary sector organisation whose mission is to promote education and employment for the vision impaired under the age of 30 throughout Sussex – who invited an application for a project and this was the start of positive collaboration. The Trust ([www.blatchington-court.co.uk](http://www.blatchington-court.co.uk)) has a long association with the University of Sussex in providing support to visually impaired individuals. Feedback from students and from the Blatchington Court Trust led to focusing on developing accessible ways to provide information, advice and guide to meet the needs of new visually impaired students in higher education in a format which was appropriate.

The resource is an audio welcome pack for visually impaired students joining the University of Sussex, Brighton and Chichester and is made up of two CDs. Disc 1 (approx 20 minutes; each service differs) is a students' guide to each of the higher education careers services to enable the Universities of Sussex, Brighton and Chichester to describe the careers information, advice, guidance and employment services on offer to students. Disc 2: (35 minutes) provides an outline of the career planning process and inspiring but realistic case studies from Alison, Andy, Matthew, Amanda, Charlotte and Nicky: six visually impaired graduates who tell their story. Accounts feature both the good and bad experiences of visually impaired students and provide insights and tips from these individuals.

In addition to developing accessible information for new university students the project has increased knowledge among careers staff of the issues facing visually impaired students and a greater awareness of the career development learning needs of visually impaired students in higher education.

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