

**“Partners in Learning” Advanced Certificate Course for Education Support Professionals working with Children and Young People with Vision Impairment**

## Introduction

As a teacher, teaching assistant, support worker, or early years practitioner, you play a vital role in understanding and meeting the needs of children and young people with vision impairment in your setting. The **Partners in Learning** course provides you with the specialist understanding, knowledge, and skills necessary to ensure equitable access to education and to enable the best outcomes for the learners you support.

The course reflects best practice in vision impairment education as outlined in the sector-endorsed **Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (CFVI).**

## Course Pathways — Starting September 2025

You can choose between two flexible study options, both offered at the **same cost** with comprehensive tutor-led training:

* **One-Year Pathway**
Complete all six units within one year. Ideal for those wishing to quickly gain specialist knowledge and apply their learning sooner.
* **Two-Year Pathway**
Spread the same content over two years. Perfect for pacing your study around work, family, or other commitments.

**How to Apply**

Applications for the 2025 intake are now open.

* Download the [**Partners in Learning Certificate Course for Education Support Staff – Application Form**](https://viewweb.org.uk/wp-content/public-files/Partners_in_learning_application_form.docx)
* Complete and email your application to: courses@viewweb.org.uk

## About the Course

Partners in Learning is a comprehensive training programme designed for teaching assistants and education professionals working with learners aged 0–25 who have vision impairment. Originally developed by **RNIB** and **The Open University**, the course has been delivered by **VIEW** since 2015. It is the only nationally available course of its kind in the UK.

Since its launch in 2005, around 1,200 education professionals have completed the course.

## Accreditation History

Until 2018, Partners in Learning was accredited as a BTEC Advanced Certificate at Level 3. Due to changes in BTEC regulations requiring a minimum of 100 learners per year and the low incidence nature of vision impairment, VIEW relinquished BTEC status. Despite this, the course content remains unchanged in depth and quality, and it continues to receive excellent feedback from students and employers. Several local authorities now mandate Partners in Learning for teaching assistants in their visual impairment support services.

## Key Features

* Developed jointly by RNIB and The Open University (Level 3 equivalent)
* Delivered online with tutor-supported study and discussion activities
* Includes two live online training sessions via Zoom
* Six units completed over 12 or 24 months (group-based learning with peer interaction)
* Starts September 2025 with an introductory Zoom training day
* Course fee: £850 (£710 for VIEW members)

## Course Content and Learning Outcomes

Partners in Learning challenges you to reflect on and develop your current practice, share ideas with others in the field, and apply new knowledge in your working environment. You will be encouraged to use your learning practically to improve outcomes for learners with vision impairment.

## Learning Outcomes

By completing this course, you will be able to:

* Understand vision impairment and its implications for educational and social development
* Acquire skills and techniques to support learners and foster independence both inside and outside the classroom
* Develop an appreciation of effective teamwork in supporting learners
* Build positive working relationships that promote learner independence and active participation in planning and decision-making

## Course Units

The course comprises six units. Each unit involves self-study, using the resources provided, and assessed elements: three assignments, three discussion activities and a knowledge-check test.

Part 1: Understanding vision impairment and SEND/ALN/ASN support for learners with vision impairment:

* **Unit 1: Provision, roles and responsibilities** including:

Principles affecting provision

Types of placement and provision

Role of the Teaching Assistant/Classroom Assistant/Pupil Support Assistant

* **Unit 2 Vision and vision impairment** including:

Ocular and cerebral vision impairment and their effects

Sensory development

Clinical and functional assessment

* **Unit 3 Effective practice** including:

Techniques for effective teamwork

Team development

Environmental modifications

Part 2: Ensuring effective support for the vision impaired

* **Unit 4 Curriculum access**

Challenges in the curriculum

Access to assessment

Ensuring access and inclusion in the curriculum

* **Unit 5 Communication skills in a learning environment**

Challenges to communication

Developing communications skills

Supporting forms of communication

* **Unit 6 Independence and social inclusion**

Developing social inclusion

Developing living skills

Reviewing mobility skills

Developing personal agency and independence

## Assessment

Your progress is assessed through a combination of:

* Online self-study activities, including multiple-choice tests
* Online group discussions to share and deepen your learning with peers
* Short written assignments applying your knowledge to your own practice

## Benefits of the Course

* Awarded an advanced certificate from VIEW
* Flexible online study with a detailed timetable
* Extensive course materials across six comprehensive units
* Varied learning and assessment approaches
* Regular interaction with tutors and fellow students
* Online training days with no need for travel

**Note:** This course does not meet the mandatory qualification requirements for Qualified Teachers of Children with Visual Impairment (QTVI).

## Who Should Enrol?

The course is designed for education professionals working with children and young people who are blind or partially sighted, including:

* Teachers
* Teaching Assistants
* Learning Support Assistants
* Support Workers
* Early Years Practitioners

## Entry Requirements

Applicants should:

* Be educated to GCSE level, NVQ Level 2, or equivalent qualifications or experience
* Have regular, ongoing work with one or more children or young people with vision impairment during the course
* Have access to reliable broadband internet and email facilities
* Have support from their employer for the duration of the training

## Start Date

The next intake begins in **September 2025**.

**Contact Information**

For further information or questions, please contact us at:
**courses@viewweb.org.uk**