

# TOP 10 TIPS FOR ADULT LEARNERS

**1** There are options available for every adult learner, whether you would like to quickly re-train for a skill based position, develop an additional level of expertise, or even discover areas you may be interested in pursuing! *Look up local certification and degree programs to explore your options.*

Did you know that financial aid is not based on personal credit rating? Even for student loans. There are many options for financial aid outside of what you get through FAFSA, like local scholarships or grants. *See UpliftED resources to learn more.* **2**

**3** Adult learners typically do not start with 0 credit hours towards their educational goals. Many adult students can apply previous college experience, certifications, professional development, or even life experiences towards the achievement of their degree or certificate! *View the **Prior Learning Glossary** to learn more.*

Be prepared for the application and admissions process. It can be smoother than you think if you're prepared. Find out what each school requires. Some institutions will ask for transcripts, resumes, or personal statements. Having access to these documents prepared ahead of time will simplify the process. **4**

**5** There are programs designed to fit any individual. Be sure to look into the way the programs you're considering are structured. Are all classes online? At night? Accelerated pacing? Choosing a program that is structured in a way that fits your schedule and learning style will ensure success.

Employers are looking for individuals with skills and industry recognized certifications. Some organizations will help with things such as funding, childcare, and transportation which are potential barriers to academic success. Make sure to ask your employer if any of these resources are available to you. **6**

**7** Don't fear online classes, but don't think they're easier. Online classes are distinctly different than in-person. You must schedule your own time to "go to class", and don't forget to turn off your phone! You can use online classes to your benefit, though, by connecting with peers from different backgrounds and having flexibility to determine your schedule.

One of the top challenges for adult learners is managing responsibilities – work, family, & education. Your responsibilities must be considered when choosing which pathway to education is right for you. Having a support system is key! Make sure you check with your institution to see what resources are available such as academic counseling. **8**

**9** Accreditation is one of the most important things you can look into to ensure your degree/certification will be high quality and transferable. While searching for schools make sure you ask, "Is the institution accredited and what kind of accreditation do they hold?". Remember this general rule: universities should be regionally accredited, and technical schools should be nationally accredited. *Go to [edsmart.org/regional-vs-national-accreditation](https://edsmart.org/regional-vs-national-accreditation) to learn more.*

Congratulate yourself for investing in your education! The application process can be daunting but use the resources available to you, ask questions and don't give up. Once in school, take steps to manage responsibilities and set aside time for you. You can do it! **10**