

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Transition Pathways?

Transition Pathways is a collection of two-year, non-credit programs for young adults with autism and/or intellectual disabilities. Our ideal candidate will begin their final year of high school in Philadelphia, and will continue in the program for one year after high school graduation. This program offers innovative pathways to competitive employment, independent living, community engagement, and lifelong learning that can be combined flexibly depending on the individual’s strengths and preferences. There will be two pathway options to choose from that will combine the following tracks in different ways. The activities and outcomes from these tracks are outlined below.

ACTIVITIES I will	TRACKS		OUTCOMES When I graduate, I will
	High School	After High School	
Complete courses in self-care, advocacy, executive & social skills	Independence		Be able to live in my own apartment, with a bit of help
Complete structured internships in Year 1, and a selected job in Year 2	Employment		Be working in a regular job, with some support
Audit typical Drexel courses or community-based learning resources	Lifelong Learning		Continue pursuing other learning opportunities
Participate in Drexel events & clubs and volunteer in community;	Community		Continue being involved with others in the community
<p>Each TRACK involves different activities that provide different experiences to teach different skills and reach different outcomes.</p> <p>Each PATHWAY combines tracks based on the person’s strengths and interests.</p> <p>All activities are directed by a PERSON CENTERED PLAN</p>			

What are the Pathway options?

Our Work Pathway

Our Work Pathway emphasizes the Employment Track, with a goal of at least 20 hours per week in internships in the first year that lead to competitive employment in the second year. Students rotate through at least 3-4 structured internships during their first year. We include activities from the Independent Living Track across both years of the program. In the second year, we add activities from the Community and Lifelong Learning Tracks. Our goal is to increase the number of adults on the autism spectrum working at Drexel. We also hope to tap into our unique co-op network of employers, and other businesses in the surrounding community.

Our College Pathway

Our College Pathway is built on a [ThinkCollege](#) model but includes specific adaptations for adults on the autism spectrum and a greater emphasis on employment. Unlike many ThinkCollege programs, our program will start during high school. The College Pathway includes an equal emphasis on Employment,

Independent Living, and Lifelong Learning Tracks in the first year. The Lifelong Learning track includes opportunities to audit neurotypical Drexel courses as part of a non-credit program. Courses include a selection of required or recommended courses for Drexel freshman orienting them to college and college life, and the option of electives in specific areas of interest to the student. Students also rotate through at least 3-4 structured internships during their first year. In the second year, we will add activities from the Community Track.

Questions about our Program

How many students will be accepted?

- Up to 16 students will be accepted each year in the initial stages of the program, although we may expand in future years.

When will the program start?

- The first cohort of Transition Pathways students will start fall 2016. Students will begin an orientation at Drexel when Philadelphia high schools start classes and will begin auditing Drexel courses when Drexel begins classes.

Will Transition Pathways be a Drexel degree program?

- No. Transition Pathways is a collection of non-credit programs based at Drexel University. As part of the program, all students must participate in employment internships at Drexel and with partner employers, and courses designed solely for Transition Pathways students. Students in the College Pathway will also audit a selection of neurotypical Drexel courses. Most of these courses are required for students in Pathways, but there are opportunities to take electives in the second year.

Will students receive college credit for courses and internships?

- No. Transition Pathways is a non-credit program. Students will not receive any credits that they could subsequently apply towards a traditional degree program. Young adults on the autism spectrum interested in immediately pursuing a traditional degree after high school may consider applying to a college with a specialized support program for matriculating students on the autism spectrum (like the [Drexel DASP](#) program).

How long is the school day?

- For the first year of the program, while students are still registered in high school, the program is the same length as a typical school day in high school - about 7 hours.
- For the second year of the program, the school day will likely be longer, to create more opportunities to become involved in Drexel life.

What does a student's schedule look like?

- In their first year, we expect that students will arrive at a classroom on Drexel's campus, to begin each day in a 60 minute seminar just for Pathways students. The last 30 to 60 minutes of each school day may also be spent in a Pathways seminar or study hall. The schedule for the remainder of the day depends on the pathway they have chosen;
 - Students in the Work Pathway spend the rest of their day in an internship, and eat lunch at their internship site with their co-workers.

- Students in the College Pathway spend part of the day in an internship, part of the day auditing courses on campus, and part of the day working on assignments related to their coursework.
- The exact schedule for the second year includes the same range of activities, plus more opportunities to get involved in campus and community life. The schedule also becomes more individualized and flexible as students identify jobs and courses even more aligned with their career and life interests

What are the opportunities for Transition Pathways students to be involved with neurotypical individuals?

- Pathways programs are designed to bring young adults on the spectrum and neurotypical adults - classmates, other students, co-workers, and so on - together across much of the day. We will also launch an expansion of Drexel's peer mentor programs, in which neurotypical students volunteer to coach students on the autism spectrum across a range of activities.

What activities and facilities do Transition Pathways students have access to on Drexel's campus?

- Transition Pathway students have access to all activities and facilities that are available to other Drexel students. The Pathways course in the first year orients students to the wide range of activities available so that students can begin to explore campus life. The second year of the program includes specific opportunities of interest to Pathways students to become involved in clubs, sports, and other campus and community activities, with the support of peer mentors.

What does the program cost?

- The first year of the program is free. Since the first year of the program is the student's final year of high school, no fees are charged to students for year one of Transition Pathways.
- Costs for the second year of the program are still being determined. Transition Pathways is specifically designed to make best use of public funds to cover program costs, and we are making every effort to minimize costs to students and families..

Can Transition Pathways students receive financial aid?

- This will be determined during this coming year. We will be applying for recognition as a Comprehensive Transition Program in fall 2016. If our application is successful then some students may qualify for federal financial aid in their second year of the program.

Are Transition Pathway students entitled to related services that they received in high school?

- Yes. Pathways students begin the program in their final year of high school and are entitled to all services as described in their IEP. In the second year of the program, students will have the opportunity to apply for additional assistance through the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and other sources.

Where do students live?

- At the present time, we do not offer an option to live on campus in a Drexel residence, but we are exploring alternatives.

How will students get to campus?

- Our ideal applicant is registered in high school for the first year of Transition Pathways, and so will be entitled to whatever transportation options they might use to attend high school (e.g., school bus, subsidized public transportation, and so on). These arrangements are made through the school district. In the second year of the program, students are no longer entitled to

transportation through their school. We expect that one goal for many students in the first year of the program will be the independent use of public transportation.

For more information, please visit our webpage, as information will be updated regularly, including more detailed information on application deadlines and procedures. Interested applicants or their caregivers should also consider getting on the Transition Pathways mailing list by emailing us at Transitionpathways@drexel.edu.