Learning Support Procedures

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Contents

1. Purpose

This policy applies to support provided to learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, temporary injuries/disabilities, those in need of English and/or mathematics support, to ensure they have the opportunity to access the full range of provision at the college.

2. Scope

All learners funded by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) / Skills Funding Agency (SFA) will be able to access Learning Support, regardless of mode of study, at any time during their learning programme.

The college receives LS funding to provide learning support staff and specialist equipment. This funding will be used strategically to ensure that the greatest number of learners can receive support to access college courses.

3. Introduction

The framework for the SEND policy is provided by: The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, The Children and Families Act 2014, The Education Act 1996, The Single Equality Scheme 2013-16, The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, SEND Code of Practice and key regulations and circulars on the organisation of special educational provision (see Appendix 2). Changes in policy or practice will be updated as new legislation emerges.

Learning Support is a service that is provided to help learners who have disclosed a disability, learning difficulty or medical condition, whilst they are studying at College. We aim to remove any potential barriers to learning to ensure that learners develop their personal skills and confidence and become as independent as possible in their learning and achieve their learning goals, personal goals and employment ambitions.

Support for learners is provided by a team of Learning Support Officers, Specialist Assessors, the Transition Coordinator and a team of Learning Facilitators who are directly employed by the College, supported on occasion, by agency staff. Support is delivered in a variety of ways, tailored to meet an individual's needs. This may be classroom, small group or one to one support in a study session and/or equipment based.

Support may involve mobility support, note-taking, explaining/clarifying tasks, helping to develop organisational/time-management skills, support with Maths, English and language skills. LS staff work closely with teaching teams to modify resources to make learning, assessments and examinations accessible to the learner/s. Support may also be needed to help a learner to remain calm, to behave appropriately, or to be able to deal with changes in routine.

LS is learner focused and support is provided across all areas of the College including discrete programmes for learners with LDD and Higher Education programmes.

Support for HE programmes is funded through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). Careers staff will support learners through the DSA application process.

HE learners without DSA, can access digital support through google classroom and support to help build study skills to assist with research and referencing techniques, assignment support, organisation/time management tools and assistive software, where appropriate. In some instances, screeners are available to identify learners who may have indicators of Specific Learning Difficulties. Specialist LS staff can conduct and interpret the screener and provide advice and guidance to the learner, including if individuals wish to pursue a formal diagnosis from a suitably qualified professional.

A definition of a disabled person is someone who has: *a long term mental or physical impairment which has a significant impact on the person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.*

The College aims to ensure that all learners are neither advantaged or disadvantaged over their peers by any long term, substantial special educational needs or difficulties which fall into one or more of the following categories:
- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

4. Responsibility

The Learning Support Manager will have responsibility for strategic management and implementation of systems to maintain the security of personal information and working practices.

The Transition Co-ordinator will lead on transition meetings, observations and assessments of learners. The Transition Co-ordinator will plan transition visits to the college in collaboration with the curriculum team and will be involved in the Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) consultation process.

The Additional Learning Support (ALS) team will be responsible for liaising with the local authority to ensure they are kept up-to-date with all aspects of learning and engagement of all students with an EHCP. This may include details of learner status, progress and achievement. The ALS team also collate and provide all the contributory information and evidence needed for EHCP annual reviews and ensure that annual reviews are held and conducted in accordance with regulatory guidance and procedures.

5. Outcomes

- To identify learners with special educational needs and disabilities to ensure that their needs are met or to further signpost learners whose needs cannot be met by existing College resources.

- To inform the relevant local authority of learners who may require an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP), ensuring all relevant processes and procedures are followed.
- In accordance with GDPR, to work collaboratively with outside agencies to provide appropriate information where assessments or review of special educational need are being made.
- To ensure that College activities and resources are accessible to learners with special educational needs and disabilities wherever possible and reasonable.
- To support all learners with special educational needs and disabilities to learn, achieve and make progress.
- To maintain effective communication to ensure parents/carers/guardians and appropriate partner agencies are informed of relevant learning, progress and attainment information for learners with special educational needs and disabilities.
- To ensure that learners express their views and are fully involved in decisions which affect their education.
- To promote effective partnerships with all stakeholders.
- To develop effective links with partner school SENCOs and local authorities.
- To provide equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum, inclusive of all equality groups and regardless of personal circumstance or special educational needs and disabilities.
- To work with curriculum teams and other internal departments to ensure that support strategies and recommendations are implemented and learning needs are met.
- To use an holistic approach to developing learners physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually.
- To recognise the importance of each learner's self-esteem and self-value and enhance this wherever possible.
- To provide learners who have SEND with independent and impartial careers advice and guidance.
- To meet the training needs of all staff involved with learners who have special educational needs and disabilities.

6. Procedures for Achievement of Outcomes

- Implementing clear systems for identifying and assessing learners who have special educational needs and disabilities.
- Compilation and maintenance of recording systems for learners with disclosed special educational needs and disabilities.
- Regular monitoring and review of progress of learners with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Ensuring that learners with special educational needs and disabilities are encouraged to grow their independence in preparation for transition out of further education.
- Where relevant, learners will have a Medical Protocol and / or Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) completed by the Health and Safety Team.
- LS staff will participate in local authority annual reviews of learners who have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP).
- Encourage learners to have high aspirations for their education, employment, independent living and community participation.

- Work with the learner, their parents/carers/guardians and other education/training providers, as relevant, to ensure learners transition smoothly between phases of education.
- Collaborative working between all relevant staff at the College to establish robust and transparent approaches to implementing Exam Access Arrangements (EAA) for individual learners.
- Ensure that the College fulfils the requirement of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 and other relevant legislation, codes of practice and guidance.
- The Learning Support Manager will co-ordinate provision for learners with special educational needs and disabilities, liaising with parents/carers/ guardians, staff and relevant external agencies
- The Learning Support Manager will endeavour to advise parents/carers/guardians and learners, as appropriate, when seeking diagnoses for specific learning difficulties and requesting EHCP needs assessment.
- The Learning Support Manager will be responsible for regular review of the quality of our provision for learners with special educational needs and disabilities.
- The Learning Support Manager will make recommendations for the training needs of staff.
- Consult with SENCOs from other providers to ensure effective use of resources and the dissemination of best practice.

7. Reporting Concerns

Given the sensitive nature of the issues surrounding learners with special educational needs and disabilities, any learner/parent/carer/guardian with a specific concern or complaint relating to the provision of support is welcome to address these directly to the Learning Support Manager, who will note any complaints and arrange a suitable follow up meeting to discuss the situation. If this does not solve the issue or allay the complaint, then the learner/parent/carer/guardian is welcome to follow the procedures in the College Complaints Policy.

8. Identification of support need

Learners and other agencies can alert the college to an additional learning support need via a number of routes:

- A need can be identified in the relevant section of the college application and enrolment form.
- Learners can disclose a need during the admissions interview.
- All learners will be encouraged to state where they have received previous Exam Access Arrangements.
- Learners can disclose a need at any time during the admissions process.
- The learner's school reference may indicate support that was in place during the learner's compulsory education.
- A learner may be identified through Key to Success (KTS) data.
- The Local Authority may alert the college to a potential need.
- Tutors / Progress Coaches may refer learners to support at any time during the course, and particularly following Student Performance Reviews.

- Learners may be classified "at risk", and therefore may be identified as needing extra support to ensure they remain on programme.
- Prospective learners can be identified and assessed for potential additional learning support needs through the college's links with local high schools and special schools.
- An LS interview will take place to ascertain learning needs and a support plan will be generated with the learner and their parent/carer/guardian, where relevant, and made available to all staff working with the learner.
- The ALS team will attend all open events and interview evenings to meet learners who have a learning difficulty or disability. Individual LS discussions and interviews can also take place at these events.

All data collected will be linked to the LS database EBS Support Manager to ensure that all requests for support and equipment are recorded in a central area. ProMonitor is the college's central reporting system to ensure that Tutors / Progress Coach can access information about their learners via the learner's profile page and Group Profile.

9. Assessment of requirements

The ALS team will meet to discuss the level of support needed for learners with special educational needs and disabilities. In some instances, particularly for those with an EHCP, the level of support may be determined as 'high need' and as such a high needs funding application must be submitted to the relevant local authority to meet the costs of providing higher levels of support. Wherever possible and reasonable, all learners with high needs, who have an EHCP, will be invited to participate in transition activities.

An agreed Support Plan will be created along with a Risk Assessment, Medical Protocol (for learners with medical care needs), a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (for learners who are incapable of following instructions or whose physical disabilities require them to have support to leave the building). Support requiring exceptional and/or specialist support, equipment or resources (e.g. complex medical needs) will be discussed with the relevant local authority and appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to explore ways of accommodating requirements so that, wherever possible and reasonable, the learner can attend the college. This may include requests for additional funding from the local authority.

Whether those needs can be accommodated and considered reasonable will depend on factors including, but not limited to: the needs of the student, the effectiveness of the adaptations and adjustments, the cost of the adjustment, whether the centre can reasonably provide the adjustment and the likely impact of the adjustment on the learner, other learners, accommodation and resources.

Every effort will be made to ensure that initial advice and guidance is responsive to needs, and recruitment practices are robust and demonstrate integrity without compromising the demands of the qualification.

All learners identified for LS will be required to engage with the support provided. The college reserves the right to remove support if it is perceived as unused or if a learner no longer needs support at the level originally planned.

Staff development will take place to address training needs based on the support needs of the prospective learners. Specialist equipment will be allocated where needed. Wherever possible the college will endeavour to ensure the appropriate level of support is provided from the first day of the academic year.

Directors of Curriculum, Safeguarding & Inclusion Managers and Progress Coaches and curriculum teams will be informed of learners receiving additional learning support during the first week of term. Panel meetings and discussions are held to ensure that all curriculum areas are advised of the learners in their areas with an EHCP and those deemed 'high needs' are identified and relevant information from the EHCP is shared.

All learners identified with a learning support need will have a teaching and learning adjustment statement prepared and uploaded to Pro-Monitor. The statement will inform staff of a learner's support needs and offer guidance on how the learner's needs can be met. Every effort is taken to ensure an inclusive environment is maintained in the classroom and in all other areas of the college. Learners may be required to provide medical or other suitable evidence to demonstrate special educational needs and disabilities or other substantial impairment.

10. Access

All learners will be able to apply to access additional learning support at any time during their programme, through self or tutor referral. Wherever possible, support will be provided, however this is dependent on the learner's individual needs and whether the support requested is considered reasonable.

Should the student be required to work from home support will continue while learning online where feasible to do so.

Learners receiving in-class support will have their support regularly reviewed and adpted to reflect changing support needs. Learning Facilitators provide in-class support and are expected to record the support provided on ProMonitor and report to the Learning Support Officers any concerns about a particular learner.

Formal diagnoses of specific learning difficulties cannot be done through the college, requests for this should be made through the NHS or through private assessment.

11. Timing

Additional learning support will only be available for the amount of time that is in the best interests of the learner. If a learner is considered to have developed the skills to engage in learning independently, support will be withdrawn. Withdrawal of support will be discussed with the learner, staff and parent/carer/guardian where relevant. It is important that wherever possible, learners achieve independence and do not become dependent on the support they are receiving and are prepared for the transition out of further education.

Appropriate staff development will be available to enable all staff involved in LS to support learners' needs.

Adequate resources will be allocated to enable additional learning support to be delivered in an innovative, contextualised and relevant way.

12. Costing

EBS Support Manager software will be used to cost the support for every learner who is identified as needing LS. This data will be used to generate the LS ILR return for each academic year. Documented evidence for each individual learner is available within the LS records, to demonstrate the accuracy of all LS costings.

Applications for High Needs Funding support will be made to the relevant Local Authority within agreed timescales.

The preparation for the LS ILR return is undertaken by the Director of MIS. The Learning Support Manager and Director of Student Support and Inclusion check all costings. This activity is planned to take place in a timely way to fit within the ILR returns schedule communicated by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA).

13. Standardisation

Quality systems will be used across the college to ensure standardised documentation and recording systems. Where in-class support has been requested, tutors must detail the role of the support within the lesson. During any internal inspection process the teaching and learning assessment team or the LS manager will ensure that the role of the support is being used and directed effectively.
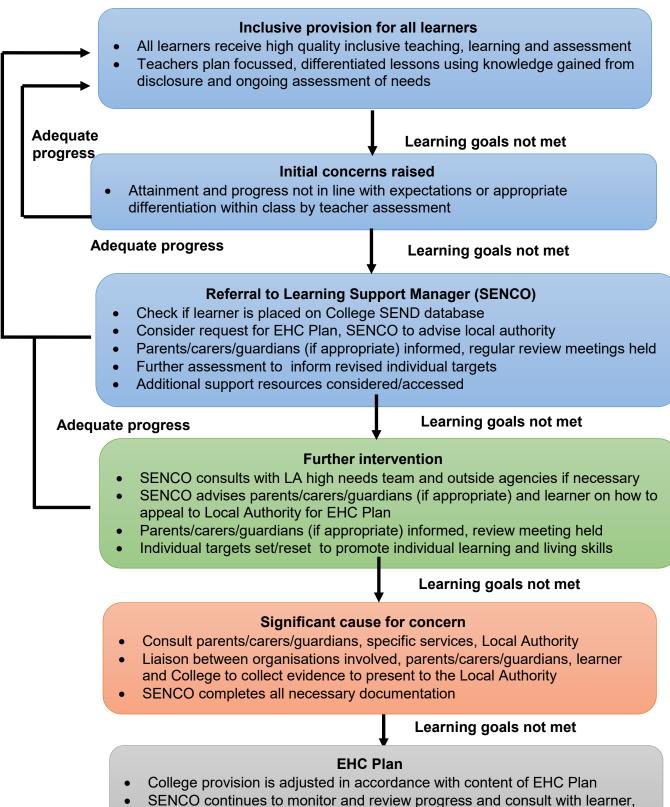
The Learning Support Manager will conduct learning visits as part a wider QA activity of LS staff.

14. Monitoring

The policy will be monitored by the Executive Leadership Team, the College Management Team and the Learning Support Manager and the Director of Student Support & Inclusion at appropriate intervals through their meetings and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Appendix 1 - SEND Flowchart for provision, intervention and review

Inclusive provision for all learners
- All learners receive high quality inclusive teaching, learning and assessment
- Teachers plan focussed, differentiated lessons using knowledge gained from disclosure and ongoing assessment of needs

Adequate progress

Learning goals not met

Initial concerns raised
- Attainment and progress not in line with expectations or appropriate differentiation within class by teacher assessment

Adequate progress

Learning goals not met

Referral to Learning Support Manager (SENCO)
- Check if learner is placed on College SEND database
- Consider request for EHC Plan, SENCO to advise local authority
- Parents/carers/guardians (if appropriate) informed, regular review meetings held
- Further assessment to inform revised individual targets
- Additional support resources considered/accessed

Learning goals not met

Adequate progress

Further intervention
- SENCO consults with LA high needs team and outside agencies if necessary
- SENCO advises parents/carers/guardians (if appropriate) and learner on how to appeal to Local Authority for EHC Plan
- Parents/carers/guardians (if appropriate) informed, review meeting held
- Individual targets set/reset to promote individual learning and living skills

Learning goals not met

Significant cause for concern
- Consult parents/carers/guardians, specific services, Local Authority
- Liaison between organisations involved, parents/carers/guardians, learner and College to collect evidence to present to the Local Authority
- SENCO completes all necessary documentation

Learning goals not met

EHC Plan
- College provision is adjusted in accordance with content of EHC Plan
- SENCO continues to monitor and review progress and consult with learner, parents/carers/guardians and relevant external agencies

Appendix 2 – DSA process flowchart

Get medical evidence	Medical evidence can be a letter from your GP or consultant, outlining your condition/disability and how it affects you. If you have a specific learning difficulty (SpLD) then you will need a post-16 report from a practitioner psychologist or a suitably qualified specialist tutor holding a current Assessment Practising Certificate. Contact the Learning Support Team to check if you have relevant medical evidence.
Complete and send off a DSA	Contact your nearest needs assessment centre and book an appointment. You can find details of your nearest assessment centre at www.dsa-qag.org.uk Your funding body should contact you, by e-mail and/or letter, with details of the support they will fund, based on your needs assessment.
Wait to hear from your funding body	Your funding body should contact you by e-mail and/or letter, telling you to arrange a needs assessment.
Book a needs assessment	Contact your nearest needs assessment centre and book an appointment. You can find details of your nearest assessment centre at www.dsa-qag.org.uk. Your funding body should contact you, by e-mail and/or letter, with details of the support they will fund, based on your needs assessment.
Attend the needs assessment	You will discuss your support needs with an assessor. They will ask about your disability/condition, previous support, your university course and what sort of support you will need. The needs assessor may demonstrate software to show you some assistive technology. The assessment may take up to two hours.
Needs assessment report sent to funding body	Your assessor will write up a needs assessment report which will contain recommendations for support and equipment. After you've checked this, the report will be sent to your funding body.
Waiting to hear from your funding body	Your funding body should contact you based email and/or letter, with details of the support that they will fund, based on your needs assessment.
Contact supplier to order	If you are entitled to equipment you will need to contact the supplier to arrange delivery. The details of the supplier will be on the letter from your funding body. You will also need to organise equipment training.
Receive support	If you have been recommended a specialist tutor or a mentor, contact the organisation to ensure they have all the correct details and arrange support.

Appendix 3 – Legislation and guidance relevant to this policy

UN convention on the Rights of the Child	1989
Education Act	1996, 2002
Mental Capacity Act	2005
United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	2007
Single Equality Scheme	2015
Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability: Progress and next steps	2012
Children and Families Act	2014
The Special Educational Needs (Local Offer) Regulations	2014
Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions	April 2014
Mental health and behaviour in schools	June 2014
Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years	July 2014 (Revised January 2015)
Send gateway for advice and resources	http://www.sendgateway.org.uk/
Council for Disabled Children	http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/
Ambitious About Autism	http://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk
Local Support Organisations	
Warrington LA local offer	https://askollie.warrington.gov.uk/localoffer/
Warrington SEND information and advice team	http://www.warringtonsendiass.co.uk/
Careers Advice	Careers adviser based in learner services
Warrington Disability Partnership	http://www.disabilitypartnership.org.uk/
Cheshire Autism Practical Support	http://www.cheshireautism.org.uk/database/local-groups-services/