



Additional Learning Support & Inclusion Policy

Policy Area: Student Services

Policy Lead: Assistant Principal Student Experience

Approval By: Executive

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. East Sussex College is committed to treating all students & apprentices equitably, fairly, and with due regard, providing reasonable adjustments for identified learning difficulties, disabilities, and medical conditions, including mental health difficulties. The college's ethos of inclusion, widening participation, and promoting equality and diversity is encapsulated in this policy, defining the scope, principles, available services, and approach to supporting students/apprentices for long-term success.
- 1.2. East Sussex College is committed to providing an educational environment that nurtures students to become increasingly confident, independent individuals, through the provision of engaging, stimulating, and challenging learning opportunities. The college is committed to meeting the individual needs of students through diverse provision and assessment methods. Its culture is rooted in tolerance and respect, ensuring fair and dignified treatment for all.
- 1.3. This policy aims to provide clear processes and procedures to ensure that students/apprentices with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) have opportunities and support to enable them to succeed and achieve their potential. Aligned with the strategic priorities of the college, it outlines how East Sussex College will meet statutory requirements under the [SEND Code of Practice](#), [Children and Families Act 2014](#), [Special Education Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), and the [Equality Act 2010](#).
- 1.4. The approach to maintaining standards for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties as described in the SEND Code of Practice emphasises that all teachers are educators of students with SEND, with additional Learning support provision complementing high-quality teaching, learning, and assessment. Additionally, all college staff share the responsibility of making reasonable adjustments for students with SEND.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. This policy outlines the intentions for the college's additional learning support (ALS) provision, which aims to promote inclusion.
- 2.2. Equity is a core principle in preparing students with knowledge, skills, behaviours, and attitudes for successful transitions into adult life, supported employment, or independent living. The college places students at the heart of decision-making processes and aims to maximise the use and effectiveness of ALS funding and other funding streams.
- 2.3. The college aims to maintain a highly skilled staff that is trained and aware of their duty to consider the needs of all students, making reasonable adjustments when necessary. Where necessary, external specialist support may be procured in response to Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs), with collaboration and support from local authorities.
- 2.4. College systems are designed to be proactive and inclusive, ensuring staff awareness of students' disabilities and learning difficulties, preferably as part of the pre-entry or transition process. Through effective support strategies and data-driven decisions, the college strives to ensure that it provides an inclusive college environment.
- 2.5. This policy articulates the college's commitment to engaging with parents/carers and relevant professionals, agencies, and organisations in a timely and collaborative manner, aiming for the best possible outcomes for its students.

3. Scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to all teaching and support staff at the college and to all further education (FE) students who have:
 - 3.1.1. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
 - 3.1.2. Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)
 - 3.1.3. Medical needs for which support is required to access college
 - 3.1.4. Mental health needs
 - 3.1.5. Communication needs
 - 3.1.6. General difficulties
- 3.2. The college is committed to supporting people to reach their full potential by providing appropriate additional learning support (ALS). From the funding available it will determine how best to target and deploy learning support resources to maximise participation and achievement.
- 3.3. To meet the diverse educational and personal needs of students and apprentices, support packages are tailored through a careful review process. These packages may encompass various elements, such as:
 - 3.3.1. Assessments for exam arrangements
 - 3.3.2. Communication Support Workers for Deaf students/apprentices
 - 3.3.3. Adjustment of course materials
 - 3.3.4. Learning Resources Centre (LRC) drop-in support
 - 3.3.5. Exam support for students with exam arrangements
 - 3.3.6. In-class support – one-to-one and/or group Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) or Individual Needs Assistants (INAs)
 - 3.3.7. Mobility assistance
 - 3.3.8. Note takers
 - 3.3.9. One-to-one support outside of class
 - 3.3.10. Small group support outside of class
 - 3.3.11. Speech and language therapy
 - 3.3.12. Occupational therapy
 - 3.3.13. Communication groups
 - 3.3.14. Study skills support
 - 3.3.15. Support with assistive technology
 - 3.3.16. Support with personal care
 - 3.3.17. Physiotherapy support

4. Statutory obligations

- 4.1. East Sussex College is committed to ensuring that all students understand their opportunities to access additional learning support to assist in achieving their primary learning goals, and that all staff are aware of the college's additional learning support & inclusion procedure and their responsibilities to:
 - 4.1.1. Promote equality and participation in all aspects of college life;
 - 4.1.2. Ensure individualised strategies are in place to support learning and improve outcomes;
 - 4.1.3. Monitor the impact and quality of support delivered to individuals or groups of students.
- 4.2. The college is committed to meeting its requirements as set out within the Children & Families Act (2014), the SEND Code of Practice (2014) and the Equality Act (2010). As part of these requirements, and in line with funding guidance, the college must also work in collaboration with relevant local authorities as part of general practice.

5. Policy principles

- 5.1. The provision of additional learning support (ALS) is guided by a set of fundamental principles that underscore the college's commitment to inclusivity, effectiveness, and continuous improvement:
- 5.2. East Sussex College promotes a culture of acceptance to ensure that students and apprentices feel encouraged to openly disclose any additional needs.
- 5.3. The college is committed to equity of opportunity and will take guidance from its Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Statement (within the college's Annual DEI Report) and Policy to ensure this.
- 5.4. To support high levels of aspiration, the college will provide sensible, and informed advice and guidance to students prior to, and upon, course entry.
- 5.5. All applicants to the college are actively encouraged to disclose if they have a disability and/or learning difficulty, at which point they are offered the opportunity to discuss their individual needs.
- 5.6. The college is committed to responding to declarations of student need.
- 5.7. In accordance with the Equality Act the college has a duty to anticipate the needs of students wherever possible, and to make reasonable adjustments.
- 5.8. The college recognises the many barriers to successful learning and seeks to employ a comprehensive range of strategies to tailor appropriate and flexible support programmes to reduce those barriers and narrow the attainment gap where applicable.
- 5.9. The promotion of skills that support independence is a key principle. Where appropriate, a tailored support package is planned, empowering students and apprentices to develop self-reliance.
- 5.10. The ALS and Curriculum teams work collaboratively to ensure that support for students and apprentices is coherent, well-planned, and effective, addressing diverse needs seamlessly.
- 5.11. The provision of additional learning support (ALS) will uphold the values of the college.

6. Definitions

- 6.1. The college: refers to East Sussex College.
- 6.2. Special Educational Needs (SEN): A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:
 - 6.2.1. Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
 - 6.2.2. Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.
- 6.3. Disability: A child or young person is identified as disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities:
 - 6.3.1. 'Substantial' is more than minor or trivial, e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed;
 - 6.3.2. 'Long-term' means 12 months or more, e.g. a breathing condition that develops because of a lung infection.
- 6.4. Additional Learning Support: is identified as any kind of provision that is over and above, or significantly different to, provision normally provided to all students.

7. Funding sources

The college's extensive offer of provision is funded through a range of agencies, each with discrete regulations, requirements, and quality assurance frameworks. These funding sources collectively contribute to the ALS framework that supports students and apprentices. Agencies include:

- 7.1.1. Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) (16-19)
- 7.1.2. Adult Skills Fund (19+)
- 7.1.3. Disadvantage Funding
- 7.1.4. High Needs Funding
- 7.1.5. Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) (higher education)

8. Support model at each stage

- 8.1. Students are encouraged to disclose their needs at multiple stages: pre-application, application, post-application, during induction, and throughout their course.
- 8.2. Consultation on Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) involves collaboration with the relevant local authority, with initial screenings identifying additional needs.
- 8.3. The ALS team follows up on disclosures, conducts assessments when required and identifies support packages across all aspects of the students'/apprentices' programmes.
- 8.4. Support documentation is maintained, monitored, reviewed, and modified, with details recorded on ProMonitor.
- 8.5. Progression support for future courses or employment is reviewed as needed, and end-of-course support packages are evaluated for students progressing onto further courses.

9. Higher education (HE)

- 9.1. Standard Support Provision: Most students will have their support needs met through the college's existing support services. This includes information and advice from the ALS tutor and therapy team, as well as information literacy support from the library teams. Each campus has a dedicated Study Skills Mentor who can support students with more complex queries. However, for those with more extensive requirements, it may be necessary to apply for [Disabled Students' Allowance \(DSA\)](#).
- 9.2. Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA): Students may apply for DSA to cover additional costs arising from a mental health condition, long-term illness, or any other disability. Those with dyslexia or other specific learning difficulties may also be eligible for DSA to assist with extra costs associated with studying in Higher Education. DSA is awarded in addition to other student finance and does not need to be repaid. To qualify, students must submit evidence of their disability.
- 9.3. DSA Coverage: DSA can help cover the costs of:
 - 9.3.1. Specialist equipment, such as a computer
 - 9.3.2. Non-medical helpers
 - 9.3.3. Additional travel expenses
 - 9.3.4. Other disability-related study costs
- 9.4. Computer Provision: HE students may be eligible for a new computer if they do not currently have one or if their existing computer does not meet the required specifications. Detailed information will be provided if an assessment determines the need for a new computer.
- 9.5. Computer Contribution: Students will need to pay the first £200 towards the cost of a new computer. This amount represents the minimum contribution expected from any student purchasing a computer through DSA.
- 9.6. Coverage Limitations: DSA does not cover disability-related costs that students would incur regardless of their attendance at a course, nor does it cover costs that any student might have.
- 9.7. Dyslexia Assessment: HE students with dyslexia must provide a full diagnostic report written after the age of 16 to apply for DSA. This assessment includes tests for attainment, spelling, reading, writing, numeracy, working memory, phonological awareness, speed of processing, and underlying ability. The college has specialist teachers with current Assessment Practising Certificates who can conduct these assessments and prepare the necessary reports at a subsidised charge that reflects the local community needs.
- 9.8. Identifying Dyslexia: If a student has not been previously diagnosed with dyslexia but considers this is something that affects them, they should speak to a member of the ALS team. This discussion will help identify the difficulties they are experiencing and determine the best course of action.
- 9.9. Assessment Process: The dyslexia assessment typically lasts around four hours. Prior to the assessment, students will need to discuss their needs and case history, either over the phone or in person. An interview will be conducted as part of the assessment to explore previous support needs in detail. After the report is completed, students will have the opportunity to discuss the results with a specialist teacher. All assessments are conducted within the college. If an assessment is not able to be completed by a college specialist assessor, information and advice will be provided to support the student to access external assessors.

10. Exam support

- 10.1. Some students may require additional support during exams. To determine the appropriate arrangements, such as extra time, a reader or a scribe, an assessment is usually necessary to identify any underlying learning difficulties. Students who have previously had exam arrangements or suspect they have a learning difficulty affecting their exam performance can request an assessment through their Study Programme Tutor, English, Maths or course tutor, or the ALS team. The college requires that a referral is made from the relevant teaching staff to ensure that the correct arrangements are applied for to support the various qualifications the student may be completing.
- 10.2. It is important to note that previous access arrangements from another institution, such as secondary school, do not automatically carry over to college.
- 10.3. **Normal Way of Working:** In certain cases, exam arrangements like the use of a laptop/word processor, separate/smaller shared rooms, or read aloud accommodations can be granted without a full assessment. There must be clear evidence that these accommodations represent the student's normal way of working within the college. For instance, if a student uses a laptop/word processor, it should be their primary method for note-taking and coursework throughout their studies.
- 10.4. **Separate Room for Medical Reasons:** To be granted a separate room for medical purposes, there must be substantial supporting evidence from a suitable health care professional stating that this accommodation is necessary for the student to take the exam. Without this evidence, a separate room will not be permitted, although alternative options will be explored.

11. Confidentiality and data protection

- 11.1. **Data handling**
 - 11.1.1. **Collection and Storage:** All information regarding students' additional support needs will be collected, stored, and managed in accordance with the college's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Policy. This includes secure digital storage systems and restricted access to sensitive information.
 - 11.1.2. **Usage:** Information will only be used for the purpose of providing appropriate support and accommodations.
- 11.2. **Confidentiality**
 - 11.2.1. **Privacy:** Students' personal information and details about their support needs will be kept confidential. Only relevant staff members involved in providing support will have access to this information.
 - 11.2.2. **Disclosure:** Information will not be disclosed to external parties without the students' explicit consent, unless required by law or when there is a significant risk to the student or others.

12. Related documents

- 12.1. Annual Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Report (available on the website)
- 12.2. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy (available on the website)
- 12.3. [SEND Code of Practice](#)