

Additional Learning Support Policy 2013- 2014

Policy Statement

Additional Learning Support

POL058

Owner : Student Services Last Reviewed : April 2014

Stephenson College is committed to providing an effective and supportive learning environment for **all** students. **Additional learning support** is available for students identified as having significant barriers to learning through physical, mental, social, emotional and language factors. These factors may be adverse, long term and/or hidden and the support will help learners to gain access to, progress towards and successfully achieve the learner's goals.

This statement adds detail to the College's Equality Policy and the protected strands there in.

1. Background

The College is mindful of its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 1996 Sections 30(3) and (4) which:

Requires institutions in the Further Education sector, as a condition of grant, to publish 'disability statements' and to report annually to the Secretary of State for Education and Employment on their progress and plans for the future in providing further education for disabled students.

2. Definition of Disability

Stephenson College's definition should encompass both Acts and the SFA/EFA definitions and incorporate details along the following lines:

A student who has learning difficulties and / or disabilities (SLDD) is someone who may experience difficulties in their learning and who may require one or more of the following:

- ◆ A provision of special means of access to the curriculum through specific equipment, facilities or resources, modification of the physical environment or specialist teaching techniques.
- ◆ A provision of a special or modified curriculum.
- ◆ A provision which gives particular attention to the social structure and emotional climate in which education takes place.

The term 'SLDD' could include students who have a physical or sensory disability, or who have learning difficulties which could be specific, mild or, moderate who experience emotional, behavioural or linguistic difficulties or who have mental health problems.

This policy covers students identified as those who might display behaviour assessed as being of risk to themselves or others due to

- Medical or psychological conditions
- Negative or extreme behavioural characteristics.

Definition of Vulnerable

Vulnerable students are individuals who may be in need of additional learning support by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness or able to take care or protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

3. Purpose and Objectives

The policy's purpose is to ensure:

- ◆ Potential students who are assessed by other agencies to be vulnerable or at risk to themselves or others are responded to in a fair and positive way.
- ◆ The College responds to existing vulnerable learners appropriately where a condition suggests they are vulnerable to themselves or others whilst on their course.
- ◆ Support is made available to identified learners as speedily as possible
- ◆ Duty of care to staff and students is not breached.

4. Admissions Arrangements

Opportunity to allow potential students to provide information about their additional needs will be provided in

- ◆ Application forms/ Health & Social checklist
- ◆ Enrolment forms
- ◆ Student Risk Assessment

and at interview, induction and later in tutorials.

This will enable assessment of the student's individual needs to be made and necessary facilities/support made available, wherever possible.

At all points in the process there will be a liaison between the student, the named staff member(s) responsible for the area of work, Student Support Services and members of staff who would be involved in teaching the student. This process must ensure that enquiries/applications from students with a learning difficulty or disability, who meet criteria for a given course, have the opportunity to discuss support requirements with named members of staff to successfully overcome barriers to study.

The college will be flexible in the way it operates and interprets its admission criteria for students who have learning difficulties and disabilities.

The college will be flexible in the operation of its enrolment and admission procedures for students who have learning difficulties and disabilities.

There will be liaison with the appropriate external agencies (e.g. Connexions in the city/ Prospects in the county, RNID, Social Services, Camhs and RNIB) during admissions and throughout the length of the course at Stephenson College.

The college will make every effort to ensure that communications with other agencies are effective in order that vulnerable students are identified and their circumstances managed according to their identified needs.

The Stephenson College confidentiality policy establishes that information sharing is on a need to know basis and failure to disclose may preclude learners from accessing support to help them achieve or could put themselves and others at risk of harm or failure.

5. Educational Facilities and Support – Identification of Need.

Students requiring additional support will be identified initially through the applications, enrolments and admissions procedures. Students identified as requiring additional learning support through the Skills for Work and Life programme will complete a risk assessment which:

- ◆ Requests permission to contact previous schools or colleges to obtain an informed and accurate educational history including any previous risk assessment.
- ◆ Liaison and collaboration with relevant outside agencies
- ◆ Requests for information relating to areas of
 - SLDD
 - Behaviour
 - Social History
 - Medical History
 - Educational History

The risk assessment is undertaken by the Programme Leader, Additional Learning Support Co-ordinator/ Disability Officer and where appropriate the Health & Safety Officer, Faculty and Deputy Faculty Heads and Lecturers.

At enrolment and induction further opportunities for assessment will be arranged for students with learning difficulties and disabilities and vocational assessments and any others relevant to each student's individual needs.

Following assessment each student will be offered a set of targets aimed at meeting individual needs in relation to the course of study. These targets may include support from a variety of agencies and/or personnel and will involve regular monitoring so that changes to the original plan are appropriate.

A student has the right to decline any support that may be offered, unless this is needed for Health and Safety reasons. A disclaimer must be signed if support refused.

Flexible learning opportunities for students with learning difficulties will be provided outside the traditional learning environment where possible.

The college will seek to establish close links with schools which have students with additional needs in order to make the best possible provision and transition when the students progress to college.

Both 'infill' provision and individual programmes for the integration of students with needs will be promoted.

Students with additional learning support needs will be made aware of the range of specialist services available to them when leaving college e.g. specialist career services and independent specialist job finders.

6. Staffing

The college employs staff experienced in working with people with additional support needs.

The college will identify the following named staff roles for learning support which will be responsible for the welfare of students with additional needs, for co-ordinating services and facilities and for disseminating information on this subject and for co-ordinating funding returns to the SFA/EFA and other relevant funding bodies.

- ◆ Student Services Manager
- ◆ Disability Officer
- ◆ Learning Support Co-ordinator
- ◆ Specialist Tutors
- ◆ Specialists in Autism, Behaviour Management and Dyslexia
- ◆ Health and Safety Officer
- ◆ Site Engineer
- ◆ Safeguarding Staff
- ◆ Careers and Guidance Staff
- ◆ Counsellor
- ◆ Student Services Staff

7. Training

Stephenson College's commitment to the training of staff to enable them to support and assist students with a range of additional needs will be promoted, as part of a planned programme of staff development. Teaching staff are informed of their responsibilities and how to work with the Additional Learning Support Team. The policy for Additional Learning Support will be incorporated into the induction process for all staff.

8. Access to Buildings

The college has excellent access to all facilities for students requiring wheelchair access. In addition, a system of room allocation will be adopted to ensure that, as

far as is reasonably possible, wheelchair accessible classrooms are reserved for groups which include students who have mobility problems.

9. Complaints /Suggestions – Student Support Services

The complaints procedures should be instigated by any student with additional learning support needs if the service received is in their view inadequate. First point of contact will be Student Services.

In addition to this procedure, as a means by which the quality of the College's services to students who have additional learning support needs can be improved, the named members of staff and any member of Student Services Staff will welcome comments on how the service can be amended.

Students will also have the opportunity to raise questions or highlight any difficulties being experienced through the online email facility on the Learning Support Web page available to all students on Lernet.

10. Examination Arrangements

The college will review its arrangements for examinations/formal assessments in order to ensure that there is sufficient flexibility to accommodate the special needs of students with additional learning support needs.

Special arrangements already available include the provision of readers, prompters, amanuenses, appropriate equipment, extended time allowances and/or adapted examination materials e.g. large print. The purpose of the special arrangements is to compensate for the restrictions imposed by a disability without impairing the validity of the examination. Where a student has had a 'statement' or Education, Health and Care Plan at school detailing individual needs, this will be taken into account in this assessment.

11. Organisation and Responsibility

The Additional Learning Support policy is the responsibility of the Student Services Manager.

Organisation and deployment of appropriately trained staff is the responsibility of the Additional Learning Support Co-ordinator.

Delivery of Additional Learning Support within the classroom, workshop or cluster is by Learning Support Assistants, Educational Support Assistants and Specialist tutors or purchased from outside agencies as required.

Risk assessments are undertaken by the

- ◆ Additional Learning support Co-ordinator/ Disability Officer
- ◆ Skills for Life and Work Programme Leader.
- ◆ Health & Safety Officer (where applicable)

and in conjunction with outside agencies as required.

12. Quality and Monitoring

The Learning Support Co-ordinator will monitor and ensure all concerns, records and assessments are recorded accurately and said data stored and disposed of in line with good practice and data protection legislation.

An annual operating action plan within the Single Equality Scheme will be used to set targets and monitor Additional Learning Support requirements.

Students' feedback on additional learning support will be obtained through Across College Questionnaires and via the student's voice on the student learning support web page. Students feedback through termly reviews with learning support assistants and also provide feedback to exam concessions through online questionnaires.

Effectiveness (distance travelled) is measured through data analysis of retention and achievement of named learners.

Effectiveness of staff will be measured through annual and peer observation and maintained through completion of qualifications at level 2 and level 3, staff training and appraisal.

13. Future Plans

The college will encourage the 'learner voice' via the established mediums and will listen and act as appropriate. The college will continue to develop resources for individual needs within the restraints of national policy.