BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE

ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This policy supplements the Equality & Diversity Policy and has strong linkage with the English and Math's policy. It has been formulated to emphasise the College's commitment to making learning accessible to all in line with current Equality and Diversity legislation.

The College is committed to the early assessment of individual students' needs in order to provide reasonable adjustments, and promote non-discriminatory practices across the College. This includes ensuring the availability of a range of services, support and auxiliary aids to meet the needs of students, and potential students, who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities that may affect their ability to access provision.

The College is committed to supporting students with the development of English and Maths (in response to the national agenda) OFSTED now have 'Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare' skills to enable them to succeed on their programme of study and to play a full part in their community.

1.2 Purpose/Aim

The overall aim of this policy is to ensure that the College is an inclusive learning environment where learning, achievement and progression are accessible to everyone. Additional Learning Support will encourage access and progression based on the individual needs of all students including, where appropriate, the inclusion and support of students with a variety of disabilities and special requirements.

The policy is written for and circulated to all staff of the College and reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team. It is available to all College stakeholders.

This policy supports the Aims and Objectives outlined in the College Strategic Plan. The outcome of the policy will enable students to be successful and achieve to their full potential, resulting in providing all students with a positive College experience.

All College stakeholders are responsible for implementing this policy and the accountability and monitoring of the achievement of the aims of this policy lie with Head of Additional Learning Support in conjunction with all members of the College Management Team.

1.3 Definitions

The College uses the full range of definitions of disability; the Equality Act 2010, the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Education Act 2011 and the SEND Code of Practice for 0-25 year olds. The range includes the following main categories:

- Physical difficulties
- Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties
- Learning difficulties, including Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) such as dyslexia, dyspraxia
- Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)

- Mental Illness
- Hearing and visual impairment
- Severe disfigurements
- Progressive conditions that are expected to become substantial.

Equality and Diversity

- This policy works in conjunction with the College's Equality and Diversity policy.

Diversity

- The College has a range of curriculum provision covering ability levels from pre- foundation to degree level education and beyond. Bridgwater and Taunton College students encompass a full range of age groups, modes of attendance, learning needs, ability and motivation.

- Bridgwater and Taunton College thrives on the diversity of its students and recognises the valuable and enriching contribution that people from a variety of backgrounds and experience bring to the life of the College. It is committed to maintaining breadth in the curriculum and providing support to every student, through its entry systems, course provision and student support structure, during the student's journey.

- Bridgwater and Taunton College students have access to high quality additional learning support provision regardless of their chosen mode of study. The policy is flexible and dynamic enough to take account of the diversity of students who learn at Bridgwater and Taunton College.

- Recognising the diversity of our current and future cohort of students and clients and being responsive to their needs is key to improving the quality of additional learning support.

Equality

- Bridgwater and Taunton College has a strong commitment to equality of opportunity as laid down in its Equality and Diversity Policy

- Bridgwater and Taunton College promotes equality of opportunity to all staff and students in accordance with current legislation such as the Equality Act 2010.

Inclusive Learning

- Bridgwater and Taunton College is committed to the principles of inclusive learning. It supports the view that good teaching is found where teachers understand and respond to the individual requirements of the students. It will use the individual students as the starting point for its delivery of additional support.

- Through an understanding of how people learn, staff will endeavour to match the student, aptitudes and learning styles, with the curriculum and its delivery in an appropriate, supportive learning environment.

Learning Environment

- The learning environment extends beyond the physical resources of the classroom to include every aspect of the students' experience at Bridgwater and Taunton College. This encompasses e-learning, assistive technology and work experience.

- The College continually strives to improve its additional learning support resources materials to stimulate student interest.

EHCP

- EHCP is an Education Health and Care Plan created by the Local Education Authority in conjunction with multi agencies to coordinate a coherent support agreement across education, health and social care for students with SEND aged 0-25. This forms a statutory legal document with defined outcomes for the student.

2 Policy Statement

2.1 The College is committed to developing inclusive learning approaches and to providing additional learning support to secure learning success for all.

For the College to be an inclusive learning environment there is a need to recognise disability and its impact on the way the people learn. Inclusive learning is based on providing the best match or fit between students' needs and the learning opportunities provided.

It is recognised that some students may require additional support including individual adjustments in order to fully access the provision.

3 Scope

3.1 Students' Entitlements

All students are entitled to study and progress in a mutually respectful inclusive environment consisting of, but not exclusively,

- A warm and nurturing welcome
- Fairness to all
- Equality of opportunity for learning and training
- Full access, wherever possible, to the range of College facilities and services
- Effective and Responsive Student Voice
- Specialist work skills placement officers
- Additional support in maths and English and study skills where appropriate
- Extra workshops and drop in sessions
- Special arrangements for exams
- Specialist software / equipment as appropriate
- Communicator /signer
- Targeted key workers
- Specialist ASC support
- Specialist SpLD support
- Counselling and mental health support.

3.2 Staff should:

- During the curriculum planning process, consideration is given to learner needs and where possible flexibility will be incorporated within the course

- Review teaching styles and practices to ensure that provision is accessible and that reasonable adjustments are built-in to anticipate likely support needs.

- Ensure that recruitment, assessment and examination arrangements are flexible to the needs of all students and anticipate the need for any reasonable adjustments.

- Encourage students to disclose a disability where it would enable additional adjustments, exam/ assessment arrangement or auxiliary aids to be put in place whilst maintaining confidentiality to the level requested by the student, wherever possible.

- Ensure that the students complete an initial assessment for all full-time students at or prior to the beginning of their course and for part-time students as appropriate. The results will help identify English and maths support needs and decide whether the provision of additional learning support would be of benefit to the student.

- Maintain robust working links with Additional Learning Support staff to maximise inclusive practice through differentiation and effective communication.

- Monitor and review (making appropriate adjustments) the accessibility to College services such as Information, Advice and Guidance, Student Support, Welfare and Counselling, Learning Resource Centre, Restaurant services, recreational facilities and transport etc.

- With support from Additional Learning Support, complete either a PCR (person centred review) for high needs students without an EHCp or an EHCp annual review for those with an EHCp

3.3 College managers will ensure that:

- All staff receive training on their responsibilities under the requirements of current College's Additional Learning Support policy.

- Sufficient resources are available to fund the anticipated reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of the students who have a disability and to respond to individual cases.

- Effective systems and procedures are in place for the promotion, referral, identification and provision of additional learning support, including learning agreements, review of need and effectiveness of the service.

- Key performance indicator and any differences in success for individual groups are identified and actioned through Self-Assessment in-conjunction with College's Equality & Diversity Committee.

3.4 Financial resources

- The College recognises the challenge of enhancing the quality of additional learning support across the College and is committed to adopting a student led resources allocation model within the budget available.
- Local authorities provide top up funding to support High Needs students and where this is available, it will be used to provide support to those specific learners
- For students without additional funding, the College will make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of the learner
- Additional funding is available to support apprentices and this funding will be claimed to cover the support provided

4 Procedure

See appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4.

5 Related Policies and Student Entitlement

- Alcohol Substance Misuse Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health and Welfare Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Personal Care Policy
- HE Additional Learning Support Policy

6 Review of Policy

- The College self-assessment report process will provide evidence in areas for improvement required in the delivery of additional learning support. This ensures the College's strategic aims are implemented at an area level through the operating plan.

- Data will be reviewed relating to the retention of students who have learning difficulty and /or disability

- Positive student voice feedback will be sought from students who have a learning difficulty, a disability or who need additional learning support.

- Review Groups and Standards Committee will review performance ensuring governor involvement.

- The Equality and Diversity Committee will consider equality of opportunities for ALS students.

- Review of performance via the College inspection and review process and in conjunction with the TLA strategy

- Additional Learning Support is also subject to Local Authority review.

Appendix 1 **ACS FE Support Student Journey**

ACS FE Support Student Journey

Appendix 2 **Education Health and Care Plan College Process**

EHCP College Process

Appendix 3 **Exam Concession Referrals**

Exam Concession Referral

Appendix 4 **FE ALS Referral Student Journey**

FE ALS Referral Student Journey

Appendix 5 **ALS FE SpLD Assessment & Support Student Journey**

ALS FE SpLD Assessment & Support Student Journey

Appendix 6 **Guidance for allowing the use of laptops in exams**

Guidance for allowing the use of a laptop in examinations at Bridgwater and Taunton College

Exam Access Arrangements (EAA's) are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. (Joint Council for Qualifications 2017)

It is vital that EAA's do not give a student an unfair advantage.

Many students would prefer to type in examinations, rather than write by hand. However, this cannot be awarded just because they prefer to type or type more quickly.

Students may be allowed to type in their examinations at Bridgwater and Taunton College if one or more of the following criteria are met:

- The student's handwriting is slower than average and they would therefore be disadvantaged in a written exam. If typing is quicker (average (or above average) speed) then using a laptop is a reasonable adjustment. **The student will need an EAA assessment to identify this need.**

- The student's handwriting is largely illegible or indecipherable (Sample of handwriting AND evidence of normal way of working required from teaching and/or support staff)

- The student has a diagnosis of SpLD/dyspraxia or dysgraphia, which causes handwriting difficulties (evidence required)

- Presentation of handwriting is poor and would disadvantage student in an exam, e.g. lots of crossing out, confusing editing or restructuring (Sample of handwriting AND evidence of normal way of working required from teaching and/or support staff)

- Handwriting is painful and/or uncomfortable (background evidence required)

- Student qualifies for a scribe, but may opt to type with the spelling and grammar checker enabled. **The student will need an EAA assessment to identify this need.**

- Student types notes in class due to handwriting difficulties (Sample of handwriting AND evidence of normal way of working required from teaching and/or support staff)

- Quality of student's handwriting is poor and writing improves when typing e.g. coherence, development of ideas, structure and organisation (Sample of handwriting AND evidence of normal way of working required from teaching and/or support staff)

In addition, typing must be the student's normal way of working (NWW) in mock tests/examinations

Evidence of need and evidence of NWW is required for all Exam Access Arrangements, including use of a laptop.

RARE exceptions to the above are if the student presents with a temporary injury or disability at the time of the exam (therefore having no evidence of NWW) OR provides a NEW diagnostic assessment report (e.g. for dyspraxia or dysgraphia)