



# LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

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# Learning Support Policy

## **TITLE**

Learning Support Policy

## **1. PURPOSE OF POLICY**

Nescot is an inclusive learning institution and welcomes diversity of its students in age, ethnicity, and level of achievement, support need, experience and ability. There is an inclusive commitment to providing support so that all students have an equal opportunity to access learning and succeed in their goals.

This Learning Support Policy makes reference to the High Needs Students (HNS) as defined in the Children and Families Act 2014 and additional learning support (ALS) provision for students and prospective students. The aim is to provide support to enable all students to overcome barriers to learning. Individuals may present with a learning difficulty, disability and/or medical condition, social, emotional or behavioural difficulty and/or may need support to further develop their English, maths or language skills.

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

2.1 'High Needs Students' are defined as: Any young person aged between 16-25 who has a current Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and who will require additional support costing over £6000 each year.

2.2 "Students with additional learning support needs" (ALS) is a term used to describe students who need adjustments made for them at College due to a medical condition, disability, sensory or physical impairment or learning difference or because English is their second language.

2.3 ALS is the term used to describe a broad range of support on offer to students with additional support needs including:

- a) the adjustments to be made by teaching staff (e.g. providing copies of handouts before the start of a lesson, giving advance notice to students of timetable changes or dates for mock exams);
- b) the assistive technology to be provided by the Learning Support Team, or Student Finance and allocated from the Learning Resource Centre or as a

result of a Disability Support Allowance (DSA) :

- c) one to one or small group support sessions provided by Specialist Support Tutors, learning support staff or via curriculum teams through catch-up and other additional sessions. Where a DSA stipulates this may also take the form of external support;
- d) the provision of in-class support by a member of the Learning Support Team (e.g. a Learning Support Assistant);
- e) the adaption of materials into Braille or enlarged text by the Learning Support Team; Access to Examination Arrangements.

High Needs Students who have their needs identified in an EHCp are entitled to support under the Children and Families Act 2014. Often their support is very specific and must be bespoke to meet their needs.

Students with additional learning needs are entitled to receive support under the Equalities Act 2010 giving them protection against discrimination and victimisation on the grounds of disability in education. Nescot makes reasonable adjustments for all students and prospective students with a disability and/or learning difficulty.

Nescot recognises that this is a college wide responsibility and that all members of college staff have a role to ensure that all students receive the support that they need to fully access the curriculum in conjunction with access to all other college services.

Responsibility for student success lies with all staff. All staff have a duty to ensure that any student's support needs are identified promptly. Identification may occur during the application process: declaring a support need on the application form, at interview, during enrolment or through initial assessment. Local Authorities can request a needs assessment consultation for young people with an EHCp (Education Health and Care plan). Some students may be identified as having support needs whilst on programme. Following identification, teaching staff must ensure that students receive an appropriate level of support to meet their identified needs. ALS may be provided through appropriate differentiation and/or adjustments in teaching delivery within the curriculum area. ALS may be delivered by specialist learning support staff and provided in addition to the main teaching programme.

ALS plays an important part in enabling students with special educational needs to achieve success by developing underpinning skills in English and maths. This is of particular importance for those students on Entry level or level 1 programmes as well as those students who are speakers of other languages.

### 3. SCOPE

#### Ethos of Learning Support

At NESCOL, the student is considered to be at the centre of all ALS processes. Each student is respected and valued as an individual and recognised as having unique needs. The focus is on students' abilities to foster autonomy and become independent students.

At NESCOL a holistic approach is regarded to be the learning experience which works best for students; the aim being to develop close partnerships between tutors, personal development coaches and other teaching staff.

Students with special educational needs are supported to achieve on their main study programme together with the additional delivery of some small group support to develop English and maths skills as appropriate to individual needs.

Students receiving support consistently achieve at the same level as those with no support.

### 4. AIMS

Our overarching aim is to deliver effective and responsive Learning Support to students with support needs.

4.1 The implementation of the Learning Support Policy aims to ensure that Learning Support:

- a) enables students with support needs to have the same opportunities at College as students without those needs;
- b) maximises the use of funding streams in supporting students with additional support needs;
- c) meets the requirements of the current funding and audit guidance;
- d) complies with the Children and Families Act 2014, Equality Act 2010, the Data Protection Act and Safeguarding legislation;
- e) provides additional support in a manner that continues to maintain the integrity of any qualification (e.g. not doing the coursework for the learner but supporting the learner to do the coursework);
- f) seeks ways to support students with support needs that promote their independence and prepare them for further study or employment;

4.2 This will be achieved through:

- a) shared in-class support from Learning Support Assistants, where possible;
- b) the use of assistive technology, adjustments by subject tutors or out of class support, where applicable, to develop the student's independence and to make economical use of resources;
- c) providing information to all staff in College regarding their responsibilities under the Children and Families Act 2014 and Equality Act 2010;
- d) providing Continual Professional Development (CPD) opportunities and advice to staff that promote the understanding of students additional support needs;
- e) the continued development and implementation of systems that encourage disclosure of additional support needs before the student starts College;
- f) the provision of support as early as possible in the students programme;
- g) the promotion of the services offered by the Learning Support Team to staff and students;
- h) the development of resources to assist College staff in understanding the needs of students with additional support needs;
- i) the management of risk assessments where there is a potential risk to students or staff due to the nature of the student's additional support need;
- j) ensuring that the sharing of information on students' learning support needs occurs only with their consent and where it is to their advantage, using mainly the College EBS and ProMonitor system;

Nescot respects all students' wishes and the right of all students to confidentiality. Students will be supported to identify the impact of not providing full disclosure of any special educational needs.

## 5. PROCEDURE

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. When working with students with learning support needs, teaching staff have the responsibility to:

- a) make reasonable adjustments;
- b) obtain the EHCp of any student in their class who has one, understand and implement any adjustments specified within the plan;
- c) pro-actively liaise with in-class support staff or the SST (including the HE Support Mentor) to ensure effective implementation of their recommendations;
- d) as far as possible, follow the advice provided by staff from the Learning Support Team (either verbally, or on ProMonitor);
- e) seek advice or training from staff within the Learning Support Team to develop their skills and knowledge in making adjustments;
- f) as far as possible ensure that the recommendations provided by the Learning Support Team are fulfilled;
- g) respect the students confidentiality (unless they are a risk to themselves or others) in only passing on information to others where the student has given their permission, and where it will be of benefit to them;
- h) contact the Exams Office or the Learning Support Team to request access arrangements, where appropriate as soon as the need is identified;
- i) use strategies in making adjustments that encourage students' independence.

2 Tutors/Personal Development Coaches have the responsibility to:

- a) ensure that they are familiar with their Tutees EHCp/learning support targets that are available on EBS/ProMonitor.
- b) contact the Learning Support Team if the student starts to have any difficulties (for example, failure to make academic progress or falling behind with assignment deadlines);
- c) involve members of the Learning Support Team who have worked with their tutees when considering enrolment onto another courses, progression onto Higher Education or employment opportunities.

3 The Learning Support Team have a responsibility to:

- a) liaise with teaching staff to ensure effective implementation of any recommendations that may be included in an EHCp or DSA;

- b) arrange and manage annual reviews for EHCp holders;
- c) liaise with teaching staff on issues that arise that affect the student they are supporting;
- d) keep their colleagues within teaching teams and the Learning Support team abreast of any problems or changes that occur affecting the student;
- e) minimise disruption to classes in the course of supporting their students;
- f) support students in a manner that ensures the integrity of academic standards and encourages independence.

4 The student has a responsibility to:

- a) attend appointments with the Learning Support Team promptly;
- b) attend 1:1 teaching sessions with the Specialist Support Tutors promptly;
- c) inform the Learning Support Team of any relevant changes to their circumstances;
- d) ensure that any paperwork relating to Access to Examination Arrangements is still valid and up to date.

5 College Managers have a responsibility to:

- a) work with the Learning Support Team in making adjustments for students with support needs;
- b) provide advance notice of timetable changes so that support staff can be effectively deployed and students prepared for those changes;
- c) ensure that entry requirements for their courses are explicit and appropriate and include a requirement for English and maths levels
- d) change classrooms for a course, where the elected classroom is inaccessible for a student with additional support needs and the curriculum can be delivered in a changed setting;
- e) timetable students with a need for in-class support together, where possible, so that support staff can be deployed effectively;
- f) explore in advance the use of small group teaching where support would best be delivered in this way and within the ALS funding regulations.

6 The Assistant Principal for Learning Support and Experience has the

responsibility to:

a) ensure that students with an EHCp receive the support outlined in their plan, that annual reviews are held in a timely manner and that teaching staff are fully aware of the special educational needs of students in their classroom

a) prioritise the support for HNS including those with an EHCp

b) cascade information about the SEN reforms throughout the college

c) allocate learning support resources equitably across the College

d) advise staff and managers on appropriate strategies in making “reasonable adjustments”;

e) work with the senior managers to provide relevant CPD events that meet the needs of teachers and support staff.

## 6. IDENTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT NEEDS

### Prior to Enrolment

Learning Support is publicised widely through leaflets, the prospectus and the website. Ideally support needs are identified prior to enrolment in one or more of the following ways:-

- A direct approach to the SEN/D Team. This usually occurs in the case of a young person with an EHCp when a needs assessment Consultation is requested by the Local Authority.
- The applicant may be highlighted for support by an advocate or partner agency such as a parent or school who provides detailed information on the support needs.
- The applicant is invited to disclose a support need on the application form or at the interview and the Learning Support team is notified by Advice & Guidance
- The applicant's needs are identified through Initial Assessment procedures if English or Maths qualifications are not at the appropriate level.
- HE students are advised and supported in applying for a DSA where appropriate to access additional external support; this may be at any point of the programme

These applicants, and if appropriate their feeder schools or colleges, are contacted for further information. An appropriate level of support can then be planned for the student prior to enrolment.



## At Enrolment

Disclosure of special educational needs may occur during enrolment. The student will be invited to meet with a member of the Learning Support team who will ascertain how the support needs can be effectively and correctly met. The student will then be advised of the support that can be provided on their chosen programme.

## On Programme

All students are informed about learning support through induction activities, staff referral, college posters and leaflets. Some students may be referred for support by tutors and lecturers through regular opportunities provided for students to discuss and monitor progress towards individual learning aims. Individual students' support needs are discussed at course team meetings and referrals for support are made using ProMonitor.

## 7. ENTITLEMENT AND RIGHTS TO LEARNING SUPPORT

a) Support for HNS and those with an EHCp is prioritised and provided in accordance with the recommendations set out in their EHCp.

b) Reasonable adjustments will be made by the College for all students with a disclosed medical condition, disability, sensory or physical impairment, learning difference or language support need if they meet the entry requirements of their chosen course. All students with a disclosed support need are entitled to:

- a consultation with a member of staff to agree how they will be supported during the transition to College (interview, enrolment, orientation around College) and whilst at College;
- targets will be set by the teachers and support staff they are in contact with, who may need to make adjustments;
- refuse the support offered to them, unless there is a risk to their safety or that of other students and staff;
- revisions to their targets;
- be able to speak in confidence to staff about their support needs. This information will not be passed on to other staff or external bodies without signed consent, unless they are at risk to themselves or others;
- a risk assessment being undertaken, where attendance on their chosen course may pose a risk to themselves or to others;
- access arrangements in exams, and during entry tests or assessments, if appropriate evidence is produced in advance of the exam or assessment and is in accordance with the JCQ Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Regulations, to

enable these adjustments to be provided

## 8. ABSENT FOUNDATIONS STUDENT

### INDEPENDENT STUDENT

All parents complete a Parental Permissions Form at the beginning of the academic year. This form identifies if permission is given for a student to leave college premises or move around the college without supervision. If a student has permission they are deemed independent and can make decisions whether to attend class or not. In this case we mark students absent and contact the parent if absence patterns continue. The only occasion we would look for an independent student is if there was other cause for concern e.g. safeguarding, ill health etc

### NON INDEPENDENT STUDENT

If a non-independent student is absent then we follow the procedure below

- After 5mins LSA is sent to search immediate area, checking in key places e.g. toilets, seating areas etc.
- If student is not found after 15mins of searching security should be informed. We ask for an immediate check to see if they have left college premises using their ID badge.
- If they have left college and they do not have parental permission, their parents are contacted immediately, who then decide on a best course of action.
- If the student is suspected to be onsite then we continue to search for the individual.
- After the student is missing for 60 mins we contact the parent to inform them of the problem, whilst continuing to search.

## 9. SHARING INFORMATION

At enrolment, once a student has disclosed a disability and /or learning difficulty to any member of staff, Nescot has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure the student is not placed at a disadvantage because of any disclosed needs. All members of staff who receive information about a disclosure must pass this information to the relevant person/s, with the student's consent. The student will be assured of confidentiality and that information is restricted in its circulation to relevant staff members only.

At this time the student also consents to information being held on EBS and ProMonitor.

## 10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The provision of Learning Support will be monitored and evaluated on an annual basis via the College's self-assessment process in order to:

- a) improve the learning support provided;
- b) improve the procedures by which learning support is organised;
- c) ensure the effective use of resources allocated to the Learning Support Team;
- d) measure the retention, achievement, success and progression rates of students with additional support needs;
- e) improve systems and encourage disclosure of additional support needs.

The eligibility of those in receipt of support and the production of targets agreed by students will be monitored via the College's internal audit processes.

The correct use of funding will be monitored through internal and external audit processes.

Provision for students includes:

- In-class support from a LSA prioritised for HN students and those with an EHCp with specific learning difficulties or disabilities (SLDD), physical and /or mobility needs
- In-class support from an LSA prioritised for students on courses up to and including Level 1
- In-class support from an LSA for students on courses at Level 2 and above is prioritised for students with specific or complex academic, social, emotional, physical or mobility needs
- 1:1 study support workshops delivered by specialist teachers, prioritised for students with specific literacy, numeracy, ESOL or dyslexia needs on courses at and above Level 2 with priority to those students who do not hold an EHCp who may not have access to a higher level of support in class.
- Bespoke small group study support workshops delivered by specialist teachers, prioritised for students with literacy, numeracy, ESOL or dyslexia needs on courses at and above Level 2
- Support for personal care and/or mobility needs is provided as required. Adaptive equipment including hoists is available. Access arrangements for exams including additional time, readers and

amanuensis etc

- Communication support, signers and specialist teachers for students with visual and hearing impairments
- Loan of adaptive aids and equipment such as adjustable desks, laptop and enlarged keyboards
- Individual risk assessments and personal evacuation plans
- Technology assessments and training on use of specialist software such as Read and Write Gold, Dragon and Inspiration.
- Extended library loans
- Materials in alternative formats
- Provision for Staff includes:
  - Information, advice and training on strategies to support differentiated teaching and learning strategies and styles: including modifications to course content; developing inclusive materials to ensure programmes are accessible to all students; use of technology/specialist equipment to improve access to learning and/or general college provision and services.
  - Information and training on the administration of annual reviews for those students with an EHCp.
  - Regular reviews on students who have been identified for support and on the ALS being provided.
  - Members of Staff with a learning difficulty or disability have access to all the support identified above for students.

## Addendum:

### Arrangements during Coronavirus Lockdown – Online learning.

From September 2021 all students with an EHCp have a named LSA who is their main contact and will deliver learning support remotely in the event of a lockdown and/or remote learning.

EHCp holders are risk assessed and their views and those of their parents/guardians are sought, as to their preference to attend College or study remotely in the event of a lockdown.

Students who are extremely clinically vulnerable are advised to remain at home.

The advice of the College nurse is sought regarding any additional safety measures.

Staff and students are trained in the use of Google classroom which is the on-line learning platform used by the College to deliver on-line and blended learning.

The LSA will assist and support the student remotely both during and after on-line teaching sessions.

Students who remain in College during a lockdown will work with an LSA who will help them access their on-line lessons so that they are able to keep in contact with their peers and keep up to date with learning.

EHCp holders and other vulnerable students including those with additional needs are prioritised for the loan of a College laptop.