



Richmond upon Thames College

Policy Name: Learning Difficulty & Disability Policy

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Policy Responsibility: Inclusive Learning Manager

Approved By: CLT

For Information to: Students, staff, parents/carers

Version Control:

Introduction

1. Ethos

“Disability” for the purpose of this statement is defined according to the Equality Act 2010.

The College and its staff and students will make every effort to enable inclusion into all aspects of college life for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. Every student is seen as an individual and the college wishes to respond to individual needs. We are committed to ensuring that disabled people, including those with learning difficulties are treated fairly and not discriminated, harassed or victimised against directly or indirectly.

The college aims to eliminate discrimination, promote equity of opportunity and create an environment, which fosters good relationships between all students. Effort is made to ensure that all our services and provision do not discriminate against any students. Reasonable adjustments are considered in advance to ensure that disabled students are not treated less favourably for reasons connected to their disability. The health and safety of students whether applicants or enrolled students is of paramount importance to the college, and actions may be enforced as a result of an inclusive risk assessment.

However, the college is not able to meet all complex and profound learning needs and is not fully accessible to wheelchair users.

2. Admission Arrangements

At college Open Evenings, Inclusive Learning Support (ILS) staff are available to discuss support needs with students and their parents/guardians. Any applicant with a special educational need and/or disability is encouraged to meet with a member of the specialist Learning Support team regarding their needs and support available at the college.

Students applying to the college have the opportunity to disclose their support needs on the application form. Opportunities are also available for students to disclose at enrolment, induction and whilst on a college programme. All disclosures are subject to confidentiality in negotiation with the student except in circumstances where safeguarding concerns are relevant. In such cases, the relevant safeguarding procedures are enacted. If consent for disclosure is given, support and adjustments can be discussed during the interview and enrolment process and the department will make a record of the student details and needs and contact them during the academic year when they are able to provide support.

Students with Education, Health and Care plans on Mainstream Provision

We work closely with Local Authorities (LA) to plan provision effectively and meet the needs of applicants from the local borough of Richmond and Kingston and many other London Boroughs, such as Hounslow and Ealing.

Where a student has an EHC plan which has been agreed by their LA or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), we ask them to disclose this at application. An EHC plan will help us to assess a student’s needs and make suitable recommendations regarding the reasonable adjustments and support we are able to provide and make efforts to ensure this is in place at the start of a programme.

A member of the ILS team will attend the curriculum interview for applicants who have indicated that they have an EHC plan. During this meeting we can advise and discuss the needs, outcomes and provision recommended on the EHC plan. If the support is agreed, the student will have to notify the local authority that the college is their first choice. They will send the college the EHCP for a formal consultation in which we will have 15 days to respond and address any further queries from the plan before we give them a final decision.

3. Educational Facilities and Support

i. Specialist Courses

There are discrete courses for students with learning difficulties. These are

- a. School leavers with mild and moderate learning difficulties
- b. Students who have found it difficult to attend school regularly
- c. School leavers with severe learning difficulties
- d. Adults (25+) with severe learning difficulties

Students on these courses are taught in small groups and are fully supported by Student Support Assistants.

Please contact the Head of School for Supported Learning for further details.

ii. Inclusive Learning Support on mainstream programmes

The college has a team of specialist staff who are experienced in working with students with Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Autism, Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder, Mental Health, Sensory, Medical and Physical needs and Moderate Learning Difficulties.

The college has an ILS referral system in place, whereby any staff member or the student themselves can refer to discuss their needs and difficulties by the ILS team to see how the college can best provide support to meet their needs. We are able to make a recommendation of support, which could include accessing a one-one specialist teacher, in-class support, exam access arrangements, differentiated teaching, assistive technology or equipment.

We can also offer specialist screening assessments for exam access arrangements, such as extra time, reader, scribe, prompt, separate room, use of a laptop, reading pen and rest breaks. We are able to refer students to outside agencies for specialist assessments where needed, such as referrals to Surrey Physical and Sensory Support Service, who are able to provide physical, sensory and mobility assessments.

We can provide in-class Learning Assistants, for students with learning needs which are assessed as “high” and can provide one-to-one support, including dyslexia (Specific Learning Differences) support, by specialist teachers. We can provide practical support for students with sensory, health and physical needs and can arrange a risk assessment and Personal Evacuation Plans. We actively promote the use of Assistive Technology – such as a computer reader software, electronic reading pens and can offer access to equipment, such as accessible keyboards. We provide enlarged texts, provide specialist software and we have portable induction loops, radio aids and can arrange communication support workers/signers. The college also has recently developed its support services for students with mental health needs, and one-one support is now accessible to students with emotional, mental health or anxiety needs.

We offer all students with learning needs and disabilities a supportive discrete environment, The Learning Support Workshop (D20), which is also used as one-to-one and small group teaching and learning space. Students can also access all other student spaces.

If you have an Education, Health and Care plan, which has been agreed that we can provide the provision you need, we will ensure that you are effectively supported to work towards your outcomes. If you have an EHC plan we can offer in-class support from a Learning Assistant on a one-one or small group basis. The college will not provide transport from home to college and such arrangements need to be arranged in advance of the start of the academic year.

3. Access Arrangements for Examinations

Any student who requires exam access arrangements should discuss this with their lecturers for a referral. The lecturers will need to complete an ILS referral form and provide evidence of the student’s work showing their

difficulties. If students have been entered for an early exam e.g. November resits, lecturers and students must contact the ILS department or the Exams Team, as soon as possible at the start of the course.

When a need is disclosed and a referral is made, the ILS Team will offer a screening for exam access arrangements. An exam access report (or Form 8) will be provided as evidence of a need for access arrangement. The report contains details about student's history of need and provision, normal ways of working and the access arrangements recommended. Education, Health and Care plans can also be used as evidence of need for access arrangements in exams and assessments. Examples of exam arrangements available are extra time, a reader, an electronic reader, a scribe, a personal assistant, a separate room, rest breaks, and/or use of a laptop computer and software.

5. Other Support

Student Services offers a wide range of support including a counselling service, welfare and wellbeing service, careers service and advice on financial support. We have links with a range of local organisations and voluntary bodies who also provide support.

6. Physical Accommodation and Access

Students and staff with disabilities who need car parking facilities can be offered these if we have been notified in advance. Spaces are limited.

The entrance doors to the college have door assistors or electronic actuators. Several internal doors also have this provision. A risk assessment or a personal emergency evacuation plan may be required for staff and students with mobility requirements.

The ground floor of the main college buildings are accessible to those using a wheelchair and accessible toilet facilities are available. Access to the upper floors is via platform lift.

There are ramps on the first and second floors rendering these areas accessible. There are also accessible toilets on these floors.

However, it is not possible to reach the Tower rooms, where Music Technology classes take place. The Drama Studio are also up short flights of stairs. The staircases to all of these rooms are too narrow to allow stair lifts.

The Harrop building (Q block) has a lift and accessible toilets on both first and second floors, enabling access to Technology, Computing and Maths.

The library is accessible on the ground floor. Library staff will always support with access to books when requested.

The student and staff catering services are all on the ground floor and accessible. The Sports Hall and its facilities are in a separate building and are accessible. Merits Restaurant is accessible via a platform lift on the front staircase in Merit's foyer, which gives direct access to the restaurant area.

We have evacuation chairs that can be used to descend stairs and exit the building in an emergency. If a student with significant mobility difficulties wishes to attend a class that is normally held in an upper floor classroom then, in certain circumstances, the class can be relocated to a ground floor room, apart from the specialist areas mentioned above.

There is a personal care area with hoist and shower and an accessible changing area, shower and toilet in the Sports Hall.

For students, staff and visitors with hearing impairments, we have fixed Induction Loops, Radio Aid Systems for use in classrooms and portable induction loops. A Deaf Alert Pager System is linked to the Fire Alarm. All Parents' Evenings and Open Events are accommodated on the ground floor of the building.

7. Future Plans

The college wishes to be proactive in ensuring we continue to meet the requirements of the Disability Equality Act 2010. We intend to have fully accessible learning environment when the new college building is completed in 2020. We will also continue to update and develop the use and accessibility of assistive technology and specialist equipment for students to promote independence in their learning and ensure they are not disadvantaged.

8. Complaints and Appeals Procedure

If students feel the college's policy has misled them and that they were led to believe that there would be support and facilities that are not in place then they have a right to complain. They can report a complaint to either the Inclusive Learning Manager, Head of Student Services, Health and Safety Manager.

Any student requiring help in order to make the complaint will be given that support.

Key Contacts:

Job Title	Location	Name	Telephone number	Email address
Head of School	E23	Toni Whitehouse		toni.whitehouse@rutc.ac.uk
Inclusive Learning Manager	D20 LSW	Rekha Patel	020 8607 8424	rekha.patel@rutc.ac.uk
Inclusive Learning Team Leader - including High Needs Students on mainstream programmes	D20 LSW	Paul Smyth	020 8607 8173	paul.smyth@rutc.ac.uk
The Dyslexia Team	D19b	Emma Allotey Johnny Mooney Aysha Lewis	020 8607 8283	emma.allotey@rutc.ac.uk johnny.mooney@rutc.ac.uk aysha.lewis@rutc.ac.uk
Specialist Teachers for students with Autism	D19a	Catherine De-baritault	0208 607 8209	Catherine.de-baritault@rutc.ac.uk
Specialist Teachers for students with Mental Health Needs	D19a	Narinder Dosanjh	0208 607 8233	narinder.Dosanjh@rutc.ac.uk
General Enquires - regarding support or to make a referral to learning support				als.referrals@rutc.ac.uk
Health & Safety Manager	D14	Mark Brough	020 8607 8493	mark.brough@rutc.ac.uk
Head of Student Services	D17	Deborah Stephenson	020 8607 150	deborah.stephenson@rutc.ac.uk