

ST PATRICK'S



St Patrick's College

Inclusive Practice Handbook

2018 – 2019

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Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
1.1. Students with Disabilities or Special Needs	
1.2. The Equality Act 2010 (Amended 2012)	
1.3. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 1995 – Revised 2005)	
1.4. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA), 2001	
1.5. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)	
1.6. About the Handbook	
1.7. Scope and Remit	
2. Inclusive Practice.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1. About Inclusive Practice	
2.2. Declaration of Disability / Learning Difficulty	
2.3. Responsibilities of the Inclusion Service	
2.3.1. Core Responsibilities	
2.3.2. Non-obligations	
2.4. Student Wellbeing	
3. Disabilities and Learning Difficulties	7
3.1. What is Disability?	
3.2. Examples of Recognised Disabilities	
3.3. Understanding Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)	
3.4. Examples of Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)	
3.4.1. Dyslexia	
3.4.2. Dyspraxia	
3.4.3. Dyscalculia	
3.4.4. Dysgraphia	
3.4.5. Attention Deficit (and Hyperactivity) Disorder	
3.5. Co-morbid SpLDs	
3.6. Common Impacts of SPLDs on Study	
3.7. Understanding the Autistic Spectrum	
3.8. Common Impacts of Autistic Spectrum Conditions on Study	
3.9. Understanding Mental Health	
3.10. Common Mental Health Conditions in Further / Higher Education	

3.11.	The Challenges of Sensory Impairments	
3.11.1.	Visual Impairment	
3.11.2.	Hearing Impairment	
4.	Specifying and Implementing Appropriate Support	13
4.1.	Individual Support	
4.1.1.	Individual Support for Study	
4.1.2.	Individual Support for Assessment	
4.1.3.	Individual Support for General Access	
4.2.	Considerations for Applying Individual Support	
4.2.1.	Unfair Advantage	
4.2.2.	Retrospective Application	
4.2.3.	Validating Partners' Regulations	
4.3.	Disability Conditions, Relevant Support and Potential DSA Support Table	
4.4.	Venue Accessibility	
4.5.	Individual Support Specification Process Flow Chart	
5.	The Individual Support Plan (ISP)	18
5.1.	The Purpose of the ISP	
5.2.	Sharing Responsibility	
6.	The Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)	20
6.1.	Criteria for Eligibility	
6.2.	Examples of conditions eligible for DSA	
6.3.	Applying for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)	
6.4.	Evidence Required for DSA Application	
6.5.	DSA Process Flow Chart	
7.	Withdrawal of Disabled Students due to Lack of Academic Progress	23
8.	Staff Contact Information	24
8.1.	Useful Links	

1. Introduction

1.1. Students with Disabilities or Special Needs

St. Patrick's College (The College) works together with students and its awarding body (Pearson) to provide an environment in which no learner is placed at a disadvantage because of a disability and/or learning difficulty. In doing so the College aims to promote equality of opportunity for all students, as guided by the Organisation's *Equality and Diversity Policy*.

The College offers personal and confidential assistance to students in need of assistance with disability and/or learning difficulties. This may include arranging for Individual Support to a study programme to ensure that students can engage with their programme(s) under fair and equitable conditions. It may also include assistance with any potential funding arrangements available. The College ensures that students affected by mobility or sensory impairments have uninhibited access to facilities and that appropriate emergency evacuation procedures are in place.

1.2. The Equality Act 2010 (Amended 2012)

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination both in the workplace and in wider society. It replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single act, making the law more accessible and reinforcing some instances. It provides clarification on what constitutes the unlawful inequitable treatment of a person.

In the context of this handbook, The Equality Act outlines UK government legislation providing protection from the various forms of discrimination relating to disability. The Act states that it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of a disability factor. 'Disability' under the Equality Act 2010 is defined as:

'a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities'.

Full document can be found here:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

1.3. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 1995 – Revised 2005)

In addition to imposing obligations on employers, the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) places duties on service providers and requires 'Individual Support' to be made when providing access to goods, facilities, services and premises. There is also the DDA 2005 which amends and updates the DDA 1995.

The DDA can be referenced from the following:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/50/contents>

1.4. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA), 2001

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 establishes legal rights for disabled students in *pre-16* and *post-16* education by amending the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) to include education. SENDA ensures that disabled students are not discriminated against in education, training and any services provided wholly or mainly for students. This includes courses provided by Further and Higher Education Institutions and sixth form colleges.

According to SENDA, it is unlawful for responsible bodies to treat a disabled person 'less favourably' than a non-disabled person for a reason that relates to the person's disability. If a disabled person is at a 'substantial disadvantage', responsible bodies are required to take reasonable steps to prevent that disadvantage which might include changes to policies and practices, course requirements or the physical features of a building.

Full document can be found here:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2001/10/contents>

1.5. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)

The most recent version of the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) '*Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education*'_ Section 3: *Disabled students*, states that to meet legislative requirements successfully, an [education provider] needs to have an ethos that embraces diversity, as well as senior managers who demonstrate a commitment to resourcing the disability equality agenda and take an active interest in accessibility.

The QAA additionally proposes that institutions make consideration of the entitlements of disabled students and staff a core element of institutional practice relating to all decision-making activities.

The QAA Code is made up of 24 precepts that encourage institutions to be pro-active in developing provision, to ensure that Individual Support is available, and to actively prevent any form of discrimination against students with disabilities.

The full document can be found here:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuringstandardsandquality/quality-code/Pages/default.aspx>

1.6. About the Handbook

The *Inclusive Practice Handbook*, is intended to provide guidance for staff and students on the responsibility of the College to support students presenting with disabilities, learning difficulties or illness which may impeded their ability to engage with studies. It describes the processes the College has in place to support students and should serve as a frame of reference for staff responsible for supporting inclusive practice across departments, both academic and non-academic.

1.7. Scope and Remit

The support described in this handbook is applicable to students with a long-term or permanent condition disruptive to their study; it is **not** applicable to students with short term injuries or illnesses; these are treated as *Mitigating Circumstances* and are dealt via a separate *Special Considerations* process.

The support processes outlined in this handbook apply to **students only**. The processes and mechanisms by which the College provides support for disabled members of staff are the responsibility of the Human Resources department.

2. Inclusive Practice

2.1. About Inclusive Practice

The College liaises directly with students who declare a disability and/or learning difficulty to assess their specific needs and specify any support that can be provided to assist them. The College is also responsible for communicating this information to other members of staff as appropriate so that the support requirements identified can be implemented.

2.2. Declaration of Disability / Learning Difficulty

Students can declare a disability or learning difficulty either during the admissions phase, or at any time during their programme of study. Having made this declaration the College will be automatically notified and will contact the student directly by phone and email.

A consultation meeting is then held between the Disability Officer or a member of the Student Administration team and the student to identify any support requirements. Following this meeting an Individual Support Plan (ISP) is generated. The ISP informs the appropriate academic or administrative departments of the required support. (*The full support implementation process is outlined in [Section 4](#)*)

College staff handling declarations of a disability or learning difficulty maintain discretion and confidentiality in disclosing any information about a student's requirements and information is shared on a strictly need-to-know basis and only with the student's expressed consent.

2.3. Responsibilities of the Inclusion Service

2.3.1. Core Responsibilities

The core responsibilities of the College in dealing with inclusive practice are:

- i.* Assessing applications from students for disability support, liaising with the student or medical professional as required;
- ii.* Generating the Individual Support Plan (ISP) and recommending any Individual Support to the student's programme and learning experience;
- iii.* Ensuring that the ISP is communicated to all appropriate departments for implementation;
- iv.* Assisting students with Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) applications where eligible;
- v.* Making referrals to internal and external support providers where necessary;
- vi.* Maintaining communication with the student to ensure that support provisions are effective or require review.

2.3.2. Non-obligations

The Inclusion Service does not:

- i.* Attend to matters of *Special Consideration* or *Mitigating Circumstances* in instance where the student is affected by a short-term affliction. These are dealt with by the student's academic or administration team;
- ii.* Contest final decisions made by Academics where students' grades or performances are concerned. – A separate appeals process is in place for this, handled by the student's academic team
- iii.* Directly involve itself with financial issues outside the remit of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) applications.
- iv.* Attend to staff with disabilities or learning difficulties; such cases are referred to the Organisation's Human Resources Department.

2.4. Student Wellbeing

The LSBF Inclusion Service also offers pastoral support to students who are in need of someone to talk too. The service is entirely confidential and is open to students who wish to discuss anything that may be troubling them about their study, physical health, mental health, social issues or any other general well-being issues. If students request or require further intervention, they may be referred to an external practitioner, such as their GP for further help. Students can make an appointment with the Disability Service by email or can request a referral through their tutors, programme leaders or other support staff.

3. Disabilities and Learning Difficulties

3.1. What is Disability?

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines a 'disabled person' as:

'a person [who has] has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

Disability under the Equality Act 2010 constitutes:

'a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities'.

The Inclusion Service accommodates students with a range of long-term conditions that impact upon daily life and study. Not all conditions are typically regarded as disabilities and in many cases students affected by such conditions, regardless of the severity of the impediments, will not identify with the term 'disabled'.

Therefore, it is important that the necessary steps for raising awareness are taken in order for the service's remit to be fully recognised. In understanding how conditions qualify for support through the Inclusion Service, emphasis is directed towards the phrase 'long-term'. Diagnoses of Specific Learning Difficulties (in adulthood) and Autistic Spectrum Conditions are regarded across the industry as permanent.

3.2. Examples of Recognised Disabilities

Disabilities recognised by the Inclusion Service include but are not limited to:

- Long-term Medical Conditions, *e.g. Diabetes, Sickle Cell Disease, HIV, Cancer*
- Long-term Mobility Issues, *e.g. Carpel Tunnel Syndrome, RSI, Paralysis*
- Long-term Mental Health Issues, *e.g. Anxiety, Chronic Depression, Schizophrenia, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)*
- Sensory Impairments, *e.g. Hearing Impairment, Sight loss,*
- Specific Learning Difficulties, *e.g. Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, AD(H)D, Dyscalculia*
- Autistic Spectrum Conditions, *e.g. Asperger's Syndrome*

Chronic medical or mobility conditions do not usually have a direct impact upon cognition and are not usually seen to directly impact study. Difficulties with study commonly arise through the impact of pain, fatigue, physical weakness, imbalance, immobility and the side-effects of medication. Attendance and attainment are generally affected by surgery, recovery periods or frequent medical appointments.

3.3. Understanding Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) are generally understood as being differences in learning styles as opposed to disabilities. The attitude towards learning difficulties has evolved hugely and with it, there is a more accurate recognition of how these conditions impact upon learning, cognitive processes and ability across work and study.

Traditionally, SpLDs have been thought of negatively, with the stigmatic profiling of children and adults across various cultures.

Where not entirely dismissed, SpLDs have been attributed to poor intelligence, laziness, illiteracy and even problematic behaviour. It should be noted, however, that psychologists differentiate between General Learning Difficulties and Specific Learning difficulties and that SpLD is not synonymous to low IQ. In fact, those presenting with SpLDs often have above-average IQ scores as well as a good command of language. Very few students on the SpLD spectrum will consider themselves to be 'disabled'.

3.4. Examples of Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

3.4.1. Dyslexia

This is the most common of the Specific Learning Difficulties. Dyslexia is best understood as a cognitive profile associated with difficulties in reading accuracy, comprehension, spelling and processing speed. In some cases, students will struggle with phonological processing, verbal comprehension and difficulties with written expression.

3.4.2. Dyspraxia

Dyspraxia is widely understood as being a condition that affects co-ordination and the planning of movement. Students with this profile type can experience difficulties with orientation, organisation, perceptual reasoning and fine motor movements involved in handwriting or tying shoelace.

3.4.3. Dyscalculia

Dyscalculia is associated with a poor understanding of numbers, difficulty with arithmetic and the learning of mathematical principles. The profile can (but not always) involve difficulties with the understanding of time and time management.

3.4.4. Dysgraphia

Dysgraphia is similar to Dyspraxia, whereby it is best understood as a difficulty with hand/finger co-ordination and so handwriting becomes problematic. Students may also experience difficulty with spelling and confusion with certain letters of the alphabet.

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3.4.5. Attention Deficit (and Hyperactivity) Disorder

Attention Deficit (and Hyperactivity) Disorder or AD(H)D, is characterised by the inability to sustain concentration or offer attention for prolonged periods of time. This is sometimes coupled with hyperactivity or impulsive behaviour. Effects are usually more prominent in childhood and tend to be seen more in males than females.

3.5. Co-morbid SpLDs

It should be noted that recognition of SpLDs is not so clear-cut and in the majority of cases, a cognitive profile can be inclusive of two or more Specific Learning Difficulties. Psychologists call this 'co-morbid'.

3.6. Common Impacts of SPLDs on Study

Include the following difficulties:

- Difficulty reading and understanding academic text;
- Difficulty with concentration;
- Difficulty with handwriting;
- Difficulty with note taking;
- Difficulty with organisation and time management;
- Difficulty with exam preparation/exam performance;
- Difficulty with giving presentations;
- Difficulty with coursework composition/written expression.

For examples of SpLD support, refer [Section 4, sub-section 4.3](#)

3.7. Understanding the Autistic Spectrum

The Autistic Spectrum covers a range of various developmental disabilities. Autism is sometimes referred to as a 'hidden disability' as it is not always easy to detect and is affiliated with a spectrum, as those affected with the condition are so in very different ways. As with Specific Learning Difficulties, no two people are likely to have the same profile on the ASD spectrum and the differences in their strengths and weaknesses may be vast, depending on where the effects of the condition are most profound.

Although traditionally known as Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), more widely the profile is being referred to as Autistic Spectrum Condition, as with further research, more focus is being given into understanding the strengths of the Autistic profile as opposed to the impediments.

Autism is usually diagnosed at a young age and requires a lifetime of specialist support. Autistic students have great difficulty understanding instructions, communicating their thoughts or emotions, making friends, being dependent on others, dealing with social interaction or with change. Autistic children and adults have a tendency to depend on strict routine. They can also display extreme sensitivity to certain sensory stimuli such as specific sounds or colours.

Autistic students with Asperger's Syndrome tend to be of average to high intelligence, although they will still experience difficulties understanding and processing language. These students often show keen interests in subjects such as mathematics and science and are able to offer valuable perspectives not typically considered due to their unique view of the world around them.

When communicating with Autistic students, instructions or questions should be simple and direct, avoiding figurative speech or physical gestures.

3.8. Common Impacts of Autistic Spectrum Conditions on Study

- Difficulty understanding academics;
- Difficulty following instructions or assignment briefs;
- Difficulty with exam performance (usually due to the way questions are presented);
- Difficulty with interaction or presentation;
- Difficulty with communication and relationship building;
- Difficulty asking for clarification or help;
- Difficulty with written or spoken language;
- Difficulty with adaptation e.g. transition from FE to HE or change in timetable.

For examples of Autistic Spectrum support, refer [Section 4, sub-section 4.3](#)

3.9. Understanding Mental Health

Mental Health conditions affect study as commonly as learning difficulties do, although some mental health conditions are not so recognisable in nature or in the way they may impact upon learning. Traditionally, there have been extremely negative attitudes across the education and employment sectors regarding mental health concerns, particularly with more severe conditions. Although with better understanding and emphasis on inclusion and equality, these issues are being offered a much more sympathetic approach.

It may not be so accurate to categorise mental health issues according to the severity of the condition itself, as two people suffering the same condition may see a huge variation as to the impact that condition has on daily life, attitude, communication, relationships, competence in work/study and in general wellbeing. It is typical of mental health conditions, like some medical conditions, to have inconsistent effects on people. There may be intervals where the condition seems absent. There may be highs and lows in attitude and/or mood and it is also important to note that many people suffering with mental health conditions may also be impacted by their medication (side effects as well as dependency).

3.10. Common Mental Health Conditions in Further / Higher Education

These include:

- Chronic anxiety
- Long-term depression
- Panic disorders
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Bi-polar Syndrome
- Borderline Personality Disorder
- Schizophrenia

Usual impacts of mental health issues upon study are:

- Inability to concentrate/Lack of motivation
- Frequent absence
- Poor time management/organisation
- Issues with memory/Poor communication
- Constantly feeling overwhelmed/pressured/anxious
- Hyperactivity/mania
- Sensitivity to sensory stimuli, communication or criticism
- Tendency to isolate self/low self esteem
- Unpredictable behaviour/responses

For examples of Mental Health support, refer [*Section 4, sub-section 4.3*](#)

3.11. The Challenges of Sensory Impairments

Sensory impairments probably have the most direct impact upon study, along with physical conditions that affect mobility. Students affected by hearing loss, sight loss, blindness or deafness are profoundly disadvantaged in that they have the most restricted access to learning resources. They are in need of the most support and even with the best support; these students are still required to work harder than their able peers in order to reach the same level of academic attainment.

3.11.1. Visual Impairment

Students who are visually impaired can be challenged in various ways. Their impairment may be slight, causing some loss of focus or colour vision. It may be that they have blind spots and are unable to see all things in their direct or peripheral vision. Some students may be able to read but require text to be magnified and some may be classified as blind, only able to see lights, shadows or nothing at all.

The most prominent impact upon study is with reading, as well as with the other practical aspects of study such as writing, note-taking and getting around. Not being able to read causes severe obstacles to research, assignment composition, revision and exam performance.

Even when aided with braille (where available), students will take longer than their able peers to work through materials and compose their assignments. Even listening to lecturers can be more strenuous as the student is totally dependent on what they can hear, being unable to read facial expressions, body-language or view presentation slides.

3.11.2. Hearing Impairment

Challenges of hearing impairment can cause two direct barriers between the student and the information they are trying to obtain; the most obvious being that they are unable to hear some, most or all of the spoken material, and the less obvious being the language barrier that may have some impact if the student's first language is sign language. A student who is fluent in British Sign Language (BSL) will not necessarily be fluent also in British English as there are differences in syntax.

They are also likely to experience difficulties with spelling, in particular, with the spelling of new or unfamiliar words that they have been unable to hear. Students who lip read will require much concentration during classes and will easily become frustrated in group situations where many people are speaking. This can make lectures and classes exhausting and note taking will be almost impossible.

For examples of sensory impairment support provisions, refer [Section 4; sub-section 4.3](#)

4. Specifying and Implementing Appropriate Support

Support will be uniquely specified for each student through a one-to-one consultation with the Inclusion Services. This support will then be outlined within an **Individual Support Plan (ISP)** to advise administrative departments and academics on how to provide for the student's needs.

In cases where a student has a mobility or sensory impairment, the Inclusion Services will additionally liaise with Operations staff to ensure that building accessibility and emergency evacuation procedures are in place.

The following section covers the support available from the Inclusion Services and the process by which Individual Support are implemented.

4.1. Individual Support

Individual Support comes is implemented in the form of modifications to a study programme that are designed to mitigate or remove the impeding effect of a disability and/or learning difficulty.

This type of support varies, depending on the nature of a student's condition but usually falls within three main categories:

4.1.1. Individual Support for Study

These refer to a modification of the teaching/learning strategy and/or environment, including but not limited to:

- Permission to record lectures/classes/workshops,
- Lecture materials/notes provided in advance,
- Library Support,
- Special seating in taught sessions
- Additional breaks.

4.1.2. Individual Support for Assessment

Individual Support for assessment that lessens the impact of a disability or learning difficulty upon exam performance or submission of coursework, such as:

- Extra time for written exams,
- Deadline extensions for coursework,
- Special seating or sheltered invigilation for exams,
- Permission to type exam answers,
- Breaks during examinations.

4.1.3. Individual Support for General Access:

Adjustments to how the student accesses their campus facilities, communications, resources and provisions for health and safety.

- Delivery of library books
- Extensions on book loans
- Priority for accessible venues within or across campuses
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)
- First Aid referrals

4.2. Considerations for Applying Individual Support

4.2.1. Unfair Advantage

Individual Support must not be granted in such a way as to cause an unfair advantage to students in receipt of them. If the Academics consider a recommendation on the ISP to be such that it gives the disabled student an unfair advantage, they will duly advise the Inclusion Service to make the appropriate amendments.

4.2.2. Retrospective Application

Individual Support cannot be applied retrospectively by the Inclusion Service, and so will not apply to cases whereby students have missed deadlines or exams. Such cases will be referred to the Special Consideration or Appeals processes.

4.2.3. Validating Partners' Regulations

LSBF has strategic partnerships with award validating institutions. Individual Support must be granted in line the partners' requirements. Where in doubt, the partner institution should be consulted directly by the Inclusion Service to ensure that appropriate support is provided.

4.3. Disability Conditions, Relevant Support and Potential DSA Support Table

The table below outlines examples of Individual Support (Institutional Support) provided via the company and the DSA (Disabled Students' Allowance).

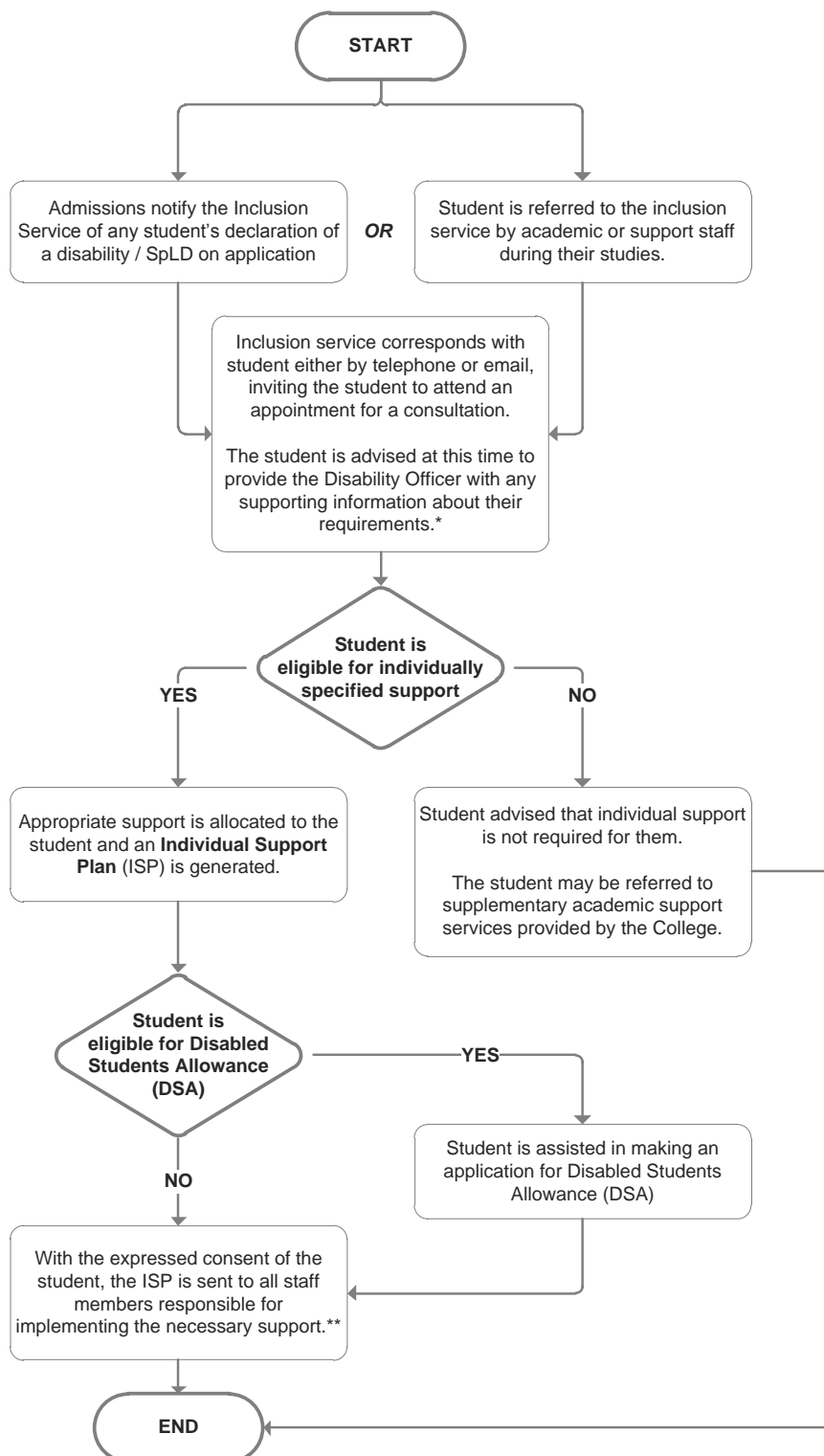
Condition	Institutional Support	DSA Support
Mobility Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible Venues • Library Support • Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) • Recorded lectures • Extra time in exams (to compensate for slow writing and to allow for rest breaks). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel Allowance (for taxi service) • Ergonomic workstation for home study • Assistive Software for dictating written work.
Specific Learning Difficulty (Dyslexia)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra time for exams • Extended deadlines • Recorded lectures • Library support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational software • Specialist (non-subject specific) tuition • Non-subject specific textbooks
Mental Health Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra time in exams • Extended deadlines • Recorded lectures • Library support • Referred to counselling service (if appropriate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Mentoring • Organisational software
Hearing Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritised seating in class • Lecture materials in advance • Extended deadlines • Extra time for exams • Library support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistive technology (if appropriate) • BSL Interpreter • Note taker
Visual Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritised seating in class • Recorded lectures • Extra time for exams • Extended deadlines • Library support • Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistive technology (if appropriate) • Note taker • Scribe • Travel allowance
Medical Condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritised seating in class • Extra time for exams • Extended deadlines • Lecture materials in advance • Special permissions for exams (food/drink/toilet) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel allowance • Organisational software
Autistic Spectrum Condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra time for exams • Extended deadlines • Library support • Clear instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring

4.4. Venue Accessibility

The access and entrance facilities provided by LSBF differs between teaching buildings and are detailed as below:

Campus Location	Access
30 Holborn, Buchanan House, London, EC1N 2LX	Step-free, pavement-level entrance to the building. Lift access to all floors.
2 nd Floor Linley House, Dickinson Street, Manchester M1 4LF	Lift access to all floors.

4.5. Individual Support Specification Process Flow Chart



**Information about a disability or learning difficulty are not retained by the College. Students are instructed not send such information electronically.*

This information will be viewed by the Disability Officer during the consultation. It will not be copied or stored.

*** The information on the ISP does not describe the exact nature of the disability, which will remain confidential; rather it will describe the support arrangements in place to mitigate the effects of it.*

Sensitive information about a disability or learning difficulty will under no circumstances be unnecessarily shared within the College.

5. The Individual Support Plan (ISP)

5.1. The Purpose of the ISP

The Individual Support Plan (ISP) will serve as a document for identifying which students are under the care of the Inclusion Service, what their support recommendations are and which departments are responsible for seeing that the recommended support is implemented.

The ISP will initially take the form of a paper/electronic document, but is intended to be developed as an online form, integrated with the Information Systems database. In both formats, it will include the following information:

Section 1:

Personal details – Student’s name, ID number, course details

Section 2:

Confirmation of consent to share information – the student will have agreed that details relating to their study needs / support recommendations may be shared with collaborating departments across the institution.

Section 3:

Disability type – The nature of the disability will be disclosed in brief (this will be the group under which the condition is classified e.g. dyslexia would be categorised as ‘Specific Learning Difficulty’. Sickle Cell Disease would be categorised as ‘Medical Condition’.

Section 4:

Confirmation of Evidence – This section will simply indicate that the relevant supporting documentation has been received by the Inclusion Service.

Section 5:

Individual Support Recommendations (by department) – This section will outline the Individual Support recommended by the Inclusion Service and will group the Individual Support under the departments responsible for seeing them implemented. For example:

Individual Support	Department
Permission to record lectures/classes:	Academic Department
Extended book loans:	Library Services
Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP):	Health and Safety (Operations)

Section 6:

Student Commitments – A break-down of the student’s obligations as part of the agreement for their disability support. In order for the Inclusion Service and collaborating departments to be as effective as possible, some efforts will be required from the student to ensure that all necessary information is gathered and that the institution is notified of any changes to their circumstances.

Section 7:

Date of Circulation and Notification of Receipt – The document will be circulated to all relevant departments who will be required to acknowledge receipt and to confirm that the support has been implemented or not (and the reasons for it not being implemented).

5.2. Sharing Responsibility

In order for inclusive practice to be successfully implemented, the Inclusion Service requires the co-operation of all stakeholders, in particular, that of all departments involved in the students’ academic and non-academic experience on course.

Recommendations for Individual Support will be directed specifically to those departments responsible for their application, with the expectation that the support will be actioned on receipt of the ISP.

6. The Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)

The DSA is available to most disabled students from the United Kingdom and there is no set age limit on receiving DSAs. This support is additional to the support offered by the student's Higher Education Institution and can fund study in the form of specialist equipment, support workers or help with travel. Non-UK students from the European Union (EU) member countries and other overseas/international students are **not** eligible for DSA.

The following section outlines the criteria for DSA eligibility, and the process by which the Inclusion Service will assist students with DSA applications.

6.1. Criteria for Eligibility

To qualify for support through the DSA, a student must meet the following criteria:

- i.* Applicant must be enrolled on a full-time or part-time Undergraduate or Postgraduate program of study, *e.g.* a degree or HND-level course, including distance learning courses that last at least a year,
- ii.* Have a long-term disability, medical condition that affects their ability to study or a diagnosed learning difficulty,
- iii.* Be a UK citizen OR have been granted Indefinite Leave to Remain by the UK Home Office,
- iv.* Qualify for student finance from Student Finance England (SFE)

On the contrary, students will not be able to receive DSAs under the following reasons:

- i.* On short courses of less than one year in duration
- ii.* Already receiving funding from the NHS
- iii.* Already getting funding from a Research Council
- iv.* A sandwich-course student on a full-year placement.
- v.* Students cannot get DSAs for more than one course at the same time.

6.2. Examples of conditions eligible for DSA

- Long-term Medical Conditions *e.g.* Diabetes, Sickle Cell Disease, HIV, Cancer
- Long-term Mobility Issues *e.g.* Carpel Tunnel Syndrome, RSI, Paralysis
- Sensory Impairments *e.g.* Hearing Impairment, Sight loss
- Mental Health Issues *e.g.* Anxiety, Chronic Depression, Schizophrenia, OCD
- Specific Learning Difficulties *e.g.* Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, AD(H)D, Dyscalculia
- Autistic Spectrum Conditions *e.g.* Asperger's Syndrome

6.3. Applying for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)

The first step to be taken is to complete the DSA Application Form (as produced by Student Finance England or SFE) which can be obtained online at

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/education/student-finance>, and submit it to the Inclusion Service. The application will need an official stamp from the School and a copy of the student's medical/diagnostic evidence.

If a student is eligible for the DSA, it is important to apply as soon as possible as the application process can take a number of weeks. However, the Inclusion Service will help the student through the process each step of the way.

6.4. Evidence Required for DSA Application

Students with a disability, long-term health condition or mental health condition will need to submit a letter from their doctor, specialist or professional practitioner. It must clearly state a diagnosis of the condition and if possible, some information about how it affects the student.

The document **MUST** be signed and dated, and can be submitted to the Inclusion Service electronically or as a paper copy.

Note: To keep within DSA regulations, medical evidence must be no more than 2 years old.

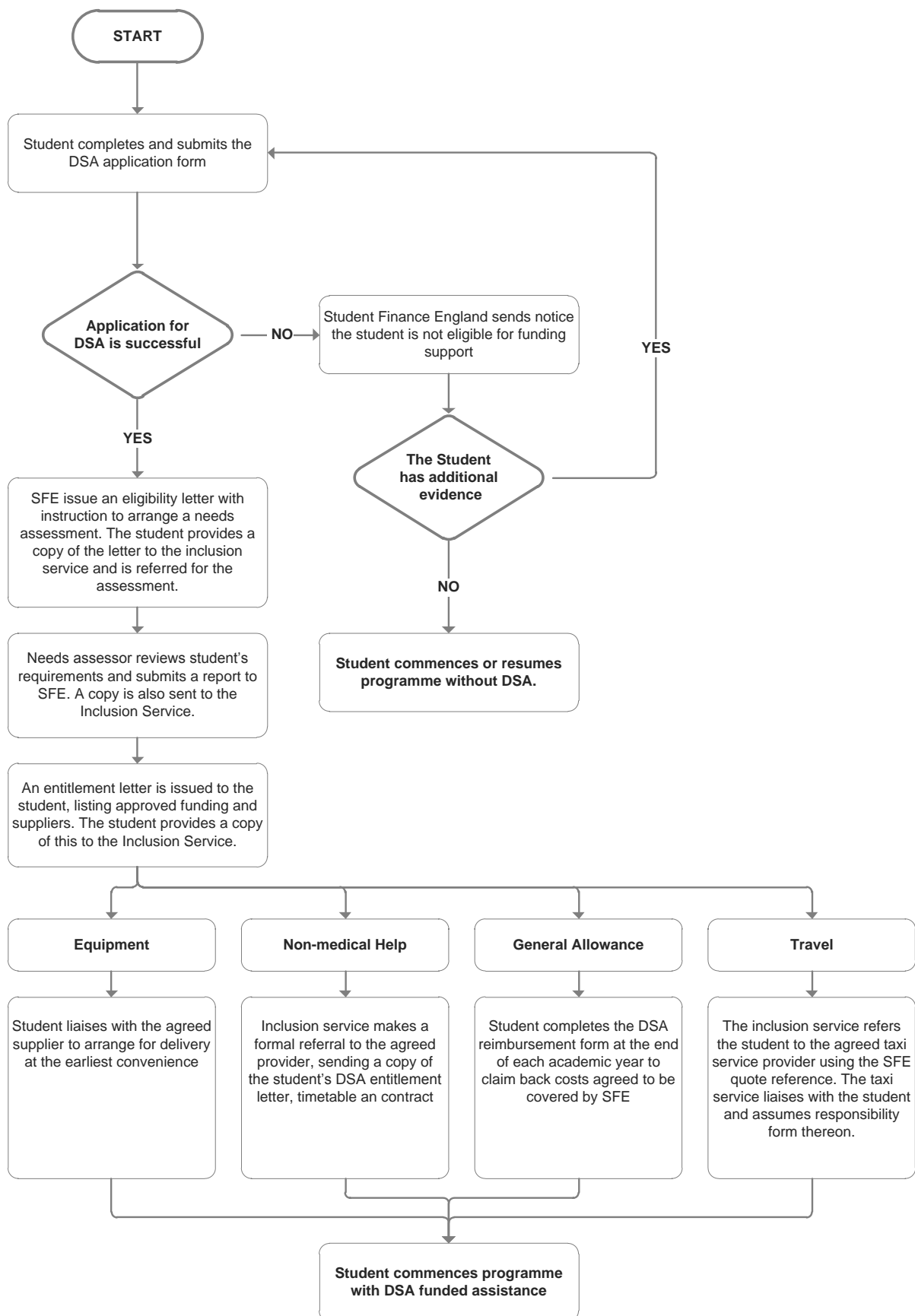
Students with a Specific Learning Difficulty e.g. Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, AD(H)D or Dyscalculia, are asked to submit a copy of their diagnostic report from a psychologist or specialist assessor. This must also be signed and must be a post-16 assessment (student was assessed at age 16 or older).

The first step to take is to complete the DSA Application Form and if eligible for the DSA, the student can receive funding for:

- Equipment such as computers, software, ergonomic equipment and assistive technology
- One-to-one support for Specialist Study Skills, Mentoring, Scribes, Note-takers and Interpreters
- General allowances for consumables such as printer paper, ink and non-core textbooks
- Additional travel costs such as a taxi service to and from your institution.

Note: The DSA does NOT have to be paid back unless the student withdraws from the course, in which case the student may have to return some of the funding.

6.5. DSA Process Flow Chart



7. Withdrawal of Disabled Students due to Lack of Academic Progress

The Inclusion Service records all involvement it has with students and where the appropriate support has not been fully implemented, Inclusion Service will intervene. When the Inclusion Service has seen all possible support administered, but the Academic Department ultimately decides to withdraw the student, the decision does not relate to disability but is based on the fact that the student's academic progress is not at the appropriate level required by academic partners or to comply with any visa requirements.

As a standard practice, where a disabled student is withdrawn, this will take place after;

- i.* The Inclusion Service has exhausted its resources to implement support;
- ii.* The Academic Department has adhered to the support recommendations as effectively as possible;
- iii.* The Academic Department has conducted a careful review of the student's academic progress and deemed it unrealistic for the student to catch up or to pass the minimum requirement of the course;
- iv.* Or, a Disciplinary Panel has considered the student's behaviour to be in breach of the student code of conduct.

Withdrawals are made on the basis of lack of academic progress, attendance or unacceptable behaviour but not disability or any of the categories stated in the *Equality Act 2012* that could suggest discrimination. It should be noted that Individual Support recommendations have a very distinct jurisdiction and that the Inclusion Service will not contest decisions made by the Academic department. The decision of the Academic Department will be considered as final.

8. Staff Contact Information

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8.1. Useful Links

Student Finance England:

<http://www.practitioners.slc.co.uk/>

Student Loans Company:

<http://www.slc.co.uk/>

Disabled Students' Allowance:

<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview>

Disabled People:

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/disabilities>

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