

**Title: Statement of Our Commitment to Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities**

**Type:** Policy Statement

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**Purpose:** To inform staff, students, applicants, parents or carers, careers services, health services, social services and other agencies of the services and provision available to students with learning difficulties and disabilities at the College.

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**Scope:** This policy applies to applicants and to students of the College

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**Responsibility:** The Vice Principal HR & Student Services is responsible for this policy. The Director Student Services is responsible for the monitoring of the policy.

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**Legal Context:** The Equality Act (2010)

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### **Solihull College Disability Statement**

This document is intended to be a guide to the services and provision available to students with learning difficulties and disabilities at the College and Stratford-upon-Avon College (hereafter referred to as the College). It is intended for use externally by students, parents or carers, careers services, health services, social services and other agencies as well as internally by students and College staff. It is acknowledged that, because of its format, this document may not be accessible to all students. A summary of this statement is available in large print, in symbols and electronically. It can also be accessed for adaptation on the College's website. Please ask at the Student Services Centre for the version you require.

In this document we have used the term 'students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities', and by this we mean students who, because of a learning difficulty and/or disability, will need specific provision or services.

The College encourages applications from **all people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities**. Our aim is to make it easier for you to study with us and to achieve your learning goals.

We want the College and its courses to be as accessible as possible to our whole community. That is why we are committed to providing **sensitive and individual support** for all our students.

If you have a learning difficulty or a disability, you may need additional support to obtain access to the College facilities. You may discuss your particular needs confidentially with a member of staff.

For information on how to contact us, please see page 7 of this statement.

## **How to Apply**

If you would like to join one of our courses, there are people who can help you through the admissions process. You will be asked to complete an application form. If this is difficult for you to do yourself then you can get help from the Student Services Centre, or you may want to ask someone you know well to help you. There is a box on the application form for you to indicate if you require any special help at interview - for example, a communicator or someone to help and support you. For full time courses, you will be asked to attend for an interview.

Our Student Services Centre is open and friendly for everybody. You can contact us by calling in to see us, by telephone, letter or by e-mail. A text message service is available for users with hearing difficulties. A member of the Additional Needs team can attend any interview if you wish.

There is space on the application form for you to indicate if you have any additional needs. If you tick this box your needs will be followed up by a member of the Additional Needs team.

Please inform us at the earliest possible opportunity if you have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) so that we can ensure that the provision and needs outlined within the plan can be provided.

## **What kind of support can we offer?**

### **Support for learning**

All full-time students have a Personal Tutor. Your Personal Tutor is here to support you in your studies, to provide advice, guidance and information, and is your main contact at college. You will meet regularly to discuss your progress and identify where you are doing well, what you need to work on and have help with. Any additional support you may need to complete your studies will also be made known to your personal tutor.

You are entitled to a discussion of your needs for additional support before joining a course of study, following which an ISP (Individual Support Plan) will be set up.

We will let you know what support is available before your course starts. The ISP is reviewed with you regularly to ensure that it is meeting your needs.

### **Here are some examples of how we can help:**

- Support from a Learning Support Assistant in and out of class
- Personal care support
- Support through the English & Maths Hubs for numeracy and literacy
- Materials in different formats
- Loan of specialist equipment
- Technical support
- Reader/note taker
- British Sign Language/Sign Supported English communicators if you are D/deaf

### **Support with using equipment**

The College has a wide range of equipment available for student use. A particular piece of equipment is sometimes needed to enable students with disabilities to gain full access to their course.

Our range of specialist equipment includes:

- Computers with software such as *Read and Write* for students with dyslexia

- Large screen monitors
- Screen magnifiers
- Screen and text readers (for blind computer users)
- Specialist keyboards or input devices
- Dedicated laptops for long term loan
- Dictaphones
- Spell checkers and thesauruses
- Voice input software
- Scanners and digital cameras
- Portable CCTV (vision aid)
- Deaf alerters
- Visual Mouse
- Easy read scanner
- Site licence for Read and Write software to support varying visual abilities and other specialist software
- Induction Loops & radios aids
- The Exam Pen

If you would like a full list of what is available, please contact Dave Wedgbury, Additional Needs Manager.

The College website is disability friendly. We can help you to customise your desktop view to meet your specific need, e.g. the visual appearance of the desktop and keyboard input preferences.

**Once the course has started**, you can discuss with your personal tutor and/or subject tutor any difficulties, which you may be experiencing at college. You may ask for someone to help and support you with this, if necessary. The Additional Needs Support Tutor will be involved in these discussions.

Students intending to follow a Higher Education course should discuss their additional needs at their initial interview, since an application to Student Finance England (SFE) for Disabled Student's Allowance (DSA) will need to be made. The Additional Needs team can offer advice if needed.

### **Specialist advice**

Solihull College links to other agencies to provide specialist advice and support.

These are:

- Educational Psychology Service
- Solihull Specialist Careers Service
- Autism West Midlands
- Dyslexia West Midlands
- Solihull Action Through Advocacy
- Learning Disability Social Work Team
- Newlands Bishop Farm
- Sign Solutions
- Hereward College
- RNIB
- BID
- MIND
- CAMHS/ SOLAR
- Family First
- Think Family



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### **How to ask for support**

You can ask for assistance during your first visit to the College when we will show you the buildings in order to identify any accessibility problems.

After your first visit we can offer a more detailed assessment and prepare an individual support plan (ISP) which will meet your needs.

We want you to let us know as soon as possible if you require support so that we can plan with you your transition into the College. However, if you decide you need support during your course, you can still contact us:

- **Dave Wedgbury – Additional Needs Manager** Contact through Student Services Centre
- **Julie Barson – Disability Officer** Contact through Student Services Centre
- **Liz Meredith - Dyslexia Support Coordinator** Contact through Student Services Centre
- **Diane Read – Deaf Coordinator** Contact through Student Services Centre
- **Sallie Partridge - ALD/Reach Co-ordinator**
- **David Lodge - Estates Manager.** The Estates Manager has general responsibility for buildings, including physical access and related premises matters. Contact through Facilities
- **Adam Thomas – Director Student Services** Contact through the Student Services Administrator.

### **Relevant staff expertise**

The College staff are qualified and highly experienced in various areas of additional needs. They provide guidance and support to other staff across the College.

### **Disabled Students' Allowance**

Many students on HE courses who have a disability or learning difficulty may be eligible for funding from the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). Further information can be obtained from the Student Services Centre or online at [www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview](http://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview)

### **Literacy and Numeracy Support**

If you would like to improve your reading, writing and/or number skills, you can attend individual or group sessions in the English and Maths Hubs. The support plan will be designed to meet your individual needs.



### **Examination and assessment**

You may need to take an examination or other assessment as part of your studies. It is essential that you discuss your individual needs as soon as possible, especially as external bodies need to be contacted. The College's Examination Officers must make formal applications by dates set by the Examination Boards if students are to be given access arrangements.

A few examples of these arrangements are:

- using easily accessible rooms
- the use of readers and scribes
- BSL support
- extra time or timed rest breaks
- exam paper in a different format or on coloured paper as required

Your Additional Needs Support Tutor will apply for your exam access arrangements based on evidence of need and your normal way of working.



### **Getting around the college**

This section tells you about the physical accommodation and access to the College buildings. There are three main campuses - Blossomfield Campus, Woodlands Campus and Stratford-upon-Avon Campus. Some community courses take place in other centres such as secondary schools and community centres. You are advised to ask us about specific accessibility needs or see details from Disabled Go on their website.

Recreational areas and refreshment facilities, learning Hubs, Libraries and Information Technology rooms are fully accessible at Blossomfield Campus and Woodlands Campus. There are lifts to the upper floors of the main buildings at Blossomfield and Woodlands Campus.

The College has a sports hall at the Blossomfield Campus and the changing rooms are disability adapted.

Information about the college can be accessed on the Disabled Go website as follows:

[www.disabledgo.com](http://www.disabledgo.com)

### **Parking**

There are designated parking spaces, clearly highlighted and located near to the main entrances at the three Campuses for blue badge holders and specialist transport users.

### **Other facilities**

There are toilets for people with disabilities at each campus. There is a personal care room at Blossomfield campus.

### **Come and Visit Us**

The College wants to continue to improve physical access and facilities for people with disabilities. You are warmly invited to visit us and discuss your particular needs with the Additional Needs Manager or a member of the Additional Needs team.



### **What other facilities and services are available?**

The College provides a wide range of services and facilities to all its students including:

- Advice and guidance about choosing a course
- Welfare and financial advice
- Use of libraries, open access centres and learning Hubs
- Use of the College counselling service
- Careers guidance
- College nurse
- Support from the Student Enrichment Team

### **How can I complain if I'm not satisfied with the support provided?**

We hope that you will have a positive and successful time at college, but things can go wrong at times. If this happens, we want you to let us know. You can approach your complaint in a number of ways, which are set out in our Complaints Procedure. If you have any difficulty with communication, you can ask someone of your choice to help you make your complaint. For example, you can ask a parent, guardian, carer or friend to complain on your behalf or you can have access to the local advocacy service.

The College has a number of policies setting out your rights and responsibilities as a student. These are:

- The Admissions Policy
- The Student Code of Conduct
- The Solihull College Student
- The Attendance and Punctuality Policy

The Equality Policy  
 The Complaints Procedure  
 The Disciplinary Procedure  
 The Assignment Submission Policy  
 The Fitness to Study Policy

**Contact Information**

Student Services Blossomfield Campus Blossomfield Road Solihull B91 1SB Tel: 0121 678 7000 Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@Solihull.ac.uk">enquiries@Solihull.ac.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.solihull.ac.uk">www.solihull.ac.uk</a>	Student Services Woodlands Campus Auckland Drive Smith's Wood Solihull B36 0LY Tel: 0121 770 7388 Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@Solihull.ac.uk">enquiries@Solihull.ac.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.solihull.ac.uk">www.solihull.ac.uk</a>	Student Services Stratford-upon-Avon Campus The Willows North, Alcester Road, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 9QR Tel: 01789 266245 Email: <a href="mailto:Hello@stratford.ac.uk">Hello@stratford.ac.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.stratford.ac.uk">www.stratford.ac.uk</a>
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A copy of this document can also be found on the College website  
[www.solihull.ac.uk/](http://www.solihull.ac.uk/)

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