

 **Canterbury**

C o l l e g e

**ADDITIONAL LEARNING
SUPPORT
POLICY**

MARCH 2011

Additional Learning Support (ALS)

POLICY STATEMENT

In accordance with the College mission statement “providing excellent education for all”, the College is committed to providing an inclusive learning environment for all sections of the community. The College aims to ensure that students meet their qualification aims, and raise their aspirations in order to develop their full potential.

(Canterbury College Learning Policy)

1.1 Canterbury College is committed to inclusive learning and widening participation; the College also take its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) very seriously. This means that all applicants and learners who have disabilities or learning difficulties are entitled to receive support to enable them to participate as fully as possible in college life and to enable them to complete their programme of study successfully.

2. Definition of ALS

ALS is any activity that provides direct support for learning to individual learners, over and above that which is normally provided in a standard learning programme that leads to their learning goal. ALS is only available for learners on funded programmes. ALS is required to help learners gain access to, progress towards and successfully achieve their learning goals. The need for ALS may arise from a learning difficulty and/or disability, or from support required to access a progression opportunity or employment, or from literacy, numeracy or language support requirements.

(Source: Funding Guidance 2010/11: Additional Learning Support, Young Persons' Funding Agency. June 2010).

3. SCOPE OF ALS

3.1 Additional Learning Support (ALS) will include any activity that provides direct support for learning to individual learners, over and above that which is provided in a standard learning programme and which leads to their primary learning and/or functional skills goal(s). The need may arise from a learning difficulty or disability or from literacy, numeracy or language support requirements.

3.2 Where the majority of learners in a group are identified as requiring ALS support, this should be addressed through the design of the programme. The College is committed to providing a range of flexible Foundation Learning programmes at College are that are designed to meet the needs and aspirations of young people with additional educational needs, basic skills needs and English language needs.

3.3 Additional Learning Support is provided by a number of teams within college:

- **Additional Support Team** (cross-college). The Additional Support Team provides learning support to identified students enrolled on a wide range of programmes spanning all faculties and levels of award. The team consists of a number of support practitioners and specialist teachers who are experienced in working with students presenting a wide range of additional needs.
- **Foundation and Supported Learning.** The Foundation Learning team provide supported learning programmes of study aimed at promoting personal life skills, independence, vocational skills and aspirations and basic skills.
- **ESOL/ESL.** There is a range of programmes aimed at international students whose first language is not English and this provision is planned with the needs of learners in mind. In addition, international students undertaking cross-college vocational programmes are able to access the services of the Additional Support Team.

3.4 Additional Learning Support is different to and separate from Functional Skills. A policy document detailing the College Functional Skills provision is available.

4. Identification of Needs

4.1 Students are able to disclose information relating to additional educational needs at any point in their journey. The College actively promotes inclusive practices and encourages students to disclose information regarding additional needs as early as possible in the application cycle in order support planning and provision to be most effective.

Pre-Entry Stage

4.2 Prior to enrolment, all students are encouraged to disclose information relating to additional needs through the application and course selection process. Applicants may also contact teams directly or make enquiries via the College Disability Advisor based in the Student Information Centre.

4.3 Once information has been shared with college staff, all students will be contacted by the relevant team and offered opportunities for consultation and a needs assessment. The purpose of the needs assessment is to verify the nature of the need, gather more detailed information and, where applicable, begin the support planning process. The needs assessment may take place in conjunction with programme interviews and selection activities or independently.

4.4 The College requires certain evidence to be available in order to initiate planning for additional learning support. Evidence might include:

- A Statement of Special Education Needs (SEN)
- A Connexions Moving On Plan (S139a)
- A reference from the school Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)
- A medical reference or report
- An Educational Psychologist report
- Results of specialist testing and/or diagnostic assessment conducted by the College
- Initial assessment (functional skills) results

4.5 Where an applicant is assessed as being eligible for and requiring some form of additional support, a profile will be produced which sets out basic information about the student's needs and gives initial guidance to teaching and support staff allowing them to make timely plans for supporting the learner and ensuring that curricula are accessible and inclusive.

On-Programme Stage

4.6 Once a student has enrolled on a College programme, a more detailed Individual Support Plan will be produced that gives details about:

- The aims and objectives of support
- Additional support provision planned and implemented
- Support Targets and review schedules

4.7 With the student's consent all information that contributes to the effective and appropriate provision will be shared with relevant College staff.

4.8 Additional learning support is intended to be flexible and creative in order to meet the needs of individual students. Support strategies are varied but can include:

- Access to Learning Support Practitioners in class for curriculum support
- Access to Drop In Centre tutors for curriculum and functional skills support
- Access to Specialist Tutors for bespoke study skills support
- Access to Specialist Tutors for support with emotional-behavioural or mental health issues
- Access to ICT and assistive learning technology to develop study skills and promote independence
- Access arrangements for controlled tests (see College Access Arrangements Policy)

4.9 All information disclosed for the purposes of providing additional learning support to students will be stored on the College network in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Any private and sensitive information that the learner wishes to remain confidential will be stored securely and not shared with other college staff without the express permission of the student.

4.10 Students are able to disclose information about additional educational needs following enrolment and this will initiate the consultation and needs assessment process. In addition, referrals may come from College staff where difficulties or lack of expected progress have been observed or where the student has disclosed information.

Progression and Exit Stage

4.11 All students with Individual Support Plans will have these reviewed once per term, targets will be updated and general progress towards curriculum goals will be recorded.

5. General aims of additional learning support

5.1 The College aims for additional learning support to be:

- Effective
- Personalised
- Appropriate

5.2 Effective support

Effective support is any activity that is planned to help the learner overcome or reduce barriers to learning and promote success. Effective support helps the learner to develop strategies that enable them to become more independent and empowered by the learning process. Effective support is goal driven and measurable.

5.3 Personalised support

Personalised support is any planned activity that takes account of the individual learners' strengths, weaknesses, preferences and aspirations. Personalised support encourages and motivates the learner to actively engage in the planning and implementation of their support.

5.4 Appropriate support

Appropriate support is that which considers the needs, preferences and aspirations of the individual learner in relation to specific educational targets but also takes the wider social context into account. Appropriate support is stimulating and challenging and takes into account individual needs, values and expectations and those of wider society.

6. Monitoring ALS

6.1 Each term the amount of learning support across the college will be monitored to ensure that correct funding claims can be made and subsequently audited. Where learners have withdrawn the reason will be recorded and followed up where necessary.

6.2 Learning support on supported and foundation learning programmes will be tracked through routine and regular target-setting and ILPs as part of the programme activity.

6.3 Learning support on cross-college programmes will be tracked through Individual Support Plan reviews completed by Learning Support Practitioners (LSPs) and copied to programme tutors. Where possible, LSPs will be included in team meetings, progress reviews etc.

6.4 Individual and group literacy and numeracy support will be tracked through routine reports and summaries passed to course tutors at regular intervals.

6.5 Programmes should report, where possible through SARs the impact of Additional Learning Support on learner achievement, to show distance travelled from early screening and diagnostic assessment.

6.6. The Additional Learning Support Unit should show through the SAR the retention, achievement and success rates of those receiving Additional Learning Support, and make comparisons across the college.

6.7 Case-studies of success stories for those receiving Additional Learning Support should be gathered and used to promote equality and diversity.