

Accessibility Policy and Plan

Sept 2021

Version 5

1. Scope

This policy applies to all staff at Expanse Learning College (Hereafter referred to as the College).

2. Background

On 1 October 2012, The Equality Act replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It extends protection from discrimination in some areas and has placed new duties on schools and colleges.

The Act makes it unlawful for Expanse Learning College, to discriminate against, harass, or victimise a student or potential student in relation to:

- admissions
- the way we provide education for students
- the way we provide students access to any benefit, facility or service
- subjecting students to any other detriment.

The protected characteristics are:

- age
- sex and sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

Our Accessibility Plan outlines how we intend to improve access for disabled students to the physical environment, the curriculum and written information.

The Equality Act applies to all schools and colleges in England and Wales. (Equality Act 2010: Schedule 10, Paragraph 3 and Disability Discrimination regulations 2005) Furthermore, we are required to draw up equality objectives under the Specific Duties Regulations 2011 so that we meet the general aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. This Accessibility Plan is reviewed every year.

3. Disability Discrimination Act

The disability provisions in the Equality Act mainly replicate those in the former Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). There are some minor differences as follows:

- the definition of disability is less restrictive
- direct discrimination can no longer be defended as justified
- failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be defended as justified
- from September 2012, we are under a duty to make available auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments
- where these are not being supplied through a Statement of Special Educational Needs or from other sources

4. Definition of Disability

The Act defines disability as when a person has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Some specific conditions such as multiple sclerosis, cancer or HIV are considered as disabilities regardless of their effect. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least twelve months.

5. Reasonable Adjustments

We aim to ensure that nothing we do as a college places a disabled student at a disadvantage compared to other students,

we make sure that we take reasonable steps to try and avoid or mitigate that disadvantage.

When it is reasonable to do so, we provide auxiliary aids or services for a disabled student, when such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the student faces compared to other non-disabled students.

Where an auxiliary aid is not provided under the SEND system via an EHC Plan there should be no assumption that it must be provided as a reasonable adjustment. Any decision would be taken based on the facts of an individual case, including cost implications.

There is no legal definition of auxiliary aids. We interpret this to mean any or all of the following: helpful; providing support or assistance; and that these can be things or persons which help. We include hearing loops, adaptive keyboards, and special software.

Our SEND policy defines what provision we make available including reasonable adjustments in our college. We will consider what is reasonable in the context of our college, given the circumstances of each individual case.

Where the auxiliary aid has a benefit to the rest of the student's life outside of college, it would be unreasonable for our college to make such provision, e.g., hearing aids.

We consider that effective and practicable adjustments for disabled students will involve little or no cost or disruption and will therefore be considered as reasonable. Where substantial adaptations are required which are not contained within our Accessibility Plan, we reserve the right to deem these as unreasonable.

It is our aim to ensure that disabled students play as full a part as possible in college life and our Accessibility Plan and reasonable adjustments help support that aim. Where any adjustment would have a detrimental effect on other students, we would not consider it to be *reasonable*. For example, if an external trip was planned to involve climbing and a wheelchair user could not take part, we would carefully consider how the disabled student could participate viably, but we would not cancel the trip because to do so would be detrimental to other students.

6. Our Vision

We believe that every student has the right to be happy, healthy, safe and successful, valued and respected, and to have high aspirations for their future. Inclusion is the process of taking the necessary steps to ensure that every student is given equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy college life.

7. Our Duty around Accessibility for Disabled Students

Our Accessibility Plan is outlined below.

Our Accessibility Plan focuses on the following areas for implementation: -

- increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum
- improving the physical environment to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled students.

Our Plan also includes the resource implications of implementing the Plan.

Our approach includes the following areas:

- **Physical facilities** – addressing any alterations that may be required to the structure of the building or site to establish access for students, staff, parents and visitors
- **College Curriculum** – including our provision for teaching and learning, the wider curriculum, extra-curricular activities and visits.
- **Support Services** – access to services within and external to the college to support families where disability is identified

Physical Facilities

Process for Identifying barriers:

- Action plan following a site inspection by relevant personnel for example Wigan Council or a member of the Shared Services team.

- On-going feedback from individual students / staff.
- Transitional arrangements to identify needs of individual students and to incorporate them into their individual students plan.
- Individual risk assessments and plans developed and available to all staff.
- Head of Learning Support / Pastoral Team to oversee all relevant EHC Plans including regular review, partner liaison, ensuring that updates are shared with all relevant staff as linked documents.

Summary of facilities / progress to date:

Leigh Site	Orrell Site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Disabled parking bays and drop off area on car park adjacent to reception - single level and unloading /wheelchair accessible. ○ College building and outside areas are fully accessible. ○ Sensory Room on site. ○ Accessible kitchen and kitchen assessment areas on site. ○ Disabled toilets on site. ○ Hygiene suite on site ○ Secure building system and camera on site. ○ Auditory environment has good acoustics in classrooms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Disabled parking bay and drop off area on car park adjacent to reception - single level and unloading /wheelchair accessible. ○ Ground Floor of the college building and outside areas are fully accessible. ○ Sensory Rooms on site. ○ Accessible kitchen and kitchen assessment areas. ○ Disabled toilet on site. ○ Hygiene area on site ○ Secure building system and cameras on site. ○ Auditory environment has good acoustics in classrooms.

Objectives for improvement 2021/22:

Leigh Site	Orrell Site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ External and internal floor markings are in place to support students with visual impairment ○ Ensure Emergency Evacuation Plans continue in place for students. ○ Ensure accessibility requirements are considered with all future refurbishment projects. ○ Expanse Learning College are responsive and will put in place all feasible actions as identified by individuals. ○ Sensory Rooms to be refurbished as per student input ○ Prayer Room to be set up on site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ External and internal door markings are in place to support students with visual impairment ○ Ensure Emergency Evacuation Plans continue in place for students. ○ Ensure accessibility requirements are considered with all future refurbishment projects. ○ Expanse Learning College are responsive and will put in place all feasible actions as identified by individuals. ○ Sensory Room to be furnished as per student input ○ Prayer Room to be set up on site

Monitoring of plans:

- Impact of this plan will be monitored termly through a site inspection by Shared Services Team (Health and Safety Framework – Compliance Inspections) and reviewed annually.

Support Services

Process for Identifying barriers:

- Head of Learning Support / College Team manage all referral information and undertake detailed pre-attendance and initial assessments to ensure the needs of students are identified with student, family and partners via discussions, observations and a specific learning plan constructed for each student.
- Head of Learning Support / Pastoral Team manage all relevant EHC Plans including regular review, partner liaison, ensuring that updates are shared with all relevant staff as linked documents, including Annual Review, PEEP's etc.
- Effective communication and established relationship with commissioning Local Authorities and with relevant specialist support services.

Summary of facilities / progress to date:

Leigh Site	Orrell Site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expanse Learning College works proactively with students and families; we have established relationships with a wide range of partners: SALT/ TESS / Health / CAMHS / OT /Complex Needs team / Special Schools and Colleges. ○ Head of Learning Support / College Team carefully plan allocated time for support work and time to support our young people; this established Multi-Agency approach supports management and development of support plans for students with regular reviews. ○ Head of Learning Support / College Team have expertise and access to specialist services ensuring relevant information, support and strategies for teaching students with SEND, SEMH and/or medical conditions. ○ All college staff team undertake relevant training, CPD to support effective classroom and student management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expanse Learning College works proactively with students and families; we have established relationships with a wide range of partners: SALT/ TESS / Health / CAMHS / OT /Complex Needs team / Special Schools and Colleges. ○ Head of Learning Support / College Team carefully plan allocated time for support work and time to support our young people; this established Multi-Agency approach supports management and development of support plans for students with regular reviews. ○ Head of Learning Support / College Team have expertise and access to specialist services ensuring relevant information, support and strategies for teaching students with SEND, SEMH and/or medical conditions. ○ All college staff team relevant training, CPD to support effective classroom and student management.

Objectives for improvement 2021/22:

Leigh Site	Orrell Site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to Quality Assure the role of all agencies working with our students and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to Quality Assure the role of all agencies working with our students and families.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to develop a proactive Multi Agency Approach to supporting our students. ○ Establish additional residential and external opportunities for students. ○ Ensure the full implementation of the baseline assessments to better support students with effective social and emotional targets and strategies. ○ Ensure the MIS system 'Databridge' is fully operational; Ensure Databridge records on student's needs and all support plans are entered onto the system and all staff have immediate access to better support students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to develop a proactive Multi Agency Approach to supporting our students. ○ Establish additional residential and external opportunities for students. ○ Ensure the full implementation of the baseline assessments to better support students with effective social and emotional targets and strategies. ○ Ensure the MIS system 'Databridge' is fully operational; Ensure Databridge records on student's needs and all support plans are entered onto the system and all staff have immediate access to better support students.
Monitoring of plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Impact of this plan will be monitored by the Shared Services Team (Data & Compliance) and reviewed as part of self-assessment activities ○ The College SLT Team and Director of Post 16 Education will monitor points 1-4 	

College Curriculum	
Process for Identifying barriers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ College SLT will monitor the quality of teaching and learning support and impact on progress through observations (OTLA), work scrutiny, student voice, case conferences and peer review work. ○ BKSB utilised for literacy and numeracy baseline assessment and ongoing controlled assessment and testing for students. ○ Pearson personal growth and wellbeing qualifications are used to support students to develop personally and socially and their skills for employment. ○ Baseline assessments are used to identify and support students with social, emotional and behavioural issues, informing specific strategies 	
Summary of facilities / progress to date:	
Leigh Site	Orrell Site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Laptops, I-Pads, Desktops and Smart screens are available on all college sites to support teaching and learning and to assist identified students with handwriting and recording difficulties. ○ All classes have dedicated specialist support staff. ○ Curriculum is differentiated to ensure that students are taught at an appropriate level to meet their needs. ○ Expanse Learning College provide appropriate sensory processing aids for specific students based on assessed needs. ○ The College works within the ICE guidelines to put into place Access arrangements. ○ Classroom based support and intervention can take place in one to one, small group or whole class settings. ○ The College have established staff with the expertise and training to support vulnerable students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Laptops, I-Pads, Desktops and Smart screens are available on all college sites to support teaching and learning and to assist identified students with handwriting and recording difficulties. ○ All classes have dedicated specialist support staff. ○ Curriculum is differentiated to ensure that students are taught at an appropriate level to meet their needs. ○ Expanse Learning College provide appropriate sensory processing aids for specific students based on assessed needs. ○ The College works within the ICE guidelines to put into place Access arrangements. ○ Classroom based support and intervention can take place in one to one, small group or whole class settings. ○ The College have established staff with the expertise and training to support vulnerable students.
Objectives for improvement 2021/22:	
Leigh Site	Orrell Site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review the curriculum offer in line with national and local practice /policy and EIF framework ○ Review the interventions provided for individuals and classes as part of the on-going quality cycle. ○ Provision of specialist equipment to be reviewed and provided on an individual basis. ○ Modification of learning materials to ensure resources are accessible. ○ Resource technology to support all students in accessing College curriculum. ○ Student voice and wider stakeholder feedback to drive effectiveness. ○ Continue to offer through Performance Management, CPD to enable staff to support full range of needs of students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review the curriculum offer in line with national and local practice /policy and EIF framework ○ Review the interventions provided for individuals and classes as part of the on-going quality cycle. ○ Provision of specialist equipment to be reviewed and provided on an individual basis. ○ Modification of learning materials to ensure resources are accessible. ○ Resource technology to support all students in accessing College curriculum. ○ Student voice and wider stakeholder feedback to drive effectiveness. ○ Continue to offer through Performance Management, CPD to enable staff to support full range of needs of students.
Monitoring of plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Impact of this plan to be monitored regularly through Self-Assessment activities undertaken by College SLT and the Quality Forum. 	

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the governing body

Impact of non-compliance:

Staff:	Disciplinary action, prosecution
Student:	Not applicable
Legislation/organisational:	Reputational damage, litigation, statutory and non-regulated compliance. prosecution
Compliance lead:	Shared Services
Policy Reference:	ELCO-POL-HSE-003
Version:	5
Agreed policy location:	DatabridgeMIS
Does the policy require Governor approval?	No

Approval

Prepared by Karl Wane 08/12/2021  Director of Post 16 Education	Approved by Tony Brown 08/12/2021  CEO	Counter Signatory Scott Roberts (Assoc. CIPD) 08/12/2021  Head of Shared Services
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Version Control

Version	Date	Revision	Review Date
1	01/08/2018	First Issue	01/09/2019
2	01/09/2019	Policy review and transferred onto the new policy template	31/08/2020
3	01/09/2020	Policy Review, Removed Warrington Site	31/08/2021
4	01/09/2021	Policy Review	31/08/2022
5	08/12/2021	Policy Review, Added Orrell Lodge site	07/12/2022