

Accessibility Policy & Plan

Exppanse Learning College

September 2023

Author: Karl Wane

Version 6

Review Date: September 2024

1. Scope

This policy applies to all staff at Expanse Learning College across all sites (Hereafter 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

The Accessibility Plan outlines how we intend currently provide and are looking to enhance access for 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 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 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 were 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

The Accessibility Plan is outlined below.

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.

Plan includes the resource implications in SLT 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
- **Support Services** – access to services within and external to the college to support families where disability is identified
- **College Curriculum** – including our provision for teaching and learning, the wider curriculum, extra-curricular activities, and visits.

Physical Facilities

Process for Identifying barriers:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular site inspections by business officers, SLT, governors, external experts Feedback from stakeholders and other visitors Admissions process to identify student needs and address them within their individual learning plan. Individual risk assessments and support plans developed and available to support staff. SLT oversight of EHC Plan management and communication to stakeholders 	
Current	
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 assessment areas on site. Disabled toilets on site. Hygiene suite on site. Secure building system and cameras on site. Auditory - 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 space on site. Accessible kitchen area. Disabled toilet on site. Hygiene area on site. Secure building system and cameras on site. Auditory - good acoustics in classrooms.
Satellites	
Wigan Vocational Centre Site	Dean House Farm Site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disabled parking bays and drop off area on car park Single level some wheelchair accessibility. Construction workshop and outside area accessible. Sensory Room on site (within school). Kitchen welfare and toilet unit on site Accessible kitchen and kitchen on site (within school). Accessible toilet on site (within school). Full hygiene suite on site (within school). Secure building system and cameras on site. Workshop and classroom have good acoustics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking available single level and unloading Most outside areas are accessible. No specific Sensory Room on site. Kitchen and area on site. No disabled toilet on site. No hygiene suite on site Secure building system and cameras on site. Converted rooms and outside spaces provide alternative learning environment Auditory - good acoustics in building.
Objectives for improvement 2023 - 2024	
Leigh Site	Orrell Site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans continue in place for students. Additional security measures to safeguard shared areas from public access Responsive site team procure relevant resources as per students identified needs. Ensure different types Sensory Rooms are available. Utilise Leigh Hub sensory space. Maintain hygiene suite Ensure Prayer Room available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans are in place for students. Ensure accessibility requirements are considered within planned site development activities. Ensure there is responsive SLT procure relevant resources as per students identified needs. Develop Sensory Room space on site. Ensure Prayer Room / Space is available. Develop more accessible kitchen facilities. Develop studio space and IT internet capacity
Satellites	
Wigan Vocational Centre Site	Dean House Farm Site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External and internal floor markings are in place to support students with visual impairment Emergency Evacuation Plans in place for students. Ensure accessibility requirements are considered within all site development activities. Responsive site team procure relevant resources as per students identified needs. Sensory Room available (within school). Prayer Room available (within school). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans are in place for students. Ensure wheelchair accessibility requirements are considered within planned site development activities. Ensure there is responsive SLT on site to support students identified needs at all times. Develop Sensory Room space on site. Ensure Prayer Room / Space is available. Develop practical / accessible kitchen facilities.
Monitoring Arrangements	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact of this plan will be monitored termly through a site inspection by Shared Services Team (Health and Safety) 	

Support Services

Process for Identifying barriers:

- SLT and Admissions team manage all referral information, 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.=
- Admissions team, head of learning support and pastoral team jointly 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 specialist support services.

Current

Leigh Site

- College SLT and delivery teams work proactively with students and families
- Established relationships with a wide range of partners: SALT, TESS, CAMHS, OT, Complex Needs teams and other Specialist pre and post 16 providers.
- College SLT and delivery teams carefully plan time for support work with students
- Established Multi-Agency approach provides support plans for students with regular reviews.
- College SLT and delivery teams have expertise and access to specialist services to deliver strategies for students with SEND, SEMH and/or medical conditions.
- All college staff team undertake relevant training, CPD to support effective classroom, cohort, and student management.

Orrell Site

- College SLT and delivery teams work proactively with students and families
- Established relationships with a wide range of partners: SALT, TESS, CAMHS, OT, Complex Needs teams and other Specialist pre and post 16 providers.
- College SLT and delivery teams carefully plan time for support work with students
- Established Multi-Agency approach provides support plans for students with regular reviews.
- College SLT and delivery teams have expertise and access to specialist services to deliver strategies for students with SEND, SEMH and/or medical conditions.
- All college staff team undertake relevant training, CPD to support effective classroom, cohort, and student management.

Satellites

Wigan Vocational Centre Site

- As above

Dean House Farm Site

- As above

Objectives for improvement 2023 - 2024

Leigh Site

- Continue Quality Assurance activities with agencies working with our students and families.
- Continue Multi Agency approach to student support.
- Establish additional residential and external transition opportunities for students.
- Ensure the full implementation of the baseline assessments to better support students with effective social and emotional targets and strategies.
- Ensure Databridge records student's needs and all plans & documents plans are on the system giving staff immediate access to better support students.

Orrell Site

- Continue Quality Assurance activities with agencies working with our students and families.
- Continue Multi Agency approach to student support.
- Establish additional residential and external transition opportunities for students.
- Ensure the full implementation of the baseline assessments to better support students with effective social and emotional targets and strategies.
- Ensure Databridge records student's needs and all plans & documents plans are on the system giving staff immediate access to better support students.

Satellites

Wigan Vocational Centre Site

- As above

Dean House Farm Site

- As above

Monitoring Arrangements

- Impact of this plan will be monitored by the Heads and reviewed as part of self-assessment activities
- SLT 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 learning walks, work scrutiny, student voice, case conferences and other review work. RTL, RTW, and BKSb assessments will be utilised to identify year on year baselines for students Pearson, DofE and John Moore accredited qualifications are used to support student personal and social development and skills for employment, independence, and community inclusion. Additional assessments are used to identify and support students with social, emotional, health and behavioural issues and to inform specific support strategies. 	
Current	
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. Classes have dedicated specialist support staff. Curriculum is differentiated to ensure that students are taught at 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 JCQ guidelines to put into place Access arrangements. Classroom based support and interventions take place in one to one, small group or whole class settings. The College have 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. Classes have dedicated specialist support staff. Curriculum is differentiated to ensure that students are taught at 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 JCQ guidelines to put into place Access arrangements. Classroom based support and interventions take place in one to one, small group or whole class settings. The College have staff with the expertise and training to support vulnerable students.
Satellites	
Wigan Vocational Centre Site	Dean House Farm Site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above
Objectives for improvement 2023 - 2024	
Leigh Site	Orrell Site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the curriculum offer in line with national and local standards, guidance and EIF framework Review support provided for students and cohorts as part of the on-going quality assurance activities. Provide specialist equipment and resources on an individual basis. Modify of learning materials to ensure teaching activities are fully accessible on site. Provide technology to support students accessing College curriculum on site. Use student and stakeholder feedback to drive effectiveness. Continue to offer staff CPD and training to enable them to teach and support the full range of needs of students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the curriculum offer in line with national and local standards, guidance and EIF framework Review support provided for students and cohorts as part of the on-going quality assurance activities. Provide specialist equipment and resources on an individual basis. Modify of learning materials to ensure teaching activities are fully accessible on site. Provide technology to support students accessing College curriculum on site. Use student and stakeholder feedback to drive effectiveness. Continue to offer staff CPD and training to enable them to teach and support the full range of needs of students.
Satellite Facilities	
Wigan Vocational Centre Site	Dean House Farm Site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above
Monitoring Arrangements	
<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-HSEM-POL-0003_(Exp-Sep24)
Version:	7
Agreed policy location:	DatabridgeMIS
Review Schedule:	12 Months
Does the policy require Governor approval?	No

Approval

Prepared by Karl Wane 28/09/2024  Director of Post 16 Education	Approved by Tony Brown 29/09/2023  CEO	Counter Signatory Scott Roberts (Assoc. CIPD) 29/09/2023  Head of Shared Services
---	--	---

Version Control

Version	Date	Revision	Review Date
1	01/08/2018	First Issue	01/09/2019
2	01/09/2019	Policy reviewed 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
6	08/12/2022	Policy Reviewed	07/12/2022
7	28/09/2023	Policy Reviewed and satellite facilities added	28/09/2024