

Learning Difficulties and SEND Policy

*Review History:		
Date of review	Reviewed by	Reason for review
September 2022	Group Academic Director	Annual review
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**Policies will be reviewed annually or more frequently if there are any legal changes or as good practice requires.*

Aims

Promoting positive and inclusive attitudes in the classroom and within all teaching and learning activities is an integral part of BSC's values. We are committed to providing transformational learning experiences for all and to ensure everyone studying at BSC is supported to achieve their potential.

This policy outlines our stance and ways in which we can support students with learning difficulties or other disabilities that affect how they learn. The list is not exhaustive so we encourage potential students to contact us to see how we might be able to accommodate their specific needs. We acknowledge and respect the right for people with any disability to access the same level of education and service in our colleges. We will not, however, compromise our academic or professional standards in order to accommodate a request.

Booking & Admissions

In order to make any reasonable adjustment, we ask students, parents and agents to inform us of any learning difficulties before or upon booking (at application stage) so colleges consider the requests, respond accordingly and make the necessary preparations prior to the student's arrival.

College teams, along with the Director of Operation and Group Academic Director will assess any declarations of special needs or disability on a case by case basis.

If the college team does not have the resources or expertise to deal with the needs or request, we will either:

Recommend an alternative BSC college that can accommodate *or*
Inform the student before enrolment and not proceed with the booking

BSC reserves the right to refuse admission if the college cannot adequately cater for a student's specific needs through reasonable adjustment.

BSC acknowledges that many of our colleges are based in older, sometimes listed buildings that unfortunately cannot accommodate wheelchair users or those who find using steps and stairs difficult. We encourage anyone with a physical disability to contact their local BSC representative for more information on the most suitable location for them to book their course. BSC Brighton is the only college with lift access.

Needs identified after arrival

For any physical, learning or neurodiversity needs that are identified after the student starts their course, the college teams will discuss this with the student (and their agent/families if necessary) and agree what adjustments can be made.

College teams have some training and expertise in certain areas, including neurodiversity, but do not offer a SEND identifying or referral service and are not SEND specialists. If we are unable to cater for the student's needs, we will seek to find alternative providers via our umbrella organisation English UK, or make arrangements to cancel the course and send the student home.

Disability

Legally, disability is defined as: a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

BSC aims to comply in all respects with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

This means that people with disabilities should not be treated less favourably than non-disabled people for reasons related to their disability without justification and that reasonable adjustments should be made so that a disabled person is not placed at a substantial disadvantage by comparison with a person without a disability.

All students and employees are asked to disclose disabilities. BSC will do everything in its power to support the person and disclosed information will be kept confidential and passed on only with the person's permission.

As part of BSC commitment to equality and diversity, any adjustments that can be predicted for future students will be considered in future business plans including building and facilities or refurbishment projects.

Teaching and Learning

We understand that everyone has their own learning preferences, and teachers will actively seek to accommodate all students by negotiating the weekly schemes of work and planning with their classes. We recognise, however, that some have more particular learning needs that may be due to neurodivergence that could be developmental (ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Autism), acquired (head injury or trauma) or progressive (MS, Dementia). The more information we have from the student, the better we can support them in our colleges and classrooms. We encourage students to share any coping mechanisms or previous learning plans that they may have.

Learning needs will be addressed on a case by case basis, as the support required will be individual to each student. There may be, however, some tools we can recommend or trial with the student's consent. These can include:

- Placement in the classroom (nearer the front to avoid distraction, near a door if regular breaks needed)
- Extra time for activities/class tests
- Written instructions to avoid repetition
- Allow speech to text tools available through Word or Google Docs
- Manage progression expectations accordingly

For students with impaired visibility or hearing we will endeavour to make practical adjustments such as:

- Enlarging photocopies
- Providing digital copies of material by email so student can use device
- Writing larger on classroom screen
- Ensure student is seated in best place to see or hear in class
- Provide student with recordings they can listen to on own device for volume or repetition

Exams

External exams, whether taken at a BSC exam centre or a preferred partner centre, are often able to offer extra time for students with certain learning difficulties. Exam bodies need to be informed of the needs at time of booking and will require translated documents from an official source that detail the diagnosis.

Appropriate arrangements with exam centres include allocation of extra time and breaks, provision of examination papers in larger print, or suitable seat planning.

Health and Safety

BSC treat Health and Safety considerations as paramount for our students and employees. Any adjustments requested will be considered with regard to our Health & Safety policy and training, and may mean there is justifiable reason not to accept the request. College H&S officers will be involved in any and all risk assessments.