

GENERAL POLICY: DISABILITY STATEMENT

Applies to both staff and students

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Boston College welcomes the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Special Educational Needs & Disability Act 2001v and the Disability Equality Duty 2006)). The College will make all reasonable adjustments to all aspects of the College to avoid substantial disadvantage to any disabled student or disabled person, in line with legislation recommendations and compliance dates of the above Acts. The College is required to publish a Disability Statement annually.

1.2 The Act defines disability as: -

“A Disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment, which has an effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. That effect must be: -

- **Substantial (that is more than minor or trivial); *and***
- **Long-term (that is likely to last for at least 12 months or for the rest of the life of the person affected); *and***
- **Adverse (anegative affect on a person’s ability to carry out a daily living function)”**

1.3.1 The College welcomes applications from people with disabilities. It is College policy to accept any student for a course where they are suitably academically qualified, regardless of their disability. Where a student has additional support needs through a disability, medical condition or learning difficulty, where possible, reasonable adjustments can be made in order to facilitate their acceptance on the course. The College also works with awarding bodies to ascertain what adjustments can be made. The College accesses available funding for the provision of additional equipment, professional assessments, additional human support and adaptations to existing facilities or the provision of new ones.

1.3.2 The College will make a realistic offer of a place to any applicant who the College feels are able to benefit from its courses and services. College staff advise applicants of course expectations and where possible give guidance on the expectations of employers where an applicant is applying for a course that could lead to a relevant work related qualification.

The College will not accept applications where it is not able to provide an appropriate course. The College will advise applicants of where to access information on alternative courses.

1.3.3 All disclosures of disability will be treated sensitively and used only for the potential benefit of the learner. Disability data will be stored on College computerised records and only accessed by authorised staff.

1.3.4 The College recognises that an individual has the right to withhold information relating to their disability but in these circumstances will not be able to make certain reasonable adjustments that could identify an individual to others in the College.

1.4.1 The College identifies its principles and the action it will take through a wide range of documents which will include: -

- The Strategic Plan
- The Disability Equality Scheme
- The College Charter
- The Mission Statement
- The Equal Opportunities Statement and Policy
- Other College Policies and Codes of Practice

1.4.2 The College Mission Statement is: -

“Boston College: a learning organisation raising aspirations and meeting the skills needs of individuals, communities and employers through high quality education and training”.

1.4.3 The Equal Opportunities Statement is: -

“Boston College commits itself to the active promotion of equal opportunities in all areas of the College’s life and work. The College seeks to prevent discrimination against any individual or group working at or served by the College on the basis of age, colour, sex, disability, religious belief, marital status or racial or cultural origin”

1.4.4 The College Charter describes the services available to students with learning difficulties and disabilities.

2. THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- 2.1 The College works to provide advice and quality in the provision of education, training and other services. This principle applies to all members of the College, employers and the community in general which includes people with disabilities.
- 2.2 People with disabilities will be given equal opportunity and access to the College’s provisions in line with the implementation dates as laid down in the SEND Act 2001, the College will endeavour to go beyond mere compliance of the Act. (See Appendix 3, obtainable from the Inclusive Learning Manager).
- 2.3 The integration of disabled students within the general student body is in the interests of all students and all students are supported with any difficulties they may encounter.
- 2.4 Where required, disabled students will be provided with enhanced services and support to enable them to benefit from the College’s provisions.
- 2.5 Students with learning difficulties and disabilities, qualified for additional support, benefit from such support as required on an individual basis or small group basis.

3. ADMISSIONS POLICY

- 3.1 The Boston College Admissions Policy meets the requirements of the College Charter, Mission Statement, Equal Opportunities Policy and Disability Equality Scheme.
- 3.2 The College seeks to offer a fair and efficient admissions service to all applicants irrespective of mode of attendance.

- 3.3 Applications from disabled people are made through the normal arrangements where possible. Special arrangements for interview and guidance sessions can be made in response to any information being provided by a student that these are required.
- 3.4 Application forms provide the opportunity to declare any medical, educational or other special needs. The College encourages students to provide us with this information in order that we may make adjustments to admission arrangements / interviews.
- 3.5 The Student Guidance Session record form, which provides the format for all full-time student admission interviews, requires staff to identify: -
 - whether any additional academic support will be required
 - whether the student has any special needs
- 3.6 The Interview Checklist requires the admissions tutor to investigate the student's additional support requirements in numeracy, literacy and problem solving and study skills.
- 3.7 Where required the College Inclusive Learning Manager will contribute to the admissions procedure for any course and support admissions tutors.
- 3.8 Applications for Foundation Studies courses are processed through the normal arrangements. Staff from the Foundation Studies Area conduct admissions interviews.

4. EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES AND SUPPORT

- 4.1 Students with disabilities are integrated into standard courses wherever appropriate.
- 4.2 All full-time students are allocated a personal tutor whose role is defined for students in the Students' Handbook. As part of the progress review process tutors identify any additional support which may be required.
- 4.3 Part-time students are the responsibility of a course tutor/course co-ordinator who will identify any additional support which may be required. Assistance from the Inclusive Learning Manager may be requested at any point.
- 4.4 The Learner Support Service operates on the Rochford and De Montfort campuses and is open to all students who require support at any level with literacy, numeracy and study skills.
- 4.5 The College operates a diagnostic testing system, described in a Code of Practice, to ensure students requiring support are identified and additional support is offered.

5. STAFF AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 The effective operation of the Equal Opportunities Policy is the responsibility of John Allison-Maybank, Director of Client Services.
- 5.2 The first point of contact for any person who would like advice / guidance on disability issues relating to the College is the Inclusive Learning Manager who is based in Student Services.
- 5.3 Students with disabilities have access to the full range of Student Services identified in the Students' Handbook. The Student Services Manager is Rachel Overton.

- 5.4 A central team of staff make up the Foundation Studies Programme who work primarily with students with learning difficulties and disabilities enrolled on Foundation Level courses.
- 5.5 Academic staff are supported by a team of Learning Support Assistants.
- 5.6 The team is co-ordinated by the Inclusive Learning Manager.
- 5.7 Staff are encouraged to obtain qualifications specifically related to supporting students with additional needs.
- 5.8 Staff have access to internal and external training courses and programmes through the College Staff Development Programme.
- 5.9 Vocational staff are offered training to develop their skills in working with students with disabilities.

6. ACCOMMODATION, TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT

- 6.1 The College operates on three main sites and also has a number of Information Technology centres across Lincolnshire. Where identified and in line with the DDA and SEND Act, alterations to premises and equipment have been made to allow improved use and access of equipment and premises.

Certain anticipatory adaptations to buildings and services have been considered and where appropriate have been or are being introduced.

- 6.2 One flat in the Halls of Residence is accessible to people with mobility problems and people who use a wheelchair.
- 6.3 The College has a range of learning materials suitable for use with students with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- 6.4 The College will assess the needs of students who require specially adapted furniture and on confirmation of acceptance of a course offered by the College, special equipment will be allocated or purchased for use in College by that student.
- 6.5 When required, the College works with the students; an advocate or parent and external agencies to obtain the required equipment to meet individual needs. The College will listen to concerns raised by any person with a disability and is keen to take advice from people with disabilities on any issue relating to College provision that puts them at a substantial disadvantage.

7. COMPLAINTS

- 7.1 The College has a formal Complaints Procedure which is operated under the title 'What to do if things go wrong'. The principles underlying the Complaints Procedure are outlined in the College Charter. The procedure is detailed in the Students' Handbook and a booklet entitled 'Student Disciplinary and Complaints Procedure'. The Charter, Handbook and booklet are available from Student Services. The arrangements described apply to all students irrespective of disability. A simplified version is available from the Curriculum Leader Functional Skills.
- 7.2 Complaints are monitored by the Director of Curriculum and Standards and, with the action taken, are reported to the Academic Board.

8. EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENTS

- 8.1 Students with a disability will be integrated into mainstream courses or taught in discrete courses as appropriate.
- 8.2 Where possible students will work towards the achievement of recognised qualifications but all achievement will be recorded.
- 8.3 Examinations and assessments will be conducted in accordance with examining board requirements and regulations. Where these regulations offer arrangements for candidates with special assessment needs these will be requested on the student's behalf and may include: -
- enlarged print / Braille papers
 - language modification for hearing-impaired candidates
 - the provision of electronic or other aids to assist comprehension of questions
 - amanuensis (scribe or note taker) support
 - alternative accommodation
 - time extensions and rest breaks
- 8.4 The Examinations Officer who acts as the Centre Head makes arrangements for assistance.

9. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

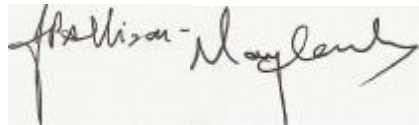
- 9.1 The College seeks advice and support from a range of external agencies to assist students with disabilities. Such agencies include: -
- Royal National Institute for the Blind
 - Royal National Institute for the Deaf
 - Dyslexia Association
 - National Autistic Society
 - Lincolnshire County Council
 - Skill – National Bureau for Students with Disabilities
- 9.2 The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funding mechanism provides additional support for disabled students for: -
- inter-site travel
 - additional teaching
 - Learning Support Assistant support
 - guidance and counselling
 - additional assessment costs
- 9.3 Student Services provide support for disabled students. The range of sources is described in the Students' Handbook. Student Services support includes: -
- careers advice and guidance
 - medical support
 - financial support
 - counselling
 - basic advice on disability and related welfare benefits
 - assistance with form filling
 - travel assistance
 - complaints

10. ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- 10.1 Most financial support to assist disabled students is provided by the LSC, EMA and ALG.
- 10.2 Local firms are approached from time to time to support particular projects such as the International Raleigh, other out-of-College activities, Technology Week and Young Enterprise Projects.

11. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 11.1 Copies of the following documents are obtainable for Student Services: -
 - The College Charter
 - The Equal Opportunities Policy
 - The Admissions Policy
 - The Students' Handbook
 - The Disability Equality Scheme
- 11.2 A guide for parents and students who require additional help and information has been produced and is provided to all students with learning difficulties and disabilities on application.
- 11.3 Simplified course information sheets and course handbooks for students and parents wishing to join Bridging courses / Foundation courses are available.
- 11.4 This disability statement is available in alternative formats on request from Student Services.

REVIEWED FOR COMPLIANCE WITH EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY PRINCIPLES	
	JOHN ALLISON-MAYBANK, DIRECTOR OF CLIENT SERVICES
DATE	11 MARCH 2010