Additional Support Policy

Document Version	Date	Policy Owner	Review Date
Version 1.0	November 2020	Stephen Smith. Operations and Quality Director	November 2021
Version 2.0	December 2021	Joanne Gunnell, Head of Operations and Quality	December 2022

Policy Statement and Intent

At Learn Plus Us we believe in giving every learner and Apprentice the best opportunity to develop, attain qualifications, meet Standards, milestones and goals that improve their job and career opportunities and support them to make a valuable contribution to their community. Our Additional Support policy is built upon this premise, by providing additional support whilst on one of our learning programmes to reach their full potential. This policy is underpinned by the Equality Act 2010 and specifically the protected characteristic of Disability. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) not only align the rules for Additional Learning Support to the Equality Act 2010 but also the Education Act 1996 (as amended by section 41 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009).
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apprenticeship-funding-rules

The main characteristic covered by this policy is 'Disability'. Disability can be defined 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 and includes learning difficulties and disabilities.
Equality Act 2010 (legislation.gov.uk)

Our intent is to 'level up' by identifying barriers to learning and progression and in so doing close the attainment gap that commonly exist between those with an additional learning / support need and those without. Our policy seeks to address barriers created through permanent, long term and some cases short term physical or mental health issues, that have an impact on the learner or Apprentice's ability to learn and progress through their programme. The support might be required across all or some components of a learning programme / Apprenticeship, which may or may not include aspects of English, mathematics and technology.

This policy sets out how Learn Plus Us aims to continue to maintain and improve standards for learners with additional support needs, utilising the Learning Support Funding (LSF) available through the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) if eligible but still providing support to those that aren't eligible for funding.

Scope

This procedure covers all learners and Apprentices undertaking a programme of learning, including Apprenticeships with Learn Plus Us.

Purpose

In presenting this policy, Learn Plus Us seeks to:
- Express its full commitment to young people and adults with additional support needs
- Clarify the scope of additional support
- Outline the roles and responsibilities of staff with regards to learners with additional support needs
- Involve learners and Apprentices in the planning of the support they will need
- Develop and maintain systems that encourage learners and Apprentices to disclose their additional support needs before starting their course so that support can be provided from the start of their programme
- Improve outcomes for learners and Apprentices with additional support needs in terms of retention, achievement, success, progression to higher employment opportunities or access to higher education
- Promote the independence of learners with additional support needs

Aims

- Utilise additional Learning Support Funding (LSF) and where applicable other funding streams to support learners and Apprentices with additional support needs
- Provide targeted appropriate individualised support that builds confidence and narrows the attainment gap
- Provide additional support in a manner that continues to maintain academic standards
- Provide additional support that increases life skills and improves the job and career prospects of learners and Apprentices
- Address the additional support needs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdown and various restrictions since March 2020

Process and Procedures

Form *a1a. Enrolment Additional Support Questionnaire* (initial screening tool) completed as part of enrolment process with the Enrolment Officer and other colleagues from LPU.

↓

If the Apprentice / learner ticks YES to any question and/or English and/or maths is below W/A E3, the completed questionnaire is passed to the Learning Support Tutor (LST) to carry out a full review of the results. The LST will upload completed *questionnaires* to ILP Log – Initial Assessment on Laser.
(Those with no actions will be filed in MS Teams).

↓

LST completes Learning Needs Assessment using form *a1b. Learning Support Needs Assessment*.

↓

LST has a virtual meeting the Apprentice / learner to fully complete the *a1b. Learning Support Needs Assessment* form. The LST uploads the completed *Learning Support Needs Assessment* to ILP Log – Initial Assessment on Laser.

↓

If support needs identified the LST will review against the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the learning programme and document the aspects that the support will be targeted to.

↓

LST will confirm if eligible for funding and who will be the main role holder delivering the additional support with the learner / Apprentice – this could be the LST, main Tutor, Functional Skills Tutor or an external specialist.

↓

LST identifies the reasonable adjustments and specific support required and starts to develop the Support Plan using form *a1c. Learning Support Plan*.

↓

LST has a virtual meeting with the learner / Apprentice to further develop and agree the Support Plan. This could be at the same meeting as the *Learning Support Needs Assessment or at a 2nd meeting* up to a week apart. The LST will upload the completed *Learning Support Plan* to the ILP log – Support Plan on Laser.

↓

PICS updated to trigger the funding claim (note the end date will initially be the final date of the programme but this will be kept under review. Apprentices can maintain a funding claim to support the cost of reasonable adjustment at EPA if required) and the e-portfolio system updated.

↓

Additional support delivered according to the *Learning Support Plan*, as a minimum monthly support is delivered by the named person, but it is also essential that support is carried through to the main curriculum delivery as well.

↓

Monthly support must be documented using form *a9. Learning Support Review*. The LST, FST or Tutor (person delivering the support) uploads the monthly Learning Support Review to ILP log – Support Plan on Laser and adds a brief note to the PLJ log.

↓

If there have been changes to circumstances, a break in learning or a lack of progress, a full review of the Learning Support Plan will take place with the LST. Any changes documented and communicated to the data team if funded is impacted, the main tutor and other specialist involved.

↓

If an Apprentice / learner doesn't complete their programme on time the LSF claim should be extended on a month-by-month basis – LST update data team.

↓

Quality and Compliance checks carried out throughout the period of the *Learning Support Plan*.

On average we expect new Apprenticeship LSF claims to commence in the month after enrolment and AEB learners claims to commence from day 1.

If a Tutor identifies what they think might be an additional learning support need with one of their Apprentices or Learners, they complete form *a8. Supplemental Support Request* and email it to the Learning Support Tutor, who will follow up with the Apprentice / learner using the *Support Needs Assessment* form and the process outlined above will follow.

Support Needs Screening at Enrolment

Learner and Apprentices will complete a short questionnaire using form *a1a. Enrolment Additional Support Questionnaire* as an initial screening tool. The Enrolment Officer or another member of the enrolment team completes page 3. If they answer YES to any question(s) and/or the English and/or maths comes out at below working at entry level 3 the form is passed to the Learning Support Tutor. The LST uploads the completed questionnaire to ILP Log – Initial Assessment on Laser. Those with no actions will be filed in MS Teams.

Learning Needs Assessment

The initial assessment pulls together information from other places, including *a1a. Enrolment Additional Support Questionnaire* and is captured on the form *a1b. Learning Support Needs Assessment*.
- Enrolment Additional Support Questionnaire
- Application information
- Existing diagnosis; EHCP, SEN, LDA, medical evidence
- English and maths initial assessment and diagnostics in initial assessment
- Neurodiversity will be outsourced if required

The Learning Support Needs Assessment – pulls all the information together so that the LST can:
- Identify the challenges faced without adjustments
- Clearly identify the need to use expertise
- Ensure the need is of substance
- Consider wider needs, such as personal and social development

At this stage of the process the LST has a virtual meeting with the Apprentice / learner to fully complete the *Learning Support Needs Assessment* form. The LST uploads the completed *Learning Support Needs Assessment* to ILP Log – Initial Assessment on Laser

Learning Support Plan

Having carried out a robust initial assessment and additional needs assessment, the next step is to formulate an individual *a1c. Learning Support Plan*.
- Design to suit the individual
- Make it specific by mapping against the identified knowledge, skills and behaviours
- Consider English and mathematics
- Consider adaptations to tests / exams and EPAO for Apprentices; get the Awarding Organisation and or End Point Assessment Organisation involved and consider how to prepare learners and Apprentices in a way that meets their needs
- Who is the most appropriate person to take the lead with this learner / Apprentice?
- Consider:
  o Sessions with LST
  o Sessions with Functional Skills Tutor (FST)
  o Specific support from Tutor
  o Adaptation of resources
  o External referral
  o External specialist, e.g., a signer
  o Additional time and/or sessions
- Ensure the main Tutor is always involved, understand what reasonable adjustments to the curriculum are required and adapts the ILP accordingly. Open dialogue between the LST/FST and Tutor is vital
- Safeguarding is an important linked area, some learners and Apprentices with support needs may be more vulnerable and more at risk of needing support regarding Safeguarding and The Prevent Duty
- Good quality indivualised IAG that is tailored to their needs and takes into account reasonable adjustments that might be required
- At this stage of the process the LST has a virtual meeting with the Apprentice / learner to agree the Learning Support Plan. This could be at the same meeting as the *Learning Support Needs Assessment or at a 2nd meeting* up to a week apart. The LST will upload the completed *Learning Support Plan* to the ILP log – Support Plan on Laser

Delivery of Additional Support
- We use the agreed *Learning Support Plan* as the guide to what support interventions are delivered and who is delivering them; LST, FST, Tutor
- Interventions must take place as a minimum monthly, unless the reasonable adjustment is something that we've set up to run across the entire programme, e.g. all resources in large font
- It is the responsibility of the allocated team member to deliver the support as outlined in the support plan
- The form *a9. Learning Support Review* is used to record the monthly interventions and review progress – this is also used as evidence for the LSF funding claim and is to ILP log – Support Plan on Laser and adds a brief note to the PLJ log

Formal Review
- A formal review of the Learning Support Plan takes place as a minimum on a quarterly basis, but can also take place if there's been a significant change of circumstances
- The formal review may result in some change made to the Learning Support Plan, this needs to be communicated to other relevant parties, within the agreed confidentiality rules
- Should the review result in the learning support stopping, the data team must be informed, and the finding claim stopped

Quality and Compliance
- We will carry out spot checks for quality and compliance throughout the period covered by the Learning Support and Plan and the funding claim
- The LST will carry out quality and compliance checks for delivery undertaken by anther team member, the Head of Operations and Quality or Curriculum Managers will carry out quality and compliance checks for those being delivered by the LST
- Further monthly compliance checks will be completed by the Data and MIS team

Impact and Evaluation
- It's important to us that we understand the impact that our additional support has had on learners and Apprentices, we will achieve this through
  - Capturing learner and Apprentice feedback
  - Reviewing attain data to identify if learners and Apprentices receiving additional support are achieving at the same pace and level as their peers that don't have support needs
  - Progressions to higher qualifications, promotion at work or getting more responsibility, conformed employment

Roles and Responsibilities
- The Board: Policy sign-off and accountability from a leadership perspective
- Head of Operations and Quality: Policy ownership, implementation, quality assurance, quality improvement
- MIS and Contracts Manager: Enrolment, data integrity, report and data analysis, audit and compliance
- Learning Support Tutor: Management and delivery of Additional Learning Support
- AEB Manager: Lead role to support the LSS to manage the delivery of additional support for AEB learners
- Designated Safeguarding Lead: Lead role supporting other colleges, learners and Apprentices to be vigilant and aware if potential increase vulnerability in relation to Safeguarding and The Prevent Duty
- Curriculum Managers: Quality assurance and compliance
- Tutor: Programme delivery; teaching, training, assessment, underpinned by the support plan reasonable adjustments and in some cases delivering the full learning support
- Functional Skills Tutor: Delivery of English and maths were support needs have been identified and a support plan is in place

Other Relevant Policies
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy
- Safeguarding and The Prevent Duty Policy
- Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
- Quality Assurance Policy