

John Wheatley College

Board of Management

INCLUSIVE LEARNING POLICY

1. Policy Context

John Wheatley College is committed to offering equality of opportunity to undertake lifelong learning to its students, its staff and members of the general public. The context of this commitment is determined by:

- the provision of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (as it applies to Scotland);
- the Human Rights Act 1998;
- the College's Equal Opportunities Policy;
- the guidance provided by the Scottish Executive to the Scottish further Education funding Council and Policy Priorities for sessions 2001/04; and
- the College's recognition under the Positive About Disabled People Standard.

It also takes full cognisance of the recommendations of the Beattie Report and the obligations placed upon it by the provision of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992.

The College will, in these circumstances, seek to define students who require support to learn in the widest context (as described below).

It will seek to provide all reasonable levels of support which are required by individuals who experience difficulty in learning or making progress (within the financial resources available to it).

It will also seek to review regularly its estate to that potential barriers to participation in learning are minimised or eliminated. This will be undertaken as a routine part of its Estates Strategy.

The College also has a commitment to working in collaboration and partnerships with public and voluntary services which have been established to assist those with learning difficulties. It will not seek to replicate unnecessarily specialist services provided by such agencies. It will, instead refer its students to them for specialist assistance or involvement, whenever possible, in planning future provision in a genuine process of consultation.

It will collaborate with external agencies to provide learning experiences of the highest quality and relevance which meet the needs of the College's potential stake holders. The College acknowledges that its primary stake holders in this

respect are its students (as individuals and members of class groups). However, it also acknowledges the legitimate interests of others such as parents and guardians, employers and voluntary organizations.

The College's detailed procedures to support this policy (and associated documentation) are available on the College's Intra-net or on request from its Assistant Principal in a printed form.

2 The Policy's Scope

The College's definition of those who may require support to learning is generated by legislative requirements in addition to guidance issued periodically by the Scottish Executive and the Scottish Further Education Funding Council (SFEFC).

As a consequence the College acknowledges that the undernoted might be used to define such learners. These include those students who have:

- Learning difficulties (mild, moderate or severe – as defined in Statements (Records) of Need or by school or other agencies);
- Specific learning difficulties (such as dyslexia);
- Sensory impairments;
- Physical impairments;
- Chronic health problems;
- Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties;
- Learning difficulties associated with mental health conditions.

This range of need takes full account of the College's strategy obligations within the terms of the 1992 Act and guidance originally issued by the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department (in FE Circular: 1/94).

Furthermore the range of provision which the College can offer to such students to support their learning includes:

- *Special Programmes* – these are defined as those which are specifically designed and structured to meet the needs of students with learning difficulties arising from one or more of those defined in previous paragraph;
- *Extended Learning Support* – this is additional support designed to meet the needs of students who have learning difficulties but who are not attending or undertaking a Special Programme. These students require specialist support to participate in more general provision. This may, for example, include additional guidance and individualized learning support (often provided in flexible learning areas). The College will not provide counselling to such students. This will be undertaken by specialist external services to which students with such needs will be referred by College staff. The College maintains (and periodically up-dates) a directory of agencies which can be of such assistance for all members of its staff;

- *Learning Support* – this primarily provides assistance in core skills (although in some circumstances specific assistance with other areas of study can be available). This service is available from both class teachers, in the flexible learning units and, in some circumstances, by library staff;
- *Adult Literacies Support* – this support is available to all students who experience difficulties in communications, Numeracy, Information and Communicable Technology and in acquiring learning skills. It is available to support such needs within a variety of contexts which include: individuals' private lives, family or domestic situation, community and in people's working lives. Its objective is to enable individuals with such needs to handle information, express ideas and opinions, solve problems and continue to learn and adapt to a rapidly changing world.

The College contends that this range of support complies with guidance issued by the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department in FE Circular: 3/93 and to the recommendations for action included in the Beattie Report.

3 Supporting Students Across the College

3.1 Guidance

As part of the pre-entry guidance procedure the College will ensure that students have the opportunity to self-identify any learning difficulties which they believe will require additional support. Furthermore, the College will liaise with all partners to ensure that all appropriate and relevant information with regard to the student's learning needs are shared within the terms of the Data Protection Act (1998). During induction and on-going guidance, students will be able to identify barriers to learning with appropriate support from staff to ensure that they make informed choices with regard to the suitability of the various options that are available to support their learning needs. At the pre-entry stage, an initial assessment of the student's abilities and additional support needs will be available and will involve consultation between the student, his / her representative and the appropriate members of staff. Students with learning difficulties or disabilities will also be encouraged to self-identify, during the enrolment process. Failure to declare known difficulties may result in delay in the provision of additional support. Staff will also seek to refer students for additional support throughout the year as specific needs are identified. Progress reviews will be conducted throughout the year and all students will be entitled to a progression guidance interview towards the end of their programme. The confidentiality of information will be agreed with each student with details only being made available to other John Wheatley College staff on a 'need to know' basis and in compliance with SFEFC and Data Protection Act (1998) guidelines.

3.2 Special Programmes

John Wheatley College will provide, according to demand, and within the resources available to it, Special Programmes for students who require support to learn in all curricular areas. Both College-based and outreach courses will be available. John Wheatley College will seek to meet the support needs of these programmes within the resources available, in collaboration with external support agencies and partner organisations. A student's additional support needs will be recorded on a Personal Learning Support Plan. As with all College provision, these programmes will have clearly identified learning targets and progression routes.

3.3 Learning Support

John Wheatley College recognises that it is likely that many students will require some support to learn during their studies. Additional support will be made available to students who are following mainstream programmes but who are experiencing difficulties.

This support will be provided in a variety of ways including individualised learning programmes, tutorials, small group or co-operative teaching basis to respond to the temporary nature of some learning needs which often prevent students from realising their full potential.

3.4 Extended Learning Support

Extended Learning Support (ELS) will be available for those students with learning difficulties or disabilities as defined in section 2.1 above. All additional support will be co-ordinated by the College Disability Advisor and will be recorded on an Extended Learning Support Plan. Students will be offered an initial interview with the Disability Adviser. The purpose of this interview will be to assess each student's additional support needs and to agree the level of support to be provided by John Wheatley College, within available resources, and / or appropriate external agencies.

Extended Learning Support will offer students:

- the opportunity to make informed choices about a comprehensive range of learning (including multi-media) technologies, more low-tech aids and alternative learning strategies to assist them in their study programme;
- initial training in the use of specialist equipment and on going support;
- essential (core) skills support including literacy and ICT; and
- a general information service and referrals to specialist agencies where appropriate

The College will endeavour to continue to improve its links with the appropriate agencies to develop further a network of services and resources for students requiring such support. The College's pre-entry and on going guidance provision will continue to inform students as to the additional support which can be made available.

3.5 Health and Safety

Health and safety standards and procedures will apply to all students.

Appropriate health and safety procedures will be operated for students with learning difficulties and specific induction programmes will apprise students of their responsibilities in this respect. The College will regularly review its evacuation procedures to ensure that needs of students with learning difficulties or disabilities are addressed. Staff Induction will include a specific element on Health and Safety applicable to students with learning difficulties or disabilities.

4. Management, Access and Resources

4.1 Management

The operational management of Extended Learning Support and Learning Support will be the remit of the Associate Principal: Core Skills, who will have responsibility for co-ordinating specialist support services for students. The operational management of Special Programmes will be the responsibility of the Associate Principal in whose School the programme is delivered.

The day-to-day management of programmes defined within the Inclusiveness Policy will be as follows:

- Extended Learning Support will be the responsibility of the Senior Lecturer, Support for Learning;
- Learning Support will be the responsibility of a designated Senior Lecturer within the School of Core Skills; and
- Special Programmes will be the responsibility of the Senior Lecturer within the appropriate curricular area.

4.2 Access

The College will provide appropriate information and guidance for potential students who require support to learn in its publicity and marketing materials. The College will seek to continue to improve the physical access within the resources available for such purposes. All main College buildings are accessible to those with a physical disability.

4.3 Resources

Familiarity with the College's aims and policies for students with learning difficulties will underpin all provision of services and resources. Recognition will be given to the positive role that the Library and Flexible Learning Units can play in enhancing students' experience of College.

An additional support resource room will be made available. The services within this room will be co-ordinated by the Disability Adviser. All provision to support students' learning is conditional on securing the appropriate levels of funding.

The College will seek to fund:

- the development of a resource bank of re-usable assistive micro technology and low tech aids for student loan; and
- assessment commissioned from external agencies when deemed appropriate by John Wheatley College staff.

Students will be assisted when seeking to access other sources of funding to support their personal and educational needs, e.g. Disabled Student Allowance, or other external agency funding.

4.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Special Programmes and Extended Learning Support services outlined in this policy will be monitored continuously as part of the College's self evaluation process and will include information from a range of services such as student guidance reviews, student satisfaction surveys and by requesting formal commentary from external agencies who use any of the services provided. This monitoring and evaluation will be co-ordinated by the Consultative Committee on Inclusive Learning.

[John Wheatley College makes use of Self Evaluation methodology specified by SFEFC to enable consistent review of all its services.]

5. Quality Assurance

Special Programmes will be subject to the same quality assurance and audit procedures that are applied to all other College programmes.

Extended Learning Support reviews will take place a minimum of once per block, to ensure that students' additional support needs are being met. A Student Satisfaction Survey on Extended Learning Support will be conducted at the end of each student's programme.

6. Consultative Committee on Inclusive Learning

The College's Academic Board is a Standing Committee of its Board of Management. The College will establish a Consultive Committee within the framework of the Standing Committees of the Academic Board. The Consultive Committee will assist the College develop provision for students who require additional support to learn and to review the effectiveness of the Inclusive Learning Policy. The Committee will comprise of John Wheatley College staff and co-opted members from external support agencies. Parents and students will also be invited to attend and participate in this committee's deliberations (See Appendix 2). The minutes of the Consultative Committee shall appear as a matter of routine on the agenda of the Academic Board.

Remit of the Consultative Committee on Inclusive Learning

The Consultative Committee will provide advice on the provision of special programmes and other learning support to the Academic Board. The Consultative Committee on Inclusive Learning shall:

- advise the Academic Board on the development of its policy related to inclusive learning;
- assist the College's Management to assess the quality and effectiveness of its provision for students with learning difficulties and disabilities;
- advise the Academic Board on matters related to the improvement and development of programmes and services for students with learning difficulties and disabilities;
- advise the College on the marketing of special programmes extended learning support and matters relating to the Inclusive Learning services;
- assist in identifying demands for provision; and
- assist in identifying appropriate staff development programmes

7. Staff Development

All academic and support staff have responsibility for ensuring equality of opportunity as set out in the College's Equal Opportunities Policy. The College will ensure that staff responsible for managing provision for students with learning difficulties have appropriate qualifications and expertise. In addition the College will continue to support staff who wish to undertake specialist teaching qualifications in the support to learn area. Supporting students with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities will be a priority area for staff development. Regular staff development opportunities will be made available for academic and support staff throughout the year via staff induction programmes, programme and moderation group meetings and specific training sessions. These sessions will include specialist input on working with students who exhibit challenging behaviour. This will be reflected in the College staff development plan.

8. Review

The College will undertake a review of this policy every two years or earlier if substantial legislative or policy changes require such action.

9. Implementation

This policy will come into effect on 1 August 2001.

IG/AL/IQ/AS
John Wheatley College
May 2001

Appendix 1

John Wheatley College

Supporting Documentation

Personal Learning Support Plan
Disability Adviser Leaflet
Letter to Students
Skillsbase Referral Form
Confirmation of ELS Appointment
Extended Learning Support Plan
ELS Review Sheet

Appendix 2

John Wheatley College

Membership of Consultative Committee on Inclusive Learning

Assistant Principal

Associate Principal (Core Skills)

Associate Principal (Vocational Skills)

Senior Lecturer (Support to Learn)

Senior Lecturer (Core Skills)

Senior Lecturer (Vocational Skills)

2 Lecturers

Disability Adviser

1 Head Teacher (Special School)

1 Principal Teacher (Learning Support)

1 Student

1 Parent / Guardian

2 Representatives from Specialist Agencies

College Chaplain

Note: the Guidance Manager and Marketing Manager will attend as required.