



LINCOLN COLLEGE

ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

POLICY CQ/PO/6

SPONSOR

Group Director of Marketing and Communications

Equality and Diversity Statement

Lincoln College strives to treat all its members and visitors fairly and aims to eliminate unjustifiable discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs or practices, disability, marital status, family circumstances, sexual orientation, spent criminal convictions, age or any other inappropriate grounds.

LINCOLN COLLEGE

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Paragraph	Content	Page Number
1	Purpose	1
2	Aim	1
3	Introduction	1
4	Admission Arrangements for Full Time Further Education Admissions	3
5	Applications for part time study	5
6	Applications for Higher Education (HE) full time study	5
7	Applications for part time study HE study	6
8	Applications for apprenticeships	8
9	Internal applicants	9
10	Returning students	9
12	Progression expectations	10
12	Mental Health Policy	11
13	Enrolment	11
14	Fees and Waivers	12
15	Data protection	12
16	Appeals Procedure	12
17	Modifications to the Policy and Review Procedures	13
Appendix 1	Disclosure of Special Education Needs and/or Disability	14
Appendix 2	Examination Access Arrangements for Vocational Awarding Body Qualifications (excluding Functional Skills Level 1 and Level 2)	16

LINCOLN COLLEGE

ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1 PURPOSE

- Lincoln College Admissions Policy will meet the requirements of the College Charter, Strategic Plan and Equality Act.
- The College seeks to offer a fair and efficient admissions service to all its students irrespective of attendance.
- The College will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments for students with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) wherever possible.
- The admission arrangements are designed to promote retention, learner success and equality of opportunity.

This Policy needs to be read in conjunction with the following related policies and procedures:

- Fees Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Mental Health Policy
- Student Disciplinary Policy
- Criminal Disclosure Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy

2 AIM

To ensure that applicants to the College are treated fairly. All applicants will be considered for a place on their individual merits, providing they meet course specific entry criteria. When start dates for courses are confirmed potential students will be invited to enrol.

3 INTRODUCTION

3.1. This policy applies to all applicants to programmes of study within Lincoln College, Newark College and Gainsborough College.

3.2. The College will ensure that it meets its requirements under the Equality Act. This means that we will ensure that all applicants are treated fairly and given equal opportunities to apply for courses at Lincoln College, Newark College and Gainsborough College. Within the Equality Act particular attention is given to ensure the following protected characteristics are supported:

- Age
- Sex
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

- Marriage or civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
- 3.3. The College offers a broad range of courses to a varied student population. This policy determines the principles of the College admissions and enrolment systems. The arrangements for admissions to courses will vary, dependent upon course, applicant's age, experience, course requirements and funding available.
 - 3.4. Applicants will receive information, advice and guidance to help them decide on the course of study best suited to their needs. Our motto for offering places is "right learner, right course, and right time". Services available to applicants include an impartial, confidential IAG appointment, a written action plan providing next steps for students and the offer of continued IAG support post enrolment and as a member of our alumni after their studies have finished.
 - 3.5. Applications to the College will be processed in a timely manner on receipt. Applicants will select a Welcome Day of their choosing during the application process. At their welcome day applicants will be interviewed and made a conditional offer, or referred to make an IAG appointment.
 - 3.6. All applicants are entitled to receive a clear indication, prior to enrolment, of all likely expenses associated with their chosen programme of study (costs may be subject to change).
 - 3.7. All applicants should be informed of the College admissions entry criteria required for their programme of study.
 - 3.8. The College reserves the right not to enrol an applicant who has outstanding debts with the College. When identified, the Digital Engagement Team will notify the Finance Team to liaise with the applicant.
 - 3.9. The College reserves the right to refuse admission to an applicant who has previously been excluded from this or any other educational institution. People previously excluded will be interviewed by the appropriate Head of Learning and Skills or the Head of Student Services, prior to their re-entry. The College will only refuse admission if they feel that they are unable to provide a satisfactory risk assessment and/or if it is felt that the learner has made no progress from the previous exclusion.
 - 3.10. The College recognises it has a duty of care to students, staff and visitors and therefore reserves the right not to admit an applicant where there is evidence that they could pose a risk to themselves or others, which cannot be managed through a risk management plan.

- 3.11. Applicants under 16 will need to be approved for funding prior to acceptance on any programme of study. Please contact the Head of Marketing and Engagement in the first instance on: 01522 876253 or email admissions@lincolncollege.ac.uk (this does not apply to students wishing to join the Career College).

4 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR FULL TIME FURTHER EDUCATION ADMISSIONS

- 4.1. The date applications are received by the College is recorded to ensure they are prioritised in date order.
- 4.2. All applicants to the College receive instant confirmation that their application has been received via the College website, or within 10 working days for mailed applications, along with their Welcome Day invite.
- 4.3. Where an applicant has applied for more than two courses, their applications will be passed to the Careers Guidance Team to provide impartial IAG to decide on the best course which meets the applicant's career aspirations.
- 4.4. Admission arrangements and entry criteria will vary depending on the course being applied for. If you wish to check the specific arrangements for a course please contact our Information Officers on 0300 3032435 or email enquiries@lincolncollege.ac.uk. Alternatively entry requirement information is available on the College's website www.lincolncollege.ac.uk.
- 4.5. If an applicant is aged 16-25 and has a declared Special Educational Need and/or Disability (SEND), a request for further information will go to their school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). The applicant will also be sent a questionnaire to complete to provide further information on what, if any, additional support they may require.
- 4.6. Applicants may be asked to provide a reference from their last attended school, an employer, or asked to provide a character reference at the discretion of interviewing tutors.
- 4.7. Applicants who miss a Welcome Day will automatically be re-invited to the next available event.
- 4.8. As part of the admissions process, applicants will be given a conditional offer, an unconditional offer or referred for an IAG appointment:
- Conditional Offer – this may be subject to one or more of the following:
 - Gaining specific exam results
 - References
 - Interview performance
 - Demonstrated commitment and motivation to undertake all aspects of the Study Programme
 - Unconditional Offer – where an applicant has already met the course specific entry criteria.

- Referral for IAG appointment – interviewer is unable to make an offer on the chosen course. They will provide reasons for this decision and arrange for a careers guidance appointment to identify suitable alternative courses.
- 4.9. A confirmation offer email will be sent out within 10 working days of the verbal offer of a place on a course during a Welcome Day.
- 4.10. Receipt of an invite to enrolment does not guarantee a college place on the course applied for. Invites are sent before the college has evidence that entry requirements have been met and the College reserves the right to refuse enrolment if entry requirements are not met. In these circumstances an alternative course or course level will be offered.
- 4.11. A course may become full during main enrolment. Courses are filled on the basis of the earliest applicants who have met the entry requirements and have attended their enrolment slot. Where a course is full, an applicant will be given the following choices:
- To be transferred onto an alternative course (where available and appropriate)
 - To meet with a Careers Guidance Adviser to consider other available options
- 4.12. All applications processed from the 31st August, for a September start, will automatically be classed as a “late application”. This is to ensure the College has sufficient time to obtain references, health declarations and criminal disclosures. If all of this supporting evidence is not in place within 42 days of enrolment, the College reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place to study.
- 4.13. Applicants will be kept informed of the process at each stage.
- 4.14. All students will be placed on a 42 working days probationary period, from the first day of attendance on their Study Programme. This is to ensure that students are on the appropriate course and level. This also gives the opportunity for students to transfer onto a different course if places are still available, providing they meet the entry requirements.

During this time students are also monitored for academic ability, attendance, behaviour and performance on their programme of study. If it is felt that there is a lack of commitment on the student’s part which has been documented and discussed and there is no improvement, the learner may be asked to leave before the end of the 42 days. The requirements for satisfactory progress must be clearly communicated to the learner, along with any specific actions needed to meet these requirements. (The 42 day rule does not apply to students who have applied for an Advanced Learner Loan and students with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

- 4.15. During the 42 day period students may be asked to leave, whatever their disciplinary status at the time, provided that the above procedure has been followed.

- 4.16. Where a student is under the age of 18 or has a special educational need and/or disability, parents should be involved in discussions before a withdrawal can take place, unless there are exceptional circumstances why that young person chooses for them not to be involved.
- 4.17. Where students are under the age of 18, “raising the participation age” applies. This means that all students under 18 should be in education, training or employment with training. Where the College is looking to withdraw such a student a referral should be made to the Careers Guidance Team to consider other internal or external courses, before they are withdrawn from their studies. Student withdrawal information must be passed to the relevant Local Authority to follow up (EHCP students cannot be withdrawn without an early review being carried out and approved by the Local Authority).
- 4.18. Students have the right to appeal the 42 day probationary period following the appeals procedure outlined in section 17.

5 APPLICATIONS FOR PART TIME STUDY

- 5.1 The admissions arrangements for part time courses vary. Please see the website or course information sheet for specific details.
- 5.2 Not all part time courses require an interview. Where an interview and/or assessment is required, the College will attempt to give as much notice as possible.
- 5.3 When a student has been made an offer they will be sent information on joining instructions and when to come in for enrolment.

6 APPLICATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (HE), FULL TIME STUDY

- 6.1. All full time HE students are required to apply directly through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). Please see the UCAS website (www.ucas.ac.uk) for specific deadlines. Students are signposted to the UCAS website from the Lincoln College website, which includes accurate course information and the [College's Higher Education Terms and Conditions](#).
- 6.2. Following notification of an application from UCAS; the College will arrange a course specific interview for applicants on the following programmes:
- Certificate in Education, Training and Skills Level 5
 - BSc (Hons) Clinical Herbalism
 - BSc (Hons) Acupuncture
 - BA (Hons) Lens Based Media
 - BA (Hons) Musical Instrument Craft
 - Professional Graduate Diploma in Education, Training and Skills (PGDE)

Interviews are not routinely required for applications to other programmes, although admissions tutors may wish to discuss applications with individuals in more detail. Applicants may therefore be contacted for an informal discussion in order to enable the admissions tutor to make a decision regarding an application.

- 6.3. Applicants, following interview where required, will be given one of the following:
 - Unconditional offer – where the applicant already meets all entry criteria required
 - Conditional offer – where the applicant will be required to meet specific entry criteria
 - Rejected – where unfortunately the applicant has not met course- specific entry requirements
- 6.4. Applicants will be able to track the progress of this offer through “UCAS track”. Once examination results become available the College will review and update any ‘Conditional’ offers making them either ‘Unconditional’ or ‘Reject’.
- 6.5. Where an awarding body imposes specific entry requirements, the College will assist the applicant to check whether they meet those requirements. The responsibility of the accuracy of the information supplied to the validating body rests with the applicant.
- 6.6. When a student has been made an offer they will be sent an information pack including a hard copy of the College’s terms and conditions, course information and accommodation information in compliance with the requirements set by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).
- 6.7. Applicants are then required to contact the College in order to formally accept an offer. Following this formal acceptance a full set of course information and terms and conditions will be sent to the applicants along with details of the course enrolment and induction timetable.

7 APPLICATIONS FOR PART TIME HIGHER EDUCATION STUDY

- 7.1. All part time HE students apply directly to Lincoln College.
- 7.2. Online applicants will receive an automatic reply from the College website confirming receipt of their application. All other applicants will be sent an acknowledgement letter within 10 working days.
- 7.3. Handwritten applications are date stamped on receipt. All applications (handwritten and online) are logged onto our management information system (ProSolution).
- 7.4. The part time application will then be scanned and sent to the HE Administration Team for processing.

- 7.5. Following notification of a part time application, the College will arrange a course specific interview for applicants on the following programmes:
- Certificate in Education, Training and Skills Level 5
 - BSc (Hons) Clinical Herbalism
 - BSc (Hons) Acupuncture
 - BA (Hons) Lens Based Media
 - BA (Hons) Musical Instrument Craft
 - Professional Graduate Diploma in Education, Training and Skills (PGDE)

Interviews are not routinely required for applications to other programmes, although admissions tutors may wish to discuss applications with individuals in more detail. Applicants may therefore be contacted for an informal discussion in order to enable the admissions tutor to make a decision regarding an application. If deemed necessary tutors reserve the right to conduct an interview on any course.

- 7.6. Applicants, following interview where required, will be given one of the following:

- Unconditional offer – where the applicant already meets all entry criteria required
- Conditional offer – where the applicant will be required to meet specific entry criteria
- Rejected – where unfortunately the applicant has not met course- specific entry requirements

- 7.7. Where an awarding body imposes specific entry requirements the College will assist the applicant to check whether they meet those requirements. The responsibility of the accuracy of the information supplied to the validating body rests with the applicant.

- 7.8. Where the College accepts applications for courses through an admissions interview, we aim to email an offer within 10 working days from the interview if successful.

- 7.9. When a student has been made an offer they will be sent an information pack including terms and conditions, course information and accommodation information in compliance with the requirements set by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

- 7.10. Applicants are then required to contact the College in order to formally accept an offer. Following this formal acceptance, a full set of course information with terms and conditions will be sent to the applicants along with details of the course enrolment and induction timetable.

8 APPLICATIONS FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

The admissions arrangements for apprenticeship programmes vary. This is dependent upon the age of the applicant and whether the prospective learner is currently employed, or is applying to an existing apprenticeship vacancy, or is expressing an interest in starting an apprenticeship.

School-leaver applicants applying directly to college

- 8.1. Applicants without an employer should complete an online application for a Study Programme and indicate they would be interested in an Apprenticeship should a suitable vacancy become available via the College website.
- 8.2. Applicants will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt message from the College website. Postal applicants will be sent an acknowledgement letter within 10 working days.
- 8.3. Applicants select a Welcome Day date of their choice during the application process. During the Welcome Day they will receive a corporate presentation delivered from a Study Programme and an Apprenticeship member of staff, a group discussion will be facilitated about their chosen pathway and take part in 1:1 or group interviews.
- 8.4. As part of the admissions process, applicants will be given a conditional offer on the equivalent Study Programme and marked as a potential apprentice. Applicant will then be invited in at a later date to complete a number of assessments.
- 8.5. Should a suitable vacancy be available before September the applicant may start their apprenticeship in September if successful in interview.
- 8.6. If a suitable vacancy is not secured before September the student may start their Study Programme and attend Apprenticeship Tutorials (focused on finding an apprenticeship) until they secure an apprenticeship with an employer. At this point they will transfer from their Study Programme to their apprenticeship.

Employed apprentice applicants

- 8.7. If the applicant is already employed, the Apprenticeship Sales and Recruitment Team will undertake a workplace visit, including a Skills Need Analysis, ensuring the learner has the ability to achieve the relevant apprenticeship framework/standard.
 - If the applicant achieves the relevant standard to progress onto the apprenticeship framework/standard, an agreed start date will be set with the applicant and their employer.
 - If the applicant does not currently meet the specific criteria for the apprenticeship framework/standard, an alternative framework/standard will be sourced or they will be advised/referred to access careers information, advice and guidance.

Those applying via the National Apprenticeship Service

- 8.8. The College's Learner Engagement Administrative Officer (LEAO) will shortlist applications according to the job descriptions and specifications set by the employer as well as the apprenticeship framework/standard entry criteria. Shortlisted applicants attend an Apprenticeship Day and take part in assessments.
- 8.9. Suitable candidates are forwarded to the employer who then selects candidates for interview. The employer will notify the LEAO and/or Business Development Officer (BDO) who the successful applicant is and also provide feedback to the unsuccessful candidates.
- 8.10. The relevant BDO will arrange a sign up appointment which is conducted in the workplace.
- 8.11. The successful candidate(s) will be invited to a college Apprenticeship Day Session and an assessor will be allocated to deliver the first episode of learning and support the learner through their apprenticeship.
- 8.12. Unsuccessful candidates are invited to attend a workshop offering guidance on 'How to write a winning application' to support them in their next application. They will also be sent regular emails regarding vacancies and events and provided with the opportunity to meet with a Careers Guidance Adviser to consider full time course opportunities.

9 INTERNAL APPLICANTS

- 9.1 Internal applicants will be subject to meeting the same entry criteria as full time external applicants.
- 9.2 If an internal applicant is progressing within the same curriculum area, they may not need to attend a Welcome Day. However, they do need to have demonstrated that they are able to pass their current course with the specific grade required for the next course and that they have made good academic and personal progress on the course.
- 9.3 Where a learner is progressing to another curriculum area, or currently behind with existing studies, they may be expected to attend a Welcome Day.
- 9.4 Where an internal applicant has had poor attendance, performance or behaviour or has a current disciplinary sanction, it may be decided that their probationary period will have additional, relevant conditions at the start of subsequent courses. Alternatively, it may be deemed appropriate to decline a place at this time.

10 RETURNING STUDENTS

- 10.1 The College expects 100% attendance and punctuality at all timetabled sessions. This includes all planned College activities, workshops, maths and English classes, work experience, compulsory

visits and activities and tutorials. In addition the College expects students to be motivated and engaged with all of their lessons and have an appreciation that our aim is to develop student's skills to ultimately enter employment:

It is essential that students attend all exams they are enrolled for. Failure to attend may result in the student having to pay for the missed exam and ultimately it may stop the student being allowed to return to do a further course, or removed from an existing programme.

- If a student has an attendance rate below 90%, the College reserves the right to refuse progress onto a second year or alternative course.
- Maths and English are essential employability skills and a core component of study programmes. If it is found that students have not been attending these classes this may result in students not being allowed to return for a further year's study.
- The College sets high expectations for motivation and behaviour. If a student has been subject to a disciplinary sanction resulting in a final written warning, we reserve the right to refuse a student a further year's study.

11 PROGRESSION EXPECTATIONS

- 11.1. Under normal circumstances it is expected that students will progress from one level to a higher level e.g. level 1 to level 2 to level 3.
- 11.2. It is appreciated that there are occasions where students may undertake two courses at the same level. This may be for one or more of the following reasons:
 - To become multi skilled, e.g. a plumber and an electrician
 - To change career direction
 - To build confidence/self esteem
 - Not yet ready to move onto a higher level course
- 11.3. Students will not be allowed to undertake more than two courses at the same level unless there are exceptional circumstances which are supported by the course tutor.
- 11.4. The course tutor will be required to provide a summary, outlining why they feel that the student's circumstances are exceptional and why they should be allowed to complete another year of study. This will then be passed to the Group Director of Marketing and Communications to review if a place can be offered.
- 11.5. The Group Director of Marketing and Communications will be required to write to the applicant advising them on the outcome of the decision.

12 MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

- 12.1 The College recognises that for certain courses there is a need to ensure that students are emotionally able to undertake all aspects of the programme of study and relevant work placement.
- 12.2 The College will take every reasonable step to ensure that it supports students with a special educational need and/or disability. However in doing this it must also consider its duty of care in relation to Safeguarding and Health and Safety.
- 12.3 If it is felt that undertaking a programme of study may have a detrimental effect on the applicant and/or others, then a referral needs to be made to the Head of Student Services and relevant Academic Director. **PLEASE REFER TO THE SEPARATE MENTAL HEALTH POLICY FOR FULL GUIDANCE.**

13 ENROLMENT

- 13.1 To be officially enrolled an applicant will need to complete an online enrolment form. The applicant will be required to provide specific information which is a requirement of relevant funding bodies. Depending on the age of the applicant and which course they are enrolling on, it may involve some or all of the following documentation:
- Proof of ID
 - Previous qualifications/certificates including maths and English
 - National Insurance Number
 - Passport/Visa to confirm residency status for non-EU students
 - If applying for fee remission, evidence of current means tested benefit
 - If employer is paying – a letter confirming this
 - If paying using a loan from Student Finance England – a letter proving this or proof that the loan has been applied for
- 13.2. Applicants must enrol by their legal name.
- 13.3. Applicants who do not enrol on the main campus sites at Lincoln, Newark or Gainsborough will also be asked to sign a Learning Agreement with the enrolling tutor. This is an auditable contractual document found at the back of the enrolment booklet and used as proof of enrolment on a programme of study. The applicant will be emailed an electronic copy of their learning agreement to keep. A copy can be printed at the request of the applicant if required.
- 13.4. A photograph of the applicant will also be taken at enrolment to enable a student ID card to be printed. This ID card must be on show at all times by the student whilst on College premises along with the provided College student lanyard (please see appendix 8 of the Safeguarding Policy).
- 13.5. Enrolment of applicants is an essential part of the agreed study programme for a learner. Therefore a learner will only be allowed to

attend the College for a maximum of 7 working days before their enrolment has to be completed. It is appreciated that there are occasions where exceptional circumstances arise. In this instance, approval to extend the enrolment time will need to be authorised by the Group Director of Marketing and Communications.

- 13.6. It is appreciated that some HE students and students using an Advanced Learner Loan may initially be enrolled as pending. The pending code can only be used where the College is waiting for confirmation of payment from Student Finance England.

The College reserves the right to suspend a student's attendance until fees have been paid in full, either in person or by Student Finance England.

14 FEES AND WAIVERS

- 14.1. Most courses have fees attached to them however some students may be eligible for fee remission. Please see the Fees Policy for further details and eligibility.

15 DATA PROTECTION

- 15.1 Data collected during the admission and enrolment process will comply with the current legislation concerning data protection.
- 15.2 The minimum data required will be sought.
- 15.3 Data will be kept secure and confidential and only used for the purposes for which it was collected.
- 15.4 Data will be destroyed after the period of time it is no longer needed as evidence for auditors.
- 15.5 For further details, please refer to the College Data Protection Policy.

16 APPEALS PROCEDURE

- 16.1 Applicants or their parents/guardian or next of kin (if the applicant is under the age of 18 or up to 24 if they have an EHCP) have the right to appeal against a decision which has been made as part of the admissions process.
- 16.2 The applicant will receive an acknowledgment letter from the Director within 3 working days.
- 16.3 The Director has a further 5 working days to investigate the appeal which may involve a meeting with the applicant. The applicant will have the right to be accompanied and represented by a parent/guardian or next of kin.
- 16.4 If the matter remains unresolved the appeal should be referred to the Director of Performance and Planning.

The Director of Performance and Planning or their nominee shall meet with the Director and the applicant within 3 working days to review the case. The applicant, wherever possible, should be provided with verbal feedback of any decision made, but shall in all cases be provided with written feedback within 3 working days following the meeting.

- 16.5 If the matter is still not resolved to a satisfactory conclusion, the applicant can make a final appeal to the Managing Director of Education and Training Delivery who will consider the appeal, reviewing all supporting evidence before informing the applicant of a decision within 3 working days.
- 16.6 Applicants may also follow the Customer Complaint and Grievance Procedure following the outcome of an assessment decision.

17 MODIFICATIONS TO THE POLICY AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

- 17.1. Any permanent modifications to the Policy require the formal approval of the Directors Operational Meeting (DOM) Group.
- 17.2. A full policy review takes place annually with the DOM Group endorsement being sought.
- 17.3. Individual exceptions to this policy can only be authorised by the Managing Director of Education and Training or a nominated Director. Such exceptions will not be regarded as setting a precedent but should be reviewed on an annual basis when the Policy is being updated.

APPENDIX 1

DISCLOSURE OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITY (SEND)

Lincoln College operates an inclusive approach to our admissions process. We welcome students with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) and will provide all reasonable adjustments to admissions and enrolment arrangements wherever possible.

1. In line with the Equality Act 2010, the College has a duty to provide inclusive, accessible and high quality study programmes for students with SEND. For the purpose of this policy, reference to disability incorporates all conditions which may require support.
2. The College encourages SEND students to disclose their disability on enquiry, application, during enrolment, or at any time whilst on a College programme. It is in the best interests of the student to disclose any support needs as soon as possible so that an Assessment of Support Needs can be carried out if required. This is to ensure that the College can provide the best possible support in a timely manner and make any reasonable adjustments necessary to support the applicant.
3. On no occasion will an applicant be treated less favourably for admission to a programme because of their SEND. Priority for admission to courses is based on date of application and ensuring that applicants meet specific course entry requirements. We will however make special considerations for applicants with an EHCP where we are the named provider.
4. There may be an occasion where an applicant is advised to consider an alternative course as their career aspiration may not be realistic. In this instance the applicant and their parent/guardian (where applicable) will be consulted. In some cases advice may need to be taken from the Local Authority that is responsible for commissioning "High Needs" places.
5. Where disclosures have not been made prior to enrolment, it can be difficult for staff to provide adequate support to meet a student's needs at the start of programme. The College positively encourages that disclosure is made well in advance of enrolment so that adequate staffing and support are available for the start of the course.
6. All applicants who declare a SEND will be sent a questionnaire to complete on declaration. Where a disclosure is made, evidence will be required, e.g. medical letters or Educational Psychologist report. If the applicant is still at school a questionnaire will also be sent to the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) requesting information on current levels of support provided. There are a variety of ways to assess support needs, including:
 - The opportunity to come in and meet with an Assessment and Support Co-ordinator to discuss support needs (mainstream students and apprentices). If applying for a course in the School of Foundation, applicants would meet with a course tutor.
 - A telephone/email assessment to discuss support needs.

- Visit to current school to observe existing support needs. This also provides the opportunity to meet with school SENCO. This can be very helpful to students who have anxiety about transition arrangements.
 - To attend a taster day with current students. This can help to give applicants a chance to experience what college life is really like.
7. Where applicants are invited to attend an interview, assessment, taster day and/or experience day, every effort will be made to provide the learner with appropriate support to meet their needs to ensure they have equal access for admission onto their chosen programme of study. If the applicant has special exam arrangements in school and needs to undertake an entry test, support and extra time will be provided where evidence demonstrates there is a need.
 8. All information gathered from point six is used to support the assessment process. All information held on an applicant is covered under the Data Protection Act 1998. Information about disability is classed as “sensitive personal information” and the processing of it requires the specific consent of the applicant.
 9. When the applicant requests confidentiality or permits only a limited disclosure, the College will still attempt to assess the needs of the applicant and make reasonable adjustments where possible. This can be done whilst still complying with the applicant’s wishes. However, such compliance may adversely affect the level of support which the College can give. For example, it may not be possible to make reasonable adjustments or the adjustment might not be the same standard as it would have been if full disclosure was given.
 10. Where the applicant specifies total confidentiality, the staff member to whom the disclosure is made will endeavour to make whatever reasonable adjustment is possible within their remit. This needs to be communicated with the applicant and a record of the conversation made on the applicant’s file. The applicant must be advised that although the College will respect their wishes, it still has a duty to ensure that there is compliance with relevant legislation and that there may be an occasion, eg. Safeguarding or Health and Safety, where the College may need to overrule the applicant’s confidentiality to keep either the individual or others safe. The applicant would be advised of where this applies.
 11. Special exam arrangements – see appendix 2

APPENDIX 2

EXAMINATION ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL AWARDING BODY QUALIFICATIONS (EXCLUDING ENTRY LEVEL QUALIFICATIONS)

- The rules for access arrangements have changed and previous recipients of access arrangements at school are not guaranteed access arrangements when they begin College.
- Access arrangements do not transfer from one institution to another – even if a student has always received access arrangements at school these arrangements do not ‘transfer’ to Lincoln College.
- **Access arrangements are not an automatic right and are not guaranteed.**
- Awarding bodies have different regulations when it comes to access arrangements. The awarding bodies have strict requirements and decide whether an application is approved/not approved.
- The key message that the awarding bodies are trying to get across is that it **MUST be ‘their normal way of working.’** Their intention is that fewer students will receive access arrangements on the basis of Equality and Diversity.
- An access arrangement is not simply an add-on for the examination. The particular requirement **MUST** be present and evidenced during class time. This includes readers, scribes, large papers, overlays, 25% extra time, word processor, separate invigilation and a small group.
- It is the responsibility of the student to apply for exam concessions. If a student has received an assessment of support needs they will be encouraged to take away the relevant paperwork.
- It is now far more difficult to secure access arrangements in examinations due to the tight regulations set by the awarding bodies.
- In order to make any application, sufficient evidence will be required in advance to identify that the requirement reflects the student’s normal way of working. The documentation presented must show a compelling case for the requested concessions with a clear and detailed picture of current need supported by a substantial weight of evidence to demonstrate difficulties. It’s not sufficient to say the student will benefit from concessions.
- The Examinations Team are subject to unannounced inspections from awarding bodies and this will have consequences if the appropriate evidence is not available. Student Services will not make an application until assured that all regulatory requirements are fulfilled. If an application is processed without sufficient evidence to support a claim then this may result in a student losing their qualification or examination marks. An application based upon insufficient evidence is classified as malpractice.

Deadlines and what we need from you and when

Complete the student Examination Access Arrangements form. The completed forms must be submitted to Student Services along with any of the documents below:

- Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- A psychological assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist confirming learning disability either during the secondary school period or later.
- An assessment confirming learning disability during the secondary school period or later carried out by a specialist teacher who holds one of the JCQ approved qualifications.
- Any medical evidence e.g. consultant letter confirming diagnosis.

If any of the above are not available, e.g. in the case of a mature candidate, please contact Student Services for guidance.

Process for Requests

1. The student will need to obtain the Student Exam Access Arrangements form. This can be found in Student Services.
2. The form must be submitted to Student Services by the published deadline otherwise we cannot guarantee that the requested concessions will be in place.
3. Student Services will co-ordinate the collection of evidence and apply for concessions.
4. Student Services will notify the student and lecturer of the outcome.

Please remember that we are not asking you to identify or diagnose any student. However we are asking for your observations and professional thoughts on how the student copes and performs in your class.

Examples of Access Arrangements

Extra Time of up to 25% - The centre is required to provide evidence of the normal way of working for the candidate. Evidence must include annotated mocks, timed assessments and a supporting statement from the tutor.

Supervised Rest Breaks – The centre must be satisfied that there is a genuine need for this arrangement on account of a physical disability, a psychological or medical condition, or behavioural, emotional and social needs. All of this information does need to be evidenced and kept on file for the student. A rest break is an opportunity for the student to 'stop the clock' (turn over their paper), have a supervised break and then re- start the exam (without losing any of their official allocated time).

Reader – A reader may be allowed if a student has been assessed and their score for reading accuracy is below 84.

Scribe – A scribe will not be allowed if a candidate's literacy difficulties are primarily caused by English, Irish or Welsh not being their first language. Visual Impairments or a medical condition can be common reasons why scribes are used.

Word Processors – Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spell check/predictive text disabled to a student where it is their normal way of working within the centre.

Transcript - A transcript may be permitted by the centre where a student's handwriting is illegible and the use of a word processor is not their normal way of working. It is also used where a student's spelling is so difficult to decipher that it would be beneficial for an examiner to be able to refer to a transcript of the student's work for clarification. This arrangement must only be used where a candidate cannot use a word processor.

Prompter – A prompter may be allowed where a student has little or no sense of time or loses concentration easily. This option could also be effective for a student that is affected by an obsessive-compulsive disorder which leads them to keep going over the same question rather than moving on to other sections of an exam.

These are just a few of the options open to us as a centre. Please do have a look at which option you think the student needs before submitting your evidence to Student Services. It may be that your student requires rest breaks rather than 25% extra time. Do check through before submitting.

Example of how to write a supporting statement

A supporting statement is the chance to provide the detailed picture of need that the awarding bodies require for each student. Please remember not to use the word 'benefit' or 'would like' as this does mean that the application may not go through. It is about their need or requirement, not what would benefit them.

New guidelines state we now need a statement from tutors describing the difficulties the learner has in class and the impact, to help evidence the student's need for special exam arrangements

Prompt questions:

- Time restraints on performance; how time restraints affect the learner's performance? How far the learner got in the time allowed? Whether the learner needs more time to finish? How the student's work/score may have differed if more time was allowed.
- Students needing to re-read for full understanding; does the student have difficulty reading long or unfamiliar words? Do they complain that they have to read things 3 or 4 times?
- Having difficulty comprehending; student frequently asks for clarification or for more information from you, may seem anxious and need reassurance.
- Retaining information they have read; do they easily forget things they have read?
- Having to draft and re-draft work repetitively; does work go back and forth for more comments and re-marking?
- A marked difference between work produced at home, under exam conditions and under exam conditions with extra time; please send test results or examples.

- Very poor handwriting - is writing illegible or difficult to read? Do they cross out a lot or make many additions? Do they write very slowly? Does student complain that hand or wrist hurts if they write? Do they work better/faster on a word processor?
- Slow processing of information; do they struggle to understand new concepts, or take ages to produce work?
- Does student have difficulties with time management, organisation of work, chaotic folders, and memory?