

1. Introduction

This policy is aimed at staff and other stakeholders and outlines the service provided by central Learner Services and the Learning Resource centre.

There are a series of Learner Services Booklets that outline each aspect of the service for the benefit of learners.

Policy Statement

Chesterfield College will provide effective support to enable all learners to develop their full potential. The College welcomes all people, regardless of their gender, age, race, sexual orientation, cultural, social or religious backgrounds and physical, sensory or intellectual difficulty. By personalising support and focusing on the needs of individuals Chesterfield College is committed to delivering a supportive learning environment which facilitates success and progression.

Learner support is an entitlement available to all learners. Support is delivered prior to entry when choosing a programme of study, through to on course tutorial support, financial advice, counselling if required, learning resource facilities and progression guidance. A Learner Services office is open at the Infirmary Road and Clowne site. All areas of learner support publish service standards which are evaluated via the College's Quality Systems.

2. Context

Vision

Chesterfield College will be a broadly based College providing a wide range of employability and progression opportunities for the whole community both by itself and in concert with employers and other providers.

Mission

Chesterfield College seeks to promote prosperity in the local community through its unique contribution to the development of skills and qualifications encouraging all individuals to develop their potential, delivering vocational excellence and clear progression routes.

3. Purpose

- To outline the services provided for learners by Learner Services and Learning Resources
- To support the delivery of consistent standards of delivery across the College
- To support College retention and achievement strategies

4. Links to Other Documents

- Admissions Policy
- Students Internal Assessment Appeals Procedure
- Student Attendance and Absence Reporting Policy
- Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Complaints Procedure

- Information Advice and Guidance - Partnership Agreement and Matrix Standard
- Learner Voice Strategy
- Student - Tutorial Entitlement and Every Learner Matters Entitlement
- Equality Policy, Equality Scheme and Disability Equality Scheme
- Personal Tutor Core Handbook
- Service Standards for the delivery of ALS, IAG and Student Support
- Procedures for the operation of ALS
- EMA and ALG Guidelines
- LSF Guidelines
- Induction Checklist

Also refer to the Student Handbook and individual leaflets for learners/parents/guardians:

- Learner Support Services
- Counselling Service
- Information Advice and Guidance
- Additional Learning Support
- Support for Deaf Students

5. Policy Details

Learner Support will be described under FIVE categories:

1 PERSONAL TUTORIAL SUPPORT

2 ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND DISABILITIES

3 LEARNER SUPPORT, FINANCIAL HELP AND COUNSELLING

4 INFORMATION, ADVICE AND CAREERS GUIDANCE

5 LEARNING SUPPORT – LIBRARIES/LEARNING CENTRES

6. Action to Implement the Policy

Please refer to each individual section

7. Monitoring and Review

Please refer to each individual section

1. PERSONAL TUTORIALS

1.1 Introduction

The Tutorial programme is central to the College's mission of developing learners' full potential; it should underpin the learner's academic and personal development.

The tutorial programme is designed to be an active process in which the learner is involved as part of a group in discussion, activities and negotiating targets. The scheme of work is tailored to the needs of learners at each level and in different programme areas.

The development of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for each learner is a continuous process which tracks the Learner Journey. Individual learners meet with their Personal Tutor to discuss progress on the course and agree targets for their Individual Learning Plan. The tutor will offer support and guidance throughout this process, signposting to central Learner Services as appropriate.

The aim is to create an experience which is personalised to each individual learner.

1.2 Identification of Need

Tutorial Entitlement Full-time Learners

Full-time learners will normally attend a group tutorial event weekly, this may be delivered by the Personal Tutor, Learner Services or involve an external speaker or visit. The programme of group tutorials is tailored to the curriculum area and level of course

Full-time learners also have one-to-one tutorials normally every 6 – 8 weeks, although these sessions may be more frequent as the need arises. Learners identified as being at risk of early withdrawal receive Additional Pastoral Support (funded by Additional Learning Support ALS) which is personalised to their individual need.

Part-time and Higher Education Learners

Part-time day release and higher education learners have a scheduled one-to-one tutorial every 6 – 8 weeks and this forms part of the learners' timetable.

Higher education learners have a nominated tutor, often this will be a subject/module teacher or the Programme Manager who will provide academic support, in addition, many higher education tutors offer on-line support, particularly for part-time learners.

Part-time learners, including those on part-time higher education courses have access to the central Learner Services provision including advice on Student Loans, Bursaries, Careers and the Access to Learning Fund (ALF). From September 2007 onwards a Learner Services presence will be offered at the Tapton House site one day per week.

Learners who are perceived to be at risk are allocated Additional Pastoral Support (APS).

1.3 Delivery

A Personal Tutor will:

- Provide individual and group tutorial support
- Ensure learner participation in Induction (checklist completed) including late induction
- Deliver a tutorial curriculum which enhances learning and achievement
- Supply information about College enrichment and ELM activities/events
- Offer support to enable learners to achieve their potential, including active monitoring of learners with learning difficulties or disabilities.
- Deliver additional support for identified learners (learners at risk of early withdrawal)
- Help learners to set ILP targets and review the achievement of these targets
- Monitor learner attendance, punctuality, behaviour and Notes of Concern
- Encourage and reward positive behaviour
- Report on learner progress
- Provide and signpost information about progression routes
- Facilitate access to specialised services provided by central Learner Services including careers advice, counselling and advice about finance and funding

Refer to the Personal Tutor Core Handbook for a description of the role of the Personal Tutor AND Induction Checklist

The Tutorial programme is co-ordinated by the Head of Learner Services. The implementation of tutorials in each Directorate is the responsibility of the Operational Manager Support for Students (OMSS) who will monitor the quality of delivery and ensure access to appropriate staff development events.

The delivery of Personal Tutorials supports the College retention strategy by supporting learners who are perceived to be at risk of early withdrawal with APS. For example, learners who were previously NEET, learners who joined a course late, learners who have poor attendance or have other personal issues receive Additional Pastoral Support. This is normally delivered by the Personal Tutor or the Operational Manager Support for Students.

1.4 Resources to support Personal Tutors

- Personal Tutor Core Handbook
- Tutorial Scheme of Work differentiated by Level (Entry, Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3)
- Resources and activities to support the delivery of tutorials are available on the Intranet – under Learner Services and in the Learner Services Resource Room
- Scheduled contributions to the tutorial curriculum by the managers from the central Learner Services team for example, on UCAS applications or job search skills. As required unscheduled interventions to address emerging issues such as bullying

- External speakers/contributors and activities co-ordinated by the central Learner Services team eg on issues such as smoking, drugs and personal safety.
- Every Learner Matters ELM College-wide events
- New Personal Tutors are allocated a mentor and a Personal Tutor Group, led by the Head of Learner Services, meets to share and disseminate good practice

1.5 Staffing

Staff are selected to be Personal Tutors based upon their expertise and experience.

Personal Tutors are invited to attend a series of tutor briefing/training sessions each year, focusing on the Personal Tutor Handbook and target setting for the Individual Learning Plan.

1.6 Monitoring and Tracking

The Operational Manager Support for Students will produce 2 annual reports which are collated by the Head of Learner Services.

- Additional Pastoral Support (APS) within their Directorate
- Review of Personal Tutorials within their Directorate.

1.7 Evaluation

The role of Personal Tutors is reviewed through the OMSS report and through learner surveys, focus groups and parent surveys.

2. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND DISABILITIES

2.1 Introduction

The College offers extra support in literacy, language, numeracy and study skills to help learners achieve their chosen qualification. For learners with physical disabilities support is available for a range of physical, sensory or medical needs.

An Operational Manager (Support for Students) in each Directorate works alongside the central Learner Services team to co-ordinate support. Learners are encouraged to request extra support before making an application, at interview, during enrolment, during induction or at any time during the year.

All full-time learners undertake an initial assessment and the results of these assessments are used to provide appropriate support. Wherever appropriate, learners are asked to attend initial assessment activities as part of the interview procedure so that support can be planned in advance.

The College makes provision to support learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities through its specialist programme or on mainstream programmes. The specialist provision is administered through the Social and Personal Care Directorate and mainstream programmes through central Learner Services.

By offering support the ALS team aim to:

- Ensure that language, literacy, numeracy, learning difficulties or physical support needs are not a barrier to learning and achieving at Chesterfield College
- Offer learners the opportunity to have their needs assessed and addressed if appropriate
- Ensure that the support is put in place within two weeks of identifying that need, where possible.
- Review the delivery of support and make adjustments as required.
- Liaise with course teams to ensure that support is an intrinsic part of learning.
- Provide reasonable adaptations to learning materials and resources, where necessary, to support learning needs
- Liaise with course teams to ensure assessment concessions are applied for to relevant assessment authorities

2.2 Identification of Need

The College application, interview, enrolment and induction processes provide the opportunity for applicants/new learners to declare a learning difficulty or disability. In some cases needs are identified through inter-agency collaboration, existing Care Plans, SEN Statements, Educational Psychologists Reports and references from a previous school.

The Learner Support Manager assesses learners with specific support needs and liaises with each Directorate and the Additional Learning Support (ALS) Manager to put appropriate support in place. Those learners providing a statement of educational need will not be required to undertake any further assessments unless their statement requires updating.

Throughout their time at College learners may self-refer or be referred by one of their tutors to either the OMSS or ALS Manager if concern is expressed about their ability to achieve their learning goal.

If a learner is referred for Additional Learning Support but does not wish to take up the opportunity then they are required to sign the “Decline of Support” form.

2.3 Delivery

The mode of delivery is dependent on the needs of the individual learner. This can include one-to-one tuition, small classes, workshops, through to a support teacher working with a main subject tutor within a class. Wherever possible delivery takes place within the learner’s main vocational area.

Reading, writing, speaking, study skills and numeracy. This can be provided in a number of ways:

- An ALS teacher in one of your classes
- Extra one-to-one sessions
- Extra workshops and/or drop-in sessions

Dyslexia/Discalculia/Dyspraxia - This is usually provided on a one-to-one basis and the support offered is based on a specialised assessment, support available includes:

- Advice and guidance
- Assistance with assignments
- Special arrangements for exams
- Training on specialist equipment such as voice-activated software

Physical, sensory or medical/mental health needs - This is again provided on a one-to-one basis; a learner’s needs are assessed and support available includes:

- Learning Support Assistants
- Communicator/Signer
- Specialist Software/Equipment
- Documents in appropriate formats - The College's course information will be made available in a format accessible to you (eg Braille, large print etc).

Medical Needs - Please refer to the College procedure on learners who require medication whilst at College.

Other types of support – The College can also fund mentoring support for learners who are very bright or where a learner is the only male/female in their group.

2.4 Staffing

Support is delivered by:

- ALS Tutors (deliver literacy and numeracy support – including intensive support for dyslexic learners)
- Carers – provide support for learners with physical disabilities
- Communication Support Workers – provide general support and a signing service for hearing impaired learners
- Learning Support Assistants assist with a variety of support needs including behavioural interventions and helping learners to organise their notes and meet deadlines
- Curriculum support– a subject specific tutorial that enables students to develop an understanding of vocationally/academically specific ideas and terminology.

ALS Tutors are chosen for their expertise in teaching Basic Skills, and their knowledge of the learner's main learning programme. They have an appropriate teaching qualification and a Basic Skills qualification at Level 4. In addition, they will attend staff development sessions that contribute to their continuous professional development.

2.5 Resources

Basic skills teaching resource materials are centrally stored and made available to teaching staff. All staff will have access to the materials that are owned or licensed to the College. Additional materials and equipment for other types of support, eg to support dyslexia or sight impaired learners are obtained through specialist agencies.

2.6 Tracking

Support Tutors provide learners with a planned learning programme including negotiated short-term targets related to their main ILP targets. They review and record progress on the ALS ILP and report as part of the Progress Review Board process. The Learner Services Manager, along with the OMSS, respond to this feedback and make adjustments to the support package as required.

2.7 Monitoring

Costs

Support is carefully monitored to ensure the quality of the provision and to track costs. Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funding regulations require that learners exceeding the audit threshold level 3 (bands 9 to 37) are required to sign a learning agreement. If the costs for supporting a learner are estimated to exceed band 37 the LSC must be informed. In such cases the relevant Head of Learning and Programme Manager will also be notified of those students' estimated costs.

All records will be stored at the end of each academic year and will be kept as directed by the LSC.

Impact

Impact of specialist support will be monitored through the College's tutorial and quality systems and adjustments made to the level of support. Progress reports to learners and parents (where appropriate) will be provided through the normal reporting process.

The level of provision will be reviewed and where appropriate, adjustments will be made. Appropriate specialist advice will be sought if required from external agencies.

2.8 Review and Evaluation

Services for learners are discussed and reviewed regularly as part of the quality system. Changes to the services are frequently required to meet the demands of national initiatives and requirements eg ELM Themes and personalised learning.

The level of provision is reviewed annually and where appropriate, adjustments made.

Individual services for learners are evaluated in various ways:

- Feedback from learner and staff quality surveys
- Individual evaluation sheets

- Informal and verbal feedback from recipients of the service and their supporters.

The level of provision will be reviewed termly by the Learner Services Management team and where appropriate, adjustments will be made.

Please refer to the Additional Learning Support procedures and Flow Diagram

3. LEARNER SUPPORT, FINANCIAL HELP AND COUNSELLING

3.1 Introduction

The College makes provision to support learners with personal counsellors, financial advisors along with lodgings information. From October 2007 onwards the NHS will provide a free and confidential lunchtime Sexual Health Clinic at the Infirmary Road (Tuesday) and Clowne site (Monday)

The Learner Services team contribute to the Personal Tutorial programme at each level providing input and resources on a variety of issues including financial support, health issues including smoking, drugs, sexual health and personal safety. The team co-ordinate contributions from external services including, Community Action for Sexual Health, North Derbyshire Stop Smoking, NHS –North Derbyshire Alcohol Service and the Community Safety Partnership as part of Every Child Matters (ECM), now branded as Every Learner Matters ELM events.

The Learner Services team also respond to issues as they arise; delivering specific group tutorial interventions on such issues as bullying or other inappropriate behaviour.

3.2 Identification of Need

Throughout their time at the College learners may be referred by lecturers/tutors if concern is expressed about their ability to achieve their learning goal or they may refer themselves where they feel they need assistance.

These services are promoted through the Student Handbook, group presentations/speed-dating at induction, through the Freshers' Fair and by Personal Tutors, supplemented by posters and leaflets. Information relating to Learner Support is updated regularly on the Learner Services Notice Boards, contained within each Directorate, and through the Student Newsletter

3.3 Delivery

Learners are seen individually for personal counselling, for advice on financial/welfare issues - (Learner Support Fund LSF, Access to Learning Fund ALF, Educational Maintenance Award EMA and the Adult Learner Grant ALG) and matters relating to accommodation and travel. In addition, the team deliver activities during Group Tutorials for example, on the EMA, Adult Learner Grant and teaching staff are kept informed about any changes to procedures.

Part-time learners have access to Learner Services during the day and until 7.00 PM Monday – Thursday.

3.4 Resources

- Learner Services Reception Service (8.30 – 7.00PM at Infirmary Road and 10.00 – 3.00PM at Clowne)
- Confidential counselling rooms
- Numerous leaflets on a wide range of topics relating to the welfare of learners
- The Personal Tutor Handbooks and Intranet Resources provide supporting learning materials on such issues as health, drugs and financial support.
- Access to external advisory services.

3.5 Staffing

Learner Support is delivered by the Learner Support Manager and a team of counsellors/advisors qualified to BAC Level 4 or 5.

The Learner Support Manager maintains contact with external agencies including the Behavioural Support Unit, Youth Offending Team, the National Health Service, Social Services and the Association for Young Carers. This enables the service to respond appropriately and swiftly in individual learner needs.

3.6 Monitoring/tracking individual learners

The use of the services is monitored throughout the year and statistics are provided for the Senior Management Team, Middle Management meeting, Academic Council and the Corporation annually, wherever appropriate.

Learner Services Reception at Infirmary Road and Clowne log all enquiries from learners, staff and the general public. Confidential records are kept of interviews and outcomes. Statistics are provided by learner profile and do not refer to clients by name; this enables the team to determine trends.

3.7 Monitoring/Review and Evaluation

Services for learners are discussed and reviewed regularly as part of the quality system.

Changes to the services are frequently required to meet the demands of national initiatives and requirements eg ELM Themes and personalised learning.

The level of provision is reviewed annually and where appropriate, adjustments made.

Individual services for learners are evaluated in various ways:

- Feedback from learner and staff quality surveys
- Individual evaluation sheets
- Informal and verbal feedback from recipients of the service and their supporters.

The level of provision will be reviewed termly by the Learner Services Management team and where appropriate, adjustments will be made.

4. INFORMATION, ADVICE AND CAREERS GUIDANCE

4.1 Introduction

The Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Centre provides up-to-date prospectuses and information sheets about courses available at Chesterfield College, and general advice and guidance about appropriate courses and progression routes to enquirers. Information is also available about provision at other educational organisations.

4.2 Identification of Need

Throughout their time at the College learners may be referred by lecturers or they may refer themselves where they feel they need advice.

IAG services are promoted through the Student Handbook, group presentations/speed-dating at induction, through the Freshers' Fair and by Personal Tutors, supplemented by posters and leaflets. Information relating to IAG is updated regularly on the Learner Services Notice Boards, contained within each Directorate, and through the Student Newsletter.

4.3 Delivery

The initial point of contact for IAG is the Advice and Guidance Centre located near reception on the ground floor at Infirmary Road. There is an appointments system, although drop-in consultations are sometimes available and are always available for urgent and emergency situations. Guidance services for learners are provided confidentially and private counselling rooms are available for all the one-to-one services offered.

A service is also provided until 7.00 PM on the days when College has late classes, so that part-time learners can access the services (including tutorial support). The Learner Services reception at Clowne also deals with enquiries and makes IAG appointments for learners based mainly at Clowne. In addition the IAG Manager holds a surgery at Tupton every Tuesday until 6.00PM for those learners who do not study at Infirmary Road for any part of their programme.

Advice and Guidance Managers also contribute to the Personal Tutorial programme at each level providing input and resources to develop employability skills; including CV writing, job search skills, understanding the local labour market and making UCAS applications. Learners may also attend a new Job Club held at lunchtime. The IAG Manager also co-ordinates activities funded by AimHigher, designed to increase levels of participation in higher education. In addition, the team take an overview of College Careers Events where external speakers/ employers contribute to Every Learner Matters ELM events.

4.4 Resources

Information Advice and Guidance can provide:

- Prospectuses for a wide range of FE and HE Institutions
- Course leaflets and information sheets for Chesterfield College,
- Contact lists for other educational establishments including schools, colleges, universities and national agencies
- Information about the labour market and job vacancies locally
- Job Club at lunch-times
- Careers Resource Centre with information leaflets on a range of jobs and careers, information on related topics

- Computers containing a range of careers software (located in the main learning Resource Area)
- Tutorial Input on employability skills and UCAS
- Careers Interviews – one-to-one service by appointment and a drop-in service
- Management of the Connexions Partnership Agreement
- Advice to learners and tutors on UCAS application processes and reference writing
- Planning and co-ordination of activities funded by AimHigher
- An overview of College Careers Events and employer input

4.5 Staffing

Individual advice and guidance on careers and progression is available on request. The College has its own qualified careers advisers who are qualified and/or experienced and offer specialised, accurate, impartial and confidential services for learners. Advice and guidance is also available from advisers from Connexions Derbyshire working at the College.

The IAG team deliver a scheduled programme of careers and progression related topics during the Personal Tutorial programme, which is differentiated by level. In addition, tutors can arrange additional sessions on request.

4.6 Monitoring/tracking individual learners

The use of the services is monitored throughout the year. Statistics are provided for the Senior Management Team, Middle Management meeting, Academic Council and the Corporation annually, wherever appropriate.

The number of applicants and applications to College is monitored monthly from January to June. Progression to Higher Education is monitored via official application figures from UCAS. The aim, in future, is to track individual enquiries through to application and enrolment.

Careers and progression: Confidential records are kept of interviews and outcomes. Statistics are provided by learner profile and do not refer to clients by name.

4.7 Review and Evaluation

Services for learners are discussed and reviewed regularly as part of the quality system.

Changes to the services are frequently required to meet the demands of national initiatives and requirements eg ELM, enterprise education, work related learning and personalised learning.

The level of provision is reviewed annually and where appropriate, adjustments made.

Individual services for learners are evaluated in various ways:

- Feedback from learner and staff quality surveys
- Individual evaluation sheets (eg for careers and progression interviews)
- Informal and verbal feedback from recipients of the service and their supporters.

5. LEARNING SUPPORT – LIBRARIES/LEARNING CENTRES

5.1 Introduction

Study support in the Libraries/Learning Centres is available to all learners on a drop-in basis. The service provided helps support the delivery of the curriculum in the way it encourages learners to use the learning resources.

The responsibility for the organisation of study support is with the Head of Learning Resources and Libraries who will deliver the service in liaison with the College's Directorates.

5.2 Identification of Need

Study support opportunities are introduced to learners via a Library/Learning Centre induction session, normally within the first two months of them joining the College. Academic staff are asked to book information skills sessions for their learners where appropriate. These sessions help learners to increase their awareness of the full range of information sources that exist, whilst helping them to develop their information handling strategies and skills.

Within the programme of study, subject tutors will identify areas of the curriculum where the Libraries/Learning Centres will need to be used by learners. Where learners need to develop study skills, these will be addressed as part of their main programme of study.

5.3 Delivery

Staff in Libraries/Learning Centres support learners in a number of ways. Through the professional enquiry service available, learners are directed to the most appropriate learning resources to support their work, eg books, magazines, CD-ROMs, online resources. Where learners require more support, staff will work with them to understand the information available.

Through the advisory work with teaching staff, the service helps to ensure that project and assignment briefs encourage learners to access the available resources in an effective manner. Within any programme learners' use of study support will need to be incremental to enable them to build up their confidence and skills for independent study.

5.4 Resources

The annual budget allocation from the College is based on historic accounting data, and a proportion of it is divided between the Directorates according to their learner numbers. The division is further monitored to ensure 10% of the allocation to Directorates is spent on non-book materials (eg videos, learning packs, CD-ROMs, online services). The learning resources are catalogued using published standards (i.e. AACRII and MARC) and classified using a recognised classification scheme (i.e. Universal Decimal Classification) which brings order to their arrangement within the centres.

A computerised catalogue facilitates rapid access to resources by indicating the availability, or otherwise, of all learning materials held by the centres. A database is used to manage the acquisition and use of all the learning resources. The service maintains and manages access to a variety of learning environments and provides

appropriate equipment to meet individual learner needs (eg computers, video players).

5.5 Staffing

Professional Library/Learning Centre staff are assigned a range of curriculum programme areas for liaison purposes. They are given guidance on how to promote the service, ie a resource selection checklist and a listing of the information to be given to academic colleagues and in return encourage academic staff to use the Learning Centres along with their learners, eg by setting assignments and projects that use the service fully.

The Head of Learning Resources and Libraries directs the work of the five experienced librarians who act as Libraries/Learning Centre Managers to ensure that the service meets the needs for flexible curriculum delivery, eg open, timely and managed access to facilities and resources.

5.6 Monitoring and Tracking

Mechanisms are in place within the Libraries/Learning Centres to allow the service to monitor and analyse the usage of learning resources. Analysis occurs in terms of who is using particular resources and when. The computerised library management system that is in place collects data on the use of hardware, software, books and journals.

5.7 Evaluation

A range of key performance indicators are used to plan service improvements, eg regular recording of enquiry statistics is combined with qualitative data on how satisfied learners are with staff responses.

The Libraries/Learning Centres also operate within the College's quality framework and as such, go through the process of self-assessment each year. The service reviews its annually set action plan each term so that continual improvement is made more likely. Appropriate targets are set to measure the effectiveness of the service provided, eg a complete shelf tidy within 25 working days, as this helps rapid retrieval of stored resources when customers use the catalogue provided.

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