



ETC International College Disability Policy & Strategy December 2023

Where Students Have Been Identified As Having Learning or Language Difficulties And/Or Disabilities (A)

Does the Curriculum provided meet their needs?

ETC assesses each potential student wishing to embark on a course of study on an individual basis. As the list of medical (physical and psychological) conditions is exhaustive and infinite, this individual assessment also applies to those students with learning/language difficulties and/or disabilities.

Disclosure of medical conditions that could affect a student's course of study at ETC is a mandatory requirement (for the safety and wellbeing of the student) and is completed at the enrolment stage and on the enrolment form. *"Please note that if any physical or psychological condition, including diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, allergies, anorexia or bulimia, is not disclosed on this Enrolment Form, students will be asked to leave the College and no fees will be refunded". (ETC Enrolment Form).* An ETC student health questionnaire is also currently being developed and will form part of the overall enrolment process of students.

Information about an adult student's particular medical condition or specific requirements is passed on to the Adult Department via several channels. This is usually from the Admissions department, the Registrar, the Agent or by emails sent by the parents or the students themselves directly to the College.

A few examples of what procedures are in place for students with special requirements are recorded below;

1. Dyslexia – when a student is identified as having dyslexia, this is recorded on the database and a green tutorial card produced- the teachers then enquire as to the nature of the special consideration or the Director of Studies, the Assistant Director of Studies or Senior Teachers speak to the two/three class teachers to inform them that the student has dyslexia. The teachers have had training in this via an Inset and teachers may receive individual guidance on teaching dyslexic students via our SpLDs Specialist.

2. EBD (Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties) are often not disclosed on the enrolment form mainly because students are unaware that these exist, students/parents are reluctant to disclose them or these develop once the student has arrived in the UK (the shock to the system of being in a different country with different customs and cultures). There are indeed countless studies on human behaviour examining why people behave differently in countries that are not their native ones. Students with EBD generally occur amongst the junior population¹ (homesickness, testing the boundaries, first time away from parents) whilst the adult students generally have stabilised into adulthood through maturity and experience.

However, on the rare occasions that an adult student at ETC is identified with an EBD, for example with Bipolar Disorder², ETC remains in constant contact with the parents and agent of the student, a risk assessment is carried out and an individual plan of action is initiated. Having an EBD does not necessarily exclude the student from being permitted to study at ETC. For example, using the mentioned case of the student with Bipolar Disorder, the parent of the student were required to stay with the student in Bournemouth for the first three months of study following an episode, to ensure an appropriate settlement and transition period for the student.

¹ Please refer to the Adult Department ISI Inspection Portfolio, Section 6, Where Students Have Been Identified As Having Learning Or Language Difficulties And/Or Disabilities – Does the Curriculum provided meet their needs? (A) Dyslexia & Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

² Bipolar disorder or bipolar affective disorder (historically known as manic-depressive disorder) is a psychiatric diagnosis for a mood disorder in which people experience disruptive mood swings. These encompass a frenzied state known as mania (or hypomania) usually alternated with symptoms of depression. Bipolar disorder is defined by the presence of one or more episodes of abnormally elevated energy levels, cognition, and mood with or without one or more depressive episodes. (Wikipedia)

Where Students Have Been Identified As Having Learning Or Language Difficulties And/Or Disabilities (B)

Does the Curriculum provided meet their needs?

In continuation of the previous section, further examples of what procedures are in place for students with special requirements are recorded below;

3. Diabetes – If a student is identified with diabetes, before he/she arrives for their course, it is essential to obtain as much information as possible from the student/parents/agent about the student's particular needs and type of diabetes (1 or 2) and how to address the storing of the student's supplies and equipment. The following checklist is adapted to suit the student, and class teachers, activities staff are all informed about what to allow and make allowances for in the class;

- a. Hypo remedies – does the student need glucose sweets, a sugary drink or a follow-on snack in the classroom?
- b. Insulin – does the student have an insulin pen as well as spares in case of breakages? Can the student administer his/her own injections?
- c. Blood glucose meter and strips – does the student have this as well as spares in case of breakages or malfunction?
- d. Ketone – does the student have ketone strips (either blood or urine)?

While ETC does have the facilities to store supplies and equipment for diabetic students, it is preferable that the student carry these around with them so that they are easily accessible at all times.

When a particular student is identified, the Director of Studies informs the student's class teachers and provides them with the particular needs of the student and how to adapt and make allowances for their needs. For example, eating sugary sweets or drinking a glucose drink in the classroom. Teachers are always reminded of the sensitivity of the issue and advised that they are not to make a big issue of this condition, keeping the feelings of the affected student at the forefront of any classroom decisions.

Teachers are also encouraged to speak to the student themselves about what they need (as the person affected knows the most about his/her condition), but again to do this away from the earshot of other students and in a highly sensitive and understanding fashion. Teachers are also given an information leaflet about diabetes and a note is made on the database

4. Sensory Impairment – Hearing. ETC has received very few students with hearing impairment in recent years. If further enquiries were made for an adult with hearing loss, then as with all students who have been identified as having a disability of some kind, then a formal risk assessment would be completed before making a decision on whether the college had the facilities to accommodate the student.

Examples of assessment factors are;

- mild/moderate hearing loss – placing student next to the teacher or at the front of the class, reminding teachers not to speak to the student if they are standing behind them, reminding teachers to check with the students that they can hear the CD being played, writing homework on the board instead of giving it verbally.
- moderate/ severe hearing loss – ETC does not have the loop system but, with advance notice, it would be able to employ sign language teachers. As with all disabilities, this would be done via the risk assessment process to ascertain whether ETC would be able to accommodate the student.

Our SpLDs specialist can offer bespoke information on how to help a student.

Where Students Have Been Identified As Having Learning Or Language Difficulties And/Or Disabilities (C)

Does the Curriculum provided meet their needs?

In continuation of the previous section, further examples of what procedures are in place for students with special requirements are recorded below;

4. Physical Disabilities – mobility aids

ETC has had students who required additional walking aids (crutches and wheelchair and walking frame). They were accommodated in easy-access rooms on the ground floor (rooms 25, 20, Res. 2 and Res. 3 as they were 16/17 years old). The wheelchair-bound student had a “buddy” to help her.

ETC also makes provision for a Trinity examiner, who enters the premises via the back door of the Residence building and examines in Residence 3.

ETC has employed a teacher reliant on crutches. Taking the Disability and Equality Act 2010 into consideration, the interviewer made no reference to this teacher’s disability during the interview and selection phase of the recruitment process as selection for posts are based on qualifications, experience, a satisfactory DBS³ and references only. As the teacher concerned was a successful candidate for the post of Teacher, once the offer of employment was confirmed in writing, the ST then broached them to discuss the necessity of completing a risk assessment form. It was essential to make clear to the applicant verbally and in writing that the risk assessment process was in no way connected to her employment offer and to reassure them that it is designed to be a positive help for them. It was also a vital portal to open up a dialogue between the ST and the applicant, as disabilities can sometimes be misunderstood by the employer and felt to be misunderstood by the employee. Using the DirectGov website as a template⁴, the Junior Courses Manager conducted a meeting with the applicant and the risk assessment form was completed together. All possible risk aspects were considered and solutions to each issue were discussed, enabling ‘reasonable adjustments’ to be made for the new teacher. For example, reassuring them that they would be timetabled on the ground floor (so there would be no need to negotiate stairs and with an easy escape route for Fire Risks), planning an evacuation procedure in the event of a Fire. Please refer to this risk assessment attached in this section.

5. Expectant Mothers

ETC has had occasion to welcome several students and to employ teachers and other members of staff who are pregnant. ETC has also employed a teacher who was at the end of her second trimester. A meeting was scheduled between the expectant mother and a ST in order to open dialogue and complete a risk assessment form. It was also an opportunity for the ST to describe the four key rights that pregnant employees have; paid time off for antenatal care, maternity leave, maternity pay benefits (if applicable) and protection against unfair treatment or dismissal. A risk assessment form was also completed and necessary changes were identified to protect the expectant mother and the unborn baby. Examples of risks in a teaching environment might be caused by; lifting or carrying heavy loads, standing or sitting for long periods and working long hours. As above, once dialogue has been established, it is ETC’s fundamental aim to maintain an open portal between the line manager and the employee with the aim of being aware and adaptable to the expectant mothers changing condition. Please refer to this risk assessment attached in this section.

³ DBS = Disclosure and Barring Service. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. It replaces the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). DBS is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Home Office. (GOV.UK 2018)

⁴ The Direct Gov website was replaced by www.gov.uk on the 17th October 2012. Please refer to <https://www.gov.uk/rights-disabled-person/employment>

Where Students Have Been Identified As Having Learning Or Language Difficulties And/Or Disabilities (D)

Does the Curriculum provided meet their needs?

While ETC would like to cater for all people who come to ETC with a disability, it recognises that it is unable to accommodate all disabilities. As mentioned in previous sections, every person who proposes to come to ETC with a disability is initially processed through the risk assessment procedure on an individual basis. The following examples provide examples where limitations have arisen;

6. Wheelchair Users

ETC currently does not have sufficient facilities to accommodate comfortably a person who is wheelchair-bound and has no carer. This is principally due to a lack of ramps into the buildings as well as not having bathroom facilities equipped for wheelchair users. Plans are in the pipeline however, to build an accessible toilet in the Residence building near the existing toilets. Nevertheless, recently a Trinity GESE examiner who is a wheelchair user came to ETC to conduct a four-hour exam. When booking the exam, the Director of Studies DOS was informed of the disability and tried to dissuade the examiner from coming because of the lack of toilet facilities. In this case, though, the examiner informed the DOS that he would be comfortable taking a four-hour exam, even in the knowledge that there was a lack of toilet facilities. In this case, therefore, preparations were made for the examiner in other areas, such as timetabling the exam on the ground floor, reserving a car parking space for him outside the exam room, informing him that his entry and exit route would be the fire escape doors, informing the Fire Marshalls, putting the examiners name on the Fire watch checklist, providing the examiner with all the writing and materials he would need for the exam in the exam room and finally bringing the examiner tea/coffee to his exam room.

7. Blind/Partially Sighted students

Recently, ETC had an enquiry from a partially sighted student. In this case the student was an adult. The Director of Studies showed the student around the building and discussed with her the facilities that ETC does and does not have. Academic details were discussed, such as having orally-based classes or the use of an assistant to take notes for the student as well as the resources and facilities that the student themselves have and use on a daily basis. In this case example, once the student had been shown all the facilities that ETC has as well as discussing options available to her, the student decided independently that it would not be appropriate for her to study at ETC due to the severity of her blindness.

As above, there are limitations to the provisions that ETC can provide for students/teachers with disabilities. However, the primary aim of ETC is to;

- a. Treat each case on an individual basis
- b. Treat each case with sensitivity and with an awareness of legislation such as the Equality Act 2010⁵
- c. Open up dialogue between ETC (the provider) and the student/teacher (the service user)
- d. Conduct a detailed risk assessment together with the disabled person
- e. Work together to make reasonable adjustments and find solutions to individual issues

⁵ www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act/

Where Students Have Been Identified As Having Learning Or Language Difficulties And/Or Disabilities (E)

Does the Curriculum provided meet their needs?

Disclosure Of Medical Information Adult

Students

For Students who are over 18 years and who wish to enrol on a course at ETC, they must fill in an enrolment application form (for lower level students with the assistance of the agent or, if available, one of the bi-lingual members of staff)⁶.

On the enrolment form it states;

Do you suffer from any illnesses or disabilities? Yes/No Do you have another medical condition? Yes/No

If you have answered yes to any questions, please give details.

Please note that if any physical or psychological condition, including diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, allergies, anorexia or bulimia, is not disclosed on this Enrolment form, students will be asked to leave the College and no fees will be refunded.

If a medical condition is disclosed, it is then passed on to the relevant departments. Disclosure of medical information to staff members is treated with the utmost sensitivity, confidentiality and on a 'need to know' basis. In the adult department, the Director of Studies makes a note of the medical condition in the department records on the database, and where appropriate, passes the information on to the teachers of the student's class. Students then have green tutorial cards. The Director of Studies also informs the ETC Qualified First Aiders⁷.

The ETC Safeguarding Committee - Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, ETC Director / Health and Safety Officer, Principal, Director of Studies and Accommodation Manager meet regularly and informally, when the need arises, to discuss these issues.

Adult Teachers

For teachers of adult students who apply to work at ETC, the Equality Act (2010) states that it is unlawful to ask a person about a disability or illness during the interview stage. As discussed previously and covered in a later section⁸, the recruitment process of adult teachers is based on qualifications, experience, answers to subject and classroom management questions during the interview, satisfactory references and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. However, once a letter to offer employment has been sent to the successful candidate, a part of the new teacher induction process is to complete a staff member details form. On this form, there is the opportunity for the teacher to fill out any relevant medical conditions. If a significant condition is disclosed (for example pregnancy or using crutches), then the Director of Studies will arrange for risk assessments to be complete and to open up dialogue with the new employee about their disclosure.

Updated December 2023 David Jones Hazel Valvona Sarah Vivian
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⁶ ETC has a wealth of bi-lingual staff which adds value to its international setting. Languages spoken at a bi-lingual level include; Arabic, Italian, Polish, Spanish, Hungarian, Portuguese, Japanese

⁷ First Aid is covered in detail in the section: Students' Welfare & Health and Safety (B) -Does the college have a satisfactory written policy on First Aid and does it implement this?

⁸ Please refer to sections: Standard for Teaching (B.2) The Interview Process