



# South Thames Colleges Group

## Inclusive Learning Policy 2023/24

<b>Policy Title:</b> Inclusive Learning Policy	<b>Staff Member Responsible:</b> Vice Principal – CC & MC and High Needs
	<b>Approval Date:</b> May 2024

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## 1. Policy Overview

South Thames College's Group is committed to providing equal opportunities for Colleagues, students and service users and to eliminating discrimination. The group's mission is achieved in part by providing teaching and learning in a community that respects and values all individuals. The college group understands and appreciates the benefits of a diverse workforce/college community and strives to create and maintain an inclusive environment. We welcome applicants, learners and visitors with learning, difficulties, disabilities, medical conditions, mental health issues and other learning needs. We are committed to removing barriers so that all learners can reach their true potential. We intend to provide a high-quality learning experience for all learners including those with additional support needs.

The Group seeks to provide an atmosphere and culture, where everyone feels valued and adjustments are in place so that every learner has the opportunity to achieve their learning goals and excel in their chosen pathway. We require all Colleagues within the organisation to demonstrate high standards in relation to the treatment of visitors, applicants and learners with inclusive support needs.

The College Group works in partnership with Local Authorities to provide a Local Offer to meet the needs of young people who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and support them on their journey to adulthood. The Group is committed to using its best endeavours to put reasonable adjustments in place for all learners with inclusive and additional needs.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Admissions Policy *incorporating Learning Support Procedures*
- Safeguarding Children and Adults at risk Policy
- Administration and Storage of Prescribed Medication Procedures
- Personal Care Procedures
- General Data Protection Policy
- Fitness to Study Procedures
- Mental Health Strategy

## 2. Purpose and Principles

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework that sets out the Group's underpinning principles, values and legal obligations in relation to the treatment of people with learning difficulties, disabilities and other inclusive support needs, as specified in:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- 0 to 25 SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Equality Act 2010
- Preparing for Adulthood Agenda (funded by the Department of Education)
- Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Publication 'Adjustments for Candidates with Disabilities and Learning Difficulties, Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments'

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We aim to ensure that all learners who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not substantially disadvantaged including in relation to the four identified aspects of Education, Health and Care Plans:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs

### 3. Scope

This policy and associated policies are applicable to all permanent and temporary staff along with Governors, applicants, students, customers, employers, volunteers, workers supplied by external agencies and contractors. The policy applies to all processes relating to employment, education and training and interactions with staff, students, customers and contractors working across the Group in all locations where education and training is delivered. It applies also to those situations where learners are in the workplace setting, undertaking vocational training or studying for vocational qualifications. The policy also covers collaborative provision and staff employed directly by contractors supplying services on behalf of the Group.

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disability as “a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities”.

Inclusive Support aims to ensure reasonable adjustments, as set out by the Equality Act, are implemented for learners with an identified learning difficulty and/or disability to achieve their learning goal. For learners with an Education, Health and care Plan (EHCP) they will also be supported to achieve their EHCP outcomes.

### 4. Key objectives

#### 4.1 Physical Access to college premises

We aim to ensure all our colleges are fully and easily accessible to all learners, colleagues and visitors.

#### 4.2 Access to learning programmes

Our admissions process aims to ensure that we recruit learners who, with reasonable adjustments, can succeed on their chosen pathway to the best of their ability.

#### 4.3 Assessment Practices

We aim to ensure that all learners are assessed in ways that enable them to show their true capabilities and potential, including in the use of new technologies.

#### 4.4 Communication

We aim to ensure that we communicate with learners in the most effective ways and provide resources in many formats. Our website and IT services provide accessibility features to support learners.

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#### 4.5 Target audience and Achievement

We aim to raise achievement rates for all young people, adults, apprentices and learners with high needs to above national averages.

#### 4.6 Innovation

We aim to develop our programmes, including discrete and personalised programmes of study, to provide the best opportunities for all learners to achieve and progress into further and higher education or a supported internship, employment or other life opportunities. We are committed to providing access to and training on assistive technology and software to support independence.

#### 4.7 Value for money

The College Group aims to provide value for money in both the resources it chooses to employ and the way it uses these resources.

### 5. Identification of Need and Referral Process

#### 5.1 Educational Health and Care Plans

Local Authorities have a responsibility to consult the College Group for the placement of all learners with an Education Health and Care Plan. This enables the College to fully assess a learner's needs and agree a package of high needs support funding if required. See appendix 1 for a flowchart of the process.

#### 5.2 Reasonable Adjustments for other students without an EHCP

The College has a legal duty to try to remove the barriers our learners face in education because of disability. This is called 'making reasonable adjustments. These adjustments help make sure our learners get the same access to education as anyone else.

Anyone can ask for adjustments if they need them. But to have legal rights to reasonable adjustments, learners need to be defined as 'disabled' under the Equality Act 2010. This usually means how their condition affects THEM, not what THEIR condition is. See appendix 2 for guidance and appendix 3 for a flowchart of the process.

### 6. Support Offer

Learners with inclusive support needs have access to the following types of specialist support, depending upon their assessed level of need:

- Exam access arrangements
- Specialist teachers
- Speech and language and OT therapy
- Specialist software
- Adapted equipment
- In class support
- Study skills workshops
- Mentoring

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In addition, learners have access via the curriculum and Student Services to:

- Personal Tutor
- Independent Advice and Guidance (IAG)
- Counselling
- Welfare Advisers
- Youth Workers
- Safeguarding team
- Mental health support

## **7. Roles and responsibilities**

### **7.1 All college staff**

All colleagues are responsible for ensuring that all colleges within the Group are welcoming and inclusive places to visit and study. Colleagues are experienced in anticipating and assessing the needs of applicants, visitors and learners with inclusive support needs, treating everyone with sensitivity and respect.

### **7.2 The Governing Body**

The Governing Body takes corporate responsibility and is responsible for liaising with the Group Leadership Team over matters regarding meeting the legislative such as those contained in the Equality Act 2010 and Children and Families Act 2014.

### **7.3 Group Leadership Team**

The Vice Principal Curriculum and High Needs is the designated member of the group leadership team with overall responsibility to ensure the effective implementation of Inclusive Support.

### **7.4 Curriculum teams**

Curriculum teams have a central role to play in the early identification of learners who require specific teaching strategies and adapted materials so that all learners can access the curriculum equally. It is essential that curriculum teams work effectively with any support colleagues both in and outside the classroom for the benefit of learners. Curriculum teams are also responsible for providing reasonable adjustments in the classroom and requesting exam concessions for those learners requiring additional inclusive arrangements.

### **7.5 Heads of Inclusive Learning**

Heads of Inclusive Learning are responsible for planning and providing support for learners both in class and outside if required.

### **7.6 Inclusive Learning Team**

The Learning Support team are responsible for providing an effective admission, referral and assessment process; and subsequent support offer to learners with learning difficulties and or learning needs. The Learning Support team are also responsible for working in partnership with Local Authorities for the placement of learners with Education, Health and Care plans.

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## **8. Colleague training**

A programme of CPD focussed on developing teaching, learning, support and therapy strategies for learners with learning difficulty and/or additional support needs is delivered throughout the year by both internal and external professionals.

## **9. Quality and monitoring**

The Vice Principal Curriculum and High Needs will monitor Key Performance Indicators across the Supported Learning curriculum and Learning Support.

## **10. Review**

This policy will be subject to annual review. The Vice Principal Curriculum and High Needs will initiate the review.

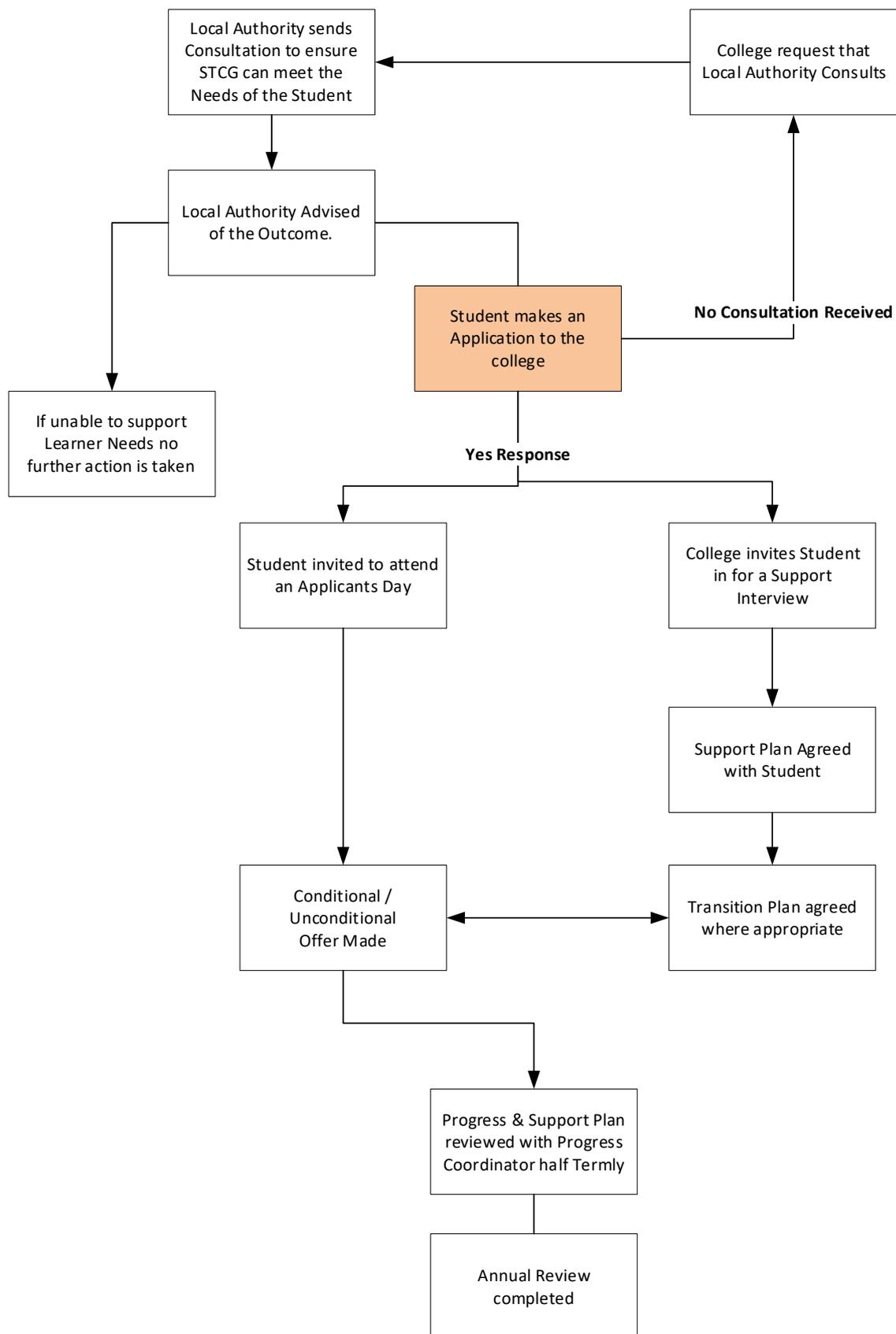
## **11. Access to the Policy**

The policy and procedures will be published on the Group website and on the South Thames College's Group intranet.

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**Appendix 1: Education, Health and Care Plan College Process 2023/24**

**Education Health & Care Plan College Process 23/24**



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## Appendix 2: Non-EHCP Learners – Reasonable Adjustments Guidance and Process

### Non-EHCP Reasonable Adjustments Guidance

#### Types of reasonable adjustments

Adjustments could be things like:

- getting notes and lectures in advance
- alternative formats of lectures or course material
- speech to text for video conferencing
- equipment or aids, such as BSL interpreters, scribes or specialist computer equipment
- one-to-one support
- accessible rooms and venues, such as having quiet spaces
- accessible student accommodation or specific housing arrangements
- Providing accessible facilities such as lifts and hoist
- Exam Access Arrangements

#### What is reasonable?

There is no set definition of what is ‘reasonable’ in the Equality Act. It depends on:

- what LEARNERS need and the difference it will make
- cost
- practicality and effectiveness
- disruption and health and safety

For example, it might be reasonable to...

- give a learner software that helps them type or dictate lectures and coursework

It might not be reasonable to...

- change exam criteria that might advantage you or disadvantage other learners
- make an adjustment that meets learners needs but affects other people’s access needs or everyone’s health and safety. For example, some raised floor markings that help people with visual impairments could be a trip hazard for others.

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## Working with Us

We will work with our learners to find adjustments that both:

- meet their needs
- would be considered 'reasonable'

If something is not considered 'reasonable', we will try to find alternatives.

Learners can also go to disability charities, local support groups or online communities and forums for help finding alternative adjustments to suggest to your college.

## Asking for reasonable adjustments

If a learner feels they require reasonable adjustments they should email the Inclusive Learning Department:

- Carshalton College: [ILAdminCC@stcg.ac.uk](mailto:ILAdminCC@stcg.ac.uk)
- Kingston College: [ILAdminKC@stcg.ac.uk](mailto:ILAdminKC@stcg.ac.uk)
- Merton College: [ILAdminMC@stcg.ac.uk](mailto:ILAdminMC@stcg.ac.uk)
- South Thames College: [ILAdminSTC@stcg.ac.uk](mailto:ILAdminSTC@stcg.ac.uk)

Learners will need to:

- talk about how their condition affects them
- be clear on what they need

## Costs for reasonable adjustments

Before any reasonable adjustments can be formally agreed and implemented, the college will need to assess the cost implications to ensure that these can be met.

## Not satisfied with reasonable adjustments offered OR the college is unable to provide reasonable adjustments?

If we are unable to provide the reasonable adjustments required then learners can:

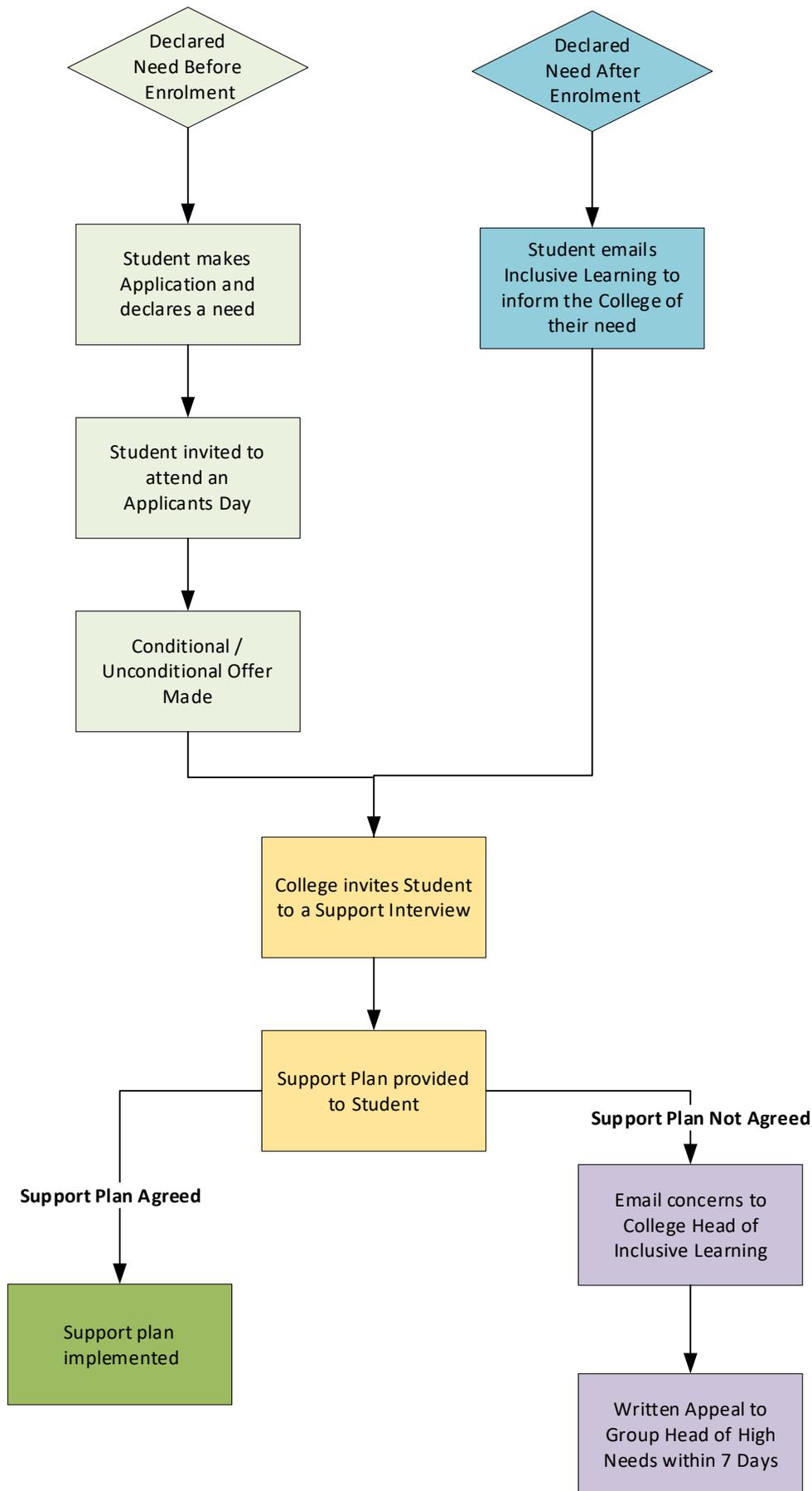
- Ask to meet with the Head of Inclusive learning at your college. Please send an email to the Inclusive Learning department using the email addresses above.

If there is still no agreement then learners can:

- Submit a formal appeal to the Group Head for High Needs. This should be emailed to [fiona.pace@stcg.ac.uk](mailto:fiona.pace@stcg.ac.uk).

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**Non-EHCP Reasonable Adjustments Process 2023/24**



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