

Additional Needs Policy

The Organisation recognises and values each student's individual diversity in all its forms. The School, aims to promote access to our training programme for all applicants who have a professionally diagnosed physical/mental health condition/disability and/or professionally assessed learning disability resulting in an additional need. However, in compliance with the Equality Act 2010, the School does not require applicants to provide information about any additional need(s) they may have until the interview process is complete. To achieve this any applicant with an additional need is not fully assessed until post interview and after being offered a place on the course, as detailed below.

Declaration of Additional Needs Information

1. Post-offer and prior to commencement of the course, in order to ensure the Organisation can support students with additional needs, all students are asked to complete a confidential **Medical & Learning Information (M&LI Form)**, and thus provide full information about their health status, and in particular to declare any special learning disability need they have, as extra learning support in the form of reasonable adjustments may be needed to successfully complete the course. Students are informed that any information provided will be treated confidentially and only shared on a strictly need to know basis within the Organisation, which includes the Course Director, Tutors, Course Supervisor and Development Manager. If necessary, LIFE-FORCE Centre would also be informed of any additional environmental support requirements.
2. Students should be aware that any disclosed medical condition &/or learning disability must be declared to the placement manager(s), so that appropriate support can be provided if necessary.
3. Once a student declares an additional need then, the **Assessment Procedure for Additional Needs** below will be actioned and implemented by the Course Director and depending on the nature of the declared additional need, one or both learning support assessment procedures will be applicable.
4. Depending on the nature of the disclosed medical condition &/or learning disability the School may on occasion need to seek advice from an external agency.
5. Students should be aware that the tutors are unable to implement any reasonable adjustments unless these are detailed on a formal Learning Support Plan Form that has been agreed and signed by the Course Director.

Assessment Procedure for Additional Needs

Risk Assessment Procedure for a Medical Condition

1. For students with a formally diagnosed and documented physical/mental health medical condition, the Course Director will conduct a confidential risk assessment with the student to determine the level of risk and identify any procedures that can be put in place to support the applicant's medical condition whilst in the learning environment and enable them to access course accommodation, teaching spaces and course resources. If considered necessary, the Course Director liaises with the Course Supervisor to assist with this procedure. During the consultation with the student a **Medical Risk Assessment Form (RAF)** is completed. The Medical RAF is sent to the student for them to review, amend the content if considered necessary and then agree with the procedures that are to be put in place to support their additional needs. A copy of the final form is given to the student and tutors. The tutors implement and monitor the agreed procedures and review these with the student during their tutorials and take note of their feedback. If the Medical RAF requires further amendments, then the tutor advises the Course Director who adjusts the form accordingly.
2. Students need to be aware that depending on the nature of a declared medical condition, they may have to obtain a **Statement of Fitness to Participate & to Practice** from their GP/Health Care Professional as a trainee counsellor, prior to commencement of the clinical placement.

Assessment Procedure for a Learning Disability

1. Students with a professionally assessed and documented learning disability, the Course Director, in liaison with the Course Supervisor if deemed necessary, conducts a learning support assessment to determine whether sufficient reasonable adjustments can be put in place, and if so, what these are to support the student's learning.
2. The Course Director adds any recommendations and/or research into how the applicant can be best supported, along with the granted reasonable adjustments, on the relevant sections of a **Learning Support Plan Form**.
3. The Course Director then puts these recommendations forward to the student by emailing them the proposed Learning Support Plan Form, which aims to support their learning disability.
4. The student reviews the contents and if considered necessary provides feedback detailing any suggested amendments. If considered appropriate, the Course Director amends the Learning Support Plan Form accordingly and returns this to the student for their agreement and confirmation that they consider the granted reasonable adjustments will be effective in supporting their learning disability. Once agreed the form must be signed by the student, their personal tutor and then copied to the student and Course Director.
5. If it is considered that sufficient reasonable adjustments can be put in place, then the nature and extent of such a provision must be fully understood by all parties in advance of its commencement, and once established, the total extent of such support must be clearly indicated by the student on all submitted work and on a **Reasonable Adjustments Log Sheet**, provided by the Course Director.
6. The student's support plan is then implemented by their personal tutor and monitored regularly during tutorials, at agreed time periods of 3, 6 or 9 months, during which the tutor takes note of the student's feedback and makes any **minor** amendments to the Learning Support Plan. The tutor should inform the Course Director about extra resources that are needed such as handouts printed on coloured paper. The tutor should complete a **Learning Support Plan Review Form** after each review and provide the student with a copy for inclusion in their portfolio.
7. Prior to the scheduled review date, if the student requests **further** support/ reasonable adjustments or declares a **new** learning disability, then the tutors provide them with a **M&LI Review Form**. Once the student has completed this form the tutors send it to the Course Director who then follows the **Assessment Procedure for a Learning Disability** from point 1 above, as applicable.
8. Depending on the nature of the request, the Course Director determines whether the student must provide further written professional evidence about the newly declared learning disability. A meeting with the student is then be conducted by the Course Director along with the tutors if considered necessary, and if applicable the **original Learning Support Plan Form** is amended, detailing any further granted reasonable adjustments that are to be put in place.

Withdrawal of Place on the Course

1. In such circumstances where Life-Force School has carried out a Medical/Learning Disability Assessment as detailed below, and after consultation with the relevant and appropriate external agency, if it is subsequently determined that an adequately supported learning environment cannot be provided, then the applicant will be informed accordingly by email and the offer of a place on the course will have to be withdrawn. Should the applicant disagree with this assessment outcome then they should be aware that the School would welcome their comments along with any recommendations they may have themselves regarding possible reasonable adjustments.
2. The School will further consider the applicants proposed reasonable adjustments that could potentially be implemented and will then make a final judgement about if these can be granted. The Course Director will notify the applicant of the outcome in writing.

Ongoing Arising New Additional Needs

Student Makes a New Additional Need Declaration

During the course if a student, **without** an agreed additional support in place, has any change of personal circumstances and about their medical status &/or a learning disability, then they should declare this new information to their personal tutor who provides them with a **M&LI Review Form**. The student should complete this form prior to the tutors returning this to the Course Director. Depending on the nature of the newly disclosed additional need the relevant procedure is the same as a declaration made at the **start** of the course, which is summarised below. (**Ref. Assessment Procedure for Additional Needs**)

1. Risk Assessment Procedure for a Medical Condition

The Course Director liaises / meets with the student to assess and determine the procedures to be put in place to minimise the identified risk and support their additional need, through the completion of **Medical RAF**.

2. Assessment Procedure for a Learning Disability

The Course Director liaises / meets with the student to conduct a learning support assessment to determine whether sufficient reasonable adjustments can be put in place, and if so, what these are to support the student's learning, through the completion of a **Learning Support Plan Form**.

Tutors Consider Student has a Learning Disability

Alternatively, the tutors may consider a student has an unidentified learning disability as they are struggling to complete course assignments within the standard number of allocated tutorials. In such circumstances the tutors should bring this matter to the attention of the Course Director who supports them to manage this situation with the student who may potential have unidentified additional learning support needs. The personal tutor should raise this concern with the student during an extra tutorial and if considered appropriate provide them with a **M&LI Review Form**. The student must complete this form to confirm whether or not they think they may have a learning disability and therefore possibly need additional support in the form of reasonable adjustments.

NB. In relation to a newly declared learning disability, for either of the two situations above, the student needs to provide written professional evidence for any declared learning disability before any reasonable adjustments can be put in place. Once provided, the Course Director follows the **Assessment Procedure for a Learning Disability points 1-8 above**, with the aim of supporting the student's learning.

Reasonable Adjustments

The School can make appropriate “reasonable adjustments” to standard assessment arrangements, whenever this is deemed fitting. A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a learning disability or difficulty that places the student at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation.

Reasonable adjustments granted at the discretion of the School must be agreed with the Course Director and monitored by the student’s personal tutor. Once agreed, a **Reasonable Adjustments Log Sheet** must be completed and then kept within the student’s professional portfolio file so that it can be made available to the moderator during their visit.

Agreed Additional Support Documents & Supporting Evidence

All agreed additional support and supporting evidence provided by the School should be made available within the student’s portfolio, this could include any of the following documents, as applicable.

- Reasonable Adjustment Log Sheet
- M&LI Form
- M&LI Review Form
- Learning Support Plan Form
- Learning Support Plan Review Form(s)
- Additional Tutorial Record Sheet(s)
- Action Plan Forms(s)
- Extension Form(s)
- Formal Assessment Reports or Test Documents.

Types of Additional Support

- Extra Tutorial Support - To enable the student to understand the assessment criteria requirements of written coursework assignments.
- Learning Support Plan – Detailing the nature of the formally assessed learning disability and agreed reasonable adjustments.
- Action Plan – Listing all required course work with extension submission and referral hand in due dates
- Hardware – Extended use of Library Facilities
- Audio Recording – Group tutorials on assignment requirements and assessment criteria.

Types of Reasonable Adjustment

- Software – Such as Texthelp and Write and Dragon Dictate to support the further development of literacy and help with proof reading.
- Language Grammar Support – From an independent lay person who is not a family member or relative, acting as a scribe or proof-reader to help with the writing of assignments.
- Extension Times – Longer time periods of up to 30% in order to complete assignments.
- Word Count Margin – An increase of up to 30% for assessed assignments.
- Viva Support – Opportunity to verbally demonstrate the ability to understand the theoretical knowledge contained.