

Supporting students with short and long-term disabilities

Policy title: Supporting students with short and long-term disabilities

Document reference: LAAT

Department / Function: Student Support

Owner: Director of Student Services

Oversight committee: Student experience

Approving body: Borad of Governors

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Supersedes: None

Regulatory Alignment with Office for Students (OfS) Conditions

This Students with Short or Long-Term Sickness Policy forms an integral part of the London Academy for Applied Technology's (LAAT) student support and academic governance framework and provides assurance that the provider delivers a high-quality academic experience while safeguarding student wellbeing, in accordance with the Office for Students' regulatory requirements and the expectations of its validating partner, Plymouth Marjon University.

The policy directly supports compliance with **OfS Condition B1 (Academic Experience)** by setting out clear institutional requirements for flexible learning arrangements, adjustments to timetables, and access to teaching and learning resources for students affected by short- or long-term sickness. It ensures that students continue to have equitable access to high-quality teaching, appropriate guidance, and learning opportunities, enabling them to successfully achieve their intended learning outcomes despite health-related challenges.

The policy further supports **OfS Condition B2 (Resources, Support and Student Engagement)** by requiring that students affected by sickness are provided with timely access to guidance, resources, and wellbeing support. It embeds inclusive practices, anticipates diverse health-related needs, and establishes mechanisms for monitoring engagement and participation, thereby supporting student continuation, progression, and completion.

Alignment with **OfS Condition B3 (Student Outcomes)** is achieved through the provision of reasonable adjustments and support measures that help maintain progression and achievement. The policy ensures that students with sickness have the same opportunity as their peers to meet programme outcomes and complete their studies successfully.

Alignment with **OfS Condition B4 (Assessment and Standards)** is achieved through the requirement that adjustments to assessments and deadlines are clearly defined, transparent, and consistent with academic regulations. The policy maintains academic standards while

allowing for flexibility to accommodate health-related circumstances, ensuring fairness and academic integrity.

The policy also supports compliance with **OfS Condition C1 (Consumer Protection)** by ensuring that students are provided with clear, accurate, and accessible information about available support, reasonable adjustments, processes for requesting assistance, and their rights and responsibilities. This enables students to make informed decisions, understand the support available, and ensures that delivery is consistent with published guidance and contractual commitments.

This policy is informed by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the academic regulations and quality assurance frameworks of Plymouth Marjon University. Its implementation is monitored through LAAT's governance structures, including the Academic Quality Panel and Academic Board, to ensure effective oversight, continuous enhancement, and ongoing compliance with regulatory requirements.

1. Purpose

This policy sets out LAAT's approach to supporting students with disabilities and providing reasonable adjustments. It aims to ensure equitable access to learning, promote student wellbeing, establish clear procedures, and align with UK higher education expectations. The policy also supports students' continuation, progression, and successful completion of their programmes.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled on LAAT higher education programmes who have a disability or additional support needs, as well as to all staff involved in teaching, student support, and programme administration.

3. Definitions

1. **Disability:** A physical, sensory, mental health, neurological, medical, or learning condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Includes permanent, temporary, visible, and invisible disabilities.
2. **Reasonable Adjustments / Accommodations:** Changes or supports that enable a student with a disability to access learning, assessment, and university life on an equal basis with others.
4. **Accessibility:** The design of environments, services, information, and activities so they can be used by all students, including those with disabilities.
5. **Confidentiality:** The requirement that disability-related information is kept private and shared only with staff who need it as part of their role.
6. **Assistive Technology:** Tools or software that support learning, such as screen readers or speech-to-text tools.

4. Principles

This policy is guided by principles of fairness and consistency, ensuring that all processes and decisions are transparent and applied consistently. Student- and people-centred practice underpins decision-making, with the interests, safety, and wellbeing of students and staff placed at the centre of all actions. Compliance and proportionality are maintained by implementing requirements that are appropriate to the situation while meeting regulatory and legal obligations. Finally, inclusivity and accessibility are embedded in the policy's implementation, supporting equality, diversity, and inclusion across all aspects of practice.

5. Governance, Committees and Terms of Reference

5.1 Governance and Oversight

Overall governance of this policy is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team, ensuring alignment with Office for Students (OfS) regulatory requirements, including Conditions D and E2 where applicable. Oversight and assurance related to the implementation of this policy are also provided through reports to relevant committees, including the Academic Board and the Student Voice Committee, to ensure effective monitoring, accountability, and continuous improvement.

5.2 In relation to this policy, the SMT will:

1. **Approve and periodically review** this policy and recommend any substantial changes.
2. **Receive and consider evidence** on how effectively the policy is working (e.g. annual reports, incident data, student/staff feedback).
3. **Monitor compliance** with relevant regulatory, partner and legal requirements (e.g. OfS conditions, validating university policies, statutory duties).
4. **Recommend improvements** to strengthen policy implementation, mitigate risks and enhance student/staff experience.
5. **Report annually** to the Board of Governors / SMT on key issues, trends and actions arising from this policy area.

6. Policy Statement

LAAT's senior leaders will ensure that students lie at the core of this policy.

Leaders will apply the principles of fairness, transparency, and consistency in implementing this policy.

Leaders will at all times prioritise safeguarding student welfare and academic success. They will comply with safeguarding law, the Equality Act, GDPR and sector expectations.

7. Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) – Overview

- Step 1 – Initial student enquiry or staff referral.
- Step 2 – Information gathering and supportive discussion.
- Step 3 – Assessment of needs, risks, or academic implications.
- Step 4 – Decision-making and documentation.
- Step 5 – Communication of the decision in writing.
- Step 6 – Follow-up actions, monitoring and secure record-keeping.

Evidence Sources

- Student support records
- Referral logs
- Risk assessments
- Student feedback
- Wellbeing documentation

8. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

All records are stored securely for a minimum of six years in accordance with LAAT's Data Protection Policy.

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually as part of LAAT's quality cycle.

10. Monitoring, Compliance and Review

LAAT will check this policy is working in practice.

- **Monitoring:**
 - By Director of Student Services, safeguarding lead
 - Produce annual reports to committee, audits, surveys.
- **Review:**
 - This policy will be reviewed annually.
 - The **Policy Owner** is responsible for initiating the review and presenting recommended changes.

11. Responsible people / roles include

- **Dean:** Dr Manoj Ponugubati
Overall accountability for policy implementation
- **Student Support Lead:** Ms Nadia Asim
Oversees wellbeing and support processes.
- **Programme Lead:** Mr Amarjeet Singh
Support academic-related decisions and referrals.
- **Safeguarding Lead:** Mr Jay Sharda
Handles safeguarding and Prevent concerns.

List of people and contacts

Role	Name	Contact email
Dean	Dr Manoj Ponugubati	manoj@laat.ac.uk
Student Support Lead	Ms Nadia Asim	nadiaasim@laat.ac.uk
Program Lead	Mr Amarjeet Singh	amarjeet.singh@laat.ac.uk
Safeguarding Lead	Mr Jay Sharda	Jai.sharda@laat.ac.uk

12. List of Document (LoD)

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Wellbeing and Mental Health Support Policy
- Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy

13. Evidence

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Evidence mapping table

Evidence Item	Purpose / What it Demonstrates	Relevant OfS Condition(s)
Teaching and Learning Policy	Demonstrates LAAT's approach to delivering high-quality teaching, learning opportunities, academic support, and inclusive learning practices, ensuring students are supported to achieve intended learning outcomes.	B1 (Academic Experience), B2 (Resources, Support and Student Engagement), B4 (Assessment and Awards), E2 (Management and Governance)
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy	Demonstrates commitment to fair treatment, inclusive practice, elimination of discrimination, and equitable access to learning, assessment, and support for all students and staff.	C5 (Treating Students Fairly), B1 (Academic Experience), E1 (Public Interest Governance), E2 (Management and Governance)
Health and Safety Policy	Demonstrates that LAAT provides a safe learning and working environment, with appropriate controls to protect student and staff wellbeing and support continuity of provision.	B2 (Resources, Support and Student Engagement), E2 (Management and Governance), E3 (Accountability)

Wellbeing and Mental Health Support Policy	Demonstrates structured arrangements for student wellbeing support, early intervention, and signposting, supporting engagement, retention, and continuation.	B2 (Resources, Support and Student Engagement), B3 (Student Outcomes), C5 (Treating Students Fairly)
Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy	Demonstrates secure handling of personal data, confidentiality in academic and support processes, and compliance with data protection legislation and information governance requirements.	C1 (Consumer Protection Law), E2 (Management and Governance), F2 (Information Controls)