

SEND Policy Apprenticeships

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PUBLIC

This document may be disclosed outside of the QA group of Companies.

Review of policy - The QA SEND Policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of Learner Services.

Access - The policy will be published on the QA Intranet, and learner and employer portals.

Next Review Date: June 2027

Document Information			
1.0		New Policy	
Revision History			
Version	Issue Date	Author	Description of Change
1.0	July 2023	Mark Soady	New Policy
1.1	July 2024	Mark Soady	Review and update to new template
1.2	June 2025	Mark Soady	The role of the CIAG Team has been added.
1.3	June 2026	Alan Skelton	The process surrounding EHCPs has been updated.

Document Approval		
Name	Position	Viewed / Comments
Brett Cuming	Head of Quality	01/07/23 Approved
Naomi Lavender	Quality Director	12/06/25 approved
Naomi Lavender	Quality Director	26/06/26 approved

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2. Policy

In conjunction with the wider Quality strategy, QA will work to remove barriers for learners to ensure they receive equality of opportunity and are able to thrive in learning.

QA take a positive approach to SEND ensuring that hidden abilities are harnessed and leveraged in the first instance whilst taking time to address the challenges an individual may face.

3. SEND

SEND is the overarching term used for learners with a Special Educational Need and/or Disability. This includes learners who have a diagnosed Learning Difficulty and/or Disability – LDD, including ADHD, Autism Spectrum Condition, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dyspraxia, and mobility, visual and hearing impairments.

These learners may have the following formal reports:

- Statement of Educational Needs (SENs)
- Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDAs) or
- Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

However, SEND also refers to those with a diagnosed LDD but without SENs, LDAs, or EHCPs, and those with an undiagnosed LDD – a Learning Need (LN). QA is compliant with the SEND Code of Practice (2015), Equality Act 2010 and Ofsted EIF (2022)

4. Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (2025)

The **EIF (from Nov 2025)** places a **strong, explicit emphasis on inclusion**, with SEND embedded across all inspection activity.

Inclusion is:

- **A standalone evaluation area**, and
- **Threaded through all other areas** (curriculum, behaviour, leadership, outcomes).

Ofsted's stated aim is "**high-quality, inclusive education for every learner**", including apprentices and FE learners.

5. Equality Act (2010)

Many of these learners may have a disability/difficulty under the Equality Act 2010, that is '...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. For the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, long-term refers to a period of 12 months or more.

6. SEND Code of Practice 2015 (0-25 years of age)

It is our statutory duty to identify, assess and provide support for young people with SEND:

- To co-operate with the local authority on arrangements for children and young people with SEND.
- To admit a young person if the institution is named in an EHC plan.
- To follow the Code of Practice.
- To ensure an effective transition from one education provider to the next.
- To use best endeavours to secure the special educational provision that the young person needs.
- To maintain high expectations of learners and all stakeholders involved in the learner's journey.

7. Support

Support for SEND learners is individualised and tailored to meet their needs. Learners sharing the same barrier may receive differing support dependent upon the impact on learning. We believe that support for learners with SEND should be holistic in nature, so we foster an environment where collaboration and information-sharing is the norm; this allows for timely intervention.

8. Process

8.1. Identification

- A learner is invited prior to Day 1 Induction to disclose any need or barrier to learning via their application form, to the Sales Team, Onboarding and Careers, Education, Information and Guidance Team (CEIAG). However, we are aware that many individuals may be worried about the connotations of disclosing a learning need, so we have trained each team involved in the onboarding process and beyond to ask explorative questions to encourage timely disclosure.

- When a learner does disclose, our account managers are tasked with informing prospective employers, with the learner's explicit permission, so they can make reasonable adjustments to their interview process; this allows both the employer and QA to remain compliant with the Reasonable Adjustments Duty.
- If the learner is successful in securing an apprenticeship, the recruitment team will instruct the learner to complete a Self-Referral Form. We aim to hold an initial support call before Day 1 learning commences so the learner can start their journey on the best possible footing.
- A Learning Support Plan (LSP) is created during the first call with the Learner Support Team and includes a Reasonable Adjustments Plan (RAP)/Summary of Reasonable Adjustments (SoRA). The RAP/SoRA is shared with all key stakeholders to ensure they are aware of the reasonable adjustments they must make for their learner.
- The learner's disclosed need will be entered onto the ILR to allow for timely and accurate reporting.
- There is a high likelihood that many apprentices may be neurodivergent but are unaware. As a result, we deliver neurodiversity awareness sessions for our Digital Learning Consultants (DLCs) and Skills Coaches to ensure they are aware of the potential indicators. If a neurodiversity is suspected, DLCs will raise this with their learner and, with permission, will submit a referral form to the Learner Support Team. In addition, we provide awareness sessions for all our apprentices as well as inviting all apprentices to the QA Apprenticeships Neurodiversity Network.

8.2. Assessment

Support needs of learners will be explored by the Learner Support Team. A comprehensive questionnaire will be used to assess the needs of those who already have a secure diagnosis. A Do-It Profiler is used where learners, DLCs or Skills Coaches have identified a potential learning need that has otherwise been undisclosed.

Following an assessment, a clear justification for support is documented and an overview of the potential impact of failing to provide said support is provided. Once completed, Learner Support Funding is claimed.

The learner's support is reviewed at least every 3 months following this to ensure that it is still fit for purpose. In addition, any changes are documented and communicated with all appropriate stakeholders to ensure holistic support is maintained.

9. Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

When a prospective apprentice declares an EHCP, the Onboarding Team will automatically refer the apprentice to Learner Support, and the onboarding process will be paused until Learner Support confirms the status of the EHCP.

If an apprentice with an EHCP is enrolling onto a Level 3 programme and is 16-24 years old at the time of enrolment, the Learner Support Team will contact the apprentice and request a full, up-to-date copy of the EHCP. If this is not possible from the apprentice, then QA will contact the Local Authority to request a copy and make them aware the learner is commencing an Apprenticeship programme with QA. In a meeting with the Local Authority, QA's Learner Support Team will discuss and amend the EHCP as necessary to ensure the apprentice's specific learning needs will be met on programme, while removing previously agreed support methods that QA are unable to provide due to QA's delivery model.

If an apprentice with an EHCP is enrolling onto a programme higher than Level 3, or is over 24 years old at the time of enrolment, the Learner Support Team will contact the apprentice and request a full, up-to-date copy of the EHCP, explaining that this will cease once the learner enrolls onto a Level 4-7 programme, or has already ceased given the learner's age. Learner Support may be able to use an inactive EHCP as a basis for providing tailored support and can still provide Learner Support even without an active EHCP.

10. Learning Support Funding (LSF)

Where justification can be evidenced, LSF will be applied. The learner will be allocated to a Learner Support Specialist. LSF is applied based on the information submitted by the Learner Support Specialist ensuring that the paperwork is completed within each calendar month. Where applicable, an Earnings Adjustment Statement will be created up to the value of £19,000. Where a learner requires Exceptional Learning Support that exceeds £19,000, a claim must be made at the beginning of the learner's journey.

11. Reasonable Adjustments

A 'reasonable adjustment' is a change that must be made to remove or reduce a disadvantage related to:

- A learner's disability when in learning.
- A learner's disability when applying to learn.

Reasonable adjustments in learning may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Access to learning materials ahead of workshops

- The recording of workshops
- Allocation of a scribe/reader
- Access to assistive technologies
- Additional support by tutors/DLCs/Learner Support Specialists outside of the normal way of working

12. Exam Access Arrangements

Exam access arrangements (EAA) for summative assessments such as End Point Assessment are explored as a direct result of the areas highlighted within the learner's support plan. EAAs are carried out by specialists, trained at Level 7, to identify if learners are entitled to arrangements including extra time, a reader, a scribe, and a separate room. All exam access arrangements are agreed with the awarding organisation and End Point Assessment Organisation and are aligned to JCQ requirements.

13. Training and Development

Internal training is delivered monthly, but employees are also encouraged to take part in external development that can be completed in work time.

