Disability Policy

1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This policy applies to all job applicants and employees at Reception Academy.

Reception Academy aims to provide full and fair opportunity for employment and education for disabled applicants, staff and students in line with recommendations from the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 (DDA) and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA).

Reception Academy will aim to identify the needs of disabled staff and students in consultation with them, provide appropriate support, reasonable adjustments to practices and premises, and raise awareness and understanding within Reception Academy of the issues surrounding disability.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Reception Academy will ensure:

- That the requirements of those students or staff who disclose a disability or learning difficulty are assessed on an individual basis;
- That all discussions and information regarding a disability or specific learning difficulty are treated in a confidential manner and abide by Reception Academy's confidentiality policy;
- In the case of non-standard adjustments for disabled students, Reception Academy will be involved in any discussions regarding adjustments to ensure that educational standards are maintained and that the necessary resources are available.

NB:- All staff and students at Reception Academy are expected to be responsible for implementing this policy.

3. DEFINITION OF A DISABILITY

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) describes a disability as:

“A physical, or mental impairment which, has a substantial and long term adverse effect on (a person's) ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities"

1. ‟Impairment’ covers physical impairments and impairments affecting the senses such as sight and hearing. It also covers mental impairment, which is Disability Policy RECEPTION ACADEMY December 2012 defined as resulting from or consisting of a mental illness (e.g. schizophrenia) or disorder (e.g. learning difficulties).
2. ‟Substantial’ is defined as „more than minor or trivial”; „long term adverse effect” is defined as lasting more than a year (12 months or more)
3. ‟Normal day-to-day activities’ are broken down into nine areas with examples:-
   - mobility (difficulty going up or down a flight of stairs)
   - manual Dexterity (pressing buttons on keyboards or keypads extremely slowly)
• physical Co-ordination (inability to place an object accurately without assistance or hard concentration)
• continence (frequent minor incontinence)
• ability to lift, carry or move everyday objects (inability to pick up everyday objects of moderate weight with one hand)
• speech, hearing or eyesight (taking longer to say things, inability to hear a clear conversation on the phone, total inability to distinguish colours or walk safely without bumping into things)
• ability to concentrate (inability to complete a task without assistance or confused behaviour)
• memory, ability to learn or understand (inability to remember names of familiar colleagues, customers, inability to adapt after thorough and persistent training)
• perception or the risk of physical danger (inability to operate properly maintained equipment safely through fear)

3.1 If a member of staff or student has an impairment which meets all three components of the definition outlined above, they will be covered by the DDA. This applies to both people who currently have a disability and those who had a disability in the past.

3.2 Other Conditions covered by the Disability Discrimination Act
Those deemed to be disabled within the meaning of the DDA are:
• blind and partially sighted people
• people with many types of cancer
• people with HIV
• people with multiple sclerosis
• Progressive conditions such as muscular dystrophy are covered by the DDA as evidence shows that their condition is likely to result in an impairment which will become substantial.
• Severe disfigurements are treated as impairments under the DDA. Once a person has shown they have a severe disfigurement e.g. skin disease, they are protected under the Act. This does not cover deliberate disfigurements such as piercing or tattoos.
• Conditions controlled by medication or special aids are also covered if the impairment would meet the definition if it were not controlled by medication. e.g. epilepsy, diabetes, or a person with an artificial limb. This definition does not apply to people who use glasses or contact lenses
• Recurring conditions such as MS or arthritis are still covered by the DDA even when treatment leads to temporary remission

3.3 Reception Academy is committed to ensuring that plans have been made to accommodate disabled staff and students by whatever reasonable means are necessary. It is our intention that disabled students should have access to as wide a curriculum as is possible within the constraints of the physical environment including suitable extra-curricular activities.

4. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS
The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) amends some of the DDA by placing additional duties on providers of education. It requires that disabled students should not be treated less favourably, without justification, for a reason which relates to their disability. It also requires that reasonable adjustments are made.

4.1 Factors to be considered for any alteration when justifying “reasonableness” are likely to include the following:
- Practicality of works
- Cost
- Disruption of works to the provision of education services
- Resources
- Effectiveness

4.2 Reception Academy will make reasonable adjustments to the workplace and to employment arrangements to ensure that a disabled person is not at any disadvantage when compared with a non-disabled person or other disabled person.

4.3 Reasonable adjustments may include:
- making adjustments to the premises e.g. widening a doorway for a wheelchair
- allocating some of the disabled person's duties to another person
- transferring the disabled person to fill an existing vacancy e.g. If through disability they can no longer carry out their existing job and no reasonable adjustments would enable him or her to do so, then suitable alternative posts can be considered
- altering the disabled person's working hours
- assigning the disabled person to a different place of work e.g. if a building is inaccessible
- allowing the person time off during working hours for rehabilitation or treatment
- arranging training for the disabled person
- acquiring or modifying equipment e.g. providing a specially adapted keyboard for a visually impaired person
- modifying instructions or reference manuals
- modifying procedures for testing or assessment e.g. for a person with restricted manual dexterity
- providing a reader or interpreter
- providing supervision

4.4 In all cases the person concerned must be consulted on the reasonable accommodation of his or her needs.

4.5 In order for an individual’s needs to be clearly assessed, an individual may be requested to visit an Occupational Health Adviser, who will be able to advise the academy on reasonable adjustments and support for the individual to carry out their role.

4.6 Reasonable adjustments for students are agreed in the Individual Learning Plan.

5. PROCEDURE
5.1 FOR DISABLED STUDENTS:

A disabled student is encouraged to disclose their disability at an early stage, such as application or enrolment. Information on disability disclosure procedure is available on the academy’s website. Initially, the Admissions Team will be notified when a student discloses and will make contact with the student, giving them the opportunity to make an appointment to discuss any support needs. A disabled student is usually required to provide written evidence of their disability (such as an educational psychologist’s report) if they are requesting any reasonable adjustments.

If adjustments are agreed, an Individual Support Plan will be completed. In agreement with the student, this will be distributed to relevant staff only, in order to ensure that any necessary adjustments are put in place.

5.2 FOR DISABLED STAFF:

The Act places specific responsibilities on employers relating to the recruitment and appointment process. Reception Academy will ensure that a disability should not bar an individual from employment unless it would genuinely prevent them from doing the job and there is nothing Reception Academy can reasonably do to overcome difficulties resulting from any disability.

Reception Academy will consider making reasonable adjustments to working arrangements and premises to prevent or reduce any substantial disadvantage, thus enabling a disabled staff member to perform their job effectively. Disabled individuals are therefore encouraged to disclose any disability, either verbally or in writing to either the Principal or Director of Administration, in order for their needs to be assessed. The disabled staff member may be asked to provide supporting documentation regarding their disability from a doctor or specialist.

5.3 FOR DISABLED STUDENTS:

The first point of contact for queries about provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is the Director of Training. Alternatively, students can contact the appropriate Tutor.

6. DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUNDS OF A DISABILITY.

6.1 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people. Some types of discrimination can be justified but direct discrimination cannot.

6.2 Discrimination occurs when „for a reason which relates to that person’s disability, the disabled person is treated less favourably than a person to whom that reason does not apply“

6.3 Discrimination also occurs if:
• Reception Academy fails to make reasonable adjustments to the working arrangements or the physical features of the premises to accommodate a disabled person, and the failure to make reasonable adjustments cannot be justified.
• The individual suffers victimisation because he or she made a complaint under the Disability Discrimination Act.
• The individual suffers harassment because of their disability.

6.4 If an employee or student believes that they have been treated less favourably on the grounds of their disability they can make a complaint to either their Curriculum Line Manager or a member of the Senior Management Team.

7. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

All staff involved in recruitment and selection must be aware of their responsibilities under the DDA. Practices are in place at Reception Academy to ensure people with disabilities are treated fairly and equitably throughout the recruitment process.

1. Recruitment and publicity materials for staff and students will be scrutinised and will be free from stereotyping and any form of discrimination.
2. Job descriptions and person specifications will be reviewed to ensure that the minimum criteria for the post is clear and relevant, and that unnecessary requirements do not unfairly exclude a disabled person who could do the job. e.g. „Must have driver's licence“, when driving is not necessary or core to the function of the post.
3. All candidates will be asked in their invite to interview letter whether or not they have any special needs or requirements for their interview and/or test.
4. All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that the interview arrangements are such that disabled people may attend without difficulty.
5. Any candidate with a disability who meets the minimum criteria for a position will be invited to interview.

1. All candidates will be assessed on their abilities, experience and suitability for the post according to objective criteria. Selection panels will be encouraged to assess how any disabled applicant can meet the requirements of the post, considering any reasonable adjustments which may be necessary or appropriate.

8. DISCLOSURE OF DISABILITY

As many disabilities are not obvious, Reception Academy relies on the staff member/student or applicant to make the disclosure about his or her own disability. It is recognised that individuals are often reluctant to do this, because they fear discrimination, and feel it is not relevant to their ability to do the job. However, with this information Reception Academy is better able to support the individual and make any reasonable adjustments necessary either for their interview, or in their work environment.

Disclosure can be beneficial for the following reasons:

• the stress of not divulging a disability can exacerbate the person's difficulties at work;
• the employee and manager can together determine what adjustments, if any, would maintain or improve working conditions; students should agree An Individual Support Plan with their Tutor
• the support of staff/students can be implemented

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

Information about a disability, health condition or specific learning difficulty is considered to be personal sensitive information under the Data Protection Act 1998. Any such information provided to Reception Academy will be treated in confidence. When a person’s disability status is known, all unnecessary disclosures will be avoided.

Disclosure will only occur:

• With the express consent of the individual; and/or
• When it helps to facilitate the person’s ability to do the job; or
• If it is absolutely necessary within the law.

The applicant or employee will always be informed about the purposes for which the personal information will be used. Where students and/or staff do not declare a disability or state that they want such information to remain confidential, this may restrict the provision of any adjustments.

As a matter of good practice, Reception Academy will ensure that the workforce generally is advised of any relevant health and safety issue that affects an individual disabled employee or student.

10. ADMISSIONS

10.1 Initial enquiries about courses and applications are dealt with by the Admissions Team, who will arrange an interview. Applicants who are aware they have specific needs are strongly recommended to outline them at this stage so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

10.2 Reception Academy is committed, wherever reasonably possible, to meet the needs of all students in order that they can gain access to and make progress on, the course(s) of their choice. Where adjustments to Reception Academy educational environment are required, Reception Academy will make every effort to do so, provided this is achieved within resource constraints. Where this is not possible, outside assistance may be sought to try and ensure barriers to entry are minimised.

10.3 All students will have an individual interview regarding their course/programme of study to ascertain areas where they may require additional support. During this process, assessment will take place to ensure that:

The student’s expectations are fully discussed and analysed, their needs understood and assessed
• The proposed learning programme with Reception Academy is considered to be in the student’s best interests and that they would not be better provided for elsewhere
• Reception Academy facilities and resources are sufficient to meet those needs. The Learning Agreement will contain clear statements specifying precisely what Reception Academy is offering to the student and details of the commitment the student is making to Reception Academy. Any changes to the student’s circumstances will automatically require a full review of the Learning Agreement. Students with additional needs that are identified part way through their course of study will be counselled and guided through an assessment process to establish how they can be supported through the remainder of their course.

All applicants for courses are considered on their aptitude, experience, qualifications and ability. It is the aim of Reception Academy that students with any disabilities are enabled to benefit from, and be successful on, the range of educational provision offered by Reception Academy. Students are encouraged to participate in all aspects of Reception Academy life. However, there are limitations to access on certain areas of the campus.

Reception Academy will assist students in the use and storage of special equipment that they may have and will help students, where possible, in obtaining equipment. In addition, Reception Academy has some equipment and adaptations to facilities that may be of use to students with physical/sensory disabilities, whether in general areas of Reception Academy or related to specific vocational areas.

11. EXAMINATION ARRANGEMENTS

Reception Academy can approach the various Awarding Bodies who may ask for evidence of an appropriate assessment. Examples of arrangements that could be made include extra time, an amanuensis, a reader, a tape recorder for recording answers, a separate room, etc. Notice should be given wherever possible at the commencement of the course so that these arrangements can be formalised. The nature of the arrangements is based on the particular circumstances of the student and is subject to the rules of the Awarding Body if applicable.