



MORLEY COLLEGE

Student Support Policy

**POLICY OWNER: PRINCIPAL
APPROVAL: GOVERNING BODY ON RECOMMENDATION OF
CURRICULUM & STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**LAST APPROVAL: 2017
NEXT REVIEW: 2021
(or at an earlier date
should changes in funding
rules necessitate) Fitness to
Study Procedure to be
reviewed in 2018**

Equality Analysis Screening

Equality analysis is a way of considering the effects on different groups protected from discrimination by the equality act. Consider if there are any risks within this policy that will adversely affect a particular group or a variety of groups. Are there any changes that need to be made to the policy itself or additional actions that need to be made to mitigate the risks? The protected characteristics are:

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Religion and Belief
- Maternity and Pregnancy
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

Risks identified:

The Student Support Policy is designed to break down learning barriers to Morley College London for all students. There are two elements to this policy: the universal and tailored. The combination of these two elements ensures that the protected groups within the Equalities Act are not discriminated against.

The Fitness to Study Procedure, set out within Appendix B and its relationship with E&D has been carefully considered. It is intended, in part, to provide an alternative to the Student Disciplinary procedure for vulnerable students where appropriate. The policy was designed in collaboration with ALS and underwent consultation with the Student Council whom endorsed.

Evidence used (data, consultation):

Does this policy need a further action before it can be approved?
(changes made to policy or further equality analysis needed)

No

MORLEY COLLEGE

Student Support Policy

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

1.1 This Student Support Policy informs our students and other stakeholders, clearly and simply, of our objectives and responsibilities for supporting students. It explains how we ensure that students at the College can expect a supportive and responsive experience from initial enquiry through to completion of a course and progression within or outside the College. This policy demonstrates our commitment to provide support for students that is inclusive, of a high standard and provides students with a foundation for high achievement.

1.2 The policy sets out our objectives and how we plan to achieve them in order to ensure that our students make the best possible progress, in an environment which ensures they are safe from discrimination and in which they are able to achieve to their very best.

1.3 The policy demonstrates our commitment to go beyond compliance with equality legislation and to strive towards best practice in our approach to Student Support across all the College's functions.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Morley College aims to reduce barriers to learning to ensure students achieve to their full potential irrespective of background and personal circumstance.

3. MORLEY COLLEGE IN CONTEXT

3.1 Morley College London is a Specialist Designated Institute (SDI) adult education college located in central London. It enjoys a distinguished history in British adult education dating back to the early 1880s. Today Morley College is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.

3.2 The College celebrates and values the diversity brought to it by all members of its community and is committed to providing the education and support that enable all members of this learning community to achieve to their full potential. Ensuring excellent Student Support is core to our mission, values and strategic objectives. Our vision identifies the College as a provider of inspiring, distinctive and excellent adult learning, a college which contributes to, and is responsive to, the communities it serves.

3.3 Respecting diversity and promoting equality is one of our five core values and is central to our vision as we strive to provide relevant and challenging education and training for all sections of our community. We recognise that, in order to meet our core values, we

have a responsibility to assist students in reducing barriers to learning whether they be financial, social or related to disability and learning difficulties.

- 3.4 Central to the Student Support service is the recognition that a high quality, impartial Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) service is a key component in assisting our students to enrol on a suitable programme of learning and to achieve positive destinations upon completion of their courses.
- 3.5 The College is focused on meeting the learning needs of its local residents. It is located on the border between Lambeth and Southwark. 50% of our Students are residents of Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham.

4 POLICY OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 To utilise the resources available to all students to enable them to achieve to their full potential, we prioritise support for students on accredited courses to achieve qualifications leading to training and employment. This overarching objective informs all areas of student support;
 - Additional Learning Support (ALS) – Providing an outstanding service for those students with disabilities, liaising with community partners in Lambeth and Southwark (and beyond where appropriate) to support student's needs.
 - Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) – Providing an appropriate level of Advice and Guidance in a confidential and impartial setting, including accessing an extensive network of local support for our students.
 - Financial Support – Providing financial support through the Discretionary Learner Support Fund and Bursary Fund to assist the college in breaking down the financial barriers to learning (The detailed Financial Support Policy follows as an Appendix).

5 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 5.1 The policy relates to all students at Morley College

6 RESPONSIBILITY STRUCTURE

- 6.1 The Student Services manager has responsibility for the implementation of the Student Support Policy in consultation with the Senior Management Team (SMT).
- 6.2 The ALS Manager, in consultation with the Student Services Manager, curriculum and service staff, has responsibility for the implementation of the Student Support Policy as it relates to ALS.

7. PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION

- 7.1 This Policy sets out:
 - The universal student support offer available to all students at Morley College London
 - The tailored offer for those students on accredited courses
- 7.2 Students attending the College can expect the following level of Student Support:

- A confidential pre-enrolment advice and guidance service
- Support with the enrolment process
- Financial support if eligible with fees via the College Bursary Fund
- Assessment with a member of the Learning Support team and an adjustment note to class tutor
- On-course careers advice including UCAS advice
- Signposting to external welfare organisations
- Support with equipment for Sensory Impairments or Laptops to support writing difficulties
- Post-course confidential advice and guidance and signposting

7.3 *In addition to the above*, all students on accredited courses can expect the following:

- Support through the pre-enrolment stage including an assessment of need with Learning Support and support with applications for the Advanced Learning and Higher Education loans.
- Students on Higher Education courses will be supported in applying for their Disabled Student Allowance (DSA)
- Upon receipt of a DSA Assessment of Need report for Higher Education students we will contact students to arrange an appointment where we will discuss the report and arrange support.
- Financial support with childcare, materials and transport via the Learner Support Fund
- On-going support with a learning support specialist (dyslexia/counsellor or another) according to need
- Dyslexia assessment for students with places at HE who need to apply for the Disabled Students Allowances; Exam screenings for students with SpLD/Dyslexia at FS L1& 2 & GCSE
- Exam access arrangements to ensure reasonable adjustments are made for students with disabilities

7.4 All student support is bound by constraints. These are:

- Disclosure of need to the Learning Support department during the enrolment process
- Level of financial support available at a given point in the year
- The assessment of the ability of the student to achieve on a course. For courses requiring tutor approval this will be undertaken prior to enrolment.
- The level of adjustments required to meet students' needs which are reasonable and do not adversely affect the nature of the course/the majority of the students
- The level of "wellness" required to attend College with acceptable levels of attendance
- The compliance of the student with the College's Student Charter
- Meeting the attendance requirements of the course.

Appendix A

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS 2017/18

There are 4 areas of Financial support that student can apply for :-

1. Morley College Bursary

- The Bursary can provide a financial contribution towards tuition fees to enable you to study

2. Learner Support Fund

3. Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund

- Both of these funds are to provide support for Childcare, Travel & Materials while studying
- Due to government funding regulations, eligibility for the Learner Support Fund and Advanced Learning Loans Bursary depends in part on age and level of course.

4. Higher Education Loans and Grants

- Students apply directly for these through Student Finance England

1. Morley College Bursary Fund

The Morley College Bursary is a discretionary fund operated by the College to assist students who are experiencing financial difficulties and are unable to pay the full course fee. Funds are limited and the College regrets it may not be possible to fund all students who meet the criteria.

Students can apply for Bursary support on most courses, but not if Advanced Learner or Higher Education Loans are applicable for the course.

The panel is made up for the Student Services Manager, Learning Support Manager and the Student Finance officer.

The criteria for the award are the following;

- The student qualifies for the concessionary rate but there are circumstances above and beyond those for which the concession is granted that would entail they are applying for the award. Proof of these circumstances must appear within the supporting statement and a bank statement / benefit documents must support the application
- The applicant does not qualify for the concessionary fee but there are exceptional circumstances which would mean that the applicant would not be able to attend the course unless the Bursary was awarded. Proof of these circumstances must appear within the supporting statement and a bank statement / benefit documents must support the application

The fund can make a contribution towards course fees, either 25% or 50%. Support is restricted to £200 per student per year and this can be spread across 3 terms, you can only get support with one course per term.

Applications must be made before you enrol on a course. Applications forms submitted after enrolment will not be considered.

Please request an application form from student services. You need to return the application form and any relevant documents to the Student Finance Officer, in the Information, Advice and Guidance office. You may be required to attend an interview with the Student Finance Officer to discuss your application.

The Bursary Committee meets every week. You will be informed of the decision in writing within 5 working days of the meeting.

Appeals

If your application is not granted, you can appeal this decision. This must be done via email to the Vice Principal, Nick Rampley: nick.rampley@morleycollege.ac.uk
You must submit an appeal, within seven days of written notification of the outcome of your application.

2. Learner Support Fund

These awards are funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency to help students most in need. Funding is limited and the College regrets it may not be possible to fund all students who meet the criteria.

The Learner Support Fund supports those on selected accredited courses. The qualifying courses include Essential Skills and Access courses.

The criteria to receive the fund are;

- You must be in receipt of a means tested benefit or have a household income less than £330 per week. You must also be ineligible for funding from the Advanced Learning Loans Bursary.
- You must have been ordinarily resident in the UK/EU for 3 years prior to commencing your course.

This fund can support the cost of childcare for children aged between 18 months and 5 years for full time care and from 5 years to 11 years for part time care. Providers must be Ofsted registered. It is possible to make an application for up to 3 children in relation to childcare costs.

The priority of the Learner Support Fund is to support with childcare costs of eligible students. If, after all the childcare money has been apportioned, there is additional money the fund will then support with transport costs. A decision on this will be made at the end of term one.

Applications for help with childcare support must be made at the after enrolment . Please request an application form from student services. You need to return the application form and any relevant documents to the Student Finance Officer, in the Information, Advice and Guidance office; you will be required to attend an interview with the Student Finance Officer to discuss your application.

Please note that the support of the Learner Support Fund is only confirmed upon receipt of a letter of confirmation from Student Services, and the fund is distributed strictly on a first come first served basis. This fund cannot be used to pay for course fees.

Learner Support Fund support will be removed if:

- You subsequently abandon or do not complete the programme of learning.
- Your attendance is less than 75%.
- Your conduct or behaviour is in breach of College Rules & Regulations.

You should also note that if you receive any state benefits it is your responsibility to inform the Department for Work and Pensions about any learner support payments you receive, as this payment may affect your eligibility for some state benefits.

If you are in any doubt about the above, or require further advice and information, please arrange to see the Student Finance Officer: 020 7450 1855, pearl.flanders@morleycollege.ac.uk

Appeals

If your application is not granted, you can appeal this decision. This must be done via email to the Student Services Manager, Luke Howson: Luke.Howson@morleycollege.ac.uk
You must submit an appeal, within seven days of written notification of the outcome of your application.

3. Advanced Learning Loans Bursary

These awards are funded by the Education Skills Funding Agency to help students most in need. Funding is limited and the College regrets it may not be possible to fund all students who meet the criteria.

The Advanced Learning Loans Bursary supports those studying on eligible level 3 (or above) accredited courses. The criteria for receiving the fund are below;

- You must be aged 20 or above at the start of your course and have signed confirmation that you are in receipt of an Advanced Learning Loan.
- You must also be in receipt of a means tested benefit or have a household income less than £330 per week.

This fund can support the cost of childcare, travel and materials costs. For childcare support children must be aged 18 months to 5 years for full time care and from 5 years to 11 years for part time care. Providers must be Ofsted registered. It is possible to make an application for up to 3 children in relation to childcare costs.

For travel costs you must live in excess of one mile from the College, unless there are exceptional circumstances. For Materials costs you must provide evidence of purchase and this is capped depending on your courses of study. Please check with the Student Finance Officer for individual courses.

Applications for support must be made once you have confirmed approval of your loan through the Student Loan Company. The college cannot support with any funds until you have confirmed approval for the loan.

Support for the cost of travel will be made after half term during term one, when you have receipts to show how you travel to the college. You must reapply for travel each term.

Support for Materials will be made after we have received receipts and payment is made once per term. You can reapply for the cost of materials each term until the £200 cap.

Please request an application form from student services. You need to return the application form and any relevant documents to Pearl Flanders, Student Services, in the Information, Advice and Guidance office; you will be required to attend an interview to discuss your application for childcare support.

You will normally get a decision regarding childcare funding on the day of your interview. Travel grants and Materials are usually paid at the end of term, so you should expect to get a decision at this time.

Learner Support Fund support will be removed if:

- You subsequently abandon or do not complete the programme of learning.
- Your attendance is less than 75%.
- Your conduct or behaviour is in breach of College Rules & Regulations.

You should also note that if you receive any state benefits it is your responsibility to inform the Department for Work and Pensions about any learner support payments you receive, as this payment may affect your eligibility for some state benefits.

If you are in any doubt about the above, or require further advice and information, please arrange to see Pearl Flanders: 020 7450 1855, pearl.flanders@morleycollege.ac.uk

Appeals

If your application is not granted, you can appeal this decision. This must be done via email to the Learner Services Manager, Luke Howson: Luke.Howson@morleycollege.ac.uk
You must submit an appeal, within seven days of written notification of the outcome of your application.

4. Higher Education Students

Eligible students are able to apply for Tuition Fee loans and Maintenance loans on our Higher Education Courses. Students should apply directly to Student Finance England for the loans and should apply as early as possible to ensure that the appropriate funding is in place at the start of the course. The Maintenance loan payments are paid directly to the student from the Student Loans Company. Morley will process appropriate attendance data to the Student Loans Company to facilitate payments. Additionally eligible students can apply for the Childcare Grant and the Adult Dependent Grant through Student Finance England.

Appendix B

Appendix to Student Support Policy

Fitness to Study Procedure for Morley College

Note: To be reviewed: 1 year after implementation

Introduction

Morley College is committed to supporting student wellbeing and recognises that a positive approach to health is crucial to student learning and achievement.

Fitness to Study relates to an individual's capacity to participate fully as a student both with their studies and with the social aspects of College life generally. This procedure outlines the steps to be taken by the College when there is concern that a student's health has the potential to adversely affect the student himself or herself or of others in the College community.

Decisions made concerning a student's fitness to study are made through a collective, supportive process, after appropriate consultation and after consideration of the student's ability to study, learn effectively and complete his/her course successfully.

Please note that prior to enrolment Morley College reserves the right to request further information or evidence from a student if they have concerns regarding their fitness to study. All students are expected to meet the standards set out within the Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook ([here](#)). When a staff member has such concerns a meeting should be arranged to discuss the suitability of the course before the student is enrolled.

Issues arising from this procedure may be dealt with in accordance with the Colleges Safeguarding procedures when appropriate.

Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 The term 'fitness to study' as used in this document relates to the entire student experience, and not just a student's ability to engage with their studies. For example, the College expects its students to be able to live in harmony with others, and conduct themselves in ways which have a positive impact on those around them.

1.2 Whilst all students at the College must conform to certain standards of behaviour it is recognised that issues of concern which may lead to behaviour which is not of the normal expected level can be due to health and wellbeing issues. When this is the case it may be appropriate to use the Fitness to Study procedure rather than the usual College Disciplinary Procedure. The Fitness to Study policy sits outside of the normal College Disciplinary Procedure ([here](#)).

1.3 A student's fitness to study may be questioned if health problems are disrupting his or her own studies or the student experience of others, or result in unreasonable demands being placed on staff or other students.

2. Circumstances under which a student's fitness to study should be considered

2.1 The below list includes examples of circumstances where a student's fitness to study might be considered, although this is not exhaustive:

- Where a student is affected by medical conditions that require long periods of absence and treatment.
- When there is a disruption to teaching, learning and support of other students or where unreasonable demands are being made on staff or students due to deterioration in the physical or mental health of a student.
- Where there is a potential risk to a student or others due to deterioration in the student's physical or mental health.

3. Fitness to Study Procedure

Stage 1

3.2 The relevant Head of School (HOS) or Programme Manager (PM), Student Services Manager or Additional Learning Support Manager must be informed of the concerns being raised.

3.3 The relevant Head of School (HOS) should arrange a Stage 1 meeting with the relevant programme manager present and any other staff from the department and/or professional services as is considered appropriate in the individual circumstances. There should normally be two members of staff present at the meeting except in exceptional circumstances.

3.4 At least 5 working days' notice should be given to students prior to the meeting.

3.5 The student should be made aware of the purpose of the meeting and that they may be accompanied at the meeting by a relative, friend, student representative or support worker (but not by a legal or other professional adviser unless the College otherwise agrees). In the event that the student is unable or unwilling to attend, the meeting may go ahead in his or her absence, if the College considers it reasonable to do so. However, the College should offer to rearrange the meeting at least once. Refusing to attend the meeting may also trigger Stage 2 of the procedure.

3.6 The Stage 1 panel may seek a medical assessment, usually from the student's GP or medical practitioner. If the student refuses this their studies may be suspended until evidence that they are fit to study can be provided.

3.7 The Stage 1 meeting will consider whether the student is able to participate as a student, in relation to progressing with academic studies and life generally at college and whether any support needs can be met by the College's support services.

3.8 If this is considered possible, an action plan will be agreed between the PM and the student detailing a timeline and milestones the student will need to meet along with details of the support to be provided to the student. A decision should be made by the HOS who is responsible for monitoring the plan. The student should be made aware of what will happen if the action plan is breached, which will normally involve their case moving to Stage 2.

3.9 If it is not possible for the parties to agree on an appropriate plan Stage 2 of the procedure will be initiated.

3.10 The outcome of the Stage 1 meeting must be recorded, with any agreed actions and timescale, sent to the student within 5 working days or before the student's next class by the HOS.

Stage 2

3.11 Stage 2 can be reached through Stage 1 or directly if the concerns identified by are serious, persistent or have become critical i.e. the student's behaviour is putting health and safety or the well-being of self or others at risk. It may also be invoked if a student has previously had their studies suspended through this procedure and the same issues have arisen on being re-admitted to College.

3.12 The Stage 1 panel chair, relevant Head of School (HOS), Student Services Manager or Learning Support Manager may call a Stage 2 Fitness to Study meeting.

3.13 The Stage 2 meeting will normally be chaired by a member of SMT who is not the principal. At the discretion of the panel Chair, the panel may include relevant members of academic staff or professional services staff. The membership of the panel will be at the discretion of the Chair as is most appropriate taking into account the circumstances but a quorum of 2 must apply. A minute taker will also be present.

3.14 At least 5 working days' notice should be given to students prior to the meeting.

3.14 The Panel may request medical evidence. The student will be invited to attend the meeting and informed that he or she may be accompanied by a relative, friend, student representative, support worker (but not by a legal or other professional adviser unless the College otherwise agrees). In the event that the student is unable or unwilling to attend, the meeting may go ahead in his or her absence if the College considers it reasonable to do so. However, the College should offer to rearrange the meeting at least once.

3.15 At the Stage 2 panel, the student's support needs will be discussed and various

options considered including a break from study, a period of suspension or postponement or a recommendation for withdrawal or exclusion of the student.

3.16 In cases where a suspension or postponement of studies is agreed, a clear time frame must be given to the student. The provision of appropriate documentation/medical evidence within that time frame will be a condition of re-entry to the programme of study.

3.17 The decision made by the Stage 2 panel will be notified to the student within 5 working days of the meeting. The student will be advised of his/her right to appeal against the decision and informed how that appeal should be lodged and in what timescale.

3.18 Should a student be unwilling or unable to take part at any stage of the procedure or to attend a meeting, the College may nonetheless follow the procedure where it is reasonable to do so. In addition, the College will consider any request from the student to proceed with a meeting in his or her absence on the basis of written reports and/or a written statement from the student.

3.19 A note of the meeting and outcome of both Stage 1 and Stage 2 meetings shall be kept on the College record system.

4. Right of appeal

4.1 The student may appeal the decision made at Stage 2 of the procedure by appealing in writing to the Principal. This appeal must be lodged within 5 working days of the Stage 2 meeting.

4.2 The Principal may choose to meet with the student after reviewing the paperwork of the earlier meetings.

4.3 The decision of the Principal will be final. They reserve the right to request a further meeting with relevant staff and / or the student or may choose to make a decision based on evidence already considered.

5. Return to Study

5.1 Any return to study at the College, including either re-joining the same course or commencing a different course, following the withdrawal or suspension must be agreed by the appropriate HOS, with the advice of the Student Services or Additional Learning Support Manager, in advance of enrolment.

5.2 If the HOS does not feel that the students health has improved to a level where they could re-join the College they are able to refuse enrolment until the students health is improved.

