University Technical College Warrington (UTCW)

Accessibility Policy

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1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   UTC Warrington (UTCW) is committed to inclusion of all students and staff with disabilities and aims to provide additional support, resources and facilities to meet individual need. This policy is a guide to the services and provision available to students and staff with disabilities. This statement was drafted using guidance set out by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

1.2   The Public Sector Equality Duty consists of a general equality duty, which is set out in section 149 of the Equality Act (2010) and the specific duties which came into law on the 10th September 2011. These duties state that the UTC must:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

UTCW complies with the statutory requirement under the Equality Act (2010) to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled students can access/participate in the curriculum;
- Improve the physical environment of the UTC to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled students.

UTCW aims to treat all its students fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all students without discrimination of any kind.

1.3   The Disability Discrimination Act and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of practice (2014), state that a disabled person is someone with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Examples include cancer, diabetes, multiple sclerosis and heart conditions; hearing or sight impairments, or a significant mobility difficulty, mental health conditions or learning difficulties.

Under the Equality Act of 2010, disability is a Protected Characteristic and as such, people who are identified as having a disability are protected under the law.

1.4   It is unlawful for education providers to treat a person with disabilities less favourably for a reason related to that disability or fail to make **reasonable adjustments** to prevent the learner or employees being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

1.5   The Accessibility Policy is an 'umbrella' policy which encompasses existing policies and action/development plans, implemented and monitored by the Principal and Senior Leadership Team, the SENCO and trustees on the Trust Board.

This Accessibility Policy is linked to the following policies and documents:

- The UTC Improvement Plan
- The Equality and Diversity Policy
- The Assessment Policy
- The Health and Safety Policy
- The Special Educational Needs (SEND) Policy
- The Special Educational Needs (SEND) Information Report
- The Safeguarding Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- The Lockdown Procedures
- The Educational Visits Policy

2   ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

2.1   Students across both Key Stages have an appropriate (differentiated and personalised) curriculum to fit their needs. When a student's individual needs have been identified on admission to a course, a learner support plan can be put in place will can include:

- Study skills
- British Sign Language
- Technical support from the behaviour and welfare team and the loan of technical equipment.
- One-to-one support for students with dyslexia or dyspraxia
- One-to-one support and in-class support for students with mental health and well-being or behavioural difficulties.
- Access to specialist support, adaptations and technology.
- Adaptations and technology for visually impaired students.

3   ACCESS TO PASTORAL SUPPORT

3.1   Principal and Health and Safety Officer are responsible for monitoring site accessibility. The following policies/procedures underpin the UTC commitment to site accessibility for students, staff and visitors:

- The Health and Safety Policy

- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

- The Equality and Diversity Policy

- The SEND Policy

- The Lockdown Procedures

- The Educational Visits Policy

Principal Features of UTCW Current Provision are:

- All of the UTC site is wheelchair accessible;

- There is a lift to all floors;

- Disabled toilets are available;

- There is appropriate space for students to work individually or as part of a small group;

- There is clear, visual signage;

- The physical space is safe and welcoming;

- A number of staff are certified First Aiders and Fire Marshalls;

- A number of staff have been trained in the use of the Epi-pen.

- An annual audit of the site is undertaken by the Health and Safety Officer with the Principal;

- The Trust Board receive a report completed by the Health and Safety Officer at every meeting;

- The Health and Safety Officer produces risk assessments for two purposes: for activities and for groups of students and for specific students (generic

for their time at the UTC and/or for specific activities or to take into account their specific disability);

- The Business Director produces a risk assessment for pregnant employees and this is monitored on a 3 monthly basis.

- The medical conditions of students affecting health and safety and site accessibility are shared on a need-to-know basis by the Principal, SENCO and relevant staff;

- External professionals support the UTC as required;

- There are designated drop off areas for disabled access at the front of the building;

- If assistance is required, the Reception staff will be informed and a member of staff will assist the disabled person into the building.

4   ACCESS TO INFORMATION

4.1   All relevant policies are approved by the Trust Board and the schedule of policies identifies dates for review. The Principal is responsible for monitoring access to information to ensure that students, parents/carers, staff and visitors have access to the information they need, with due regard to confidentiality;

The UTC ensures that requests for information comply with statutory access established by:

- The Freedom of Information Act (2000)
- The Data Protection Act (1998)
- The General Data Protection Regulation (from May 2018);
- The Equality Act (2010)
- Other legislation that provides right of access.

Principal Features of UTCW Current Provision are:

- The UTC has an agreed policy for responding to requests for information;

- Relevant documents are posted on, and may be downloaded from the UTC web site or hard copies may be requested at a small charge;

- Parents/carers/students may request copies of student record files, including paper and electronic files. A small charge will be levied for administration and photocopying charges;

- Parents/students may not be given access to records which contain information on other staff/students which would breach the Data Protection Act (1998) or will breach the General Data Protection Regulation (May 2018);

- All requests for information should be made, preferably in writing, to the Data Protection Officer;

- Any complaints should be addressed through the UTC Complaints Procedure, available on the UTC website.

4.2   Information Provided by UTCW

Students have access to information through:

- Regular reporting of their progress in written reports from teachers;

- Feedback from their subject teachers (verbal and written) relating to their work completed in class;

- Feedback at Parents' Evenings and other individual meetings with UTC staff;

- Reviews from enhanced monitoring through Individual Behaviour plans and Intervention plans etc.;

- The SEND review process;

- Representation on/by the Student Leadership Team.

Parents/Carers have access to information through:

- The regular reporting of their child's progress in written reports from teachers;

- Teachers' written comments in their child's books / folders;

- Letters, newsletters, emails and text messages from the UTC Principal and staff;

- Telephone conversations and meetings with UTC staff, including Personal Academic Tutors and Key Stage 4 / Key Stage 5 Pastoral Leaders;

- Talking to teachers at Parents' Evenings;
- Through appointments with teachers, e.g. SEND reviews, reviewing Individual Behaviour plans, reviewing Intervention plans;
- Meetings with relevant external professionals supporting the work of the UTC;
- By prior appointment to visit the UTC;
- Specific requests for information (see above);
- The UTC website;
- 'Open' events for prospective students and their parents/carers;
- The UTC Prospectus.

Visitors / external agencies / individuals have access to information (on a need-to-know basis only)

- The UTC website;
- Contact with professionals within the UTC;
- By written request to the Principal

4.3   Accessibility of Information

The UTC aims to provide information in an accessible format and will respond to individual needs and requests as they arise.

For example:

- The UTC will seek support from outside agencies to provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, audiotape or Braille for students, prospective students or parents/carers who have difficulty with standard forms of printed information;

- The UTC will also make information for parents/carers available in a range of different formats, should the need arise, and be aware of font size and legibility when producing written information;

- The UTC will, if the need arises, aim to provide translation or interpreter services to ensure all parents/carers/students can access information.

5 MEDICATION MANAGEMENT AND PERSONAL CARE

5.1 If a student with disabilities is required to take daily medication while on the premises, this must be discussed with the Welfare Officer/School Nurse to ensure that the disposal of any waste e.g. containers, tubes or needles is correctly managed. The UTCW Medical Conditions Policy provides details of procedures to be followed.

5.2 If a student with disabilities requires assistance from staff to administer medication, this must be risk assessed and only permitted after the member of staff has received appropriate training.

5.3 If the student with disabilities requires assistance with personal care, the carer, or the member of staff must have appropriate training to provide this care. For example – safe use of hoists.

6 CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

6.1 In order for UTCW to provide disability-related support, the person with disabilities will need to provide the College with:

- Information regarding the nature of the disability

- The type of support required

UTCW may need to share information in order to provide the most appropriate support. This will be done sensitively and all processed will comply with the UTC policy on Data Protection and GDPR (2018).

7 MONITORING AND REVIEW

7.1 This policy will be reviewed annually by the Business Manager in conjunction with the Principal and the relevant Link Governor, and also updated in response to relevant legislation and/or whenever any accessibility arrangements are amended throughout the year.