BORDERS
COLLEGE

Regionally Focused – Globally Engaged
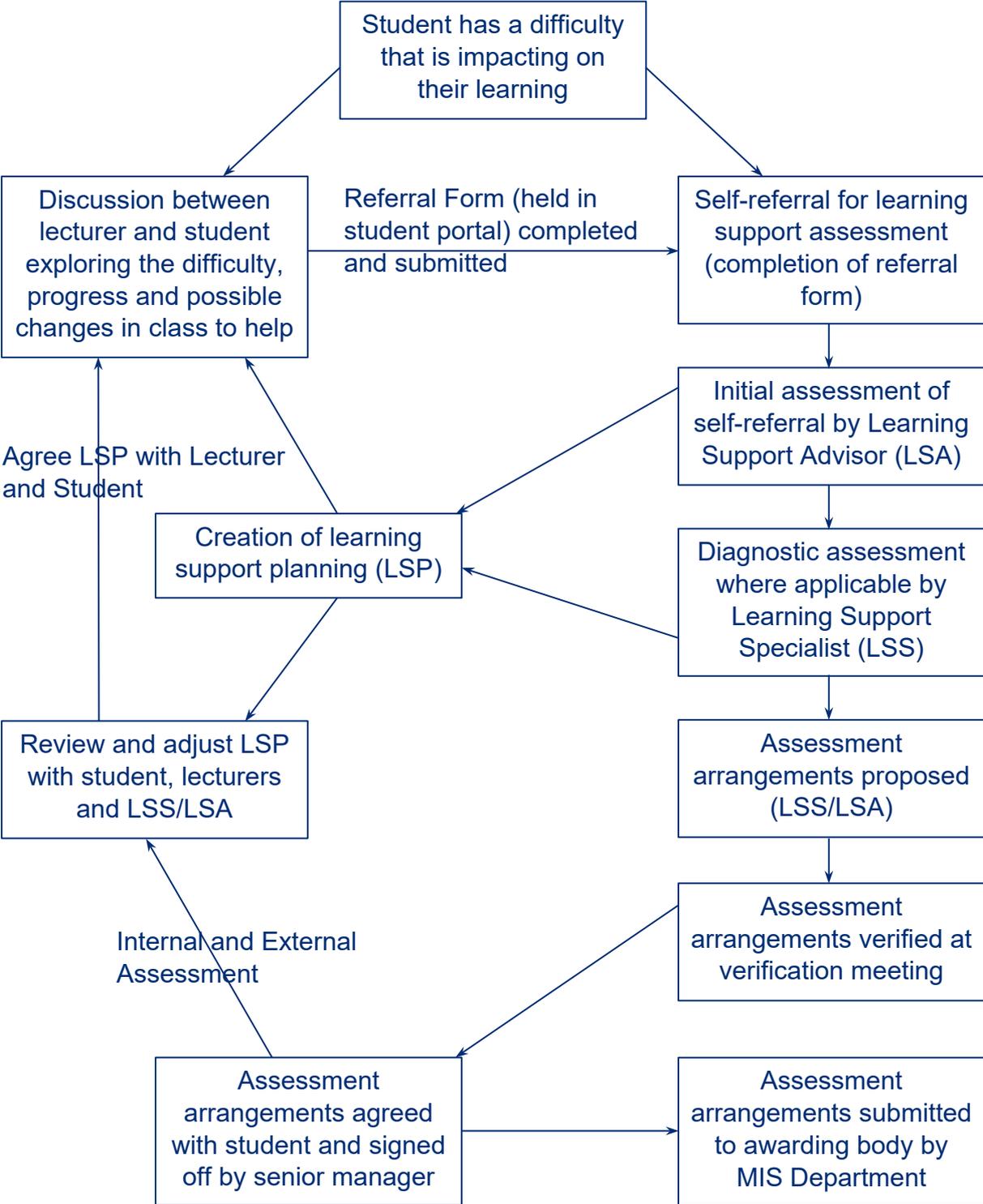
Assessment Arrangements Procedure

May 2021

History of Changes

Version	Description of Change	Authored by	Date
1.1	Introduction of a new policy and procedure document for assessment arrangements for all awarding bodies used by the College	D Killean & C Elliott	27.10.2016
1.2	Updated document to include revised Assessment Arrangements Information for Centres dated August 2017	C Elliott	29.8.17
1.3	Minor updates including the inclusion of Data Protection legislation into the procedure and the review date to be every two years. Policy now a separate document	C Elliott	24.5.18
1.4	Updates to job roles and changes in reporting structure to bring ownership into the Learning Support function	C Nairn	24.3.21

SUMMARY FLOW DIAGRAM – Assessment Arrangements

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                    ┌──────────────────────┐
                    │  Student has a       │
                    │  difficulty that is  │
                    │  impacting on their  │
                    │  learning            │
                    └──────────────────────┘
                      ↙                  ↘
┌──────────────────────┐              ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Discussion between   │ Referral     │ Self-referral for    │
│ lecturer and student │ Form (held   │ learning support     │
│ exploring the        │ in student   │ assessment           │
│ difficulty, progress │ portal)      │ (completion of       │
│ and possible changes │ completed    │ referral form)       │
│ in class to help     │ and submitted│                      │
└──────────────────────┘              └──────────────────────┘
                                                  ↓
  Agree LSP with Lecturer           ┌──────────────────────┐
  and Student                       │ Initial assessment   │
                                    │ of self-referral by  │
        ┌──────────────────────┐    │ Learning Support     │
        │ Creation of learning │    │ Advisor (LSA)        │
        │ support planning      │   └──────────────────────┘
        │ (LSP)                 │              ↓
        └──────────────────────┘   ┌──────────────────────┐
                                    │ Diagnostic assessment│
                                    │ where applicable by  │
                                    │ Learning Support     │
                                    │ Specialist (LSS)     │
                                    └──────────────────────┘
                                                  ↓
┌──────────────────────┐           ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Review and adjust    │           │ Assessment           │
│ LSP with student,    │           │ arrangements         │
│ lecturers and        │           │ proposed (LSS/LSA)   │
│ LSS/LSA              │           └──────────────────────┘
└──────────────────────┘                      ↓
  Internal and External            ┌──────────────────────┐
  Assessment                       │ Assessment           │
                                    │ arrangements         │
                                    │ verified at          │
                                    │ verification meeting │
                                    └──────────────────────┘
┌──────────────────────┐           ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Assessment           │           │ Assessment           │
│ arrangements agreed  │ →         │ arrangements         │
│ with student and     │           │ submitted to         │
│ signed off by senior │           │ awarding body by     │
│ manager              │           │ MIS Department       │
└──────────────────────┘           └──────────────────────┘
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1. Procedure

1.1 This section aims to provide information for all staff on assessment arrangements and the procedure to follow to verify those arrangements for students who have a disability and/or an identified additional support need.

1.2 It also aims to provide guidance to Learning Support staff to ensure that appropriate assessment arrangements are provided for those students who are eligible. The College recognises the importance of having an effective quality assurance system for identifying and verifying students' need for assessment arrangements.

1.3 The College's assessment arrangements quality assurance system includes the following processes:

- Identify a student's assessment need
- Determine the most appropriate assessment arrangement
- Verify the student's need for the assessment arrangement in an internal or external assessment
- Authorise the submission of a request for an assessment arrangement in an external assessment

All of the processes outlined above must be documented, implemented and monitored to meet the specific awarding body requirements. At all stages, professional dialogue is essential between teaching staff, learning support staff, those responsible for quality assurance, and the MIS team who are responsible for submitting requests for assessment arrangements to the awarding bodies. In some cases, other key professionals, such as therapists, specialist practitioners or educational psychologists, may also be involved.

1.4 Identifying the student's assessment need
Wherever possible, the student's likely difficulties in accessing the unit or course assessment should be identified before he or she embarks on the unit or course. In some cases, however, the student's disability or difficulties may only become apparent, or be disclosed, during the student's course of study. The need for assessment support could be identified by the student, the subject lecturer or learning support staff.

1.5 Determine the most appropriate assessment arrangement
This is the stage in the internal quality assurance system where the College determines what assessment arrangements will be required. For example, this could be quite straightforward e.g. the provision of a Braille question paper for a blind candidate in the external assessment or it could require detailed discussion with the awarding body to ensure that the integrity of the assessment is not compromised by the proposed assessment arrangement.

The specification for each unit or course lists the evidence that is required to show that the outcomes and assessment/competence standards have been achieved. For example, students may be required to show that they have knowledge, specific communication skills, practical skills, or the ability to work in a particular way.

The specification will also set out the assessment conditions. If the student is able to achieve the outcomes and assessment/competence standards, but is unable to do so using the suggested assessment activities outlined in the specification, there is often scope to propose alternative ways of generating the necessary evidence.

Assessment evidence can often be drawn from a variety of activities and presented in a variety of formats. Assessors should use their professional judgment, subject knowledge and understanding of the student's difficulties (in consultation with learning support staff) to determine the most appropriate ways to generate the necessary evidence of attainment.

1.6   Verify the student's need for an assessment arrangement
This is a key stage in the internal quality assurance system and it is important that the College can provide awarding bodies with documented evidence of the verification process and the staff involved. Verifying the student's need for assessment arrangements is extremely important for two reasons:

- The College need to be assured that the decision to provide, or not to provide, a particular assessment arrangement can be justified, and that it meets with the awarding body guidance and relevant equality legislation.

- That the College has in place a robust internal assessment arrangement verification system to ensure that all relevant information and evidence has been gathered and fully considered in determining the provision of assessment arrangements for a student in any internal or external assessment.

The Learning Support Specialist in conjunction with the Head of Student Services will verify and authorise any request for assessment arrangements in an external assessment. These requests will be submitted to the MIS department by the required date to ensure that they are received prior to the awarding body deadline.

In submitting a request for an assessment arrangement in an external assessment, or providing an assessment arrangement in an internal assessment, the college is acknowledging that it has met its responsibilities in terms of quality assuring the eligibility of the student and the appropriateness of the assessment arrangement. The college is also confirming that it has obtained the written consent of the candidate to share their personal data with the awarding body and to submit the request.

1.7 Documented evidence to support the provision of assessment arrangements

1.7.1 Evidence of the college's assessment arrangements internal verification meetings

The college must provide documented evidence of the meetings/discussions at which relevant candidate information and evidence was considered before the provision of an assessment arrangement in an internal assessment and/or before submitting the request to the awarding body for an assessment arrangement in an external assessment.

1.7.2 Evidence that students have agreed to the provision of assessment arrangement and to their details being disclosed to the awarding body

It is important to have confirmation from students that they have been involved in discussions about, and have agreed to, the assessment arrangements being provided, and that they intend to use them. Consent must be obtained from students for relevant details of their disability/additional support needs to be disclosed to the awarding body in line with Data Protection legislation and guidance including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and College policies. For some students, it may be necessary to involve parents/carers in the discussion.

1.7.3 Evidence of the students' disabilities/additional support needs and how this affects them in the learning and teaching situation

There must be documented evidence of the nature and extent of the student's learning need, and how it has impacted on teaching and learning. Information, where relevant, from professionals e.g. educational psychologist, may also be available. This evidence should be contained within the Learning Support Plan (LSP) and additional reports, assessments, minutes of meetings, will be held within the Learning Support shared area.

1.7.4 Evidence of the need for current assessment support, how this is met, and how it relates to the arrangements being requested or provided

In nearly all cases, students requiring specific assessment arrangements will need similar arrangements to be made during their course to ensure they are not disadvantaged. There should be documented evidence that links this ongoing support to the assessment arrangements needed for the awarding body.

1.7.5 Evidence that varying needs across the curriculum areas have been taken into account

There should be documented evidence that the need for assessment arrangements has been considered on a subject-by-subject basis.
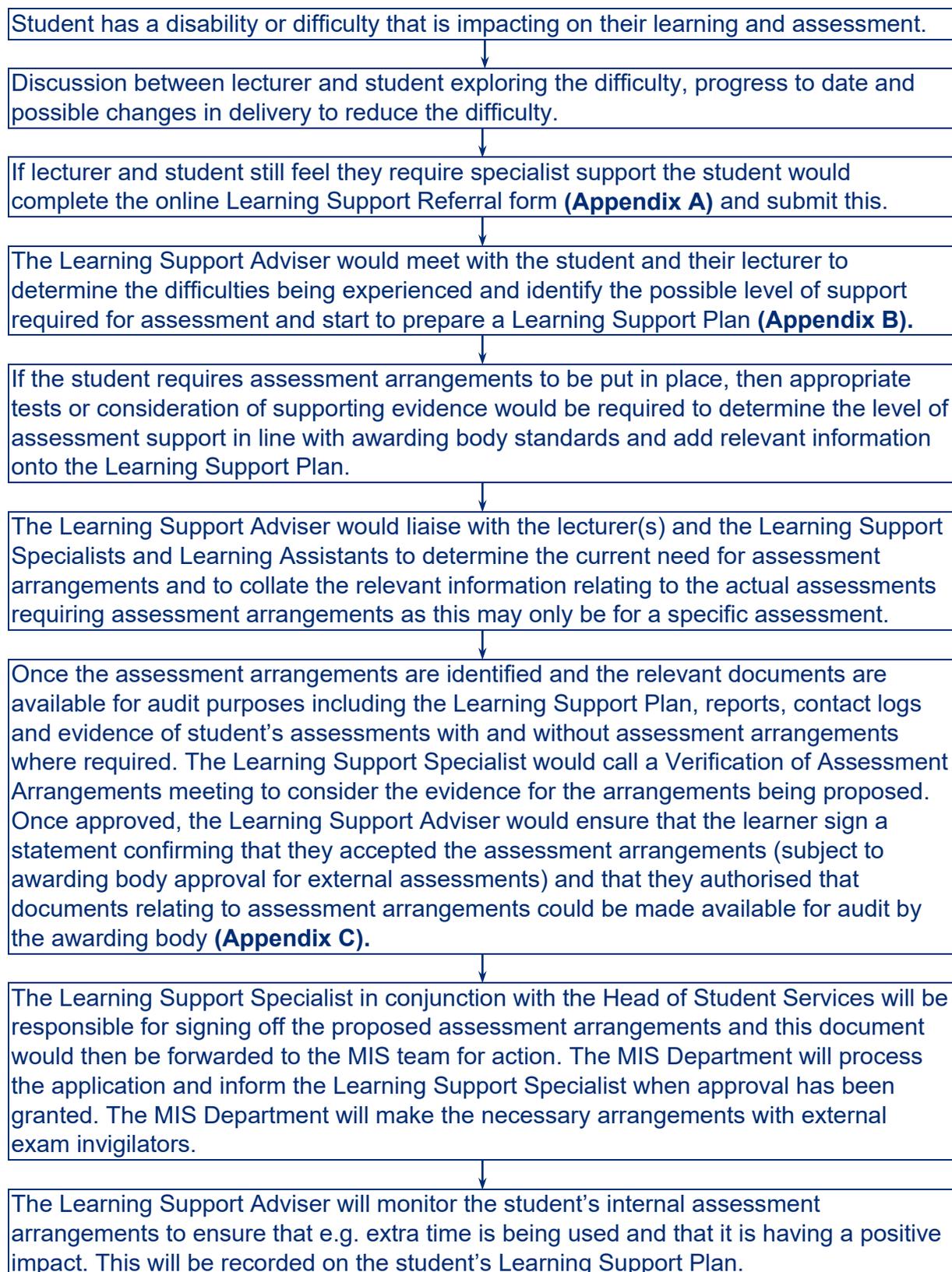
1.7.6 Evidence for specific types of assessment arrangements
For some types of assessment arrangements, there should be specific documented information/evidence of the need for the particular arrangement.

1.7.7 Evidence of a system for the management of assessment arrangements which is supported by college senior management
There is a requirement for awarding bodies to see evidence of a whole-college approach to the provision of assessment arrangements, for example, a reference made to this in the College's Access and Inclusion Policy.

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2. Verification of Assessment Arrangements Procedure Flow Diagram

Student has a disability or difficulty that is impacting on their learning and assessment.

Discussion between lecturer and student exploring the difficulty, progress to date and possible changes in delivery to reduce the difficulty.

If lecturer and student still feel they require specialist support the student would complete the online Learning Support Referral form **(Appendix A)** and submit this.

The Learning Support Adviser would meet with the student and their lecturer to determine the difficulties being experienced and identify the possible level of support required for assessment and start to prepare a Learning Support Plan **(Appendix B).**

If the student requires assessment arrangements to be put in place, then appropriate tests or consideration of supporting evidence would be required to determine the level of assessment support in line with awarding body standards and add relevant information onto the Learning Support Plan.

The Learning Support Adviser would liaise with the lecturer(s) and the Learning Support Specialists and Learning Assistants to determine the current need for assessment arrangements and to collate the relevant information relating to the actual assessments requiring assessment arrangements as this may only be for a specific assessment.

Once the assessment arrangements are identified and the relevant documents are available for audit purposes including the Learning Support Plan, reports, contact logs and evidence of student's assessments with and without assessment arrangements where required. The Learning Support Specialist would call a Verification of Assessment Arrangements meeting to consider the evidence for the arrangements being proposed. Once approved, the Learning Support Adviser would ensure that the learner sign a statement confirming that they accepted the assessment arrangements (subject to awarding body approval for external assessments) and that they authorised that documents relating to assessment arrangements could be made available for audit by the awarding body **(Appendix C).**

The Learning Support Specialist in conjunction with the Head of Student Services will be responsible for signing off the proposed assessment arrangements and this document would then be forwarded to the MIS team for action. The MIS Department will process the application and inform the Learning Support Specialist when approval has been granted. The MIS Department will make the necessary arrangements with external exam invigilators.

The Learning Support Adviser will monitor the student's internal assessment arrangements to ensure that e.g. extra time is being used and that it is having a positive impact. This will be recorded on the student's Learning Support Plan.

3. Internal and External assessments

3.1 Internal Assessments

You do not have to submit a request to the awarding body for the provision of assessment arrangements for internal assessment, provided that the student's need for the assessment arrangement has been appropriately verified and the assessment arrangement required does not compromise the assessment/competence standards.

3.2 External Assessments

It is important that requests for assessment arrangements are submitted on the appropriate document. For example, completion of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) – Assessment Arrangements Request (AAR) online system and for the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) – Form 8 – Application for Access Arrangements. The MIS team will provide guidance for other awarding bodies.

If you are in any doubt as to whether a particular assessment arrangement would be acceptable in an external assessment it is important that you contact the MIS team for clarification. The MIS team will access these for you or can provide the link to the most up-to-date arrangements.

4. Examples of assessment arrangements

4.1 Assistance in aural assessments

Technological aids which provide better access to sound, such as radio aids for deaf candidates, may be used in an aural assessment. Where a candidate requires extra time for a listening assessment presented to them on CD or Audio file, the College can request a version with extended pauses.

4.2 Live presentation

Listening arrangements that are normally presented to candidates on CD/Audio file may be presented live to enable deaf candidates to lip-read. Copies of the transcript for the listening assessment will be provided for the reader's use.

Before the start of the examination/assessment, and in isolation, the person reading the transcript to the candidate should be allowed sufficient time to read through the transcript and hear the CD/Audio file through. This is to enable them to match the speed and style of the recording. If required, an additional copy may be requested for this purpose. The transcript should then be read to the student with appropriate pauses.

4.3 Extra time

Only students who have been identified as having a particular disability/difficulty, and who are placed at a **substantial disadvantage** and need extra time are eligible. It is important that the necessary evidence is provided to support the provision of extra time. There must also be monitoring of the student's ongoing difficulty in completing assessment tasks and the overall use of extra time in any timed class assessments to accurately estimate the amount of extra time required. Too much extra time in an assessment may be tiring for the student and may ultimately disadvantage them.

4.4 Use of ICT or Digital Question Papers

For many disabled students and/or those with additional support needs, using ICT to type or to use speech recognition software provides a more effective and independent means of communication than using human support such as a scribe.

4.5 Practical Assistant

A practical assistant is someone who carries out some tasks in a practical assessment under the explicit instruction of the student. This is permitted for students who have difficulties that prevent them carrying out practical assessments safely and independently. Approval to use this arrangement depends on both the assessment and competence/assessment standards for the practical assessment and the degree of assistance that is required by the student.

4.6 Prompters

A prompter is someone who can be present during an assessment to ensure a candidate stays on task. A prompter may be required where a candidate has little or no sense of time, or has significant concentration difficulties. The prompter may sit beside the candidate to keep their attention on the assessment.

4.7 Readers

The use of a human reader can be allowed to meet the needs of students who have **substantial** difficulties with reading text and who cannot access the assessment material by any other more appropriate means, for example, by using a text/screen reader.

A human reader reads out text verbatim in an assessment to enable a student to access it. This may involve reading out all written instructions and questions to the candidate, or only certain questions and words as directed by the student. Students may also ask that their written responses are read back to them.

4.8 Scribe

The use of a scribe can be allowed to meet the needs of students who have **substantial** difficulties with writing and who cannot produce their written responses by any other more appropriate means, for example by using appropriate ICT.

A scribe records a student's dictated responses. This may involve scribing all the student's responses, or the candidate may request only certain questions or words are scribed. The scribe cannot enhance or refine the student's dictated responses, but can use their discretion with regard to the correct spelling of a word and, where necessary, correct the punctuation.

4.9   Using sign in assessments

With the exception of English, Gaidhlig, Gaelic (Learners) and Modern Languages, Deaf students may have the contents of a question paper or assessment task signed to them by a sign communicator in any external assessment. Deaf students may also sign their responses, which must be recorded, translated and transcribed prior to submission.

4.10 Supervised breaks or rest periods in a timed assessment

Rest periods and supervised breaks are permitted during a timed assessment. The time taken for the break does not count towards the time allowed for the assessment concerned. The College must ensure that a member of staff supervises the student if they are out of the room as this is not the invigilator's responsibility.

4.11 Transcription with correction of spelling and punctuation

The use of transcription with correction may be allowed to meet the needs of students who have **substantial** difficulties with handwriting and spelling and/or punctuation and who cannot produce written text by any other more appropriate means, for example using ICT with appropriate software.

The transcriber may only correct errors of spelling and punctuation. The transcript must otherwise be an exact copy of the student's original script

**4.12 Assessment arrangements for candidates who have English as an
          additional language (EAL)**

Candidates who have English as an additional language, **and whose knowledge of English could impair their ability to communicate their attainment**, are allowed the use of a bilingual translation dictionary. This is allowed in both internal and external assessments, with the exception of assessments in English, ESOL and the candidate's first language.

All candidates who need to use a bilingual dictionary are allowed extra time of 10 minutes per hour to use the dictionary.

The College must determine whether a candidate needs to use the bilingual dictionary.

Where a lecturer believes a learner requires the use of a bilingual dictionary they should request that this is assessed by a member of the ESOL team and approved by the appropriate Curriculum Learning Manager (CLM).

Assessment Arrangements Procedure

The CLM will inform the MIS team that a request should be submitted for approved candidates to the awarding body for external assessments. MIS will inform the lecturer, the CLM will liaise with the Learning Support Specialists to make arrangements for this assessment arrangement with the exam invigilators.

For internal assessments, approval is required from the CLM but there is no requirement to seek the awarding body's approval.

Word Lists – the use of word lists for subject specific words not found in some bilingual dictionaries is subject to prior approval by the awarding body.

Electronic Dictionary – The use of an electronic dictionary is allowed provided it functions as an English/first language dictionary only (word for word) and does not contain explanations or definitions of words and phrases. Any personal user word lists etc. must be disabled.

Online Dictionaries – Centres may only use an online bilingual dictionary, where it is confirmed to be a word for word dictionary and is printed out as a paper version or downloaded and used as a stand-alone file on a PC by the centre in advance of the examination. No access to networks/internet should be permitted on the day of the examinations to access these dictionaries.

Appendices

Appendix A: Online Learning Support Request form – Updated version

Appendix B: Learning Support Plan

Appendix C: Assessment Arrangements Agreement

Learning Support Request

Supporting achievement at Borders College

If you would like to disclose a learning support need or speak to someone about learning support at college, please complete the online learning support form at:
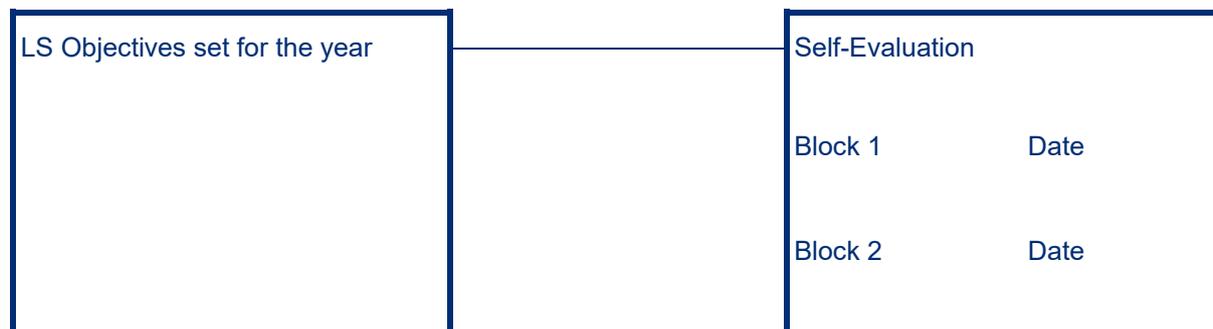
[Learning Support Referral Form](#)

You will then be contacted by a member of the Learning Support team.

Learning Support Plan

Individual Learning Support Plan

Student Name	BC number	Course	Course Tutor	Learning Advisor Responsible	Campus	Days in College

Summary of Learning Support Needs	
Tests	DAST Screening ☐ Date: Cerium Overlay ☐ Date: Other Significant testing (Please specify) ☐
Alternative Assessment Arrangements	Reader ☐ Scribe ☐ Extra Time ☐ Separate Accommodation ☐ Assessment Technology (Please Specify) ☐ Verification of Assessment Arrangements – Appendix C signed ☐ Date:
Health and Wellbeing	
Any Other Relevant	

LS Objectives set for the year	Self-Evaluation Block 1 Date Block 2 Date

Contact Log

Date	Staff Initial	Role	Comment

I agree/do not agree to the sharing of relevant information relating to my disability/difficulty with staff or the awarding body in line with Data Protection legislation and College Policies.

Signed: (Learner)...Date:...........................

Assessment Arrangement Agreement

Borders College
Assessment Arrangements Agreement

Student Name: **Name of Programme:**

After discussions with lecturers and learning support staff, the following arrangements will be trialled for assessments. If they make a significant difference to your performance they can then be put in place for summative assessments.

If you have any concerns regarding these arrangements please contact the Learning Support Adviser in your faculty.

Subject/Level	Assessment Arrangement
Comment:	

I agree/do not agree to the above assessment arrangements and for the disclosure of relevant information relating to my disability/difficulty to the awarding body in line with GDPR.

Student Signature:..Date:........................

Students under 16 years of age also require the signature of a parent/guardian.

Signature of Parent/Guardian:..Date:........................

Please note: If this agreement is not signed and returned to the Learning Support Adviser it will be assumed that you do not wish to use the above assessment arrangements.

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Assessment Arrangements Procedure

Status:	Approved by JCC
Policy Dated:	May 2021
Author:	Head of Student Services
Review Date:	May 2023
Equality Impact Assessed:	September 2017

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