



# Personal Assistant Handbook

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# 1. Introduction

The Learning Support Centre provides you with this handbook to give you information on all aspects of working as a Personal Assistant.

Please make sure you are familiar with its content before you commence working and if at any time you have any queries that are not answered in this handbook, please contact your line manager (the LSC Support Coordinator) who will be more than happy to assist you.

This handbook should be read in conjunction with your terms of employment and job description.

The Learning Support Centre would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the team and look forward to working with you.

# 2. Roles & Responsibilities

In accepting employment with The Learning Support Centre it is assumed that you have read, understood and undertaken to abide by the provisions contained in this handbook in so far as:

- You understand the nature of the work you have agreed to undertake and have satisfied yourself that your skills and experience are sufficient to complete the work
- You are fit to undertake this work and understand that if at any time you become unfit to continue with the work you must inform your line manager immediately
- You have an obligation to keep The Learning Support Centre informed of any changes to your DBS disclosure
- You attend mandatory training requirements as deemed necessary to carry out the requirements of the student group supported in this position.

## Duties and Responsibilities

- **To assist students according to their needs and following their individual care plans.**
- Know and respect the rights of the students that use the service
- Show respect for the students dignity and personality, in the delivery of care in both verbal and non-verbal communication
- Observe and inform your line manager of any changes in the student's needs or state of health, whether physical, emotional, psychological or social
- Record appropriate information and observations on the students care log
- Understand and apply current policies
- Contribute to the continuity and high standards of care of the students
- Assist in the maintenance of a safe and healthy working environment
- Report any bad practice if genuinely suspected or witnessed
- Attend staff meetings and training when required
- Assist and facilitate the training of new staff members.

### **3. Conduct Expected Of The Learning Support Centre Staff.**

You are expected at all times to conduct yourself in a manner which is appropriate to your status as a Personal Assistant. You should endeavour to carry out all work assigned to you diligently and conscientiously. You should treat all fellow workers and students with courtesy and respect.

You should follow all rules, regulations and guidelines established in the workplace at all times and if you have any queries you should address these to your line manager.

You are expected to take all reasonable steps to safeguard your own safety and the safety of any other person who may be present or be affected by your actions and comply with the Health and Safety policies of the company and student risk assessments.

You should keep your line manager informed at all times of all relevant changes in your circumstances and any effecting your working environment, especially anything that may affect your ability to carry out the your day to day duties.

If you are for any reason unable to attend work you should inform The Learning Support Centre at the earliest possible time to enable cover to be arranged to ensure the continuity of care to the student. This can be done by ringing the out of hour's line or contacting the office directly. Please do not send email or text messages to report sickness.

You should always remember you are a guest in the student's home and should be helpful and courteous at all times.

You must carry out your duties in accordance with the care plan kept in the students' home.

You must always arrive on the agreed time for your shift, if you are running late please ensure you communicate this to the student you are supporting and your line manager.

The Learning Support Centre operates a no smoking policy. You must not smoke in a student's home, designated areas are provided for this.

You are strictly forbidden to take another person who has not been engaged by The Learning Support Centre into a student's home during the execution of your duties (this includes children).

### **4. Induction Training Procedures**

The Learning Support Centre is committed to providing the following training for all its employees

- Common Induction Standards

- Moving and Handling
- Food Hygiene Awareness

- First Aid Awareness
- Safeguarding Adults
- Infection Control
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion

The Learning Support Centre will ensure that part of your introduction to the company includes 1:1 sessions with your line manager who will cover the necessary processes which will enable you to carry out your duties effectively.

## **5. Health & Pregnancy**

Whilst working for The Learning Support Centre you are required to;

- Report any injury and declare yourself as unfit if you are suffering from vomiting, diarrhoea or a rash.
- Inform The Learning Support Centre if you become pregnant, The Company can then complete the necessary risk assessment.

## **MRSA**

Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) is the name given to a range of strains of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. MRSA exists on the hands or in the nose of around one third of the healthy population and is usually harmless. It can however prove fatal if it enters the bloodstream of an already weakened person.

It is usually transmitted by touch. The single most effective measure for preventing MRSA contamination is washing the hands before and after every person contact.

In addition

- Use liquid soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub when washing hands – make sure it comes into contact with all areas.
- Remove wrist and preferably hand jewellery at the beginning of each shift where you will be regularly decontaminating your hands.
- Wear disposable gloves and aprons when attending to personal care
- Dispose of any gloves and aprons after use
- Cover cuts and breaks in your skin

## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

As a responsible employer The Learning Support Centre will supply you with Gloves, Aprons and Alcohol based gel hand sanitizer to ensure protection from cross contamination.

Blue gloves and aprons must be worn for all food/drink preparation.

White gloves and aprons must be worn when attending to all personal care and laundry.

## **6. Dress Code**

You are required to dress appropriately at all times whilst on duty. Short sleeves are an advantage when carrying out personal care duties. Care workers are to wear closed toe, flat shoes at all times

Due to moving and handling equipment/requirements, long hair should be tied back and off of the face and nails cut short to avoid any unnecessary injuries.

## **7. Health & Safety**

The Learning Support Centre recognises and accepts its duty as an employer for providing a safe healthy workplace and working environment.

Under the Health & Safety at work Act 1974, it is your duty to:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety at work of yourself and any other person who might be affected by your acts or omissions
- Not intentionally or recklessly misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare.

The management of Health and safety at Work Regulations 1992 further requires you to:

- Use any equipment provided in the interests of safety
- Follow health and safety instructions
- Report anything you consider to be a serious danger
- Report any shortcomings in the protection arrangements for health and safety

## **Fire Safety in the student's home**

At the Halls of resident there should be a fire procedure sign on display, please familiarise yourself with this in case of emergency.

Personal Assistant must not endanger their own lives in the event of a fire starting in the home of a student. If it is safe to do so, contain the fire in the room it has ignited in and ring

the emergency services at once. Do not open a door if there is smoke coming from underneath it or if the door or handle is hot to touch. It only takes 3 minutes from ignition of a flame to total destruction of a medium sized room. Do not jeopardise your own safety to save the life of another always ring the fire brigade for assistance.

## **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)**

Cleaning materials can be dangerous if not used strictly in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Gloves may need to be worn when handling certain chemicals. Under no circumstances must chemicals ever be mixed, particularly toilet cleaners and bleaches since this can produce toxic fumes which have resulted in fatalities. Cleaning materials must not

be decanted from one container to another. Cleaning materials must not be used if not clearly labelled.

## **Household Refuse**

Care should be taken to ensure that the refuse is not allowed to accumulate in the house but is deposited in the dustbin or sack outside the home. Any full bags should be carried to the refuse area at Bede Hall and placed inside the large industrial bins provided.

## **Manual Handling**

The Learning Support Centre has a responsibility to train all employees in safe lifting and manual handling, as covered by EEC regulations 1990.

Practical training is essential for safe lifting and handling; the risk associated with lifting and handling is complex.

Lifting and handling should be avoided as far as possible. If a student is found on the floor they must be left unless they can get up without assistance, make them as comfy as possible and contact the emergency services.

Moving and handling using a hoist is always done with 2 members of staff; you must never move a person in a hoist on their own.

You must never use a piece of equipment without having the necessary training to do so.

## **Food Hygiene and Preparation of Meals**

All staff will receive basic training in the principles of food hygiene as part of their induction programme. The potential effects of food contamination can be very serious. The following points must always be observed;

- All surfaces, equipment, fridges, utensils and cutting boards must be clean at all times.
  - Cutting boards and knives used for raw meat must not be used for cooked food/vegetables.
  - Wash hands thoroughly before and after food preparation
  - Cover any cuts or abrasions with a waterproof dressing
  - Clothing should be clean to avoid contamination
  - Use a plastic apron and gloves
  - Check temperature of fridge is maintained at 4 degrees, freezers at -18 degrees.
  - Store vegetables in a cool dry place and wash before use.
  - Do not store raw meat above cooked food.
  - Reheating cooked food is dangerous and not recommended
  - Do not place hot food in the fridge – allow cooling first.
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- Where possible cover food with cling film to prevent contamination from flies.
  - Always follow manufacturers cooking guidelines when preparing a meal.
  - Place all opened food in a plastic container, cover and label when opened.

Any breach or non-observance of the company's Health and Safety policy will constitute a disciplinary offence in respect of which you may be dismissed whether with or without notice or payment in lieu of notice and irrespective of the fact that no warnings have been given.

## **8. Timesheets & Pay Advice**

You are required to complete timesheets provided by The Learning Support Centre on a monthly basis. All timesheets must arrive by 4pm on the Friday before the 20th of the month for payment in that month's wage. Time sheets received after the 20th will be paid the following month.

You will be paid directly into your bank account on the last working day of each month.

## **9. Codes of Practice**

The Learning Support Centre will ensure each new staff member is issued with the 'GENERAL SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL CODES OF PRACTICE'. You will be expected to familiarise yourself with these codes as they form the framework within which you will be working.

## **10. Record Keeping Requirements**

All entries onto the care logs will record the following information;

- Time in and time out
- Details of care provided



- Facts and not descriptions
- Changes in well-being and who this has been reported to
- Creams must be named and the areas they have been applied to
- Legible signature after each entry
- All entries must be made using a black pen/ biro this is for legal purposes.

The Care Coordinator will collect all care logs at the end of each month.

## **11. Procedures for Dealing With Allegations of Abuse or Misconduct**

Any carer who has evidence of an allegation of abuse has a duty of care to make this known confidentially to his/her superior. Carers must not document their suspicions but inform the person that is being abused; they must report this to their line manager to prevent or protect them from further harm.

Personal Assistant must attend a Safeguarding training programme to ensure they fully understand that constitutes to a safeguarding issue:

Examples of abuse

- Physical
- Emotional
- Psychological
- Sexual
- Financial
- Neglect
- Institutional

## **12. Assistance & Administration of Medication Policy**

Personal Assistant must only prompt medication from a monitored dosage system.

**They must not:**

- Insert eye drops
- Ear drops
- Nose drops
- Adhere analgesic patches
- Give medication directly into the body via a feeding tube
- Administer/assist/dispense tablets from an unmarked container
- Administer tablets directly into a person's mouth

There will always be an exception to this rule but training from a qualified person must take place and a record kept on that care workers file for that particular student. If you are

unsure what you can and cannot do with respects to the assistance you can provide a student please contact your line manager.

## **13. Drug & Alcohol Policy**

The Learning Support Centre recognises that alcohol and drug abuse are to be treated primarily as health problems. This policy aims to ensure that staffs facing these problems are motivated to

Seek appropriate counselling and treatment in the knowledge that The Learning Support Centre will respond sensitively without recourse for disciplinary procedures in the first instance.

Those that recognise that they are suffering from these problems need to seek advice, assistance and treatment as soon as possible. Support and guidance can initially be obtained from your GP

## **Good Practice at Work**

The consumption of alcohol by Personal Assistants is inappropriate prior to the commencement of duty, at any time whilst on duty; it will result in unacceptable work performance.

Personal Assistants must adhere to the company's policy on alcohol and drug abuse and should raise any issues of concern relating to the latter to their manager which will be treated in strictest confidence.

## **Recognising substance abuse**

Substance abuse may be the cause or the symptoms of a variety of problems at work. The earlier that individuals with difficulties are identified the greater the likely success of treatment.

A combination of some of the following characteristics may indicate the presence of substance abuse problem:

- Absenteeism.
- Deterioration in time-keeping
- Changes in appearance
- Lack of concern over personal hygiene
- Changes in mental condition.

Any Personal Assistant that are found to be under the influence of drugs or substance abuse whilst on duty will be subject to a disciplinary action and subsequent dismissal.

## 14. Data Protection

The Learning Support Centre has a legal obligation to comply with all appropriate legislation and guidance issued by, for example CQC, Health and Social Care Act, Essential Standards of Quality and Safety etc.

You are required to familiarise yourself with the following requirements for the disclosure of information under the Data Protection Act

The Learning Support centre recognises that the Data Protection act is to avoid causing harm to individuals in the main, this means

- Information kept secure
- Information is password protected
- Information is kept in locked cabinets

You are safeguarded against any possible misuse of personal information held by us through our strict control of its use, and in doing this we do our best to ensure that such information is:

- Kept for a valid reason
- Accurate
- Up to date
- Kept confidential

You are required by The Learning Support Centre to notify us if there is a change to your personal details.

## 15. Confidentiality

Any student information obtained by you during the course of your duties is confidential and should not be disclosed to any third party if it is not legitimately in connection with their treatment or any other official investigation.

Please take care with student details when on university campus to ensure that they are not in any undue danger of being accessed by unauthorised individuals. Where a student is considered incapable of giving consent, consent will be obtained from their advocate.

Information may only be shared if:

- It can be justified in the public interest (normally where the disclosure is essential to protect the service user or someone else from risk of significant harm)
- It is required by law or court order.

In the course of your employment you will have access to and be entrusted with information in respect of the business of the company and the affairs of its clients all of which information is/or may be confidential.

## **16. Quality Assurance**

The Learning Support Centre is committed to providing the highest standard of service to all our students.

The company's services will be measured by the quality and professionalism of its staff.

We therefore commit to the following standards:

Recruitment and Selection will comply with the requirements of the:

- Essential Standards of Quality and Safety
- Disclosure & Barring Service
- Equal Opportunities Code: Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and 1999
- Data Protection Act 1998
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

On this basis pre-employment checks will include obtaining:

- Two written professional references
- Disclosure and Barring Service Check
- Equal Opportunities Monitoring form
- Written application form

## **17. Training & Development**

The Learning Support Centre is committed to provide all training requirements to ensure safe practice of all its staff and students. All staff must attend mandatory training when notified.

### **Annual Personal Development Reviews (PDR) & Supervisions**

The Learning Support Centre will observe your working practice within the first 3 months of employment and at subsequent periods thereafter. There will be an annual appraisal and supervision meetings though out the year. These meetings will give us the opportunity to build a personal development plan and monitor your performance to identify any further training needs. They are also an opportunity for you to raise any concerns and issues you may have.

Personal development reviews are carried out based on feedback received from students and cover the following areas:-

- General levels of service including punctuality, attitude and ability to carry out practical tasks.
- Training needs
- Personal development
- Any other issues, including progress since last appraisal.

## **18. Complaints, Grievance, Disciplinary And Appeal Process Summary**

During the course of your work with The Learning Support Centre you will come across complaints from students. It is the policy of The Learning Support Centre to deal with any expressions of dissatisfaction in a professional and precise manner. All complaints will be investigated within a specific time limit and resolved as soon as possible, this is the responsibility of The Learning Support Centre Management team. You may however, be requested to put details of any complaints against another member of staff or student in writing, provide a statement of an allegations and/or attend an interview to investigate details further. Please read LSC Care Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure for further details.

The following offences may result in staff dismissal (this list is not exhaustive)

- Theft
- Wilful damage to property belonging to the company, its students or other employees.
- Fraud
- Working under the influence of drugs/alcohol
- Physical violence/fighting
- Bullying
- Gross insubordination or use of aggressive behaviour or excessive bad language.
- Gross immorality or sexual harassment
- Deliberate falsification of records
- Unlawful discrimination against fellow employees/students

## **19. Handling Students Finances**

When handling the finances of students Personal Assistant will ensure a receipt is issued for every transaction, the shopping receipt is given to student and a financial form completed with signatures of both Personal Assistant and student.

### **Personal Assistants must not**

- Borrow money from a student
- Become part of a lottery or gambling syndicate with a student
- Give advice on financial matters even if asked by a student
- Have access to or use a card that gives them direct access to a student's bank account

Failure to adhere to this may result in disciplinary action.

## **20. Gifts & Gratuities Summary**

Under no circumstances may The Learning Support Centre staff seek any other monies, favours or reward for services rendered, either for themselves or for a third party. From time to time a student or relative may wish to offer a gift as a mark of their appreciation, receiving anything more than a token gift is not generally appropriate to the provision of professional care. Token gifts such as flowers or chocolates are acceptable (maximum of £10), any offers of money should be cleared with your manager first.

Personal Assistants must not accept any offers from a student for payment for activities such as cinema tickets, food in restaurants, takeaways etc. Personal Assistants are expected to pay for or provide their own food and drink whilst at work.

Any unauthorised acceptance of gifts or money will be deemed to be gross misconduct and may lead to dismissal.

## **21. Wills & Legacies**

No wills or legal documents are to be witnessed on behalf of any customer of the Learning Support Centre, unless you have been authorised to do so by a director.

## **22. Annual Leave**

All annual leave must be taken out of term time.

## **23. Personal Safety**

The company considers the welfare and safety of its workforce of paramount importance. To ensure your safety and implement safe practice we will

- Maintain a record of planned schedules

As a Personal Assistant you are advised to;

- Inform someone of your whereabouts
- Ensure you have enough credit on your mobile phone to gain assistance if necessary
- Stay alert to your own personal safety.
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## 24. Coping with Aggression & Violence

If a student becomes physically violent, abusive or displays aggressive behaviour;

- Do not be confrontational
- Do not take offense at assault or accusation
- Do not attempt to initiate any form of physical contact, as such actions can easily be misunderstood or resented.
- Do not approach the person rapidly
- Do not approach from behind
- Avoid eye contact
- Allow plenty of space between you and the student
- Do stay calm
- Do talk quietly and firmly

Encourage the student to talk rather than act out of anger

- Leave the property if you cannot control the situation or you are at risk.
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## 25. Resources

All resources can be found via the website [www.learningsupportcentre.com](http://www.learningsupportcentre.com)

On Page: **Meet the Team** Link: **Staff Portal**

You will be emailed a password to access this

### **Company Policies and Procedures**

All company policies and procedures are available on the staff portal. This includes the following which are essential for personal assistants.

- LSC Advocacy Policy and Procedure
- LSC Care Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- LSC Care Financial Transaction Policy and Procedure

- LSC care Manual Handling Policy and Procedure

You must confirm that you have read and understood all policies and procedures and will be asked to complete a sign off sheet to evidence this.

## **27.The Learning Support Centre Contact details**

Tel: 0116 2548881

Text: 07964313546

Phoenix Yard

Jubilee Building

5 Upper Brown Street

Leicester

LE1 5TE

[amy@learningsupportcentre.com](mailto:amy@learningsupportcentre.com)

If you are working outside office opening hours we have an out of hour's phone which is held by a senior member of the team.

If you need guidance urgently and or an incident occurs that you need support with you must call this number:

**Out of hours telephone number: 07964313546**