

Definition of additional learning needs

- (1) A person has additional learning needs (ALN) if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability (whether the learning difficulty or disability arises from a medical condition or otherwise) which calls for additional learning provision.
- (2) A child of compulsory school age or person over that age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she—
 - (a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
 - (b) has a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 (c. 15) which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities for education or training of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream maintained schools or mainstream institutions in the further education sector.
- (3) A child under compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she is, or would be if no additional learning provision (ALP) were made, likely to be within subsection (2) when of compulsory school age.
- (4) A person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been used at home.

Most learners will make good progress in their learning and will not have ALN or require ALP. The individual needs of learners will be met within universal provision in schools and settings. Based on evidence gathered over time, it should be possible to identify learners who are making less than expected progress.

A judgement must be made in each case as to what it is reasonable to expect a learner to achieve. Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a learner has ALN. As all learners in school will inevitably progress at different rates the fact that a learner is underperforming by comparison to others of the same age is not on its own, proof of ALN. In fact, when considering learner needs it may become evident that they are making good progress from a low base. Consequently, there will always be learners who have lower levels of attainment and ability who will progress at a slower but steady rate. They may indeed require support and access to a differentiated curriculum to make suitable progress, but this does not automatically mean that they have ALN.

The Individual Development Plan (IDP) is the document that contains a description of the ALN that acts as a barrier to the learner in achieving their educational potential and the ALP that is necessary to overcome or mitigate this barrier. It is created through collaboration with the learner and the learners' parents/carers in conjunction with any other professionals that might be involved.

The very few learners who do not make good progress through universal school provision may be identified as having ALN and require ALP. Where this is the case, the school will need to prepare and maintain an IDP that details the barrier to learning and the ALP it will secure to address the barrier. The IDP will detail the strategies and interventions that are additional to or different from what is normally provided for others of the same age.