

Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plans and EHC Needs Assessments

Guidance for Post 16 Students

What is an EHC plan?

An EHC plan is a document that holds all the information in one place about what a young person wants to achieve in their education and training, and the support they need to do this.

It is issued after an EHC needs assessment of a young person's education, health and care needs, although not all EHC needs assessments lead to EHC plans being issued. Sometimes a young person's need can be met in other ways.

An EHC plan can last until the young person leaves education and training (to a maximum age of 25 if necessary).

Why might I want an EHC plan?

If you are expecting to continue in education or training, and think you will need a high level of additional support to do so, you may need an EHC plan to make sure that the right support is in place. Most young people will be able to access all the support they need without an EHC plan, and in those cases an EHC assessment will not be necessary.

An EHC plan can help coordinate all the services and professionals who are supporting you so they can work with you in a more 'joined up' way.

An EHC plan can help you have more choice and control over how the support you need is delivered. One example of this is the opportunity to have a Personal Budget - money or services provided instead of, or in combination with, traditional services that the Council and NHS provide. Providing the suggestions do not impact on your health, safety or wellbeing, are legal, and meet the aims in your support plan and the outcomes in your EHC plan, there can be many different options available.

What will an EHC plan not help with?

If you do not meet the criteria for particular services without an EHC plan, having a plan will not change this. For example, an EHC Plan will not change your eligibility for travel assistance.

An EHC Plan is not likely to help you get a place at a particular college or education provider if that setting has already made a decision not to offer you a place.

Who can I talk to?

If you need help to decide if an EHC needs assessment/plan is right for you, support with initiating an application or would like more information, you can talk to the Additional Learning Support Team at your college. You can also talk to an Independent Supporter. Independent Supporters are independent of decision-making professionals and are there to give you impartial information, advice and support to help you through the EHC needs assessment process. You can contact this service by calling 0115 804 1740 or emailing independentsupport@futuresadvice.co.uk.

What happens next?

If you would like to apply for an EHC needs assessment, this should be done with the young person's and parent/carers' knowledge and, where possible, agreement. You can apply for an EHC needs assessment via the following website: www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/education-and-schools/special-educational-needs-service/

Your family or your college can ask us to start an assessment, but we will not do so without your permission.

The assessment process takes 20 weeks in total, but you will know within 6 weeks whether the Local Authority has agreed to start an assessment. There is a diagram of the process on the next page.

Education, Health & Care (EHC) Needs Assessment Timeline

The assessment process takes up to 20 weeks:

The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Service receives your EHC assessment request.

WITHIN 6 WEEKS OF YOUR REQUEST BEING RECEIVED

The SEN Service provides you with relevant information.

Information is collected from some of the people who have worked with you within the last two years.

Professionals read all the information and decide whether to start an assessment:

If an assessment is not required:

Copies of the reports and an explanation why an assessment is not needed is made available to you and the educational setting. Details of mediation and the appeal process is made available.

If an assessment is required:

Reports will be requested from your school/college, educational psychologist, health services, social care services and others involved with you.

UP TO THE END OF WEEK 14

The reports are written and sent to the SEN Service.

Professionals read all the information and decide if an EHC plan is needed:

If an EHC plan is not required: You will be able to view the reports and a letter explaining why an EHC plan is not needed. You will also be offered the opportunity to meet with an SEN Officer to discuss any concerns you may have, and details of your rights regarding mediation and appeal. The decision will also be made available to your school/college.

If an EHC plan is required: the draft Plan is written. The draft plan (along with the reports used to write it) are then made available to you and the professionals that wrote the reports.

UP TO THE END OF WEEK 20

You have 15 days to comment on the content of the EHC plan and say which educational setting (such as a college or training provider) you would like naming in Section I the plan.

The SEN Service considers your response. It consults with educational settings and considers their responses alongside yours. A placement is then identified and named in the plan.

The final EHC plan is sent to you and all relevant professionals/services. You will also be sent details about mediation and how to appeal.