Akademia High School

Learning Support Policy

Contents

Wellbeing Team:

Role	Name	e-mail
SENCO		
Head of Learning Support	Lucy Pawlik	lucy.pawlik@akademeia.edu.pl
Learning Support Assistant	Shaghayegh Nazari	shaghayegh.nazari@akademeia.edu.pl

Introduction

Akademeia High School is committed to providing a comprehensive and inclusive education for all students, including those with special educational needs. Our Learning Support policy is designed to ensure that every student receives the support and accommodations necessary to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

We believe in fostering an environment that celebrates diversity and promotes equal opportunities for all learners. We recognize that all teachers are teachers of students with SEN. The Learning Support Department is dedicated to providing comprehensive school wide support by implementing a range of strategies and interventions. We aim to meet the unique needs of each student, enabling them to reach their full potential.

This policy was written by the Head of Learning Support/SENCo in alignment with the guidelines outlined in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years, published by the UK Government's Education and Health departments in January 2015. Although we operate as an international school, we have endeavored to align our policy with the guidelines outlined in the code of practice to the best of our ability.

The Learning Support policy at Akademeia High School has been developed and reviewed by and will be continuously monitored and evaluated in light of any changes or updates to the code of practice to ensure

ongoing relevance and compliance. Our policy serves as a living document that reflects the values and practices upheld within our school community in relation to students with special educational needs (SEN).

Definitions

Special Educational Needs

Students have Special Educational Needs (SEN) if they have a difficulty accessing the curriculum, temporary or long term, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

- Students have difficulty accessing the curriculum if they:

- have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority or others the same age

- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of school facilities

- The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability includes substantial and long-term sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, mental health difficulties and long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes and epilepsy. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and youth and those with SEN.

- High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalized will meet the individual needs of the majority. Special educational provision is provision or training that is additional to or different than others of the same age

- At Akademeia High School, the term Learning Support (LS) refers to SEN provision

Abbreviations

SEN: Special Educational Needs

LS: Learning Support

SENCo: Special Education Needs Coordinator

HOD: Head of Department

HOY: Head of Year

SOC: Student of concern

ILP: Individual Learning Plan

Aims of Learning Support Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- To ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, can access the curriculum that is differentiated according to their needs.

- To establish a structure and procedure in which all staff members actively participate in identifying, assessing, and delivering personalized support for any student with SEN, learning difficulties, and/or disabilities.

- To provide adequate support to teachers, enabling them to effectively respond to the learning needs of all students.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of Learning Support

Head of Learning Support is responsible for coordinating and overseeing the provision of learning support for students within the school, as well as ensuring the implementation of special access arrangements for the exams. Therefore, Head of Learning Support at AHS is also acting as the school's SENCo.

- **Overseeing the provision of learning support for students**

The Head of Learning Support oversees and monitors the provision of learning support in the school. To do this the Head of Learning Support will:

- Ensure the implementation of learning provision, in line with the school's procedures
- Liaise with the mentors and teachers in order to ensure the provision of learning support to students in need
- Oversee the work division and assigning students seeking support to appropriate members of the Learning Team for individual or group consultations
- Identification of students with SEN
- Visit the classes of students brought to the Learning Support Department's attention

- Visit mentor's hours (if requested by the mentor) to discuss the matters related to learning strategies
- Assist the Admissions Team with evaluation of candidates with SEN
- Liaise with the Admissions Team with regards to newly admitted students to collect and process data regarding SEN
- Represent the department in meetings with parents
- Oversee the progress of students receiving support within the department
- Increase visibility of learning support provision during assemblies, general meetings with parents

- **Support the implementation of special access arrangements for the exams**

The Head of Learning Support will:

- Ensure the implementation of relevant access arrangements procedures within the school
- Liaise with the Exam Centre with regards to provision of access arrangements for the students
- Communicate with the parents regarding the matters of psychoeducational assessment and special access arrangements for the exams
- Update students' profiles on ASIMS, related to special educational needs
- Maintain and update SEN Registry
- If necessary, cooperate with external institutions (e.g. exam boards)

The Learning Support Teaching Assistant

- Support students with SEN and other students in need in the classroom, under the direction of the classroom teacher
- Collaborate with the classroom teacher to support planning and delivery for diverse needs in the classroom
- Be familiar with the individual needs and plans of students in the SEN Registry
- Contribute to the development and review of student profiles, learning plans and access arrangements.
- Gather data and evidence needed for documenting normal way of working and student progress

The Learning Support Teacher

- Provide individualized support to students with learning difficulties or special educational needs (SEN).

- Collaborate with classroom teachers to develop and implement strategies for accommodating diverse learning needs within the classroom.
- Develop and implement personalized learning plans tailored to each student's individual needs and academic goals, including accommodations for exams and coursework.
- Collaborate with the exam centre to ensure that students with SEN receive the appropriate access arrangements to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities.
- Deliver targeted interventions and support sessions focused on building essential academic skills, such as literacy, maths, study skills, and exam preparation strategies.
- Monitor and track the academic progress of students with SEN, providing ongoing feedback and adjustments to support strategies as necessary to ensure academic success.
- Communicate regularly with parents/guardians to provide updates on their child's progress, discuss strategies for support at home, and collaborate on goal-setting.
- Work closely with other members of the school's support team, including special educational needs coordinator (SENCOs) and the Wellbeing team to ensure a coordinated approach to supporting students with SEN.
- Maintain accurate records of student assessments, progress, and interventions in accordance with school policies and procedures.

Parents/Guardians

Parents should contact the SENCO as early as possible if they feel their child may have a learning difficulty and should be assessed for access arrangements.

To ensure that a student receives the appropriate level support and is aligned with the requirements of various British Exam Boards, parent will need to provide the Head of Learning support with any documentation confirming their child's needs.

Learning Support Provisions

AHS provides support for students with mild to moderate learning needs depending on available resources. Mild learning needs refers to students who can access the curriculum with high quality standards of teaching practice but require accommodations or minimal teacher support to fulfil their potential and need to be monitored. Moderate Learning needs refers to students who require an Individual Learning Plan, in class support, individual or group learning support lesson but are able to fulfill curriculum requirements.

Levels of Learning Support

At AHS, LS is considered to be a part of a whole school system, not only dedicated to providing support for individual students with identified SEN but is also implemented in the form of staff training and raising awareness on neurodiversity.
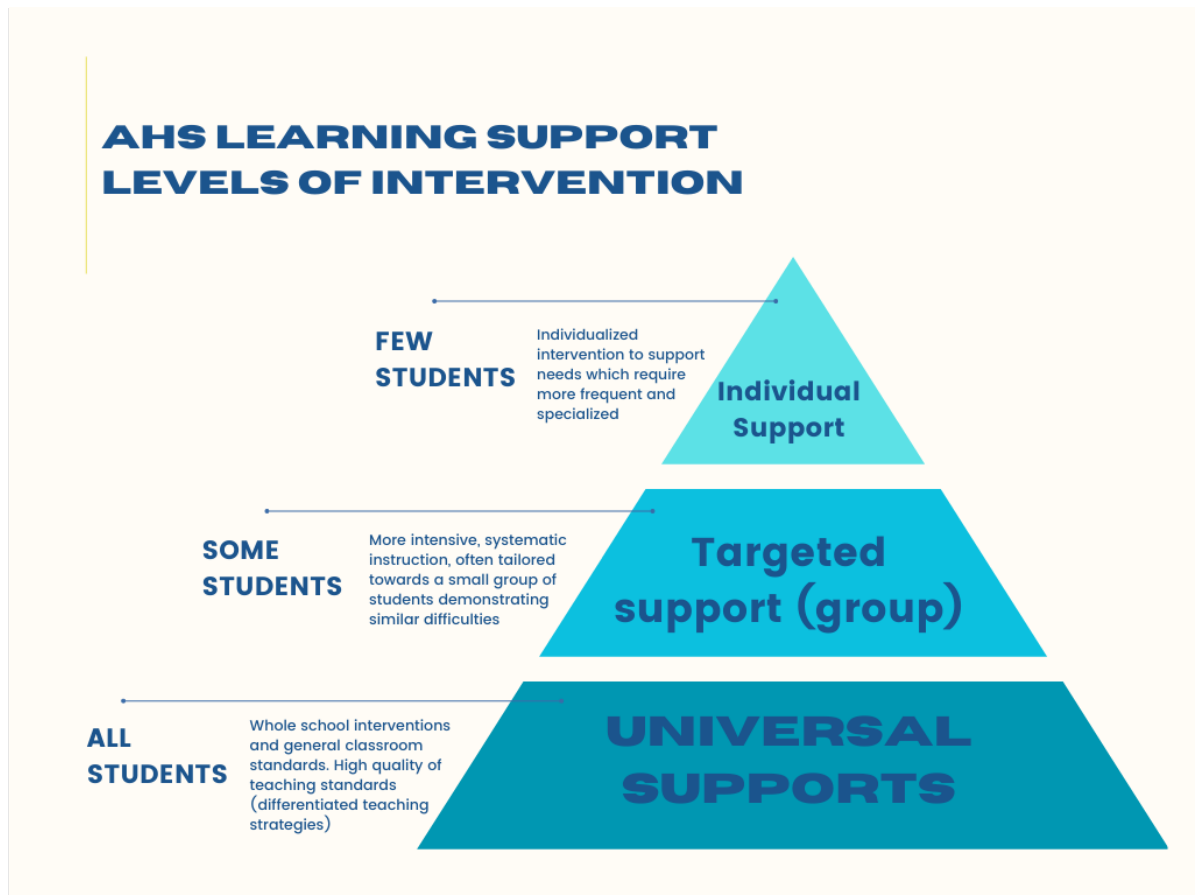

Figure 1 AHS Learning Support Framework

Universal Support

Interventions implemented across the school to ensure high quality of teaching:

- Research based effective Instructional strategies
- Differentiation
- Neurodiversity advocacy (Assemblies)

- Teacher training
- Curriculum support planning with individual teachers or departments

Targeted Support

When support provided at a universal level is not sufficient for a student, their areas of challenge may be addressed in a smaller group setting. Such interventions include:

- Mentor's Hour visitations/workshops
- Professional Development Scheme workshops
- Social skills group
- Study skills workshops (notetaking, time management…)

Individual Support

When student's needs go beyond support provided at a group level, Individual support will be provided:

- Individual meetings with Learning support staff for students with Individual Learning Plan (Individual goals, intervention, and progress tracking)
- Weekly, bi-weekly on one needs basis regular sessions with Learning Support Staff to work on individual goals and learning strategies
- Small group lessons (learning about their strengths and areas of challenge, learning about their diagnosis, individual teacher support for assignments…)
- Student profiles and Individual learning plans with yearly review of learning plans; meeting with parents

English as an Additional Language

We are committed to providing tailored support for students learning English as an additional language (EAL). Students requiring EAL support are identified through an initial assessment of their English proficiency upon entry, as well as ongoing monitoring of their language development and academic progress. Once identified, EAL students receive appropriate support based on their individual needs, which may include one-on-one sessions with a specialist language teacher or targeted small-group interventions. In addition, assessment criteria may be adjusted where necessary, allowing these students to demonstrate their understanding and skills without being

limited by language barriers. This support framework ensures that EAL students have equal access to the full curriculum, fostering their confidence and success as they progress in both English and their academic studies.

Identifying Students with SEN

Identification at admission

The Head of Admissions will provide the SENCo with a list of newly admitted students with identified SEN. The Senco will:

- review the admissions files of these students
- Initiate contact with the parents and meet with the student to establish the student's normal way of working and plan for possible needed provision
- add the student to the LS Registry, ASIMS under the 'SEN & Exams' tab and create an individual student file
- Information for teachers about student's SEN are available in the 'SEN & Exams' tab in ASIMS. Mentors will check if their students have been identified with SEN, familiarize themselves with the recommendations (strategies and access arrangements) and notify the teachers of the student SEN needs.

Identification during the school year

Due to the importance of early intervention, most students with LD are identified in primary schools, however we acknowledge there will be students with LD who may have gone through primary school undiagnosed having had strong compensating skills and only start to show symptoms of learning needs when the curriculum becomes significantly more demanding at a secondary school level.

WHAT CONCERNS CAN YOU REFER TO LEARNING SUPPORT?

Your student is struggling with:
- Reading (comprehension, accuracy, speed, proper expression)
- Writing (spelling, grammar, organization/structure, work production)
- Speech/Hearing (articulation, voice quality, stuttering, hearing impairment)
- Thinking/Reasoning skills (abstract concepts, logical reasoning/thinking skills, pragmatic skills-being realistic and sensible)
- Math (number sense, word problems, acquiring new concepts, computation skills
- Motor (handwriting, unusual pencil grip, poor balance and coordination, tracing, drawing, cutting difficulties, gross motor skills)
- Sensory

Classroom Behavior Concerns
Student:
- is hyperactive/distractable/impulsive
- is withdrawn/daydreams/easily confused
- does not follow rules of game/task/activity
- does not complete homework
- has a slow work pace/slow to start
- rarely takes chances
- has difficulty following directions
- is disorganised
- has problems with auditory processing
- tires easily
- has poor memory
- is disruptive
- struggles with classroom routine
- does not conform to rule or boundaries or rules of the classroom

Figure 2 Teacher guide for Learning Support related concerns

Subject Teachers who regularly observe and assess student progress are most likely the first to notice when a student is struggling with learning. Teachers and staff have been provided with a list of SEN related difficulties that can be referred to the Learning Support Department (see figure 2). Teachers, Mentors, HOD's and HOY's or any other member of staff who notices a concern with learning may refer a student to the LS Department using the referral procedure detailed below.

Identification of students with SEN may also be initiated by parents or students themselves. They will be directed to meet with the Head of Learning Support who will create a file note, initiating the referral process or recommend other more appropriate next steps such as referral to the Wellbeing Department.

The Head of Learning Support will:

- meet with the HOY's once each term to discuss SOC's
- review exam results after each session to identify students of concern and gather more information on these students which may in some cases lead to initiating the referral process

Students making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances including progress in areas other than performance e.g., personal development or social skills is key data in identifying students with SEN.
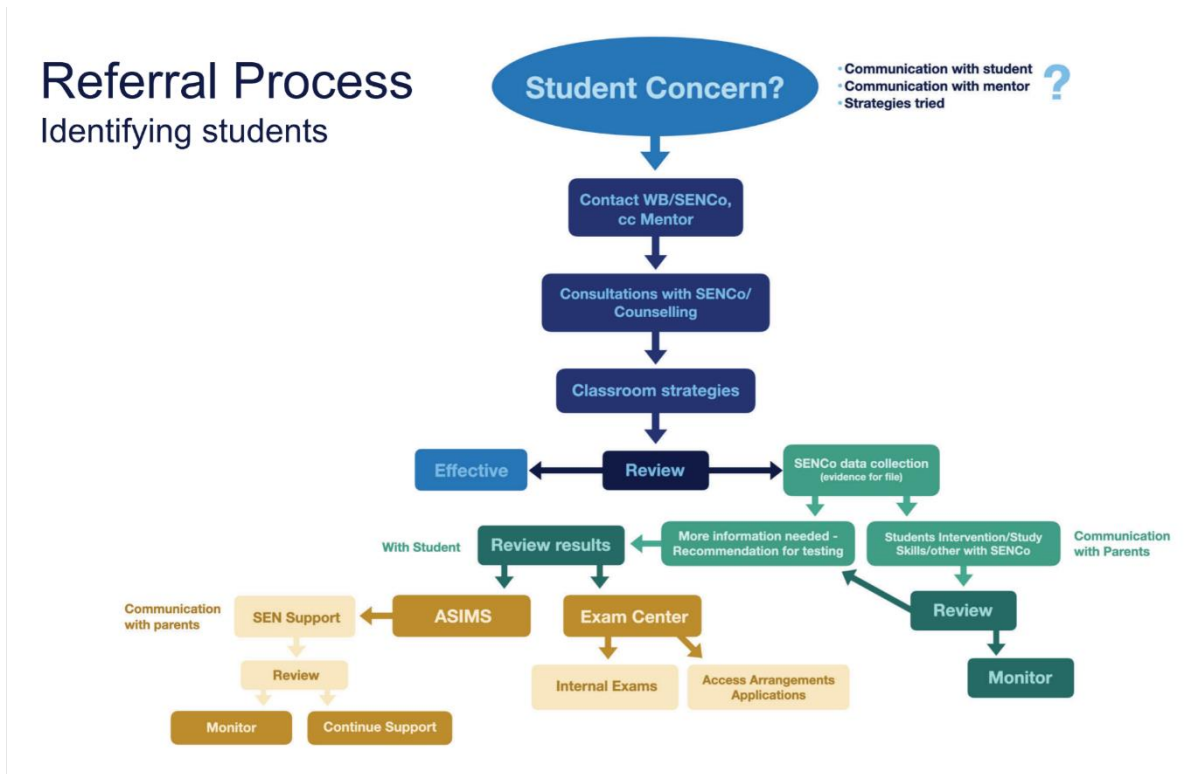
Procedures

Figure 3 Teacher guide for Learning Support related concerns

Referral

Teacher initiated:

- When a teacher is concerned about a student's learning, they will communicate their concern with their student and the student's mentor.

- The teacher will try some strategies in the classroom, for example; changing seating, providing extra scaffolds, giving extra thinking time to students before responding etc. (The teacher may consult with a member of LS to receive list of strategies to try)

- When the strategies the teacher is providing are proving not to be effective, the teacher should contact the Head of Learning Support directly in person or via e-mail (lucy.pawlik@akademeia.edy.pl), initiating the referral process.

- The Head of LS will ask the teacher to complete a referral form and will gather more data (feedback) from other teachers and Mentor to which will be added to an LS student file created by the Head of LS. The student will be added to the SEN Registry with a "referral" status

- The mentor will communicate and share any learning concerns raised by teachers with parents, informing them their child has been referred to Learning Support

Assessment (Internal)

- Once the Head of Learning Support receives a referral, they will proceed with all or some of the following steps to evaluate the level of need:
    a.

- review the student's progress, performance and sample work
- collect any additional data from teachers and mentor
- Student history: language history (student or parent interview)
- conduct an observation of the student in class
    b.

- meet with the student to discuss difficulty and if needed conduct needed screening to get a better understanding of student's needs
- At this stage, the Head of LS will summarize findings and make recommendations. They will:
- Meet with student and parents to share feedback and agree on potential provision to implement
- Add information to SEN tab in ASIMS and notify student's mentor and teachers of any provisions in place
- coordinate targeted provisions (differentiated access, strategies, resources and additional teacher support)
- Inform the Exam Centre about any exam provisions: Access Arrangements, such as frequent rest breaks, use of word processor, extra time or separate room for tests may be trialed at this time on internal assessment to evaluate if effectiveness. (see: Access Arrangements Policy)

Evaluation (External)

- In the case the data collected does not give a thorough understanding of the student's needs, the Head of LS will recommend for the student to undergo further testing (psychoeducational evaluation).
- Parents/Guardians should arrange psychoeducational evaluation externally
- After psychoeducational evaluation is completed, Parents/Guardians should submit relevant documentation to the school for the Head of LS review.
- The Head of LS will create a note with summarized recommendations for teachers to follow to add to and update the ASIMS SEN tab and notify mentor/teachers of update
- The Head of LS will notify the Exam Centre of any Access Arrangements and upload the evaluation to the SEN tab in ASIMS for Exam Centre purposes
- The status of the student will be updated in the SEN Registry

Intervention

The Learning Support can provide intervention for students and support to develop a variety of skills such as:

- reading comprehension

- spelling, punctuation and grammar

- vocabulary building

- written expression

- numeracy

- subject-specific support

- organization

- study, revision and exam skills

- working memory

- social skills

- emotional and mental health (with a referral to the school counsellor where appropriate)

The delivery of support may include the following depending on needs

- Small group teacher supported Study Period and/or

- Sessions for students grouped by similar needs typically by Year
- One to One support provided by the Head of LS or LS Teaching Assistant:
- Sessions are planned and guided by individual student goals, regular and as frequent as needed, from once or twice a week to once a term.
- In class support

- The Head of LS or LS Assistant will be In classrooms supporting teachers and students, where needs are higher and classroom benefits from co-teaching strategies. This Includes collaborating with subject teacher on planning and supporting with delivery (create resources, templates, additional material an implement particular strategies to support student)

Access Arrangements

Introduction

Akademia High School Exam Centre is a registered examination centre and acts in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications, which acts on behalf of the major examination-awarding bodies in the UK. In order to meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010, the JCQ instructs its awarding organisations with regard to implementing procedures relating to reasonable adjustments, and for this reason, all students, including candidates with long-term and substantial disabilities, are enabled to access examinations.

These arrangements put candidates who have particular needs, such as with special educational needs, a disability, or even temporary injury, in a position to access any assessment and demonstrate their learning or skills without any changes in the requirements of the assessment itself.

Access arrangements cater to the needs of each and every candidate. They should not advantage the candidate over other candidates or compromise the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. Access arrangements should reflect the student's normal way of working within the school. They can vary between students, as well as between subjects.

The need for access arrangements is normally identified during Y9 and 10 and should be finalized by Year 11. Access arrangements should not be introduced for the first time during final examinations.

Eligibility Criteria

A student with a disability or difficulty which has a substantial and long-term effect on performance in examinations may qualify for access arrangements. Pupils may be identified for consideration for an exam access arrangement based on at least one of the criteria below, usually no later than Term 1 in Year 11 for IGCSE's or Year 12 Term 2 for A Levels

• Information from previous schools

• Subject teacher referrals

• Parental referral

• Student self-referral

• Knowledge of a student's history of need of support provided by teaching staff and/or medical professionals (Specialist evidence confirming the candidate's long term and persistent disability such as "Orzeczenie" or "Opinia Psychologiczna", a medical consultant, a psychiatrist...)

Access arrangements will only be awarded where sufficient evidence exists and must be the student''s normal way of working. Any evidence must be presented in a manner timely enough to have allowed for the school to consider how it supports these needs through the learning support department to ensure that the student is not at a disadvantage.

When allocating resources for access arrangements, priority is always given to pupils with the most evidence of need as seen in school. In order to ensure that it is meeting students' needs holistically and supporting best outcomes, the school will not award access arrangements on the basis of diagnostic assessment reports (including medical reports).

Students identified according to the criteria above, supported by appropriate teacher evidence, will be referred for testing by Learning Support. A diagnosis of 'dyslexia', or any other condition, does not guarantee the awarding of an access arrangement, nor eligibility for testing. Awarding access arrangements solely based on such diagnostic assessment reports (including medical reports), without a picture of need and a normal way of working within the school, would be malpractice and a breach of JCQ regulations.

Informal access arrangements, based on information gathered from primary school, and the criteria above, may be put in place for students.

The provision and/or use of access arrangements in 5th Form is not a guarantee that they will still be in place during 6th Form, since student's needs may have changed in a way that no longer necessitates the support and/or meets the exam board criteria.

An "Orzeczenie" alone is insufficient for any access arrangement to be granted. The centre must produce centre-based evidence as set out in the JCQ regulations supporting the need of an arrangement.

In accordance with JCQ regulations, access arrangements solely on the basis of a diagnosis but evidence gathered by the school which confirms the students' needs, their normal way of working and is appropriate for the student.

Timeline

To ensure sufficient time to process applications for access arrangements (collect evidence from teachers, trial access arrangements, show normal way of working, complete forms...), referrals are accepted until mid-Term 2 for access arrangements to be implemented and applied for external examination session in at the end of Term 3 (specific deadlines are set by JCQ).

Reviewing and Monitoring Students

- Students who are in the SEN registry are reviewed at least once a year to track progress and ensure provisions in place continue to be needed.
- All student SEN documents, and information is confidential stored safely (in a safe or on the drive with restricted access and protection passwords or on ASIMS with limited access) in alignment with data protection law/school policy

Record Keeping

The Head of LS:

- maintains an updated list of students with SEN, requiring additional support or referred to LS to track and monitor students in the **SEN Registry.**
- maintains and updates the **SEN Tab in ASIMS**
- Creates and compiles documents/records in the **Student Files**

Policy owner:	Kay Czepli-George, Deputy Head (Pastoral)
Policy published (date):	August 2023
Reviewed (date):	August 2024
Next review (date)	August 2025