



Excellence in Education Catering

Special Diets

Does my child need a special diet menu?

HCL offer specifically adapted menus in line with our mainstream offer for selected food allergies, intolerances or cultural choices.

We have created a brand new, on-line application service that simplifies the process of requesting a Special Diet Menu.

All new applications for Special Diet Menus are required to follow this process. Pupils currently following a HCL special menu will be required to re-register their application.

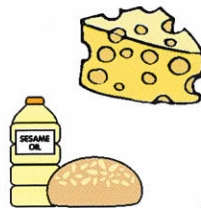
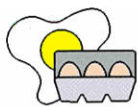
Our new system will make it much easier for parents or guardians to apply for a Special Diet Menu, which will mean that children can start enjoying school meals sooner.



IT'S
REALLY
EASY
TO
APPLY
ONLINE...

FOLLOW
THESE SIMPLE
STEPS TO
START YOUR
APPLICATION
PROCESS
TODAY...

How to apply for a *Medical Menu*



Step 1

Please read fully our 'Frequently Asked Questions' section on the back pages of this leaflet.

Step 2

Go to the HCL website:

www.hertscatering.co.uk/allergy-menu-application

Step 3

Select the pink tab at the top called 'Medical Menus'.

Medical Menus

Step 4

From the list of medical menus available, choose the menu type that exactly matches the medical evidence you have. Do not select any other menu type other than what is listed on the medical evidence, as we will be unable to fulfill any requests that do not match exactly. If the menu type you need is not listed, select the tab 'Allergens not listed'.

☒ **Allergens not listed**

Step 5

Once you have found the menu that represents your child's specific medical requirements, select: 'Apply for Menu'.

If your child has a nut allergy, please tick this option **BEFORE** completing the next stages of your application (see box 'Nut Allergies' below). If your child has a nut allergy **PLUS** another dietary requirement, tick the additional menu type required **BEFORE** proceeding with your application.

Step 6

Ensure that you have all the correct information on the checklist below so that you can complete your application.

- Your child's allergy/ intolerance information
- Your child's school and class name
- A clear, colour photo of your child (see the examples of what is an acceptable picture to the right)
- Medical evidence from your child's medical practitioner (see box 'Medical Evidence' to the right)

If you have all of these, click 'I have everything, let's go!' to begin your application.

I have everything, let's go!

Step 7

Start to type your child's school name into the text box, as you type, school suggestions that match will come up on screen, ensure you select the correct school, paying attention to the school address appearing alongside the school name. Click:

Continue to select menu

The medical menu relevant to your child's specific requirements and in line with the mainstream menu offered at your child's school will now be available to view. The medical menus we use have been created by a qualified nutritionist and HCL are unable to make any alterations to suit particular tastes.

View the menu PDF

Check that the medical menu offered matches exactly to the medical evidence you are submitting and then press 'All correct, continue application'. If the menu and medical evidence do not match, click 'Change this' to correctly select the right menu option.

All correct, continue application

Step 8

You can now continue with the application by completing all the details we require:

- Child's name
- Child's date of birth
- Child's class
- Year child moves into secondary education
- Your name
- Your telephone number
- Your email address
- Your home address

Remember that you must also upload all your medical evidence and a photograph along with your application.

Step 9

Once you have completed all the details we require and uploaded your child's photograph and medical evidence, you will need to accept HCL's Terms & Conditions for offering your child a special menu - you can view our T&Cs by clicking 'View Terms & Conditions' or you can tick the box 'I agree to the Terms & Conditions' and 'Send Application'.

We aim to process your application within four term time weeks.

Nut allergies

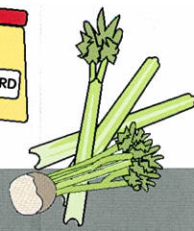
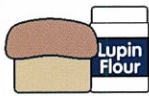
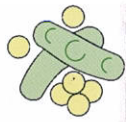
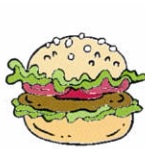
HCL do not use tree nuts or peanuts as an ingredient or use any products that carry a "may contain nut traces" warning on the label.

Therefore no amended or special menu is required from our standard menu range. We do however require that a full application is completed to ensure that all parties are aware of your child's allergy, symptoms and treatment. If your child does have a nut allergy, please tick this option **BEFORE** completing the next stages of your application.

☒ **My child has a nut allergy**

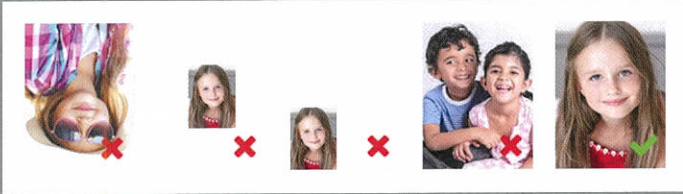
If your child has a nut allergy **PLUS** another dietary requirement, please tick the additional menu type before proceeding with your application.





How to apply for a *Cultural & Religious Menu*

Uploading your child's photo



We must have a photo of your child to ensure that they are properly recognised and identified as requiring an adjusted menu at the point of service, by both our regular staff and temporary staff.

This photo must:

- Be in colour
- Have no busy backgrounds
- Be taken within the last month
- Be clear and in focus with your child facing forwards
- Be close-up of their full head and shoulders
- Show your child alone with no other objects or people

You may use your child's school portrait. This may be available from your child's school as an electronic version - please speak to your child's school.

Medical Evidence

You can **ONLY** apply for a special diet menu if you have medical evidence available to support your application. Don't worry if you haven't got it to hand, you can download a form to take to your doctor by clicking the button. However, please note that we will not be able to process any applications without this evidence, so please allow sufficient time prior to your child requiring a school menu.

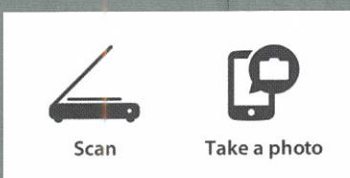
[Download Medical Form](#)

It's really easy to upload your medical evidence documents

You can upload your evidence by taking a photo of the documents, ensuring that your child's name along with the special diet requirements and medical practitioner's details are clearly visible.

If the details are unreadable, we may have to reject your application. You can also scan the evidence or use PDF format or Microsoft Word Documents. As long as they contain all the relevant details and are signed, dated and stamped by your medical practitioner, we will be able to process your application without undue delay.

Please ensure that the documents you upload are the correct way up.



Step 1 & 2

Follow steps 1 and 2 from the Medical Menu application process.

Step 3

Select the orange tab at the top 'Cultural & Religious Menus'.

[Cultural & Religious Menus](#)

Step 4

Now select the menu type that you would like to apply for and click 'Apply for Menu'.

[Apply for Menu](#)

Step 5

Ensure that you have all the correct information on the checklist below so that you can complete your application.

- Your child's school and class name
- A clear, colour photo of your child
(see the examples of what is an acceptable picture on the left)

If you have all of these, click 'I have everything, let's go!' to continue your application.

[I have everything, let's go!](#)

Step 6

Start to type your child's school name into the text box, as you type, school suggestions that match will come up on screen. Ensure you select the correct school, paying attention to the school address appearing alongside the school name. Click:

[Continue to select menu](#)

You can view your selected menu and make sure that it is suitable for your child by clicking 'View the menu PDF'. If you are happy with your menu choice click 'Continue application'. HCL are unable to make any alterations to our Cultural Menus to suit particular tastes. Check your chosen option is correct. If it is wrong you can click 'Change this' to correct it. If it is correct, you can now click 'All correct, continue application'.

[All correct, continue application](#)

Step 7

Fill out the form by completing all the details we require, taking care to ensure all the information is correct. **Remember that you must also upload a photograph along with your application.**

Step 8

Once you have completed your form and uploaded your photograph, you will need to accept HCL's Terms & Conditions for special menus - to view our T&Cs click 'View Terms & Conditions'. Tick the box 'I agree to the Terms & Conditions' and 'Send Application'. We aim to process your application within four term time weeks.

Frequently Asked Questions

My child does not like some of the dishes on the special menu, can I ask for the menu to be amended?

We are unable to accommodate personal preferences as this can cause confusion and increase the risk of error.

My child is only allergic to wheat, not all gluten.

We produce over 30 different menus for children requiring special diets for medical reasons. Unfortunately we are unable to split this down any further as it would become unmanageable in our kitchens.

My child can have egg, baked as an ingredient, but not raw or whole.

We produce over 30 different menus for children requiring special diets for medical reasons. Unfortunately we are unable to split this down any further, because it would become unmanageable in our kitchens.

Can I provide my own products?

We believe that our menus meet the requirements for most allergen free diets. However, if it is considered appropriate for a specific dietary need to supply products from home, HCL will accept items that do not require temperature control. Any high risk protein items that require either fridge or freezer storage will not be accepted.

My child only wants lunch on a special promotional/theme day, what should I do?

HCL has a stringent allergen process that we follow for pupils who regularly have a school lunch. Unfortunately we are unable to provide individual allergen menus for children who only have the occasional meal. For each theme day menu we produce an allergen declaration sheet, which is available from the school on request, allowing parents to make an informed decision as to whether the menu is appropriate for their child. Please note however that we cannot always guarantee that the choice of specific dishes is available to the end of service.

We will not be able to guarantee a specific meal. The only exception to this is Christmas Lunch, where a form can be completed in advance, stating a child's needs, and we will attempt to accommodate.

My child regularly has an allergen free school lunch, what happens on theme/promotional days?

The Cook at your child's school will either ensure that the promotional menu is appropriate or serve your child a dish that is on their pre-agreed menu.

Why do I have to have medical evidence?

Withdrawing a food group from a child's diet should always be monitored by a health professional. Doctors should be aware of relatively minor intolerances because they could be indicative of other intolerances. HCL needs to be fully aware of potential symptoms and, if necessary, carry out a risk assessment. Evidence from a medical professional (which can include GP, Hospital Consultant or Registered Dietitian) also ensures that we provide special menus for those who really need it and not to accommodate personal preferences. It also ensures that food groups are not removed from a child's diet as a result of diagnosis from operatives who are not medically trained.

How do I scan the medical evidence?

If you have access to a printer with a scanning facility then this should be straightforward. If not, we will accept photos of the medical evidence but please ensure that each page is photographed individually and ensure that it is clear to read on receipt.

If my child requires a special menu for both cultural and medical reasons which route do I take?

Please click on the medical menu button and click "Allergens not listed" then indicate, where asked, what the requirement is. e.g. Pork Free and Dairy Free.

My child requires a vegetarian menu, do I need to apply on line?

No you do not need to apply on line. A vegetarian choice is available on a daily basis so no application is required.



Excellence in Education Catering

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