



Dyslexia - a guide for lecturers

This guide for college and university lecturers contains some general advice about dyslexia.

It is important that students with dyslexia are given the support they need – with the right support, the vast majority of dyslexic students successfully pass their degree courses and go on to find graduate employment.

Dyslexia affects 1 in 10 people and can be classed as a disability under the Equality Act (2010).

What is dyslexia

There are many definitions and research papers about the exact nature of dyslexia. Most accept that dyslexia is physiological in nature, is indicated by a problem with phonological processing and results in difficulties in the acquisition of literacy skills. Dyslexia can also affect things like remembering instructions, following directions and organisational skills.

There is an official Scottish Working Definition of dyslexia; this has recently been reviewed against a new international definition agreed by experts. For more information see our What is dyslexia? leaflet.

Points to consider

Your institution should provide guidance on dyslexia and working with students and should include:

- information about dyslexia
- links to your institute Accessible and Inclusive Learning policy
- guidance and examples of good inclusive practice and on creating accessible materials

- information about the College/University policies for Reasonable Adjustments and Additional Arrangements for assessments and exams
- marking and viva guidance for students with SPLDs (specific learning difficulties) including dyslexia.

Some students may already know that they are dyslexic, but others will only know that they have to work harder than others and that their written work does not show their ability. If you are puzzled by a student's work, discuss this with them and suggest they seek support from the academic/study skills services . Alternatively, you can suggest that they contact the Student Disability Service for further advice and support.

Good practice includes things like making reading lists, assessed course work and deadlines as clear as possible. These should be made available at the start of the course with reminders throughout.

Feedback on assessed work should be in an accessible format with a follow up explanation orally if requested.

Reasonable Adjustments

According to the Equalities Act 2010, students are legally eligible for 'Reasonable Adjustments'. These are changes which will allow them to fulfil their potential and may include arrangements for exams and assessments.

Your institution should have a policy about extra time and all tutors should be aware of this. Additional Assessment Arrangements might include:

- extra time to complete exams.
- use of assistive technology (if appropriate), or a scribe and/or a reader .
- use of a computer instead of handwritten exam scripts.
- assessment feedback that is constructive and sensitive to the student's dyslexia
- a dispensation for spelling and grammar if the meaning is clear. All students are expected to use spell and grammar checkers, but not all dyslexic type errors are picked up by these checkers. Feedback on these errors can be useful, but should be given sensitively.

Lecture notes

Students with dyslexia might experience difficulties taking notes in class because of their short-term memory and slower processing difficulties. You should allow requests to record your lectures. Alternatively, you can provide notes which are in dyslexia-friendly format. See our Dyslexia-Friendly Typed Formats leaflet.

Transition to Employment

EmployAbility can work with dyslexic university students and graduates to ease the transition from education into employment.



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employ-ability.org.uk/students-and-universities/