

Dyslexia Fact Sheet



Dyslexia is a neurological difference which particularly affects the processing of language and literacy. The brain of someone with dyslexia processes information in different ways; this can result in strengths in some areas and difficulties in others and can affect the speed of processing of some information.

It is a specific learning difficulty; it affects certain skills and abilities but is not linked to the general level of intelligence of the person who has it.

People who have dyslexia may have difficulties in some or all of the following areas:

- reading
- writing
- spelling
- maths computation
- understanding sequences and patterns
- knowing left from right, map reading skills
- organisation
- short term memory and multi-tasking
- speaking, listening and language skills

Dyslexia often exists alongside other related conditions, including autistic spectrum disorders/conditions (ASD/ASC), attention deficit disorders (ADHD/ADD) and dyspraxia.

Good practice when teaching or supporting students with dyslexia:

- Give guidelines for organising work, e.g. use of checklists, highlighters, file/folder organisation and structure etc.
- Give guidelines for organising time, e.g. breaking work down into smaller sections with shorter-term deadlines to avoid impossible last-minute catch ups.
- Minimise demands on short-term memory. Use visual support when presenting new information, encourage the student to jot down key information as lists or mind maps, and allow time for this. Use visual references when delivering content verbally etc.
- Explicitly teach the writing skills required for your subject, such as how to deconstruct a question, organise information, plan a piece of written work, link ideas, and provide writing frameworks and scaffolding for longer tasks.
- Provide a list of key words for your subject. Try to reinforce the spelling of key words by writing them on the board/highlighting them when they are used in class. Provide students with a glossary of key words and terminology.
- Avoid asking the student to read aloud. It causes a lot of anxiety and doesn't necessarily reflect how well the student understands the work in class. If a student must read aloud, give them plenty of notice/prior experience of the material they are reading.
- Avoid dictation. The combination of listening, taking notes and getting the spelling right is a challenge - try to minimise the expectation to do this, provide any notes in advance or give students handouts for reference.
- Be aware of assistive technologies and how these can support the student.
- Provide core notes of work covered in class. This relieves the student of the pressure to note everything down, share any materials/slides used in a place that is accessible.
- Provide accessible written resources, ideally in at least size 12 font in a sans serif font (Arial, Calibri, Century Gothic etc.). Avoid poor quality copies and overcrowded pages.

