

## Resources

### General

Always ask people who have disabilities what their particular needs are and make reasonable adjustments according to their specific requirements. Two people with the same disability may not have the same needs.

### Dyslexia

Approximately 1 in 10 people have some degree of dyslexia and it is the world's most common learning difficulty. 65% of disabled Exeter students have dyslexia or associated dyspraxia.

Dyslexia is a brain-based type of learning difficulty that specifically impairs a person's ability with the written word. Although effects and severity vary from person to person, common characteristics include difficulty with manipulation of sounds and/or rapid visual-verbal responding. There is a 35 - 40% chance of other learning difficulties being present (e.g. dyspraxia, Asperger's Syndrome, attention deficit etc.) and 50% of visual dyslexics have a degree of Meares-Irlen Syndrome.

The most common effects are problems with reading, writing, spelling, short-term memory, concentration and organisational skills.

### Support

A multi-sensory approach is most effective in addressing effects of different neurological functioning – difficulties with visual, auditory and language skills. Presenting material visually, as well as verbally, is the most common adjustment made.

#### 1. Lectures

- Copies of lecture notes/PowerPoint/OHP presentations in sans serif fonts make information available for students who cannot listen and take notes simultaneously.
- Taped lectures also give auditory reinforcement and useful repetition; very effective for some but not all.

#### 2. Assignments

- Guided reading lists are useful so that essential reading is covered by students who cannot skim or scan and often cannot read effectively for any length of time
- Difficulties with eye tracking and weak visual neural networks can be helped with coloured overlays or lenses for Meares-Irlen Syndrome.
- Occasional extensions for assignments may be required but this should be negotiated with subject tutors for every request.
- A computer for word processing, checking grammar and spelling, with software, is often the most useful resource. (ReadWrite can read text acquired or written by student, check homophones etc.; Inspiration or Mind Manager creates concept maps supporting planning and organisation of work; Voice Recognition enables students to dictate work rather than express it through writing.)
- Students may have 1:1 study skills sessions with a specialist tutor to address specific areas of literacy weakness, organisation, memory and time management.

### 3. Testing and examinations

- Extra time in exams/class tests is often recommended, as reading and writing take considerably longer than for non-dyslexics.
- If a reader or scribe is required then a separate room must be used, with invigilation

For more information, see:

General Marking Guidelines

<http://www.admin.ex.ac.uk/academic/disability/general-marking.php>

Brisith Dyslexia Association

<http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/>

Source: Mary Reece, Disability Officer, University of Exeter, Disability Resource Centre, Old Library, Prince of Wales Road, Exeter, EX4 4SB.

## Sensitive Responses to Disability

Think about the words you use.

<b>Avoid</b>	<b>Use instead</b>
the handicapped	disabled people
the disabled	disabled people
Cripple, invalid	disabled person
Spastic	person who has cerebral palsy
afflicted by, suffers from, victim of...	has or with... (the condition or impairment)
mentally handicapped, retarded, subnormal	learning impaired
confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair-bound	wheelchair user
able-bodied	non-disabled
disabled toilet*	accessible toilet*

Source: [www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk) (\*not on the scope list)