

For Managers: Dyslexia

Further introduction

“Dyslexia is likely to be present at birth and to be lifelong in its effects. It is characterised by difficulties with phonological processing, rapid naming [or rapid automatic word retrieval], working memory, processing speed and the automatic development of skills that may not match up to an individual’s other cognitive abilities. It tends to be resistant to conventional teaching methods, but its effects can be mitigated by appropriately specific intervention...” (BDA, 2007).

A dyslexic student thinks in different ways, often more visually and can have good insight. They are frequently good mathematicians. However, there will be some issues with reading, writing or memory.

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Recommended provision

Equipment and software

It is recommended that you have the following equipment available for helping students with dyslexia:

- Manipulatives
- Highlighters
- A variety of light but coloured/off-white paper
- Squared paper
- Post-its
- 2-line calculators (which display input and output)

There are a wide range of softwares which students may use for assistance. If a student is using a specific software, and you need further guidance, we recommend that you liaise with relevant support staff, e.g. in the Disability Office. Further information about creating accessible mathematical resources and using technology to access them may be found at:

- <https://www.bath.ac.uk/projects/mathematics-accessibility/>

- <http://www.stem-enable.org.uk>

Physical learning environment

A quiet space to work is helpful.

Online learning environment

Provide documents in a format which can be transformed to meet the reader's needs and which can be read aloud and colour annotated, including the equations. Accessible web pages and Word documents which pass the Word accessibility checker and in which the equations can be read aloud by the Word Read Aloud tool are best. Provide materials in a choice of formats, e.g. the same concept explained in video, via interactive example and in text.

- <https://stem-enable.github.io/Accessibility-of-maths-e-resources/>

Additional/alternative provision

Think about providing 1:1 support.

Tutor training

We recommend that you include a discussion on these Manager and Tutor leaflets in tutor training at your institution. Over the coming years, accessibility training will become an important feature of maths support tutor training at local and national levels. For further information on tutor training, contact your maths support network.

Working with other university services

It is important to know the Disability Department in your institution who can supply further details about dyslexia.

- You should have information leaflets about the Disability Department available for students in your centre and vice versa.
- The Disability Department may also be able to recommend that other students use your maths support centre.
- If you think a student in your centre has dyslexia, you should encourage and support the student to make contact with the relevant Disability Department in your institution.

Recommended reading

Trott C. (2012) Mathematics, dyslexia, and accessibility. In Good Practice on Inclusive Curricula in the Mathematical Sciences, Ed. Cliffe E and Rowlett P.

<http://www.mathcentre.ac.uk/resources/uploaded/inclusivecurricula.pdf>

Hunter-Carsch M and Herrington M (2001) Dyslexia and Effective Learning. Whurr, London

Some basics are covered in the 2003 Good Practice in the Provision of Mathematics Support Centres (<http://www.mathcentre.ac.uk/resources/guides/goodpractice2E.pdf>) p22-27

Henderson A (2012) Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Mathematics. Routledge, Oxon.

Du Pre L, Gilroy D. and Miles T.R. (2008) Dyslexia at College, Routledge, Oxon.