



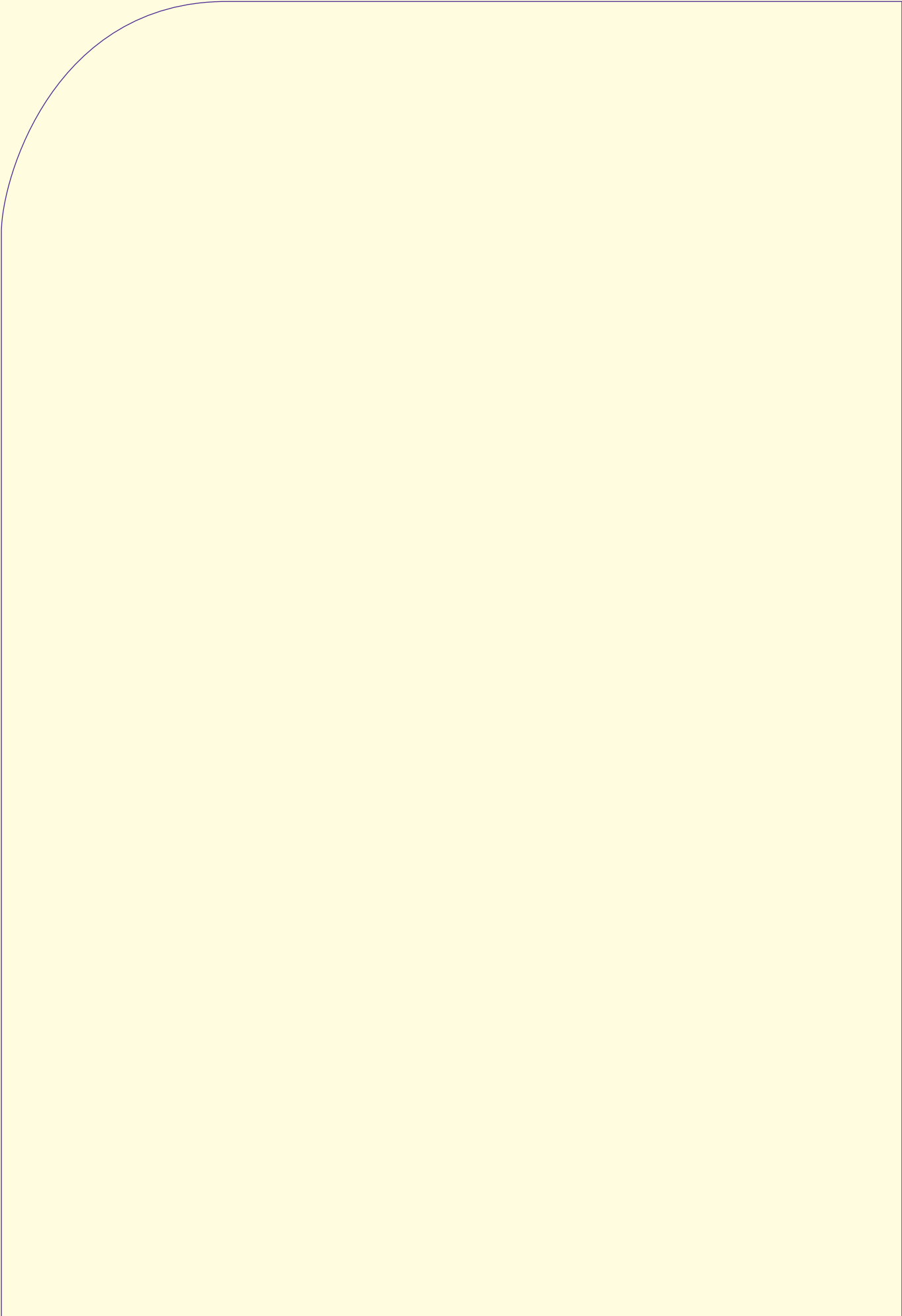
ACCESSIBLE LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Good Practice Guide for Teaching Staff



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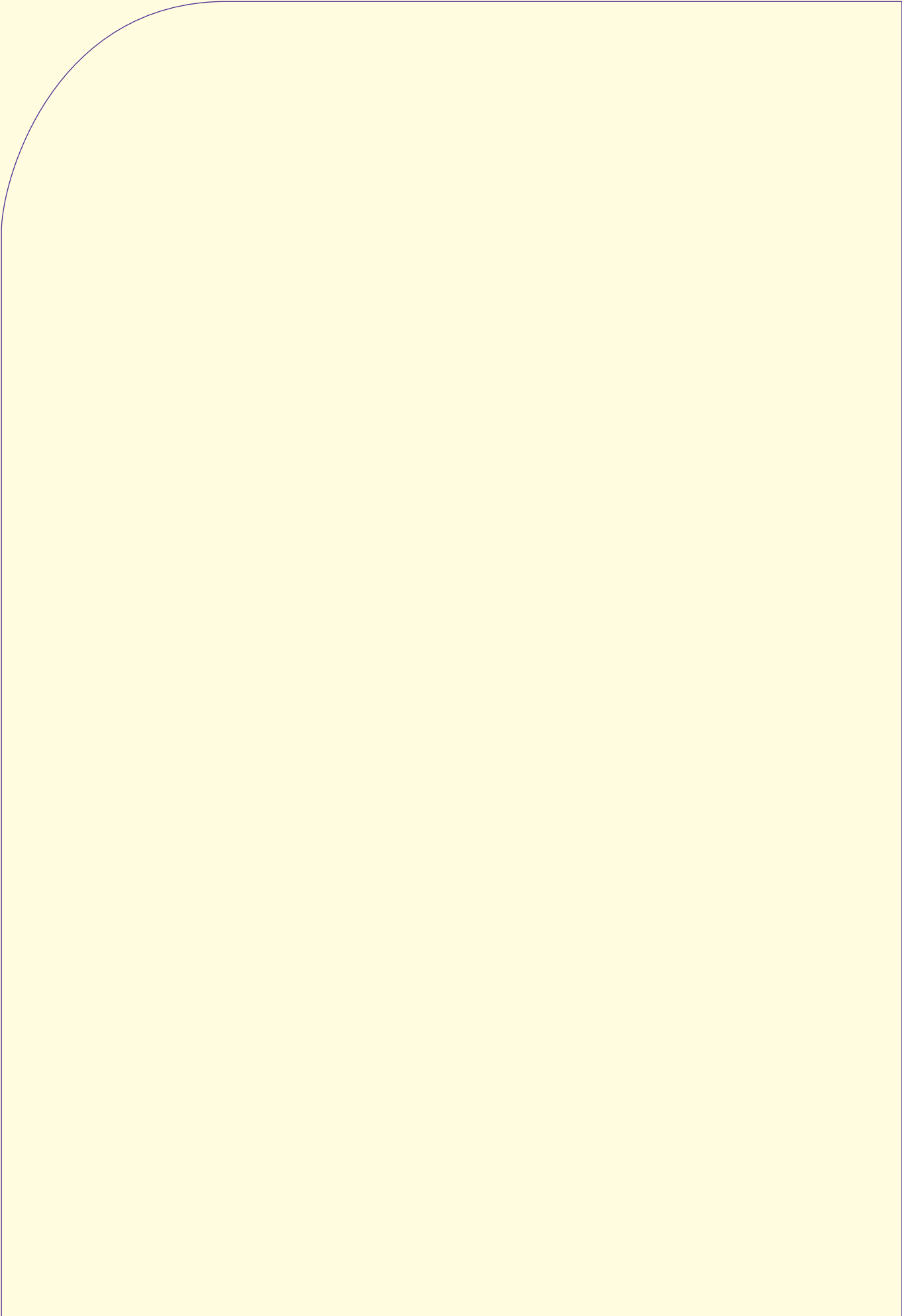
Good Practice Guide for Teaching Staff



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An electronic copy of this document is available from Adam Cresswell, a.cresswell@gold.ac.uk.



INTRODUCTION

Staff will be aware that changes in legislation have imposed certain obligations regarding the treatment of students with disabilities¹. This handbook is intended to assist you in fulfilling a significant element of the duty placed on the College and its staff by the Disability Discrimination Act (Part IV).

Those who wish to consider the legislation in full are advised to consult the Code of Practice published by the Disability Rights Commission. This document attempts to interpret the application of the legislation through case studies/examples. The document can be accessed at:

http://www.drc.org.uk/uploaded_files/documents/2008_187_DDA_Pt4_Code_of_Practice_for_Post_16_education.doc

The code states that relevant sections of the act *'make it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people or students by treating them less favourably than others. In addition, they require responsible bodies to provide certain types of reasonable adjustments to provision where disabled students or other disabled people might otherwise be substantially disadvantaged.'*

It goes on to suggest that: *'A responsible body's duty to make reasonable adjustments is an anticipatory duty owed to disabled people and students at large. [s 28T] It is not simply a duty to individuals.'*

Responsible bodies should not wait until a disabled person applies to a course or tries to use a Service before thinking about what reasonable adjustments they could make. Instead they should continually be anticipating the requirements of disabled people or students and the adjustments they could be making for them, such as regular staff development and reviews of practice. Failure to anticipate the need for an adjustment may mean it is too late to comply with the duty to make the adjustment when it is required. Lack of notice would not of itself provide a defence to a claim that an adjustment should have been made.'

The guidance set out below is intended to give some practical advice to departments on how they might consider making 'reasonable adjustments' to anticipate the needs of students with Specific Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (SpLDD)².

Ultimately Departments and individual academics within them are best placed to consider how to utilise the advice below, and in some cases alternative approaches to those suggested will be required. In order for the College to fulfil its' legal obligations there are, however, areas of guidance which must be adhered to. These, along with matters that are agreed College policy, appear in bold.

¹The Act applies to people who are disabled according to the definition of disability in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. [Sch 1] A disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment, which has an effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. That effect must be:

- substantial (that is, more than minor or trivial); and
- long-term (that is, has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months or for the rest of the life of the person affected); and
- adverse.

²Most Specific Learning Difficulties are recognised as Disabilities for the purposes of the Act

SECTION I: GENERAL GOOD PRACTICE



By following the general guidance, it is envisaged that departments will reduce the overall resource costs of making specific adaptations for a large number of students with a wide range of needs, and allowing all students, not only those with disabilities, to experience an appropriate learning process.

The following guidance is based on the principle of 'Universal Design for Learning'. *'Curriculum design theories have been drawn from the area of universal design in the physical world. To draw on an example of physical design consider the use of a curb ramp for individuals with wheelchairs. Although the curb ramp is extremely beneficial for wheelchair users, 100 other users will use it (e.g. mothers with prams, shopping trolleys, bicycles, pedestrians). Thus the premise of universal design highlights that accommodations that are made for specific individuals can greatly benefit all individuals.'*³

In short, good practice in relation to students with an SpLDD is invariably good practice for all students. It is acknowledged that much of the guidance relates to practices that will already be second nature to most staff.

It should be stressed that following this guidance will not replace the need for staff to negotiate specific adjustments for a student who has particular requirements as a result of having an SpLDD. Students will have developed different coping strategies for adapting to the learning challenges posed by their disability and will be best placed to advise you on what 'reasonable adjustments' can be made to assist their learning.

³ Accessible Curricula: Good Practice Guide for all, Carol Doyle and Karen Robson, pg8.

General interaction with students:

DO

Notwithstanding the fact that students may not wish to disclose that they have an SpLDD, they should be encouraged, and certainly given repeated opportunities, to do so.

Students should be asked if they wish information regarding their disability to be passed onto relevant staff. See note below for revision to College policy in this area⁴. Although students will be asked to give their permission at enrolment for the disclosure of information on disability it is good practice to both remind them at any future discussions on adjustments they are requesting that they have given this permission, and to allow them the opportunity to withdraw or modify this permission.

All students declaring a disability should be assigned a full-time member of staff as their personal tutor. It is important that students feel they have access to a named contact to go to for support when necessary who can reassure them at times of crisis and refer them to appropriate staff in student support.

Language should be carefully chosen when addressing students, regardless of whether you have a student with a disability in your class. For example, it is always preferable to refer to 'disabled people' rather than 'the disabled'. If you are unaware of the correct terminology for a particular disability, try to research the subject on the web, particularly <http://jarmin.com/demos/course/awareness/terminology.html>

Aim to meet the student prior to the commencement of classes. Some students will be able to advise on a range of strategies that may assist them.

Ask the student if assistance is required

Where possible allow flexibility in attendance and punctuality, if treatments or therapies are tightly scheduled or during times when difficulties are worse than usual

Above all listen to disabled students.

DON'T

Be aware of, but do not draw attention to, any special arrangements or adjustments that a particular student has asked for.

Do not assume that all students who inform you of their disability will want this information shared with colleagues (see footnote 4)

If a student is accompanied by an assistant, e.g. personal assistant, note-taker or sign-language interpreter do not address them but speak directly to the student

Do not assume that even where you have given thought to the inclusive strategies that you will employ that they will meet the specific needs of a student with an SpLDD.

Do not presume that help is needed or that it will be readily requested.

Do not dismiss or trivialise the difficulties facing students with disabilities.

⁴From 1st September 2005 students will be asked to sign the following at enrolment "Should you, either during the admissions procedure or at any point in your studies, give or have given information about a disability which you believe yourself to have, this information will – unless you object explicitly – be passed to any member of the College who requires it in order to ensure appropriate arrangements for teaching, examination or domestic facilities (including residential facilities should you wish to live in College accommodation)."

Documents and Materials

GENERALLY GOOD

Programme handbooks and specifications should state clearly: the learning outcomes of the programme and courses, how the course will be taught, any attendance or other requirements, how the learning outcomes will be assessed, and any opportunities for general learning support and/or formative assessment offered.⁵

Programme handbooks and websites, where appropriate, should alert applicants, to the fact that they are required to undertake fieldwork and/or placements in different environments. They should, if possible, include examples of support and adjustments that can be provided to disabled students to allow them to undertake these

Wherever possible, all learning materials should be made available electronically at least 24 hours before the lecture. This will enable students to print them out in a format accessible to them, and to be aware of the content and structure of the lecture in advance.

Documents should be prepared in a 'sans serif' font, with text in a readable size (at least 12). Try to keep the structure as simple as possible, to allow the content to speak for itself

OHP/PowerPoint materials in a 'sans serif' font, at least size 30pt text. Text should not be superimposed on images, and there should be a high contrast between background and text colour. www.techdis.ac.uk/

GENERALLY UNHELPFUL

To only produce documentation in hard copy.

Do not give out teaching material during lectures, seminars, etc if you expect students to make use of it during the session unless you have made this available in a range of formats

Do not overload slides with too much information.

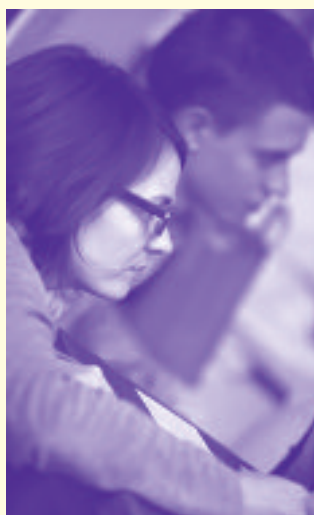
⁵It is important for core learning outcome to be expressed in such a way as to make explicit what students will be required to demonstrate at the end of the programme. e.g. in relation to chemistry one practice-based programme determined that an essential learning outcome of the programme was 'an ability to be able to handle chemicals in a laboratory setting in order to carry out a range of experiments'. Another theoretically based degree required that students should 'understand how chemicals are used in a range of experiments'. It is perhaps evident that students with a range of physical disabilities might find the second programme more easy to manage. Some accredited programmes require students to be able to communicate to a professional level in written and verbal form. It is imperative that the learning outcomes elucidate what 'being able to communicate to a professional level' actually means. If students will be expected to adhere strictly to conventions of grammar, spelling and punctuation then this should be stated. Further guidance on drawing up programme specifications can be found in the programme approval book available from g.bodrell@gold.ac.uk or at K:\registry\Deputy Registrar Office\Programme Approval.

The following layout would be accessible to most students, including those with a range of SpLDDs.

GOOD	BAD
<p>Althusser (1969) argues that the Ideological State Apparatuses differ from the Repressive State Apparatus in three core ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Function “massively and predominantly by ideology”• A plurality of apparatuses• Largely in the ‘private’ as opposed to the ‘public’ domain	<p>Althusser (1969) argues that the ISA* differs from the RSA** in 3 core ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The ISA functions “massively and predominantly by <i>ideology</i> and only secondarily by violence” => This is the opposite of the RSA2) There are a <i>plurality</i> of Ideological State Apparatuses => connections not immediately apparent : no obvious correlation between ISA and ‘state’ => 3) The ISA is largely in that domain defined in ‘bourgeois law’ as <i>‘private’</i> (e.g. family, church, etc.) as opposed to <i>‘public’</i>. <p>*ISA = Ideological State Apparatuses **RSA = Repressive State Apparatus</p>

⁶It is worth reiterating that whilst the example given would assist in anticipating general need it may still not meet the needs of all students e.g. arguably some students with dyslexia who do not respond to linear representations of information. Further guidance on making adaptations for students with dyslexia is available from the College Disability Office and from Julia Lockheart In the Languages Studies Centre.

TEACHING STRATEGIES



Staff will already be employing a range of strategies to ensure that, as far as possible, the learning environment is accessible to all, including those students with a SpLDD. The following details general good practice (most of which is simple common sense) that should, where appropriate, be incorporated into your teaching:

Lectures:

- Face the student group when speaking, avoid obscuring the face by hands or papers.
- **Make materials displayed on OHP/ PowerPoint/Whiteboards available in written form (electronically) for transcribing purposes.**
- Use plain language as far as possible and explain specialist terminology, avoiding unexplained jargon and colloquialisms. Where possible, make lists of technical terms and their definitions available to students prior to their use in lectures and/or practicals.
- Re-iterate key points, re-phrase information that is likely to be misunderstood and re-emphasise questions asked by students before answering.
- **Allow students to make tape recordings of lectures if required.**⁷
- Consider summarising previous lectures and providing an overview of the topic to be covered that day.

⁷It was agreed that students with disabilities that impaired their note-taking abilities ought to be given the right to record lectures, and that due to the sensitive nature of some 'hidden' disabilities, students should not have to publicly disclose their disability prior to gaining permission to do so. Some concerns were raised about the recording of seminar and tutorial discussions, and it was agreed that this would be left to lecturers' discretion. Concerns were also raised about the copyright of any material recorded from a lecture. It was accepted that this was covered by the normal procedures for plagiarism.

Seminars/Tutorials:

- All of the advice relating to lectures applies to seminar and tutorial discussions.
- Students should be encouraged to make any presentations available electronically.
- Only allow one student to speak at a time.
- Clarify any questions or points made by students that contain ambiguities.
- Ask students to identify themselves to the group before they start speaking.
- Ask open-ended questions, not those that only require a yes/no response. This will enable you to check that the student has understood the question.

Practicals/Studios and Workshops:

- Practical classes are often seen as teaching environments in which concerns about safety are paramount. The vast majority of students with disabilities raise no more safety considerations than any students, and the same procedures will maximise the safety of all. Clearly, it is important for students to be encouraged to share with staff any concerns about safety considerations in practical classes.
- If understanding rather than activity is the learning goal of a practical class, then it is likely that you will be able to accept the principle of a student working with and through an educational support worker whom the student directs to perform a variety of tasks.
- Always discuss procedures and any special safety considerations with the students before allowing a practical task to begin. Safety rule sheets should be available in accessible formats.

- Good general preparation greatly enhances accessibility, such as leaving aisles clear of obstacles, ensuring shelves are easily reachable by all users, and ensuring the appropriate protective clothing is worn at all times by all users.

Field Trips and Placements:

- Programme staff and placement supervisors need to be familiar with the range of support and adjustments that can be offered to students on placement.
- Placement selection and planning for disabled students needs to start early and involve disability support staff.
- Students' needs for adjustments on placement should be considered by programme staff and placement supervisors, working in collaboration with the Disability Co-ordinator.
- The impact of any aids or adaptations on the placement setting as a whole needs to be addressed and managed as part of placement planning.
- Where there are concerns about the impact of a student's disability on their level of professional competence, programmes should ensure that reasonable adjustments have been made.
- Plan early, and discuss fieldwork with all students. In these discussions, consider both the formal curriculum of the fieldwork and the more informal learning and social 'events' – e.g. which local pubs are accessible?
- Seek mutually acceptable ways of ensuring participation, e.g. a student may need to use their own adapted transportation.
- Link with external organisations early, to ensure access.

Assessment:

- **Where a student requests special examination arrangements, they should be referred to the Disability Co-ordinator, who can make recommendations as to the appropriate special examination arrangements.**
For details of the special examination arrangements application procedure, see Appendix A.
- **Course promotional materials should be as explicit as possible about the assessment methods used, the weighting given to each assessment, and where possible should allow for a broad range of assessment methods across a programme.**
- Set essay and assignment titles early to allow students to organise their time.
- When setting assessment strategies, be aware of the learning outcomes of the course, and of alternative ways of measuring those outcomes.
- Ensure that, as far as possible, the method of assessment measures the learning outcomes accurately. For advice on which assessments measure which learning outcomes effectively, see http://www.shu.ac.uk/services/lti/accessibleassessments/content/section_1/1.2.html
- Be aware of alternative assessment practice in your subject, and of what aspects of assessed outcomes are essential to demonstrating progress in the learning outcomes, and which are merely contingent, e.g. the difference between being able to play a musical instrument and being able to sit a 3-hour written exam.
- For examples of alternative assessment strategies, see <http://www.space.ac.uk/assess.php>
- Where studying is interrupted as a direct result of a disability-related cause, this should not unjustifiably impede a student's subsequent academic progress.
- Examination adjustments should be considered during formative as well as summative assessments.
- Where a student undertakes an assessment in a form different to the majority of the class, their work should be marked around half-way through the other responses, to ensure the assessor has a feel for the general range of responses before they encounter the different format response.
- Departmental Senior Tutors are responsible in the first instance for receiving requests from the Disability Co-ordinator for special assessment arrangements.

SECTION II: SPECIFIC NEEDS

The following strategies provide an introductory framework for considering programme design and adjustment in such a way that it anticipates some of the needs encountered by students with a declared SpLDD. It is by no means prescriptive or exhaustive, as individual students' needs and approaches to learning will vary. It is also worth bearing in mind that many students will have hidden disabilities, such as epilepsy or mental health difficulties, or hidden aspects to visible disabilities. Students suffering from certain health conditions such as cancer, HIV and diabetes may also qualify as disabled under the DDA 2005. Many students will have more than one disability or multiple disabilities.

It is worth restating that following this guidance will not replace the need for staff to negotiate specific adjustments for a student who has made known that they have a SpLDD and who has particular requirements.⁸

The following recommends adjustments that, in general, will be of benefit to students with the following SpLDD:

Dyslexic students:

- Dyslexia is often characterised as an imbalance of skills. It can be associated with enhanced skills in:
 - o spatial awareness
 - o problem solving
 - o lateral thinking
 - o empathy
 - o the ability to generate and manipulate a holistic picture of a concept or problem
- However, the processing differences often lead to difficulties in literacy development and features of this can still be apparent in university students, such as:
 - o omission of vowels
 - o letter reversal
 - o poor sentence structure and organisation
 - o difficulty organising thoughts
 - o problems with listening and note-taking simultaneously
 - o reading hesitantly or misreading so that comprehension is slower
 - o poor organisation in all aspects of college life
 - o poor time management
- A number of the difficulties faced by students with dyslexia can be overcome by the basic requirement of making all course materials and lecture notes available electronically.
- The Disability Team can arrange diagnostic assessments for SpLDDs and needs assessments, liaison with the library for enhanced services, and use of relevant assistive technology.
- Use structural indicators in your language, e.g. 'firstly', 'the main point', 'it follows from this'.
- Read aloud material from the board and from handouts and transparencies.
- Ensure the environment is free from distraction, e.g. flickering lights, background noise.
- Minimise the length and complexity of communications.
- Label equipment in practical classes.
- A small minority of dyslexic students will make use of note-takers, readers and amanuenses. It is important to address the student and not the note-taker.

⁸Further advice on specific adjustments for specific SpLDDs is available from the Disability Office.

- Students with dyslexia may struggle to organise their time effectively, while support should be given, extensions to course-work deadlines are counter-productive and should not be offered on the grounds of dyslexia alone. This should be made explicit in departmental hand books.
- **When applying for special examination arrangements, students with dyslexia can apply for the opportunity to submit examination scripts with a Dyslexia Alert Sticker – when marking scripts with Dyslexia Alert Stickers, please refer to the guidelines in Appendix B.**

Students with visual impairment:

- A number of the difficulties faced by visually impaired students can be overcome through the basic requirement of making all course materials and lecture notes available electronically in advance.
- The Disability Team can advise departments how to obtain materials in alternative formats.
- Ensure the student is notified of organisational changes – s/he will not be aware of messages left on notice boards or changes in lecture venues pinned to lecture theatre doors.
- Stand where glare is minimised if the student is partially-sighted, e.g. do not stand with your back to the window.
- Indicate verbally when you are entering or leaving the student's presence.
- Express written information verbally, e.g. when viewing overheads or writing on the board.
- Give directions in words not gestures.

- All visual impairments increase the time and effort that students must expend in activities of daily living, as well as in activities related to their studies. Be aware of this if a student is making requests such as extra time for the completion of assignments.

Deaf students/students with hearing impairment:

- Many students who are deaf or hearing impaired rely on lip reading to some extent, but be aware that only about 30% of words can be lip read clearly.
- The Disability Co-ordinator can organise support for deaf or hearing impaired students, including:
 - o Making referrals to Room Bookings to ensure that teaching rooms have induction loops if necessary.
 - o Arranging a note-taker or BSL interpreter as appropriate.
 - o Liaison with Library and Assistive Technology Centre for enhanced services.
- If using a lecture theatre with an induction loop, please always use it and remember to turn the microphone on.
- Provide printed summaries of audio and audio-visual materials
- When speaking:
 - o Face the student so they can lip-read
 - o Avoid moving around too much
 - o Ensure light is on your face, e.g. don't stand with your back to the window
 - o Speak clearly, don't shout or over-enunciate as this distorts sound and lip patterns.
- Repeat the content of a question from the class before giving the answer.

- If a student is having difficulty understanding, re-word rather than repeat what you have said.
- If a student is using a sign-language interpreter, provide rest-breaks every 15-20 minutes or negotiate an appropriate time with the interpreter. BSL has its own structure and syntax, and is different from English. This effects the time taken to interpret, and may affect a student's reading and written expression, as English may be in effect their second language. If an interpreter is needed for more than an hour at a time it is likely that there will be two taking turns with the interpretation

Students with mobility impairment:

- The Disability Co-ordinator can organise support for students with mobility impairments, including
 - o Making referrals to Room Bookings to ensure that teaching rooms are accessible.
 - o Arranging a note-taker or personal assistant as appropriate.
 - o Liaison with Library and Assistive Technology Centre for enhanced services.
- When speaking to the student, use the same volume and tone of voice and the same eye contact as you would with any other person. If the person is in a wheelchair, try to place yourself on the same eye level for comfortable eye contact, e.g. seat yourself nearby.
- Leave equipment where the student has placed as it has been positioned where it will be easiest to retrieve.
- Ensure corridors are clear and that seating within classrooms allows sufficient space for manoeuvring wheelchairs.

- All mobility impairments increase the time and effort which students must expend in activities of daily living, as well as in activities related to their studies. Be aware of this if a student is making requests such as extra time for the completion of assignments.
- Be understanding of lateness related to transport or issues with personal assistants.
- If the student has a speech impairment this may make communication difficult. Do not give the impression of understanding if you haven't. Being asked to repeat something several times is likely to be a familiar experience for the individual. If there is still doubt about what is being said, clarify a statement by repeating it or asking the student to write it down.

Students with Asperger's syndrome:

- Asperger's syndrome is a pervasive and complex developmental disorder which falls within the autism spectrum, characterised by:
 - o impairment in reciprocal social interaction sometimes severe
 - o all absorbing narrow interest
 - o imposition of some routines and meanings
 - o speech and language problems
 - o non-verbal communication problems
 - o motor clumsiness

However because Asperger is a syndrome of difficulties, not all students will experience ALL these difficulties and those difficulties can be experienced in varying degrees of severity

- Respect any need for routine – e.g. the student may wish to sit in the same seat at every lecture.

- Keeping the same personal tutor throughout the course is helpful.
- Give advance notice of unusual events such as field trips or exams.
- Students may require assistance with clarifying course requirements – ensure instructions are explicit and avoid metaphorical and figurative language.
- Group work may be particularly challenging. Be aware of the need for extra support and take this into account in group assessments, or devise an alternative assessment method to group work.
- Poor fine-motor co-ordination may result in extremely poor handwriting. Use of a word-processor in lectures may be beneficial.
- Non-verbal communication is often not well developed.
- Individuals may often interrupt inappropriately and be unable to interpret any cues that such interruptions are unwelcome.
- At times, students with Asperger’s syndrome may appear non-compliant as they often have difficulty taking direction and coping with negative feedback.
- Tutorial participation may present problems for some students – allowance for communication difficulties may be necessary.
- Students with Asperger’s syndrome may benefit from accessing the Disability Service or Counselling Service.
- The periods of emotional frustration experienced by all students at some time or other can be greatly magnified for students

with Asperger’s syndrome, they may seem to over-react to seemingly unimportant issues.

Students with Mental Health Difficulties

There are a growing number of students whose mental health problems are sufficiently “long term and substantial” to bring them within the scope of the DDA 2005. It is quite likely that you will have at least one student in every seminar group suffering from a mental health disability. However due to the particular stigma which still surrounds mental health problems, students with this disability may be the least likely to inform you of their condition.

Students with mental health problems can become very behind with their academic work. They may reach a point where for a time they are unable to move on with their studies.

If a student is open about their difficulties they may find it useful to talk through their needs with you so that you can come to some common agreement.

The most common requests from students are:

- Timetable planning and help with their academic work programme to minimise stress. They may for instance need to negotiate a timetable that as far as possible fits around their medication or hospital treatment
- Extra help with planning before or during exam and assessment periods.
- Special Examination arrangements; these are recommended through the Disability Co-ordinator in liaison with Department Senior Tutors. They will need medical evidence of their disability.

- A named contact to go to for support when necessary who can reassure them at times of crisis and refer them to appropriate staff in student support (likely to be personal tutor who should be a full time member of staff).
- Academic staff being clear about what they expect from them. Students with mental health problems can find the unexpected or surprises very disorientating. This includes deadlines for coursework, regularity of tutorials and exams.
- Flexibility in attendance and punctuality, if treatments or therapies are tightly scheduled or during times when difficulties are worse than usual.
- Extensions of coursework deadlines during periods when their mental health problems are preventing them from being able to concentrate and focus on their studies (currently extensions are not allowable within College regulations work must be submitted with extenuating circumstances – this policy is however, currently being reviewed).
- If possible a quiet room to rest in should they become unwell in a lecture.
- Contact from staff during any periods of time away from studies due to illness. They will benefit from knowing that you haven't forgotten about them and you are looking forward to their return.
- To be treated respectfully – to be listened to and not have their difficulties dismissed.

It is important to bear in mind that teaching approaches can have an encouraging or detrimental effect on some vulnerable students. Many students with mental health problems suffer from very low self-esteem and they can feel very exposed in group situations. They can find it difficult to speak up in seminars or put together presentations. They are scared of "getting it wrong" and coming across as stupid. All students can benefit from being reminded that seminars and tutorials are a vehicle for the learning process where ideas are developed and expanded rather than a judgmental process involving right and wrong answers. It is advisable to avoid sarcasm and to use irony carefully when responding to students with mental health problems as they can find this form of communication undermining.

It can be a very fine balance between encouraging a student to open up and participate in the group and drawing too much unwanted attention to them. If you are concerned about a student perhaps to them individually and ask them how you can encourage them to participate.

Some students may benefit from working in small groups within the seminar environment so that they feel they are making a contribution but are not exposed to the scrutiny of the whole group.

The College's Mental Health Guidelines provide further information about how to support students with mental health problems. The College Counselling Service provides a consultation service to all members of staff to support them in their pastoral work with students. The Service also facilitates a number of workshops on specific topics designed to boost students' self confidence as learners (eg workshops on managing procrastination, perfectionism, self esteem, anxiety and stress)

FURTHER SUPPORT AND ADVICE



College disability support is provided by the following people:

Disability Co-ordinator

Mary Bown, m.bown@gold.ac.uk, ext 2292

Dyslexia Tutor

Helen Ware, h.ware@gold.ac.uk

Assistive Technology Centre

Alastair Veal, a.veal@gold.ac.uk, ext 5023

Lecturer, Academic Literacies

Julia Lockheart, j.lockheart@gold.ac.uk,
ext 7254

Libraries

Sheila Turley, s.turley@gold.ac.uk, ext 7299

Centre for Learning Technology

John Phelps, j.phelps@gold.ac.uk, ext 7549

Counselling

Veronica Denby, v.denby@gold.ac.uk, ext 7473

Learning and Teaching Office

Andrew Brett, a.brett@gold.ac.uk, ext 7400

Your Department Senior Tutor's role also includes acting as a liaison between staff, students and the College on disability issues.

EXTERNAL LINKS

Code of Practice Published by Disability Rights Commission
http://www.drc.org.uk/uploaded_files/documents/2008_187_DDA_Pt4_Code_of_Practice_for_Post_16_education.doc

Hosted on the HE Academy website: a wide ranging set of good practice guides on all aspects of accessibility:
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources.asp?section=generic&process=filter_fields&type=all&id=17&history=

SWANDS staff development resources
<http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/pages/view.asp?page=3243>

DEMOS staff disability awareness resources
<http://jarmin.com/demos/>

National Disability Team planning and awareness raising checklists
http://www.natdisteam.ac.uk/resources_briefings_ndtchecklists.html

An A-Z of useful links from UWIC
http://www.uwic.ac.uk/new/disability_dept/a2z/index.asp

PREMIA accessible research practice resources
<http://www.premia.ac.uk/>

Sources referred to in drawing up the guidance:

Doyle, Carol and Robson, Karen (2002) *Accessible Curricula: Good Practice for All* [UWIC Press: Cardiff]

Shaw, Susan (2000) *Teachability: Creating an Accessible Curriculum for Students with Disabilities* [Scottish Higher Education Funding Council: Glasgow]

DfES (2005) *SpLD Working Group Guidelines*

DfES (2004) *Delivering Skills for Life:*

A Framework for Understanding Dyslexia [NIACE: Leicester]

HMSO (2001) *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001*

Goldsmiths College (2002) *Guidelines for Tutors Supporting Students with Specific Learning Difficulties including Dyslexia and Dyspraxia*

McNulty, Helen (2001) *Disability Statement* [Goldsmiths College University of London]

Learning and Skills Council (2003) *Disclosure, Confidentiality and Passing on Information*

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SECTION III

APPENDIX A: Special Examination Arrangements procedure: (extract from the guidance notes on the application for special examination arrangements).

- 1 All students with a Disability/Specific Learning Difficulty (e.g. dyslexia) who wish to have special examination arrangements, including Dyslexia Alert Stickers are required to make an appointment with the Disability Coordinator in order to complete form SEA (appointments can be booked through the Student Support Office 020 7919 7757).
- 2 Students will be given these notes for guidance, which they are obliged to read in full before making an application.
- 3 Before additional arrangements are recommended, students must supply the Disability Coordinator with supporting evidence of their Disability/Specific Learning Difficulty. This should be either:
 - a. recent evidence from a medical practitioner or other suitably qualified professional such as a psychiatrist, that indicates the nature of the disability/difficulty and outlines its effects and the support needs.
 - b. Medical evidence of disability together with an up to date Needs Assessment completed by an accredited Access Centre which makes recommendations as to the support needed.
 - c. In the case of students with Specific Learning Difficulties (dyslexia, dyspraxia, AD[H]D), a full Educational Psychologist's Report, undertaken post 16. Help organising an up-to-date Report can be provided through the Disability Office.
- 4 The Disability Coordinator will discuss in confidence the student's support needs with them and fill out section B of the SEA form referring to the recommendation made in the student's supporting evidence.
- 5 The Disability Coordinator will forward her recommendation to the Department Senior Tutor for agreement, who may, subject to the student's express permission, consult with those who ordinarily teach him/her in order that they are fully aware of the support s/he may need.
- 6 Once your Senior Tutor is satisfied that your request falls within agreed norms they will sign the form and send on your behalf to the Examinations Office.
- 7 Where the request falls outside agreed norms, the Senior Tutor will then present the student's needs to the Chair of the Departmental Sub-Board, who, once satisfied that the request is reasonable, will sign the form and send it to the Examinations Office.
- 8 The Examinations Office will write to the student no less than 4 weeks before the beginning of the Examinations period to confirm what support the student will receive.
- 9 If the Senior Tutor and Chair of Departmental Sub-Board cannot satisfy themselves that the request is reasonable, they will return the form to the Examinations Officer, who must then convene a Special Assessments Adjudication Panel to decide on whether to uphold the Disability Coordinator's recommendation. Due to confidentiality issues, the Panel will be presented by an anonymised report by the Disability Officer. The decision of the SAAP will be final.

The College is currently reviewing the following procedures and therefore updated guidance may be issued separately and/or included in future versions of this document

APPENDIX B: Guidelines for marking scripts accompanied by a Dyslexia Alert Sticker:

If a student declares on their enrolment form that they are dyslexic the Department Senior Tutor in each department will be automatically alerted to this by College Registry. It will be their responsibility to inform the student what concessions they may be eligible to apply for. Recommendations for Dyslexia Alert Stickers are made in the same way as all other applications for Special examination Arrangements

From 2003/04 onwards the procedures will mean that students with disabilities will be written to by the Disability Officer and told that if they want to apply for concessions they should make an appointment with one of the disability Team who will make appropriate recommendations in line with the guidelines for applying for special examination arrangements. The Department Senior Tutors will be required to follow up any students who have not made applications by the deadline to ensure that they do not want the provision.

Most applications will be given concessions in line with both sector standards and recommendations in the students Educational Psychologists report. However if the student is asking for concessions that are outside of these norms the application will be referred to the Special Examinations Panel for a ruling.

Students can apply for additional time, the use of a spellchecker and in some cases the use of a word processor. Some students may also be allowed to use an amanuensis. Each student is different and will require varying levels of support.

However all dyslexic students will be given the opportunity to identify themselves to the marker as a dyslexic candidate by being given an optional *dyslexia alert sticker*, with their I.D. number printed on it, should they want their

dyslexia to be taken into account when their scripts are being assessed.

With the introduction of the Disability Co-ordinators post, departments will have a specific person to support the implementation of these arrangements.

Procedures for concessions for dyslexic students submitting written coursework is currently under consideration by the Working Party.

Marking work from students with dyslexia

Should students choose to attach a *dyslexia alert sticker* to their scripts, please bear in mind the following guidelines:-

When marking the written work of dyslexic students it is essential that tutors make allowances for *specific dyslexic difficulties**. Rather than adjusting marks and being faced with the almost impossible task of deciding how much adjustment would be fair at a final stage (as would be the case at the examining board). The following guidelines are the recommendations of the Dyslexia in Higher Education National Working Party (1999): -

1. Where possible the student should be marked according to the *overall content, ideas and critical acumen* of the work i.e. ideas and concepts expressed, inclusion of theorists and correct statements regarding their work, etc.
2. *Overall structural mistakes* should not be used to mark down a dyslexic student i.e. flow and connection in sentences and paragraphs.
3. *Mistakes in punctuation, spelling and grammar* should not be used to mark down a dyslexic student.

(Taken from Dyslexia in Higher Education: policy, provision and practice. National Working Party on Dyslexia in Higher Education: 1999, p152)

These guidelines aim to maintain the highest academic standards and are for the purpose of establishing equitable circumstances for all disabled students.

“On occasions, examiners may detect no symptoms of dyslexia in an examination script or in some other piece of work. This lack of apparent dyslexic symptoms should not be taken as evidence that the dyslexia has been 'cured' or that the disability was a myth. Work that shows few signs of dyslexia may evidence the efficacy of the support and special arrangements being provided for the student. HESA statistics show that, in terms of degree classes at graduation, the performance of students with dyslexia is not altogether that different from that of other students. Furthermore, where appropriate support provision is available, there are indications that the proportion of students with dyslexia achieving 'good' degrees (i.e. first class and upper second) more closely resemble that of the whole cohort (see section 1.1.5.1).” (Ibid).

* It is recognised that this may not be possible where the quality of written expression is one of the principal focuses of the examination (e.g. in English language)

LARGE FORMAT FOOTNOTES

- ¹ The Act applies to people who are disabled according to the definition of disability in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. [Sch 1]
A disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment, which has an effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. That effect must be:
- substantial (that is, more than minor or trivial); and
 - long-term (that is, has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months or for the rest of the life of the person affected); and
 - adverse.
- ² Most Specific Learning Difficulties are recognised as Disabilities for the purposes of the Act
- ³ Accessible Curricula: Good Practice Guide for all, Carol Doyle and Karen Robson, pg8.
- ⁴ From 1st September 2005 students will be asked to sign the following at enrolment
“Should you, either during the admissions procedure or at any point in your studies, give or have given information about a disability which you believe yourself to have, this information will – unless you object explicitly – be passed to any member of the College who requires it in order to ensure appropriate arrangements for teaching, examination or domestic facilities (including residential facilities should you wish to live in College accommodation).”
- ⁵ It is important for core learning outcome to be expressed in such a way as to make explicit what students will be required to demonstrate at the end of the programme. e.g. in relation to chemistry one practice-based programme determined that an essential learning outcome of the programme was ‘an ability to be able to handle chemicals in a laboratory setting in order to carry out a range of experiments’. Another theoretically based degree required that students should ‘understand how chemicals are used in a range of experiments’. It is perhaps evident that students with a range of physical disabilities might find the second programme more easy to manage. Some accredited programmes require students to be able to communicate to a professional level in written and verbal form. It is imperative that the learning outcomes elucidate what ‘being able to communicate to a professional level’ actually means. If students will be expected to adhere strictly to conventions of grammar, spelling and punctuation then this should be stated. Further guidance on drawing up programme specifications can be found in the programme approval book available from g.bodrell@gold.ac.uk or at K:\registry\Deputy Registrar Office\Programme Approval.
- ⁶ It is worth reiterating that whilst the example given would assist in anticipating general need it may still not meet the needs of all students e.g. arguably some students with dyslexia who do not respond to linear representations of information. Further guidance on making adaptations for students with dyslexia is available from the College Disability Office and from Julia Lockheart in the Languages Studies Centre.
- ⁷ It was agreed that students with disabilities that impaired their note-taking abilities ought to be given the right to record lectures, and that due to the sensitive nature of some ‘hidden’ disabilities, students should not have to publicly disclose their disability prior to gaining permission to do so. Some concerns were raised about the recording of seminar and tutorial discussions, and it was agreed that this would be left to lecturers’ discretion. Concerns were also raised about the copyright of any material recorded from a lecture. It was accepted that this was covered by the normal procedures for plagiarism.
- ⁸ Further advice on specific adjustments for specific SpLDDs is available from the Disability Office.

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