Recommended Reasonable Adjustments

SpLD Strategies for Faculties to Support Achievement

Student diagnosis: Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD)

The largest percentage of students in HE, who have been identified with a disability, fall under the umbrella term, SpLD. Neurodiversity, being the intrinsic cause of SpLDs, means that the conditions are varied and each person with a SpLD has a unique profile. However, here are some tips for generic support that may be beneficial for all students.

The following guidelines will support students to access and achieve positive results on your course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Attributes</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Creative thought</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Good at making connections</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Innovative</td>
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<td>• Empathetic</td>
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<th>Student Challenges</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Processing information quickly</td>
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<td>• Processing new vocabulary</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Writing legibly</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Keeping up with note taking</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Clarity in notetaking</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Prioritising reading</td>
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<td>• Takes time when reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Retaining information</td>
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<td>• Recalling spoken information</td>
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<td>• Organisational difficulties</td>
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<td>• Working Memory</td>
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<td>• Prioritising and organisational difficulties</td>
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<td>• Multitasking</td>
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<td>• Misinterpreting information</td>
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<td>• Group work</td>
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## General Advice

- The best way to give appropriate support is by discreetly asking the student what would be helpful to them, so an initial one-to-one conversation is very useful.
- Be direct, explicit and consistent when communicating.
- Explain why a subject/topic is taught.
- Chunk workload.
- Use a visual calendar with staggered deadlines and key completion dates.
- Encourage an uncluttered working environment to aid focus – allow headphones to minimise distractions.
- Support the student to avoid over scheduling.

## Handouts, PowerPoints and Written Information

It is advisable to:

- Provide PowerPoints at the beginning of a module or a week in advance of a lecture, to enable the student to prepare and print information.
- Use san serif font e.g. Arial, Lucinda Sans, Calibri, Tahoma.
- Use a 12pt font with a minimum of 1.15 spacing for text/handouts.
- Break down long pieces of text, using headings, bullet points and using **BOLD** to identify key words.
- Number the slides to reduce order confusion when printed.
- Use a pale coloured background, not white with black text.
- Use a minimum of 24pt font for power points.
- Make all material accessible so that students can change font, size, background colour etc. to suit their learning needs.
- Place a full stop at the end of bullet points, so there is a pause between points when students use text to speech software.

## Lecture / Seminar

Students benefit from preparation:

- Give a course overview at the start of the academic year; a yearly calendar of when assignments are due, exams dates and when the reading week is, etc.
- Balance presentations and activities where possible.
- Present material in different ways using visual aids, such as graphs, flow charts, mind-maps, video clips, music and pictures.
To avoid confusion, back up what you say in a lecture with the same written information or instructions.

- Staple lecture notes together to avoid order confusion.
- Provide written instructions as well as oral whenever possible.
- Provide glossaries, subject specific vocabulary and frequently used acronyms.
- Introduce new topics by providing an overview first.
- Use concrete examples to aid understanding.
- Use anecdotal information and visual material to aid memory.

Assignments and Essay Questions

- Break assignments down into manageable chunks.
- Use clear fonts for marking grids and learning outcomes.
- Give specific guidelines, e.g. how many references/citations per point; word count for different sections.

Reading Lists

Students benefit from clear reading lists:

- Use a sans serif font e.g. Arial, Lucinda Sans, Calibri, Tahoma in 12pt font, with a minimum of 1.15 spacing.
- Split into essential, extra and exceptional categories to enable slow readers to priorities their reading.
- Use a line space between each reference to differentiate one reference from another.

Use Assistive Technology

Information on podcasts is available at: http://www.southampton.ac.uk/isolutions/computing/elearn/podcast/

- Allow the use of iPads in seminars to listen to written material if they struggle to read quickly (text to speech).

Encourage your students to use apps:

- Inspiration for mind mapping.
- Zotero for referencing.
- Pomodoro to support efficiency.
- Quizlet and Study Shack to develop flashcards for revision.
- Robobraille.org will convert written text such as book pages into accessible formats.
Recording lectures and seminars

Students may benefit from recording information:

- Allow students to record lectures/seminars on their own devices e.g. phones/laptops. It enables students to focus on the lecture content and gives time to process information.
- Panopto is a video platform available in some lecture theatres and available at:
  http://www.southampton.ac.uk/isolutions/computing/elearn/panopto/

Sharing and Further Information

- All tutors and lecturers should be made aware of the student’s SpLD.
- The information in this Student Support Recommendation must be shared if the student studies a module with another faculty, goes on placement or broad.
- The following websites provide information on accessibility and inclusive practice:
  https://www.southampton.ac.uk/edusupport/study_support/information_for_staff.page

Resources

Study Skills resources are available at:
http://library.soton.ac.uk/sash
- An interactive Study Skills Toolkit is available via Blackboard.

Further information for students and tutor support is available from:

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