

Dyslexia and Studying from Home

Technology for Study

- Reasonable adjustments and the usual study support must be in place while students are working from home. The first step is to ask the student what additional support they think will help.
- Check with learners that they have access to an internet connection. If a learner does not, then make arrangements for materials to be sent. Offer additional tutorials to learners with specific difficulties via the telephone until the learner can access online lectures and classrooms.
- Because of the need to now work online, laptops with an additional large screen are likely to support individuals with hidden disabilities; having multiple documents open for cross-referencing is one way of supporting the user's working memory.
- If a student's usual specialist software is temporarily unavailable, they may find a free temporary download for their software via the software company's website. This link has a free temporary download of Read and Write Gold so students can try it out: www.texthelp.com/en-gb/products/read-write/read-write-for-work/ This YouTube video has a good demonstration: www.youtube.com/watch?v=YxUwQMm_Lmw
- Microsoft has dictation and screen-reading features built-in (as do smartphones) assigning a trusted tutor/mentor for support with activating and using these tools is a quick way of providing help to employees with dyslexia.

- This video demonstrates ways of adjusting the built-in screen tinting features without the need for specialist software:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=hINILnaBWOg&t=2s

Staying Organised and focused

- Electronic calendars with reminders can have deadlines logged in (wall planners and paper timetables can also be used for visual methods of seeing the 'timeline').
- It's important to be as organised as possible, using folders, colour co-ordination, 'to do' lists etc to ensure that day-to-day tasks and targets are clear and achievable.
- Where possible, have a designated study-zone at home,
- Ensure that breaks are taken away from the study-zone; this will help to maintain perspective, to reduce stress and to ensure there a chance to decompress.

Delivery of Teaching

- Virtual lectures: it is helpful to use a video platform that enables attendees to record the content, thus freeing up the need to take notes and enabling neurodiverse students to review information at their own pace. However, those students with hidden challenges may require additional training on these web-based platforms, a named and trusted tutor/ mentor is a quick way of providing this.
- Many neurodivergent individual's process information differently and like to have verbal information in bitesize chunks with additional time to process and digest it.

- Be sure to email lecture notes and handouts early so students with reading difficulties have time to process the information and to prepare their contributions. Be aware, that many individuals with reading challenges prefer information presented visually (charts, diagrams, colour coding) as well as with specific fonts and layouts (this Dyslexia Friendly Style Guide is useful for creating materials: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/advice/employers/creating-a-dyslexia-friendly-workplace/dyslexia-friendly-style-guide)
- Endeavour to link ideas together in informal discussions and formal lectures.
- Neurodiverse learners may need support to plan assignments and to set priorities and deadlines.
- It is important to use technology to reach out to students to ensure well-being.
- Whilst studying remotely, has the college/ university ensured that there are clear channels of communication if a student is struggling to cope and remain focused?
- Need help and advice? Reach out to us here at the British Dyslexia Association: helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk