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*Personal Statement: Dr Georgia Niolaki*

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I am delighted to provide my statement in support of my application. I would like to help individuals with dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) in my area and nationally and internationally. My interest in dyslexia stems from personal experiences working as a primary school teacher in the UK and Greece and the last nine years lecturer in Higher Education (at Coventry University (CU) and soon at Bath Spa University (BSU) Senior Lecturer in SpLD/Dyslexia and Inclusion). I also have dyslexia (which was never diagnosed due to lack of awareness when I was a student!), and I have experienced difficulties and exclusion in my school years. I am a Trustee of my local LDA, NWCDA (North Warwickshire & Coventry Dyslexia Association) and a Deputy Adult Representative on LAB.

**What can I bring in this role?** I can bring my interest, enthusiasm, knowledge, and expertise. I published and presented research findings on individuals with dyslexia in peer-reviewed journals and conferences (UK and abroad). I support monolingual and bilingual individuals who have dyslexia. My published interventions demonstrate the importance of using the best dyslexia teaching practices. I share my insight to colleagues about dyslexia friendly teaching

following the BDA suggestions and practices. Schools invited me to offer my expertise on dyslexia, literacy difficulties in bilingual children and cross-language differences in the manifestation of dyslexia. Recently, I published in the British Psychological Society special issue (*Working with young people aged 16-25*) a contribution about assessment practices. I am teaching and leading modules on SpLDs.

Via these roles, I guide and inspire future teachers, teacher assistants, specialist dyslexia assessors, SENCos, Educational Psychologists and clinicians. I also spread the values, the commitment, and the seminal work the BDA carries. I am leading large research projects on spelling and bilingualism funded by the British Academy and CU. The spelling project aims to develop an assessment tool used by dyslexia assessors to identify strengths and weaknesses in spelling and writing. That demonstrates my ability to lead projects and successfully gain funding from different organisations. These skills and knowledge can be an asset for the BDA.

I would like to help individuals understand that dyslexia is not a barrier to achievement, but low self-worth feelings can be. I receive unimaginable pleasure by supporting individuals who have dyslexia and knowing that I helped them break barriers (behavioural, social and emotional). My roles (Adult Deputy on LAB and member and trustee of my LDA) demonstrate my commitment and understanding of how the BDA works, and my ability to represent LDAs other than my own. I believe that I am well-suited for the role and can make a significant contribution always acting in the best interests of the BDA and individuals who have dyslexia.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Georgia Niolaki  
Senior Lecturer SpLD/Dyslexia & Inclusion,  
Bath Spa University