

STUDENT SERVICES

**I THINK I MAY BE
DYSLEXIC**



What is Dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a Specific Learning Difficulty or SpLD. It can affect individuals in a variety of ways. People with Dyslexia may find it takes them longer than others to learn to read, write and spell. People with Dyslexia can also experience difficulties with their organisational skills, short-term memory, sequencing and maths.

Dyslexia is not an illness or the result of a disease, but is due to a weakness in the brain's ability to process language based information. Little is known as to why some people are dyslexic and others are not, but what is known is that it is a biological phenomenon, although environmental factors have been shown to have a contributing factor. Dyslexia tends to run in families also, although no genetic link has so far been discovered.

It is a common belief that people who are dyslexic are not as intelligent as those who aren't. Nothing could be further from the truth. Dyslexia can affect anyone at any level of intellectual ability. Dyslexia is not the result of a lack of motivation, emotional disturbance, sensory impairment or lack of opportunity, although it can occur alongside any of these. (some information taken from www.bma.org.uk)

Dyslexia can present itself in a variety of ways, so consequently there are a range of resources and strategies to support dyslexic people.

For some it can be a simple case of putting a colored overlay over something they are reading to stop the words from "jumping around".

For others they need a far more interactive approach to support and may benefit from the use of specific hardware or software, or perhaps access to a specialist tutor. Many dyslexic students will use a combination of these along with other complementary strategies.

As all students are individuals, what works for one student may not work for another. It is important that your needs are properly assessed. If you think you might need some support you should talk to Student Services. Details of the support the college can offer you are detailed further in this booklet, but if you would like to make an appointment to speak to someone please contact Simon on 01642 856123 or e-mail to disability@ccad.ac.uk

How do I know if I am Dyslexic?

The only way to diagnosis Dyslexia is by having a full diagnostic report carried out by either an Educational Psychologist or by a suitably qualified specialist teacher.

You can arrange to have an assessment carried out privately. These assessments are quite expensive, costing around £300. Before you commit yourself to this however, there are a couple of things that you can do to see if you are at risk of being dyslexic.

CCAD SpLD Screening

When you joined the college you may have been asked to complete a screening test on the computer called LADS. This stands for Lucid Adult Dyslexia Screening.

This screening tool asks you to complete a variety of tests to see if you have any difficulties. The tests cover a wide range of educational activities such as reading, writing, spelling and maths as well as spatial awareness.

The software then uses a complex calculation to assess whether you had any difficulties with these tasks and if so whether it was because you found them hard or if it was because you might be dyslexic. The software then provides your tutor with a result which they can discuss with you.

Questionnaire

If you are not a student at CCAD yet, or if you have used the screening and feel that it didn't give you the result you expected, you can use the simple questionnaire included in this booklet.

The questionnaire is a simple tool that allows you to find out if you are at risk of Dyslexia. The result that you get is not a diagnosis and can only be used to show whether you are at risk of being dyslexic. Please complete the questionnaire as honestly as possible. You will then need to use the guidance on the next few pages to find out what your result means.

Adult Checklist

A checklist for dyslexic adults will not provide enough information for a diagnostic assessment, but it can be very useful in promoting a better self-understanding and a pointer towards the future assessment needs.

Below are the questions that were found to be more predictive of dyslexia (as measured by prior diagnosis). In order to provide the most informative checklist, scores for each answer indicate the relative importance of that question.

Alongside each line you can keep a tally of your score and at the end find a total.

For each question, circle the number in the box which is closest to your response.

		Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Most of the Time	Total
1	Do you confuse visually similar words such as cat and cot?	3	6	9	12	
2	Do you lose your place or miss out lines when reading?	2	4	6	8	
3	Do you confuse the names of objects, for example table or chair?	1	2	4	4	
4	Do you have trouble telling left from right?	1	2	4	4	
5	Is map reading or finding your way to a strange place confusing?	1	2	4	4	
6	Do you re-read paragraphs to understand them?	1	2	4	4	
7	Do you get confused when given several instructions at once?	1	2	4	4	
8	Do you make mistakes when taking down telephone messages?	1	2	4	4	
9	Do you find it difficult to find the right word to say?	1	2	4	4	
10	How often do you think of creative solutions to problems?	1	2	4	4	
		Easy	Challenging	Hard	Very Hard	Total
11	How easy do you find it to sound out words such as e-le-phant?	3	6	9	12	
12	When writing, do you find it difficult to organise thoughts on paper?	2	4	6	8	
13	Did you learn your multiplication tables easily?	2	4	6	8	
14	How easy do you find it to recite the alphabet?	1	2	3	4	
15	How hard do you find it to read aloud?	1	2	3	4	

Results from the Adults Test – what it all means

The research and development of the checklist has provided a valuable insight into the diversity of difficulties and is a clear reminder that every individual is different and should be treated and assessed as such. However, it is also interesting to note that a number of answers that are said to be characteristic of dyslexic adults, are commonly found in the answers of non-dyslexics.

It is important to remember that this test does not constitute an assessment of one's difficulties. It is just an indication of some of the areas in which you or the person you are assessing may have difficulties. However this questionnaire may provide a better awareness of the nature of an individual's difficulties and may indicate that further professional assessment would be helpful.

Whilst we do stress that this is not a diagnostic tool, research suggests the following:

Score less than 45 – probably non-dyslexic

Research results: no individual who was diagnosed as dyslexic through a full assessment was found to have scored less than 45 and therefore it is unlikely that if you score under 45 you will be dyslexic.

Score 45 to 60 – showing signs consistent with mild dyslexia

Research results: most of those who were in this category showed signs of being at least moderately dyslexic. However, a number of persons not previously diagnosed as dyslexic (though they could just be unrecognised and undiagnosed) fell into this category.

Score greater than 60 – signs consistent with moderate or severe dyslexia

Research results: all those who recorded scores of more than 60 were diagnosed as moderately or severely dyslexic. Therefore we would suggest that a score greater than 60 suggests moderate or severe dyslexia. Please note that this should not be regarded as an assessment of one's difficulties. But if you feel that a dyslexia-type problem may exist, further advice should be sought.

Please note:

This screening checklist is not a diagnostic assessment.

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How can I find out if I have Dyslexia?

Whether you have used the questionnaire or you have been screened using the LADS software it is important that you talk to someone about what the results mean. You can either talk to the tutor doing the screening, or you can speak to your Student Services Adviser or the college Disability Adviser.

Depending on your circumstances the adviser or tutor might suggest that you have a full diagnostic assessment. This assessment will need to be carried out by a suitably qualified specialist teacher or an Educational Psychologist.

If they think you need this assessment they will be able to arrange this for you and the college may be able to help you with some, or all, of the costs involved.

The assessment will normally take place at the college and will take up to 2 hours. It is nothing to worry about and will involve you doing some reading, writing, spelling and maths. There will also be some memory tests and some spatial awareness tests.

If the Adviser does not think that you need an assessment either now or in the future they will explain their reasons to you. If you disagree with their opinion you are welcome to either ask for a second opinion or arrange for an assessment privately. Student Services will be happy to provide you with details of where you can get a quality report carried out.

It is very important that if you arrange your own assessment you make sure that the person carrying out the assessment is suitably qualified. Student Services can provide you with details of the qualifications the assessor should have and they can also give you advice on the type of assessment you need to ask for.

How do I find out what support I need?

The support that is available to you will depend on:

- The type of course you are on (either FE or HE)
- Your specific difficulties
- The type of support that you will find useful

Before the college can put any support in place you will need to have your needs assessed. How you have your needs assessed depends on the type of course you studying.

FE Students (studying at the Middlesbrough site)

If you are studying on an FE course, the way you access support is quite straight forward. You will need to meet with the Disability Adviser for a one to one appointment. During this appointment the Disability Adviser will talk to you about your course, the things you find most challenging and will also look at the results of your diagnostic assessment.

During the appointment the adviser will help you decide the types of support you will need to access. The adviser will take notes in the appointment and after you have met will write up a report. Once completed, you will be given a copy of the report, and if you agree to the support recommendations you will be asked to sign the report by way of confirmation.

The adviser will then set up your support, and arrange to meet you during the year to check that the support you are receiving meets your needs. If you want to talk to the adviser about your support, before a follow up appointment, you will just need to let them know.

HE Students (studying in Hartlepool)

Accessing support in Higher Education is slightly more complicated. To access support you will need to apply for some funding first. This funding is called Disabled Students' Allowance or DSA.

HE students need to apply for DSA because this funding will pay for the cost of an assessment to see what support you need and also the cost of any recommended support. You can find out more about the support and funding process in our leaflet 'Disability Support in Higher Education'.

What support is available?

At both our Middlesbrough and Hartlepool sites the college is able to offer students access to a range of support strategies. These include:

- Specialist one to one tuition
- Access to a range of loan equipment
- Access to supportive software solutions
- Proof reading services
- Additional support from teaching staff

When you have your needs assessed it may be recommended that you require access to more specific support. If this is the case, the Disability Adviser will talk to you and assist you in accessing this.

In good company

If you are diagnosed as a dyslexic thinker, you are not alone. Along with many of the UK population, you also have something in common with the following people, one or two of whom you may have heard of before:

- Marlon Brando
- Cher
- Winston Churchill
- Liam Gallagher
- Jamie Oliver
- Jodie Kidd
- Einstein
- Robbie Williams
- Richard Branson
- Peter Stringfellow
- Andy Warhol

Additional sources of support

Websites

Middlesbrough Dyslexia Group: <http://www.middlesbroughdyslexiagroup.20m.com/>

The British Dyslexia Association:

National Helpline: 0845 251 9002

Email: helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk

Booklets

CCAD Student Services

Additional Learning Support (Further Education)

Disability Support in Higher Education