



# Guidelines

## For candidates who have dyslexia

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### Background

Dyslexia is a registered disability under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and is defined as a specific learning difficulty. People with dyslexia typically have certain difficulties with reading, spelling and writing. The Society recognises that a candidate who has dyslexia may be at a disadvantage during training and assessment.

The British Dyslexia Association defines dyslexia as “*a specific learning difficulty which mainly affects the development of literacy and language related skills.*”

*It is likely to be present at birth and to be lifelong in its effects. It is characterised by difficulties with phonological processing, rapid naming, working memory, processing speed, and the automatic development of skills that may not match up to an individual’s other cognitive abilities.*

*It tends to be resistant to conventional teaching methods, but its effects can be mitigated by appropriately specific intervention, including the application of information technology and supportive counselling.”*

They identify a number of difficulties associated with Dyslexia in an educational setting. We have provided a list in Appendix 1. If you have dyslexia you might experience difficulty with some aspects of your training and assessment.

### Work based learning

Our qualifications involve work based learning so you may need to speak to your employer or placement provider about any adjustments which need to be made at work to help you.

If you have not already done so you should get an adult dyslexia assessment. Your local dyslexia association will be able to help you find a practitioner who can conduct this assessment. To find your local dyslexia association check the British Dyslexia Association website ([www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)).

Your assessment will help to identify what adjustments to the work place will help you. It is a good idea to show it to your line manager when you meet with them to discuss the adjustments. The strategies which can help people overcome problems related to their dyslexia vary so it is important to have the assessment to help identify the strategies which will help you. Some of these are inexpensive and

uncomplicated such as providing coloured paper or a quiet work space. However, if additional expense is incurred your employer can apply for funding through the Government's Access to Work Scheme.

We have produced guidance for supervisors and placement providers which you may want to pass to your employer or placement provider.

## **Examination and Assessment**

We have also produced some guidance for our assessors and examiners to help them to assess your work in a way which takes account of your dyslexia. There are some things you will need to do in order to ensure the guidance is used when assessing your work:

- You must provide us with a copy of your dyslexia assessment.
- When registering for an examination you must tell us in good time about any adjustments you might need. This document tells you what adjustments we are likely to be able to make.
- When submitting work for assessment you should remind the Qualifications Officer that a dyslexia sticker will need to be added to your submission. This document explains the purpose of the dyslexia sticker.

Prior to any examinations or submissions you should provide the Qualifications Office with a copy of your report or statement confirming your dyslexia diagnosis.

The Qualifications Officer will discuss with you any adjustments that might be required to examination or assessment arrangements. He or she will advise you of the options which are available and will listen to your suggestions about the most appropriate adjustments for you.

We will normally need time to make arrangements for the adjustments we agree with you so you should ensure that you have informed us in plenty of time.

## **Written examinations**

For written examinations you will normally be allowed the following:

- 10 minutes additional reading time at the start of the examination.
- An additional 15 minutes for each hour of the examination
- Where this additional time results in the examination lasting for longer than four hours you will be allowed a break in the examination. The break will continue to be under exam conditions. You will need to let the invigilator know when you would like to take the break.

In addition, you will be allowed to choose from the following options to assist you in the examination:

- The examination paper can be presented on coloured paper (you should tell us in advance which colour is most helpful to you)
- You can be provided with coloured note paper to write their answers (you should tell us in advance which colour is most helpful to you)
- You can ask for a reader to read the examination paper
- You can ask for a scribe to write the examination paper to your dictation

- You can ask for a word processor to write your examination scripts. Where a word processor is to be used you should advise the Qualifications Office in advance about any specific settings which you would like, such as coloured backgrounds or specific contrast settings. You will be allowed to arrive at the centre early to practice using the word processor provided.

In all cases you must make these arrangements with the Qualifications Office in advance.

Other candidates are likely to be taking the exam at the same time. Wherever possible we will provide a separate examination room for you. If it is practical to do so more than one candidate with additional time may be in the same examination room, but this will depend on the arrangements for the examination and any additional facilities which we might be providing.

### **The dyslexia sticker**

All work which is sent to examiners or assessors will be identified by means of a sticker on the front of the work advising the examiner/ assessor that you have been diagnosed with dyslexia. Assessors will be provided with a copy of the guidelines for marking work by candidates with dyslexia.

### **Assessment guidelines**

Assessors are provided with guidelines for marking work by candidates with dyslexia. These are available on our website. The guidelines provide some information about the kind of difficulties which a candidate with dyslexia might experience and advise assessors to focus on the content of the work rather than presentation and spelling.

Assessors are asked to mark work sympathetically and to focus on your understanding and skill in relation to the learning outcomes for the work rather than spelling or presentational errors.

However, sometimes presentation is key to the learning outcomes for a submission. In these cases the work will be marked for presentation as well as content. Feedback which is provided to you will explain where this has been the case.

### **Guidelines for oral assessments**

Some qualifications require oral assessments. Our guidance for assessors includes a section about oral assessments. We are aware that some candidates with dyslexia may prefer oral assessments whereas others may find this more challenging. If you have particular concerns about an oral assessment please discuss this with the Qualifications Officer in advance.

### **Guidelines for providing feedback to candidates with dyslexia**

You will normally receive feedback on your submission. We have asked the assessors to write this feedback as clearly as possible and to provide feedback on both the positive and negative aspects of your submission.

Often feedback needs to focus on the reasons why a submission was not awarded a pass mark, or gives advice to a candidate about what might be done better in the next submission. Sometimes candidates can find this disheartening. You should remember that the feedback is provided to help you improve and even very good

submissions might receive some suggestions for improvement. You should always discuss your feedback with your Co-ordinating Supervisor/Co-ordinator of Training/Supervisor who can assist in understanding the feedback and help you to use it to improve future submissions.

## **Appendix 1**

The British Dyslexia Association identifies the following difficulties associated with Dyslexia in an educational setting. Not all people with dyslexia will experience all of these difficulties, but usually will experience some of them.

### **Written work**

- Has a poor standard of written work compared with oral ability
- Has poor handwriting with badly formed letters
- Has neat handwriting but writes very slowly indeed
- Produces badly set out or messily written work with spellings crossed out several times
- Spells the same word differently in one piece of work
- Has difficulty with punctuation and/or grammar
- Confuses upper and lower case letters
- Writes a great deal but 'loses the thread'
- Writes very little but to the point
- Has difficulty taking notes in lectures
- Difficulty with organisation of homework
- Finds tasks difficult to complete on time
- Appears to know more than can be committed to paper

### **Reading**

- Is hesitant and laboured especially when reading aloud
- Omits, repeats or adds extra words
- Reads at a reasonable rate but has a low level of comprehension
- Fails to recognise familiar words
- Misses a line or repeats the same line twice
- Loses his place - or uses a finger or marker to keep the place
- Has difficulty in pin-pointing the main idea in a passage
- Finds difficulty with dictionaries, directories, encyclopaedias

### **Numeracy**

- Finds difficulty remembering tables and/or basic number sets
- Finds sequencing problematic
- Confuses signs such as x for +
- Can think at a high level in mathematics, but needs a calculator for simple calculations
- Misreads questions that include words
- Finds mental arithmetic at speed very difficult

Finds memorising formulae difficult

### **Other areas**

Confuses direction - left/right

Has difficulty in learning foreign languages

Has indeterminate hand preference

Has difficulty in finding the name for an object

Has clear processing problems at speed

Misunderstands complicated questions

Finds holding a list of instructions in memory difficult, although can perform all tasks when told individually

### **Behaviour**

Is disorganised or forgetful e.g. over sports equipment, lessons, homework, appointments

Is immature and/or clumsy

Has difficulty relating to others: is unable to 'read' body language

Is often in the wrong place at the wrong time

Is excessively tired, due to the amount of concentration and effort required

*(Source: The British Dyslexia Association website - [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk))*

## **Appendix 2 – Websites**

The British Dyslexia Association – Adults and employment section:

<http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/about-dyslexia/adults-and-business.html>

The Government's Access to Work Scheme

[http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/disabledpeople/employmentsupport/workschemesandprogrammes/dg\\_4000347](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/disabledpeople/employmentsupport/workschemesandprogrammes/dg_4000347)