

Funding support for adults with dyslexia

Background

The British Dyslexia Association estimates that dyslexia affects 1 in 10 of the population in the UK, 4% severely. Whilst support for children with dyslexia is usually funded and provided through the school system, the picture for adults with dyslexia is more complex, not least because of the range of contexts in which adults may be learning or need support.

Key Legislation

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) give providers of education and training, and employers, a duty to address the needs of people with disabilities, including those with dyslexia.

What might support consist of?

Support for adults with dyslexia often begins with screening or assessment. This is because adults may have left the education system without a cause for their difficulties being identified or a diagnosis of dyslexia being given. Adults may not realise that dyslexia is a possibility for them until any children they have are diagnosed, or they re-enter education or training, or they change job or get promoted.

Screening or diagnosis is important for a number of reasons:

- It identifies the cause of difficulties.
- It may indicate the other kinds of support that are appropriate.
- It can “explain” strengths and weaknesses to the person concerned.
- It also provides a “passport” to funding.

Other support may consist of the provision of technology, and the technical support and training that goes along with it. Support may also be in the form of 1:1 tuition, mentoring or other kinds of teaching/training, or the provision of special arrangements for examinations.

Adults in education or training

Learning & Skills Council funded provision

Where learners with dyslexia are attending provision that is funded by the Learning and Skills Council (**Further Education, Adult & Community Education, Work-based Learning for Young People**) their support (including assessment) can be

funded through 'Additional Support' funding. The principle that access to this support should be regardless of age, mode of study or type of programme is the basis for this. Colleges receive funding from the LSC for support provided to students over and above the support that all students receive. In reality, many colleges find it difficult to find sufficient specialist staff to support the number of learners with dyslexia and it is this, rather than funding, that is likely to have the biggest impact on adults needing support.

Higher Education (HE)

Students with dyslexia in higher education may be eligible for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). This is a non-means-tested grant that is awarded by Local Education Authorities. In order to apply for the DSA students need to have an existing assessment of dyslexia – the DSA can't be used for an initial diagnostic assessment.

learndirect

learndirect is the national information and advice line for adults but it also provides education through its learndirect centres. Adults attending a learndirect course can request support for their dyslexia through their centre. The centre will liaise with their hub to organise and fund the support needed.

Adults at work and seeking work

Access to Work is a Department for Work & Pensions scheme, administered by Jobcentreplus.

The scheme has two purposes: firstly, it provides advice and information to people with disabilities and employers. Secondly, it can give a grant to employers to cover part of the costs that an employer may incur when employing a disabled person, for example the cost of specialist equipment or of providing support to a prospective employee at an interview. Both permanent and temporary employees are covered by the scheme although volunteers are not. The amount of money available through Access to Work is variable and depends on the nature of need and the time that the employee has been with the employer. The scheme will not usually fund the provision of a specialist dyslexia assessment, although an assessment of the support needed in the workplace forms part of the application process.

In order to apply for Access to Work, people with dyslexia should contact a Disability Employment Adviser. The person with dyslexia can complete an application by telephone, which they then need to sign. An assessment of need is organised, before the amount of support to be awarded is confirmed to them in writing. The employer must purchase the support and then claim the costs back.

Support for people seeking work is also available from Jobcentreplus via the Work Preparation scheme. However, this is not always delivered by specialist organisations with detailed knowledge of dyslexia. The scheme is for unemployed people or those at risk of losing their job. It is necessary to see a Disability Employment Adviser in order to participate in the scheme and the process can be a lengthy one. It is possible, though, for a diagnostic assessment to be funded for participants.

The funding of support for people with dyslexia through Jobcentreplus changes regularly. There are also some regional variations in how support is provided, so up to date, local advice should always be sought.

Other Sources

Dyslexia Action provides dyslexia assessments and support to adults and there are local offices across England and Wales. They charge a fee for their work but they have a small number of bursaries available.

NIACE's work on dyslexia

Framework for Understanding Dyslexia

NIACE and the Learning and Skills Development Agency led the project that culminated in the development of the Framework for Understanding Dyslexia (2004) www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/understandingdyslexia/.

The Development Officer for dyslexia is Rachel Davies. Current areas of interest are supporting dyslexic people in the workplace and support for young adults with dyslexia. Rachel can be contacted on 0116 204 6989 or by e-mailing sarah.wright@niace.org.uk.

NIACE contacts

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Leicester, LE1 7GE

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Email: sarah.wright@niace.org.uk

Website: www.niace.org.uk

Development Officer for Dyslexia: Rachel Davies, Tel: 0116 204 6989

Key documents

"Bridging the Gap: a guide to the DSA in Higher Education" can be downloaded from www.studentsupportdirect.co.uk

The LSC policy statement "Additional Learning Support: Confirmation of Funding Arrangements for the Post-16 Sector from 2004/5" can be downloaded from www.lsc.gov.uk

Useful contacts

Adult Dyslexia Organisation

Ground Floor, Secker House

Minet Road

Loughborough Estate

London, SW9 7TP

Website: www.adult-dyslexia.org.uk

Work relates to adults with dyslexia (including in employment), runs support groups and provides a helpline, provides training and tuition, and lobbies on behalf of adults with dyslexia.

British Dyslexia Association

98 London Road

Reading, RG1 5AU

Tel: 0118 966 8271

Website: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

Provides advice to teachers and employers on dyslexia issues, provides training for teachers, has a helpline for individuals with dyslexia, local associations, and approves specialist training qualifications for teachers.

Disability Rights Commission

DRC Helpline

Freepost MID02164
Stratford upon Avon, CV37 9BR
Tel: 08457 622 633
Website: www.drc-gb.org

An independent organisation set up to fight discrimination and ensure equal opportunity for disabled people.

Dyslexia Action

Park House, Wick Road
Egham, TW20 0HH
Tel: 01784 222300
Website: www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk

Provides training for teachers and tuition for individuals with dyslexia, publishes research and materials about dyslexia. Email: info@dyslexiaaction.org.uk

learndirect

PO Box 900
Manchester, M60 3LE
Tel: 0800 100 900
Website: www.learndirect.co.uk

learndirect is the national information and advice line for adults and it also provides education through its learndirect centres.

Learning & Skills Council

Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry, CV1 2WT
Tel: 0870 900 6800
Website: www.lsc.gov.uk

National body responsible for education in the post-16 sector.

Right to Write

23-24 Margaret Street
London, W1W 8RU
Tel: 0870 240 4809
Website: www.right2write.co.uk

A company which provides support to people with dyslexia through Jobcentreplus.

Useful websites

A list of local Access to Work offices, as well as other information on the scheme, is found at: www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/cms.asp?Page=/Home/Customers/HelpForDisabledPeople/AccessstoWork

Information on the Work Preparation scheme can be found at: www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/cms.asp?Page=/Home/Customers/HelpForDisabledPeople/WorkPreparation

A guide to dyslexia for learndirect staff can be found at: www.ufi.com/dyslexia/index.html

This is the seventy-seventh in a series of briefing sheets, which aim to provide an introduction to a variety of lifelong learning issues. Other titles in the series which may be of interest include:

76. What is Dyslexia?
66. Promoting literacy, language and numeracy programmes
65. Learning and Skills Council funding for literacy, language and numeracy
64. Embedding literacy, language and numeracy
59. Skills for Life teaching qualifications framework

Requests for briefing sheets in other formats, such as large print are welcomed, we will be pleased to consider your request. Copies of this and other sheets are available from NIACE

21 De Montfort Street
Leicester, LE1 7GE
Tel: 0116 204 4289
Email: information@niace.org.uk
They are also available on the website at
www.niace.org.uk/information

NIACE, the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, has a broad remit to promote lifelong learning opportunities for adults. NIACE works to develop increased participation in education and training. It aims to do this for those who do not have easy access because of barriers of class, gender, age, race, language and culture, learning difficulties, or insufficient resources. Registered charity number 1002775; Company registration number 2603322.