

Analysing & Capturing Good Practice in 1:1 Specialist Tutorial Support



An Explorative Case Study Approach

Authors:

Bob Burwell: Specific Learning Differences Tutor, Student Services, University of Hull

Barbara Kelly: Specific Learning Differences Tutor, Student Services, University of Hull

The contents may be copied for non commercial purposes only, provided that full acknowledgement is made to the source.

(June 2013)

Contents:

Section 1:	1.1 Introduction: Purpose and Rationale	3
	1.2 Organisation and instructions for use of this pack	4
Section 2:	Underpinning theory of good practice	5
	2.1 Appropriate body of knowledge for Dyslexia Tutors (slides 2&3)	5
	2.2 Typical Needs Assessor's recommendations for tutorial support (slides 4-6)	6
	2.3 ADSHE : 7 underlying principles for effective dyslexia support (slide 7)	7
	2.4 A joint investigative approach (slide 8)	8
Section 3:	CASE STUDIES (slides 9-11)	10
	Case Study 1 - Chloe	10
	Case Study 2 - Liam	11
	Case Study 3 - Andrew	12
	Case Study 4 - Rebecca	13
	Case Study 5 - Ellie	14
	Case Study 6 - Lamont	16
Section 4:	Implementing good practice	17
	4.1: Barriers to effective practice (slide 12)	17
	4.1: Key elements of good practice (slide 13)	18

Section 1

1.1: Introduction: Purpose and Rationale

This staff development learning pack is intended for tutors working on a 1:1 basis with students who have a range of specific learning differences (SpLDs) – such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia AD(H)D. Our initial rationale for the creation of this pack was based on a perception that there is a lack of understanding of the complex nature of the mix of specialist skills and essential underpinning elements required for the delivery of effective 1:1 SpLD tuition, particularly in Higher Education (HE). Moreover, it was also perceived that current interpretations of 1:1 tutorial support can lead to a simplistic, reductionist view of our work as being just study skills rather than a complex, developmental teaching process that leads to autonomous learners. The focus is, therefore, on analysing and capturing these elements in order to enable SpLD tutors and other disability staff to articulate the underpinning principles and philosophies of good practice, and enable them to build their own narratives about their work. Furthermore, this project provides a wider opportunity to enable professionals to:

- Make explicit good practice
- Have a clearer understanding of our underpinning philosophies
- Provide clear Benchmarks of our practice
- Contribute towards the content of appropriate qualifications
- Understand more clearly the importance of the learning environment

This pack was created over a period of a year (2012-13), in response to the dearth of appropriate development materials for SpLD staff, which actually address what happens in the room at the point of delivery of support. We drew on a number of underpinning philosophies, particularly the work of Margaret Herrington (2002). The materials were first trialled at a regional workshop in September 2012, followed by the delivery of smaller, shorter workshops at the 2013 ADSHE National Conference.

The six student case-studies in this pack are based on some typical and interesting SpLD profiles. Each case-study was written to be thought provoking and stimulating, requiring the SpLD tutor to adopt a problem solving approach. Each story illustrates students in receipt of a DSA support package, but who are still struggling both with the challenges of their academic work as well as understanding their SpLD profile. These case studies will resonate with tutors, as they include typical SpLD scenarios.

Section 1

1.2: Organisation and instructions for use of this pack

We think that the teaching pack can be successfully used in a number of ways:

- To provide ADSHE Regional Co-ordinators with an opportunity to use the pack as we did and deliver a regional workshop, enabling regional tutors to work together, problem solve, and develop their good practice.
- To use at a more targeted micro level, within your institution, working with your SpLD colleagues in order to use the pack to enhance your practice.

(Of course, you could try both approaches which might be even more effective).

The aim of this pack is provide a framework for tutors to use as a resource to stimulate discussion on good practice rather than provide a prescriptive model. Moreover, tutors will benefit from the opportunity to explore wider theory and knowledge suggested in Section 2.1 of this pack.

The pack has been organised into four key themed sections, which provide a structured approach for training purposes. The pack is designed to be used in conjunction with the attached PowerPoint presentation. Therefore it is recommended that you read each section of the pack and refer to the PowerPoint slides that are signposted in each section of the pack.

When using the case studies, we recommend that tutors work in pairs or small groups. Each pair/small group works on one case study. It is also recommended that tutors read their chosen case study individually. Then each pair/small group should discuss and problem-solve how they would answer the questions at the head of each case study. The first question is significant, as it addresses the students' immediate concerns, as encountered by the tutor, in the tutorial room.

Section 2

2.1: Appropriate body of knowledge for Dyslexia Tutors

(Slides 2&3)

This section provides an opportunity for participants/tutors to discuss what constitutes an appropriate body of knowledge for specialist tutors. Colleagues working in different sectors may find that they draw on some philosophies more than others, 'although, in part, this may be an unconscious process'. The purpose of this exercise is to make explicit the theories and philosophies we use in our work, and the list (Herrington, M. 2001) below provides a starting point for wider discussion about issues which may inform specialist practice.

Without these underpinning philosophies, the tutors' gaze may be too limited and limiting for their dyslexic students. The effect of being able to draw on these underpinning philosophies is that it will enable the tutor to encourage the development of the student's own **VOICE**. (Herrington, 2002)

Please highlight from the list below key examples which inform your practice and discuss within your group?

- a) Disability & employment issues
- b) Social & medical models of disability
- c) Thinking, teaching & learning models, approaches & styles
- d) HE curriculum process, practices, cultures & underlying rationales
- e) Parameters, concepts, research, assessment & teaching methods regarding SpLD & Dyslexia + 1st hand accounts by dyslexic adults
- f) The Philosophy & practice of adult/lifelong learning
- g) Literacies, academic literacies & numeracies
- h) Participative research & practice methodology
- i) Models of counselling
- j) Epistemological issues & the dominant paradigms within disciplines

Section 2.2

An example of a Needs Assessor's comprehensive recommendations for Specialist 1:1 tutorial support

(Typical Needs Assessor's recommendations for tutorial support (Slides 4-6))

These have been included because they illustrate the emphasis on the tutor's role being focused on study skills which have been funded by SFE (Student Finance England) as part of the DSA (Disabled Student's Allowance) package. However, it is what UNDERPINS the tutor's ability to teach these skills which is the purpose of this pack.

These recommendations should be interpreted as an overview of possible starting points for the tutor and student to work on. However, they should not be seen as a prescriptive list of activities as there is a danger that this type of list can be too reductive.

Approximately 30 hours per year specialist tuition to improve the student's study skills and organisational ability. Although not exhaustive, it is envisaged that this support will focus on the following:

- Give guidance to Sarah to plan and structure her essays and similar assignments more adequately.
- Give direct literacy support to her when she is preparing written work and assignments (including assistance in developing proof-reading skills).
- Assist Sarah develop more effective time management skills.
- Improve her personal organisation skills.
- Facilitate the development of memorisation techniques.
- Help her to develop a fuller range of study skills.
- Support Sarah in improving her note-taking skills; in particular provide help and ideas to develop concise and appropriate techniques.
- Promote the development of her self-esteem and self-confidence with respect to literacy.
- Provide positive and constructive feedback on literacy issues to help her improve her personal performance.
- Improve general and higher order reading skills and encourage her to read more.
- Provide advice on improving reading comprehension skills.
- Help develop spelling skills.
- Foster skills in basic grammar.
- Aid the development of punctuation skills.
- Help Sarah to develop appropriate networks in support of her work.

Section 2

2.3: ADSHE: 7 underlying principles for effective dyslexia support

(Slide 7)

The ADSHE website provides an overview of the possible range of specialist 1:1 support (http://adshe.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/specialist_support.pdf), and also details the 7 underlying principles that underpin specialist 1:1 support:

- **Meta-cognition**
- **Over learning**
- **Multi-sensory**
- **'Little & often'**
- **Relevance**
- **Modelling**
- **Motivation**

However, these Principles are the starting points of good practice, but could be seen as SIGNPOSTS, rather than an explanation of the PROCESS required for 1:1 tuition.

The authors' think, that for HE, there should be an additional principle – the development of **critical thinking** which underpins higher order HE learning & interaction. Also, critical thinking is an essential element within the metacognitive process that SpLD students need to develop.

Section 2

2.4: A joint investigative approach

(Slide 8)

It is not difficult to find indicators of dyslexia, but understanding the interplay between them & the integration of these with the whole person in all contexts is an 'unfolding story' which can take time to unravel. Trust is a key element in this exercise, as the student needs to feel 'safe' before they are able to explore how their SpLD impacts on their past, present and future life. The tutor assists the student in unravelling their learning experiences using an inclusive learning development approach which enables the student to understand & own their learning journey. Unravelling is particularly critical in mature students – they may have a history of compensatory strategies which can impact negatively on their ability to cope with the stresses of studying in Higher Education. 'Close listening' (Herrington, 2002) is an essential element in this process, with the tutor using questions to start the unravelling process. A ball of wool is a useful analogy, as the student's story needs to be unravelled according to how it has been wound. There is no way of knowing beforehand what will arise, and this needs to be discovered by both the learner & tutor.

A holistic, analytical & dynamic approach can be developed by ensuring that the specialist tutor's practice is:

- Student centred
- Involves exploration of the nature of their dyslexia, and how it impacts on their learning: time taken varies depending on where they are in their learning journey.
- Tutor's knowledge, skills & expectations are woven into dynamic interaction with student.
- Using structured & unstructured conversation.
- Reflecting on meta-cognition.

CASE STUDIES:

(Slides 9-11)

Case Study 1 - Chloe (mild dyslexia)

Case Study 2 - Liam (mild dyspraxia with ADD)

Case Study 3 - Andrew (high functioning, classic dyslexic)

Case Study 4 - Rebecca (high functioning dyslexic, mature student)

Case Study 5 - Ellie (severe dyslexia)

Case Study 6 - Lamont (mild dyslexia)

Read through the case study below individually, and then in pairs or as a group discuss the following points:

1. How would you structure your approach in response to a student who makes a comment like this?
2. What teaching strategies, approaches or interventions would you adopt in order to successfully change Chloe's approach to her learning?
3. Try to be explicit with concrete examples of how you might work with the student both developmentally and practically.
4. What wider philosophies underpin your teaching to enable this student's learning development?

Case study 1: Chloe: 18 year old 1st year student studying on the BA in Early Years Education. **Mild Dyslexia.**

"I'm not sure if this support is working – I think I've made some progress but my grades are not getting much better".

Previous educational experiences

Chloe's educational background is vocationally based, where she completed a BTEC in Early Years Education. She underachieved in literacy throughout school and received some additional group support at primary school to help her with her reading and writing skills. Chloe also had to retake her GCSE English in order to pass.

Current studies

Chloe was only recently assessed in her 1st term. She was encouraged to attend an SpLD screening by her personal tutor, based on errors in her written work and a failed exam. Prior to her assessment, Chloe expressed concerns about struggling with the amount of reading required on the course and not feeling confident in independently tackling assignments. She has however enjoyed her recent placement experience, which started in Semester 2, where she also received positive feedback from her placement supervisor. Her placement experience confirmed her perceptions and feelings of the course that she enjoys and excels at working with the children but struggles with the academic side of the course.

SpLD profile

Her assessment identified a profile of mild dyslexia. Her reasoning scores were in the lower average range, but her verbal ability is more developed than her visual reasoning. Her reading and writing speeds are quite slow and her working memory is quite weak.

Specialist 1:1 tutorial support experience

Chloe started attending 1:1 tutorials early in semester 2. She did not know what to expect and appeared to lack confidence with her academic work. Her attendance was a bit erratic, which impacted on the continuity and success of the sessions. She has had some success with using the assistive software, such as textHelp, to aid her reading. Some progress has also been made with using her Dictaphone to record lectures and take notes, and also in structuring her written work.

However, Chloe has become disheartened with her progress, as she continues to attain quite low marks, and the general feedback from her tutors is that her work is too descriptive and does not fully engage with the question.

Read through the case study below individually, and then in pairs or as a group discuss the following points:

1. How would you structure your approach in response to a student who makes a comment like this?
2. What teaching strategies, approaches or interventions would you adopt in order to successfully change Liam's approach to his learning?
3. Try to be explicit with concrete examples of how you might work with the student both developmentally and practically.
4. What wider philosophies underpin your teaching to enable this student's learning development?

Case study 2: Liam: 21 year old, 3rd year student, studying on the BA in Sociology course. Co-occurring profile, **mild Dyspraxia with ADD.**

"Sorry I haven't been in the last few weeks, and I know you help me with being organised, but I still don't know where my time goes; I am trying to do my dissertation but now I have got exams, it's all a bit big at the moment!"

Previous educational experiences

Liam successfully completed 3 A levels at Sixth Form. He had a passion for History and enjoyed English. At school he struggled with some team sports and was perceived by himself and others as being a bit clumsy. His school reports often had a similar theme, based on that Liam was perceived as bright but could do so much better if he focussed and organised himself more; this perception was compounded by his poor performance in exams and his poor handwriting skills. At Sixth Form, they were more receptive to Liam's learning needs and he was given access arrangements for extra time and the use of a PC in exams. In the supportive, structured and small environment of Sixth Form, he started to flourish.

SpLD profile

His assessment identified a profile of mild Dyspraxia with ADD. His verbal reasoning scores were very high; however his visual reasoning scores were markedly lower than his verbal ability. His cognitive profile illustrated significant problems with auditory and visual memory, impacting on his reading and writing speeds and processing of information. Wider diagnostic testing revealed a mild but significant profile of a dyspraxic nature, affecting in particular his writing, especially in timed conditions. The assessment also highlighted concentration and attention issues which were impacting on Liam's ability to focus on his studies and organise and plan his time effectively.

Specialist 1:1 tutorial support experience

Liam was assessed at the start of the 2nd year of his Sociology course. He self-referred based on the fact that he was increasingly struggling to cope with the demands of the course. Liam thought he could cope in his 1st year as it was a fairly gentle introduction with no exams. However, with the increasing demands of the assessment in year 2, and the added pressure of exams, Liam somewhat reluctantly decided to be assessed. Liam initially didn't engage with setting up his tutorial support and didn't fully start accessing support until the end of his 2nd year. Liam and his tutor focussed more on broad practical support strategies, based on organisational skills around using his time effectively and planning when to do academic work. His tutor also tried to work with Liam on coping strategies regarding his concentration and attention.

Liam would start engaging in developing strategies but would often not stick to them and could easily be distracted from his work by friends, late nights, and clubs societies at the student union etc. Liam's attendance became quite sporadic, especially as deadlines loomed, which impaired any progress made in trying to implement any support strategies. In the last meeting, Liam was particularly passive and subdued, and appeared overwhelmed by the amount of work he had to complete.

Read through the case study below individually, and then in pairs or as a group discuss the following points:

1. How would you structure your approach in response to a student who makes a comment like this?
2. What teaching strategies, approaches or interventions would you adopt in order to successfully change Andrew's approach to his learning?
3. Try to be explicit with concrete examples of how you might work with the student both developmentally and practically.
4. What wider philosophies underpin your teaching to enable this student's learning development?

Case study 3: Andrew, 18 year old, 1st year student, studying for a degree in BSc Sport Rehabilitation. High functioning, **classic Dyslexic** student, identified at 8, now a bit of a rebel!

Andrew: *"Ah yes, I haven't brought my plan for my project, I started it but plans never really work for me, I had these ideas I wanted to get down before I forgot, so I wrote up the whole essay.*

Tutor: *"Did you put it through Texthelp?"*

Andrew: *"Kind of – don't like the voice much, it's OK I used spell check".*

Previous educational experiences

Andrew's dyslexia was identified at an early age. At age 9 he was given extensive teaching and support with what was then, The Dyslexia Institute, using their structured multisensory literacy teaching programme. This systematic approach addressed Andrew's phonological processing difficulties, very weak working memory, and visual tracking difficulties when reading. His reading and writing skills steadily improved, his feelings of frustration abated, and his general self-esteem regarding literacy was also more stable. However, due to Andrew's acute dyslexia profile, his programme was quite intensive. After years of well meaning, but drilled teaching, Andrew appeared immune to specialist intervention. At the time Andrew could not articulate his mixed feelings regarding his dyslexia; what he did know was he wanted to leave the programme behind him and learn independently.

In high school, although his dyslexia still impacted on his literacy, tutors perceived him as bright and a very active learner who was quite articulate in class, masking some of his underlying literacy challenges. Andrew was a natural athlete and excelled at school sports. He was very competent at maths and a range of sciences. He was also very good at design and technology where his practical and creative skills came to the fore. Andrew performed well in his GCSEs, his weakest grade however continued to be English. Andrew progressed onto studying a BTEC National Diploma in Sports Studies. He really enjoyed the course as it suited his kinaesthetic learning style. Andrew successfully completed the course attaining 'Distinction' and 'Merit' grades for most modules. One reason for this success was due to the style of the course. Written assessment could be tackled in stages, where tutors could mark and give feedback progressively, as Andrew tackled each assessment. With fewer exams and an incremental pace incremental he could work with friends on projects, without relying on individual tuition. Conversely, his new course at university was providing some new tougher challenges: more deadlines, exams, and more independent reading and research.

Specialist 1:1 tutorial support experience

Andrew had procrastinated in coming to 1:1 tuition. He had only started his tutorial support a fortnight ago. The tutor had discussed his learning needs and started creating a learning plan of targets which they could work on together. This initial plan focussed on planning essays, using assistive software, and note taking in lectures. The dialogue above was taken from only the second tutorial, which is where we pick up his story. It's early days regarding his tuition, but his tutor was presented by a student who appeared almost indifferent about attending tutorial support, but also a little conflicted, knowing that on some level these tutorials would be beneficial. In the second meeting, he was quite bluff and almost over-confident regarding his abilities, brushing off the forgotten agreed strategies. On the other hand, his tutor was left feeling a bit exasperated, looking at an essay which was interesting but written incoherently, lacking structure, with rather long rambling sentences.

Read through the case study below individually, and then in pairs or as a group discuss the following points:

1. How would you structure your approach in response to a student who makes a comment like this?
2. What teaching strategies, approaches or interventions would you adopt in order to successfully change Rebecca's approach to her learning?
3. Try to be explicit with concrete examples of how you might work with the student both developmentally and practically.
4. What wider philosophies underpin your teaching to enable this student's learning development?

Case Study 4: Rebecca: 35 year old student studying on a one year Masters in Business Administration (MBA) course at a Russell Group university. High functioning, articulate, dyslexic, mature student.

"I'm crap at relationships and pretty shoddy in every other department".

Current studies

Rebecca was brought to the point of physical and emotional collapse by the intense reading/study requirements of the MBA course. She questioned, 'why am I doing this to myself' and wondered whether she had a character flaw. This student also reported that she was 'crap at relationships' and 'pretty shoddy in every other department'. Feels guilty that in the past she has 'used' her family, friends and ex-boyfriends to discuss, proof read and compare notes with. Rebecca discounted her history degree, and the law degree had been achieved, she said, because she had been able to buy 'idiot guides' that abbreviated text and clarified the language so that the frequent re-reading (4/5 times minimum) of a piece of text in order to understand it, became manageable. She demonstrates a very high level of self-control and determination, but points out that it wasn't only 'internal pressure to do well', but also a 'stuff you' attitude that came as a reaction to those in authority who told her that she should give up.

Within a month of starting the new (MBA) course Rebecca's stress levels were so intense that her previously successful coping strategies broke down completely and she experienced a breakdown and was unable to do anything. She had never previously been identified as having a specific learning difficulty, but an educational psychologist subsequently confirmed dyslexia and very high intellectual ability.

SpLD profile

Core literacy skills (single word reading, sentence comprehension and spelling) are within superior range. Her speed of reading was within average range for sight words, but above average for non-words. Speed of writing was above average on a copying task. Within the area of Processing Speed, Rebecca's results (5th percentile) were within the borderline range – highlighting a weakness in processing visual information at speed.

Previous experience of 1:1 support - Rebecca has never received 'official' support of any kind before, and doubts that anything can be done to help her.

Read through the case study below individually, and then in pairs or as a group discuss the following points:

1. How would you structure your approach in response to a student who makes a comment like this?
2. What teaching strategies, approaches or interventions would you adopt in order to successfully change Ellie's approach to her learning?
3. Try to be explicit with concrete examples of how you might work with the student both developmentally and practically.
4. What wider philosophies underpin your teaching to enable this student's learning development?

Case Study 5: Ellie: 18 year old, Foundation Sports Therapy (1st year) student, on an FE college based degree course – aligned with a nearby university. Severe dyslexia.

Profile

On arrival in HE Ellie was identified as having severe dyslexia, with difficulty articulating thoughts both verbally and in writing. Very low confidence and self-esteem, but full of determination and passion for her subject. Parents separated - Ellie is living with and caring for her mother who has severe health problems.

“When my tutor asks a question in class I am often the only one who knows the answer, but I can only say the first letter of the words I want”.

Previous educational/work/life experiences

Special needs support received throughout school, where it would appear she was treated as having general learning difficulties. Struggled throughout secondary education, where she was repeatedly told ‘not to bother’ to try to get into further/higher education. Studied on a sports course in an FE college before entering HE.

Current studies

Ellie is an holistic thinker with strengths processing information non-verbally, but who struggles to find the right words to express her thoughts. This causes her frustration and distress. Ellie does not mix with others in her peer group who exclude her from class activities. She failed the first assignment and was clearly struggling to understand the course criteria and communicate in class. Requests for support on site (in the FE college) had not been fruitful, and she was experiencing both indirect and more explicit discrimination from both her peers and tutors who did not understand her difficulties. This resulted in extremely high stress levels relating to her course, which exacerbated her difficulties, and her health problems.

At the point of referral to the learning support department on the main university campus, Ellie presented as an almost inarticulate individual who was virtually functionally illiterate. As a result, it took three separate hours of meetings/screening before the SpLD tutor could relax Ellie enough to be able to accurately assess whether or not to recommend she be fully assessed by an educational psychologist for dyslexia.

SpLD Profile

Ellie cont.

Ellie's profile of dyslexia features significant underachievement in literacy skills, and significant weaknesses in working memory and processing speed function, ability to maintain attention and concentration and work under time pressure. Ellie is not able to follow grammatical conventions, use simple sentence structures effectively or complex sentence structures at all. Sometimes she can have two or three complex ideas in one sentence, that surface as randomly placed words - this can appear completely incoherent. Unpacking her thoughts, therefore, from one sentence can take a full hour and generate a long paragraph's worth of notes. Spelling generally can sometimes be helped by using a spell checker, but she frequently cannot work out the initial and medial sounds sufficiently to give the software enough to work on. Spelling and pronunciation of multi-syllabic, biomechanical and medical terminology on her course is extremely problematic, although she does know the words she wants to use (can recognise them if she sees them or hears them). She has very good visual ability, is an holistic thinker with an excellent kinaesthetic memory and is very strong on practical applications such as sports massage.

Read through the case study below individually, and then in pairs or as a group discuss the following points:

1. How would you structure your approach in response to a student who makes a comment like this?
2. What teaching strategies, approaches or interventions would you adopt in order to successfully change Lamont's approach to his learning?
3. Try to be explicit with concrete examples of how you might work with the student both developmentally and practically.
4. What wider philosophies underpin your teaching to enable this student's learning development?

Case Study 6: Lamont: Afro-Caribbean, 22years old, 2nd year Film Production course.
Profile: Mild dyslexia, and possibly also some evidence for Dyspraxia, although this has not been picked up by the Educational Psychologist.

"F... it, I've had enough - Are you telling me that my words aren't good enough?"

Previous educational experiences: Lamont reports having had difficulty with school work generally, and he left school at 13 but returned to education at 16. He describes being a clumsy child/adult, who always found it difficult to be organised. It would appear that his schooling was seriously disrupted due to 'difficult family circumstances'. For a period Lamont went to work for a family member who has a thriving hotel business, before completing two separate Access to HE courses.

Current studies

Low marks generally during the first year of course, resulting in his tutor referring him to the Learning Support department for assessment. Lamont enjoys the practical aspects of the course, such as filming, in which he does well. Over confidence in his academic ability is not reflected in performance, where he can miss the point of the essay questions completely. Very disparaging of others on course that he has to work collaboratively with – Lamont gets frustrated that he has to wait for others to do work before he can complete his section, but is very poor at keeping to targets and deadlines himself. He does not plan written work, and tends to use a 'stream of consciousness' approach which he says is more relevant for him. Lamont has a strong Caribbean/Midlands accent, and he frequently uses a mixture of a Caribbean patois and English slang words in his essays – with a tendency to write how he speaks. He says academic language is not for him, and has appealed low marks on some of his essays on the basis of discrimination against his 'mother tongue'. Lamont says he has difficulty articulating some speech sounds, correctly interpreting verbal instruction, keeping track of conversations and working under time pressure. He feels overwhelmed by large amounts of written material, and he struggles to identify key points and summarise information.

SpLD profile

Overall Lamont's profile indicated by WAIS-III is low average. However his verbal ability is more developed than his non verbal (perceptual) ability. Vocabulary and ability to reason with verbal concepts and ideas are at average levels. His visual organisation and ability to note fine visual detail are good. However, he shows weakness in spatial skills and had particular difficulty solving problems using complex patterns and designs. There are weaknesses in auditory working memory and significant deficits in processing speed function. Poor phonological memory is evident. Specialist 1:1 tutorial support experience: Lamont was referred for support at Easter, but DNA'd several sessions. However, he will not be able to continue on the course unless he can get his grades up, and in order to do this he will need to access 1:1 tutorials.

Section 4

Implementing good practice

4.1: Barriers to effective practice

(Slide 12)

You may wish to discuss whether some of these examples below are relevant to your own practice/experience. If so, what strategies could be put in place to address these barriers?

- Difficulty of working developmentally within the medical model adopted by universities
- Deficit laden: e.g. Reports & student's perception
- Lack of time
- Lack of appropriate training
- Student wanting a Quick Fix
- Psychological barriers
- Institutional parameters
- Not appreciating relevance of support offered
- Bad previous experience
- Delays in DSA process
- Too narrow focus
- Labelling
- Negative association with 'needing help'
- Lack of motivation
- Emotional issues

Section 4

4.2: Key elements of good practice

(Slide 13)

Following the author's research, practice and as a result of the developmental workshops, these are some of the key elements which underpin 1:1 specialist tutorial support.

- The teaching process needs to be collaborative, exploratory, investigative and power sharing rather than deficit laden & technicist.
- SpLDs are a way of processing information rather than a deficit. Tutors may need to challenge students' pre-conceived notions of a medical model.
- Developing students' metacognitive awareness & critical thinking skills leads to independent learning.
- A 'safe' environment for students to explore, learn from their mistakes and flourish.
- Teaching of skills needs to be explicit, where skills are reviewed, leading to a deeper reflective learning.

Background References

Farmer, M., Riddick, B., & Sterling, C. (2002) *Dyslexia & Inclusion. Assessment & Support in Higher Education*. London. Whurr.

Fidler, Rob. (2002) An Evaluation of the use of specialist support services by dyslexic students at a higher education institution. *SKILL*, issue number 72, March 2002 – reproduced as a handout for the Dyslexia in FE and HE module for the MA in Dyslexia Studies, July 2003.

Grant, D (2005) *That's the Way I Think: Dyslexia and Dyspraxia Explained* London: David Fulton

Herrington, M (2001). An approach to specialist learning support in higher education. In: *Dyslexia and effective learning in secondary & tertiary education*. Hunter-Carsch, M & Herrington, M. (Eds). (2001). London. Whurr.

Hunter-Carsch, Morag & Herrington, Margaret (2001) *Dyslexia & effective learning in secondary & tertiary education*. London. Whurr.

Hunter-Carsch (Ed) (2001) *Dyslexia, A psychosocial perspective*. London. Whurr.

Lozano, Sonia Rodriguez: unpublished MA Dissertation 2003. Chapter 4. p32 – 56.

McKissock C (2001) *Counselling and Supporting Adults with Dyslexia*. In Hunter-Carsch M (ed), *Dyslexia: a Psychosocial Perspective*. London. Whurr.

Morgan, Ellen & Klein, Cynthia (2000) *The Dyslexic Adult in a non-dyslexic world*. London. Whurr.

Packer, A (2003) 2002/3 review of learning support facilities at the University of the West of England, and recommendations for future development. Unpublished.

Palfreman-Kay, James (2001) 'Students' views of learning support' in *Dyslexia in Effective Learning in Secondary and Tertiary Education*. Hunter-Carsh, Morag and Herrington, Margaret (Eds). London. Whurr.

Pollack D (2001) Access to higher education for the mature dyslexic student: a question of identity. Paper presented at the 5th Dyslexia Association International Conference, University of York, UK. Cited in: Farmer Marion, Riddick Barbara & Sterling Christopher (2002) *Dyslexia & Inclusion. Assessment & Support in Higher Education*. London. Whurr.

Reiff HB, Gerber P, Ginsberg R (1997) *Exceeding Expectations: Successful Adults with Learning Disabilities*. Austin, Texas: Pro-ed. Cited in 'The Dyslexic Adult in a Non-dyslexic World', Morgan E, and Klein C. (2000.24) London. Whurr.

West, Thomas G. (1991) *In the Mind's Eye*. New York. Prometheus Books.