

Poole, Christine (2007) Marking the work of students with specific learning difficulties. In: National Association of Disability Practitioners (NADP) Annual Conference 2007, 3-4 July 2007, Paramount Hotel, Daventry, UK. (Unpublished)

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# University of Cumbria

Marking the work of students  
with spld

Chris Colcomb

Learning Coordinator

Student Development and Advisory Service

# Workshop Plan

- **Group activity** : to gain a snapshot of approaches currently taken on marking the work of students with spld
- **Presentation** : my journey from a separatist to an inclusive approach

# Group Work

## Group activity:

Group 1: Institutions with separate guidelines

Group 2: Institutions with an inclusive approach

List 4 advantages & 4 disadvantages of your current system

# Background

- Experience of operating separate guidelines with a sticker system

Change to:

- Equal opportunity approach - not fully developed nor publicised
- Separate guidelines had been written and proposed
- Opposition re academic & professional standards

# Working with CDLT

Centre for the Development of Learning and Teaching

- Proposed separate guidelines at Learning Teaching and Assessment Committee
- Working partnership with CDLT to research and develop an appropriate solution

# An inclusive approach

Incorporating support for dyslexic students into institution-wide guidelines for good assessment practice

Cooperation between:

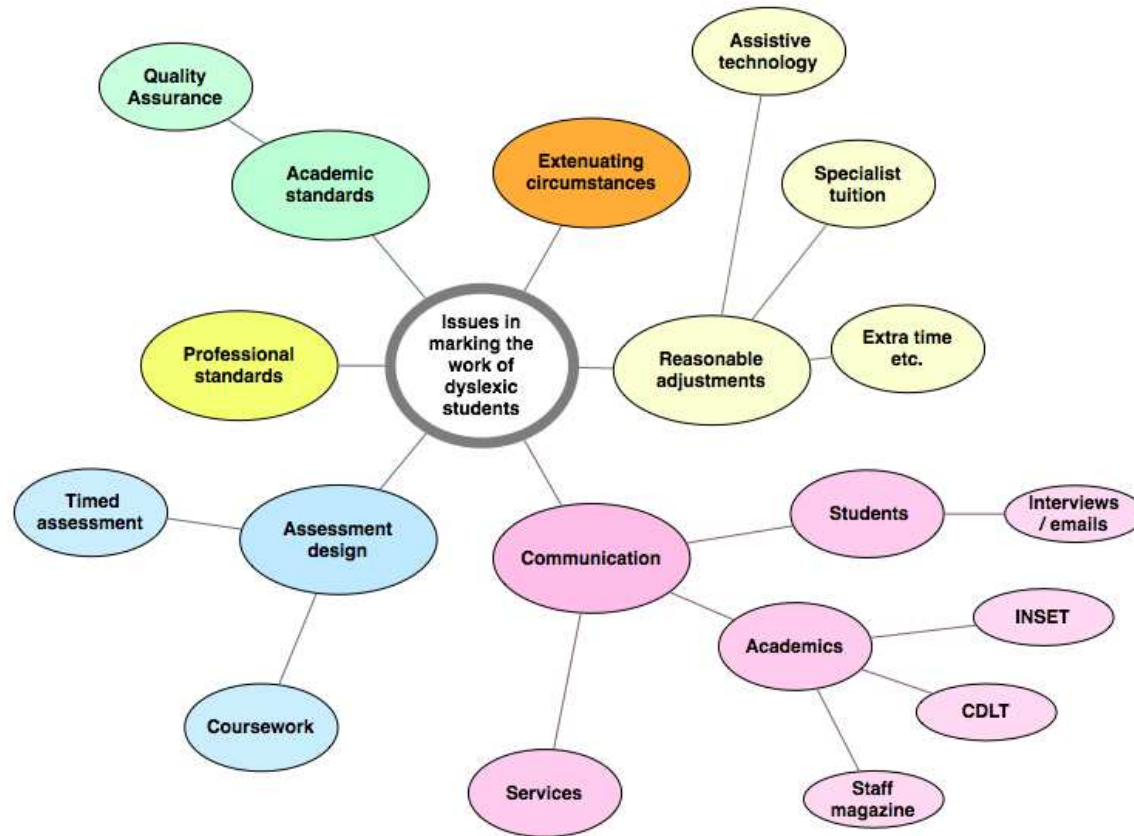
- Student Development & Advisory Service
- Centre for the Development of Learning & Teaching
- Registry
- Quality Assurance

# An inclusive approach

- Good practice is good practice is good practice
- What is good for a dyslexic student is good for all students
- Recommendations like:
  - ‘Use two pens...or opposite margins: one for comments about content...and the other for comments on spelling and grammar’are good for all students



# Marking the work of students with spld



# Assessment design

‘to accommodate disabled students, it means designing assessment so that disabled students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their learning outcomes.’

# Assessment: examinations

Fair opportunities:

equal opportunity learning outcomes... and assessment criteria that reflect them.

Examinations:

more emphasis on knowledge and understanding than accurate literacy skills

# Assessment: coursework

‘Accurate literacy skills may be assessed in coursework, which allows disabled students to demonstrate their skills with reasonable adjustments in place.’

# Academic standards

‘Offering reasonable adjustments does not mean changing or lowering academic standards...’

# Quality Assurance

‘Marking of all assessment, including examinations, should reflect the learning outcomes for the work and the College grade descriptors. In order to maintain academic standards, marking should not be adjusted for disabled students.’

# QAA

The QAA states: ‘Assessment & examination policies, practices and procedures should provide disabled students with the same opportunity as their peers to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes.’

# Professional standards

‘In the case of professional programmes... there is an overriding requirement that students demonstrate that they meet all the professional standards associated with the award.’



# TDA Training & Development Agency for Schools

## Trainee entry requirements

All providers must:

R1.6 satisfy themselves that all entrants can read effectively, and are able to communicate clearly and accurately in spoken and written standard English

# TDA Training & Development Agency for Schools

## QTS Standards

Those awarded qualified teacher status must ...demonstrate...

S2.8 They have passed the Qualified Teacher Status skills tests in numeracy, literacy and ICT.

# The NMC Nursing Midwifery Council code of professional conduct

6.2 To practise competently, you must possess the knowledge, skills and abilities required for lawful, safe and effective practice without direct supervision...

# Professional / academic standards

- Need for consistency
- Cannot change professional standards
- Aim for same high standards
- Emphasis on support / reasonable adjustments

# Reasonable adjustments

‘Reasonable adjustments should be made, as necessary at the stage of setting and completing the assessment task or exam

# Extra time

- Coursework - There will always be students who are unable to complete assignments in time for good reason...
- There may be occasions when offering a disabled student additional time to complete an assignment is a reasonable adjustment...
- Examinations and coursework - College policy requires students to arrange extensions in advance of the due date...These arrangements can take time to organise so tutors have an important role in reminding and supporting students to act promptly

# Assistive technology

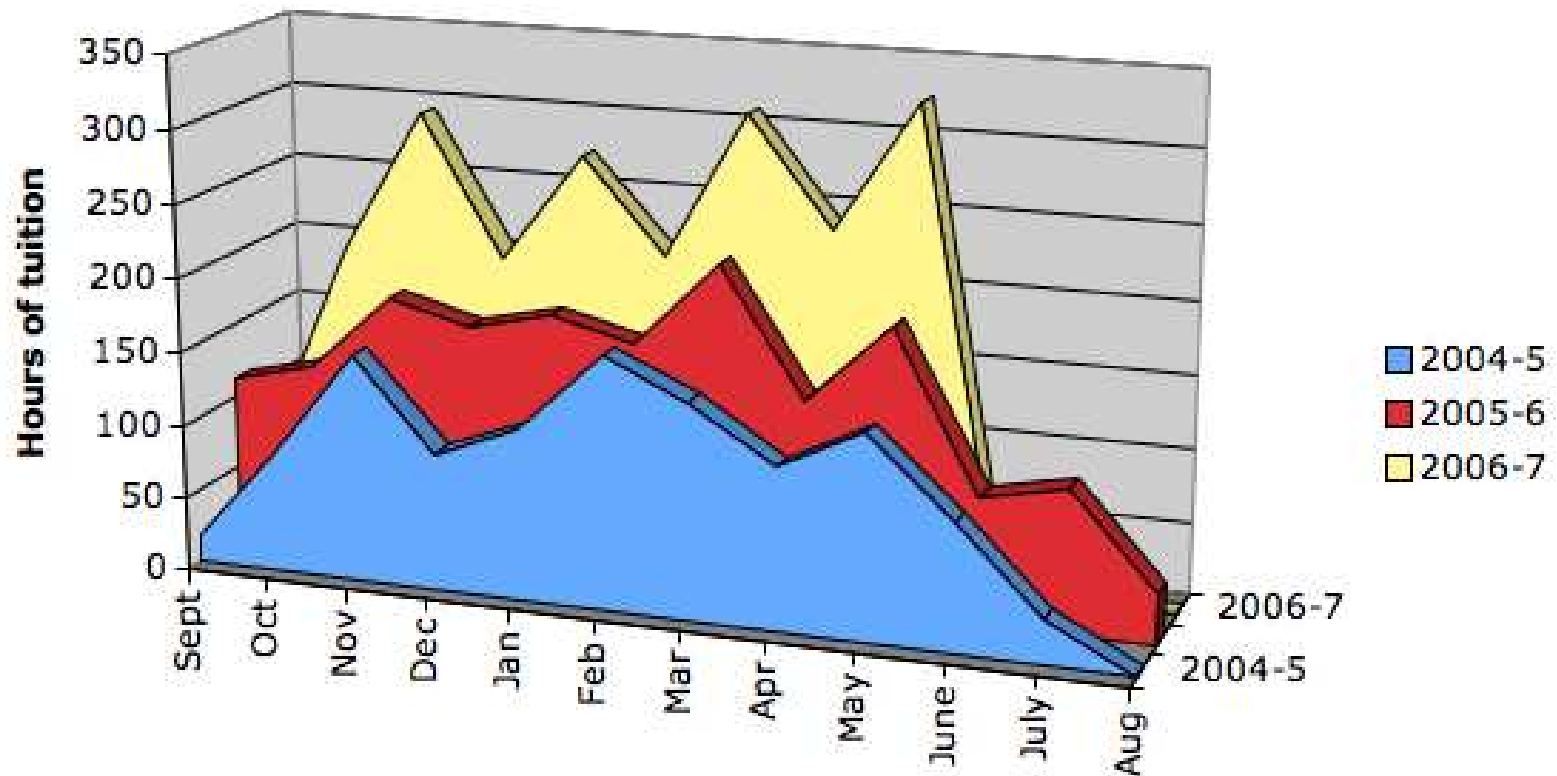
- Assistance with DSA
- LIS provision of hardware and software
- loan equipment
- funding from faculty
- encouraging take up of training
- working with Remtek and tutors

# Specialist tuition

- Availability of appointments
- Quality assurance
  - appraisals
  - monthly briefings
  - termly team meetings inc INSET
  - regular updates on College regulations etc
  - access to funding for training
  - liaison with academic staff



# Specialist tuition



# Communication with Academics - alert memos

- Sent to Heads of Faculty Administration for distribution to all tutors on student's programme
- Each memo, customised to student's support needs refers to College Marking Guidelines

# Communication with Academics

## Article in the Link:

‘The College guidelines have been updated regarding good assessment practice for students with specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia. Chris Colcomb, Learning coordinator from SDAS and Dr Sue Bloxham have been working together on the project...

Full copies of the new guidelines are available from CDLT’

# Communication with Academics : CDLT

The Centre for the Development of Learning and Teaching

- Includes representatives from all faculties
- Organises an annual INSET programme inc. PG Teaching Certificate HE - mandatory 3 hour workshop
- Organises and delivers the annual Teaching and Learning Fest
- Awards annual Teaching Fellowships
- Publishes, & regularly updates: 'Guidelines for Good Assessment Practice'

# Communication with Academics : INSET

- HR Staff development programme
- Faculty workshops
- Faculty awaydays
- Individual meetings

# Communication with Services

- Assessment Centres
- Educational psychologists
- Staff magazine – The Link
- Invited to most INSET
- Alert memos sent to Registry & LIS
- Regular liaison with Registry

# Communication with Students

- Individual interviews – pre and post enrolment
- Email to all students with spld
- Spld Bb virtual learning environment

# Extenuating Circumstances

- Available when reasonable adjustments were not in place for assessment
- If the Ecs are approved, this can result in a reassessment as if for the first time - with the reasonable adjustments in place

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