

APPENDIX TWO

Research on Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs)

Dyslexia – is a difficulty in acquiring good literacy skills, including reading, writing and spelling. It affects about 8-10% of the population and is the most common and widely understood of the SpLDs; this is mostly due to its direct impact upon academic success, job prospects and career progression. Dyslexic individuals are often fearful of highlighting their difficulties in public.

Common workplace difficulties described by adults include the following:

- Takes longer to read documents than colleagues
- Difficulty with structuring a document and spelling
- Lack of self-esteem to ask questions or for help, and may appear anxious
- Problems remembering; for example appointments, bringing the correct paperwork to meetings
- Filling in forms especially if handwritten
- Poor organisational skills
- Problems disclosing to others that they have dyslexia for fear of the consequences

Dyspraxia – Developmental Co-ordinator Disorder (DCD), also commonly known as dyspraxia, is a motor co-ordination disorder affecting about 2-3% of the UK's adult population and impacting on everyday life skills. DCD/Dyspraxia is distinct from other motor disorders like stroke and cerebral palsy.

Workplace difficulties may include problems with writing at speed and legibly, organisation, time management and planning skills and taking information down at speed.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) – is a spectrum of difficulties that affects communication, social relationships and behaviour. It includes Autism, Asperger's Syndrome and Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified. The 'spectrum' element of the disorder means that whilst all individuals with ASDs share similar traits and difficulties, their condition will affect them in different ways and to varying degrees. Approximately, 1% of the UK population is affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Difficulties in the workplace include a reluctance to communicate their difficulties and the impact they have. Lack of confidence asking questions or asking for help; difficulties with social understanding which may result in the individual's behaviours sometimes being misinterpreted by others.

Source: The Hidden Impairments: A specific learning difficulty guide for employers
Professor Amanda Kirby and Dr Ian Smythe
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