



Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna
LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR
LIMERICK & CLARE
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COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING

Disability Awareness Information for FET Learning Practitioners

Introduction to teaching and supporting learners with disabilities

Abstract

This booklet is designed to provide learning practitioners, IRGS Staff and provision coordinators with an introduction to a range of disabilities and conditions, which may influence how our learners engage with Further Education and Training. For each disability type there is an introduction, a short summary of the difficulties a learner with this disability might experience, some suggested strategies learning practitioners might employ and a set of resources/links relating to that disability

Contents

INTRODUCTION:.....	2
PUBLIC SECTOR DUTY: ASSESSMENT OF EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES: PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES	2
CURRENT LEGISLATION	3
AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS (ASD).....	5
ADD/ ADHD.....	7
BLIND / VISUAL IMPAIRMENT.....	9
DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING.....	11
DEVELOPMENTAL CO-ORDINATION DISORDER (DCD)/DYSPRAXIA	15
NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS	17
MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES	19
PHYSICAL DISABILITIES	21
SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES	23
SIGNIFICANT ONGOING ILLNESS	25
APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE & ETIQUETTE	27
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY	29
APPENDIX 1 LENS REPORT STRUCTURE.....	32

INTRODUCTION:

This booklet is designed to provide learning practitioners and provision coordinators with an introduction to a range of disabilities and conditions, which may influence how our learners engage with Further Education and Training. Each section provides some guidelines on how you can support a learner with a specific disability in your class (mindful of the fact that all learners are individual so suggested supports are not exhaustive).

When a learner with a diagnosed disability registers with the Active Inclusion Support Service, a formal Needs Assessment is undertaken with the learner, to look at what supports they will need on their chosen course. These are known as Reasonable Accommodations for learning. (In FET, you might be more familiar with the use of the term Reasonable Accommodation in the context of putting Reasonable Accommodations in place for Assessment.

At the end of the needs assessment process, the AISS team member prepares a needs assessment report known as the Learning Educational Needs Summary or LENS Report (See appendix 1 for blank template). The LENS report is agreed with the learner and provides a list of the required supports for that learner. The learner has the option of sharing the report with staff or getting the AISS to share it with the coordinator who is then responsible for sharing it with relevant learning practitioners. The provision coordinator and teaching staff are responsible for ensuring that reasonable accommodations for learning are implemented.

A “reasonable accommodation” (as it is referred to in the Equal Status Act) is an amendment to the student’s course of study, which enables her/him to participate fully in their education. An adjustment is

- intended to help ensure disabled students are not disadvantaged
- available to students with specific learning difficulties and other disabilities
- Intended to address a disability related issue not an ability “gap”.

Section 5 of the Lens report is of particular relevance to learning practitioners as it outlines particular strengths observed or reported for the particular learner and also provides some advice on teaching strategies which may be used to assist the learner.

If you have been given access to a Learning Educational Needs Summary (LENS Report) for a learner in your class, this resource will provide you with some suggestions and advice in relation to how best to organise your curriculum, classroom, assessments and assistive technologies in order to enable the learner to participate as fully as possible. This booklet provides some suggestions and strategies to support this process and we have included a section on assistive Technologies on page 30. We would like to acknowledge and are grateful for the permission to utilise and adapt resources from the Trinity Disability Service and AHEAD (Creating Inclusive Environments in Education and Employment for People with Disabilities) in the development of this resource.

PUBLIC SECTOR DUTY: ASSESSMENT OF EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES: PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES¹

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board takes a values-led approach to its work to fulfil its obligations under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014². The Duty requires public bodies to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and protect human rights for employees and service users, and across all function areas.

¹ https://lcetb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/LCETB_PSD_Assessment_Report.pdf

² https://lcetb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/LCETB_PSD_Action_Plan.pdf

The ETB has identified the values of Respect, Inclusion, Social Justice and Empowerment as motivating our concern for equality and human rights:

- **Respect:** Respect is about mutual empathy, integrity, fairness, and kindness. It involves listening to, and consideration of the perspectives of the diversity of our students/learners, staff and the wider community.
- **Inclusion:** Inclusion is about recognising, valuing and harnessing the richness of difference. It involves a recognition that diversity brings opportunities for innovation that enrich the learning environment and workplace
- **Social Justice:** Social justice is about ensuring equality of outcome by providing access to opportunities and resources to enable full participation by all in economic, social, political and cultural life. It involves prioritising a focus on individuals and groups experiencing inequality and those who are marginalised.
- **Empowerment:** Empowerment is about enabling individuals, groups and communities to have the personal and social power to influence decisions affecting their lives and the life of their communities.

CURRENT LEGISLATION

WHAT THE LAW REQUIRES YOU TO DO:

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) guidance identifies the following groups as the main focus regarding implementing our Public Sector Duty:

“Keep the focus on people across the nine grounds included in equality legislation and on the potential impact of those at risk of poverty or social exclusion”. [Equality Benefits Tool - Your Service Users and You - Realising the Benefits in the Public Sector - Equality Authority 2010.pdf \(ihrec.ie\)](#)

The Equal Status Acts 2000-2008 cover equality in the provision of goods and services while the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2008 cover equality in relation to employment across nine equality grounds:

DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is prohibited on the following nine grounds:

- **Gender:** a man, woman or transgender person;
- **Civil status:** covering a person who is single, married, separated, divorced, widowed or in a civil partnership;
- **Family status:** covering a person who is pregnant, a parent of a person under 18 or the resident primary carer or parent of a person with a disability;
- **Sexual orientation:** covering a person who is gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual;
- **Religion:** covering different religious belief, background or none;
- **Age:** this applies to persons over 18 except for the provision of car insurance to licensed drivers under that age;
- **Race:** encompassing race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin;
- **Traveller community:** covering people who are commonly called Travellers and identified by Travellers and others as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, identified historically as a nomadic way of life;
- **Disability:** covering people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions.

THE EQUAL STATUS ACTS 2000-2008 - PROMOTE EQUALITY

- Prohibits discrimination (with some exemptions)
- Prohibits sexual harassment and harassment
- Prohibits victimisation
- Requires reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities
- Allows a broad range of positive action measures

APPLIES TO PEOPLE /ORGANISATIONS WHO:

- Buy and sell a wide variety of goods
- Use or provide a wide range of services

- Obtain or dispose of accommodation
- Attend at, or are in charge of educational establishments

DISCRIMINATION - THREE TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION ARE COVERED BY THE ACTS

- **Direct discrimination:** is defined as the treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person is, has been or would be treated, in a comparable situation on any of the nine grounds which exists, existed, may exist in the future or is imputed to the person concerned.
- **Indirect discrimination:** happens where there is less favourable treatment by impact or effect. It occurs where people are refused a service, for example, not explicitly on account of a discriminatory reason but because of a provision, practice or requirement which they find hard to satisfy.
- **Discrimination by association:** happens where a person associated with another person (belonging to the discriminatory ground) is treated less favourably because of that association.

AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS (ASD)

This section introduces Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Asperger's Syndrome (AS) and explores how they may impact on a learner's academic performance and participation in Further Education and Training. Here, the main focus is to suggest ways in which you as a staff member can support learners with ASD or Asperger's Syndrome manage their role of being a learner.

INTRODUCTION

Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) is a term that is used as an umbrella term for a series of pervasive developmental, neurological disorders including Autism, Asperger Syndrome, Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS). Asperger's Syndrome (AS) is recognised as being at the high functioning end of the autistic spectrum. For the purposes of this information, we will use the acronym ASD to cover Asperger's Syndrome also.

ASD is characterised by a triad of impairments or difficulties, in the absence of general learning difficulties. Individuals with ASD may experience difficulties in (i) social interaction and social relationships (ii) verbal and non-verbal communication, and (iii) imagination, behaviour, and flexibility of thought. Learners with ASD often have above average intelligence and high aptitudes for acquiring knowledge. These aspects can enable learners with ASD to thrive in a College of FET Campus environment. The number of learners with ASD entering FET is increasing every year. It is important to understand that the difficulties identified below do not apply to all learners with ASD.

DIFFICULTIES THAT MAY BE EXPERIENCED

- Learners may have a need for order and predictability. Learners may find adapting to new routines or changing circumstances challenging. The transition to Further Education where days are largely non-routine can often be difficult for learners. Learners with ASD may have difficulties with organisation, and orientation to College of FET Campus locations and systems, particularly in their first year.
- People with ASD sometimes interpret language literally and may have difficulty understanding metaphors, sarcasm, unclear directions or ambiguous content.
- Learners with ASD may be quite conscious of their performance in social situations, which can be a source of anxiety. Learners may have difficulty getting to know new people, and building up relationships. Learners with ASD may find group work situations challenging or stressful.
- Learners with ASD may be hypersensitive to sensory stimuli (vision, hearing, touch, taste, or smell). As such, learners may be easily distracted or overwhelmed by noisy environments, for example, classrooms.
- Perfectionism can be a problem for learners with ASD. A fear of failure and a determination to complete a perfect piece of work can lead to learners procrastinating and getting 'stuck'. Organising material, planning, and managing time and deadlines can be a significant challenge for many learners.
- Learners with ASD may experience difficulties with gross or fine motor skills, and can experience difficulty with handwriting or note taking.

Explained in *Appendix 1 LENS REPORT STRUCTURE*, learners may have disclosed as having ASD to their Provision through a LENS report

STRATEGIES LEARNING PRACTITIONERS AND PROVISION STAFF CAN USE TO SUPPORT FET LEARNERS

Access the LENS report for details on how you can support the learner. Implement and support a Learner's reasonable accommodations with efficiency and discretion. Be mindful of how having ASD may impact a learner's experience of Further Education and Training.

- Provide clear and unambiguous instructions. Learners with ASD may find it difficult to decode implied meaning in language. It is therefore suggested to use simple and clear language free from metaphors. It is also may beneficial to provide both written and verbal instruction for some learners.
- Make class notes available in advance if possible. Learners with ASD may have difficulty with fine motor skills, attention, and organisation and note taking in class can be difficult.
- Learners with ASD may find it difficult to manage time and plan ahead. A clear timeline of events, assignments, and deadlines in the course handbook would support learners to know when things are due.
- Learners with ASD may find the transition from second level to Further Education and Training particularly difficult. Be particularly understanding at this time.

RESOURCES/LINKS

For more information, please see the following links:

- [Autism Uni Toolkit](#)
- [Asperger Syndrome Association of Ireland](#)
- [The National Autistic Society \(UK\)](#)
- [Signposts | National Council for Special Education - CPD and In-School Support \(sess.ie\)](#)

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ADD/ ADHD

This section introduces Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The information explores how these may affect a learner's academic performance and participation in Further Education and Training. Here, the main focus is to suggest ways in which you as a staff member can support learners with ADD or ADHD in their role of being a learner.

INTRODUCTION

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are characterised by inattention significantly affecting aspects of daily life. Hyperactivity and impulsivity can be particularly apparent within ADHD. These conditions are often considered together within the acronym ADHD and will be for the purposes of this information.

Many learners entering the FET Campus may already have a diagnosis of ADHD and have become accustomed to their possible difficulties, and may have developed effective coping strategies. Some learners however may only receive a diagnosis when they come to FET Campus.

DIFFICULTIES THAT MAY BE EXPERIENCED BY FET LEARNERS WITH ADHD

- The transition from the supported and structured environments of secondary provision and home to FET can prove difficult for learners with ADHD. The nature of the FET learning environment can pose a challenge for learners with ADHD. Self-directed learning may be particularly challenging.
- Learners may miss important information in classes because of poor concentration and difficulties taking notes. Learners may lose focus in classes due to distracting stimuli in the environment.
- Learners with ADHD often have significant difficulties with organisation and time management in FET. Learners may have difficulty developing plans, and setting and remembering goals.
- Organising and sequencing information can be a challenge for learners with ADHD. This may be evident in written work. Often, learners with ADHD may initiate work without reading the instructions fully, or understanding exactly what is asked. This may result in incomplete or incorrect work.
- Learners with ADHD may have associated mental health difficulties or learning difficulties.

STRATEGIES LEARNING PRACTITIONERS AND PROVISION STAFF CAN USE TO SUPPORT FET LEARNERS

- Learners may have disclosed their ADHD to their Provision through their guidance counsellor or the Active Inclusion Support Service. Access the LENS report for details on how you can support the learner. Implement and support a learner's reasonable accommodations for learning with efficiency and discretion. Be mindful of how having ADHD may impact a learner's experience of Further Education and Training.
- Make class notes available in advance if possible. As explained, a learner with ADHD may have difficulty paying attention and writing notes in classes. Access to class notes in advance allows the learner to review and become familiar with the class content. Having access to the notes within the class (printed or on a laptop) facilitates the learner to follow the format of the class, and add in notes as appropriate. Try to be consistent with where material can be accessed.

Provide, where possible, course material that is presented through varied and accessible methods, to engage learners with different learning styles. In non-practical classes, general the FET environment focuses on learning through the written word, with less emphasis on visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic (learning by doing) styles. Learners with ADHD may have a preference for these alternative learning styles.

- Learners with ADHD may find it difficult to manage time and plan ahead. A clear time line of events, assignments, and deadlines in the course handbook would support learners to know when things are due.
- A written outline of the course may assist a learner with ADHD to follow the course and revise for exams. Provision of clear class notes on each topic can be very helpful for a learner with ADHD. Try to avoid presenting too much information on each slide.
- Outlining each class at the beginning and highlighting new terms and key points can help a learner to focus. Periodic summaries of the class and summaries at appropriate points in the course can also be helpful.
- Providing templates or guidance for assignments online may be useful for supporting a learner to understanding the expectations of Further Education and Training.
- Prioritise course relevant book and resource lists if possible. Learners with ADHD often find it difficult to access and organise information, so prioritising reading might help to direct the learner to the most pertinent texts.
- Learners with ADHD are often easily distracted. Be mindful when giving instructions or directions to be clear and concise.
- In many instances, a learner with ADHD may also have an associated learning difficulty. If necessary, please refer to the guidelines for specific learning difficulties.

RESOURCES/LINKS

See the following links for more information about ADHD and useful resources:

- [Further Education Guide for Learners with ADHD](#)
- [ADDitude](#)
- [HADD Family Support Group](#)
- [Signposts | National Council for Special Education - CPD and In-School Support \(sess.ie\)](#)

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BLIND / VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

This section introduces visual impairment and explores how being blind or visually impaired may impact a learner's academic performance and participation in FET. Here, the main focus is to suggest ways in which you as a staff member can support learners who are blind or visually impaired.

INTRODUCTION

Visual impairment is vision loss as a result of a significant limitation of visual capability resulting from either disease, trauma, or congenital or degenerative conditions that cannot be corrected by conventional means, such as refractive correction, medication, or surgery. People are considered legally blind when visual acuity is 20/200 or less in the better eye with the use of corrective lenses. There are significant variations in visual impairment. Some people can distinguish only light. Some people may have only side vision. Some see everything as a blur while others have blank spots. Blind or visually impaired people often use a white cane or a guide dog.

Our FET environment is essentially set up for sighted learners. As such, learners who are blind or visually impaired can experience significant challenges. Learners with visual impairments are one of the most underrepresented groups in FET. Learners with visual impairments can encounter significant difficulties in the accessibility of their education.

DIFFICULTIES THAT MAY BE EXPERIENCED BY FET LEARNERS WHO ARE BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED

- Learners are likely to have significant difficulty or be unable to see print, presentation slides, or whiteboards. Learners are likely to have difficulty following the content of classes with a heavy emphasis on visual aids.
- Learners may be unable to access material in an accessible format, or convert material to an accessible format. The extra time spent making material accessible can significantly delay learners in completing reading or assignments.
- Learners may have a slower speed of work when using magnification or specialist software. Learners may have slower speed of reading, or difficulty reading for longer periods. This can delay learners in completing academic assignments.
- Learners may have problems with orientation and mobility (particularly in unfamiliar locations). Changes to the timetable or room changes can be problematic if the learner is not informed.

STRATEGIES LEARNING PRACTITIONERS AND PROVISION STAFF CAN USE TO SUPPORT FET LEARNERS

- Learners may have disclosed a visual impairment to their guidance counsellor or the Active Inclusion Support Service. Access the LENS report for details on how you can support the learner. Implement and support a learner's reasonable accommodations with efficiency and discretion. Be mindful of how being blind or visually impaired may impact a learner's experience of FET life.
- The effect of a visual impairment varies widely. Ask the learner about what they think you might need to know. Encourage the learner to approach you if they are having difficulty with the way in which you are presenting information.

Make class notes, handouts and overheads available to the learner well in advance of the class. This allows time for them to be recorded, enlarged, scanned into the learner's computer or transcribed into braille.

- Make class notes available via email or on the internet so that the learner can access them using screen reading or magnification software on their computer.
- Try to keep the physical environment consistent. Blind or visually impaired learners may develop mental schemas of how rooms are laid out which make it easier for them to navigate. If you intend to alter the layout of a room drastically then try to inform the learner beforehand and offer them the opportunity to readjust to the new layout.
- Face the class when speaking and ensure that what is written on the board is also communicated verbally.
- You may need to greet a learner who is blind or visually impaired by saying your name, as he or she may not recognise your voice.
- Never make fuss of, or feed, a guide dog- he/she is working. Ask the owner's permission first.
- When guiding a person who is blind/visually impaired, walk slightly ahead of them, allowing them to take your arm just above the elbow. Always ask if a learner requires assistance, they may not.

RESOURCES/LINKS

See the following links for more information about visual impairments and useful resources:

- [Submission-to-the-HEA-National-Plan-for-Equity-of-Access-to-Higher-Education-2022-2026.docx \(live.com\)](#)
- [Signposts | National Council for Special Education - CPD and In-School Support \(sess.ie\)](#)

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DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

This section introduces hearing loss and explores how this may impact on a learner's academic performance and participation in FET. Learners who are D/deaf or Hard of Hearing can face difficulties unfamiliar to the hearing population. Here, the main focus is to suggest ways in which you as a staff member can support learners with hearing difficulties within their role of being a learner.

INTRODUCTION

Hearing loss is measured in decibels hearing level (dBHL). A person who can hear sounds across a range of frequencies at 0 to 28dB is considered to have normal hearing. The thresholds for the different types of hearing are as follows:

- Mild 25-39 dBHL
- Moderate 40-69 dBHL
- Severe 70-94 dBHL

Profoundly deaf people cannot hear sounds quieter than 95dB. In the Deaf community, the word deaf can mean different things- 'deaf' refers to a loss of hearing, whereas 'Deaf' with a capital 'd' refers to identified membership of a linguistic and cultural minority. Irish Sign Language (ISL) is the principal form of communication for Deaf people in Ireland. Sign language arose and developed from within Deaf communities.

Deaf learners often communicate using sign language and lip reading. Some D/deaf learners use cochlear implants or hearing aids. A cochlear implant is a small, complex electronic device that can help to provide a sense of sound. A cochlear implant is very different from a hearing aid. Hearing aids amplify sounds so they may be detected by damaged ears. Cochlear implants bypass damaged portions of the ear and directly stimulate the auditory nerve.

A learner who is hard of hearing has some degree of hearing loss. Learners who are hard of hearing usually communicate using a combination of strategies that rely on his/her remaining degree of hearing ability which can be enhanced by a hearing aid or an assistive hearing device. These may include public address systems, induction loops and transmitter/receiver systems with a clip-on microphone for the teaching staff.

A Loop System enables hearing aid users to hear various sound sources in large rooms or reception areas, in auditoriums, offices, theatres, or other large public areas. A loop of insulated wire is fixed around a designated listening area and is connected to a power source, an amplifier and a microphone. Hearing aids which have the 'T' switch can be set at this position, thus allowing the user receive a signal, which is carried from the microphone to the amplifier and is transmitted through to the loop wire, similar to a transmitting aerial.

DIFFICULTIES THAT MAY BE EXPERIENCED BY FET LEARNERS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

- Most information in the FET environment is presented aurally. Learners who are D/deaf or Hard of Hearing are at a distinct disadvantage during classes as the medium of teaching is through the spoken word.
- Learners are likely to miss out on information presented aurally during classes or classes.

- Learners who use ISL usually consider English as their second language. As such, learners may have difficulty with learning and communicating through English such as spelling and grammar, reading for meaning, writing fluently and expressively,
- Learners may have difficulties completing assignments or in exam situations due to difficulties with reading comprehension or written expression.
- Learners may misinterpret information, particularly where there is possible ambiguity in terminology.
- Learners may have difficulties in group situations; following the discussion and making contributions.
- For learners who are Deaf or hard of hearing and who choose to speak, feedback mechanisms are limited; therefore, vocal control, volume and articulation may be affected. Learners may have difficulty communicating orally.

COMMUNICATING WITH A LEARNER WHO IS DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING:

- Ask the learner what is the best way for you to communicate with them.
- Be mindful of distractions and background noise and try to minimise these where possible.
- If you are finding it difficult to understand what a learner is saying, ask them to repeat it or write it down.
- It is important to gain the learner's attention (without startling him/her) before speaking, for example, by waving your hand discretely, tapping a microphone, and making eye contact.
- Speak at the same pace and volume as you would normally, speaking in a louder voice or excessively slowly may interfere with hearing aids or loop systems (where available).
- If you are using video aids, ensure that they are subtitled.
- Repeat questions or remarks from other learners in the room. Ensure important information, for example a change of room location, is communicated in a written format.

GUIDELINES IF A LEARNER IS LIP READING:

Lip-reading is a demanding activity requiring great concentration. Three quarters of it is guesswork, therefore clear speech and contextual clues are vital.

- Face the class as you speak. The learner would know best about where to sit.
- Speak clearly and at a reasonable natural pace, and do not cover your mouth or face away.
- Take regular pauses.
- Do not stand in front of a light source as this creates a shadow over your face which makes it more difficult to lip read.
- Use of facial expression and gestures during a class all produce extra contextual information to reduce guesswork for the learner.

- Try to review or give a summary of information covered.
- New vocabulary or acronyms are impossible to lip read, writing them on the board and giving an explanation helps.
- You cannot read and lip read at the same time, thus it is important to allow the person extra time to read passages/notes if you are explaining things.

GUIDELINES IF A LEARNER IS USING AN ISL INTERPRETER:

- When communicating one-to-one, speak and look directly at the D/deaf person. The interpreter will convey the message in the first person and will communicate the meaning and the content of your speech.
- The interpreter's role is to facilitate communication, not to participate, so all remarks should be addressed to the communicating parties and not the interpreter.
- Speak at your normal rate; the interpreter will alert you if you are moving too quickly. If you are taking questions from others, then the interpreter may point at that person to indicate who is speaking.
- Interpreting (translation into Sign Language) is a demanding task and most interpreters need a break after half an hour of continuous interpreting.
- Be aware that sign language often does not have signs for specialised or technical words and the interpreter will need to fingerspell these words. It can be helpful to define these terms and list any new vocabulary on handouts.
- Ensure that both the learner and the interpreter have a copy of all handouts before the class.
- Deaf learners can only attend to one source of information at a time i.e. the teaching staff (via the interpreter) or the visual aid (overheads, slides etc.).
- Ensure the classroom is well lit so that the learner can see the interpreter clearly.

GUIDELINES FOR GROUP WORK:

- Group work can be particularly difficult, especially if the learner is required to follow streams of conversation from different people in the group.
- Try to ensure that everyone in the group can be seen by the Deaf/Hard of Hearing learner or their interpreter.
- Try to encourage learners to speak one at a time in group situations.

STRATEGIES LEARNING PRACTITIONERS AND PROVISION STAFF CAN USE TO SUPPORT FET LEARNERS

- Learners may have disclosed being D/deaf or Hard of Hearing to their guidance counsellor or the Active Inclusion Support Service (AISS). Access the LENS report for details on how you can support the learner. Implement and support a learner's reasonable accommodations with efficiency and discretion.

- Be mindful of how being unable to hear may impact a learner's experience of Further Education and Training
- Ask the learner about what is the best way for you to communicate with them, and encourage the learner to approach you if you are not delivering your information clearly. See the above guidelines for support in communicating with a learner who is D/deaf or Hard of Hearing.
- Make class notes available in advance if possible, so learners can familiarise themselves with the language to expect in the class. Learners who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing may rely more heavily on text books than other learners, so providing a clear reading list at the beginning of the course can be very helpful.
- Ensure whatever information is communicated aurally is also available visually or written in notes.

RESOURCES/LINKS

See the following links for more information about being D/deaf or Hard of Hearing and useful resources:

- [A Guide to Maintaining Healthy Hearing \(audiologymedicalservices.ie\)](http://audiologymedicalservices.ie)
- [Signposts | National Council for Special Education - CPD and In-School Support \(sess.ie\)](http://sess.ie)

DEVELOPMENTAL CO-ORDINATION DISORDER (DCD)/DYSPRAXIA

This section introduces Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD) or dyspraxia and explores how it may impact on a learner's academic performance and participation in Further Education and Training. Here, the main focus is to suggest ways in which you as a staff member can support learners with DCD/dyspraxia within their role of being a learner.

INTRODUCTION

Developmental co-ordination disorder (DCD) is a lifelong condition which can negatively impact an individual's functioning and participation in everyday life. While DCD is widely recognised for its impact on gross and fine motor skills, it is often seen with co-occurring difficulties such as social and emotional difficulties, problems with time management, planning, personal organisation and executive functioning. These can have implications for an individual's education or employment experiences. (Dyspraxia Foundation, 2019).

DIFFICULTIES THAT MAY BE EXPERIENCED BY FET LEARNERS WITH DCD OR DYSPRAXIA.

In a survey completed by the TCD Disability Service in 2020, learners with DCD rated the following as key areas of difficulty:

- Organisation
- Timing in exams
- Concentrating in classes
- Writing essays/assignments

In addition, learners may have difficulty with:

- Handwriting, copying diagrams, and writing notes from the board. Keyboard skills can be difficult to acquire.
- Fine motor skills for accuracy e.g. in laboratory work, or in precise clinical skills for courses such as Nursing.
- Concentration, time management, and planning can be very challenging for some learners with DCD.
- Expressing their thoughts clearly.
- Sensitivity to sensory information such as sound, light, or touch.
- Written expression, work organisation, visual skills, oral skills, or numeracy skills.
- Associated mental health difficulties

STRATEGIES LEARNING PRACTITIONERS AND PROVISION STAFF CAN USE TO SUPPORT FET LEARNERS

- Learners may have disclosed DCD/dyspraxia to their Provision Coordinator or the Active Inclusion Support Service. Access the LENS report for details on how you can support the learner. Implement and support a learner's reasonable accommodations with efficiency and discretion. Be mindful of how having DCD may impact a learner's experience of Further Education and Training.

- Make class notes and other handouts available in advance if possible. As explained, a learner with DCD may have difficulty writing notes in classes. Having access to the notes within the class (printed or on a laptop) facilitates the learner to follow the format of the class, and add in notes as appropriate.
- Learners with DCD may find it difficult to manage time and plan ahead. A clear timeline of events, assignments, and deadlines in the course handbook would support learners to know when things are due.
- A written outline of the course may assist learners with DCD to follow the course and revise for exams. Provision of clear class notes on each topic can be very helpful for a learner with DCD.
- Prioritise course relevant book and resource lists if possible. Learners with DCD often find it difficult to access and organise information, so prioritising reading might help to direct the learner to the most pertinent texts.

RESOURCE/LINKS

See the following links for more information about DCD and useful resources:

- <https://sway.office.com/PK9PLzTGJWipWVJ9?ref=Link>(Project on DCD and TCD supports)
- [Dyspraxia Association of Ireland](#)
- [Dyspraxia Foundation UK](#)
- [Signposts | National Council for Special Education - CPD and In-School Support \(sess.ie\)](#)

NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS

This section introduces some neurological conditions and explores how they could impact on a learner's academic performance and participation in Further Education and Training. Here, the main focus is to suggest ways in which you as a staff member can support learners with a neurological condition to manage their role of being a learner.

INTRODUCTION

Neurological conditions are disorders of the brain, spinal cord and nerves throughout the body. Many conditions may be stable, others may be variable and some will be progressive.

Major types of neurological conditions include Epilepsy, Huntington's disease, Multiple Sclerosis, Motor Neurone Disease, Frederic's Ataxia, Parkinson's disease, brain injury, stroke, and some speech and language difficulties. Speech, language, and communication difficulties include problems with articulation, voice strength, fluency problems, understanding others, expression, or being unable to speak.

DIFFICULTIES THAT MAY BE EXPERIENCED BY FET LEARNERS WITH NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS

Naturally, the conditions mentioned above and other neurological conditions vary in their symptoms and effects. In general, learners with these types of illnesses:

- Often experience fatigue (physical, cognitive, and emotional exhaustion).
- May have difficulties with concentration and completion of tasks or assignments.
- Experience pain.
- Have to take medication (with possible side effects).
- Can be more susceptible to stress, and illnesses could be exacerbated by times of stress.
- Can miss classes due to medical appointments, illness, or time in hospital.
- Some learners may have mobility or postural difficulties; with walking, climbing stairs, or remaining in one position for long periods of time.
- Writing and other fine motor activities (including computer use) may also be affected.
- Learners may have difficulty with oral communication.

STRATEGIES LEARNING PRACTITIONERS AND PROVISION STAFF CAN USE TO SUPPORT FET LEARNERS

- Learners may have disclosed a neurological condition to their Provision Coordinator or the Active Inclusion Support Service. Access the LENS report for details on how you can support the learner. Implement and support a learner's reasonable accommodations with efficiency and discretion. Be mindful of how the neurological condition may impact a learner's experience of Further Education and Training.
- Make class notes available in advance if possible. Learners with neurological conditions may find it difficult to maintain their concentration during classes. Having class notes in advance enables learners within the class to reduce the amount of handwritten notes they need to take, allowing them to

concentrate on the material being delivered. This may enable the learner to conserve energy for the rest of the day.

- Prioritise course relevant book and resource lists. This enables learners to engage more easily with pertinent course texts.
- When planning course timetables, try to ensure timetabling gives all learners sufficient time to move between teaching venues. Try to avoid significant location changes within a Day e.g. between the College of FET main campus and a work placement venue.
- Be mindful of keeping areas clear, to reduce the likelihood of accidents. In long classes, it may be helpful to allow learners a quick break. Avoid drawing attention to learners who may need to leave class. Accommodate learners who may need to sit in certain learning situations e.g. in labs or practical anatomy.
- Be patient when teaching learners with speech, language, and communication difficulties. Give learners the opportunity, without compelling them, to speak in class. Give learners the time they require to express themselves. Do not be reluctant to ask the learner to repeat a statement.
- Learners with complex needs or severely reduced mobility may have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPS). The information for the learner's safe evacuation in the event of an emergency will be contained in their LENS report.

RESOURCES/LINKS

See the following links for more information about some neurological conditions and useful resources:

- [Acquired Brain Injury Ireland](#)
- [MS Ireland](#)
- [Ataxia Foundation Ireland](#)
- [Irish Motor Neuron Disease Association](#)
- [Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland](#)
- [Brainwave- The Irish Epilepsy Association](#)
- [Signposts | National Council for Special Education - CPD and In-School Support \(sess.ie\)](#)

MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

This section introduces the importance of our mental health and explores how mental health difficulties may impact on a learner's academic performance and participation in Further Education and Training. Here, the main focus is to suggest ways in which you as a staff member can support learners who may have mental health difficulties.

INTRODUCTION

Mental health is an umbrella term that refers to how we perceive and feel about ourselves and others and the meaning that we derive from everyday life. It also relates to our ability to cope with change and transition and the stresses of everyday life. Mental health is not the same as the absence of mental illness.

The World Health Organisation defines mental health as a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. Mental health is an essential component of general health and wellbeing. Poor mental health affects our ability to cope with and manage our lives, particularly during personal change and through key life events, and decreases our ability to participate fully in life.

Mental health difficulties in learners can develop in response to pressures on their course in the College of FET Campus, at work, at home, trauma, or relationship difficulties. Many mental health difficulties are temporary, responding to medication, therapy, and rest. Some people may experience more long term difficulties which are interspersed with period of good and poor health. Learners with mental health difficulties can register with the Disability Service, to access supports and advice, to support them in their learner role. Types of mental health diagnoses include: depression, anxiety, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder, personality disorders, and schizophrenia.

DIFFICULTIES THAT MAY BE EXPERIENCED BY FET LEARNERS WITH MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

- Learners may experience anxiety about day-to-day aspects of their FET Course.
- Learners may have poor attendance at their FET Course due to low mood, anxiety, or fatigue.
- Learners with mental health difficulties often have poor sleeping and eating patterns which can affect their concentration. It may also be difficult to concentrate in classes or in the library due to low mood or anxious thoughts.
- The busy College of FET Campus environment can be overwhelming for learners with mental health difficulties.
- Learners may have low self-confidence in their ability to do things, and may procrastinate or find it difficult to get things done. Learners may find it difficult to plan ahead and be organised. Meeting deadlines can be extremely challenging.
- Engaging in extra-curricular or social activities can be difficult for learners with mental health difficulties.
- Learners may be feeling very hopeless and isolated. Some mental health difficulties can cause significant changes in behaviour, and learners may be more vulnerable or aggressive.

STRATEGIES LEARNING PRACTITIONERS AND PROVISION STAFF CAN USE TO SUPPORT FET LEARNERS

- Learners may have disclosed a mental health difficulty to their Provision Coordinator or the Active Inclusion Support Service. Access the LENS report for details on how you can support the learner. Implement and support a learner's reasonable accommodations with efficiency and discretion. Be mindful of how a mental health difficulty may impact a learner's experience of Further Education and Training.
- Make class notes available in advance if possible. Learners with mental health difficulties may have difficulty attending classes for various reasons. Some learners may be anxious about the class environment. Other learners may find it difficult to attend classes due to low mood, concentration difficulties, or a disrupted sleep pattern. Providing class notes in advance enables the learner to access the class content and to become acquainted with the subject material before the class. This practice may reduce uncertainty, and help the learner to feel prepared and comfortable within the class. Having notes can also help to focus the learner on the class content, instead of worrying about taking down all of the information being presented.
- Prioritised course relevant book and resource lists enable learners to engage with the most pertinent course material.
- For many learners, their condition may be variable and they may experience periods of particular difficulty. This may require some understanding and flexibility.
- Learners may prefer not to discuss difficulties they are having but you can help by being available to listen if a learner wishes to talk to somebody.
- If you do not feel equipped to help, encourage the learner to talk to their Provision Coordinator, Guidance Counsellor or register for counselling supports with the Active Inclusion Support Service.
- Encourage the promotion of positive mental health when possible through Campus and Provision-led initiatives.

RESOURCES/LINKS

See the following links for more information about mental health and useful resources:

- [The Listen, Speak, and Be Heard website](#) - information about effective communication for learners and staff, and suggests practical tips and technological supports to improve communication skills.
- [Reach Out](#)
- [Mental Health Ireland](#)
- [Aware](#)
- [Bodywhys](#)
- [OCD Ireland](#)
- [Shine](#)
- [Signposts | National Council for Special Education - CPD and In-School Support \(sess.ie\)](#)

PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

This section introduces physical disability and some medical conditions that result in physical disabilities, and explores how these may impact a learner's academic performance and participation in Further Education and Training. Here, the main focus is to suggest ways in which you as a staff member can support learners with physical disabilities in their role of being a learner.

INTRODUCTION

Physical disabilities result from conditions that affect the physical body. These can include conditions such as brain injuries, spinal cord injury, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, spina bifida, and amputations. Severe respiratory and cardiac diseases can also affect mobility. Learners with physical disabilities often face major obstacles within FET's physical and social environment.

DIFFICULTIES THAT MAY BE EXPERIENCED BY FET LEARNERS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

- Learners may face difficulties with physical access to buildings and rooms on campus. Learners may be unable to access some activities or events with peers.
- Learners may have difficulty or be unable to write, hold, or manipulate objects. Learners may, for example encounter difficulties in the use of the library for accessing and reading texts, and finding appropriate desk space.
- Learners who use wheelchairs, crutches, canes, or prostheses may find it difficult moving from place to place, and face obstacles in the physical environment.
- It may take learners more time to complete coursework.
- Learners may tire easily, and find it difficult to maintain energy and stamina throughout the Day.
- Fatigue and weakness may make it difficult for the learners to complete assignments and perform in exams.

STRATEGIES FOR STAFF TO SUPPORT LEARNERS

- Learners may have disclosed a physical disability to their Provision Coordinator or the Active Inclusion Support Service. Access the LENS report for details on how you can support the learner. Implement and support a learner's reasonable accommodations with efficiency and discretion. Be mindful of how having a physical disability may impact a learner's experience of Further Education and Training.
- Be conscious that the learner may tire easily and may require rest periods or breaks during classes, tutorials or class tests.
- Do not push a person's wheelchair without their permission – offer help if you think it is required but do not impose it. When talking to a person who uses a wheelchair sit down (if possible) so that you are both on the same level.
- Make class notes available in advance if possible. Having class notes available online enables learners to reduce the amount of handwritten notes they need to take during the class. This may enable the learner to conserve energy for the rest of the Day. Some learners with physical disabilities may have a note-taker.

- When planning course timetables, try to ensure timetabling gives all learners sufficient time to move between teaching venues. Try to avoid significant location changes within a day e.g. College of FET main campus and work placement venue.
- Check the accessibility of all College of FET buildings.
- Learners with complex needs or severely reduced mobility may have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPS). The information for the learner's safe evacuation in the event of an emergency will be contained in their LENS report.

RESOURCES/LINKS

- [SBHI](#) Website of Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Ireland. This website gives a good explanation of spina bifida and hydrocephalus.
- <https://www.iwa.ie/> This is the site of the IWA, the national organisation of people with limited mobility. It offers a range of services, often in partnership with state agencies, including training and education.
- <https://www.mdi.ie/> - Muscular Dystrophy Ireland (MDI) site contains general information on muscular dystrophy with links to factsheets.
- <https://www.enableireland.ie/> - Enable Ireland is a leading provider of services for persons with physical disability in Ireland.
- [Signposts | National Council for Special Education - CPD and In-School Support \(sess.ie\)](#)

SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

This section introduces the different Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) and explores how they may impact on a learner's academic performance and participation at a College of FET Campus. Here, the main focus is to suggest ways in which you as a staff member can support learners with specific learning difficulties (dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia) within their role of being a learner.

INTRODUCTION

There are generally three major specific learning difficulties impacting FET learners: dyslexia; dysgraphia; and dyscalculia. Other learning difficulties include difficulties with auditory processing, memory, reading/visual difficulties.

Dyslexia is a language based learning difficulty which mainly affects the development of literacy and language related skills. Many people with dyslexia can experience difficulties in the following areas: memory, reading, writing, spelling, maths, organisation, and speech. The difficulties in these areas are not related to a person's intelligence or cognitive skills.

Dysgraphia affects the learner's ability to write coherently regardless of their ability to read. Some of the problems include: poor structure of words; incomplete words and omitted words; significant difficulty putting thoughts and ideas in writing; increased or decreased speed of handwriting.

Dyscalculia is a learning difficulty specific to arithmetic or Maths. The difficulty lies in the reception, comprehension, or production of quantitative and spatial information. Learners with dyscalculia may have difficulty in understanding simple number concepts, lack an intuitive grasp of numbers, and have problems learning number facts and procedures.

DIFFICULTIES THAT MAY BE EXPERIENCED BY FET LEARNERS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

- Learners with specific learning difficulties can underachieve within the education system unless they receive appropriate support.
- Learners may underperform on College of FET Campus examinations or require more time to complete assignments than other learners.
- Taking notes in classes can be difficult for learners with SpLDs.
- Learners may have significant organisational difficulties.
- Learners may have difficulty with handwriting and producing written work.

STRATEGIES LEARNING PRACTITIONERS AND PROVISION STAFF CAN USE TO SUPPORT FET LEARNERS

- Learners may have disclosed a specific learning difficulty to their Provision Coordinator or the Active Inclusion Support Service. Access the LENS report for details on how you can support the learner. Implement and support a learner's reasonable accommodations with efficiency and discretion. Be mindful of how having a specific learning difficulty may impact a learner's experience of Further Education and Training
- Make class notes available in advance if possible. Learner with specific learning difficulties may have difficulty writing notes in classes. Having access to the notes within the class (printed or on a laptop) facilitates the learner to follow the format of the class, and add in notes as appropriate.

- A written outline of the course may assist learner with learning difficulties to follow the course and revise for exams.
- Outlining each class at the beginning and highlighting new terms and key points can help a learner to focus. Periodic summaries of the class and summaries at appropriate points in the course can also be helpful.
- Providing templates or guidance for assignments online may be useful for supporting a learner to understanding the expectations of Further Education. Providing clear feedback on assignments enables learners to understand how they can improve.
- Please note, special accommodations for marking the spelling and grammar of learners with dyslexia do not apply to essays and other forms of continuous assessment.
- Provide, where possible, course material that is presented through varied and accessible methods, to engage learners with different learning styles. Typically, a College of FET Campus environment focuses on learning through the written word, with less emphasis on visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic (learning by doing) styles. Learners with specific learning difficulties may have a preference for these alternative learning styles. Consider using alternative assessment options.

RESOURCES/LINKS

- [Dyslexia Association of Ireland](#)
- [Signposts | National Council for Special Education - CPD and In-School Support \(sess.ie\)](#)

SIGNIFICANT ONGOING ILLNESS

This section introduces a number of significant ongoing illnesses and explores how ongoing illnesses may impact on a learner's performance and participation in Further Education and Training. Here, the main focus is to suggest ways in which you as a staff member can support learners with ongoing illness

INTRODUCTION

Some FET learners have ongoing medical conditions or illnesses which may impact on their studies or Further Education and Training. These illnesses are sometimes referred to as 'hidden disabilities' because they are less obvious.

DIFFICULTIES THAT MAY BE EXPERIENCED BY FET LEARNERS WITH ONGOING ILLNESSES

Ongoing illnesses include Arthritis, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Cystic Fibrosis, Diabetes, Haemophilia, Crohn's Disease, Fibromyalgia and many more. Naturally, these and other ongoing illnesses vary in their symptoms and effects. In general, learners with these types of illnesses:

- Experience pain.
- Experience fatigue (physical, cognitive, and emotional exhaustion).
- Have to take medication (with possible side effects).
- Can be more susceptible to stress, and illnesses could be exacerbated by times of stress.
- Can have weakened immune systems.
- Can miss classes due to illness or hospitalisation.
- May have mobility difficulties or muscle weakness.

STRATEGIES LEARNING PRACTITIONERS AND PROVISION STAFF CAN USE TO SUPPORT FET LEARNERS

- Learners may have disclosed a significant ongoing illness to their Provision Coordinator or the Active Inclusion Support Service. Access the LENS report for details on how you can support the learner. Implement and support a learner's reasonable accommodations with efficiency and discretion. Be mindful of how a significant ongoing illness may impact a learner's experience of Further Education and Training
- Make class notes available in advance if possible. Learners with ongoing illnesses may find it difficult to maintain their concentration during classes. Having class notes in advance enables learners within the class to reduce the amount of handwritten notes they need to take, allowing them to concentrate on the material being delivered. This may enable the learner to conserve energy for the rest of the Day.
- Prioritise course relevant book and resource lists. This enables learners to engage more easily with pertinent course texts.

- When planning course timetables, try to ensure timetabling gives all learners sufficient time to move between teaching venues. Try to avoid significant location changes within a Day e.g. FET main campus and a work placement venue.
- Be mindful of keeping areas clear, to reduce the likelihood of accidents. In long classes, it may be helpful to allow learners a quick break. Avoid drawing attention to learners who may need to leave class. Accommodate learners who may need to sit in certain learning situations e.g. in practical classrooms or demonstration rooms.
- Learners with complex needs or severely reduced mobility may have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPS). The information for the learner's safe evacuation in the event of an emergency will be contained in their LENS report.

RESOURCES/LINKS

If you would like more information or support, contact the Disability Service. See the following links for more information about ongoing illnesses and useful resources:

- [The Cystic Fibrosis Association of Ireland](#)
- [Arthritis Ireland](#)
- [Fibrolreland](#)
- [Signposts | National Council for Special Education - CPD and In-School Support \(sess.ie\)](#)

APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE & ETIQUETTE

LANGUAGE

The Disability Act 2005 as defines disability as:

“a substantial restriction in the capacity of the person to carry on a profession, business or occupation in the State or to participate in social or cultural life in the State by reason of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment”.

A review of the Equality Acts is presently ongoing. It will include the definition of disability, particularly as this legislation pre-dates Ireland’s ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (‘UNCRPD’)

The European Union has approved the Human Rights model of disability set out in the UNCRPD. **Article 1 defines disabled persons as:**

“Those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”

PARTICULAR WORDS & PHRASES TO AVOID:

- **Handicap / Handicapped** - instead say ‘Intellectual, Physical, Learning or other Disability’
- **Special Needs** - instead say ‘Additional Needs’
- **Suffering from/Stricken with** - instead say ‘person who has’/ ‘person with’/ ‘person who experiences’
- **Confined** to a wheelchair/wheelchair-bound - instead say ‘wheelchair user’
- **Deaf & Dumb** - instead say ‘he/she is without speech/hearing’
- **Mental Retardation/Mentally Retarded** - instead say intellectual disability / cognitive disability

GENERAL POINTERS: DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

- Do not talk about a person’s disability unless it is relevant
- Avoid asking personal questions about someone’s disability. Let them bring it up first.
- If you must ask, be understanding and show respect
- Help keep walkways clear for those with impaired mobility.
- People with disabilities are simply people and need to be treated as such.
- People with disabilities are people too, but they happen to have a disability
- Focus on the person and their ability, not their disabilities

PEOPLE WHO USE AIDS

- Always ask a person using a wheelchair if he or she would like help before helping.
- Your help may not be needed or wanted
- Don’t hang or lean on a person’s wheelchair
- If your conversation lasts more than a few minutes think about sitting down with them

PEOPLE WHO HAVE HEARING LOSS

- Always make eye contact with the person you are talking to
- A gentle tap on the shoulder will help you let them know that you are there
- Face the person you are talking to and speak slowly and clearly. Do not yell at them.
- Pen and paper if communication breaks down
- Speak to the person not their interpreter

PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

(Limited mental function may lead to issues with talking and social skills)

- Repeat what you say or try a different way of saying it
- You must be patient
- Keep instructions simple

PEOPLE WHO HAVE VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

- Always let the person know that you are there.
- Use the person's name you are speaking to and speak directly to them

PEOPLE WHO HAVE A SPEECH IMPEDIMENT

- Do not finish their sentence for them. Allow them time to say everything they want to say
- You must be patient
- Never act like you know what a person is saying.
- Ask the person to repeat or rephrase or offer them a pen and paper

PEOPLE WHO HAVE A LEARNING DISABILITY

- Ask them if they would like you to 'jot the info down' to help them remember it
- You must be patient
- Use text to speech software if needed

If a person still does not understand what you are saying, try to say it in a different way.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

In a Further Education and Training Context, Assistive Technology refers to any tools, devices, applications or features of applications that can support people with disabilities to learn and work more effectively and meet the challenges posed by the impact of their disability or the inaccessible design of environments and materials. Within Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's College of FET, there is a wide range of tools and apps available for our learners, many of which are available free of charge or are integrated [Microsoft Tools - AHEAD](#) <https://www.ahead.ie/Microsoft-Tools> and [Accessibility Features | Microsoft Accessibility](#)

This section provides a very brief overview of some of the AT available and is taken (with permission) from the AT Hive¹ – an AHEAD resource for learners to explore technologies to help them learn and work more effectively. The AT Hive is a dynamic resource and you can contribute suggested technologies you think might be useful to share by following this link: [Submit an AT Hive write up - AHEAD](#)

MICROSOFT TECHNOLOGIES

All FET staff and registered FET learners should have access to a Microsoft Office 365 account. This gives people a number of options to help them with presenting, reading, writing and organisation. When staff and learners also have Windows on their laptop/desktop, they also have access to further Microsoft technologies, which can assist them in a number of ways.

For ETB FET Learning Practitioners, Module 3 in the Teaching and Learning Online course provides a 'taster' of many of the tools available to staff and learners through their Office 365 account and additional information can be found by emailing tel@lcefb.ie

A summary of some of the Microsoft technologies is outlined below. You can click on the link for further information, videos and tips from AHEAD.

[Word Text to Speech \(Reading Text Out Loud\)](#) Your Word document can read out your written content.

[Edge Browser Reading Tools](#) Reading options in the Edge Browser

[Magnifier in Windows 10](#) In-built magnifier in Windows 10

[Teams Office 365 Closed Captions](#) Teams (Office 365) closed captions as people speak.

[Windows 10 Dictation Speech to Text](#) Use inbuilt dictation tool on a Windows Laptop/Desktop.

[PowerPoint in Office 365 Collaboration Tool](#) Collaborate online feature in PowerPoint.

[Word in Office 365 - Collaboration Tool](#) Collaborate with your group online in Word.

[PowerPoint Live Closed Captions](#) Closed captions, your voice is text on screen, as you present.

[Stream in Office 365](#) upload videos, record your screen and create closed captions.

[Calendars](#) Using online calendars to get organised.

[Browser tips](#) Using more than 1 browser for organisation.

¹ [AT Hive - An Assistive Technology Resource - AHEAD](#)

[Word online immersive reader](#) Reading support with Immersive Reader in Word.

Lens App: An app that converts images/photos of text into Word documents and then reads out text in these images.

NOTE-TAKING TECHNOLOGIES

[OneNote](#) OneNote (Office 365) for Note Taking

[Audio Notetaker by Sonocent](#) Audio Notetaker by Sonocent, records audio on your Laptop.

READING TECHNOLOGIES

[Edge Browser Reading Tools](#)

[Immersive Reader](#)

[iPad and iPhone Text to Speech](#)

[Word Text to Speech](#)

[Live Transcribe & Sound Notifications – Google App](#)

[Lens \(Office 365 App\) Read text in images and more](#)

[Reader Pen](#)

WRITING TECHNOLOGIES

[Dictate in Word \(Office 365\)](#)

[Windows 10 Dictation \(Speech to text\)](#)

[One Note \(Office 365 for Note Taking\)](#)

[iPad and iPhone Text to Speech](#)

[Dictation.io - Dictation](#)

ORGANISATION TECHNOLOGIES

[OneTab Chrome Webstore](#)

[Pomodoro Technique - Setting Manageable Goals](#)

[Calendars – Getting Organised](#)

[Browser tips - AHEAD](#)

RECORDING TECHNOLOGIES

[Otter – Live Transcribe](#)

[STREAM Office 365](#)

MAGNIFICATION TECHNOLOGIES

[Windows 10 Magnifier](#)

[Accessibility: Web Assistant for Chrome](#)

APPENDIX 1 LENS REPORT STRUCTURE

CONFIDENTIAL

Please be advised that Xxxxxx Xxxxx, (Student name) xxxxxxx(Course & Year) (PLSS No.) is registered with the ETB Active Inclusion Support Service and has underwent Needs Assessment, to determine the following Learning Educational Needs Supports.

Nature of Disability:

Requirements for the provision of Reasonable Accommodations for this year are as follows:

Introduction (Nature of Disability/Learning Difficulty)

Learner Background Information: (Difficulties, strengths, other relevant info)

Actions Necessary	Role
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learning Support Referral (Frequency: Weekly Bi-weekly Monthly) 2. Assistive Technology (Equipment/Training) – give details: 3. Counselling Referral (try to be specific on the help required) 	<p>AISS Hub Contact</p>

Actions Necessary	Role
<p>4. (Add/remove as appropriate)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate LENS report to the Learner’s relevant teaching staff. The information remains valid for each year of the learner’s course. If there are changes to the needs identified here, a new report will be provided. Ensure the agreed Reasonable Accommodations are provided Consult with AISS on required resources (Personnel and/or Equipment) Ensure Recording & Storage of information is in line with current GDPR regulations 	<p>Provision Co-Ordinator & Programme Co-Ordinators</p>

Actions Necessary	Role
5. Teaching Strategies/Tips/Advice Particular Strengths Observed/Reported:	Teaching Staff

Actions Necessary	Role
6. Nature of Support Needed:	Learning Support/Educational Support/Core Skills.

Reasonable Accommodations in Assessments/Exams:

Please note: Some preparatory work on making these Reasonable Accommodations available may already be in process, through your local provision designated R.A. person. It is advised therefore to check status on these prior to making any further arrangements).

In-Course Assessments <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
End of Semester/Year Assessments <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Evidence of Disability/Learning Difficulty Documentation: (i.e. Psychological Assessment, Occupational Therapy Report, Psychiatry report) <p style="text-align: center;">Dated:</p> Sufficient and Appropriate Evidence?

Other Info:

Important Notes & Guidelines:

- This notification must be recorded and stored in full compliance with current Data Protection legislation. (See below, if you need to check these)
- The contents of this report should only be discussed with the learner in a confidential setting, such as your office.
- The information remains valid for each year of the learner’s course. If there are changes to the needs identified above, a new report will be issued.
- Please destroy confidentially once the learner has completed your module.

Prior to setting dates / venues for in-class assessment, the following steps should be taken academic staff:

- A. Identify learners registered with AISS and the Reasonable Accommodations required (detailed in all Active Inclusion Needs reports)
- B. You will need to apply these Reasonable Accommodations in each of the Assessment circumstances above.
- C. Where necessary, contact the Needs Assessor or Provision Co-Ordinator for advice on providing the stated reasonable accommodations.

Needs Assessor /Provision or Programme Co-Ordinator. (Signatures)	Contact Details	Date
AISS Hub Contact	Contact Details:	

The following guidelines are available

- Limerick and Clare ETB Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment Procedure, July 2019, Version 1.1.
- DAWN Handbook (Teaching learners with disabilities: guidelines for academic staff)
- AHEAD & DAWN (2018), Inclusive Learning and the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations to Students with Disabilities in Higher Education in Ireland. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press. <https://www.ahead.ie/reasonableaccommodations>
- RACE: State Examinations Commission (SEC) Reasonable Accommodation at the 2021 Certificate Examinations. Instructions for Schools. <http://www.examinations.ie/schools/IR-1004-57457486.pdf> Accessed 21.1.21
- SOLAS Fund for Learners with Disabilities (FLD) Guidelines (For ETB’s V.1/2020)
- GDPR Advice/Queries: Contact: Joanne O’Brien, Data Protection Officer, Limerick and Clare

Education and Training Board, Marshal House Dooradoyle Road, Limerick, V94 HAC4. T: 061-442100
E: joanne.obrien@lcebt.ie or dataprotection@lcebt.ie. More information is available on our website
lcebt.ie/data-protection.