



Website context: Thinking about Dyslexia → Module design

Reasonable Adjustments/Anticipatory Adjustments

The concept of reasonable adjustments implies doing something different for dyslexic students than is done for others. Adjustments are recommended where university systems or style of teaching and assessment might be a barrier to the dyslexic student's opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and ability. This does not require academic standards to be compromised. The learning objectives for dyslexic students should be the same as for everyone else.

The concept of anticipatory adjustments involves being aware in advance where dyslexic students may be disadvantaged and developing transparent policies and procedures. This not only involves what is being done differently for dyslexic students but also, but in response to the 'Positive Duties' set out in DDA 2005, identifies inclusive ways of working. This raises teaching and learning as well as procedural issues. Sometimes existing good practice designed for the general student population is such that it benefits dyslexic students and hence reduces the need for adjustments. It is therefore important to recognise where and why this is happening. Similarly, it is also important to recognise how changes in practice might affect dyslexic students. This requires some understanding of how dyslexia and the requirements of your discipline might interact.

An anticipatory approach

- Encourages inclusiveness: what works well for dyslexic students is often simply good practice for all.
- Reduces the need for ad hoc responses to individual students.
- Increases accountability in the face of challenge.

For a wide-ranging discussion of the implications of inclusiveness for assessment, see the Report of the SPACE project (the first three sections) *Inclusive Assessment in Higher Education: A Resource for Change: Staff-Student Partnership for Assessment Change and Evaluation (SPACE)*

<http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/pages/view.asp?page=10494>

The report questions whether treating a particular group differently is inclusive.