‘SPECIFIC’ LEARNING DIFFICULTIES in PRISONS
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Dyslexia Consultancy Malvern
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BOOKLET 1
INTRODUCTION and RESOURCES for SpLDs

The full set of BOOKLETS comprises

1. Introduction and Resources for Specific Learning Difficulties
2. Overview of Specific Learning Difficulties
3. Principles of Support for Specific Learning Difficulties
4. Support for English/Literacy and Maths/Numeracy
5. Support for ICT and Virtual Campus
6. Support for Foreign Nationals who may have Specific Learning Difficulties
7. Specific Learning Difficulties in the contexts of Disability / Equality / Diversity / Accessibility
8. Work Preparation and Resettlement

The term ‘Specific Learning Difficulties’ refers to a family of conditions, namely Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Dyscalculia

ALL 8 BOOKLETS are available on www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk
INTRODUCTION to the BOOKLETS

Research* indicates that almost a fifth of the UK prison population faces difficulties due to Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) and are unlikely to make sustained progress without appropriate support.

Now that ‘Specific’ Learning Difficulties are included within the Prison Education Framework and must be identified beyond the remit of Education, this is the ideal time to disseminate a more in-depth knowledge of these common conditions, namely **Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Dyscalculia.** In addition, **Asperger Syndrome** is often referred to in these Booklets, due to its overlap with SpLDs.

An understanding of how these conditions affect adults in education, training and resettlement, together with some knowledge of which methodologies are most effective, will enable staff and management to help this population tackle their difficulties, value their abilities and develop coping strategies – all of which lead to better chances of rehabilitation.

Fortunately an approach that works for SpLDs is also beneficial for other people who have missed out on education or failed to make progress.

This series of Booklets, based on my earlier guide *Releasing Potential of Offenders with Dyslexia* (2014) and considerably updated, explores a number of areas. Some of these fall within Education while others have wider implications, such as disability issues. Since users of this resource may read Booklets in isolation, some key points may be repeated.

Unless otherwise stated, initiatives, tools and materials relate to practice in England, but the good practice encapsulated is universal.

This Booklet contains a list of Resources but opens with the Context of prison reform.

**Research Study** showing prevalence of Specific Learning Difficulties in Offenders


This study (by the Learning & Skills Council and Dyslexia Action) investigated Dyslexia and related conditions in a number of prisons.

**Conclusion:** 52% have literacy difficulties, just under 20% have a hidden disability (i.e. Specific Learning Difficulty) affecting learning & employment.

**Author Profile**

Melanie Jameson is a freelance consultant, trainer and assessor. She works across the criminal justice system, conveying the impact of dyslexia and related conditions through awareness training, materials development and committee work with government agencies and departments.

The resources developed in the course of her work are freely available via the website [www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk](http://www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk)

Readers are encouraged to feed back suggestions for inclusion in later revisions, via the Dyslexia Malvern website.
RESOURCES for Specific Learning Difficulties

1. The Context

The key Ministry of Justice document on the new Prison Education System for Adults in England (2018) refers to **12 mandatory requirements** that prison governors will need to ensure are delivered, either by prison staff or education service providers. These are described as falling ‘into two broad categories:
1) a minimum bar for education provision we expect to be delivered and
2) actions that will ensure the coherence of the system’.
A number of these requirements, quoted below, relate to (Specific) Learning Difficulties

1) **Minimum delivery expectations include:**
- screening of sentenced prisoners’ learning difficulties and/or disabilities on first reception or other occasion where one has not been undertaken
- education providers’ staff, and those prison staff who deliver learning, to be appropriately trained and qualified to develop and meet the additional support needs of prisoners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD);
- all prison information, forms and digital systems to be available and/or designed with suitable to support those with dyslexia.

2) **Our system coherence requirements are:**
- recording of maths and English assessment results, LDD screening, and all education-related inputs and outcomes

*Quoted sections follow subheading Protecting and advancing the principles of justice*

2. Publications on Aspects of Specific Learning Difficulties

www.autism.org.uk

**Conduct Disorder & Offending Behaviour in Young People** Liabo & Richardson (2007) Jessica Kingsley Publishers

www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk/docs/justice/Coping With Courts & Tribunals.pdf

E-guidelines series NIACE publications www.niace.org.uk/publications, in particular:
E-guidelines 3: Developing e-learning materials
E-guidelines 7: Attracting and Motivating new learners with ICT
E-guidelines 9: Supporting adult learners with dyslexia: Harnessing the power of technology

Education and Training for Offenders T Uden (2003) NIACE

How to Succeed in Employment with Specific Learning Difficulties Amanda Kirby (2013) Souvenir Press Ltd


Improving the literacy and numeracy of disaffected young people in custody and the community National Research and Development Centre (2010) https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/21954/1/doc_4688.pdf


Making the Curriculum Work for Dyslexic Learners J Lee (2002)


On-line learning and social exclusion A Clarke (2002) NIACE


Sentence Trouble The Communication Trust www.sentencetrouble.info


Interactive resources on Literacy, Numeracy, ESOL & IT are available from the Excellence Gateway archive www.excellencegateway.org.uk/interactive-resources AND Education and Training Foundation www.etfoundation.co.uk
3. Specific Learning Difficulties and Disability Networks

a) Specific Learning Difficulties

**Autism / Asperger Syndrome**

**Attention Hyperactivity Deficit Disorder**
Adult Attention Deficit Disorder–UK (AADD-UK) [www.aadduk.org](http://www.aadduk.org)
Attention Deficit Disorder Information Services: ADDISS [www.addiss.co.uk](http://www.addiss.co.uk)
ADHD Solutions [www.adhdsolutions.org.uk](http://www.adhdsolutions.org.uk/)

**Dyscalculia**
[www.aboutdyscalculia.org](http://www.aboutdyscalculia.org)
[www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexic/maths-difficulties-dyscalculia](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexic/maths-difficulties-dyscalculia)

**Dyslexia**
British Dyslexia Association [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)
Dyslexia Assessment & Consultancy [www.workingwithdyslexia.com](http://www.workingwithdyslexia.com)
Dyslexia Foundation (North West) [www.dyslexia-help.org](http://www.dyslexia-help.org)
Dyslexia Scotland [www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk)
The Cascade Foundation [www.thecascadefoundation.org](http://www.thecascadefoundation.org)

**Dyspraxia**
Dyspraxia Foundation [www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk](http://www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk)
Dyspraxia UK [www.dyspraxiauk.com](http://www.dyspraxiauk.com)

**Specific Learning Difficulties (overall)**
AchieveAbility [www.achieveability.org.uk](http://www.achieveability.org.uk)
Dyscovery Centre (resources / research & training on a range of SpLDs) [www.dyscovery.info/](http://www.dyscovery.info/)

‘Resources section’ of Dyslexia Consultancy Malvern includes relevant materials under the following headings: Adults (including Ten Tips, Ten Steps), Tutors, Employment, Justice and Vision [www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk/resources](http://www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk/resources)

**SpLD Workplace Strategy Coaching**
Genius Within [https://www.geniuswithin.co.uk/](https://www.geniuswithin.co.uk/)
Lexxic Ltd [www.lexxic.com](http://www.lexxic.com) On-line coaching sessions - *Neurotalent Unlocked*

**Communication Issues**
The Communication Trust [www.communicationtrust](http://www.communicationtrust)
Visual Stress
Cerium Visual Technologies www.ceriumoptical.com
Society For Coloured Lens Practitioners www.s4cip.org

Assistive technology

Guide Supporting People with Learning Disability & Learning Challenges (LDC)
Powerpoint Toolkit: Making services work for people with LDC (both HMPPS, 2019)

b) Disability Networks and Support
Business Disability Forum https://businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/
Disability Rights UK www.disabilityrightsuk.org
Disability Law Service www.dls.org.uk
Dyslexia Box (Assistive Technology and disability support specialists)
https://dyslexiabox.co.uk/ and https://dyslexiabox.co.uk/pages/workplace
Equality & Human Rights Commission - Advisory Service: www.equalityhumanrights.com
Mental Health Foundation www.mentalhealth.org.uk
Mind www.mind.org.uk
The Care and Treatment of Offenders with a Learning Disability network
www.ldoffenders.co.uk
The Centre for Mental Health www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk

4. Organisations, Materials & Courses referred to in these BOOKLETS
Access to Work www.gov.uk/access-to-work
Change, Grow, Live www.changegrowlive.org
Crossbow reading rulers www.crossboweducation.com
Get Set For Success, Learning & Work Institute (developed in 2014)
Language Behind Bars www.LBB-Project.eu
http://lbb-project.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/End_Materials/EN/Languages_Behind_Bars.pdf
London Shakespeare Workout www.lswproductions.co.uk
Mindmapping www.mindmapping.com and www.thinkbuzan.com/
Prison Phoenix Trust www.prisonphoenixtrust.org.uk
Reading Pen www.readerpen.com/
Shannon Trust www.shannontrust.org.uk
Stretch Charity (Digital Storytelling) www.stretch-charity.org
Touch-type, Read & Spell www.readandspell.com
Transition to Adulthood (T2A) Alliance . www.t2a.org.uk
Unlock www.unlock.org.uk
Wayout TV www.wayout.tv/brochure.pdf
Women in Prison www.womeninprison.org.uk

Prisoner Learning Alliance: https://prisonerlearningalliance.org.uk

European Prison Education Association www.epea.org now extends beyond Europe
5. Screening Tools

**Autism Quotient Test** (on-line)  [https://www.wired.com/2001/12/aqtest/](https://www.wired.com/2001/12/aqtest/)
Information on assessment of autism / Asperger Syndrome from [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

**Do-IT Profiler** [www.doitprofiler.com](http://www.doitprofiler.com)

**Dyscalculia on-line screener and checklist:**
[http://dyscalculia-screener.co.uk/](http://dyscalculia-screener.co.uk/)  discounts for multiple screenings

**Dyslexia Adult Screening Test (DAST)** The Psychological Corporation  [www.pearsonclinical.co.uk](http://www.pearsonclinical.co.uk)

**LADs Plus** (Lucid Adult Dyslexia Screening)
[https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/products/lucid-lads-plus/](https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/products/lucid-lads-plus/)

**QUICKSCAN** [https://qsdyslexiatest.com/](https://qsdyslexiatest.com/)

**Spot Your Potential** British Dyslexia Association  [www.spot-your-potential.com](http://www.spot-your-potential.com)

**Visual Stress** [http://www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk/visualstress](http://www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk/visualstress)

6. Promoting Accessibility – a wider perspective

Moving beyond the support needs of people with Specific Learning Difficulties, there is the wider consideration of how to enable prisoners who are disadvantaged in various ways to cope better. This could entail modifying certain procedures, better sharing of information, improved communication and encouraging prisoners to articulate their needs. Assisting ‘way-finding’ through colour-coded strips along the corridors has been implemented at HMP Whatton, and found to be helpful.

Prisoners with Learning Disabilities, head injuries, lack of education and/or limited English would all benefit from these approaches. Building on work by the HMPPS Evidence and Service Improvement Team, I have devised a self-assessment audit checklist along with supporting information (omitting ergonomic and physical factors which are beyond my expertise). Having presented this approach at the 2019 European Prison Education Association conference, I am now disseminating it in the UK.

The self-assessment audit is reproduced overleaf. This document, and a powerpoint sequence with examples and further details, can be downloaded freely from [www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk](http://www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk)

The purpose of completing the audit is to identify what staff are already doing well and where attention is needed. The overall aim is the promotion of ‘enabling accessible environments’, leading to better outcomes.
**SELF-ASSESSMENT AUDIT OF <ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL> IN OUR PRISONS**

*Please complete this Audit with colleagues from different departments in your establishment*

**This exercise will help identify what you are already doing well and where further attention may be needed**

**AIMS:** To promote ‘enabling, accessible environments’ ~ To identify & share Good Practice

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<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>IN P A R T</th>
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<td>1. Screening and Assessment processes (Education, Healthcare, Resettlement) highlight support needs of prisoners</td>
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<td>2. This information is readily available to all staff who need to access it</td>
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<td>3. We have a clear referral route for further specialist assessment and know what to do</td>
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<td>4. We record, share, monitor and update information on prisoner support needs</td>
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<td>5. Staff are aware of good practice in Mental Health; Learning Disabilities; Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulties; Language and Communication issues</td>
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<td>6. Staff have flexibility to offer differentiated learning, in order to accommodate difficulties</td>
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<td>7. Formal processes / disciplinary procedures etc. take account of support needs</td>
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<td>8. It is easy for prisoners to find their way around our buildings</td>
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<td>9. Notices and learning materials are written in an accessible way (and backed up by images)</td>
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<td>10. We take care that our spoken communications are clear and unambiguous</td>
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<td>11. Prisoners are encouraged to share their skills and develop their expertise</td>
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<td>12. We work well with partners and senior management to improve outcomes for prisoners</td>
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<td>13. We encourage prisoners to articulate their needs and take account of their feedback</td>
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<td>14. Our establishment allows time and opportunity to share ‘what works’ across the prison</td>
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<td>15. Our culture supports us when we try new ways of doing things</td>
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Ref: 1 SpLD PRISON Intro - Resources