

## **MELANIE JAMESON: PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

### **Initial Qualifications and Work pre-2000**

- BA in Modern Languages (French, German and Russian), Bristol 1975.
- Prison education tutor (HMP Highpoint, HMP Horfield, Lancaster Farms YOI).
- RSA Diploma in Specific Learning Difficulties 1991.
- Associate Member of the British Dyslexia Association 1996.
- Numerous assessments of SpLD children, FE and HE students and adults (both privately and clients of the Employment Service). CPD for teachers accredited by Lancaster University.
- Consultancy (usually comprising training, development of materials, advice on disability policy) for: Home Office, Prison Education Services in Northern Ireland and Scotland, Law Society, College of Law, RAF Cosford, Trade Unions and various Probation Services.
- Dyslexia assessments at YOI Lancaster Farms resulted in the creation of an offenders checklist for Dyslexia and Visual Stress; this has since been widely distributed and 'written into' documentation produced by the Northern Ireland and Scottish Prison Education Services.

### **Work undertaken from 2000 relating to Offenders / the Justice System**

- By 2000 all work incorporated the family of Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dyspraxia, Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder and Asperger Syndrome).
- Expert witness work was undertaken with submissions and court appearances on behalf of adults with Specific Learning Difficulties.
- A number of briefings were provided on criminal justice issues for House of Lords debates (via Lord Addington).

2000

- Speaker at the International Dyslexia Association Conference, Washington.
- Project for the Greater Manchester Probation Service on dyslexia as a factor in breached orders. Entailed materials production and training for probation officers and ETE workers.
- CPD has since been provided for several local probation services.
- Invited to join the DfES Skills for Life *Dyslexia Reference/Advisory Group*.

2001

- Training delivered to Manchester City College (which holds the majority of prison education contracts) including a whole day event for prison tutors.
- Presented at the Adult Dyslexia Organisation *Dyslexia and Offending* conference.

2002

- Work with College of Law on provisions for LPC and PgDL students with dyslexia, followed by staff training and a revision of disability policy.

2003

- Meeting with Home Office Minister Hilary Benn and the Offenders Learning and Skills Unit to bring forward concerns about dyslexia and the criminal justice system.
- Regional and international presentations on *Promoting a Positive Image of Specific*

## *Learning Difficulties.*

2004

- Meeting with the Department for Constitutional Affairs on diversity and equality issues in the courts and, internally, to discuss good practice relating to their own organisation. Development and piloting of my *Dyslexia in Prisons / Dyslexia and Probation* training courses.

2005

- Lead writer for the Offending Strand of the distance learning Skills for Life project: *Supporting Dyslexic Learners in Different Contexts.*

2006

- Delivery of *Dyslexia and Probation* to West Mercia and Suffolk Probation Services.

2007

- Author of a good practice guide on supporting dyslexic offenders in e-learning (part of the *E-Enabling Offender Learning and Skills* initiative). Presentation on this topic at the International Conference of the European Prison Education Association.
- Presentation at Disability Rights Commission (DRC) and Developmental Adult Neurodiversity Association (DANDA) conferences on *Specific Learning Difficulties and the Courts.*
- Published articles on this subject, commissioned by PATOSS (Professional Association of Tutors of Specific Learning Difficulties) and the British Dyslexia Association.
- Fed into the Ministry of Justice's Diversity Equality Scheme via meetings, facilitating a disability focus group and contributing to their consultation.

2008

- Presentation to the Equal Treatment Advisory Committee of the Judicial Studies Board (JSB): *Raising Awareness of Specific Learning Differences in the Justice System.*
- Commission from the JSB's Equal Treatment Advisory Committee to produce a section on Specific Learning Difficulties for the judicial *Equal Treatment Bench Book* and *Fairness in Courts & Tribunals.*
- Production of script for a training DVD for the judiciary on Specific Learning Difficulties.
- Attended the UNESCO Human Rights Conference (Paris, Sept 08).
- Provision of CPD for the NE Law Group, Leeds.
- Liaison with Equality and Diversity Officers in the Bar Council and Law Society to provide information, to be followed up with further collaboration.
- Celebration of my justice work for DANDA at a House of Commons event with Maria Eagle.

2009

- DANDA meeting with Maria Eagle to raise issues of concern and discuss areas of collaboration with the Ministry of Justice.
- Meetings with NOMS and the HMCS Equality Unit to work on equality and diversity issues.
- Provision of training for HMCS Disability Contact Officers in London.

- Workshops at Parole Board and Learning Disabilities & Offending annual conferences.
- Production of Guide: *Good Practice for Justice Professionals* relating to Specific Learning Difficulties (in collaboration with the British Dyslexia Association), published Aug 2009.
- Keynote Speaker at the Thessoloniki Dyslexia Conference on supporting adults with dyslexia and good practice for lawyers and the judiciary.
- Input in the pilot of the Advanced Judicial Skills course for Tribunal judges (November).

2010

- Presentation to the Learning Disabled Offenders Steering Group.
- Continued liaison with HMCS Equality Unit regarding Reasonable Adjustments in the courts and the provision of good quality information on SpLDs for HMCS staff.
- Invited speaker at the annual conference of Community & Diversity Relations Judges.
- Presentation at the NACRO/YJB annual conference.
- Half day CPD for the Crown Prosecution Service.
- Invited speaker at the annual day conference of the National Network of Appropriate Adults.
- Contributed to the revision of two documents:  
*Positive Practice Positive Outcomes: the training manual on awareness of/support for offenders with Learning Difficulties / Hidden Disabilities*  
*Young People with Learning Disabilities and Learning Difficulties in the Criminal Courts*

### **Special interests**

- Visual Stress & best practice in making materials accessible to people with dyslexia.
- Approaches to Screening and Assessment.
- Promoting an understanding of abilities associated with Specific Learning Difficulties, as well as ways of accommodating areas of difficulty.

### **Committee work and affiliations**

- Former Education Adviser then Special Adviser to the Adult Dyslexia Organisation.
- Member of the (then) Home Office / DfES Prisoners' Learning & Skills Unit Dyslexia Focus Group.
- Member of the National Working Party on Dyslexia in Higher Education and DfES working group on Disabled Students Allowance.
- Member of DfES Dyslexia Advisory Group overseeing dyslexia component of Skills for Life.
- Committee Member of the Quakers in Criminal Justice Group and the Crime, Community & Justice Group.
- Member of the European Prison Education Association.
- Special Adviser to DANDA (a national user-led charity for adults with Specific Learning Difficulties).
- Chair of the Worcester & Hereford branch of Patoss.
- Member of Autism West Midlands.