



# **Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Trá Lí**

## **Institute of Technology Tralee**

# **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**For Students with Learning  
Difference including Students with  
Dyslexia**



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**This handbook is intended to provide key information about support for Students with Learning Difference. For further information or explanation feel free to contact:**

**Siobhan Mac Garry, Officer for Students with Learning Difference.**

## 1. OUTLINE

IT Tralee welcomes students with learning difference onto all its courses. A confidential service is available to students with dyslexia, dyspraxia (DCD), dysgraphia, ADD/ADHD, ASD/Asperger's syndrome, borderline mild general learning difficulties, acquired brain injury, specific language disorder or any other recognised learning difference. It is fully understood that individual students with learning difference have different needs and so each student is considered as an individual with his or her own learning history. Students can be confident that this is a fully confidential service; information will be communicated to lecturers / support personnel only with the student's consent.

I.T.Tralee provides students with learning difference with the in-house expertise of a dedicated Officer who is available to assess student needs, mentor and liaise on their behalf and offer guidance to lecturing staff and other personnel involved in course delivery.

While the Institute will do its utmost to assist students who declare dyslexia or any other specific learning difficulty or learning difference, the financial resources available to the Institute for that purpose are limited and no guarantee can be given that any particular assistance will be available.

### ***Range of services available***

- Needs Assessment.
- Individual Learning Requirement Document (ILR).
- Advice on effective strategies for learning.
- Study skills sessions and guidance in accessing supports provided by Academic Departments.
- Academic writing skills development training.
- Possible referral for additional tuition where identified through needs assessment.
- Examination accommodations.
- Mentoring.
- Liaison with teaching and administrative staff.
- Screening.
- Applications for the European Social Funding for Students with Disabilities (ESF Fund).
- Referrals for training in assistive technology, both hard and software.
- Referral to external specialists.
- Photocopying arrangements.
- Library arrangements.

## 2. WHO SHOULD CONTACT THE OFFICER FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCE?

Students who have documentation concerning a specific learning difficulty, a learning difference or a borderline mild general learning difficulty should make early contact with the Service. It is important that students submit reports regarding their learning profile **in advance of** meeting with the Officer for Students with learning Difference.

The following table identifies the appropriate professional whose reports are acceptable as evidence of disability for students with learning difference wishing to register with the Service:

Dyslexia/Dyscalculia	Psychologist
Dyspraxia - (D.C.D)/ Dysgraphia	Psychologist <b><u>and</u></b> Occupational Therapist or Neurologist or Chartered Physiotherapist.
Specific Language Disorder	Speech and Language Therapist.
ADD/ADHD.	Consultant Psychiatrist or Psychologist or Neurologist or Paediatrician.
ASD/Asperger's Syndrome	Consultant Psychiatrist or Psychologist or Neurologist or Paediatrician.
Acquired Brain Injury or any other condition impacting on cognitive activity.	Neurologist or other relevant Consultant
Borderline Mild General Learning Disability	Psychologist

Students with **dyslexia** who intend applying for college through the CAO route who have reports that are written more than 5 years ago should provide a completed Educational Impact Statement (as required for the CAO DARE route) **in addition to** their original psycho-educational report.

Students coming from other educational settings should provide a letter of referral from their last place of education. This letter should outline the nature of their learning difference and how it has impacted on their ability to progress, the supports provided and the reasonable accommodations allocated to them. Where possible this letter should provide standard score results of literacy testing completed in recent years. The student **should also submit** their original psycho-educational report.

Mature students who are not coming from an educational setting and who do not have documentation will be considered on a case by case basis. Please be aware that students without formal documentation will have a waiting period before they can be allocated an initial meeting time to discuss their situation.

The Institute provides a limited screening service for students who are concerned that they may have dyslexia. For more information about the screening service please consult see the Screening Handbook in Appendix 1.

### **3. NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND THE INDIVIDUAL LEARNING REQUIREMENT DOCUMENT.**

#### Needs Assessment.

In order to register as a student with learning difference, students are required to undergo a needs assessment interview. At this meeting the student's learning history will be looked at in terms of the difficulties and strengths they have experienced along the way. It is vital that a copy of the student's documentation is presented before this meeting, as it will serve as a reference point to guide the meeting. Academic demands will be considered in the light of the student's difficulties and guidance will be offered regarding how individual student needs can best be accommodated. The student will be directed towards the supports available within the Institute and reasonable accommodations and possible additional support needs will be identified and documented. Allocated examination accommodation requests will be forwarded to the Examinations Office following this meeting.

Please follow the links below which will take you to a set of videos which describe the needs assessment process:

**Video ONE.** Students with Learning Difference - How to **set up** a Needs Assessment Meeting <https://youtu.be/9Humh9w5dIY> .

**Video TWO.** Students with Learning Difference - What happens **at** the Needs Assessment Meeting <https://youtu.be/fBcE8kH1PFo>.

**Video THREE.** Students with Learning Difference - What to do **after** the Needs Assessment Meeting. [https://youtu.be/uWFYV\\_daSkM](https://youtu.be/uWFYV_daSkM)

### Individual Learning Requirement Document.

The Individual Learning Requirement Document (ILR) will be drawn up at the final stage of the needs assessment meeting. This document outlines the agreed information which the student wishes to share with lecturers involved in their course delivery. All lecturers involved with the student can view the ILR document through a confidential link on the internal communication system within the Institute. Relevant lecturers receive notice of student ILR documents at the opening of each new semester. Heads of Department are also notified regarding student ILR documents.

## **Students registered on Nursing programmes**

### Clinical Needs Assessment

In addition to the above, students registered on Nursing programmes will be invited to an interview with the Officer for Students with Learning Difference and a representative from both the Nursing Department and the Clinical Placement site. The purpose of this meeting will be to assist the student in identifying possible areas where additional guidance/ practice time may be helpful on clinical placement. During this meeting the skills required for clinical placement will be considered in the light of the student's profile and recommendations which best accommodate the student's learning needs will be made.

### Practice Learning Plan

The agreed recommendations will be noted on a Practice Learning Plan (P.L.P.). This document will be signed by the student and circulated to those involved in supporting the student on clinical placement. The purpose of the Practice Learning Plan is to communicate the agreed plan and clarify where student and staff responsibilities lie for those involved in the training experience on the clinical placement site. Students will find this document helpful as it will open the door for them to discuss their progress with training staff on placement in a confidential and informed manner.

## **Preparation for Work Placement**

Students on all other programmes are encouraged to advance prepare themselves for work placement through discussions with their placement Co-ordinator and, where required, through sessions with the Officer for Students with Learning Difference. Where necessary, a referral can be made for an assistive technology assessment to identify possible technical support which could be implemented in the work place. It is the student's responsibility to contact the Officer for Students with Learning Difference if they require advice or support on any matter concerning work placement.

#### **4. SUPPORT FOR MANAGEMENT OF COURSE MATERIALS AND FULFILLMENT OF ACADEMIC ASSIGNMENTS.**

Students will be guided on how to access course supports made available by lecturers on Blackboard and My Docs. In addition, students will be encouraged to access any support tutorials made available to them by their Academic Departments. Students will be provided with direction towards any online study skills suite available to the student body on Blackboard.

Students registered with the Service may also access support sessions which cover such areas as:

- Academic reading skills – in conjunction with assistive technology training.
- Proof reading training – in conjunction with assistive technology training.
- Referencing skills.
- Support with interpretation of an assignment brief.

A tutor can assist the student in interpreting the written instructions and directions given by the lecturer regarding their assignment to ensure that the student is clear as to the nature of work they have to undertake.

Study skills support can include:

- Identification of learning style and appropriate learning strategies.
- Time management.
- Note taking skills.
- Approach to background reading.
- Essay writing.
- Memorisation techniques.
- Examination performance technique.
- Academic Support Referral:

Where a student is experiencing significant subject specific difficulties, the Service Provider can refer them to their Head of Department and work with the Head of Department and the module lecturer in identifying how best support the student's academic need.

- Additional Tuition: There may be situations where a student's disability impacts on them in such a manner that they are unable to keep pace with the class group despite full attendance and engagement with all class supports. Such students may be eligible for a limited number of individual additional tuition sessions so that they can progress with the class group.

## 5. EXAMINATION ACCOMMODATIONS

The Institute offers a range of examination accommodations and appropriate examination accommodations will be discussed with the student at their needs assessment meeting. Students are advised that there may be some difference in the examination accommodations available at third level from accommodations available for second level state examinations.

**Please Note: The Institute does not provide alternative venues for practical examinations. Additional time and reading support may be provided within the main examination centre for practical examinations.**

- **Extra time.** Extra time is allocated at the rate of 10 minutes per scheduled hour for students where the assessment report provides valid evidence of a processing speed delay. Extra time at the rate of 15 minutes per scheduled hour is allowed for students who are allocated reading support in separate/alternative venues or who avail of a scribe in a separate centre. A maximum of 20 minutes per scheduled hour can be allocated to a student in particular circumstances where full justification exists. Rest breaks of 5 minutes per scheduled hour may also be allocated where a documented need is identified. No individual student may exceed extra time at 20 minutes per scheduled hour for any examination.
- **Alternative venue with reading support.** This is a group venue available to students who match criteria for reading support; students are permitted to request reading support from the invigilator throughout the examination.
- **Scribe.** A scribe can be allocated to a student where the student needs meet the criteria for this accommodation. This will be discussed with the student at their needs assessment meeting. The scribe may write all or part of the student's answer script and read back the script to the student as required. The Scribe may also double up as a Reader of the examination paper, where the service of a Reader is approved. The Institute guides students who previously availed of a tape-recorder for state examinations towards the option of use of a scribe. The Institute strongly recommends that students consider the use of assistive technology - **Dragon Naturally Speaking** - as an alternative to scribe support for exams. Suitable candidates are offered training and the loan of equipment to facilitate this transition to assistive technology.



- **Computer.** Where recommended in appropriate reports, students may be offered the opportunity to complete exams on a computer. Only students who have the required typing speeds are advised to avail of this accommodation.
- **Considerate marking.** Lecturers are requested to extend considerate marking to the examination scripts of approved students produced under timed examination conditions. Where applying considerate marking the lecturer must be satisfied that the student has demonstrated clear understanding of the learning outcomes under examination. This reasonable accommodation does not apply to assignments completed outside of timed examination conditions. Students presenting prepared written work as part of continuous assessment evaluation **are expected** to proofread their scripts before they submit for correction. **It is not acceptable to submit first draft, un-proof read essays/research papers for correction.** Students are offered training in proof reading skills and soft wares to assist with development of their proof reading skills. A student may be advised by their lecturer to contact the Support Service to avail of software training to assist with proof reading skills if they notice persistent errors in the student's written work. In addition, students may attend for general academic writing support if there are concerns that their written work is not meeting academic requirements.

Considerate marking does not apply where accuracy of a language is under examination – e.g. a modern language.

The Institute will endeavour to facilitate accommodations requested provided they are reasonable and have valid documentary support.

## 6. ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

A wide range of assistive technology is available to students for the duration of their course. Training in assistive technology is organised by Support Services in conjunction with ATAC – the Assistive Technology Training and Assessment Centre - based in the University of Limerick, with outreach hours in I.T.Tralee. Some students take to technology instantly but some students are a little fearful. The Institute will work to support students in their use of assistive technology through initial training and ongoing support. Training is made available to students through the academic year and may involve group or individual sessions, depending on the student's needs. Students are advised of training sessions on offer by e-mail. **It is extremely important for students to check their e-mail regularly – if they do not do so, they may miss out on training opportunities.**

The Following is a list of assistive technology for which training is provided to students:

- **Digital Down-Loadable Recorder.** The Institute has a strict policy in place around the recording of lectures. Students will be advised regarding this policy at their needs assessment meeting. The digital down loadable recorder can be a handy tool which the student can use outside the lecture situation when attending study groups or in one to one tutoring situations. Students must always seek permission from all parties involved prior to recording. In addition, students with strong auditory learning preferences are encouraged to make their own digital recordings summarising course work – these can be downloaded and listened to while engaging in other activities, to assist learning. Use of the recorder can help facilitate over-learning, which most students with dyslexia are advised to practice.
- **Hand Held Thesaurus:** An electronic desktop dictionary and thesaurus for students challenged by the nature of vocabulary required for his/her course work. This has proven a most useful tool for students and serves to ease the challenge of learning new vocabulary.
- **Text Help Read/Write Gold** is a software providing a toolbar which allows text to be scanned and read aloud. It will read both word documents and material on the internet, aid with pronunciation, provide various dictionary type supports and speak in a range of voices. In addition, this software provides study skills support and can greatly assist research skills. Students love the fact that they can convert typed notes to MP3 using this software. Text Help is networked within the Institute - any student can access it and can use it in any lab/ library provided they have headphones.
- **Dragon Naturally Speaking:** This voice activated dictation system is constantly improving with updates. This package enables the computer to type material spoken by the student. Use of such a system requires a commitment of approximately six weeks to train the computer to the student's voice. This is a disadvantage to many students who require support instantly. However suitable candidates are advised of the possibilities of this software for their long-term progress through college and any request for its use will be facilitated provided funding is approved for the particular student.
- **Inspiration:** A mind-mapping package that can be very helpful for students attempting to organise their thoughts for essay writing. This package can also act as an aid for summarising lecture notes and revision notes. Often students with dyslexia/ learning difference are holistic thinkers, this package helps them sort out their thoughts and build logical structure to their thinking.

- **Live Scribe Pen:** The Live Scribe Pen is a device which operates as a pen but also has a recording facility on it. Using a specialised notepad, a student may record part of their lecture where they are aware that they are not managing to effectively note take. After the lecture the student may listen back to the recording by placing the Live Scribe pen on the appropriate spot on the page of their lecture notes. Users of the Live Scribe pen are subject to the Institute Protocol for Recording Lectures.
- **ORATO:** A free text read software which the student can use at home to support course reading and to support proof reading of their written work.
- **Grammarly:** A free version of this software can be used in conjunction with Microsoft word as a grammar aid.

See Sections 11 and 13 for further information about licensed and free soft wares.

## 7. FUNDING

The Institute may apply for ESF funding for students with a specific learning difficulty or any other learning difference. Funding is available from the European Social Fund for Students with Disabilities (ESF Fund) which is administered through the Higher Education Authority (HEA). The HEA issues guidelines each September outlining criteria for eligibility for the ESF fund. The Institute will guide students as to whether they match funding criteria during their registration with the Disability Services. The Officer for Students with Learning Difference will facilitate an application for funding for students who match criteria.

### **What is involved in accessing the ESF fund?**

The student undergoes a needs assessment facilitated by the Officer for Students with Learning Difference. The information discussed and support decisions made are drawn up in a document and signed by both the student and the Officer for Students with Learning Difference. The Officer for Students with Learning Difference enters the student's name on the ESF application list which is forwarded to the HEA. The HEA will allocate funding to the Institute which can then be used to provide support for listed students. Amounts allocated by the HEA are subject to external economic factors and HEA decision making. Supports accessed through allocated funding are co-ordinated by the Officer for Students with Learning Difference in conjunction with the Access Office.

### **What can the Fund support?**

- Academic Writing support – through software training and skills development sessions.
- Study skills support.
- Possible additional tuition.

- Mentoring support.
- Photo-copying /printing allowance.
- Assistive technology – possible loans of equipment and software.

### **Does the Institute apply for funding each year?**

Once a student has been approved for ESF funded support they may continue to benefit from ESF funded support for the duration of their course.



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### **I.T. Tralee Disability Fund**

In some circumstances, due to issues with documentation or other valid reasons, students do not meet the criteria for E.S.F. funding. The Institute has allocated some limited funding to furnish supports to students in this situation. Allocation of this fund is co-ordinated by the Officer for Students with Learning Difference in conjunction with the Access Office.

## **8. TIPS ON HOW TO HANDLE COURSE WORK**

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance is essential for all students wishing to progress through their course. The tips and guidelines outlined below will only be effective if the student is attending class.

### **Lectures**

A good set of notes is the key to success in your course work.

- Attend support sessions and check out online training guides and videos to equip yourself with good note taking skills.
- Log in to useful study skills sites to pick up note making tips. (See chapter 11)
- Access any notes available on Blackboard/My Docs before the lecture begins.
- Check out the many multimedia materials which lecturers may make available on Blackboard/My Docs to support understanding of class content.
- Fellow students may be able to assist with good quality notes. Use your photocopying allowance to copy additional course material.
- Return to your lecture notes within 48 hours and re-work them, summarising key points and key examples.

- If experiencing significant difficulties, discuss your situation with the Officer for Students with Learning Difference to examine all available options.

### **Organisation**

- Use separate folders for different subjects.
- Date every set of lecture notes.
- Use colour coding to mark clear differences between subjects and within subjects.
- Use a wall planner to mark important dates for assessments and exams.
- Keep a notebook to log queries, thoughts and reminders.

### **Reading**

- Get familiar with the assistive technology available to support reading of difficult texts – be sure to attend any training sessions offered.
- If you experience dazzle or visual confusion experiment with different coloured transparencies on top of your text to see if they steady the print for you. Make an appointment to see the Officer for Students with Learning Difference who may be able to assist you in selecting the best colours for your needs. Experiment with different backgrounds and font types/colours when using the computer.
- Attend support sessions on effective reading strategies and note making from reading.
- Seek guidance from lecturers as to the key texts on the reading list.
- Ask a friend or family member to read text aloud and make a recording. Make use of Text Help Read /Write Gold to create digital recordings of revision notes.

### **Essays**

- Attend writing support sessions.
- Avail of assistive technology.
- Time plan work to allow for extra re-working of written drafts.
- Compile written answers in numbered sentences to help build up order and structure at the draft stage. These can be converted to more formal writing at a later stage.
- In some cases, lecturers will give guidance/feedback if you present a draft essay or essay plan. You can check with your lecturer whether this is a support that they are prepared to offer. Please do not submit draft work to your lecturer without checking that this is appropriate.
- Allow time for proof reading and rewriting.
- Proof read twice – once for meaning, the second time for spelling and grammar.
- Proof reading strategies can be acquired through sessions with a support tutor.
- Ask for lecturer feedback on your submitted assignment – you can learn so much from this feedback which could give you focus next time you have to write an essay.

## **Memory**

- Attend study skills sessions that will help you identify your learning style. Memorisation strategies can then be learnt which best suit you eg. Pegging, Mnemonics, Visualisation, Coding etc.
- Check out the websites suggested in Chapter 11 for memorisation techniques.

## **9. DISABILITY REPRESENTATIVES**

Within our student body we have Disability Representatives who are very happy to assist students in settling into Institute life. These students can help with getting to know surroundings and they can fill in the gaps with regard to the many instructions given in the first few weeks. In addition, these Disability Representatives will be happy to work on a one to one basis helping students to master e-mail and the use of printers and how to access Blackboard/ My Docs for lecture notes.

Disability Representatives work in conjunction with the Students' Union and Student Services to ensure students with any form of disability are represented in student matters. If you would like to know more about the Disability Representatives contact the Officer for Students with Learning Difference who has further information and can put you in touch.

## **10. Disability Resource Rooms**

Room Q114 North Campus

Room A124 South Campus

Disability Resource Room in the library North Campus.

Well-equipped Resource Rooms are available on both campuses. These rooms are equipped with computers loaded with the soft wares listed below as well as a printer and a scanner. If any student requires additional specific software, every effort will be made to install it. The Resource Rooms offer students a quiet space where they have access to all available technology to support their studies. Students can book these rooms by contacting the Support Services Office in the North Campus. Access to the Disability Resource Room in the Library is via a coded keypad. Students registered with the Service will have access as the keypad will recognise their T numbers.

Access to the Disability Resource Room in the Q block and in the South Campus is via a coded keypad. Students will be advised of this code when they book a time slot.

To book time in the Resource Rooms send an e-mail to:

**[Supportservices@ittralee.ie](mailto:Supportservices@ittralee.ie)**



## 11. Softwares Available in the Institute to Support Reading, Writing and Study Skills.

The list below names the soft wares available for student use within the Institute. Training is available in all soft wares through our visiting trainer Conor Hartigan (A.T.A.C. - U.L), see Section 6 of this handbook. In addition to the training available students can check out the following training videos which demonstrate features of the soft wares.

Please note all links below will be updated August 2017 – Please check the online version of this Handbook for the updated links.

### Text Help Read and Write Gold (available on all Institute computers)

Assists with: Reading, Proofreading, Memory & referencing

- Website: <http://www.texthelp.com/UK>
- YouTube Training Videos:  
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvSZbmGbKpCTBXiXz2me8QF4Gfcsz7LTz>
- Reading Feature/Proof Reading feature:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nS4b3\\_IbX34&list=PLvSZbmGbKpCTBXiXz2me8QF4Gfcsz7LTz&index=13](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nS4b3_IbX34&list=PLvSZbmGbKpCTBXiXz2me8QF4Gfcsz7LTz&index=13)
- Memory assistance = Speech Maker:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4g41O5J-kNk&list=PLvSZbmGbKpCTBXiXz2me8QF4Gfcsz7LTz&index=14>
- Referencing Feature = Fact Folder:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4IUNMAIcM0&list=PLvSZbmGbKpCTBXiXz2me8QF4Gfcsz7LTz&index=22>

### Inspiration Mind Mapping Software (available in the Disability Resource Rooms)

Assists with: Memory & Organisation of thought

- Website: <http://www.inspiration.com/>
- Training Videos: <http://www.inspiration.com/training/individual>
- Support Manuals:  
[http://www.inspiration.com/Start9#Getting\\_Started\\_-\\_other](http://www.inspiration.com/Start9#Getting_Started_-_other)
- Memory assistance: <https://www.youtube.com/Memory>
- Organisation of thought: [http://www.youtube.com/Inspiration Organising Thoughts](http://www.youtube.com/Inspiration_Organising_Thoughts)

### Dragon Naturally Speaking (Available in the Disability Resource Rooms)

Assists with: Writing/Inputting Text

- Website: <http://www.nuance.co.uk/for-individuals/by-product/dragon-for-pc/home-version/index.htm>

- b. YouTube Training Videos: <http://www.nuance.co.uk/for-individuals/by-product/dragon-for-pc/how-to-demos/index.htm>
- c. Support Manuals: [http://www.nuance.co.uk/ucmprod/groups/dragon/@web-enus/documents/collateral/nc\\_025216.pdf](http://www.nuance.co.uk/ucmprod/groups/dragon/@web-enus/documents/collateral/nc_025216.pdf)
- d. Writing assistance: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=5U13zQPD\\_AE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=5U13zQPD_AE)

### MS OneNote

Assists with: Note Taking

Website: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-ie/onenote/>

YouTube Training Videos:

- a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PYQS-b-xFFU>
- b. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=nDWhKx2n\\_Zs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=nDWhKx2n_Zs)

Note taking assistance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sqXsg0lu2RU>

## 12. Useful Websites for Students Learning Difference

The following are just a hand full of websites that give valuable study skills tips to help you come to terms with studying and handling academic writing at third level.

- 1. <http://www.questforlearning.org/> A European funded website which promotes the use of online resources to support learners with disabilities.
- 2. <https://studenttoolkit.eu/> A newly developed online learning resource designed for students at third level.
- 3. <http://www.studygs.net/> The university of St. Thomas website has an excellent section on Study Guides and Strategies.
- 4. [http://www.boxofideas.org/ideas/?page\\_id=551](http://www.boxofideas.org/ideas/?page_id=551). An interesting resource compiled by the Dyscovery Centre. It may be of particular interest to students with dyspraxia (D.C.D.). Tips on all aspects of life, including time management, can be found when you browse the site.
- 5. <http://www.uefap.com/index.htm> Very good on line resource for academic writing tips.
- 6. <http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/>. This site provides an academic phrase book which gives lots of examples of typical phrases used in academic writing. The examples are constructed under various headings relevant to aspects of academic writing. Well worth a look if you find yourself struggling with the right words for the task!
- 7. [http://wts.indiana.edu/pamphlets/proofing\\_grammar.shtml](http://wts.indiana.edu/pamphlets/proofing_grammar.shtml) [grammar.shtml](http://wts.indiana.edu/pamphlets/proofing_grammar.shtml). A guide to proofreading – they keep it simple which is what makes it all the better!
- 8. <http://www3.ul.ie/referencing/>. An excellent tutorial on referencing – a key skills needed for academic writing.



9. <http://www.dvc.edu/enrollment/counseling/lss/>.
10. This will give you access to the DVC Learning Style Questionnaire. Having completed the questionnaire, guidelines are given on the most suitable approaches to study for your particular learning style.
11. <http://www2.hull.ac.uk/student/disability/specificlearningdifficulties/dyslexiaresources.aspx>. A very good study skills guide for students with dyslexia.
12. <https://www.intelligent.com/> - study skills guide.
13. <http://www.tonybuzan.com/about/mind-mapping/> A guide to mind mapping.

### **13. FREeware TO SUPPORT ACADEMIC READING AND WRITING.** (Information compiled by A.T.A.C. U.L.2014)

Please note all links below will be updated August 2017 – Please check the online version of this Handbook for the updated links.

#### **Reading & Proofreading**

##### **A. Balabolka**

- a. Website: <http://www.cross-plus-a.com/balabolka.htm>
- b. Tutorial: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qf6lk\\_3R29o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qf6lk_3R29o)

##### **B. Word Talk**

- a. A free plugin for Microsoft Word (available only for Windows users) that will speak the text of any Word document and highlight as it goes.

#### **Organisation of Thought &Memorisation Skills**

##### **Mind Mapping**

##### **A. Free Mind**

- a. Website: [http://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page)
- b. Tutorial: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grut\\_2cardM&feature=kp](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grut_2cardM&feature=kp)

##### **B. Xmind**

- a. Website: <http://www.xmind.net/>
- b. Tutorial: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvR0XzcyQx4&feature=kp>

## Writing


**Spellcheck Plus:** Website: <http://spellcheckplus.com/>

Review: 12 errors were found. This tool actually was quite impressive. It found all but one of the subtle errors. The one it missed was not found by any of the others either. Strangely it missed one of the more obvious mistakes that most of the others caught. Never-the-less it was the clear winner for detecting grammatical problems. It was also the only tool that made any suggestions on punctuation which I did not include specifically in my tests. SpellCheckPlus is available as a free online tool, but regrettably it has a 2000 character limit unless you register. They have a couple of apps for the iPhone, and Android, but they must be purchased.

## Windows Voice Recognition

Website: <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-ie/windows/set-speech-recognition#1TC=windows-7>

Tutorial: Windows comes with a speech training tutorial to help teach you the commands used with Speech Recognition. The tutorial takes about 30 minutes to complete. Follow the steps below to run the speech training tutorial:

1. Open Speech Recognition by clicking the Start button , clicking Control Panel, clicking Ease of Access, and then clicking Speech Recognition.
2. Click Take Speech Tutorial.
3. Follow the instructions in the Speech Recognition tutorial.

## Note taking

Evernote

## Referencing

MS Word tutorial [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QErOX\\_SWhks](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QErOX_SWhks)

## 14 CODE OF PRACTICE

I.T.Tralee is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and to making sure that students with disabilities can participate in all aspects of college life. The Code of Practice below is a written statement outlining the rights and responsibilities of students receiving reasonable accommodations within the Institute and I.T. Tralee's rights and responsibilities to students with disabilities. This Student Handbook has outlined the range of reasonable accommodation and supports available to students within the Institute. Please read the Code of Practice below to inform yourself of the rights and responsibilities involved with registering with the Disability Services within I.T.Tralee. When you sign off on your ILR document (see Section 3) you will be signing off stating that you have read the Code of practice and agree to the rights and responsibilities outlined within it.

## CODE OF PRACTICE

### **For Students with Physical, Sensory, Mental Health and Hidden Disabilities, Significant Health Conditions, Dyslexia or any other recognised Specific Learning Difficulty or Learning Difference**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

The Institute of Technology Tralee is committed to a policy of equal opportunity in education and to ensuring that students with a disability have as complete and equitable access to all facets of College life as can reasonably be provided. IT Tralee has adopted a code of practice which is applicable to all students with disabilities studying in IT Tralee. This is in accordance with the Disability Act 2005, the Equal Status Acts 2000 (as amended), the Data Protection Act (1998-2003) and the University Act 1997.

Students with a disability are encouraged to register with the Disability Service to seek supports where the disability could affect their ability to participate fully in all aspects of the course.

This Code of Practice applies to all students, both undergraduate and postgraduate with disabilities, at IT Tralee. It aims to provide a high standard of service to students with disabilities. IT Tralee will provide disabled students with reasonable accommodations to ensure that they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled student. A substantial disadvantage is one that entails time; disruption, effort or discomfort, compared to other students and which is more than minor or trivial.

For the purposes of all IT Tralee policies relating to disabled students, reasonable accommodations are determined through a needs assessment process taking into account the nature of a disability, course requirements and individual differences. The most common forms of reasonable accommodations are available in the Disability Support Services Guide and the Student Handbook for Students with Dyslexia or any other recognized Specific Learning Difficulty or Learning Difference.

## **2.0 The purpose of this Code of Practice for IT Tralee is twofold:**

- to outline to students with disabilities their rights and responsibilities in receiving reasonable accommodations in IT Tralee;
- to outline IT Tralee's rights and responsibilities to students with disabilities, and the IT Tralee community.

For the purpose of this document and all IT Tralee policies relating to students with disabilities, a reasonable accommodation might be any action that helps alleviate a substantial disadvantage. Making a reasonable accommodation might involve changing procedures, providing additional services (e.g. examination arrangements, materials in large print), or altering the physical environment. These duties are anticipatory requiring IT Tralee to create an equitable learning and teaching environment.

### **3.1 College Regulations**

This Code of Practice should be read in conjunction with the Institute's statement of 'Student Rights and Responsibilities'.

### **3.2 Every student with a disability has the right to:**

- 3.2.1 Equitable access to courses, services, activities and facilities at IT Tralee
- 3.2.2 Reasonable and appropriate accommodations and/or additional services determined by a needs assessment and in accordance with the individual's certified physical, sensory, mental health or hidden disability, significant health condition/specific learning difficulty/learning difference.
- 3.2.3 Have their reasonable accommodations reviewed within a specific timeframe
- 3.2.4 Appropriate confidentiality of disability records (files) and that disclosure of information will only happen with the student's written consent.
- 3.2.5 Information reasonably available in accessible formats.
- 3.2.6 Be treated with dignity, respect and fairness

### **3.3 Every student with a disability has the responsibility to:**

- 3.3.1 Identify themselves in a timely manner as an individual with a disability when seeking an accommodation.
- 3.3.2 Provide disability documentation from an acceptable professional source that verifies the nature of the disability.
- 3.3.3 Register with the Disability Service and follow Disability Service and IT Tralee procedures if they wish to obtain reasonable accommodations. This includes signing this code of practice and consenting to release of information.

- 3.3.4 Engage with agreed reasonable accommodations and any other skills development training opportunities provided
- 3.3.5 Students must follow specific procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations, such as:
  - Examination and Assessment arrangements
  - Applications to the ESF Fund for Students with Disabilities for funded supports such as assistive technologies
  - Access to Educational Support Worker services
- 3.3.6 Treat staff of the Institute with dignity and respect.

#### **3.4 IT Tralee has the right to:**

- 3.4.1 Maintain the Institute's academic standards.
- 3.4.2 Request disability documentation from an acceptable professional source that verifies the nature of the disability or an 'Evidence of Disability Form' completed by an acceptable professional source to verify the need for reasonable accommodations and/or auxiliary aids. The 'Evidence of Disability Form' can be found at [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie).
- 3.4.3 Discuss a student's need for reasonable accommodations with the professional source of his/her documentation, having obtained the student's signed consent authorising such disclosure and discussion.
- 3.4.4 Select from equally effective and appropriate accommodations in consultation with students with disabilities.
- 3.4.5 Review an individual's reasonable accommodations to determine they are working effectively in line with good practice.
- 3.4.6 Deny a request for reasonable accommodation if the documentation does not identify a specific disability and/or functional limitation, or if it fails to verify the need for the requested services.
- 3.4.7 Refuse to provide an accommodation that is inappropriate or not reasonable, including any that: pose a direct threat to the health or safety of the student and/or others, constitute a substantial change or alteration to an essential element of a course or programme, or pose undue financial or administrative demand or imply (or involve) a lowering of academic standards on IT Tralee.

#### **3.5 IT Tralee has the responsibility to:**

- 3.5.1 Ensure that IT Tralee courses, programmes, services, activities, and facilities, when viewed in their entirety, are delivered in the most integrated and accessible settings possible.
- 3.5.2 Provide to students with disabilities information regarding IT Tralee policies and procedures and ensure that it is available in accessible formats.
- 3.5.3 Provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations and/or auxiliary aids for students with disabilities upon a timely request

by a student.

- 3.5.4 Maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication concerning students with disabilities except where reasonable accommodations/supports are communicated to staff following appropriate authorization.
- 3.5.5 Request feedback from students about the effectiveness of the accommodations and/or supports provided in order to monitor and evaluate the quality of the service provided

### **3.6 More specifically, IT Tralee Disability Service personnel have the responsibility to:**

- 3.6.1 Assist students with disabilities to self-identify and guide them on evidence required to meet IT Tralee criteria for eligibility to receive reasonable accommodations determined on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.6.2 Assure confidentiality (subject to the student signing the disclosure of information form) of all information pertaining to a student's disability.
- 3.6.3 Inform students on their additional responsibilities and the need to plan reasonable accommodations for course-related work placements in advance.
- 3.6.4 Refer students who may require a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) to the Health & Safety Office and the Chief Fire Marshals to assess personal specific requirements and to agree personal specific solutions.

## **4.0 IT Tralee Policy on confidentiality for students with disabilities**

IT Tralee encourages students with disabilities to disclose information on their disability/specific learning difficulty/learning difference to the Disability Service before they apply to college or at any point during their studies. Such disclosure is encouraged so that IT Tralee can work with the student in ensuring that any reasonable accommodation required is identified and facilitated in conjunction with the student.

A record of the students' contact with the Institute is held securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998-2003) and information provided to the Disability Service is regarded as 'sensitive personal data'. The information may also be used for statistical and monitoring purposes without your identity being revealed.

Any documentation or information presented in disclosing a disability is held by the Disability Service and specific medical or other documentation will not be disclosed to any third party except where necessary to provide reasonable accommodations. Where a student requests and is granted any form of reasonable accommodation, such as



extra time in exams, or permission to record lectures, the IT Tralee will, in consultation with the student, disclose relevant information to the individuals in those Departments/Schools responsible for student learning and facilitating their access to such accommodations.

## **5.0 Disability Service Complaints**

Complaints about any aspect(s) of the Institute's Disability Service should be managed through the IT Tralee Student Complaints Procedure.

**I hope this handbook has been of assistance to you. As it will be updated annually any feedback will be most welcome. Please address feedback to the Officer for Students with Learning Difference**

**Update June 17**

## **Appendix 1.**

### **Screening Service for Students with Learning Difference.**

#### **What is screening?**

Screening is a process during which a student's reported learning difficulties are investigated through interview and the use of standardised testing. During the process the student's school experience and their own understanding of any past and present difficulties is noted. The student then undergoes a series of standardised tests which look at the students reasoning abilities, their attainments in reading and spelling and other relevant tests depending on the individual difficulties the student presents with. In addition, samples of the student's written work are examined and the student is requested to provide a writing sample produced under timed conditions. The entire process is facilitated by Siobhan Mac Garry, B.Ed., PG Rem. Ed, RQTU (British Psychological Society). Screening takes place over several sessions and recommendations can be made regarding a student when all relevant aspects of the student's learning profile are considered.

#### **What is dyslexia?**

Dyslexia is one of several specific learning difficulties. It is a language based disorder which often has its origins in an insufficient ability to process the phonics (sounds) that form the building blocks of words. Sometimes dyslexia may be caused by an insufficient ability to process the visual shape of letters and words or an insufficient ability to relate groups of letters to the sounds that make up words. For some people with dyslexia there are difficulties with both visual and phonological processing. These difficulties are unexpected in the individual in relation to their age and their apparent abilities both academically and in other areas of life. Such difficulties can lie behind the problems a student is experiencing with reading, writing and spelling. In addition, students with dyslexia often experience organisational and time management difficulties.

#### **Could I have dyslexia?**

As a rule of thumb dyslexia can be considered a possibility where reading and spelling are not in line with the student's overall ability and the class /age group in general. The student will often show a discrepancy between their oral and written ability and appear to avoid reading aloud or expressing their understanding in writing. These difficulties exist despite the student having English as their first language, regular schooling and no history of a hearing or visual disability.

If on the other hand a student does not have English as their first language and/or has a history of very significant educational disadvantage and /or a



hearing or visual disability then any combination of these factors may be causing the difficulties experienced in reading, writing and spelling. For such students the screening process is unsuitable as results found on standardised tests will be coloured by these factors.

### **Why undergo screening?**

Screening can provide very useful information for a student if the learning difficulties they are experiencing are significantly preventing them from progressing with their class group. Screening may offer insight as to why a student, who appears to understand their course work, experiences such difficulty communicating their understanding in writing and/or also be experiences difficulty with researching and academic reading. Screening can identify whether the student is showing significant indicators of an underlying specific learning difficulty (e.g. dyslexia) and whether further investigation of their difficulties is recommended.

### **How do I go about organising a screening?**

Screening is available to students registered on a course within the Institute. Screening **is not** available to students who are considering taking a place but who are not yet registered on a course. To organise a screening, you need to make contact with Support Services and ask for a **Screening Request Form**.

### **What are the standardised tests used in screening?**

Students who attend for screening undergo:

The BDA (British Dyslexia Association) adult screening questionnaire.

The Kauffman Brief Intelligence Test (KBIT 2) Second edition. Pearson.

The Dyslexia Adult Screening Test (DAST), The Psychological Corporation.

The WRAT IV Wide Range Achievement Test. Psychological assessment Resources. P.A.R.

Other tests may include:

Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests – Revised. AGS.

DASH 17 Plus. Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting. Pearson

### **What happens after screening?**

Where significant learning difficulties are identified, the student will be advised regarding referral for psycho-educational assessment. It should be noted that while the screening process is designed to identify dyslexia, interpretation of screening results may indicate the possibility that some other significant difficulty other than dyslexia lies behind the student's learning difficulties. It is advisable that the student follows up the recommendation for psycho-educational assessment as, once they are in

possession of an assessment report, they may register with the Service for Students with Learning Difference, undergo needs assessment and avail of appropriate reasonable accommodation.

**Please consult the “Student Handbook for Students with Learning Difference including Students with Dyslexia” for information about the Service.**

Students who come through the screening process with a screening result which does not indicate significant learning difficulties will be given guidance regarding mainstream/online and assistive technology support. They will not be invited to register with the Support Service but will be encouraged to engage with their lecturers and avail of the supports offered to all students.

### **What is psycho-educational assessment?**

Psycho-educational assessment involves testing an individual’s cognitive ability (how they think and reason) as well as their literacy/ numeracy skills. The educational psychologist also needs to get relevant background information from individuals, schools, colleges or any other relevant sources. Conclusions are made based on a combination of the history reported and the performance on the tests.

The assessment session varies in length, but on average you can expect to be with the educational psychologist for between 2½ to 3 hours. A detailed written report is supplied a few weeks after the assessment, which contains relevant history, test results, conclusions and most importantly recommendations for addressing any areas of difficulty which emerged.

### **How do I go about getting a psycho-educational assessment?**

The Institute may refer a student for psycho-educational assessment where screening identifies significant difficulties which require reasonable accommodation and support. This matter will be discussed with the individual student.

Students who are not in the above category will be supplied with a screening report which they can forward to external agencies if they choose to seek a private psycho-educational assessment. There are many independent private educational psychologists throughout the country. A list of registered psychologists can be obtained from the Psychological Society of Ireland's website at [www.psihq.ie](http://www.psihq.ie)

The following is an extract from the Dyslexia Association of Ireland website providing information about sourcing an adult dyslexia psycho-educational assessment.

*As an adult you have to arrange for your own assessment. There is no state provision, even for people who are unemployed or who have a medical card.*

*The Dyslexia Association of Ireland arranges Educational Psychology Assessments at our national office in Dublin. The fee for an assessment is normally €490. In very exceptional circumstances, a reduced rate may be available for people on social welfare or very low income. A subsidy of up to €245 towards the assessment fee may be granted in such exceptional circumstances. Applications for a reduced rate assessment must be submitted to DAI at least 2 weeks in advance of your assessment date. Late applications cannot be accepted. Applicants are encouraged to save up some money each week towards the assessment while they wait for an appointment. DAI is a charity, and we are only able to offer these limited subsidies due to fundraising and donations. Our waiting list is currently 3 months (or 9 months for funded assessments). Please contact us for further information, or if you would like to place your name on our assessment waiting list.*

*Alternatively, please click on the link below to download the referral forms. Please read the accompanying introductory letter carefully, as this gives detailed instructions on completing the forms and information on the application process. Please note that we cannot add an adult to the waiting list until we receive all the referral forms. If you need any help with this process, please call 01 877 6001 or email [info@dyslexia.ie](mailto:info@dyslexia.ie) and we would be very happy to help you.*

#### [DAI Assessment Referral Form – Adult](#)

*If you wish to apply for the reduced rate, please also complete and return the Funding Application Form, in addition to the forms above:*

#### [Funding Application Form](#)

*There are also many independent private educational psychologists, throughout the country. A list of registered psychologists can be obtained from the Psychological Society of Ireland's website ([www.psihq.ie](http://www.psihq.ie)). Students at third level should contact their college's Disability Support Service who may be able to organise an assessment for you.....*

*If you need any help with this process, please call 01 877 6001 or email [info@dyslexia.ie](mailto:info@dyslexia.ie) and we would be very happy to help you.*

*Dyslexia Association of Ireland, 1 Suffolk Street, Dublin 2. Tel: 01-6790276. Website: [www.dyslexia.ie](http://www.dyslexia.ie) .*