



Dyslexia

Guidance for FBU Officials and Members

This guidance provides details of the types of dyslexia and the process that the FBU believes should be followed in supporting members who have or are suspected of having a form of dyslexia.

Foreword



Fire Brigades Union & Dyslexia

“ The Fire Brigades Union has been a long time advocate of fairness and equality at work and ensuring that the Health and Safety of our members and public are not at risk.

Dyslexia is not an illness or a physical disability, but an often misunderstood impairment that affects some individuals.

Dyslexia is recognised under The Equality Act 2010 and similar to any other disability, the FBU will fight to ensure that a member, who may be dyslexic, will not be discriminated against.

Modes of learning, development and the delivery of training in the Fire and Rescue Service are forever changing and, along with the introduction of new technology, are influencing the decision of members in raising concerns that they may be dyslexic.

The FBUs ‘Whole Organisation Approach to Skills for Life’ recognised that this may become an issue for our members and started early on to engage with senior managers in putting the correct policies and support procedures in place.

The FBU has a number of trained Officials and Union Learning Representatives who have completed Dyslexia Support Advisors and Dyslexia Workplace Assessors courses and can offer support and guidance when dyslexia issues arise. I would encourage any individual who may have concerns to contact them for advice; their details can be found on the FBU Education website – www.fbueducation.org

The FBU is committed to supporting members with dyslexia and ensuring they are treated fairly with the same dignity, respect and equality which we demand for everyone. I encourage all officials and members to read and use the guidance contained within this document to ensure that we can do just that. ”



Matt Wrack
General Secretary FBU

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All pictures courtesy of the FBU ULF library.

Introduction



Whether it's a current employee (uniformed or support), a trainee, or new applicant to the Fire and Rescue Service, the employer has a legal obligation to ensure they are treated equally and fairly.

Under the Equality Act 2010 (EA), the employer is legally responsible to ensure that employees are not discriminated against due to their disability; dyslexia is a recognised disability within the EA.

It is estimated that around 10% of the population has dyslexia, 4% of whom can be categorised as having severe symptoms.

Often the condition is defined as; 'difficulty with reading, writing and numeracy', however these difficulties tend to be surface symptoms of underlying problems. These can involve: short-term memory, information processing and perceptual, spatial and motor skills. Other surface symptoms may include: difficulties in personal organisation and time keeping, in the workplace these symptoms may be exacerbated when individuals are put under additional pressure.

The causes of dyslexia are still not fully understood and the term dyslexia is usually used to describe symptoms not causes. People with dyslexia tend to receive and process information in a slightly different way from people who do not have dyslexia.

Individuals who are dyslexic have the ability to think very creatively and may be extremely talented. Famous names include; Bill Gates, Richard Branson, Steve Redgrave, Albert Einstein, Agatha Christie and Eddie Izzard.

Dyslexia did not prevent any of the above from realising their full potential and nor should it prevent a Firefighter or a FRS Staff Employee doing the same.

Firefighters, Emergency Fire Control Staff and Support staff in the Fire and Rescue Service are employed in an ever changing technical and practical application industry. From the moment individuals begin their career in the Fire and Rescue Service they are required to gain knowledge and understanding in a diverse field.

A potential Firefighter applying to join the Fire and Rescue Service has to undertake a national selection process that

has Language, Literacy and Numeracy skills embedded within it. If successful the individual commences initial training (normally at a Fire and Rescue Service training centre) and is expected to learn not only practical skills but start to build their knowledge and understanding of a vast and varied spectrum of equipment, procedures and regulations through practical and academic study.

These may include:-

- Breathing Apparatus (BA)
- Road Traffic Collisions (RTC)
- First Aid and Trauma Management (FATM)
- Special Risk Training
- Community Fire Safety
- Skills to meet the National Occupational Standards
- National Vocational Qualification (S) Operations in the Community level 3

They will of course need and have time to gain appropriate qualifications through assessment which will be delivered following their successful completion at a training centre and under the guidance of their line manager and other Firefighters when posted to a station.

Progression is via National Occupational Standards, S/NVQ (set at level 3) and Assessment Development Centres (ADC) with key skill requirement being higher than during the Firefighter recruitment process. Fire and Rescue Services are recognising and identifying that when working with some individuals that they sometimes have problems caused by dyslexia resulting in difficulties meeting National Occupation Standards.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) has also increased the learning needs of Fire and Rescue Service employees for everyday tasks including; individual training records, fire and incident reports, IRMPs, data management and everyday administration.

This makes it important that all Fire and Rescue Service employees receive and can access appropriate training and support.

Introduction



Fire and Rescue Service training delivery varies from service to service and, in many cases is, delivered in a very prescriptive manner. More often than not it does not take account of learning styles (the way individuals learn), learning difficulties (whether literacy or numeracy) or identify issues such as dyslexia.

People with visual or hearing impairments have to learn in a totally different way to those of us with normal sensory awareness and often the same applies to people with dyslexia.

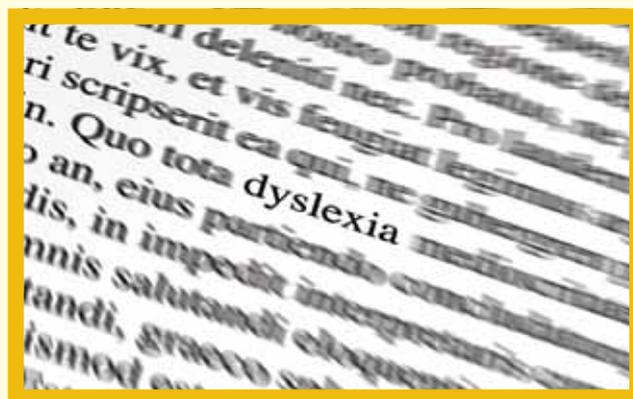
This guidance aims to raise and address:

- Some of the issues for FBU members with dyslexia.
- How we can help members overcome the 'stigma' sometimes attached to dyslexia?
- How we best represent our members identified with dyslexia.
- How we ensure that our employers recognise their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

It also raises awareness and provides some guidance when dealing with dyslexia and it will support our officials in ensuring that each Fire and Rescue Service has a policy for supporting employees with dyslexia. A more prescriptive list is contained towards the back of this document but such policies should include:

- A more positive approach to specific learning difficulties in terms of valuing the differences that these conditions may bring to the workplace.
- Inclusion of strategies to reduce stress and build confidence in those with dyslexia/specific learning difficulties.
- A wider reflection of related conditions and literacy help.
- A management guidance note with reference to the NOS and IPDS Guide.
- Awareness briefing sessions.
- Inclusion of a website link to an initial diagnostic checklist.
- Clarification of responsibilities within the organisation.

- An update on the EA and its implications.
- To consider other organisational dyslexia approaches.
- A wider description of techniques to support those with dyslexia
- Equality Impact Assessments.



Dyslexia awareness is slowly becoming a more open subject of discussion but a lot of people are still unclear and ignorant of what it means and any implications there may be for the individual, the Fire and Rescue Service and the FBU.

Without appropriate screening, assessment and support, this can directly affect the pressure and stress levels of individuals in a working environment that necessitates high levels of practical and technical skills.

It may also have a detrimental effect on the Health, Safety and Welfare of the individual, their work colleagues and members of the public.

The FBU has trained pool of Dyslexia Support Advisors and Workplace Assessors that can offer access to an online screening tool (Quickscan) and provide individual support to members who are or consider that they maybe dyslexic.

Dyslexia is a disability and an equality issue; by ensuring that we have trained and supportive official's means we can effectively raise issues with Fire and Rescue Service Managers to ensure our members are not prejudiced against and are treated with dignity and respect.

Understanding dyslexia



The word 'dyslexia' comes from the Greek meaning 'difficulty with words'. It isn't a single medical condition. The causes of the communication difficulties experienced by people with dyslexia are varied and often hard to identify or poorly understood.

The condition includes a range of learning difficulties where a person of normal intelligence has persistent and significant problems with one or more of:

reading, writing, spelling, sometimes mathematics and musical notation.

Dyslexia can present itself in many different ways and other potential difficulties could be: work organisation, time-keeping, personal organisation, short-term memory and sequencing.

These difficulties arise because of issues with the way the brain processes the information it receives, rather than the sensory issues of vision or hearing.

The world is designed for people who do not have dyslexia, particularly the world of written communication on which the Fire and Rescue Service relies so heavily.

As a consequence, people with dyslexia sometimes have difficulty reading large volumes of text presented in the customary way; they may also have difficulty in writing text using conventional means e.g. long sentences or paragraphs. In a few cases they may have difficulty in putting verbal instructions into practice. All these problems can be overcome by presenting information in a different way and other adaptive techniques.

On the other hand, potential advantages of members with dyslexia could be: creativity, lateral thinking, trouble shooting, oral skills, processing information holistically, good visual skills and intuitive thinking and a high IQ. Often people with dyslexia have been able to compensate, by one means or another, and may no longer display difficulties associated with the disability.



Definitions of dyslexia



Being dyslexic does not mean that a person cannot read, nor does it mean that their intelligence is impaired, but it can make learning more challenging depending on the degree of the problem. Unless these challenges are addressed it is very likely that individuals will suffer from low self esteem and a lack of confidence. Many adults who have struggled with complex and misunderstood difficulties all their lives have found enormous relief in a diagnosis of dyslexia which begins to answer some of their questions and anxieties about themselves and the barriers to learning that they have experienced.

The following conditions may also be contributory, overlapping factors or the underlying cause of the dyslexic symptoms:

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is used as an umbrella term to include people with a range of diagnoses such as autism, atypical autism, high functioning autism, Asperger Syndrome, semantic pragmatic disorder and pervasive development disorder. The number of males affected far outnumbers females.

Asperger's Syndrome

Asperger's syndrome a mild form of autism affecting inter-personal relationships and communication.

Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) / Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)

Difficulties with behaviour, concentration and attention span.

Auditory processing disorder is a condition that affects the ability to encode (understand) auditory information. It can lead to problems with auditory working memory and auditory sequencing. Many dyslexics have auditory processing problems including history of auditory reversals and information retention. Auditory processing disorder is recognised as one of the major causes of dyslexia.

Dyspraxia

Dyspraxia is a neurological condition characterised by a marked difficulty in carrying out routine tasks involving balance, fine-motor control, and kinaesthetic coordination. Problems with short term memory and organisation are typical of dyspraxics. This is most common in dyslexics who also have attention deficit disorder.

Verbal Dyspraxia

Verbal dyspraxia is a neurological condition characterised by marked difficulty in the use of speech sounds, which is the result of an immaturity in the speech production area of the brain.

Dysgraphia

Dysgraphia is a disorder which expresses itself primarily during writing or typing, although in some cases it may also affect eye-hand coordination in such direction or sequence oriented processes as tying knots or carrying out a repetitive task. Dysgraphia is distinct from dyspraxia in that the person may have the word written or the proper order of steps clearly in mind, but carries the sequence out in the wrong order.

Dyscalculia

Dyscalculia is a neurological condition characterized by a problem with learning fundamentals and one or more of the basic numerical skills. Often people with this condition can understand very complex mathematical concepts and principles, but have difficulty processing formulas and even basic addition and subtraction.

Scotopic sensitivity syndrome

Also known as Meares - Irlen Syndrome, is a term used to describe sensitivity to certain wavelengths of light which interfere with proper visual processing. This syndrome is particularly prevalent in people with dyslexia.

Legal requirements



Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995

What is the purpose of the Equality Act 2010?

The main purpose of the Equality Act 2010 (EA) is to streamline and strengthen anti-discrimination legislation in Great Britain. It provides the legal framework that protects people, including disabled people, from discrimination. It replaces a range of anti-discrimination legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and subsequent amendments. The EA does not replace the UK-related parts of the DDA for civil servants working in Northern Ireland.

The EA ensures that the legal framework of equality law is more consistent for all people with protected characteristics, for example, race and gender (section 4 of the EA and the Equality and Human Rights website both offer a detailed explanation of 'protected characteristics'). By simplifying and consolidating previous equality legislation, the Act is intended to be easier to operate and understand than previous equality legislation.

What is the difference for disabled people between the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Equality Act 2010?

The EA generally carries forward the protection provided for disabled people by the DDA. However, there are key differences.

- The DDA provided protection for disabled people from direct discrimination only in employment and related areas. The EA protects disabled people against direct discrimination in areas beyond the employment field (such as the supply of goods, facilities and services).
- The EA introduced improved protection from discrimination that occurs because of something connected with a person's disability. This form of discrimination can be justified if it can be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. The EA introduced the principle of indirect discrimination for disability. Indirect discrimination occurs when something applies in the same way

to everybody but has an effect which particularly disadvantages, for example, disabled people. Indirect discrimination may be justified if it can be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

- The EA applies one trigger point at which there is a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people. This trigger point is where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled people if the adjustment was not made.
- The EA extends protection from harassment that is related to disability. Previously, explicit protection only applied in relation to work. The EA applies this to area beyond work.
- The EA provides protection from direct disability discrimination and harassment where this is based on a person's association with a disabled person, or on a false perception that the person is disabled.
- The EA contains a provision which limits the type of enquiries that a recruiting employer can make about disability and health when recruiting new staff. This provision will help prevent disabled candidates from being unfairly screened out at an early stage of the recruitment process.



Legal requirements



What is the legal definition of disability?

The EA generally defines a disabled person as someone who has a mental or physical impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the persons ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This differs slightly from the definition in the DDA, which also required the disabled person to show that an adversely affected normal day-to-day activity involved one of a list of capacities such as mobility, speech, or hearing.

A disability can arise from a wide range of impairments which can be developmental such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or other specific learning difficulties.

An employer has the following duties:

- Not to refuse to employ someone simply because they have a disability; they also have a duty to think about different ways of working.
- to make reasonable adjustment to their premises or employment arrangements if these substantially disadvantage a disabled employee, or prospective employee, compared to a non-disabled person.

An employer must not refuse to employ someone simply because they have a disability; they also have a duty to think about different ways of working.

Failure to make a reasonable adjustment to a policy, procedure or practice or to a physical feature of a workplace where this is placing a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage is unlawful and cannot be justified.

Employers must not discriminate against a disabled person in:

- The recruitment and retention of employees
- Promotion and transfers
- Training and development

Additionally the Equality Standards for Local Government (ESLG) was introduced in 2001 and requires Fire & Rescue Authorities to carry out impact assessments across strands of equality which includes disability. The equality standard is used as a mechanism for mainstreaming equality in the provision of services in order to combat industrial discrimination.

In some cases, people have 'coping strategies' which cease to work in certain circumstances (for example, where someone who stutters or has dyslexia is placed under stress). It is possible that a person's ability to manage the effects of the impairment will break down so that they sometimes occur then this possibility must be taken into account when assessing the effects of the impairment.

However...

"An employer has no obligation to make reasonable adjustment if they do not know about the disability."

As well as the EA there are additional legal areas that may impinge on the ability of the individual to function in the workplace and cover both the employers and employees responsibility to ensure they are supported. These include:

- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Employer's common law 'duty of care'

The EA refers directly to the legal obligation of local authorities not to discriminate on grounds of disability. This places responsibility on each individual Fire and Rescue Service to ensure that when its employees are undertaking Community Fire Safety that it is delivered in a manner and method that does not detract from the ability of people who may have a disability including Dyslexia.

Legal requirements



Resources

Equality Act Codes of Practice (Equality & Human Rights website)

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/equality-act/equality-act-codes-of-practice/>

Equality Act 2010 definition of disability guidance (PDF, 60 pages, 830 KB)

<http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/docs/law/ea/ea-guide-2.pdf>

Public Sector Equality Duty

<http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/disabled-people-and-legislation/disability-equality-duty-and-impact-assessments.php>

Disabled people and legislation

<http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/disabled-people-and-legislation/index.php>

ACAS Disability Discrimination

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1859>

Health and Safety



The Fire and Rescue Service is a 'Safety Critical' industry and Firefighters are 'Safety Critical Workers', it is therefore imperative that systems are in place that can recognise employees who, through being dyslexic, may require reasonable adjustments when carrying out their role. Suitable H&S assessment should be made in accordance with current legislation and the introduction to the use of new equipment or procedures should be given similar consideration.

Given the role of the Fire and Rescue Service and the obvious health and safety implications that exist, all Fire and Rescue Services should ensure that policies relating to dyslexia and associated conditions are kept up to date and all staff are given the opportunity for screening where appropriate.

Equally the employee is also responsible for ensuring that they inform the employer of any situation that prevents them from operating or using equipment safely.

In the majority of cases H&S assessments can be generic however it has to be remembered that dyslexia can affect the ability of how individuals think or learn therefore different models will need to be considered.

While it is impossible to apply a risk assessment for every single action that a dyslexic person may have to carry-out, there does need to be an understanding from Line Managers that will prevent frustration for themselves and individuals; that when carrying out exactly the same role the same errors may be made.

The most difficult elements of supporting a member with dyslexia are not necessarily those that come to mind first but how to effectively and safely overcome issues such as; not being able to remember road names or locations, assimilating information on the training ground or fireground or perhaps a sequence of connecting high pressure air bags.

To meet the legal requirements of H&S legislation it would seem logical that dyslexia awareness training is for all HR staff and Line Managers. It is described as "essential in the BDA Code of Conduct for employers".



Enforcement

If a person with a disability feels they have been discriminated against they have the legal right to take their case to an Employment Tribunal. If they win their case they may:

- Make a declaration as to the rights of the complainant and the respondent in relation to the matters to which the complaint relates
- Order the respondent to pay compensation to the complainant; there is no financial limit
- Recommending that the respondent take, within a specified period, action appearing to the tribunal to be reasonable, in all the circumstances of the case, for the purpose of obviating or reducing the adverse effect on the complainant of any matter to which the complaint relates.

NB. Notwithstanding the right to take legal action as indicated above, officials and members should use local grievance procedures in an effort to resolve issues in relation to dyslexia before taking such action.

Issues for Officials and Members



Dyslexia is still widely and incorrectly seen as some form of 'mental impairment' indicating lack of intelligence rather than a disability that can be overcome once provided with the correct aids or facilities. Rather than face the ignominy that may occur, many employees will not want to highlight their dyslexia for fear of ridicule, feeling of insecurity and lack of support.

Often the individual reaches adulthood having experienced a range of difficulties but without having had any formal diagnosis. This may in turn give rise to a range of negative emotions such as low self-esteem, lack of confidence, anger, anxiety and confusion.

The symptoms of dyslexia, if not understood or diagnosed, may produce perceptions from colleagues and managers of the individual being perhaps less effective or unengaged. The individual may become withdrawn or oversensitive and may be perceived as 'not fitting in'.

It is only when dyslexia is diagnosed that such behaviours and difficulties may be explained and understood by the person themselves and others. A range of adjustments may be made to support the individual and alleviate problems. Often such adjustments relate to the different ways that those with dyslexia learn, understand, process information and solve problems.

Some members may have been assessed during previous education or employment, yet do not feel able to disclose the diagnosis to receive the assistance that is available; other members will require assessment, but do not know how to go about getting it.

Current Fire and Rescue Service communication, ICT, learning and development delivery and assessment development centres all pose problems for some dyslexic members. Very few Fire and Rescue Services take account of individual learning needs or understand that individuals learn in different ways. The 'sheep dip' approach is still the chosen method – it's cheap, delivers subject matter to a wide number of learners, allows time bound delivery and requires little effort.

Cost may be an issue for employers as many potential dyslexic employees will be required to undergo

a screening process and a possible workplace assessment. In addition there will be the cost of providing additional or modified equipment for the individuals use (see workplace assistance).

Keeping and maintaining screening results, records of assessment decisions and any casework in respect of employees with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties, as well as relevant documentation should be kept by the designated department.

Relevant information may need to be shared with appropriate managers however due regard of the confidentiality of the member will need to be taken into account.

The Fire Service College and Scottish Fire Service College may also need to know that a student has dyslexia in order to provide the appropriate materials and allow the use of aids during the course.

Procedures need to be put in place prior to and during recruitment ensuring that applicants with dyslexia are not treated less favourably.

Officials must ensure that when dealing with dyslexia issues it is done with the utmost discretion and that members know that they will be treated in a confidential and professional manner.

Recruitment and Promotion

Appropriate arrangements should be made in order to ensure that members with dyslexia are not discriminated against when applying to join the Fire and Rescue Service or taking part in internal transfer and progression procedures such as assessment and development centres. These arrangements should be included in policy statements and applicants made aware that provision will be made where appropriate.

Individuals / members should also be aware that they may be asked for evidence of their dyslexia by providing supporting evidence from approved dyslexic assessment or Access to Work. Where this cannot be provided, the individual Fire and Rescue Service may wish to make provision for an assessment to take place before providing additional resources or extending examination timescales.

Recognising Dyslexia Symptoms



There is no single sign that can be used to identify people with dyslexia or that they can use to identify themselves as dyslexic. Individuals will exhibit different characteristics, and to differing degrees to each other.

The severity of Dyslexia will clearly vary between individuals but may manifest itself in a number of ways, these may include:

- Learning to read later than others (but in most cases eventually successfully).
- Difficulty with mental arithmetic.
- Difficulty learning/reciting sequences such as months of the year, multiplication tables.
- Slow in learning material presented solely in verbal or written form.
- Slow speed of information processing.
- Discrepancy between academic achievement and performance in practical problem solving and/or verbal skills.
- Possible initial difficulty in detecting rhyme.
- Difficulty with paired associate learning (i.e. associating a label with an object).
- Excessive misspelling in written work, including errors such as confusion in letter order.

- Problems organising work.
- Difficulty with naming tasks.
- Aversion to writing or taking excessive notes.
- Evidence of working memory deficit on tasks such as taking telephone numbers or messages.
- Forgetting some of a series of instructions or carrying them out in the wrong order.
- A tendency to talk rather than listen as a strategy for restricting the input of information.

It should be noted that these characteristics do not necessarily indicate dyslexia, nor would a person with dyslexia necessarily display all of the above.

A number of symptoms that are most prevalent within the Fire and Rescue Service; are:

- Difficulty in learning information/procedures rapidly.
- Difficulty in multi-tasking across a number of activities.
- Difficulty in following instructions from managers.
- Difficulty in prioritising tasks in high pressure situations



Screening / Assessment



The Union Learning Representative (ULR) can play a key role in supporting and signposting individuals to support organisations or learning providers who can carry out dyslexia screening. They can also help advise officials who will consult and negotiate an individual's needs with management, taking account of the confidences required between the parties concerned.

Identification of dyslexia or other learning difficulties may be revealed either at initial entry stage or when an individual is already in post.

Where an individual has been referred by a manager as possibly displaying dyslexic tendencies then officials will also need to ensure that the individual knows there may be a need for them to make managers aware that they may have dyslexia.

A member who has identified themselves as having dyslexia, or believes they may have dyslexia may put themselves forward for diagnosis. The process may require initial screening leading to assessment which may include: diagnostic interview, cognitive capacity review, reading and spelling assessment, memory review and other relevant testing signified as relevant by the initial symptoms.

There are a wide number of screening aids available that will help determine if an individual is dyslexic. Many of these can be accessed through using ICT (taking account of member's skills) and delivered in around 30 minutes. If they do show dyslexic tendencies then a more extensive screening, supervised by an expert, may need to take place.

Associated conditions or difficulties may be disclosed voluntarily by the individual, identified prior to a selection or promotion process or identified by a line manager (or other) possibly through performance management or development processes.

Those involved in any case or potential case of dyslexia and/or other learning difficulties must maintain an approach that maximises confidentiality and is sensitive to the needs of the individual concerned. Whilst an open approach is encouraged – to facilitate support and understanding – the individual must not be pressurised to reveal any diagnosis.

In all instances the assessment must be undertaken with the individual's consent and by a qualified person unless the individual has already completed such assessment and can provide details.

Under the Data Protection Act, the confidentiality of an employee's personal and medical information must be safeguarded. Disclosure of a disability should only occur when:

- Absolutely necessary
- With the explicit consent of the individual
- It is necessary to facilitate the person's ability to do the job.

Medical and personal information must be recorded in a way that does not render it vulnerable to accidental disclosure. Under the Data Protection Act, the employee should know who will have access to this information and have agreed to this in writing.

Managers should be made aware that for anyone with a disability, including someone with dyslexia that:

- When an employee has told, in confidence, a member of HR advisory services, their line manager, or occupational health about the disability, the employer is deemed under the EA to know that the person is disabled.
- If an adjustment is necessary the employee's line manager will need to know the adjustment is required but neither they nor colleagues need to be told the precise medical reasons.

Workplace Assistance



The Department of Work and Pensions has funding available through a scheme called **'Access to Work'**. Before this can take place there is an obvious need for the individual to actually make managers aware that they have dyslexia.

Access to Work may pay towards the equipment needed at work in order to help overcome some of the difficulties dyslexics may have; i.e. provision of computers, programme software and satellite navigation systems.

Funding through Access to Work may be gained if the individual is:

- In a paid job
- Unemployed and about to start a job
- Self-employed
- If the disability or health condition stops them from being able to do parts of their job.



An Access to Work adviser will usually contact the individual and the employer to reach a decision about the most effective support; this can be done over the telephone, but a visit can be arranged if necessary.

Once the adviser has decided on the package of support they feel is appropriate, they will seek formal approval of their recommendations from Jobcentre Plus. The employee and employer will receive a letter informing them of the approved level of support and the grant available.

It is the responsibility of the employer to arrange the agreed support and buy the necessary equipment; the employer can then claim repayment of the approved costs from Access to Work.

The amount of help from Access to Work will vary depending on how long the individual has been employed and what support they need.

Access to Work can pay up to 100 per cent of the approved costs if:

- The individual is currently unemployed prior to joining the Fire and Rescue Service
- Working for a Fire and Rescue Service and have been in position for less than six weeks

Access to Work pays a proportion of the costs of support if all of the following are applicable:

- The individual is working for a Fire and Rescue Service employer
- Has been in position for six weeks or more
- Needs special equipment or adaptations to premises

The precise level of cost sharing is agreed between the employer and the Access to Work adviser. After between one and three years, Access to Work will review the circumstances and the support being received.

Some Fire and Rescue Services have equality budgets set-aside and can provide a means of purchasing minor equipment at a minimal cost; officials may wish to raise this with their own management.

A range of initiatives can be undertaken to adjust the nature of an individual's role/work environment, some examples are as follows:

Reasonable Adjustment



Any employer has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to prevent a dyslexic employee from being placed at a substantial disadvantage by any physical feature of the premises, or by any provision, criteria or practice of the employer.

The duty applies to all aspects of employment, including recruitment and selection, training, transfer, career development and retention. Failure to make a reasonable adjustment to a policy, procedure or practice, or to a physical feature of the workplace where this is placing a dyslexic person at a substantial disadvantage, is unlawful and cannot be justified

General Points

- Every dyslexic person is different and will have different requirements for support. There is no one size-fits-all reasonable adjustments for dyslexia.
- Reasonable adjustments are not an instant remedy guaranteeing immediate success. Although progress in overcoming dyslexia related difficulties is likely to be seen quite quickly.
- For reasonable adjustments to be effective, the following need to be in place:
 - 1 Appropriate adjustments with related training.
 - 2 A willingness on part of the employee to embrace the adjustments and training.
 - 3 Support and understanding of colleagues and management.
- Dyslexia awareness training is essential for HR and Management, including immediate Line Managers to support these adjustments.

A range of initiatives can be undertaken to adjust the nature of an individual's role/work environment, some examples are as follows:

Provision of training programmes/ briefings/presentations

- All training courses, briefings or presentations should be considered in terms of the impact they will have on

individuals with dyslexia (though these points may also apply more generally):

- Presentations and instructional methods should incorporate 'multisensory' techniques - in other words, diagrams and colour should be used to supplement written or verbal explanations as much as possible; demonstrations ('of how it should be done') and practice (to encourage learning and skill development) should also be incorporated.

Provision of written materials

- Any written materials should be considered in terms of their impact on people with dyslexia (though, again, these points may apply more generally).
- Policy documents, procedures, rules, regulations, etc. all need logical presentation/structuring and good indexation.
- Printed text should not be justified on the right side.
- Important points should be highlighted.
- Avoid underlining.
- Summaries should be included.
- Readability levels need consideration and should be relevant to job role.
- Unnecessary jargon or uncommon words should not be used, although it is recognised that technical language may be necessary.
- To accommodate possibly limited memory skills, people with dyslexia would benefit from material being as manageable as possible - by, for example, putting information into smaller chunks.
- Use bullet points or numbers rather than continuous text.
- Provide information on coloured paper (use a light yellow colour background for powerpoint).
- If appropriate (according to role) use speech to text recognition software.

Reasonable Adjustment



- Generally use Comic Sans or Arial font – size 11 plus.
- Matt paper is preferable to glossy.
- Use of boxes for emphasis or to highlight important text can be effective.
- A Reading Pen may be useful for unfamiliar words.
- Supply screen reading software.

Provision of instructions

- Give instructions one at a time.
- Communicating instructions slowly and clearly in, if possible, a quiet location.
- Give concise and direct instructions.
- Demonstrate and supervise tasks and projects.
- Taking notes and then checking them.
- Asking instructions to be repeated back, to confirm that the instruction has been understood correctly.
- Provide a memo outlining a plan of action.
- Use a tape recorder or dictaphone to record important instructions, where appropriate and safe to do so.
- Backing up multiple instructions in writing or with diagrams – mind mapping.

Difficulty with reading and writing

- Allow plenty of time to read and complete tasks.
- Examine other ways of giving the same information to avoid reading.
- Discuss the use of audio recorders.
- Use speech to text software if appropriate (according to role requirements).
- Use mind-mapping software.

Selection/promotion assessments

- Additional time should be considered for examinations/tests.
- Provide a reader if required and appropriate.
- Re-formatting the exercise or background information to ease understanding.
- Provide advice on techniques in note taking, revision and sitting exams.

Organising workflow

- Use of a wall planner.
- Prioritise important tasks.
- Create daily, dated “To Do” list.
- Use diaries.
- Writing a layout for regular tasks with appropriate prompts - for example for meetings or taking notes.
- Allow extra time for unforeseen occurrences.
- Build planning time into each day.

Short-term memory

- Use diagrams, mind maps and flowcharts.
- Check back understanding.
- Use mnemonic devices and acronyms.
- Use multi-sensory learning techniques such as recording material on to an audio recorder and play back whilst re-reading.
- Provision of appropriate computer software.
- Provision of a calculator.

Spelling capacity

- Proof reading of work.
- Spell checker on computers/portable checker.
- Personal dictionary.

Dyslexia Policies



Officials need to ensure that their Fire and Rescue Service has an adequate policy/guidance outlining their responsibilities and actions in dealing with and supporting individuals who may be dyslexic. As with all such policies each service will want to have it in their own format and words.

Good practice and experience indicates that it should include:

- A statement from the Service or Authority that it will seek to support those with dyslexia or other learning difficulty.
- Reference to the current Equality Act (2010)
- Reference to appropriate websites or sources of information
- Reference to Access to Work and procedures to access funding
- The Services or Authorities commitment to make, where appropriate, reasonable adjustments to a selection stage in order to support the individual where dyslexia has been identified in advance.
- The Services or Authorities commitment not to see dyslexia as a barrier to entry to a role or to continuation within a role.
- That the Service or Authority will, where appropriate, make reasonable adjustments to the work environment/job role to support an individual with dyslexia in undertaking their duties.
- A dyslexic person will often have particular strengths and that the Service or Authority will help support the individual in reaching their full potential
- The Service or Authority will ensure, wherever possible, that an individual with dyslexia is supported in terms of meeting specific developmental needs relating to organisational/role requirements.
- The Service or Authority commitment to provide reasonable adjustments when individuals are undergoing assessment for recruitment or promotion.
- The Services or Authorities plans to raise general awareness and understanding of the condition and provide appropriate training for all members of staff.
- The individual who is supported in terms of their specific learning difficulties should make a commitment that they will engage with the assessment process (as necessary) to diagnose the condition fully.
- The individual should engage with the reasonable adjustments which have been made to their work environment/job role.

Useful Websites and Contact Details



FBU Education

www.fbueducation.org

British Dyslexia Association

www.bdaDyslexia.org.uk

Dyslexia Scotland

www.Dyslexiascotland.org.uk

Dyslexia Wales

www.Dyslexiawales.com

Northern Ireland Dyslexia Association

www.nida.org.uk

Access to Work Northern Ireland

www.nidirect.gov.uk

Dyslexia Action

www.Dyslexiaaction.org.uk

Being Dyslexic

www.beingdyslexic.co.uk

BBC Skillswise

www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/tutors

Department for Education and Learning Northern Ireland – (Access to Work)

www.delni.gov.uk/das

University for Industry

www.ufi.com

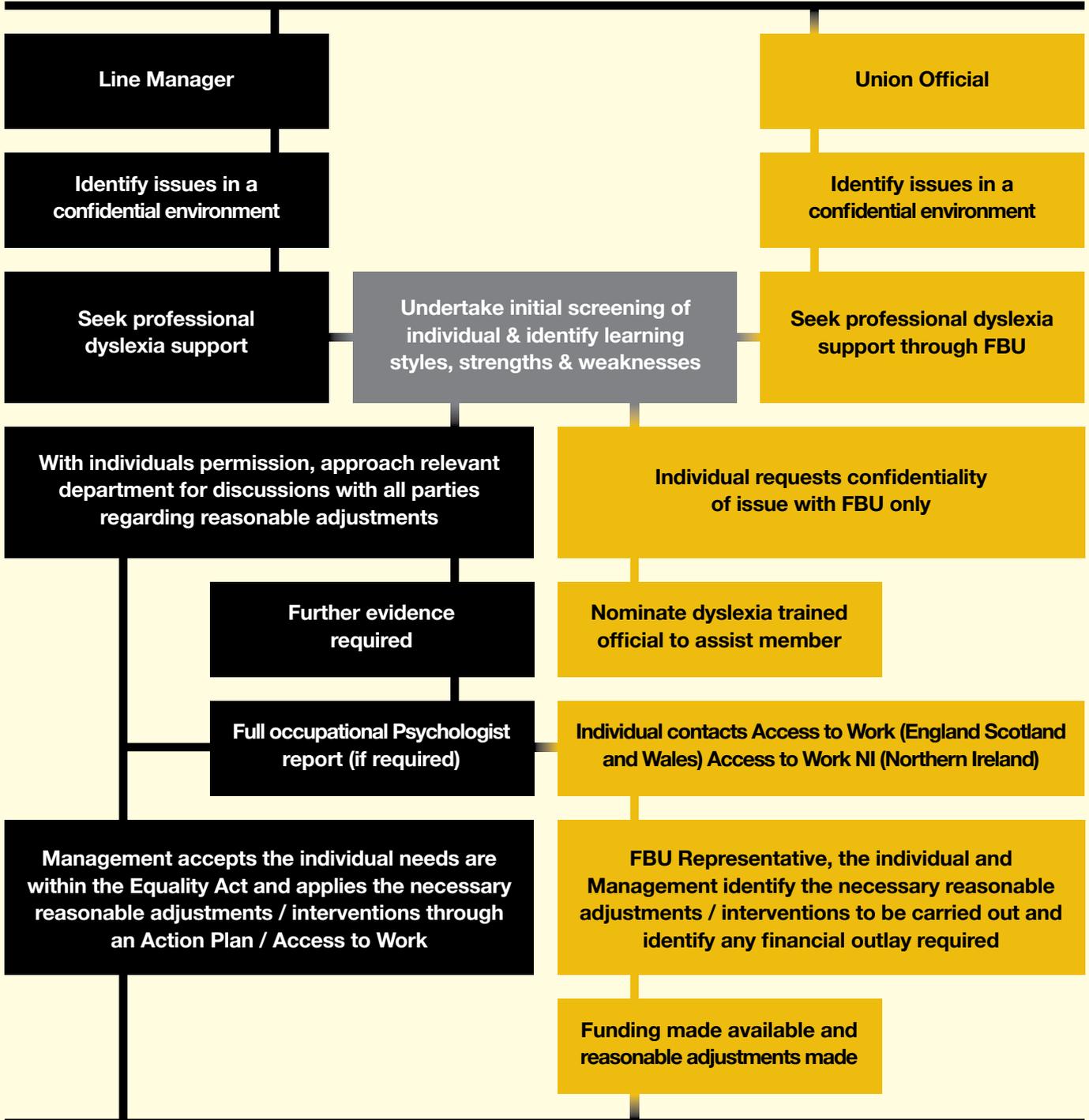
Access to Work

www.gov.uk/access-to-work

Dyslexia Flowchart



Individual discloses that they suspect they may be dyslexic



- Ongoing evaluation of the individuals requirements of adjustments
- Mentoring support systems put in place
- Dyslexia awareness training delivered within organisation

Appendix



Dyslexia - Fire & Rescue Service Draft Example Policy

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Appendix



1.0 Purpose of document

The instruction summarises the organisational policy on the management of staff with dyslexia (or other related specific learning difficulties). This document also seeks to provide practically based guidance regarding how someone with dyslexia can most effectively be assessed, supported and developed. In addition, indicators are provided regarding how the work environment and/or individual role can be adjusted to assist an individual with dyslexia.

Whilst the focus of this instruction is principally dyslexia it is also relevant to consider conditions that are related but do not fall directly under the label of dyslexia – regarding, for example, dyspraxia, dyscalculia or general literacy issues. Consideration of dyslexia can therefore be seen in the context of other specific learning difficulties (see section 4.0 for definition of dyslexia and 12.0 for definitions of other specific learning difficulties)

2.0 Management of policy

This policy will be overseen by (Department/Individual) to ensure that the policy is being adhered to and continues to meet organisational needs, current legislation and best practice.

Any instance of dyslexia, or suspected dyslexia, should be considered initially with (Department). A record of the assessment decision and any casework in respect of employees with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties, as well as relevant documentation, is kept by the (Department) in the instances of trainees at the Training Centre.

3.0 Commitment

The (F&RS) makes the following commitment regarding the issue of dyslexia:

- The (F&RS) will seek to support those with dyslexia or other learning difficulty, basing the support provided on clearly defined individual needs. A dyslexic person will often have particular talents as well as difficulties. The Authority will help release the potential of such employees.

- The (F&RS) will not see dyslexia/learning need as a bar to entry to a role or to continuation within a role.
- The (F&RS) will, where appropriate, make reasonable adjustments to a selection stage to support the individual where dyslexia has been identified in advance.

The (F&RS) will, where appropriate, make reasonable adjustments to the work environment/job role to support an individual with dyslexia in undertaking their duties and responsibilities.

- The (F&RS) will ensure, wherever possible, that an individual with dyslexia is supported in terms of meeting specific developmental needs relating to organisational/role requirements.
- The (F&RS) will seek to raise general awareness and understanding of the condition of dyslexia amongst staff groups through appropriate media. As a companion to these points, the individual who is supported in terms of their specific learning difficulties should make the following commitment, accepting that assessment and any subsequent development activities arising will be voluntary:
 - The individual will engage with the assessment process (as necessary) to diagnose the condition fully.
 - The individual will engage with reasonable adjustments, which are made to their work environment/job role.

4.0 Understanding the condition of dyslexia

It is estimated that around 10% of the population has dyslexia, 4% of whom can be categorised as having severe symptoms. Often the condition is defined as difficulty with reading, writing and numeracy. However these difficulties tend to be surface symptoms of underlying difficulties with short-term memory, information processing, perceptual, spatial and motor skills. Additional surface symptoms include difficulties in personal organisation and time keeping. In the workplace, these symptoms may be exacerbated when employees are put under pressure.

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4.1 The problem of undiagnosed dyslexia

Often the individual reaches adulthood having experienced a range of difficulties but without any formal diagnosis. This may in turn give rise to a range of negative emotions such as low self-esteem and confidence, anger, anxiety and confusion.

The symptoms of dyslexia, if not understood or diagnosed, may produce perceptions from colleagues and managers of the individual being perhaps less effective or unengaged. The person may become withdrawn or oversensitive and may, overall, possibly be seen as not fitting in.

It is only when dyslexia is diagnosed that such behaviours and difficulties may be explained and understood by the person themselves and others. A range of adjustments may be made to support the individual and alleviate problems. Often such adjustments relate to the different ways that those with dyslexia learn, understand, process information and solve problems.

4.2 The strengths of individuals with dyslexia

with dyslexia and it has been demonstrated in the (F&RS) that staff with dyslexia are certainly capable of becoming successful senior managers. Indeed, staff with dyslexia will often have strengths in other areas - such as creativity, lateral thinking, trouble shooting, oral skills, processing information holistically, (sometimes) good visual skills and intuitive thinking. Often people with dyslexia have been able to compensate, by one means or another, and no longer have difficulties associated with the condition.

5.0 Recognising dyslexia symptoms

People with dyslexia will not all exhibit the same characteristics, nor to the same degree. The severity of dyslexia is likely to vary between individuals. The condition may manifest itself in a number of ways:

- Often late learning to read, but in most cases eventually successful
- Difficulty with mental arithmetic
- Difficulty learning/reciting sequences such as months of the year, multiplication tables
- Slow in learning material presented solely in verbal or written form.
- Slow speed of information processing.
- A discrepancy between academic achievement and performance in practical problem solving and/or verbal skills.
- Some initial difficulty in detecting rhyme.
- Difficulty with paired associate learning (i.e. associating a label with an object).
- Excessive misspelling in written work, including errors such as confusion in letter order.
- Problems organising work.
- Difficulty with naming tasks.
- An aversion to writing notes or using excessive note-taking.
- Evidence of working memory deficit on tasks such as taking telephone numbers or messages.
- Forgetting some of a series of instructions or carrying them out in the wrong order.
- A tendency to talk rather than listen as a strategy for restricting the input of information.

Note that these characteristics do not necessarily indicate dyslexia, nor would a person with dyslexia necessarily display all of the above.

Since the implementation of EA and subsequent focus on dyslexia has become evident that a number of symptoms are most prevalent organisationally; these include:

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- Difficulty in following instructions from managers
- Difficulty in learning information/procedures rapidly
- Difficulty in multi-tasking across a number of activities
- Difficulty in responding under pressure
- Having to work/study harder than colleagues
- Needing to practise more than colleagues
- Organisational problems in terms of managing deadlines/appointments
- Interpersonal issues in terms of effective management of relations

A brief diagnostic checklist is available at the British Dyslexia Association (<http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/adultchecklist.html>) for staff who wishes to review dyslexia for themselves. However, any formal diagnosis can only be made through a qualified practitioner.

6.0 Legal context

The Equality Act 2010 (EA) gives rights to disabled people who have, or have had, a disability which makes it difficult for them to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Under the EA disability is defined as:

“A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”. .Long term has been interpreted as lasting or expected to last at least 12 months.

A disability can arise from a wide range of impairments which can be developmental such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or other specific learning difficulties. Under the EA it is unlawful for an employer to treat a disabled person, less favourably, simply because of their disability. This type of direct discrimination is unlawful and cannot be justified.

It is also unlawful for an employer to treat a disabled person less favourably for a reason related to their disability without justification. An employer has a duty

under the EA to make reasonable adjustments to prevent a disabled person from being placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to persons who are not disabled by any physical feature of the premises, or by any provision, criteria or practice of the employer.

The duty applies to all aspects of employment, including recruitment and selection, training, transfer, career development and retention.

Failure to make a reasonable adjustment to a policy, procedure or practice or to a physical feature of a workplace where this is placing a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage is unlawful and cannot be justified. Possible adjustments - in the context of dyslexia - are referred to below (section 9.0).

The employment provisions of the DDA 1995 did not apply to Firefighters until 1 October 2004.

7.0 Assessment/identification of dyslexia/ other learning difficulties and confidentiality

In an organisational context, the existence (or possible existence) of dyslexia and/or other learning difficulties may be revealed either at initial entry stage or when an individual is already in post. Commonly, the condition or difficulties associated with these conditions may be disclosed voluntarily by the individual themselves (see 7.1 below), identified prior to a selection or promotion process (see 7.2 below) or identified by a line manager (or other) possibly through performance management or development processes (see 7.3 below). In all instances the assessment will be undertaken with the individual's consent by the (Department) unless completed previously.

Those involved in any case or potential case of dyslexia and/or other learning difficulties must maintain an approach that maximises confidentiality and is also sensitive to the needs of the individual concerned. Whilst an open approach is encouraged – to facilitate support and understanding – the individual must not be pressurised to reveal any diagnosis.

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Under the Data Protection Act, the confidentiality of an employee's personal and medical information must be safeguarded. Disclosure of a disability should only occur when:

- Absolutely necessary.
- With the explicit consent of the individual.
- It is necessary to facilitate the person's ability to do the job.

Medical and personal information must be recorded in a way that does not render it vulnerable to accidental disclosure. Under the Data Protection Act, the employee should know who will have access to this information and have agreed to this in writing.

Managers should note that for anyone with a disability including someone with dyslexia:

- When an employee has told, in confidence, a member of HR Advisory services, their line manager, or occupational health about the disability, the employer is deemed under the EA to know that the person is disabled.
- If an adjustment is necessary the employee's line manager will need to know the adjustment is required but neither they nor colleagues need to be told the precise medical reasons.

7.1 Where an individual has identified themselves as having dyslexia, or believes they may have dyslexia:

- For a number of reasons an individual may come to believe that they have dyslexia (or perhaps other specific learning difficulty). This may arise because of a long standing difficulty with carrying out some tasks at work or elsewhere - or because they perceive they share symptoms with colleagues/relatives/friends who have been diagnosed with dyslexia.

In addition, individuals may have previously been diagnosed, perhaps many years before, and wish to have an updated review of their condition.

- Individuals may therefore put themselves forward for diagnosis if the condition has not been confirmed. Formal assessment will be conducted by (Department) (e-mail:). From this the appropriate support route can be determined for the individual, should this prove necessary.
- Assessment will normally include a diagnostic interview, cognitive capacity review, reading and spelling assessment, memory review and other relevant testing signified as relevant by the initial symptoms.



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7.2 Where an assessment procedure (selection or promotion) is used:

- An individual's involvement in a selection or promotion process for a job role is often a point at which an individual declares a suspicion of having dyslexia or declares that they have received a diagnosis of dyslexia previously (perhaps during education). In particular, this is often to seek relevant adjustment to the assessment process to reflect specific needs or to anticipate needs that might arise should the individual achieve selection to the role.

Note that diagnosis before 18 should ideally be confirmed with an adult assessment subsequently.

- The Authority will ensure that selection, transfer and progression processes are devised around selection/assessment criteria specifically relevant to the target job role, and implemented according to best practice. These criteria (which may or may not be relevant to dyslexia) should be reviewed regularly for relevance to the role. The assessment process should not seek to identify dyslexia or other learning needs if that condition has no clear relevance to the role.
- Where an individual who has been formally diagnosed with dyslexia is undergoing an assessment process (selection or promotion) consideration must be given to making reasonable adjustments to this process (such as through modifying time limits, providing a reader, offering the opportunity to take notes or adjusting exercise presentation style) to ensure that the process is fair and takes account of the impact of the condition, under the direction of the (Department). This adjustment will, where possible/relevant, be informed by recommendations provided following formal diagnosis. Any adjustment must always be based on consultation with the individual themselves. The nature of the adjustment should be recorded and stored in a database kept with the Occupational Psychology Unit.
- In the case of individuals seeking to enter the organisation (particularly those applying for Firefighter roles), applicants will be encouraged to declare a previous diagnosis – to enable review of appropriate

adjustments. For cost reasons, diagnostic assessment would not however be offered to an individual not currently employed by (F&RS); however suggestions of where assessment may be obtained externally will be offered.



7.3 Where a line manager (or other) considers an individual's workplace performance is being affected by dyslexia:

- Observation of relevant symptoms (described in section 5.0), perhaps identified through performance management systems or during development interventions, may suggest an individual's workplace performance is being affected by dyslexia. Clearly dyslexia would be only one option to explain such characteristics.
- The individual should be consulted regarding these observations. Sensitivity and confidentiality regarding the discussion of these points is paramount.
- The option of a formal assessment for dyslexia should be considered and encouraged, with an action plan developed from this where appropriate.

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8.0 Supporting the individual

If an individual has been diagnosed as having dyslexia, a clear developmental action plan, if necessary, should be formulated between that individual, his or her line manager (Department). The developmental action plan is provided for employees having difficulties. Not all employees with dyslexia will have difficulties or will necessarily need a developmental action plan. Further detail on how this action plan can be put in place is described in the (Guidance note) This may involve input from an appropriate learning needs tutor, agreed changes to systems and procedures which are agreed to be dyslexia unfriendly to the job (e.g. through IT), recommended development techniques or a training course/programme. This support may in part be achieved through the government programme **'Access to Work'** which offers practical employment assistance and funding. Desired outcomes arising from this development should be clearly set out. Often the individual themselves will have approaches that have assisted him/her previously.

Adequate time should be built in to achieve developmental goals. The action plan should be relevant to an individual's role and not be unnecessarily onerous. Progress against this action plan should be monitored at regular intervals.

9.0 Reasonable adjustments within the workplace for individuals with dyslexia/ other specific learning difficulties

A range of initiatives can be undertaken to adjust the nature of an individual's role/work environment and ensure achievement of departmental/ organisational goals. Some such examples are as follows:-

9.1 Provision of training programmes/ briefings/presentations

All training courses, briefings or presentations should be considered in terms of the impact they will have on individuals with dyslexia (though these points may also apply more generally):

- Presentations and instructional methods should incorporate 'multisensory' techniques – in other words, diagrams and colour should be used to supplement written or verbal explanations as much as possible; demonstrations ('of how it should be done') and practice (to encourage learning and skill development) should also be incorporated.
- As far as possible a person with dyslexia should not be 'put on the spot' - whilst they certainly can think on their feet, there is the danger that a 'classroom' context encourages any previous feelings of low self esteem to return.

9.2 Provision of written materials

Any written materials should be considered in terms of their impact on people with dyslexia (though, again, these points may apply more generally):

- Policy documents, procedures, rules, regulations, etc. all need logical

presentation/structuring and good indexation.

- Printed text should not be justified on the right side.
- Important points should be highlighted.
- Summaries should be included.
- Readability levels need consideration and should be relevant to job role.
- Unnecessary jargon or uncommon words should not be used, although it is recognized that technical language may be necessary.
- To accommodate possibly limited memory skills, people with dyslexia would benefit from material being as manageable as possible - by, for example, putting information into smaller chunks.
- Provide information on coloured paper (find out which colour helps the person to read best).
- Use speech to text software where possible.

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9.3 Provision of instructions

Individuals may be assisted in following instructions by:

- Being given instructions one at a time.
- Managers communicating instructions slowly and clearly in, if possible, a quiet location.
- Managers giving concise and direct instructions.
- Having a manager demonstrate and supervise tasks and projects.
- Taking notes and then checking them.
- Asking instructions to be repeated back, to confirm that the instruction has been understood correctly.
- Writing a memo outlining a plan of action.
- Use a tape recorder or dictaphone to record important instructions, where appropriate and safe to do so.
- Backing up multiple instructions in writing or with diagrams.

9.4 Difficulty with reading and writing

- Allow plenty of time to read and complete the task.
- Examine other ways of giving the same information to avoid reading.
- Discuss the material with the employee, giving summaries and/or key points.
- Utilise information prepared in other formats for example audio or videotape, drawings, diagrams and flowcharts.
- Use tape recorders.
- Use speech to text software.

9.5 Selection/promotion assessments

Reasonable adjustments for selection/promotion tests may include the following:

- Wherever possible additional time should be considered for examinations/tests.
- Provide reader if required.
- Re-formatting the exercise or background information to ease usability/understanding
- Provision of advice on techniques in note taking, revision and sitting exams may also be of assistance through courses/booklets.

9.6 Organising workflow

Organisation of work may be enhanced in the following ways:

- Using a wall planner.
- Prioritising important tasks.
- Creating a daily dated **“To Do”** list.
- Using diaries.
- Writing a layout for regular tasks with appropriate prompts - for example for meetings or taking notes.
- Allowing extra time for unforeseen occurrences.
- Building planning time into each day.

9.7 Short term memory

Recall of information may be achieved through the following approaches:

- Using diagrams, mind maps and flowcharts.
- Checking back understanding.
- Using mnemonic devices and acronyms.
- Using multi-sensory learning techniques such as reading material onto a tape machine and then playing it back whilst re-reading.
- Using computer software.
- Using a calculator.

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9.8 Spelling capacity

Spelling may be improved in the following ways:

- Proof reading of work.
- Spell checker on computers/portable checker.

10.0 Reducing stress and building confidence in those with dyslexia

As far as possible it is important to avoid causing stress in those with dyslexia/related conditions, and to work to reduce worry and anxiety:

- Whenever possible, give plenty of advance notice of tasks, rather than dropping a sudden deadline on dyslexic staff.
- Provide advance written notes if possible of a meeting or training situation. They may have particular strategies for learning or understanding information that may take a little time to work through.
- Offer staff guidance and support on difficult tasks (without giving the appearance of doubting their abilities).
- Try not to put pressure on staff, e.g. by watching or 'hovering', or by showing impatience. If possible, do not press them to take fast notes at meetings or to write down rushed instructions.
- Let staff know that you are available to help them out and answer their questions. Try not to look impatient if they ask for help when you are busy. If you cannot help immediately, arrange a time to do so as soon as possible. Try to increase the self-confidence of staff and their belief in their abilities:
- Give praise and show appreciation whenever relevant.
- If possible provide feedback one-to-one rather than in a group setting – especially more negative feedback.
- Show confidence in their abilities.
- Recognize and acknowledge their talents and their strengths

11.0 Awareness briefings for managers/colleagues

Organisational understanding of dyslexia and related conditions enables staff with such conditions to be supported effectively by the Authority and for the individual to manage symptoms to maximise work performance. There exist two main forms of awareness briefings, though the precise design would, of course, be tailored to meet particular situational needs.

- Specific team briefing:** Organisational experience reveals significant benefit to the individual diagnosed with dyslexia and his or her team if a briefing is offered to managers or other colleagues within the individual's immediate work group. This would normally be conducted by the (Department) and should ideally be completed shortly after a diagnosis or whenever the individual enters a new team/role. The wishes of the individual as to how this is conducted, or if it is conducted at all, would be paramount.
- Generic briefing:** In addition to individual-specific briefings, more generic manager workshops on dyslexia can provide a good general grounding in the management role. Such briefings would normally be undertaken by Equality and Diversity Training.



12.0 Other specific learning difficulties

concerned with dyslexia, other conditions may also be revealed. This may arise from dyslexia review where diagnostic criteria for dyslexia are not met but other difficulties in learning are shown. (See section 3)

Example Risk Assessment



	Hazards	Significant Outcomes	Existing Control Measures	Population Exposed	Likelihood 1-10	Severity 1-10	Risk Rating (Severity & Likelihood)	Additional Control Measures Required?	Priority (High, Moderate, Tolerable, Negligible)
Example 1	INTERPRETATION OF INFORMATION & INSTRUCTION Individual incorrectly interpreting written, verbal and visual information / instructions:	A range of physical injuries including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manual Handling. • Slips, trips, falls. • Falls from height. • Cuts & abrasions. • Impact injuries. • Crush injuries. • Burns & scalds. • Inhalation of fumes and particles. • Electric shock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODPM Document: Medical & Occupational Evidence for Recruitment & Retention in the Fire & Rescue Service - Sept 2004. • Procedure for Case Specific Risk Assessment, Case Management Assessment and Management Review. • Individual required to provide evidence of dyslexia from the Dyslexia Institute or other relevant professional body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual suffering from dyslexia • Operational staff • Support Staff • Other agencies • Public 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine activities. 				2	4	8	No	Tolerable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational training. 				2	8	16	No	Tolerable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational incidents. 				2	10	20	No	Tolerable
	Note: The risk analysis is based on 3 categories above and assumes the most severe potential.		• AND/OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual to receive screening via F&RS. A report will be generated and follow-up actions/further assessments may be required and/or advised. • Reasonable adjustments considered based screening or assessment reports. • Occupational health assessment prior to any change of role. • Training. • Instruction. • Supervision. 						

Example Risk Assessment



	Hazards	Significant Outcomes	Existing Control Measures	Population Exposed	Likelihood 1-10	Severity 1-10	Risk Rating (Severity & Likelihood)	Additional Control Measures Required?	Priority (High, Moderate, Tolerable, Negligible)
Example 2	SPEED OF PROCESSING INFORMATION & INSTRUCTION Time due to increase time taken to interpret written, verbal and visual information / instruction during:	A range of physical injuries including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manual Handling. • Slips, trips, falls. • Falls from height. • Cuts & abrasions. • Impact injuries. • Crush injuries. • Burns & scalds. • Inhalation of fumes and particles. • Electric shock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODPM Document: Medical & Occupational Evidence for Recruitment & Retention in the Fire & Rescue Service - Sept 2004. • Procedure for Case Specific Risk Assessment, Case Management Assessment and Management Review. • Individual required to provide evidence of dyslexia from the Dyslexia Institute or other relevant professional body. AND/OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual to receive screening via F&RS. A report will be generated and follow-up actions/further assessments may be required and/or advised. • Reasonable adjustments considered based screening or assessment reports. • Occupational health assessment prior to any change of role. • Training. • Instruction. • Supervision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual suffering from dyslexia • Operational staff • Support Staff • Other agencies • Public 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine activities. 				2	4	8	No	Tolerable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational training. 				2	8	16	No	Tolerable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational incidents. 				2	10	20	No	Tolerable

Example Risk Assessment



Example 3

Hazards	Significant Outcomes	Existing Control Measures	Population Exposed	Likelihood 1-10	Severity 1-10	Risk Rating (Severity & Likelihood)	Additional Control Measures Required?	Priority (High, Moderate, Tolerable, Negligible)
<p>ABSORBING & RETAINING INFORMATION & INSTRUCTION</p> <p>Individual experiencing difficulties absorbing and retaining written, verbal and visual information / instruction affecting ability to perform tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine activities. • Operational training. • Operational incidents. 	<p>A range of physical injuries including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manual Handling. • Slips, trips, falls. • Falls from height. • Cuts & abrasions. • Impact injuries. • Crush injuries. • Burns & scalds. • Inhalation of fumes and particles. • Electric shock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODPM Document: Medical & Occupational Evidence for Recruitment & Retention in the Fire & Rescue Service - Sept 2004. • Procedure for Case Specific Risk Assessment, Case Management Assessment and Management Review. • Individual required to provide evidence of dyslexia from the Dyslexia Institute or other relevant professional body. <p>AND/OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual to receive screening via F&RS. A report will be generated and follow-up actions/further assessments may be required and/or advised. • Reasonable adjustments considered based screening or assessment reports. • Occupational health assessment prior to any change of role. • Training. • Instruction. • Supervision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual suffering from dyslexia • Operational staff • Support Staff • Other agencies • Public 					
				2	4	8	No	Tolerable
				2	8	16	No	Tolerable
				2	10	20	No	Tolerable

Example Risk Assessment



	Hazards	Significant Outcomes	Existing Control Measures	Population Exposed	Likelihood 1-10	Severity 1-10	Risk Rating (Severity & Likelihood)	Additional Control Measures Required?	Priority (High, Moderate, Tolerable, Negligible)
Example 4	<p>SEQUENCING & ORGANISATION</p> <p>Individual experiencing difficulties in organisation and carrying out tasks in the correct sequence (including directional difficulties):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine activities. • Operational training. • Operational incidents. 	<p>A range of physical injuries including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manual Handling. • Slips, trips, falls. • Falls from height. • Cuts & abrasions. • Impact injuries. • Crush injuries. • Burns & scalds. • Inhalation of fumes and particles. • Electric shock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODPM Document: Medical & Occupational Evidence for Recruitment & Retention in the Fire & Rescue Service - Sept 2004. • Procedure for Case Specific Risk Assessment, Case Management Assessment and Management Review. • Individual required to provide evidence of dyslexia from the Dyslexia Institute or other relevant professional body. <p>AND/OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual to receive screening via F&RS. A report will be generated and follow-up actions/further assessments may be required and/or advised. • Reasonable adjustments considered based screening or assessment reports. • Occupational health assessment prior to any change of role. • Training. • Instruction. • Supervision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual suffering from dyslexia • Operational staff • Support Staff • Other agencies • Public 					
					2	4	8	No	Tolerable
					2	8	16	No	Tolerable
					2	10	20	No	Tolerable