Strategic Support of PERSONAL ORGANISATION IN ADULTS

Dyslexia Action
Training and Professional Development

Study Skills and Personal Organisation

- An essential part of study skills involves establishing the time that is available and estimating the time particular study tasks will take.

- Personal organisation is closely connected to memory and problems with sequencing, frequently experienced by individuals with dyslexia and literacy-related difficulties. If memory is overloaded with facts, dates, times etc., then the sequencing required in organisational skills becomes more of a challenge.

- Effective study skills practice therefore requires strategies to assist in planning a structured and organised framework within which it is possible to manage everyday activities and studies in a coherent and systematic fashion.

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Reflective Practice

- When considering an individual's personal organisation it is useful for the tutor/trainer to work with the learner to understand their personal challenges and strengths.

- It is important to establish what the learner already finds useful in planning their time. They may well be exceptionally organised or rely heavily on technology, in which case their strengths must be developed and used within any study plans.

- Others may have tried strategies that have not been successful, or be concerned or daunted about trying to organise themselves.

- It is important to support the learner to gain a metacognitive self-understanding about how and when they work best.

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Study Planners

- Organising time with a study planner is fundamental in helping the learner to establish organisation and routine to their lives.

- Planners also help the tutor/ trainer to monitor the progress or otherwise of the learner.

- Organisers can be designed for different time-spans depending upon the requirements of the learner (e.g. weekly and termly planners may be useful for introducing the concept of establishing a structure in study time for those individuals who are particularly disorganised).

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9					Working all day
	Gym				
10		Lecture MOD1111	Working till 2.00	Gym	
		BioMed			
11		Rm 26			
12	Lecture TEA5678			Lecture LEA1234	
	Rm 100			Rm 3 Smith Bldg	
1		Seminar MOD1111		Group Presentation	
				15 mins	
2					
3	Laboratory Practice		Group practice	Helping at	
	Lb 6		for presentation	Open Day	
4		Start work on Lab			
		Report			
5		Research			

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Study Planners: Key Objectives

Study planners help to meet key objectives for study skills, such as:

- Time management, estimation and self-regulation

- Breaking down tasks into 'small achievable' goals

- Prioritisation

- Relieving 'overload' on learners' working memory by creating materials that are visual, structured, accessible and therefore memorable

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Study Planners: Design

- In designing the planners, it is useful to discuss options such a preference for Word or Excel documents, colour-coding for different modules/units, priorities, etc. and likes/dislikes regarding technology.

- As some individuals are fearful of being tied to planning / or a timetable, it can be useful to use the tool for further open discussion and reflection whilst developing their planner to consider issues or concerns. For example seeing how much leisure time they have / don't have during the week; what time they need to relax, go to bed, etc; best space to study in, why they have not been able to previously organise themselves.

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Assistive technology: organisation and planning

- On-line calendars (e.g. Google Calendar or Outlook)

- Priority / task list apps

- Alarms and pop-up reminders

- Mind-map planners

- Computer file storage systems

- Cloud storage systems for sharing and easily accessing computer data files

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