

What is Dyscalculia?

Disability Advice and Support

**Student Services . . .
we're supporting you.**

The official definition of dyscalculia is:

"Dyscalculia is a condition that affects the ability to acquire arithmetical skills. Dyscalculic learners may have difficulty understanding simple number concepts, lack an intuitive grasp of numbers, and have problems learning number facts and procedures. Even if they produce a correct answer or use a correct method, they may do so mechanically and without confidence" (DfES, 2001).

If you are dyscalculic, you might struggle with the size and order of numbers, judging time or dealing with money. You have probably hated everything to do with numbers all your life, and have poor self-esteem about them.

Dyscalculia is nothing to do with intelligence. It is part of the diversity of human beings: we are not all alike. But the label 'dyscalculic' can be useful. It enables you to get the right kind of support. You are as capable of getting a good degree as any other student.

Positive aspects of dyscalculia

Most books and web sites on dyscalculia focus on difficulties. Dyscalculic people often have strengths as well, such as:

- creativity
- strategic thinking
- practical ability
- problem-solving
- love of words
- intuitive thinking

Some problem areas

Arithmetical issues

- understanding place value
- carrying out sums without a calculator
- working out money.

Reasoning problems

- moving from concrete to abstract
- following steps in a mathematical process.

Memory difficulties

- remembering what different signs/symbols mean
- remembering formulae or theorems
- recalling names, dates, times, phone numbers etc
- Reading problems
- reading and understanding maths books
- feeling that nothing makes sense
- relating printed questions to mathematical techniques.

General

- fluctuations in concentration and ability
- increased stress or fatigue
- anxiety and exasperation.

At University you may need to remind people of what will help you. Dyscalculia often overlaps with dyslexia. Dyslexia information is available in the Student Services Centre or online at dmu.ac.uk/disability

Dyscalculia does not have to ruin your life - it may try to, and others may unwittingly help it to, but you can hold it at bay; you can even beat it if you have the right sort of support. See the next page for DMU support services and the Maths Learning Centre contact details.

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How DMU can help you

The University is responsive to the needs of all dyscalculic students, and there are several routes to support:

Disability Advice and Support

We have disability officers responsible for dyscalculic students, who can:

- help you find out whether you might have dyscalculia
- help you to apply for special examination arrangements, and funding for learning support tutorials or equipment, if that applies to you.

You can see the disability officers at Student Services on the ground floor of Gateway House.

Telephone: (0116) 257 7595
Email: disability@dmu.ac.uk
Website: dmu.ac.uk/disability

Disability Advice and Support
Student Services
De Montfort University
The Gateway
Leicester
LE1 9BH

Counselling and Personal Support

Counselling can help with emotional aspects. To book a session, call in to

Student Services Reception
First Floor, Gateway House
Telephone (0116) 257 7602
Website: dmu.ac.uk/counselling

Personal tutors

It is also important to talk to your personal tutor, who can help to make sure your course tutors are aware of your needs.

Faculty Disability Co-ordinators

The Disability Co-ordinator for your Faculty is also available to help you. In some cases, this person is also the Faculty Manager, while in others, it is another member of staff. The list of Faculty disability contacts, correct as of February 2009, is:

Faculty of Art and Design

Rob Cummings
Telephone (0116) 250 6160
Email: rcummings@dmu.ac.uk

Faculty of Business and Law

Tracey Lee-Adams
Telephone (0116) 250 6292.
Email: tlee-adams@dmu.ac.uk

Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

Sarah Thomson
Telephone (0116) 257 7884
Email: sthomson@dmu.ac.uk

Faculty of Humanities

Donna Neal
Telephone (0116) 257 7003
Email: dneal@dmu.ac.uk

Faculty of Technology

Georgina Hill
Telephone (0116) 250 6114
Email: george@dmu.ac.uk

Library

Based in the Kimberlin Library, the Maths Learning Centre staff are all happy to help anyone understand any kind of maths or statistics. If you would like to meet them go to one of the Drop-in sessions 12.30pm-2.30pm weekdays during term time and exam time.

If you can't or don't want to come to the drop-in an initial, private, meeting can be arranged at another time, email fmwright@dmu.ac.uk. Alternatively, ask to see a member of the student support team.

Sources of further information

<http://ddig.lboro.ac.uk/pages/students.html>
www.danda.org.uk
www.brainhe.com
www.ldonline.org/indepth/math
www.dyscalculiainfo.org/

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