

**A Brief Summary of Research Findings Presented and Discussed in Martin N (2008) 'REAL services to assist university students who have Asperger syndrome', due for publication in May by NADP**

**4.6.1 Brief Summary of research based on feedback from 117 staff in various roles working with 110 students who have AS in 17 universities, with additional information from eight students and three of their mothers.**

**The author does not claim that this is a piece of emancipatory research as people with AS were not involved in the research design. The aim was to provide practitioners with information to help them to offer more effective services to students with AS. The work will be widely available this year and the author is willing to deliver staff development based on the research findings and extensive experience of working with students who have AS.**

**See Martin et al (2008) in your pack, for a descriptor of work by Madriaga et al (2008) and Beardon and Edmonds (2007) which more directly reflects the student voice and describes a means for universities to self assess the quality of their provision in relation to the requirements of individuals with AS.**

**A combination of questionnaires and interviews yielded a wealth of data which was subjected to thematic analysis and provided, in summary, the following results.**

**The reference number refers to the tables in the publication which give the fuller picture**

Reference	Title	Summary
4.1.1	Personnel Completing Questionnaires	Academic Science staff is the largest group, probably reflecting high numbers of students with AS on science courses. Dyslexia support staff attended and reported instances of students with dyslexia apparently manifesting signs of AS. A small number of residential services personnel attended despite the view that students with AS often require assistance from them.
4.1.2	Some Prior Knowledge of AS	59% the practitioners had some prior knowledge.
4.1.3	Source of Knowledge	Popular media and family contacts were the most common source of knowledge.
4.1.4	Prior Knowledge	Social difficulties /rigid behaviour were most frequently cited issues by practitioners, 16 commented on suspected undisclosed AS.
4.1.5	Did Staff Feel Adequately	59% felt inadequately prepared.

	Prepared	
4.1.6	Source and Effectiveness of Prior AS Knowledge	The conference held by the author was the most common source of information, and was judged to be effective.
4.1.7	Evaluation of Staff Development by Author	86% said this was excellent.
4.2.1	Is AS Increasing	57% feel that AS (including undiagnosed AS-14%) is increasing.
4.2.2	Age of Students	55% are below 20.
4.2.3	Student Gender	82% are male.
4.2.4	Student Ethnicity	96% are white British.
4.2.5	Route Into HE	60% arrived via the A Level route.
4.2.6	Student Outcome	8% failed.
4.2.7	Progression of Students	42% progressed to a higher qualification. 33% had difficulty gaining appropriate employment.
4.3.1	Course Distribution	74% science.
4.3.2	Science-Arts Distribution-Male	84% of male students were on science courses.
4.3.3	Science-Arts Distribution-Female	35% of female students were on science courses.
4.3.4	Courses -Arts	Art / design and history are preferred arts courses.
4.3.5	Courses-Science	Computers / maths are preferred science courses.
4.3.6	Courses Male	Computer science is the most frequent choice for males, followed by maths.
4.3.7	Courses Female	BA (unspecified) is the most frequent choice for females, followed by art and design.
4.3.8	Arts Courses-Gender Comparison	The preferred arts course for males is history, for females BA, unspecified, and followed by art / design.
4.3.9	Science Courses-Gender Comparison	The preferred science course for males is computers, for females, science –other (two choosing nutrition).
4.4.1	First Impressions	60% of staff first impressions were negative.
4.4.2	Changes Over Time	59% remained negative.
4.4.3	Details of First Impressions	Anxiety, challenging behaviour and communication problems were most frequently noted.
4.4.4	Details of Changes Over Time	Staff commented on getting used to students, but noted anxiety, depression and obsessive behaviour increasing over time.
4.4.5	Student Challenges Students/ Mothers/ Staff Comments	Social challenges were noted most frequently.

4.4.6	Social Challenges	Interacting with peers and coping with change were most frequently noted for both genders. Self-help skills were problematic in males.
4.4.7	Mixed Challenges	Organisation, anxiety and coping with change were most frequent for males and females.
4.4.8	Academic Challenges	Applying knowledge and accepting help was note most often for males and females.
4.5.1	Support Available.	54% of support included DO and others
4.5.2	Staff Views of Adequacy of Support	79% did not know whether support was adequate. Students making 'excessive demands' on service was described by some practitioners.
4.5.3	Effective Social Strategies	Clubs and Societies were the most effective, and some students described back up from clergy...
4.5.4	Effective Practical Strategies	Living at home with parents was the most effective.
4.5.5	Effective Academic Strategies	Dyslexia-study skills were most effective.
4.5.6	Living Arrangements	52% lived with parents.
4.5.7	Outcomes-Living Arrangements	3% of students who lived at home were unsuccessful compared to 8% who lived in halls.
4.5.8	Ineffective Social Strategies	Mentors without clear boundaries were most ineffective.
4.5.9	Ineffective Practical Strategies	Assuming self help skills was most ineffective.
4.5.10	Ineffective Academic Strategies	Vague and discouraging feedback was most ineffective.