

Issue 09 – January 2015



Best wishes for 2015 and welcome to the January edition of the Additional and Complex Needs newsletter from College Development Network.

If you would like to contribute an article or identify a feature that you would like to be included, please email lorna.peggie@cdn.ac.uk

College Development Network (CDN) Training Events

DART 2.1 Project - Disseminating Assistive Roles and Technology - a Jisc FE & Skills Project: Assessment for Assistive Technology

The first of two funded training days for staff in Scotland's colleges was held on Thursday 11 December 2014. Trevor Mobbs of Beaumont College set the context for the event explaining what is an assessment, why assess and what to assess. Participants were then introduced to examples of IT access software and hardware and case studies from Beaumont College, City of Glasgow College and the University of Dundee were shared. The session concluded with an opportunity to set priorities for sector development.

The second training day will be held on Wednesday 11 March 2015.



College Development Network (CDN) Workshops

Getting Up To Speed with Developments at National 1 and 2

Lecturers from West College Scotland took part in this workshop held on the Clydebank Campus. The workshop is designed for staff working with students at SCQF levels 1 and 2. Participants were familiarised with new and planned future developments in National 1 and 2 Qualifications. They then discussed issues and priorities relating to curriculum planning. The session concluded with an introduction to teaching approaches and resources designed for the delivery of national 1 and 2 units

Supporting Students with Autistic Spectrum Disorders

An online workshop was held with staff from the Lews Castle College campus of the UHI. The session aimed to increase awareness of the challenges faced by learners on the autistic spectrum along with strategies to improve the learning process and enhance the social integration of learners.

If you are interested in either of these workshops and would like more information or would like to discuss possible dates please contact lorna.peggie@cdn.ac.uk

We are also happy to discuss any other training requirements.

Planned Training Events

Scotland's Mental Health First Aid

This two day course will be held on Wednesday 21 and Thursday 22 January 2015 (1000 - 1600)

This popular and well established workshop will be of interest to any member of college staff working with staff or students. The knowledge presented and understanding developed in the workshop help to remove stigma and fear and to give confidence in approaching a person in distress and responding helpfully.

View programme and book online for [Scotland's Mental First Aid Course](#).

Equitable Admissions and Unconscious Bias

Monday 23 February 2015 (1030 - 1530)

This workshop will be relevant to all those involved with student admissions and guidance. The event will raise awareness of how unconscious bias can play a part in admissions and consider sector trends in admissions. It will also look at emerging practice in fair admissions and will provide guidance on equitable admissions.

View programme and book online for [Equitable Admissions and Unconscious Bias](#).

National Developments

EIS Highlights Scale of College ASN Cuts

The EIS has highlighted the significant impact of long term cuts to Further Education funding on Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision in Scotland's colleges. The EIS submitted Freedom of Information (FoI) requests to each college in Scotland asking key questions regarding each institution's ASN provision. The results show a significant decline, nationally, in the level of support available to students with ASN in Scotland's FE colleges – with significant regional differences in provision.

View the link to read the full article [EIS Highlights Scale of College ASN Cuts](#), which highlights the key findings of the EIS analysis of the college FOI returns.

British Sign Language (BSL)

Mark Griffin MSP introduced a Bill in the Scottish Parliament on Wednesday 29 October 2014 which aims to promote the use of British Sign Language (BSL), mainly by requiring BSL Plans (similar to Gaelic Language Plans at the moment) to be prepared and published by Scottish Ministers and listed public authorities, including colleges.

The Bill is at Stage One at the moment and the Education and Culture Committee has issued a call for evidence and highlighted a number of questions they want interested parties to respond to. View this link for further information on the [BSL bill](#).

Colleges Scotland has asked CDN to help them formulate a reply to the consultation and we are keen to hear from you.

We are particularly interested in finding out:

1. What has been your experience in providing for Deaf students who use BSL?
2. What has been your experience in providing for hearing-impaired students who do not use BSL?
3. Do you offer BSL classes at college, and if so, at what level?
4. Do you think your responsibilities under the Equality Act to make reasonable adjustments for students who are Deaf and hearing impaired will be affected in any way by the requirement to produce a BSL Plan?
5. Anything else you want to tell us?

The consultation ends on Monday 02 February 2015 and Colleges Scotland will have to disseminate a copy of their response to College Principals before that, so it would be great if you could get back to me by Friday 09 January 2015 at the latest.

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Learn BSL

If you would like to learn basic sign language or brush up on your skills you may find this website useful <http://www.signworldlearn.com/>

BRITE

We have been working with the Brite Initiative and with both the Scottish Government and the Scottish Funding Council to implement a plan to ensure that the valuable work of Brite is maintained for the benefit of learners across the college sector. From Spring 2015, CDN will take forward delivery of the PDA Inclusiveness: (Facilitating Strategies to Support Learners with Additional Needs at SCQF level 9), once the Brite Initiative closes. The PDA is designed to provide staff with the skills and knowledge so that they will be able to:

- devise strategies to support the learner
- assist in the design, delivery and review of individual learning environments
- undertake effective assessment of learners' additional support needs; and
- write reports that meet the relevant standard in relation to the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), or its equivalent, that is required by, for example, the Students Award Agency in Scotland (SAAS)

Full details of the course will be available on the CDN Professional Learning for Colleges Moodle site, which you can access through the front page of the CDN website. The course is available to candidates working in colleges and in universities across Scotland and outwith Scotland.

If you have any questions, please contact Geraldine Ratcliffe
geraldine.ratcliffe@cdn.ac.uk

Geraldine Ratcliffe
Manager, CDN

Producing Easy Read Documents

Inclusive Communication means sharing information in a way that everyone can understand. For students in colleges it means getting information and expressing themselves in ways that meet their needs. This is particularly relevant in relation to collecting equalities information as equality monitoring forms are not always accessible to a range of learners.

CDN has initiated a short-life working group of college practitioners to look at developing:

- an Easy Read version of the equalities monitoring form
- a version for ESOL learners
- a guidance leaflet and video to promote understanding of the need for and completion of equalities information.

We are hoping to pilot draft versions of all of these with groups of students and plan to have a finished product(s) by June 2015.

If you are considering reviewing how students can access information, these are some resources that you may find useful.

This video produced by [MENCAP](#) provides guidance on things to consider when making documents accessible.

For more detailed information follow this link to download a guidance document also produced by [MENCAP](#).

Text to Speech Software provides another method of accessing written information. These are some of the more commonly used pieces of software.

The free version of [Natural Reader](#) has many great features which can be viewed here.

It can convert any written text such as MS Word, Webpage, PDF files and e-mails into spoken words. Other great features are:

- it has a floating toolbar
- you can change reading voices and speed
- you don't have to copy and paste text like other text-to-speech software. Just select any text and press one hot key.
- it can magnify text - Simply scroll to the View menu and select Zoom In. This will magnify the text.
- font settings allow you to change the text font, font style and font size.
- it can also convert any written text into audio files such as MP3 or WAZ for a cd player or iPod.

Orato

To download [Orato](#) please refer to link.



- this straightforward text to speech application can be accessed from MyStudyBar which has been widely circulated round colleges.
- when downloaded to a USB drive it has the advantage that it can be carried with the student to any computer.
- you must first copy text to the clipboard.
- settings allow Orato to read either on demand or automatically when new text is added to the clipboard. Other options will display the text if required, with highlighting of the word or sentence being spoken.

Webinar

To ensure that documents are written in an accessible format for screen reading thought must be given to their design. Margaret MacKay of JISC recently delivered an excellent webinar on creating accessible information using Microsoft word. A recording of this webinar will shortly be available from the CDN webpages.

Support Protocols

Working effectively with partners to provide appropriate support for learners, continues to be a challenging but crucial aspect of meeting additional learning needs. In response to some recent enquiries it was helpful to share a range of resources that highlighted how colleges manage support. These were drawn together as part of the Profound and Complex Needs project. Though college titles may now be out of date, these examples of good practice still provide a useful basis for the review and/or development of protocols for managing this process. [Support protocol documentation](#).

Supporting Learners to Succeed, September 2014:

a thematic report by Education Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Funding Council on provision of services delivered by Scotland's colleges to support learners to succeed in their learning.

This report focuses on the actions taken by colleges to help learners resolve issues which are affecting their ability to turn up for classes, engage fully in learning and undertake assessments successfully. It explains the range of services and the relationships colleges have with other external bodies to provide support for learning.

Areas of positive practice included:

- college commitment to providing learners with support
- engagement with learner representatives to identify learner support needs and promote learner support services
- high level of commitment of staff who contribute to the support of learners.

Areas for development included:

- most colleges do not convey sufficiently to all staff, their collective role and contribution in supporting learners to complete their programme successfully and progress to a positive destination.
- some teaching staff do not apply a sufficient range of learning and teaching approaches to accommodate a diverse range of learner support needs within a class group setting.
- most colleges are not taking sufficient action to analyse and compare learner retention and success rates by disability at programme and subject area to inform further investigation and planning for improvement.
- overall, colleges are not taking sufficient opportunities to convey to Community Planning Partnerships, the support needs profiles of learners to assist future planning and to promote the work of colleges in supporting learners to succeed.

Follow this link to view the full report '[Supporting Learners to Succeed.](#)'

Maximising Learner Success in Scotland's Colleges, September 2014:

a thematic aspect report on provision in Scotland's Colleges by Education Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Funding Council

- colleges are not fully and effectively addressing the support needs of younger full-time learners and those from the most deprived areas.
- there is a lack of consistency across the sector in recognising *distance travelled* and in capturing relevant employment outcomes.
- many colleges fail to identify at an early stage the risk factors, particularly those associated with multi-deprivation, that may predispose learners to withdraw from college.

Follow this link to view the full report '[Maximising Learner Success in Scotland's Colleges](#)'

SQA



National 2

The current development at National 2 involves the review of existing Access 2 Units that do not form part of courses. This development also includes a suite of freestanding Employment Skills Units. The Unit Specifications for this suite of Freestanding Units will be published at the end of January 2015 and will be available, in full, for centres to deliver from August 2015.

National Literacy Units

For National Literacy Units at National 3, 4 or 5, a wide range of support is allowed when the four literacy skills are being assessed to help any disabled learners and learners with additional support needs (ASN), including various ICT applications.

Brian Raghoobur, an SQA Qualifications Development Manager, hosted a webinar focussing on the different kinds of support available in November 2014. This webinar was recorded and is available at the following link [National Literacy Units webinar](#).

SQA has recently published documents explaining how ICT can be used as a support in assessing writing skills, and in assessing reading skills. The two documents are available under the heading [Guidance: Using ICT in National Literacy Units](#).

SQA has recently published examples of candidate responses for reading and writing, mapped against the Assessment Standards for National Literacy Units at National 3 and National 4. These are available under the heading [exemplars/commentaries: meeting the Assessment Standards](#).

In November, SQA jointly delivered a workshop focussing on the use of ICT in National Literacy Units with CALL Scotland, at Education Scotland's National Literacy Network event. There are more events planned, open to all practitioners, with previous events filmed/archived on the CALL Scotland website. Please keep an eye on the site for details:

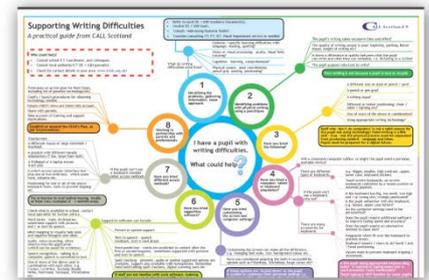
www.callscotland.org

Please remember that for National Literacy Units or for other subjects, centres can contact SQA directly via aarequests@sqa.org.uk for advice about what support might be possible for individual learners with specific needs.

CALL Scotland

Supporting Writing Difficulties

CALL Scotland is pleased to announce the release of a new resource; [Supporting Writing Difficulties: a practical guide](#). This is a step-by-step guide in the form of a question and answer 'checklist' helping you to identify problems and suggesting a range of technology focused solutions to support students who have a physical problem with writing. The guide is presented as an 'infograph' which describes a range of practical approaches.



A webinar explaining its use is scheduled for

Wednesday 14 January 2015 (1600 – 1620)

Follow this link to book a place on the [CALL webinars](#).

SCQF

Lunch and Learn



Attend a free lunchtime session to update or explore the benefits that SCQF can bring to your organisation. View here to find out more and book a place at the [SCQF lunchtime session](#).

College Credit Rating Project 2013/14 – West College Scotland

The Care Matters programme was designed and developed to meet a gap in the market. Follow this link to find out more about how [West College Scotland](#) engaged with the credit rating process for this programme.

TechDis: Celebrating Twelve Years of Inclusion Technology Advice

You might have heard that, due to a reshape of Jisc's customer services, Jisc TechDis will no longer operate as a distinct, separate service from 01 January 2015. Jisc are still committed to accessibility and inclusion, and you will still be able to get expert advice and guidance on inclusion and technology from them. Whilst we are sad to be closing, we're really pleased with what we have achieved over the past 12 years and we'd like to share some of our highlights with you.

There are resources that we're really proud of, focusing on how to use everyday technologies in a way that makes a big difference to disabled staff and students. We've covered the accessibility features in Windows, web accessibility, creating accessible documents and presentations and mobile learning. As technology has changed, we've added resources for mobile devices, and looked at the benefits of free and open source software. We have tried to ensure our format is simple (step-by-step guides and videos with an emphasis on pragmatic, low-cost ways to make your practice more inclusive).

We've been involved in some fantastic and meaningful projects. We worked with the Publishers Association on Publisher LookUp, making it easier for organisations to get electronic versions of textbooks. We've contributed regularly to high profile national events and more than a thousand other events with presentations, exhibitions and workshops showcasing innovation and promoting accessibility.

Of course we haven't done it alone. We've met some amazing people over the years and worked in partnership with dozens of organisations.

Finally, we'd like to thank you, our supporters and partners. We hope you've enjoyed it as much as we have. We would love to hear what your TechDis highlights are and invite you to add comments on how you have used the Techdis service over the last 12 years.

Please feel free to add a comment on the [Techdis blog](#).

With best wishes from the present TechDis team – Alana, Alistair, Allison, Emma, Jenny, Lisa, Lorna, Michael, Sal, Sue and Terry.

Jisc Customer Services Division Launches in 2015

From January 2015, Jisc is bringing its customer-facing teams, including Jisc RSC Scotland, in house in order to provide you with a more joined-up focused service. For the past 14 years Jisc have provided advice, guidance and expertise based within universities and colleges across the UK delivering digital solutions and services. Jisc is changing its approach but what isn't changing is the commitment to ensuring you receive solutions and access to specialist knowledge on digital technologies to support your organisation, informed by and relevant to your local context.

A nominated account manager, backed by a team of subject experts will provide you with a fully managed relationship, ensuring that you benefit from the full Jisc offer. The account manager team will operate locally to you, and will act as your route into the wealth of resource Jisc has available. Jisc's local teams will draw upon expertise from across the organisation and will have direct access to events, training, communications and marketing, sector intelligence and subject expertise to support you on:

- accessibility and inclusion
- teaching learning and assessment
- technology and the law
- online learning and the digital student experience
- technology to support enterprise
- research
- research data management
- scholarly communications
- end user learning resources engagement with digital resources
- strategy and business process in further education and skills
- systems, tools and information management.

In addition, you will also have access to the collective expertise and efforts of UK education and research through Jisc's innovation work. Jisc is very much owned by the community for the community, and solutions developed are co-designed with you to meet your needs. An example of this is the summer of student innovation, which saw learners creating their own solutions to enhance their learning experience.

Although the variety of individual services will disappear, Jisc's focus on practical support will remain. Finally, may we take this opportunity of thanking you for the energy, commitment, and support you have shown to Jisc RSC Scotland over the years, and we wish you every future success in moving forwards within the context of the new Jisc model.

More information about the changes is available on the Jisc website at:

www.jisc.ac.uk/about/national-and-regional-customer-services

Free Stuff

SnapTypeApp for iPad

This FREE app lets a student type directly into a work sheet and can be downloaded at [SnapTypeApp](#).

To use it:

- take a photo with the iPad of the paper worksheet
- tap the screen, a yellow box appears.
- tap the box, the keyboard appears. Type.
- if necessary, drag and drop the text box to better position it against the backdrop of the worksheet.
- adjust the text size slightly.
- take a screen shot to store a copy of the work and then print it out and/or share it with teacher.

For a student who struggles with handwriting but can manage a keyboard, this may be a way of including them in class activities.

Literacy and Numeracy Videos

Having problems convincing students that literacy and numeracy are important for work? These [Literacy and Numeracy videos](#) explain the skills needed in a range of private sector, public sector and self-employed jobs and also why these skills are important for job seeking.

How to Prevent Cyber Bullying

These short videos on how to [prevent cyber bullying](#) from stars of Eastenders give practical guidance on how to deal with or prevent cyber bullying.

College Development Network is a trading name of the Scottish Further Education Unit.

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