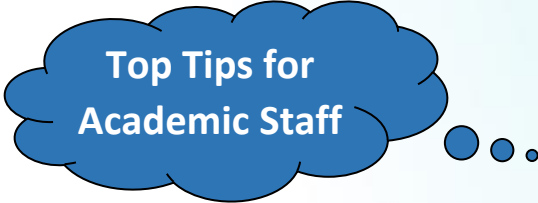


Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

This is a condition which disrupts attention and concentration, affecting around one to two per cent of the population. Individuals with ADHD may vary in how their symptoms present depending on the level of demand on them and characteristics of the environment they are working in (e.g. levels of noise etc).

Difficulties described by adults are as follows:

- Impulsivity - could be demonstrated by speaking and acting without thinking, interrupting others, difficulty waiting turn, lack of awareness of the context in which the person is behaving.
- Hyperactivity - more obvious in childhood, in adults this may be observed by difficulty sitting still, being restless and fidgety such as tapping feet, or being over-talkative.
- Inattention – the person is overly distracted, has poor concentration, difficulty in organising themselves and their work without practising and automating procedures, starting but finding it difficult to finish tasks, or missing steps in instructions.



Top Tips for Academic Staff

- If the student has a question, it is very difficult for them to concentrate on what is being said, as the question will completely dominate their thoughts. Consider ways students can 'park' questions to allow them to get it out of their heads, but know they will get a response later, e.g. using sticky notes, email or Facebook.
- Sometimes students with ADHD simply will not be able to attend lectures because of the effects of their condition, e.g. if their mood is very 'down', or very 'up' and so provision will need to be made for them to access the missed lecture notes.
- The hyperactivity element of ADHD often translates into feelings of internal restlessness for adults. Sometimes these feelings become unmanageable and they need to move around: fiddling with things, doodling, clicking pen tops, shaking legs, can all help those with the condition manage this and help them to maintain concentration.
- It requires huge effort to be structured and organised. Last minute cancellations and room changes can cause the structure students have created to collapse and compromise their studies, and should be done only if absolutely necessary.
- Reading is a problem for most students with ADHD because it demands a great deal of effort to focus; guided reading lists could help with this.
- Unlike some of the other developmental disorders, ADHD is not confined to particular areas of life and the effects are felt across multiple settings. It can therefore take a monumental effort to stop lives descending into chaos, and sometimes these efforts simply cannot be sustained.

For further information please visit www.adhdfoundation.org.uk

If you have any queries, please contact your Learning Support Coordinator