

## Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)

*This is a lifelong, developmental disability that affects how a person communicates with and relates to other people, and how they experience the world around them. (National Autistic Society 2015).*

ASC, which affects around one percent of the population, can include the assessment of having had persistent difficulties with social communication, social interaction, and restricted, repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests or activities to the extent that they interfere with their everyday functioning. People with ASC might also experience over or under sensitivity to touch, taste, sounds or light for example.

Those with high functioning ASC often have high ability but poor social skills, as they cannot always empathise with others. The condition has been colloquially termed 'mind blindness' because of the inability to 'read' another's mind.

ASC may co-exist with other conditions such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or dyscalculia.

People with ASC sometimes experience heightened sensory awareness, perceiving stimuli undetected by others.

This can result in sounds, smells, lighting and feelings against the skin becoming intrusive and distracting.

Those with ASC also commonly develop a special interest and expertise in one particular area.

The student with ASC frequently has remarkable strengths. It is common to have an excellent memory, particularly for facts and figures. They can be meticulous, focused and have a good eye for detail and errors. They are also often honest, conscientious, original, creative and good with foreign languages. Many students with ASC work to these strengths and choose subjects like mathematics, science and computing to study at university level.



### Top Tips for Academic Staff

- Students with ASC are individuals first, with their own unique personality
- For an effective working relationship, general knowledge about ASC must be combined with specific knowledge of the individual student

For further information please visit [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

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