# Key terminology

Dyslexia

“Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty that mainly affects the development of literacy and language related skills. It is likely to be present at birth and to be life-long in its effects. It is characterised by difficulties with phonological processing, rapid naming, working memory, processing speed, and the automatic development of skills that may not match up to an individual's other cognitive abilities. It tends to be resistant to conventional teaching methods, but its effect can be mitigated by appropriate specific intervention, including the application of information technology and supportive counseling”.

[British Dyslexia Association (2007)](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/%20%28http%3A/www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/%29)

Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) affect the way information is learned and processed. They are neurological, rather than psychological, usually hereditary and occur independently of intelligence. They include: [Dyslexia](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexic/dyslexia-and-specific-learning-difficulties-in-adults#Dyslexia), [Dyspraxia or Developmental Coordination Disorder](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexic/dyslexia-and-specific-learning-difficulties-in-adults#Dyspraxia) (DCD), [Dyscalculia](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexic/dyslexia-and-specific-learning-difficulties-in-adults#Dyscalculia), [Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder (AD(H)D)](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexic/dyslexia-and-specific-learning-difficulties-in-adults#ADHD/ADD).

Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA) are Student Finance grants that pay for the assistive technology and specialist tutor support that a student may need as a direct result of being disabled. To be eligible for Disabled Students’ Allowance the student must meet the [definition of disability under the Equality Act (2010)](https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010). The student's needs are assessed in order to determine the level of support available through [DSA](https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/dyslexia-spld/disabled-students-allowances/).

Assistive Technology is a broad term that refers to any object or system that increases or maintains the capabilities of disabled people. A student-centred package of support including recommended assistive technologies is identified and funded during the DSA process. A student with a specific learning difficulty may benefit from assistive technologies such as text to speech software which converts text into spoken voice output, mind-mapping software, speech recognition software, such as Dragon and technologies to record lectures. For more information read our [guide to assistive technology](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CenxcqvG7YFHMGZhEHQjQ_WDiArIMysn933KunJRzXA/edit#))

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) guides the development of a flexible learning environment that can accommodate individual learning differences. The implementation of UDL principles in course design reduce the need for multiple individual accommodations, rather adjustments are built into the course and therefore students may not need to disclose their disability or specific learning difficulty.