# Text version of PowerPoint presentation by Debbie Hindle Tuesday 23 June – ADCET ATEND Webinar

# Slide 1

How to transition to tertiary education. Helpful hints for people with autism spectrum disorder.

# Slide 2Increasing numbers of students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) at university and TAFE

# Slide 3

These learning environments are ‘unpredictable, illogical, noisy and populated with people who communicate unclearly and are unreliable’ (Beardon, Martin & Woolsey, 2009)

# Slide 4

Many students with ASD experience a number of challenges transitioning to the tertiary learning environment

These often include:

Understanding the contexts of the new environment

Time management

Social relationships

Communication

Asking for additional assistance

Getting ‘stuck’ and unable to raise concerns

(Fleischer, 2011; Knott & Taylor, 2014)

# Slide 5

There can be a tendency for students with ASD to:

be reluctant to seek additional support for their studies

have difficulties articulating their needs

decline initial offers of support

(Fleischer, 2011; Macleod & Green 2009)

# Slide 6

“By the time a student is struggling, damage has often already been done in terms of academic development, mental health and general wellbeing”

 (MacLeod & Green, 2009)

# Slide 7

But we know …..

When students are given appropriate and timely support they are more likely to succeed in their studies

Many individuals, support staff and teaching staff have developed effective strategies

AND

We wanted to capture and share some of what works well

Assist students develop good strategies and identify when to seek additional assistance

# Slide 8

NDCO Special Project Funding

Established an Advisory Committee from around Australia to inform the project

Gained feedback from a number of individuals with ASD

We thank them for generously sharing their expertise and helping make the project a reality

Mary Brake - Autism Consultant with the Tasmanian Department of Education

Shaun Corcoran - Disability Liaison Coordinator in Victorian TAFE

Marita Falkmer - Postdoctoral Fellow with the Autism CRC

Sue Hancock - Disability Advisor with ANU

Julie Harrison - Disability Services Centre Manager with ANU

Colleen Hooper - National Disability Coordination Officer in Southern Tasmania

Berinda Karp - Teacher /Consultant for Students with Disability in NSW TAFE

Amanda Richdale - Principal Research Fellow at the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre, La Trobe University.

# Slide 9

How to transition to tertiary education. Helpful hints for people with autism spectrum disorder

# Slide 10

This booklet aims to increase self-determination by assisting students

better understand their context

identify when and what supports could be helpful

and encouraging them to seek additional support when necessary.

# Slide 11

Contents.

Both editions include:

Characteristics of people with and without ASD

Identifying and using strengths, skills and talents

Information about the learning context

Advice on organising studies

Communication tips

Information on disclosure

Advice on managing stress and anxiety

Handy checklists

Practical worksheets

# Slide 12

Long Edition

66 pages

Details of where to get more information at end of each chapter, bibliography and list of other useful resources

Question & Answers at the end of each chapter

Case studies throughout

Checklist after the final chapter

Chapter for Parents - providing advice on supporting adult child

Full bibliography

Interactive exercises and activities

Easy flip style layout

Short Edition

22 pages

No Details of where to get more information at end of each chapter, bibliography and list of other useful resources

No Q&A and use of more direct concise language throughout

No case studies

Useful checklists at the end of each chapter

No chapter for parents

No bibliography

Some interactive exercises

Each chapter on a page for ease of copying

# Slide 13

Section 2. Awareness of yourself and others

Section 4. Knowing your strengths and challenges

# Slide 14

Table developed to compare characteristics of people with and without ASD

Mindful to respect the individuality and differences of people

‘To know one person with autism is to simply know one person with autism’

Talent, skills, character strengths, and challenges

Encourage resilience and mental well-being

In context of tertiary study

# Slide 15

Campus Context

Highlighting key areas on a map

Visit beforehand

Take photos

De-stress area

Travelling to and from the campus

Orientation sessions

Uni Accommodation

# Slide 16

Gillian’s story…

# Slide 17

Section 5. Studying at University or TAFE

# Slide 18

Studying at University or TAFE

Differences between Studying at High School and Uni or TAFE

‘My ideal study space’

Online systems

Library

Assessments

Online discussions or blogs

Group assessments

Full-time or part-time study load

# Slide 19

Section 6: Organising your study

# Slide 20

Students who are well organised and have good study techniques are more likely to succeed in their studies

Provide practical tools – semester and weekly planners

Assessment task activities stages

To-do lists

Effective studying

Preparing for exams

# Slide 21

Weekly Planner

|  |
| --- |
| Week Number: …………………………………………………….. Date Range: …………….. |
|  | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
| 9 am | Prepare for computer online assessment |  | Computer lecture |  | Computer lecture |  | Family and friends time |
| 10 am | Prepare for computer online assessment | Biology lecture | Read history tutorial readings | Geography lecture | History research | Write history assignment | Family and friends time |
| 11 am | History lecture | Biology lecture | History lecture |  | Geography research | Write history assignment | Family and friends time |
| 12 pm |  |  | History tutorial | Society club |  |  | Family and friends time |
| 1 pm |  |  |  |  |  | Free time. | Family and friends time |
| 2 pm | Geography lecture | Biology prac | History assignment. start writing | Geography group project meeting. | Geography research | Free time. | Family and friends time |
| 3 pm |  | Write up biology prac | Proof read biology prac report | Geography prac. | Society club get-together | Start writing geography assignment. | Family and friends time |
| 4 pm | Computer prac | Write up biology prac | Geography assignment |  |  |  |  |
| Research. |  |  | Review biology text book |  |  |  |  |
| 5 pm | Gym |  |  | Gym |  |  |  |
| 6 pm |  |  | Free night |  |  |  |  |
| 7 pm | Read history tutorial readings | Read history tutorial readings |  |  |  |  | Check Semesterassessment planner |
| Do ‘To-do list’. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Do new weekly planner. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 pm |  | Geography online discussion |  |  |  |  |  |

# Slide 22

Semester Planner

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **WEEK/DATES** | **GEOGRAPHY** | **HISTORY** |
| 1 |  |  |
| 2 | Research for assignment 1. | Research for assignment 1. |
| 3 | Research and write up assignment 1draft. | Research assignment. |
| 4 | Review, edit and submit assignment 1. Due Monday.1000 words. Worth 10%. | Research and write up assignment 1 draft. |
| 5 | Research for assignment 2. | Review, edit and submit assignment1. Due Wed. 1000 words. Worth 15% |
| 6 | Research and write up assignment 2 draft. Check online discussion. |  |
| 7 | Review, edit and submit assignment 2.Due Monday. 2000 words. Worth 20%. Participate in online discussion. | Research for assignment 2. |
| 8 | Meet with group to plan presentation. Participate in online discussion. | Research for assignment 2. |
| 9 | Online discussion due. Total 1000 words. Worth10%. | Commence writing assignment 2 draft. |
| 10 | Meet with group. | Review and edit assignment 2. |
| 11 | Meet with group to finalise presentation. | Submit assignment 2. Due Wed.3000 words. Worth 45%. |
| 12 | Group presentation and paper. Due Tuesday. Worth 20%. |  |
| 13 | Start exam revision. | Start exam revision. |

# Slide 23

Support Services

DDA and Education Standards

Inherent course requirements

Benefits of disclosure

Support for study

# Slide 24

Question & Answer

Question: I am enrolled at university full-time doing 4 subjects. I am feeling overwhelmed and stressed by the workload. Someone has suggested that I withdraw from one subject and only study 3 subjects. Is this advisable?

Answer: *If you find that studying 4 subjects is overwhelming, it is advisable to study 3 subjects. You will still be regarded as a full-time student. Studying 3 subjects will give you more time to become familiar with the requirements of tertiary study. It therefore can be a good idea for the first one or two semesters. You can always decide to increase your enrolment to four subjects in subsequent semesters. However, it is important to know that if you drop a subject after the university Census dates there will be academic penalties and a financial cost for the subject.*

# Slide 25

Find one or two ‘go to’ people on campus

Disability

Transition Support

Counselling

Learning support

Student mentors

# Slide 26

Communication Tips

Lectures and lecturers

Small classes and tutors or teachers

When do I start talking?

How long do I talk for?

When do I stop talking?

What topics are okay for discussion in the group?

How and when do I ask questions?

Peers

# Slide 27

Rachel’s story…

Rachel had a question about an assignment that she was having trouble with. She could not do any more work on that part of the assignment until she had clarification on what to do. Each time she went to the lecturer’s office, the door was closed. The deadline for the assignment was coming up soon so she was getting worried.

There was a timetable on the lecturer’s door showing two time slots for student consultations, but unfortunately these both clashed with other lectures that Rachel had to attend. She sent the lecturer an email outlining her question. The lecturer replied the next day with a short answer to the question and offered to make a time to meet later in the week if more information was required.

Rachel started work on the assignment and then took it to the lecturer at the agreed time to get some feedback and make sure she was on the right track. She was then able to finish the assignment on time.

# Slide 28

Managing stress and anxiety

Identifying physical symptoms

Stressed - feel overwhelmed or uncertain about how to cope

Anxious – feel concern about possible threats or dangers

Panic attacks – feel in immense danger and fearful for life

Healthy and unhealthy levels

# Slide 29

Find 2-3 techniques to manage stress and anxiety

Relaxation techniques

Training your thoughts

Fabic Behavioural Scales

Caring for self

Getting additional help

# Slide 30

Information for Parents chapter (long version only)

Recognition that parents can have a significant positive part to play in transition

Parenting role will change as child becomes adult

Early planning

Respecting the need for required consent

# Slide 31

But - we acknowledge this resource is only part of the picture….

Also need:

More understanding, respect and valuing the ASD perspective

Proactive support services that are flexible and responsive to needs of individual

Responsive learning and teaching environments

# Slide 32

Available at:

Hard copies from NDCOs

Download from [www.adcet.edu.au/autism-transition](http://www.adcet.edu.au/autism-transition)

A huge thanks to Darlene McLennan and Jane Hawkeswood for their work on uploading this.

# Slide 33

Questions

# Slide 34

References

Beardon, Martin & Woolsey, (2009). What do students with Asperger Syndrome or high-functioning autism want at college and university? (in their own words), *GAP,* *10,(2),* 35-42.

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