



BELFAST METROPOLITAN COLLEGE



Grundtvig Project

DESSDYS

Development of Study Skills For Dyslexic Individuals

STUDY VISIT

20-23 October 2010
Partner Meeting
Belfast, Northern Ireland





ATTENDEES

Bulgaria, Dyslexic association of Bulgaria

Daniela Boneva

Elena Mihova

Diana Arnaudova

Svetoslav Mihov

Northern Ireland, Belfast Metropolitan College

Joe Higgins

Brenda Degan

Larry Fitzsimmons

Italy, Fondazione 'Padre Alberto Mileno' Onlus

Alessandro D'Alessandro

Benito Michelizza

Hungary, BF EDU Kft

Anna Gyorfi

Gabor Gyorfi

Turkey, Kocaeli Rehberlik ve Arastirma Merkezi

Binnur Kucukylidiz

Emine Sahin

Yusuf Sahin



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study visit was to focus on what had been achieved to date in the project and for the partners to highlight their individual contributions, plus an evaluation of these activities. There was also the opportunity to identify the tasks and outcomes still remaining and to consider how best those tasks could be allocated to contribute to the achievement of the goals. There was a strong focus on how the project outcomes should be piloted and disseminated.

The event took place in Jury's Hotel in Belfast

Agenda

Day One

09.30 - 10.00	Coffee and formal welcome to Belfast Metropolitan College - Larry Fitzsimmons
10.00-10.30	Outline of partnership visit - work/social activities - Joe Higgins/Brenda Degan
10.30-10.50	Lead partner's outline of the progress to date - highlights of the project so far and elements still to be achieved - Alessandro D'Alessandro
10.50 - 11.30	Dyslexia provision in Northern Ireland and the work of the centre for training in communication skills - Joe Higgins
11.30-11.45	Comfort break
11.45 - 12.15	Bulgarian contribution: templates and translation of templates - Daniela Boneva
12.15 - 12.30	Review of morning's activities and preparation for afternoon sessions
12.30 -14.00	LUNCH
14.00- 14.30	Hungarian contribution : update on online book editor and website - Anna Gyorfi



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14.30 - 15.00	United Kingdom contribution: online book for students
15.00 - 15.30	COFFEE
15.30 - 16.00	Northern Ireland contribution : guides for lecturers in post16 sector finished products - Joe Higgins
16.00-16.30	Italian contribution : progress on pilot testing - Alesandro D'Alessandro / Benito Michelizza
16.30 - 17.00	Turkish contribution ; discussion of dissemination activities - Binnur Kucukylidiz
17.00 - 17.15	Closing remarks

FREE TIME

20.00 Dinner in Belfast Castle

Day 2

10.15 - 11.30	Educational visit to the Northern Ireland Dyslexia Association Meet with the Director John Clarke
11.45 - 12.30	Meeting in Belfast Metropolitan What needs done? Priorities and timescales for the remainder of the project - Alessandro D'Alessandro
12.30 - 12.45	Confirming dates and venues for remainder of the project - Brenda degan
12.45 - 13.15	Personal experiences Dyslexia tutor working with children Dyslexia tutor working with adults Dyslexic student
13.15 - 14.30	LUNCH
14.30 - 15.30	Small group feedback on work packages
15.30 - 16.00	Summary



CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Welcome

The Welcome introduction was provided by Larry Fitzsimmons, Programme Area Manager in Belfast Metropolitan College who thanks those attending for their support during the project, and for coming to this event. Some of the key players were duly noted and acknowledged.

Progress to date

Alessandro D'Alessandro provided an outline of progress to date. The student's guide is now ready and has been delivered on time to the partners for translation and/or adaptation. Each partner is to edit and upload the document online and this will also be supported by an audio version.

He also reported that the English version of the lecturer's guide is also ready to be translated by the partners. This will also be available on the Web and in an e-book version also.

Dyslexia Provision in Northern Ireland

Joe Higgins outlined the provision in northern Ireland for the support of individuals with dyslexia and in particular the role of his Centre for Training in Communication skills within BMC. In particular he mentioned that as well as the assessment and support of the learners themselves the centre specializes in the education programmes for the parents and teachers of learners with special learning difficulties.

Templates

Daniela Boneva presented the completed version of the set of templates. She also produced as a suggestion to the partners a short guide on each template to explain its every-day use for lectures and students. It was agreed by all of the Partners that the guides were indeed an extremely worthwhile resource and welcomed the proposal to translate them into each of the Partnership languages. These should then be published on the Web but in a downloadable format for ease of use.



Pilot Studies

Italy presented some sample questionnaires that are to be used with lecturers and students during the pilot testing. This will allow feedback on the suitability of the products produced as a result of meeting our outcomes.

Bulgaria plan to carry out its pilot study with a group of 20 University students aged 11-22 years. This pilot is being facilitated by a University lecturer and the Bulgarian Dyslexic association.

Study Visit

The visit to the Northern Ireland Dyslexia Association provided an opportunity for the partners to explore the organizational structure, the various initiatives and the methods of co-operation between the Association and groups such as parents, other institutions and NGOs that are deployed within Northern Ireland and to compare and contrast to their own country. There was a meeting with the Director that allowed an exchange and sharing of views and ideas that were both informative and useful

Personal experiences

As part of this afternoon session there was input from both lecturers and dyslexic students there was also an observation of an individual session with a dyslexic child.

Louise Campbell, a tutor at BMC gave a short input on the methods she used in supporting dyslexic learners. She stressed the importance of multisensory approaches and gave some practical examples.

Lydia, a dyslexic student studying at a local University also gave a short input of her own experiences as a dyslexic learner.

The attendees were able to discuss and share different methods, techniques and practices and to look at possible approaches for best supporting the dyslexic student.

This was an informative and worthwhile session.