

In search of a simple assessment instrument for identifying dyslexia in university students.

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University students with Learning Difficulties (LD) undergo lengthy, expensive assessment by an educational psychologist to provide a detailed cognitive profile on which to base accommodations to enable each individual to study without disadvantage. However, reports are often hard for students to understand, and without trained LD tutors, this information remains underutilized. We trialed an alternative instrument based on the York Adult Assessment developed in the United Kingdom (UK), hoping to enable university staff in disabilities and academic skills units to identify students with dyslexia quickly, easily, and at no cost to the student, and to recommend a limited range of appropriate accommodations based on the result. The trial produced significant group effects, but unacceptable false negatives; we cannot recommend the instrument, therefore, and the need for a reliable alternative remains. This article considers the problems surrounding the present method of assessment, and discusses the methodological problems of devising an alternative.

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