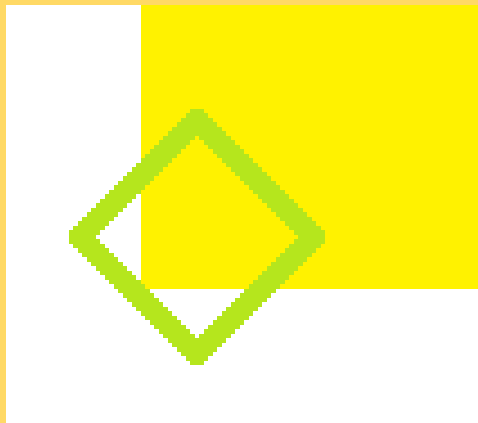


# Dyslexia Action

## Level 5 Diploma in Specialist Teaching for Literacy-Related Difficulties (DIST)



### Diploma Syllabus

v.1 from October 2024-2025

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**British Dyslexia**  
Association

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## Introduction

Dyslexia Action CPD courses are designed to strengthen the expertise and confidence of teachers, teaching assistants and support tutors in order to ensure the progress and achievement of children/adults with literacy difficulties and special educational needs. CPD courses allow professionals to develop and enhance their current skills and understanding. Whilst studying Dyslexia Action CPD courses, participants will question what currently takes place in their learning environment and will learn new theories and strategies. They will learn from fellow professionals and will share their experiences and discuss issues via the course forums. Our Level 4 and 5 unit and awards courses are mapped to level descriptors<sup>1</sup> and build towards qualifications. They are not awareness courses. Participants must complete the assignments and cannot be given access as 'read only' courses.

## Disclaimer

This document is subject to regular revision and replaces any earlier version produced by Dyslexia Action. Whereas every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this document, Dyslexia Action Training and Professional Development is unable to provide any warranty concerning the accuracy or completeness of any information contained herein and in the associated website. Dyslexia Action reserves the right to make changes to the information given and to change the content of courses. Applicants will receive additional, current information during the admissions process and on joining their chosen course. *Dyslexia Action Training and Professional Development assumes no responsibility or liability for any injury, loss or damage incurred as a result of any use or reliance upon the information and material contained within its publications or downloaded from its website.*

## Explanation of Terms

**APEL** – Accreditation of Prior Experience and Learning

**Candidate** – The person undertaking an award or unit qualification

**CPD** – Continuing Professional Development

**Hours of Learning Time** - This includes all the learning activities that are required to achieve the learning outcomes. Hours of Learning Time includes: preparation before the course begins such as induction activities; familiarisation with the course outline and recommended reading; participation in online activities such as forums and group activities and private study and assessment activities both during and after the course ends.

**Learner** – The pupil / student that the course participant does any practical work with

**Participant** – The person who is studying on a course

## Accessibility

If you have queries about the accessibility of this document, please contact us directly for advice and assistance.

## Copyright

All rights reserved. All information and material contained within this document and on the website, it is accessed from, is copyright and the copyright belongs to Dyslexia Action a trading name of Real Group Ltd. If you wish to

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix for further details.

apply for permission to use any materials found within the Dyslexia Action e-learning site, please contact Dyslexia Action at the address given in the materials or on the website.

## Level 5 Diploma in Specialist Teaching for Literacy-Related Difficulties (DIST)

There are two available routes to completing the Level 5 Diploma. They each have their own entry requirements. Details of these routes can be found below.

### Who is the diploma designed for?

The Level 5 Diploma is a comprehensive programme which trains teachers, teaching assistants and support tutors to become qualified specialist teachers and practitioners. The programme is suitable for those working with children or adults and those who are overseas. Please note, that as the components of the diploma pathway form part of a cumulative professional qualification pathway, elements of it cannot be retaken if failed.

The Level 5 Diploma course is designed to:

- Provide participants with the technical knowledge and skills needed to put into practice the theoretical understanding gained from prior study
- Provide the technical knowledge necessary to foster language awareness in learners with literacy difficulties (including dyslexia)
- Give an in-depth understanding of the rationale for some tried and tested resources
- Explain the placement process to provide participants with the necessary background knowledge and skills to place learners at the correct stage of an intervention programme by identifying areas of performance that require support.
- Provide advice and practice in structured lesson planning to ensure that participants learn to apply the principles of structured, sequential, cumulative multisensory tuition during the practical teaching intervention programme
- Give successful participants the knowledge and skills to place learners on, and deliver, an appropriately individualised, structured, cumulative multisensory literacy programme.
- Give successful participants the knowledge and skills to begin to advise non-specialist literacy staff within their educational establishment on the strategic support of literacy difficulties.

### Suitability of the Diploma for Aspiring Teacher-Assessors

The Level 5 Diploma is only for those who are primarily interested in literacy teaching as an end in itself. The course is too specialised, detailed and demanding for practitioners whose main focus is literacy assessment. The diploma is therefore not appropriate as a mere stepping stone to gain an [Assessment Practising Certificate \(APC\)](#).

### Suitability of the Diploma for Already Qualified Specialist Teachers

The Level 5 Diploma in Specialist Teaching for Literacy-Related Difficulties can also be undertaken by qualified specialist teachers *with a Level 5 or Level 7 specialist teaching qualification recognised by Dyslexia Action as equivalent to our own*, who wish to gain an introduction and practical experience of the Dyslexia Action Literacy Programme. However, important conditions apply. Please see the External APEL section below for further details.

## Level 5 Diploma – Standard Route

This route is only available for graduates<sup>2</sup> and takes one calendar year to complete. Applicants must have at least two years recent and relevant teaching or learning support experience in a dyslexia/literacy support setting. There is an application process. Applications are considered during a review process. Only applicants who have suitable professional experience, the required qualifications and the necessary interest in learning in-depth about literacy teaching will be accepted.

There are three parts to the diploma; the individual components are not available to book separately. Each component must be passed in order to progress to the next part of the course. Participants are given only one chance to resubmit an assignment that has not passed on first submission.

**Please note:** as this is a professional qualification pathway, no unit of study can be retaken. If the resubmitted work is not of passing standard, the participant is deemed to have failed the unit of study and cannot progress to the next stage of the diploma (see: Extension and Deferral Process further down and [Terms](#) you agreed to upon application).

NB: The Standard Route takes approximately one year to complete.

Diploma in Specialist Teaching for Literacy-related Difficulties (Standard Route)			
Part Number	Title	TQT	Credits
DIST Part 1	Understanding Literacy Difficulties	120	12
DIST Part 2	Foundations for Building Structured Literacy Teaching Interventions	230	23
DIST Part 3	Extending Specialist Literacy Teaching Skills	130	13
		<b>Total</b>	<b>480</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	TQT = Total Qualification Time		

## The Dyslexia Action CPD Certificate Pathway

This is a Level 4/5 study pathway suitable for non-graduates and graduates. Applicants for this route must have at least two-to-three years recent and relevant teaching or learning support experience in a dyslexia/literacy support setting.

**Please note:** It takes approximately 18 months to two years of study to complete the diploma via this route<sup>3</sup>.

In this pathway the Level 5 Diploma participants do not enrol directly for the diploma; instead, they enrol initially for one of three possible certificate pathway routes. Each of the following certificate pathways is made up of two awards, each comprising three units. Participants can choose from **one** of three possible certificate pathways below, depending on their work setting. Either:

<sup>2</sup> Foundation degrees do not meet the requirements of this course.

<sup>3</sup> Applicants may accelerate the pathway only by studying more than one CPD unit at a time within the pathway only (upon successful completion of the first unit) within the first two awards. *No more than 3 CPD units can be studied at the same time.*

1. **The Literacy CPD Programme Pathway (DACRT51)** for teachers and teaching assistants working in Great Britain (primary/secondary) [further details](#) or
2. **The International CPD Programme Pathway (DACRT67)** for teachers and teaching assistants working overseas (primary/secondary) [further details](#) or
3. **The Supporting Adults CPD Programme Pathway (DACRT56)** for tutors/training staff/those in FE/HE working with adults (16 plus) and those working with adults overseas [further details](#).

Please see the tables below for details of the pathway programmes available. Full details of the separate units within the awards can be found in the [CPD Syllabus Brochure](#). NB: If you wish to study DACPD99 (Numeracy and Dyscalculia) instead of one of the units within DAAWD51, DAAWD67 or DAAWD56 please contact [cpdmail@dyslexiaaction.org.uk](mailto:cpdmail@dyslexiaaction.org.uk) for further information.

<b>1.The Literacy CPD Programme Pathway</b>		
<b>DACRT51: Level 4 CPD Certificate in Supporting Literacy in Learners with Dyslexia</b>		
<b>DAAWD51: Level 4 Award in Perspectives on Dyslexia</b>	<b>TQT</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>
• DACPD51 Dyslexia and Co-occurring Difficulties	20	2
• DACPD52 Dyslexia: Supporting Individuals with Memory Weaknesses	20	2
• DACPD53 Structured, Cumulative Multisensory Tuition for Learners with Dyslexia	30	3
<b>DAAWD52: Level 4 Award in Developing Literacy Skills in Learners with Dyslexia</b>	<b>TQT</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>
• DACPD84 Developing Reading Skills in Learners with Dyslexia	30	3
• DACPD85 Developing Writing Skills in Learners with Dyslexia	30	3
• DACPD86 Developing Spelling Skills in Learners with Dyslexia	30	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	TQT = Total Qualification Time	

<b>2. The International CPD Programme Pathway</b>		
<b>DACRT67: Level 4 CPD Certificate in Supporting International Learners with Dyslexia</b>		
<b>DAAWD51: Level 4 Award in Perspectives on Dyslexia</b>	<b>TQT</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>
• DACPD51 Dyslexia and Co-occurring Difficulties	20	2
• DACPD52 Dyslexia: Supporting Individuals with Memory Weaknesses	20	2
• DACPD53 Structured, Cumulative Multisensory Tuition for Learners with Dyslexia	30	3
<b>DAAWD67: Level 4 Award in Supporting International Learners with Dyslexia*</b>	<b>TQT</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>
• DACPD84 Developing Reading Skills in Learners with Dyslexia	30	3
• DACPD85/DACPD85_21 Developing Writing Skills in Learners with Dyslexia	30	3
• DACPD94 Dyslexia in Multilingual Settings	30	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	TQT = Total Qualification Time	

<b>3. The Supporting Adults CPD Programme Pathway</b>		
<b>DACRT56: Level 5 CPD Certificate in Supporting Adults with Dyslexia and Co-occurring Difficulties</b>		
<b>DAAWD59: Level 5 Award in Supporting Adults with Dyslexia and Co-occurring Difficulties</b>	<b>TQT</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>
• DACPD91 Supporting Adults with Dyslexia and Co-occurring Difficulties	30	3
• DACPD92 Supporting Study Skills in Adults with Dyslexia	30	3
• DACPD96 Developing Literacy Skills with Assistive Technology	30	3
<b>DAAWD60: Level 5 Award in Learning Support for Adults with Dyslexia*</b>	<b>TQT</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>
• DACPD52 Dyslexia: Supporting Individuals with Memory Weaknesses	20	2
• DACPD93 Developing Writing Skills in Adults with Dyslexia	30	3
• DACPD94 Dyslexia in Multilingual Settings	30	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	TQT = Total Qualification Time	

## Progression onto the Level 5 Diploma: The Application Process

There is an application process to join the Level 5 Diploma at Unit 2 (once you have passed the CPD certificate). Applications are considered during a review process. Only applicants who have suitable professional experience, the required qualifications and have demonstrated the necessary interest in learning in depth about literacy teaching will be accepted (entry is not guaranteed). NB: The CPD Pathway Certificate gained is equivalent to the DIST1 unit of study for APEL purposes.

Successful applicants join the diploma at the beginning of DIST Part 2 and are expected to proceed to DIST Part 3 to complete the full diploma. Part 2 of the diploma (DIST Part 2) must be passed in order to progress to DIST Part 3. Participants are given only one chance to resubmit an assignment that has not passed on first submission.

**Please note:** as this is a professional qualification pathway, no unit of study can be retaken. If the resubmitted work is not of passing standard, the participant is deemed to have failed the unit of study and cannot progress to the next stage.

<b>Diploma in Specialist Teaching for Literacy-related Difficulties (CPD Certificate Pathway Route)</b>			
<u>One</u> of the following CPD certificate courses must be completed and is accepted (after application process) as APEL for DIST Part 1:		<b>TQT</b>	<b>Credits</b>
<b>DACRT51:</b> Level 4 CPD Cert. in Supporting Literacy in Learners with Dyslexia, OR: <b>DACRT67:</b> Level 4 CPD Cert. in Supporting International Learners with Dyslexia, OR: <b>DACRT56:</b> Level 5 CPD Cert. in Supporting Adults with Dyslexia and Co-occurring Difficulties		n/a	APEL
In addition, <b>both</b> the following units must be successfully completed to gain the full diploma qualification:			
<b>DIST Part 2</b>	Foundations for Building Structured Literacy Teaching Interventions	230	23
<b>DIST Part 3</b>	Extending Specialist Literacy Teaching Skills	130	13
<b>Total for Diploma depending on pathway chosen</b>		<b>480</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	TQT = Total Qualification Time		

## External APEL Applicants: Already Qualified Specialist Teachers

Practitioners who are already qualified specialist teachers can apply for the diploma. Potential applicants with a previous specialist teaching qualification recognised by us will (depending upon the quality of the application) be offered one of two possible entry pathways:

- a. **Entry to DIST Part 2.** Direct entry to DIST Part 2 depends upon the recognition status of the previous qualifications gained; these must be approved by an Accreditation of Prior Learning (APEL) process as being equivalent to the general theory on literacy learning unit of study (DIST Part 1) at the time of application to the course. If the qualification is more than ten years old and other CPD log evidence is not available or not recognised as sufficient, this direct entry to DIST Part 2 is not available.
- b. **Entry to the Standard Route of the diploma.** We reserve the right to require entry onto the full diploma if general theory knowledge in the previous qualification is not recognised as being

current, or if the qualification is more than ten years old and other CPD log evidence is not available or not recognised as sufficient for APEL purposes.

## List of Specialist Teaching Qualifications Recognised by Dyslexia Action for APEL Purposes

- Dyslexia Action Professional/Postgraduate Certificates (University of York)
- Dyslexia Action Diploma qualifications in Dyslexia and Literacy (University of York)
- Dyslexia Institute Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma qualifications
- Hornsby Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Teaching

## Exit Awards

The expected exit qualification is the same for participants from each of the potential application categories (Standard Diploma, CPD Certificate Pathway APEL and external APEL):

- Candidates successfully completing Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the Standard Diploma Route exit with the *Diploma in Specialist Teaching for Literacy-Related Difficulties*
- Candidates successfully completing a CPD Pathway Certificate (DACRT51, 67 or 56) and DIST Part 2 and Part 3 of the diploma exit with the *Diploma in Specialist Teaching for Literacy-Related Difficulties*
- Candidates entering the programme at DIST Part 2 with external APEL that successfully complete DIST Part 2 and DIST Part 3 of the diploma exit with the *Diploma in Specialist Teaching for Literacy-Related Difficulties*

Rarely, there may be reasons why progression through the three parts of the diploma is not possible for participants. There are early exit awards in such cases:

- Candidates successfully completing DIST Part 1 of the Standard Diploma Route can exit with the *Understanding Literacy Difficulties Award*.
- Candidates successfully completing DIST Parts 1 and 2 of the Standard Diploma Route can exit with:
  - o *Understanding Literacy Difficulties Award and*
  - o *The Certificate in Support for Literacy-difficulties*
- Candidates successfully completing a CPD Pathway Certificate (DACRT51, 67 or 56) and Part 2 of the diploma can exit with the *Certificate in Support for Literacy-difficulties*
- External APEL candidates entering at DIST Part 2 and successfully completing Part 2 of the diploma can exit with the *Certificate in Support for Literacy-difficulties*



## The Specialist Teaching Programme

Participants on the teaching course use the [Dyslexia Action Literacy Programme \(DALP\)](#). This specialist literacy training programme has been developed by the postgraduate tutor team at Dyslexia Action in response to the need for a programme that, through individual placement identification, provides a flexible pathway to accommodate each learner’s literacy profile. DALP builds upon previous works in the United States of America by Orton, Gillingham, Stillman and Cox, as well as the British programmes initially developed by Hickey and the team at the Dyslexia Institute - e.g., the Dyslexia Institute Literacy Programme (DILP). The dynamic learning pathways that can be generated by practitioners who are trained to use DALP, contribute to its power as a teacher training tool and teaching intervention programme. The separate dimensions of DALP also make it a challenging tool to master – great dedication and self-study is required to gain competence in its use.

## Learning Outcomes

<b>DIST Part 1: Understanding Literacy Difficulties</b>			
<b>Level: 5</b>	<b>Total Qualification Time: 120</b>	<b>Credits: 12</b>	<b>Duration: 10 weeks (approx.)</b>
<p>This introductory study unit provides a grounding in the key theoretical perspectives and constructs required to gain a firm understanding of how literacy-related difficulties arise and are perpetuated. It is designed to give graduate participants the opportunity to acquire a grounding in the sources of literacy difficulties. There is tutor support, but study is expected independently with the tutor providing a monitoring role. <b>DIST Part 1 is not required for entrants who have followed the CPD Certificate Pathway Route.</b></p>			
<p><b>Learning Outcomes</b> - Participants will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss a range of factors that can influence literacy acquisition and progression.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate a sound grasp of the key concepts and terminology necessary to promote progress in learners with delayed literacy development.</li> <li>3. Demonstrate understanding of the range of factors to consider when supporting learners with decoding and reading comprehension difficulties.</li> <li>4. Demonstrate understanding of the range of factors to consider when supporting learners with spelling and written expression difficulties.</li> </ol>			
<b>DIST Part 2: Foundations for Building Structured Literacy Teaching Interventions</b>			
<b>Level: 5</b>	<b>Total Qualification Time: 230</b>	<b>Credits: 23</b>	<b>Duration<sup>4</sup>: 18 weeks (approx.)</b>
<p>The second diploma unit of study raises awareness of the key elements and rationale of effective literacy intervention practice using the <a href="#">Dyslexia Action Literacy Programme (DALP)</a> as an example. The analysis of the different strands of DALP will enable participants to appreciate the range of factors to consider when planning strategic, structured support for learners with dyslexia and literacy-related difficulties. Participants analyse placement data in order to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to ascertain a learner’s ideal entry point on the <a href="#">Dyslexia Action Literacy Programme (DALP)</a>. A short series of specialist literacy sessions is delivered under the supervision of an experienced specialist literacy teacher, to give practitioners preliminary experience in the delivery of tailored learning resources for a specific learner.</p>			
<p><b>Learning Outcomes</b> - Participants will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate understanding of the essential components of a structured literacy intervention programme.</li> <li>2. Employ a placement process to gather evidence upon which to base a literacy intervention programme.</li> <li>3. Demonstrate understanding of the range of factors to consider when designating an entry point for a learner in a structured literacy intervention programme.</li> <li>4. Deliver a short series of structured, cumulative multisensory teaching sessions under the supervision of a qualified specialist literacy teacher.</li> </ol>			

<sup>4</sup> This will vary depending upon where school/college holidays fall in the teaching calendar.

## **DIST Part 3: Extending Specialist Literacy Teaching Skills**

**Level: 5**

**Total Qualification Time: 130**

**Credits: 13**

**Duration<sup>5</sup>: 13 weeks (approx.)**

The final diploma unit of study is designed to enable the practitioner to gain the necessary experience to independently plan and deliver a series of structured literacy lessons to a learner. Participants will put their knowledge of the [Dyslexia Action Literacy Programme \(DALP\)](#) gained from the previous units of study into practice by taking the lead in the lesson planning process. A range of additional activities is undertaken to enable the participant to develop a varied portfolio of strategic teaching support skills.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Participants will be able to:

1. Independently prepare a series of structured, cumulative multisensory teaching sessions for a learner with literacy difficulties based upon the findings of a placement process.
2. Effectively conduct a teaching intervention with a learner with literacy difficulties based on a structured literacy intervention programme.
3. Discuss how the essential components of a structured, sequential, cumulative multisensory lesson combined with higher-order skills tasks support multi-dimensional literacy development.
4. Critically reflect upon the effectiveness of own teaching sessions and the resources used within them.

## **Demands of DIST Parts 2 and 3**

Each of the parts of the diploma is demanding and intensive. Each part of the course is designated a number of notional study hours per week, 'notional' meaning the time that the average participant would need to spend to complete all studies, formative and summative tasks. This includes the time needed for planning and delivering the teaching intervention programme. This means that it may take some participants longer than the stated hours per week to gain the maximum professional development opportunities that the course affords.

As noted earlier, tutors give guidance via forums and written feedback, but it is participants' responsibility to work through the course materials in order to gain professional understanding. The DALP tutors are there to advise participants and support the growth of self-initiated professional understanding and the development of competence in specialist literacy teaching. They are not provided to intensively coach participants until participants gain competence.

## **How will I be assessed?**

There is quite a variety in the assignments for the diploma as a whole. These include reflective tasks, compulsory forums, conducting and reflecting upon your own performance in lesson delivery, designing higher order skills tasks for learners etc. All submissions are uploaded either on Moodle or via links within Moodle. Many quizzes feature in the units, as a means of self-checking knowledge and directing participants to key pieces of information within the course materials. Undertaking the quizzes should be seen as the means to an end, not as an end in itself. The end being the development of essential underpinning knowledge.

## **Expectations of Participants**

This diploma is a challenging professional qualification pathway and it should not be undertaken lightly. Not all participants who undertake the diploma pass it – gaining the diploma depends upon participants showing competence in key practice areas. It is therefore expected that participants are willing and able to devote quality

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<sup>5</sup> This will vary depending upon where school/college holidays fall in the teaching calendar and the number of sessions selected for the practicum.

study time to the course and that they are ready for the intensity of study when they join. DIST Part 1 requires 12 – 13 notional hours of self-study per week. DIST Part 2 requires 13 notional hours of study per week. Participants are expected to work through the many specially devised materials to acquire a theoretical understanding of the [Dyslexia Action Literacy Programme \(DALP\)](#) and then begin to apply the principles of specialist literacy provision under supervision. In the early, theoretical section of the unit of study, tutors are available on the forums to give advice and respond to queries from participants. There is no one-to-one tutorial or meeting provision within the early theoretical section of the unit of study: participants gain their knowledge base through readings, structured exercises and the study of case study materials. In the middle section of DIST Part 2, participants conduct the placement process with a learner. On handing in these findings, participants are allocated a one-to-one DALP tutor to supervise them in the practical teaching element of DIST Part 2 and then in DIST Part 3.

Practical teaching is an essential part of the diploma course. Candidates are required to submit evidence of teaching practice throughout their teaching practicum. Film recordings of teaching practice are made with the appropriate permissions from the school, learners and parents and within the terms of The Data Protection Act (2018). Recordings are usually submitted using a file upload facility - specific directions are available with the course handbooks.

### Teaching Practice: Working with a Learner

The learner selected for the teaching intervention programme must be available for the duration of the teaching practice (around 14 school/college weeks). If the learner is going to be away for more than a week during the teaching practice, she/he may not be suitable for this intervention, similarly learners taking examinations may not have the time or focus to fully engage. Tutors will advise on the suitability of chosen learners, based on the information provided, but *it is the responsibility of participants to find and select suitable learners.*

#### Please note:

- Participants working with children can only teach a learner within a DfE registered state or independent school with a Unique Reference Number (URN)<sup>6</sup> and should be covered by the school DBS check and safeguarding arrangements (this does not apply to those based overseas, although the school or college should be a registered organisation through the state authority).
- For safeguarding reasons, participants cannot teach a learner in the participant's own home or in the learner's family home: this is not permitted.
- For reasons of academic and professional integrity, participants cannot teach a family member or close family friend for the teaching intervention programme.
- Participants will be expected to select a learner whose age range is equivalent to the age range of learners they are working with at the time of making their application to the course with Dyslexia Action.
- Learning sessions must be conducted face-to-face not over the internet.

The criteria for selection of a learner for the teaching intervention programme are:

- The learner should have a minimum age of seven.<sup>7</sup>
- The learner should be currently underachieving in literacy (it is not a criteria that the learner has a diagnosis of dyslexia).
- The learner must not have a complex learning profile or social/ behavioural problems that will present challenges for the participant in training.

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<sup>6</sup> County Council Inclusion/SEND provision providers without a URN are usually considered suitable as long as the participant can provide:

- The name of county council overseeing provision
- An email for the provision provider that has a *.gov.uk* email extension

<sup>7</sup> If you regularly work with children younger than this it may be possible to work with a younger child, but the deciding factor is whether the child's profile will enable you to gain sufficient experience of the application of DALP during your training with us. It may be the case if a younger child is taught that additional exercises may need to be undertaken to demonstrate competence for the purposes of the course.

- The learner can hold age-appropriate conversations in English and has been educated in a mainly English-speaking environment. English must be the language the learners predominantly use in school to access the curriculum. Learners who are struggling with English as an additional language are not suitable for the practical elements of the courses. All lessons within the teaching intervention programme must be delivered in English.
- The learner should not be taking important exams during this period.

## Required Teaching Practice Hours

Dyslexia Action requires you to undertake a minimum of 20 hours of teaching support during the teaching practice. At least 10 hours of teaching support should be done with one learner individually (not in a group setting). Lessons normally take place on a weekly basis allowing lesson plans to be developed, resources to be prepared and tutor feedback given. Individual lessons can be scheduled for one hour or one-and-a-half hours with the learner (as appropriate for the age and profile of the learner). Successful completion of these teaching hours and other study-related tasks will enable participants to apply for Associate Membership of The Dyslexia Guild (ADG) and membership of other professional bodies (e.g., PATOSS and the British Dyslexia Association).

## Will I need to have a DBS check?

As a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced Disclosure is a requirement for those working regularly with children and young people<sup>8</sup>The person you choose to use for any practical teaching should normally be someone within your school or workplace, where you will already have a DBS Enhanced Disclosure. If you do not currently have a DBS check then this will need to be organised with the educational establishment in which your potential learner is schooled. The DBS must be in place before any face-to-face work with a learner. Please visit: [gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check](https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check) for further information.

We reserve the right to request this information from you or to terminate a programme where we feel it is not in the interests of the learner to continue. Dyslexia Action Training and Professional Development will not assume responsibility nor will accept liability incurred as a result of any participant or learner being engaged in this programme.

## Pre-reading for DIST

There is no pre-reading required. We do however suggest you join The Dyslexia Guild which provides a wide range of benefits to members and also gives you free access to online resources to continue your professional development. Contact: [dyslexiaguild.org.uk](https://dyslexiaguild.org.uk)

## Extension and Deferral Process

The diploma is an integrated study programme, which contains a tutor-supervised practical element. It is therefore expected that participants register for the diploma and work through without any unscheduled breaks. Short extensions to the summative deadline date are given in DIST Part 1. In DIST Parts 2 and 3 a teaching calendar schedules a completion pathway and it is expected that participants complete this practical part of the course without an extension, using the leeway built into the teaching calendar. *Dyslexia Action reserves the right to levy an additional tutor support fee in cases where participants do not complete the course by the final teaching calendar deadline, if one-to-one tutor support is still required.* For participants who have unforeseen mitigating circumstances there is a deferral system.

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<sup>8</sup> And with adult learners who are categorised as vulnerable.

## The DIST Deferral System

For participants who have unforeseen mitigating circumstances there is a deferral system. The terms of the deferral are different depending upon the unit being studied. This reflects the design of the DIST programme and the type of tutor support involved in each of the units of study.

### Deferrals within DIST1

DIST1 features general tutor support via a forum system. There are two types of deferrals. The timescales for deferrals are set for participant tracking and course continuity purposes. The deferral types are illustrated below:

- **Type A - Deferral to Next Cohort:** you can defer to join the next cohort after the one you are currently studying on. So, for example, if you start DIST1 in April and require a deferral, you could apply to re-join the programme with a cohort in the September of the same year.
- **Type B - Deferral to Cohort+1:** you can defer to join the cohort after next. So, for example, if you start DIST1 in April and require a deferral, you could apply to re-join the programme with a cohort in the January of the following year.

**NB:** Cohort places for re-joiners are not guaranteed - waiting lists for places will come into play during busy periods. Participants can choose which suits them better depending upon whether a short or a longer break is required. A deferral can only be granted once within DIST1 as there is in-built flexibility in the length of deferral that can be taken<sup>9</sup>. There is a fee of £125 + VAT for DIST1 deferrals to reflect the cost of operational, management and tutoring costs. For summary details see Table 1.

Table 1

DIST1 ONLY	1 <sup>st</sup> Deferral	2 <sup>nd</sup> Deferral
Deferral Options	Deferral Type A	Not available
	Deferral Type B	Not available
Deferral Cost	£125 + VAT	Not applicable

### Deferrals within DIST2 and DIST3

In these units of study participants are allocated a one-to-one tutor. The timescales for deferrals are set for participant tracking and course continuity purposes. The deferral types are illustrated below:

- **Type A - Deferral to Next Cohort:** you can defer to join the next cohort after the one you are currently studying on. So, for example, if you start DIST3 in April and require a deferral, you could apply to re-join the programme with a cohort in the September of the same year.
- **Type B - Deferral to Cohort+1:** you can defer to join the cohort after next. So, for example, if you start DIST3 in April and require a deferral, you could apply to re-join the programme with a cohort in the November of the same year.

There are a maximum of two deferrals permitted overall within DIST2 and DIST3 combined: the units are treated as an integrated whole for progression monitoring purposes. There are two important points to note:

1. **Deferral to Cohort+1** (a Type B deferral) can only be requested for a first deferral on DIST2 (or on DIST3 if no deferral has been applied on DIST2 previously).
2. Cohort places for re-joiners are not guaranteed - waiting lists for places come into play during busy periods.

Within DIST2 and DIST3 deferrals are charged to recoup administrative and the one-to-one tutoring costs associated with the break from studies and reintegration into the new cohort. Table 2 shows a summary of the deferral options and the associated costs.

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<sup>9</sup> Participants who cannot be accommodated within the deferral time frame for DIST1 have the option to withdraw and reapply at a later date that suits them.

Table 2

DIST2 and DIST3 COMBINED	1 <sup>st</sup> Deferral	2 <sup>nd</sup> Deferral
Deferral Options	Deferral Type A	Deferral Type A
	Deferral Type B - <i>only an option if a Type B Deferral has not previously been granted within DIST2 or DIST3</i>	
Deferral Cost	£300 + VAT	£300 + VAT

## Application Information

### Hardware and Software Requirements

#### Minimum Hardware and Software Requirements

- Windows/Apple (with 'Pages' app or 'Word' free software). We do not support smartphones or tablets or very old Mac/pc machines.
- High Speed Internet connection
- Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox (Internet Explorer is not supported)
- Microsoft Office/OpenOffice/Google Docs
- Adobe Acrobat Reader/Foxit Reader/VLC Media Player

#### Internet connection

For the purpose of viewing online videos, broadband connection with a liberal bandwidth usage policy (5GB) is highly advisable. The basic course content can also be accessed via mobile broadband or even dial-up using smart phones and tablets, but the learning experience will likely be diminished and some video/audio content may not be accessible.

#### Email Account

There are two conditions that must be met by all participants on the programme. The application process or study pathway may be suspended until these conditions are met:

1. Email addresses used to register for Dyslexia Action courses must match the name you are enrolling under on that course. This is insisted upon to support effective tracking of those registering and studying with us. This also helps ensure that professionally appropriate emails are used in the practical modules/units where contact with learners' parents, schools and other external bodies is necessary.
2. You must have your own personal email account or individual work email account. Shared or family email addresses contravene GDPR guidelines and are not suitable for course correspondence. We recommend using Google Mail (Gmail) as this email also gives free access to Google Drive storage.

#### Junk/spam Filters

Despite all precautions, important emails to you from Dyslexia Action might be filtered as junk/spam. To avoid this problem please add [cpdmail@dyslexiaaction.org.uk](mailto:cpdmail@dyslexiaaction.org.uk) , [dalpmail@dyslexiaaction.org.uk](mailto:dalpmail@dyslexiaaction.org.uk) and [moodlesupport@dyslexiaaction.org.uk](mailto:moodlesupport@dyslexiaaction.org.uk) to your contact list.

## Course Registration for Level 5 Diploma (Standard Route)

Intakes for the diploma are available three times a year: in January, April and September. We welcome suitably qualified applicants who have a predominant interest in learning about specialist literacy techniques and are therefore designed for literacy practitioners who can commit to studying aspects of linguistics, phonetics and morphology in some depth. This intensive study pathway in literacy teaching is not suitable for practitioners who do not have a deep professional interest in literacy teaching.

For further details about the Standard Diploma Route registration please contact [trainingcourses@dyslexiaaction.org.uk](mailto:trainingcourses@dyslexiaaction.org.uk)

## Course Registration for Level 5 Diploma (CPD Certificate Pathway Route)

Intakes onto the diploma are available three times a year: in March, June and November. We welcome suitably qualified applicants who have a predominant interest in learning about specialist literacy techniques and are therefore designed for literacy practitioners who can commit to studying aspects of linguistics, phonetics and morphology in some depth. This intensive study pathway in literacy teaching is not suitable for practitioners who do not have a deep professional interest in literacy teaching.

For further details about the CPD Certificate Pathway Route registration please contact [trainingcourses@dyslexiaaction.org.uk](mailto:trainingcourses@dyslexiaaction.org.uk)

## Course Start Dates

Standard Diploma Route Dates			
START DATES	DIST Part 1	DIST Part 2	DIST Part 3
January 2024	Wednesday 3rd January 2024 - Friday 8 March 2024	Tuesday 19 March 2024 - Friday 19 July 2024	Tuesday 3 September 2024 – Monday 9 December 2024
April 2024	Tuesday 2 April 2024 – Friday 7 June 2024	Tuesday 18 June 2024 – Friday 18 October 2024	Tuesday 5 November 2024 - Monday 10 February 2025
September 2024	Tuesday 3 September 2024 - Friday 8 November 2024	Tuesday 19 November 2024 - Friday 21 March 2025	Tuesday 15 April 2025 - Monday 15 July 2025
January 2025	Tuesday 7 January 2025 - Friday 14 March 2025	Dates to TBC	Dates to TBC
April 2025	Tuesday 1 April 2025 - Friday 6 June 2025	Dates to TBC	Dates to TBC

CPD Certificate Pathway Route Dates			
START DATES	DIST Part 1 (n/a)	DIST Part 2	DIST Part 3
November 2023	Not applicable	Tuesday 21 November 2023 - Friday 22 March 2024	Tuesday 15 April 2024 - Monday 15th July 2024
March 2024	Not applicable	Tuesday 19 March 2024 - Friday 19 July 2024	Tuesday 3 September 2024 – Monday 9 December 2024
June 2024	Not applicable	Tuesday 18 June 2024 – Friday 18 October 2024	Tuesday 5 November 2024 - Monday 10 February 2025
November 2024	Not applicable	Tuesday 19 November 2024 - Friday 21 March 2025	Tuesday 15 April 2025 - Monday 15 July 2025

Start dates for CPD Pathway Units and Awards can be found in the [CPD Syllabus Brochure](#).

Dyslexia Action Training and Professional Development reserves the right to change course start dates and/or schedules and the right to cancel any programme where candidate numbers are insufficient to warrant the course



taking place. In this case candidates will be offered places on alternative programmes or a full refund of fees will be available.

## Course Fees

There are two ways of making payment for the diploma units of study – either by paying an upfront, one-off sum, or paying by instalments. There are different fees depending upon the pathway you are following.

**Please note:** Payment terms are 30 days from receipt of invoice, or immediately if the course starts in less than 30 days. *Places are in high demand and we cannot hold places for participants who do not meet the payment schedule.*

All payments must be made in Pounds Sterling (GBP) – payment schedules are set out above. Please refer to [Terms and Conditions](#) for payment terms. VAT is applicable on all courses. If you choose to pay later by cheque or bank transfer an invoice will be raised with an additional fee of £30 inclusive of VAT. All fees are subject to an annual increase.

### One-off Payment of Fees:

One-off Payment Fees			
from 1 September 2024 Fees	Fee Excluding VAT	Fee Including VAT	Timing of Payment
DIST – Standard Diploma (DIST Parts 1, 2 and 3)	£3,495	£4,194	Payment terms are 30 days from receipt of invoice, or immediately if the course starts in less than 30 days

### Payment by Instalments:

**Please note:** if you plan to pay in three monthly instalments, you will be invoiced three equal amounts in the first three months of the course.

STANDARD DIPLOMA ROUTE – INSTALMENT PAYMENTS			
from 1 September 2024 Fees	Fee Excluding VAT	Fee Including VAT	Timing of Payment
DIST Instalment 1:	£1,190	£1,428	Payment terms are 30 days from receipt of invoice, or immediately if the course starts in less than 30 days
DIST Instalment 2:	£1,190	£1,428	Due 30 days after start date of DIST 01
DIST Instalment 3:	£1,190	£1,428	Due 60 days after start date of DIST 01
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,570</b>	<b>£4,284</b>	

### One-off Payment of Fees Pathway/APEL Route:

One-off Payment Fees			
from 1 September 2024 Fees	Fee Excluding VAT	Fee Including VAT	Timing of Payment
DIST CPD Pathway Route – DIST Parts 2 and 3:	£2,330	£2,796	Payment terms are 30 days from receipt of invoice, or immediately if the course starts in less than 30 days
DIST External APEL Pathway – DIST Parts 2 and 3:	£2,330	£2,796	



### Payment by Instalments Pathway/APEL Route:

CPD Certificate Pathway – INSTALMENT PAYMENTS			
CPD Certificate 51, 56 or 67	See <a href="#">CPD Brochure</a> for pathway costs and options		
from 1 September 2024 Fees	Fee Excluding VAT	Fee Including VAT	Timing of Payment
DIST Instalment 1:	£801.67	£962	Payment terms are 30 days from receipt of invoice, or immediately if the course starts in less than 30 days
DIST Instalment 2:	£801.67	£962	Due 30 days after start date of DIST 01
DIST Instalment 3:	£801.67	£962	Due 60 days after start date of DIST 01
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,405</b>	<b>£2,886</b>	

External APEL Pathway DIST Part 1 and Part 2 – INSTALMENT PAYMENTS			
from 1 September 2024 Fees	Fee Excluding VAT	Fee Including VAT	Timing of Payment
DIST Instalment 1:	£801.67	£962	Payment terms are 30 days from receipt of invoice, or immediately if the course starts in less than 30 days
DIST Instalment 2:	£801.67	£962	Due 30 days after start date of DIST 01
DIST Instalment 3:	£801.67	£962	Due 60 days after start date of DIST 01
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,405</b>	<b>£2,886</b>	

**Please note:** if you plan to pay in three monthly instalments, you will be invoiced three equal amounts in the first three months of the course.

## Other Important Information

### Accreditation

Dyslexia Action courses have been in existence for 50 years and have a nationally respected profile in specialist teacher training and support. Our courses meet a number of accreditation criteria reflecting the importance we place on the quality of our courses and high standards of teaching and learning which are intrinsic to our programmes.

**The Dyslexia Guild:** The Level 5 Diploma in Strategic Teaching Support confers eligibility for **Associate Membership (ADG) of The Dyslexia Guild**, recognised as the first grade of professional membership for a specialist literacy teacher/practitioner. See: page 20 for further details.

**British Dyslexia Association (B.D.A):** The Level 5 Diploma is accredited by the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) and confers eligibility for Approved Teacher Status (ATS or ATS FE/HE) or Approved Practitioner Status (APS), equivalent to **Associate Member ADG with the Guild**. *This means that if you successfully complete all elements of that course, you can then apply for the appropriate B.D.A. award. See:*

[bdadyslexia.org.uk/services/professional-accreditation](http://bdadyslexia.org.uk/services/professional-accreditation). **'Accreditation'** means that the course has been evaluated by a Liaison Team (LT) from the B.D.A. Accreditation Board and found to meet all the criteria for that award. These criteria can be found on the B.D.A. web site at: [bdadyslexia.org.uk/services/professional-accreditation](http://bdadyslexia.org.uk/services/professional-accreditation). If you have any concerns about the content or assessment of the course, with regard to compliance with the B.D.A. course Accreditation criteria, you can contact the B.D.A. at: [accreditation@bdadyslexia.org.uk](mailto:accreditation@bdadyslexia.org.uk). However, the B.D.A. can take no responsibility for the delivery of the course, e.g., inter alia, its tutors, facilities, registration, fees, continuance, etc. These are entirely a matter for the course provider. It is your responsibility before registering for the course to satisfy yourself that these are acceptable and meet your needs. If you have any concerns regarding these matters, you should, in the first instance, contact the Course Leader and if this does not produce a satisfactory result a representative of the Course Provider.

**The CPD Standards Office:** All of our Level 4/5 CPD-brand courses are individually accredited by [The CPD Standards Office](#).

### Certification

#### Dyslexia Action Certificate and Transcript

Candidates who have successfully completed all three parts of the Standard Diploma Route will be issued with a qualification certificate (Level 5 Diploma in *Specialist Teaching for Literacy-Related Difficulties*) and a transcript.

Candidates who have successfully completed a Dyslexia Action CPD Certificate and DIST Part 2 and DIST Part 3 will qualify for the Level 5 Diploma in *Specialist Teaching for Literacy-Related Difficulties*. A certificate and transcript will be issued.

## Participants with a Disability

A person is said to have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on his or her ability to do normal daily activities.

A disability can arise from a wide range of impairments which can be:

- Sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing
- Impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects such as rheumatoid arthritis, myalgic encephalitis (ME), chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), fibromyalgia, depression and epilepsy
- Progressive, such as motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy, and forms of dementia;
- Auto-immune conditions such as systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE)
- Organ specific, including respiratory conditions such as asthma, and cardiovascular diseases, including thrombosis, stroke and heart disease
- Developmental, such as autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), dyslexia and dyspraxia
- Learning disabilities
- Mental health conditions with symptoms such as anxiety, low mood, panic attacks, phobias, or unshared perceptions; eating disorders; bipolar affective disorders; obsessive compulsive disorders; personality disorders; post-traumatic stress disorder, and some self-harming behaviour
- Mental illnesses, such as depression and schizophrenia
- Produced by injury to the body, including to the brain

In cases where someone is the sole carer for a person with a long-term illness or a disability then that person is, under The Equality Act, afforded the same rights and access to reasonable adjustments that the long-term unwell/disabled person would be. See: [gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010](https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010)

The online training provided by Dyslexia Action has an inbuilt flexibility and this enables many participants with disabilities to work without any reasonable adjustments. However, we can be responsive to individual requirements within practical limits. If you have a disability, we would encourage you to disclose this at the time of application so that we can put in place any support required at an early stage. Our disclosure (DISC) form is sent to any candidate who indicates that they have a disability on our registration form. On the disclosure form you are asked to detail the nature of your disability and to indicate whether you would like a one-week extension on all units/courses you study with Dyslexia Action.

If we have permission for us to disclose, this information will be shared with the Disabilities team, any tutors you work directly with and the tutor in charge of marking. Any agreed reasonable adjustments will be noted on a form and this form will be sent to you for your records. Participants with a disability can discuss their individual requirements with the Disabilities Advisor. The Disabilities Administrator should be contacted in the first instance at: [dada@dyslexiaaction.org.uk](mailto:dada@dyslexiaaction.org.uk)

## Progression after the Diploma

Once you have successfully completed and passed the *Diploma in Specialist Teaching for Literacy-Related Difficulties* you will be a qualified specialist teacher (for those with Qualified Teacher Status - QTS) or qualified specialist practitioner (for those without QTS).

You may be interested in training to become a specialist teacher/practitioner assessor, the current suggested route available is via our sister company Real Training and is as follows:

[Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing \(CCET\)](#) or [Certificate in Psychometric Testing, Assessment and Access Arrangements \(CPT3A\)](#) (please check eligibility criteria).

plus

[Dyslexia – Professional Report Writing](#) (please check eligibility criteria).

## Dyslexia Guild Membership

All course participants are strongly encouraged to become members of The Dyslexia Guild, a membership body which welcomes all individuals with a professional interest in dyslexia and specific learning difficulties (SpLD).

### Who can join?

Dyslexia/SpLD specialist teachers and assessors, teaching assistants, SENCOs, learning support staff and tutors from further and higher education, speech and language therapists, psychologists and librarians. The Guild maintains the National Training and Resource Centre for Dyslexia and SpLD and provides a wide range of benefits to members. These include online resources, a vibrant and topical journal – The Dyslexia Review, as well as an e-newsletter. Guild members are able to renew their Assessment Practising Certificate through the association and meet annually to network at the Summer Conference.

See: [dyslexiaguild.org.uk/](https://dyslexiaguild.org.uk/)

**Special offer-** if you are a student, you can join the Guild see Affiliate membership: [dyslexiaguild.org.uk/](https://dyslexiaguild.org.uk/)

## Contact Details

### Admissions Office

70-72 Stour Street  
Canterbury  
CT1 2NZ

**Email:** [cpdmail@dyslexiaaction.org.uk](mailto:cpdmail@dyslexiaaction.org.uk)

**Web:** [dyslexiaaction.org.uk](https://dyslexiaaction.org.uk)

**Tel:** + 44 (0)1784 222304



# APPENDIX

## Level Descriptors

Our courses are mapped against the Ofqual Level 5 Descriptors<sup>10</sup> which are as follows:

### Level 4 Knowledge Descriptor (the holder...)

- Has practical, theoretical or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine.
- Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas.
- Is aware of the nature of approximate scope of the area of study or work.
- Has an informed awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.

### Level 4 Skills Descriptor (the holder can...)

- Identify, adapt and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills to inform actions and address problems that are complex and non-routine while normally fairly well-defined.
- Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions and results.

### Level 5 Knowledge Descriptor (the holder...)

- Has practical, theoretical or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to find ways forward in broadly defined, complex contexts.
- Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information, concepts and ideas.
- Is aware of the nature and scope of the area of study or work.
- Understands different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the reasoning behind them.

### Level 5 Skills Descriptor (the holder can...)

- Determine, adapt and use appropriate methods, cognitive and practical skills to address broadly defined, complex problems.
- Use relevant research or development to inform actions.
- Evaluate actions, methods and results.

Typical Level 5 qualifications include Higher National Diplomas, Diplomas of Higher Education and Foundation Degrees. For further details on qualification levels see [Qualifications can cross boundaries](#) (Sept 2019).

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<sup>10</sup> [dyslexiaaction.org.uk/level-5-descriptors/](https://dyslexiaaction.org.uk/level-5-descriptors/)