

### 1. Facts & Figures

- Developmental coordination disorder (DCD) is a developmental disorder characterized by a persistent problem **in learning** and/or **executing coordinated motor skills** in a fluent manner. In the past the disorder was often referred to as **dyspraxia**.
- The **prevalence** of DCD in children is between **5 to 7%**. DCD **is more common in boys than girls**. For every girl with DCD there are 3 to 4 boys with the disorder.
- In higher education, students experience difficulties with
  - **learning complex motor actions** such as driving a car
  - **quickly and accurately** executing coordinated movements such as manipulating tools in a lab
  - **handwriting** characterized with slower writing speed and less fluent handwriting movements. This can be at the expense of the readability.
- Other **associated problems** are reported such as:
  - **Motor** articulation problems.
  - Problems with **spatial awareness** and **spatial orientation**.
  - Difficulties with **structuring texts**.
  - Problems with **executive functions** such as organization and planning, problem solving, multi-tasking, and prioritizing. This is reflected in problems with **study skills**.
  - **Visual problems** and difficulties **concentrating**.
  - Less participation in **social activities in student life**.
  - More chance of developing **emotional and behavioral problems** such as fear of failure, anger, depression, low self-esteem, frustration, social seclusion.

## 2. Focus points, Tips and Tricks

### □ Attending classes

#### Focus points

- Taking readable, complete and well-structured **notes** is difficult
- Due to difficulties with time management and spatial awareness **being on time for classes** is not always successful.

#### Tips and Tricks

- **PowerPoint** presentations with adequate structure, delivered before classes, enhances the process of taking structured and complete notes. **Visualization** by means of schemes or diagrams provides structure.
- Using a **laptop** can contribute to taking readable and complete notes, which facilitates the processing of information.
- **Copies of notes** of fellow students can have substantial added value in addition to one's own notes.
- **Lecture recordings** that are made available online after classes, offer the opportunity to review difficult passages and complete notes.
- A **prospection of the campus** and in the classrooms are valuable. Providing a campus plan and putting up signalization are supportive.

### □ Planning and organizing study-related activities

#### Focus points

- Due to difficulties getting an **overview on study activities**, making a **study plan and managing time** (such as prioritizing) can be difficult.

#### Tips

- Providing an **overview** of all assignments and tasks helps to create an overview and make up an efficient study plan.
- **Study coaching** can be useful to help make up a realistic plan and help determine which tasks are proprietary, how much time can be spent on specific tasks , ...

- Working with a [diary with an embedded alarm system](#) can be supportive.

## □ Processing and rehearsing study materials

### Focus points

- Due to difficulties with concentration, applying structure, and problem solving, the [processing](#) and [studying](#) of course materials is hampered.

### Tips and Tricks

- Offering [sample questions and model answers](#) can be useful to help process the course content and enhance self-testing strategies.
- Offering [study coaching](#) where the focus lies on developing techniques to help structure the course material, discriminate key issues from side issues, and make connections can be helpful.

## □ Assignments

### Focus points

- Reproducing spatial information and interpreting [numerical information](#) is difficult. Additionally, reading and interpreting [charts and figures](#) is not easy.
- It is difficult to finish tasks with the required [precision](#) or at a sufficiently high [speed](#).
- [Learning new, complex motor skills](#) is not easy.

### Tips and tricks

- Assignments with numerical information are best transmitted well [in advance](#). Tables and figures are best provided with sufficient [explanation](#).
- If this is not in contradiction with the learning goals, small [deviations with regard to the required precision](#) should be allowed. An [alternative assignment](#) and/or [oral explanation](#) can be considered if necessary.
- Certain [materials](#) can be useful such as graph paper, a calculator, a drafting compass, a ruler, scrap paper, ....

- Besides elaborating on the assignment **in class**, the instructions are also best given **in writing**.
- Changing **deadlines** can be advisable in specific situations.
- By providing **more time for training**, complex motor skills can be taught.
- **Working in group** can help compensate for slow or less precise motor execution.
- For specific complex motor skills **a growth pad** can be provided where skills can be assimilated gradually. It is helpful to **break apart the motor skills and verbalize these separate steps**, and practice them under supervision.
- Large assignments are best split up in **partial assignments** where progress is monitored and intermediate feedback is given.

## □ Exams

### Focus points

- **Writing readable and fast** can be challenging. It can be difficult to deliver an answer with the necessary **structure**.
- Reproducing **spatial information** and interpreting numerical information is difficult. Additionally, reading and interpreting **charts and figures** is not easy.

### Tips and tricks

- **Extra preparation time** at an oral or written exam allows to compensate for the slow writing speed and the difficulties providing a structured answer.
- There should be **sufficient room** to formulate an answer on exam forms. It is also advisable that charts and figures are provided with the necessary **explanation**.
- An **oral elaboration** at a written exam can help eliminate ambiguities. Providing an **alternative exam form** is also an option.
- Making exams on a **laptop** can be supportive.
- An optimal **spread of exams** within an exam period is sometimes advisable.

## □ Internships

### Focus points

- Reproducing spatial information and interpreting numerical information is difficult.
- It is difficult to finish tasks with the necessary precision or with sufficient speed.
- Learning new and complex motor skills is not easy.
- Orientation at the internship location and locating rooms can be difficult.

### Tips and tricks

- A prospection at the internship location can be useful to enhance localization.
- Specific materials can be helpful such as graph paper, a calculator, a drafting compass, a ruler, scrap paper, ....
- Deviations in precision can be allowed provided this is not in contradiction with the learning goals. Alternative assignments can be considered.
- By providing more time for training and more learning opportunities, complex motor skills can be taught. It is helpful to break apart the motor skills, verbalize these individual steps, and practice them under supervision.
- For specific complex motor skills a growth pad can be provided where skills can be assimilated gradually.
- Large assignments are best split up in partial assignments where progress is monitored and intermediate feedback is given.
- It is useful to monitor the progress at a regular base and provide clear feedback. Working points that are formulated very concretely create learning opportunities.
- Spreading an internship over a longer period of time can be useful.

## □ Student life

### Focus points

- **Participating in sports activities** and the associated **social contacts**, are often challenging.
- **Living independently** can be challenging (cooking, studying, time management, ...)

### Tips and tricks

- **Support** in the development of structure, planning and specific manipulations in daily activities while living in a student dorm can make a great difference. It is helpful to make **a step-by-step plan** for important manipulations.
- Next to sports activities, participations in **other student activities** are best stimulated so there is sufficient opportunity for social interaction.
- Staff members of student facilities provide **coaching** in case of **psycho-social problems**.