

GENERAL STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

1. Hand in your resources to Learning Support Team as soon as you can, some things can be adapted quickly, some take a really long time.
2. Seat students in the middle at the front (first or second row), this helps them to use their hearing to listen to what you are saying.
3. Sit the student with VI next to peers they can work well with - they will need to ask questions from time to time, a helpful partner is worth their weight in gold.
4. Try to have a quiet working environment - students with VI rely heavily on their hearing to learn.
5. Speak clearly with extended natural pauses - try to discreetly face the student when you speak.
6. Say the student's name before asking a direct question or giving a direct instruction and indicate who is talking in a class discussion.
7. Avoid student having to look directly into a light source-do not sit or stand with the light behind you.
8. Avoid clutter or busy displays around the whiteboard area – students with VI need a single distinct point to focus on.
9. Keep your room clutter free - everyone is embarrassed if they trip up in front of others, but especially students with a visual impairment.
10. Be aware that some students with VI don't know what other students are doing around them. Explain what is happening, be aware that no hand up might be embarrassment, not lack of knowledge.
11. Use non-glossy, non-reflective paper and clear contrasting fonts / colours. Use photocopies of masters not of faint blurred versions.
12. Try to make PowerPoint with a dark background and light writing. The greater the contrast the better. Use a large, plain font (this is much better for most students).
13. Avoid PowerPoint or videos which contain lots of animation, play lots of loud music and move quickly between slides (they're too quick to see or explain).
14. Provide commentary to replace/supplement information from pictures, questions, facial expressions – “This is a model of a skull, at the front you can see the jaw bone...” and so on.

15. Use kinaesthetic experience to replace/supplement auditory and visual input (for example, if class is watching sugar cubes dissolve in a beaker, student can put their hand in beaker and feel it dissolve). This will benefit all students.
16. Use larger-lined paper, columns or boxes to place numbers in, squared paper. Have student use dark pen instead of pencil.
17. Ensure student uses aids supplied – such as hand held and portable video magnifiers, book stands, raised slopes etc.
18. Minimise extensive handwritten recording – use ICT, bullet points, mind mapping, flow charts, gapped handouts, LSA or trusted peer acting as scribe, and enlarged printout of IWB page for student to annotate.
19. Use tactile indicators- blue-tack, rulers, paper clips, folded out post-sticks etc. to help student find information in a book, locate where they need to be on page, keep track of which question they are on in a series.
20. Allow extra time to complete tasks and be aware of the fatigue the student may experience because of the amount of effort they have to put into learning. Bear in mind that a student with VI will complete, on average 1/3 to 1/2 of the work that the others have done.
21. Give a time check somewhere in the lesson – VI students will often struggle to keep track of time without a specialist watch.
22. Ensure homework instructions are written down correctly. Organise a homework buddy they can ring if they have forgotten what to do ('phone a friend').