

Report of ADSHE¹ Working Party for Quality Assurance April 2011

Members of working party:

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Background

ADSHE set up a working party to produce *Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Specialist Support for Students with SpLD in Higher Education* in 2008². The intention was to look at the quality of specialist 1:1 support for students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) and to draw up guidance for good practice.

The guidelines followed the stated objectives of the ADSHE membership:

- To share knowledge and disseminate good practice, including promoting and developing the understanding of all aspects of dyslexia;
- To clarify and promote students' entitlement to dyslexia support within individual institutions and throughout the sector;
- Work towards establishing parity of provision so that any dyslexic student will be assured of appropriate support throughout the HE sector;
- Avoid unnecessary duplication of work;
- Establish commonly accepted codes of good practice ;
- Share experiences and overcome feelings of isolation.

A second working party was set up in June 2010 to build on these guidelines and propose a more formal procedure for monitoring the quality of 1:1 support across the sector.

Aims

1. To produce ADSHE guidelines for quality assurance procedures;
2. To produce a self-audit template and a proposal for the monitoring of dyslexia provision in HE;
3. To draft guidelines for a professional register of dyslexia tutors.

Objectives

To produce standards for institutions and/or practitioners within the field to ensure the provision of accountable, transparent and quality assured 1:1 support which is nationally recognised.

It is understood that practice will vary across the HEIs according to the structure and vision of the institution and individual service. Any proposals for quality assurance will therefore need to be flexible to take account of the different organisational structures.

The working party was tasked with providing guidance for tutors to demonstrate that they have achieved agreed professional standards as set out in the ADSHE Guidelines for Professional Standards section 3.1³.

¹ Association of Dyslexia Specialists in HE

² Revised 2009

³ www.adshe.org.uk

The academic nature of dyslexia tutorial work is increasingly recognised. This is underpinned by ensuring that tutors are:

- 1) appropriately qualified
- 2) provided with supervision at regular intervals to ensure quality of provision
- 3) encouraged to be actively engaged in continuing professional development
- 4) able to apply their specialist practice to the context of the student's HEI.

Benchmarking and Consultation

Members had already been consulted at a day-long drop-in focus group at the ADSHE networking day in 2009. As a result of this focus group it was considered that it was timely for ADSHE to review quality assurance procedures for specialist tutors working on a 1:1 basis with students in HE.

The working party initially reviewed the QA procedures across the sector and other professional bodies⁴. An electronic survey was then sent out to elicit ADSHE members' views on QA and how they felt it should be conducted. The survey was sent out on three separate occasions in 2010 and again in a shortened form in 2011. The membership was broadly in agreement that ADSHE should proceed with proposals for QA.

A series of workshops and consultation meetings were carried out to elicit further views from members and non-members. A Peer Supervision workshop took place at the ADSHE networking day in summer 2010 and a focus group at the ADSHE development day in November 2010. Regional groups held their own consultation meetings which fed back to the working group.

Partnership

It is very much hoped that the work of ADSHE can feed in to national quality assurance procedures across the sector. Preliminary meetings have been held with Patoss, Dyslexia SpLD trust, Dyslexia Action and Student Finance England who have been informed about ADSHE proposals.

Self-audit tools

The working party designed two self-audit tools for individual specialist tutors and institutions to examine quality assurance procedures. Drafts of both audits were sent to the membership for comment. Following comment the audits were revised. The current self-audit tool for tutors is version ten.

It was decided to concentrate on the tutor audit initially and to work through procedures associated with quality assuring individual tutors before examining the more complex institutional route.

Quality Assurance procedures

The working party looked at a variety of peer supervision and CPD models and discussed ways of integrating membership of ADSHE with the ADSHE register of tutors in order to set up a list of registered tutors who commit to ADSHE principles to undertake self-audit of their practice on a regular basis; engage in peer supervision and provide evidence of CPD. In this way QA is accountable, transparent and consistent.

⁴ An Examination of existing quality standards

Options

1. Inclusion on ADSHE accredited dyslexia tutor list (but not monitored)

- Membership of ADSHE
- Sign up to Code of Ethics
- Undertake to complete a self-regulated CPD programme, including self-audit
- Agree to participate in minimum agreed professional supervision

Pros: Low cost to ADSHE

Cons: Totally self-regulating, relies on membership participation with no checking mechanism; not robust

2. Inclusion on ADSHE accredited dyslexia tutor list with submission of regular⁵ portfolio of CPD activities log (for monitoring purposes).

- Membership of ADSHE; membership to be quoted on invoices and reports etc
- Sign up to Code of Ethics
- Undertake to complete a self-regulated CPD programme⁶, including self-audit – submit evidence of CPD online
- Agree to participate in minimum agreed professional supervision – submit log as evidence

Pros: some regulation required in the submission of portfolio

Cons: funding implication: body of people to go through portfolios according to agreed criteria

3. ADSHE accreditation

Membership of ADSHE; membership to be quoted on invoices and reports etc

- Sign up to Code of Ethics
- Undertake to complete a self-regulated CPD programme⁷, including self-audit – submit evidence of CPD⁸
- Agree to participate in minimum agreed professional supervision – submit log as evidence
- Tutors to submit portfolios
- Provided with feedback/meeting either virtual by ADSHE ‘advisor’

Pros: More regulation, more professional

Cons: Cost of training/employing ADSHE advisors

4. ADSHE accreditation with website of CPD activities/suggestions

- a. This would include option 3 with the addition of an interactive website (similar to/part of Dyslexia SpLD Trust framework)

Pros: More guidance provided on CPD activities

Cons: Costly

⁵ Timing to be decided: Annual; bi-annual; 3 yearly?

⁶ It is anticipated that in some cases there would be overlap between ADSHE and Patoss requirements – it would be acceptable to record the same CPD activities for both.

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⁸ Format to be decided

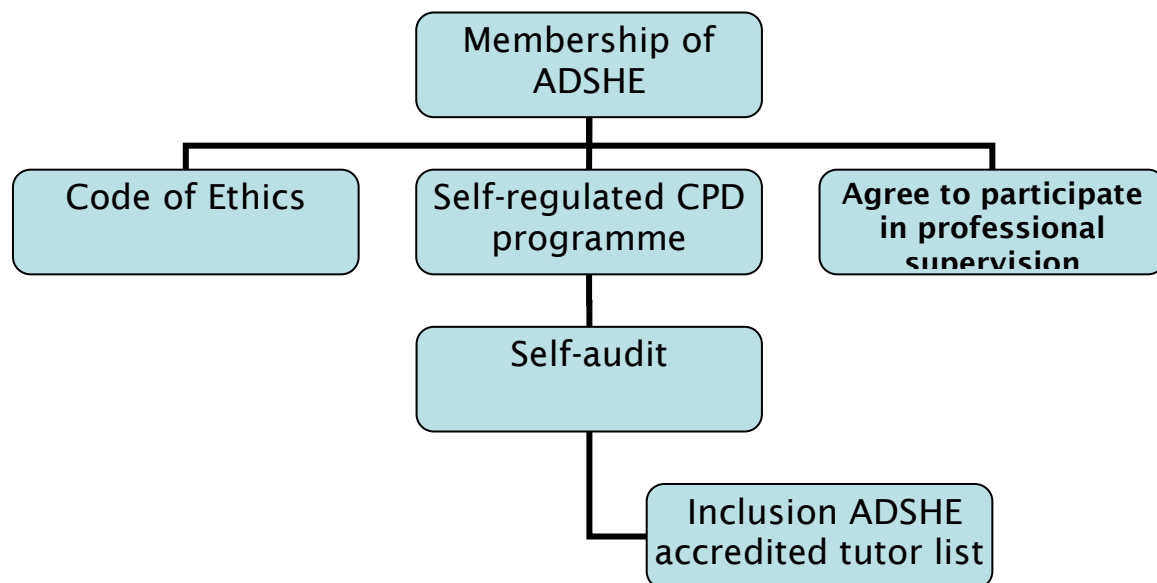
Issues to consider

ADSHE will need to consider the funding implications for the different options. Option 1 would simply have an agreed set of standards (based on the guidelines) which would be totally self-regulating. Option 4 would be very costly and follow a similar model that of Patoss and Dyslexia Action Practising certification. ADSHE in its current form would be unable to set up an advisory body to 'regulate' and check the portfolios without a substantial financial backing. As a professional body, it would possibly also need to consider changing the constitution to a charitable status.

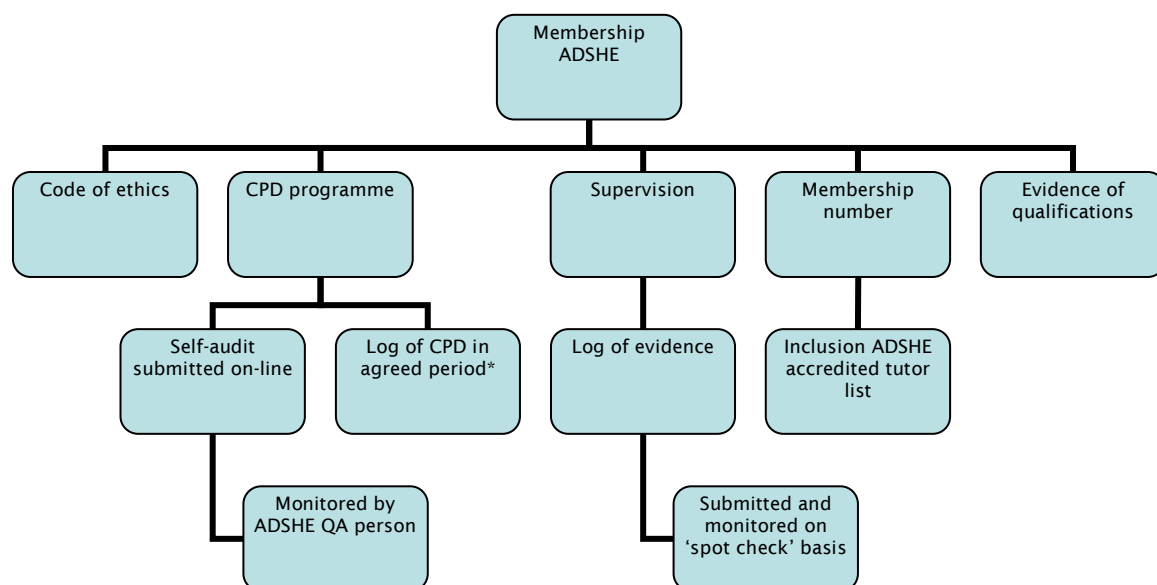
Proposals

1. The working party suggest that option 2 would be the preferred option.
2. It is proposed that a pilot CPD framework is set up to start in Autumn 2011 with the intention of setting up full programme from Easter 2012.
3. ADSHE to run some training sessions for peer supervision to enable members to run peer supervision sessions within their own institutions or partner institutions
4. Establish a body of trained experienced ADSHE 'supervisors' or 'mentors' to provide supervision remotely or by agreed visits on a regular basis?
5. Guidance information on the web.
6. ADSHE continue to work at establishing links with partner professional bodies such as Dyslexia Scotland, Patoss, Dyslexia SpLD trust, Dyslexia Action, Student Finance England and BDA.
7. ADSHE committee establish a Complaints Procedure.
8. Establish paid post to monitor audits and accreditation.

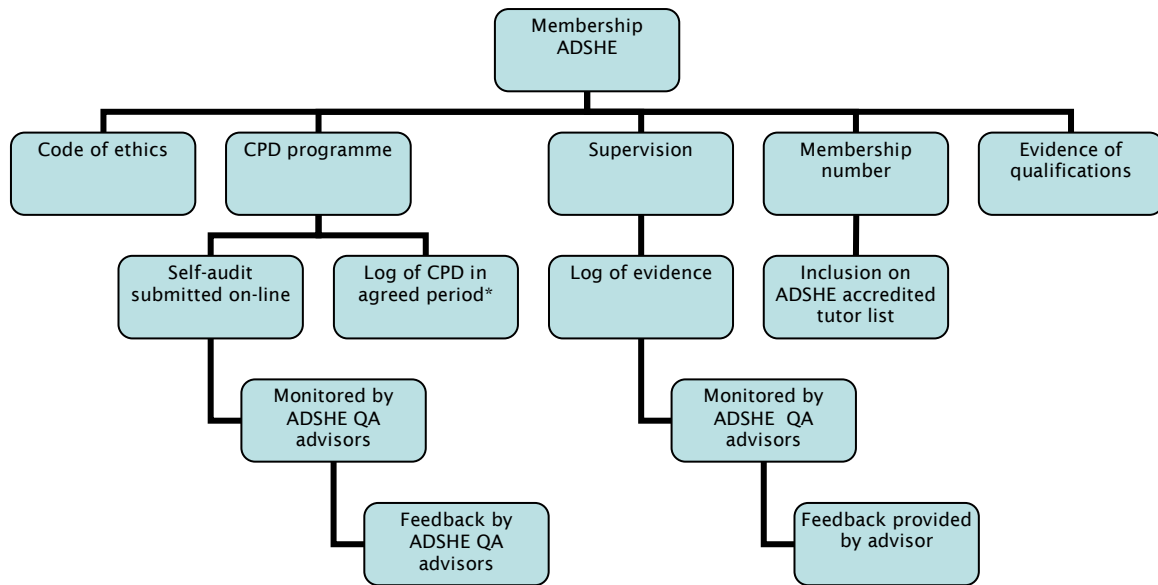
Option One: Inclusion on ADSHE accredited dyslexia tutor list



Option Two: accredited dyslexia tutor list with submission of portfolio of CPD evidence



Option Three: ADSHE Accreditation



Option Four: as 3 with additional interactive website

QA Working Party Proposals

