

Enhancing the Inclusivity of Oral Assessments.

Best practice to inclusive oral assessments



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 **AdvanceHE**

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Outlines

- Problem statement
- Definition of stammering
- International students and disability
- 10 Recommendations for inclusive oral assessment

Problem statement – Oral assessments

- Anxiety inducing (e.g., high levels of cortisol on the day of oral presentations, Preuß et al, 2010).
- Challenges of digital learning (Low power devices, low bandwidth, suitable environment.. etc).
- Does not cater for the learning needs of all students
 - Speech impediments (23,000 of U.K. HE)
 - International students (> 25 % of U.K. HE)

Definition of stammering

- One of the most hidden disabilities that affects 1% of the adult population world widely.
- A relatively common in childhood, can persist into adulthood (NHS,2020).
- Characterised by involuntary silence, reparation, or prolongations of or blocking at certain sounds or syllabus (and **avoidance**).
- A person who stammer might show symptoms of tension and anxiety as they struggle to produce their words. **Although stress can not cause a person to stammer, but stress is ought to exaggerate the stammer.**

Internationals and Neurodiverse learners

- Lack of diagnosis of learning needs might disadvantage learners
- Language acquisition related learning challenges
- Anticipating the needs of learners and diversifying assessment methods is thus pivotal.

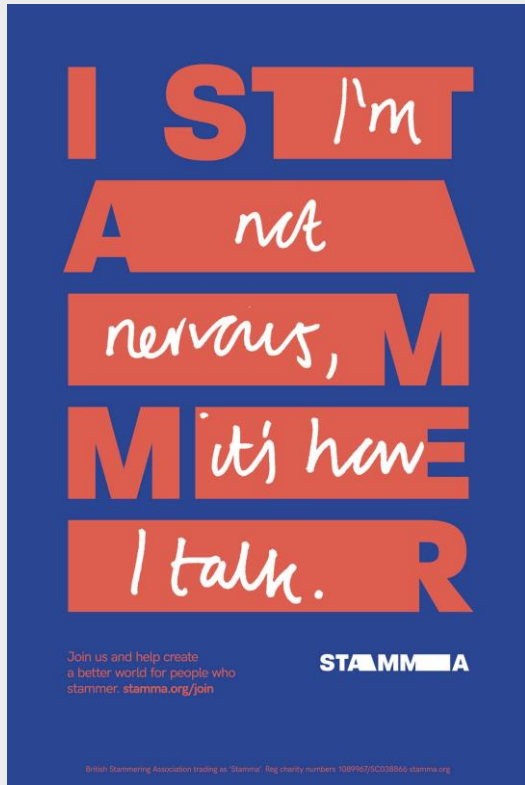
Recommendations

1. Ensure that students are aware of Exam adjustment policies
2. Allow students extra time for oral examination.
3. The characteristics of stammering varies between individuals but **being patient** and **not be tempted to finish their words** for them can be very supportive.
4. Most people who stammer struggle to say their own names (possibly the names of others), so where possible avoid introduction.



Source, British Stammering Association

Recommendations (Cont.)



Source, British Stammering Association

5. Be aware that the speech disturbance of a person who stammer is a neurological disorder which may be provoked by many factors (i.e., stress, anxiety) and the degree of disturbance vary between individuals.
6. Be aware that people who stammer recognise their stammer **as part of them**.
7. A learner might seem very frustrated as they struggle to produce their speech, and some may experience deep feelings of regret and/or shame. Because of that some might avoid talking and would only reply with short answer.

Recommendations (Cont.)

6. As appropriate, allow students the opportunity to **follow up in writing** after the exam.
7. Some people who stammer, may not stammer when reading from a written text or if they speak while listening to a recording (using headphones), so where appropriate suitable adjustment should be made (**i.e., Recoded presentations**)
8. Avoidance is one of the most common coping techniques for people with such learning needs. Please do not misinterpret this for language/subject knowledge incompetence.

Recommendations (Cont.)

9. Hesitation is a key feature of such a neurological disorder. Please do not confuse this with lack of confidence/assertiveness.
10. Voluntary stammering for self-advertising is one of the speech therapy techniques. In such case, showing understanding and patient can very useful.

Overall, people who stammer appreciate when shown patience and understanding.



Source, British Stammering Association



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Many Thanks

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