

Different – not less: enabling ASD students to learn

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QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST

*In my life, people who made a difference were those ...
who didn't try to drag me into their world, but came
into mine instead.'*

Temple Grandin



- Challenges
- Advantages
- Increased awareness
- The Library environment
- Encourage familiarisation
- Limit interactions
- Space
- My Library, My Space



Challenges

- Poor social and communication skills
- Inability to read body language and social clues
- Avoid eye contact
- Intolerance of fluorescent light & noise
- Prone to depression and anxiety
- Suffer from loneliness

A close-up, macro photograph of a mechanical watch movement. The image shows intricate metal gears and components. A prominent gear with a series of teeth is visible in the upper left. Below it, a circular plate features a large, dark, stylized number '8'. In the lower right, another gear or component is partially visible, showing numbers like '100' and '29'. The lighting is soft, highlighting the metallic textures and the precision of the engineering.

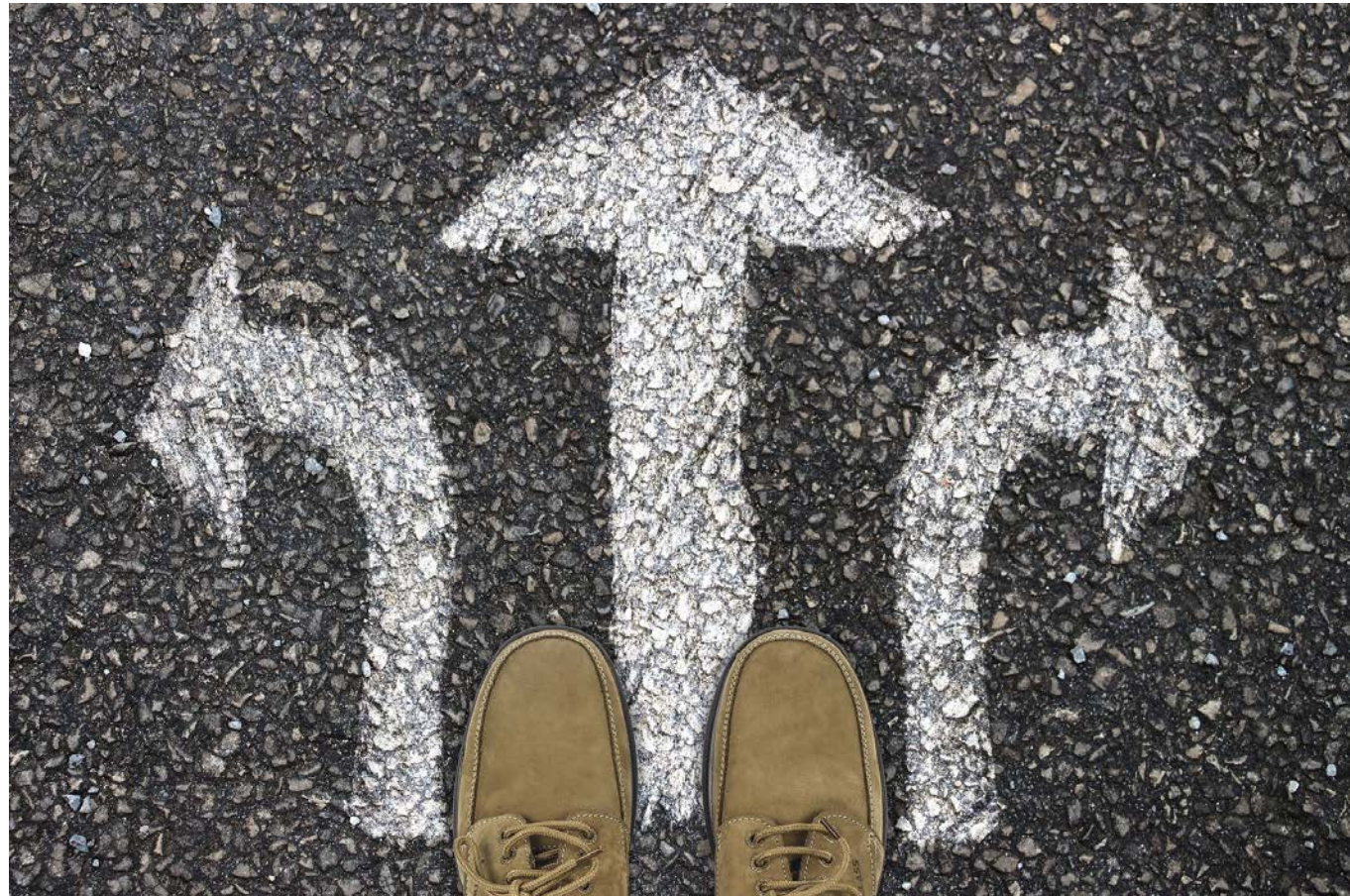
Advantages

- Strong work ethic
- Ability to focus on areas of interest
- Excellent memory & recall skills
- Curiosity and willingness to question & challenge
- Advanced learning ability in favoured subjects

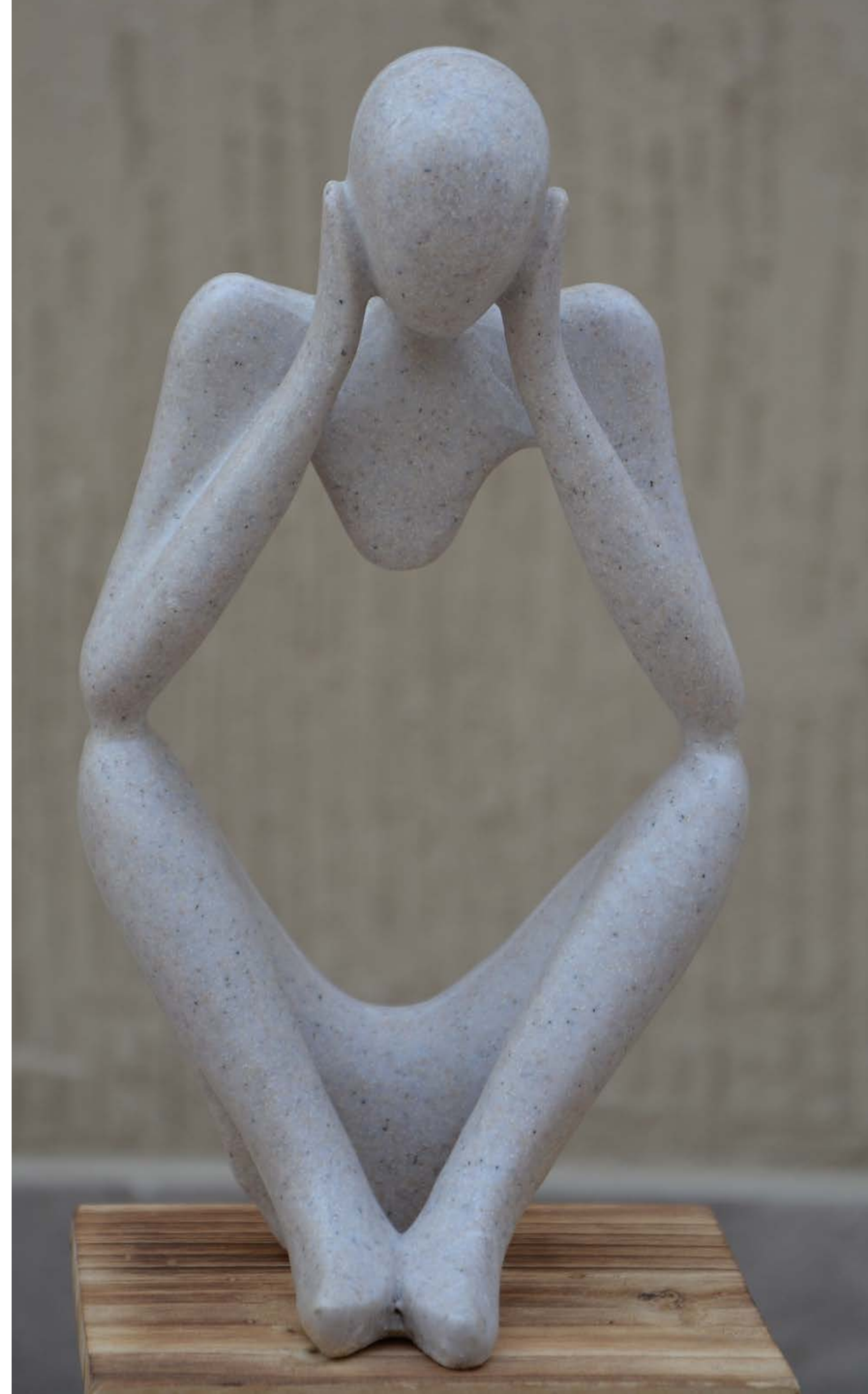
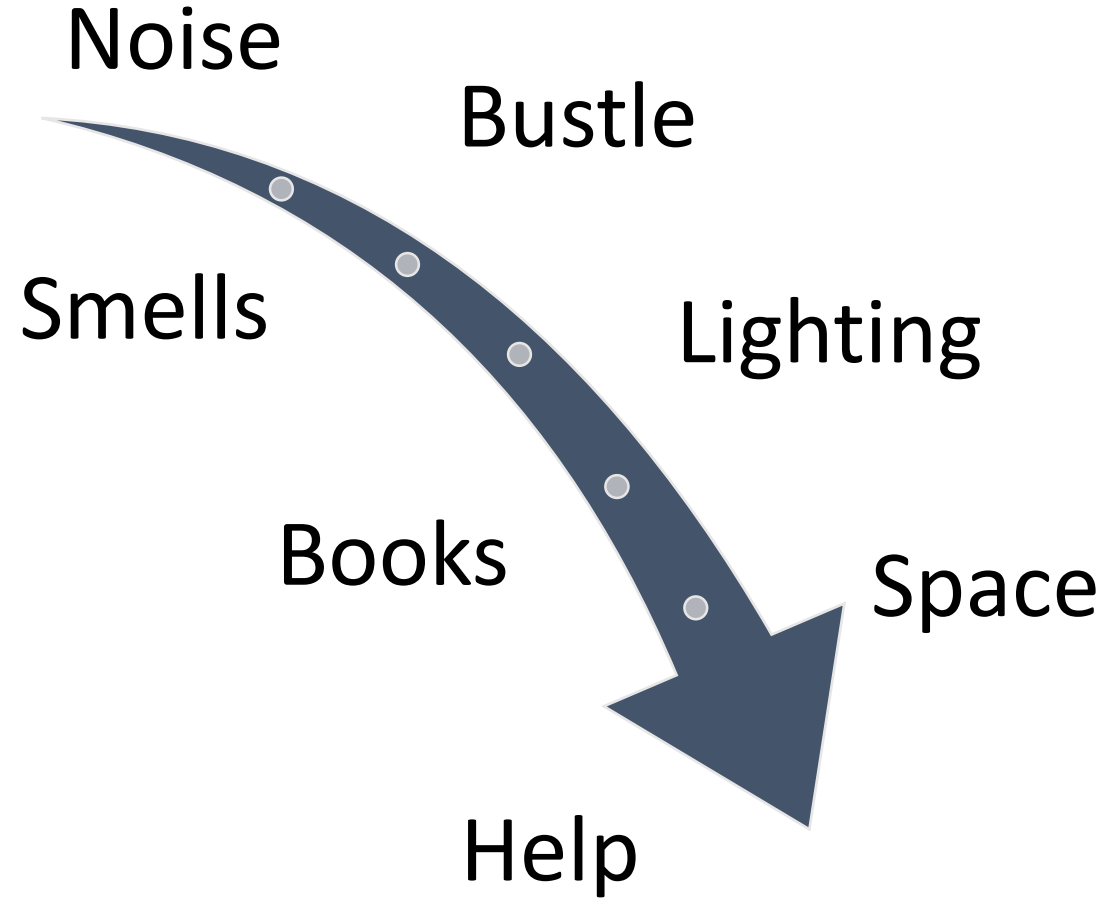
Increased awareness

Increasing numbers of ASD students in third level education

- Increased medical and public awareness
- Condition identified at an earlier stage
- Earlier treatment & therapies
- Possible to diagnose various levels of autism
- School & parental encouragement
- Universities better prepared



The Library environment



Encourage familiarisation

- Library tours
- Individual tours
- Key contact
- Clear signage
- Train library staff



Limit interactions

- Self service
- Open access hold shelves
- Noise Alert
- Up to date FAQs
- Student Wellbeing Collection





Space

- Occupancy App
- Variety of study spaces
- Group Study Rooms
- Individual Study Room
- Advanced Booking
- Priority Desk Booking

My Library, My Space

- Library film
- Engagement opportunity
- Increase understanding
- Help current students
- Attract potential students





Getting started

- ASD Group Co-ordinator
- Media Services
- Met with ASD group
- Initial meeting – volunteers
- Decide key messages

Filming

- 2 days in May
- 2 acting – 2 filming
- Student led approach
- Informal tone
- Accessible



Check out the film here:

<https://mediasite.qub.ac.uk/Mediasite/Play/28a8adad04f74b4bb96de5388d4ed4f81d>

In conclusion

- Facilitate independent study
- Offer choices
- Develop personal relations
- Train staff
- Learn from their experiences



Thank you

Email: s.bridge@qub.ac.uk

Images: www.pixabay.com
<http://qub.ac.uk/imagebank/>
Presenter's own.