



Supporting Students with Epilepsy

Student Services

**DISABILITY AND
DYSLEXIA SUPPORT**



Learning and
Professional
Development Centre



Epilepsy is a **condition that affects the brain** and causes **recurrent seizures**. There are **several types of epilepsy** and epileptic seizures can take many forms. The most familiar type of seizure is where individuals lose consciousness, fall to the ground and experience jerking movements for a couple of minutes. After the period of the seizure individuals may remain unconscious for a short time and may seem dazed after they come round. Other types of seizure involve sudden loss of muscle tone causing a person to fall; brief forceful jerks, which may not lead to falling; or, sudden disturbances to hearing, vision, smell or taste which may not be perceptible to others. **Most seizures last from a few seconds to a few minutes and usually stop without treatment.**

1) How might epilepsy affect someone at university?

- Can affect concentration and memory which may impact ability to focus on studies.
- Students may experience significant symptoms of fatigue following a seizure.
- Medication can cause sleepiness and difficulty waking in mornings and as such students may be unable to attend morning classes or exams.
- Student may experience injury following a seizure.

2) Suggested teaching and learning adjustments

- Be prepared to meet with the student before teaching commences to **get to know their individual needs** and how their epilepsy manifests.
- Students may require **breaks in teaching sessions**.
- **Provide presentation slides (PowerPoint, Google slides, Keynote etc.), handouts and other teaching resources in advance of class sessions** (i.e. upload to the KLE and send email reminders). This will allow students plenty of time to access, print and read materials.
- **Support students to revisit and revise lecture content** by using lecture capture technology or allowing audio recording of lectures. If students have a reasonable adjustment in place to allow audio recording of lectures, this must be permitted.

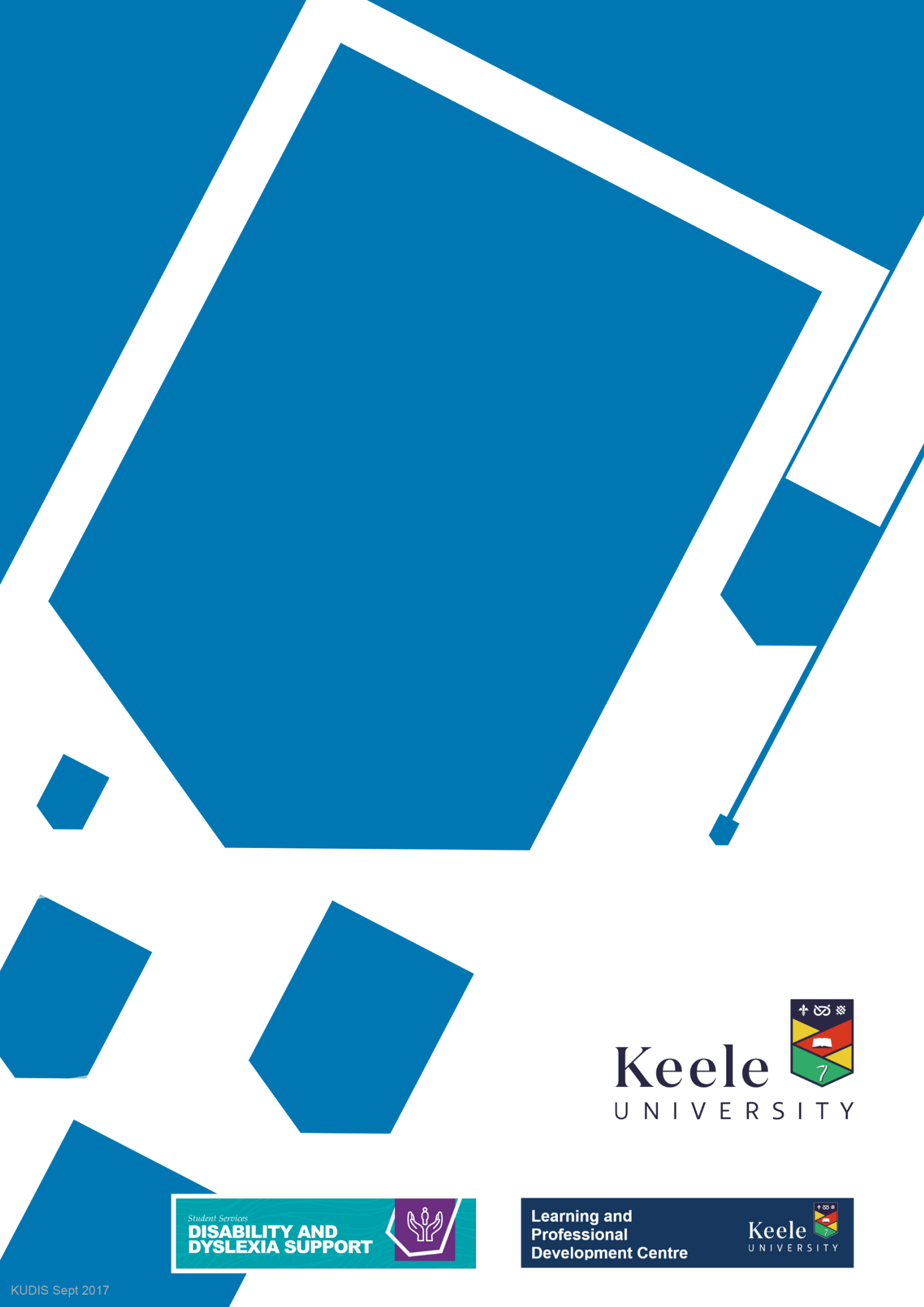
Disability Support and Inclusive Teaching and Assessment at Keele

- Students may **require specific adjustments for exams and other assessments**, including the **provision of alternative forms of assessment** where necessary. Discuss requirements with your local Disability Liaison Officer (DLO), examinations officer and as required, contact Disability and Dyslexia Support (DDS) for advice.
- The student may require **assignment deadline extensions** or **exam deferral** if they experience a seizure.
- **Consideration of health and safety** procedures may be needed in lab-based and other practical settings where chemicals, equipment or machinery is involved.

3) Epilepsy protocol: what to do if someone has a seizure

- Stay with the person and **support their head** on something soft. If safe to do so, move the person away from objects (or move the objects) on which they could hit their head.
- **Note EXACT time the convulsion** (or unconsciousness) began and how long it lasts.
- DO NOT attempt to put anything in the person's mouth and DO NOT try to restrict the convulsing movements of the limbs.
- If the person is having their **first ever seizure** you should always **call an ambulance**.
- If a student requires medication to be administered when experiencing a seizure a **specific protocol will need to be created** in conjunction with DDS.
- If the seizure is short and the person has a known history of epilepsy you need not call an ambulance, though you should **contact a local first aider** (ensure you know who local first aiders are). You can also contact security personnel (on 888) who are all first aid trained. Emergency information for every building is found on notices located at building entrances and on corridors. Information about first aid at Keele is [found here](#).
- **If the person does not stop convulsing within 10 minutes, or they remain unconscious for more than 10 minutes, or they have convulsions which stop and re-start, or they stop breathing, call an ambulance on 999 immediately, contact security on 888 and follow guidance of local first aider.**

More epilepsy information can be found on the [Epilepsy Action](#) website.



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