TechAbility Conference 2019
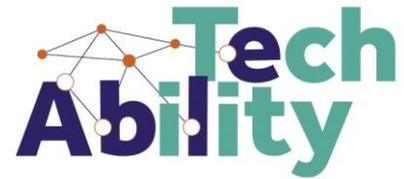
Raising Standards

Rowton Hotel, Alcester Street,
Birmingham, B12 0PJ
Thursday 21 November 2019
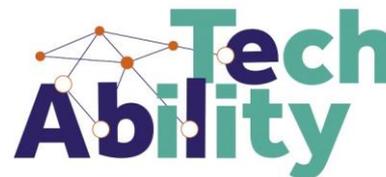
Agenda

10:00 – 10:30	**Arrival and registration** **Refreshments and opportunity to visit the exhibition**
10:30 – 10:45	**Welcome and introduction to the TechAbility Standards** Fil McIntyre and Neil Beck, Assistive Technologists, TechAbility
10:45 – 11:45	**Keynote Session** – Keynote speakers' detailed profiles are featured below. • Raising Standards: Enhancing AAC Decision Making - Professor Janice Murray, Manchester Metropolitan University • Raising Standards: Why Does It Matter Now? - Sal Cooke OBE • Raising Standards: Outcomes-Focused Policy - Robert McLaren, Policy Connect
11:45 – 12:15	**Refreshment break. Please take this opportunity to visit the exhibition**
12:20 – 13:00	**Break-out session –** Choose from the following (full descriptors below) 1. TechAbility Standards; what are they and how can they benefit your organisation? – Neil Beck, TechAbility and National Star College 2. AT Solutions for People with Visual Impairment – Caireen Sutherland, Principal Education Officer, RNIB 3. Inclusive coding environment: use of Gaze and Voice to write code - Bharat Paudyal, Birmingham City University
13:00 – 14:00	**Lunch is provided in the main room. Also there is opportunity to:** • **View the exhibition, get hands on with the products on display** • **See how the JACO Robotic Arm can be used in a college setting** • **View a showcase of TechAbility's Webinars; suggest future subjects**
13:30 – 14:00	**Karten Network Meeting** Please note: This session is exclusively for Karten Network members.
14:00 – 14:40	**Break-out session –** Choose from the following (full descriptors below) 4. Identifying Appropriate Symbol Communication Aids; presentation of a research project – Janice Murray, Manchester Metropolitan University 5. Opportunities for Professional Development in Assistive Technology – Paul Doyle, Hereward College; Holly Hartley, Seashell Trust & Will Wade, ACE Centre 6. Implementing Assistive Technology: What can Specialist Colleges and General FE Colleges learn from each other? – Rohan Slaughter, JISC
14:45– 15:25	**Break-out session –** Choose from the following (full descriptors below) 7. What Use is 3D Printing? – Simon Barnett, National Star College 8. Demystifying Switching – Hannah Golding, Treloar College 9. AAC and GDPR; what should organisations be doing? – Fil McIntyre, TechAbility and Beaumont College
15:30 – 16:00	**Panel discussion** – **How can standards in Assistive Technology practice be raised so potential can be fulfilled?** Make your voice heard! This is your opportunity to question our keynote speakers and let them know your thoughts. Our panel members are influential in the sector and this is your chance to make your opinions heard. All feedback on Vevox and a transcript of the recording will be made available to panel members and delegates.
16:00 – 16:10	Review of the day and close

Keynote Speaker and Panel Member Profiles

Janice Murray, Professor of Communication Disability (AAC), Manchester Metropolitan University

Janice Murray is a Speech/Language Therapist and Professor at Manchester Metropolitan University, specialising in Augmentative and Alternative Communication. She is the author of numerous academic papers and articles in the field of AAC. From 2016-2019 Janice was the Chief Investigator on the NIHR funded research project *'Identifying Appropriate Symbol Communication Aids for Children who are non-speaking: enhancing clinical decision making'*.

From 2009 to 2012 Janice Murray was the Chair of the UK charity Communication Matters and from 2014-2016 was Chair of Council for the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC). Since 2012 she has been on the Research Committee for ISAAC. She is currently a member of the AAC committee for the International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatrics. In 2016 Janice became a Fellow of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists for her translational research in AAC.

Sal Cooke OBE, IKCT Trustee, British Assistive Technology Association Council Member

Sal Cooke was, until recently, Director of JISC TechDis. Having worked in the transport industry for a time, Sal returned to teach in Schools, Colleges of Further Education and the University Sector in Yorkshire and Humberside.

Sal was seconded to various national agencies including the then Department for Education and Skills, working on the e-learning programmes and the Harnessing Technology Strategy. Currently Sal is personally particularly interested and involved with the work of the Independent Specialist Colleges sector.

Robert McLaren, Head of Industry Technology and Innovation, Policy Connect

Robert manages the strategic direction of the Industry Technology and Innovation team. Before joining Policy Connect, he worked within the assistive technology sector providing technology training and study skills tuition to disabled people in universities and the workplace, and consultancy services for organisations in that sector. Robert is dyslexic and was first introduced to assistive technology when he received a Disabled Student's Allowance while reading for his BA (Hons) degree in Philosophy. He also holds a PGC in Teaching Adults with Specific Learning Difficulties.

Break-out Session Descriptors and Presenters

1. TechAbility Standards; what are they and how can they benefit your organisation? – Neil Beck, TechAbility and National Star College

The TechAbility Standards have been complied to give organisations a baseline to measure their Assistive Technology provision against.

Neil Beck will describe how these standards can be used to enable you to take a strategic approach to ensure you can meet the needs of all learners. The standards will assist you to know what you are doing well and which areas you need to develop. Neil will also give an overview of the documentation and case studies which are provided to support you when utilizing the standards.

2. AT Solutions for People with Visual Impairment – Caireen Sutherland, Principal Education Officer, RNIB College

RNIB provide education for learners with Visual Impairment and a range of additional support needs. Caireen will present the ways in which learners use hardware and software to support their learning. She will outline the pros and cons of a wide range of technologies for people with sight loss and most importantly, how they fit into real-life learning and independence. You will have opportunity to get hands on with the technologies and discuss how people you support might use them.

3. Making Coding Accessible for People with Physical Impairments – Bharat Paudyal, Birmingham City University

People with physical impairments who have issues in using traditional input devices i.e. mouse and keyboard are often excluded from technical professions such as software development and website design.

Eye gaze tracking and speech recognition have improved rapidly in recent years and both have been independently used to support disabled users with programming activities. This session will discuss a recent pilot study undertaken by Birmingham City University and the findings. The study involved a combination of gaze and speech input.

4. Identifying Appropriate Symbol Communication Aids; presentation of a research project – Janice Murray, Manchester Metropolitan University (on behalf of the whole team and project collaborators – Barnsley AT Service, University of Leeds)

"Identifying Appropriate Symbol Communication Aids for Children who are non-speaking: enhancing clinical decision making" (I-ASC) is a ground-breaking and exciting project which aims to enhance the quality of life for children who need electronic augmentative and alternative communication (AAC).

The project aimed to influence current practice and improve the consistency and quality of clinical decision making in the provision of symbol communication aids. Therefore the outcomes of this study are also highly relevant for adults who use AAC. The presentation will outline the findings and outputs of this project.

5. Opportunities for Professional Development in Assistive Technology – Paul Doyle, Hereward College; Holly Hartley, Seashell Trust; Will Wade, ACE Centre

People come to work in Assistive Technology form a wide variety of backgrounds. Entry points and the professional development pathway is often unclear.

Paul will present two pathways – a Certificate in Supporting Users of Assistive Technology course to raise knowledge of AT for all staff and a higher level opportunity to undertake the Assistive Technology Professional Certification in the UK (previously US based only).

Holly will share how she joined Seashell Trust as an Assistive Technologist Apprenticeship and used this trainee post to develop her expertise and experience in house.

ACE Centre provide a range of courses to support professional development in Assistive Technology. An outline of the courses, outcomes and entry points will be shown.

6. Implementing Assistive Technology: What can Specialist Colleges and General FE Colleges learn from each other? – Rohan Slaughter, JISC

Rohan has wide experience of advising both GFE and specialist settings on how to make their IT and AT effective for supporting learning. Coupling this with direct experience as Assistant Principal and Head of Technology at a specialist college gives him a unique perspective on how best to implement AT solutions. During this workshop Rohan will share how to do it well and what pitfalls to avoid.

7. What Use is 3D Printing? – Simon Barnett, National Star College

3D Printing and Design is an exciting prospect for learners with SEND. Where to start, how it will work and how it fits in with your organisational structure can seem daunting. Simon will give you firast hand insights into the impact and the challenges 3D printing can bring as well as a foundation to build from and new avenues to explore. This session will outline:

- Where do I start?
- How do I ensure it brings value to the curriculum?
- Ways to use 3D printing across multi-disciplinary teams
- Software options available
- What is possible?
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8. Demystifying Switching – Hannah Golding, Treloar College

Developing skills with switches can take time and patience. Hannah will outline a pathway to enable switch users to develop their skills. She will also outline what the physical and cognitive reasons for using switches are and highlight some assumptions to be avoided!

If your learners are starting out with switch use, or you want to make sure you are heading in the right direction this workshop is for you.

9. AAC and GDPR; what should organisations be doing? – Fil McIntyre, TechAbility and Beaumont College

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) usage is often supported by organisations which provide paper and electronic devices for people to utilize while they are being assessed or awaiting funding. As the device belongs to the organization it is subject to The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

AAC devices are likely to contain data about the AAC user and others. A key example of this data is photographs and names. Any loss of data must be reported to the Information Commissioners Office.

This session will present the approach taken by Ambito Beaumont College to ensure young people have access to the communication they need while minimising the risks of data loss. Also discussed in the session: The GDPR as a positive – does it force consideration of the data issue? Does the human right to say someone's name override the GDPR? Communi-gate - covering up is worse than fessing up!