STUDENTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM
STUDYING ONLINE:
USING ONLINE TOOLS

WHAT IS THE AUTISM SPECTRUM?
The autism spectrum is a neurological variation which affects, among other things, the way an individual relates to his or her environment and their interaction with other people.

Online tools
- Students on the autism spectrum generally report few problems in using Learning@Griffith, PDF files, YouTube, and the Griffith library website.
- Tools such as Collaborate and Echo360 can cause problems, even though they are used frequently within a course.
- Some students on the autism spectrum may have problems using tools and/or not be able to tell you when they are experiencing barriers. These barriers may include technical problem solving and issues contacting sources of help.

Student quote: "Seeing my tutor online is important as a kind of guidance - for the material itself and getting through it."

Tips
- A successful learning experience is more than the sum of the site content and tools. Creating and maintaining a teacher presence is critical. Remember to actively engage with the students regularly via the online tools and a variety of communication channels.

Student quote: Helpful things include “Tutors that come into the discussion board AT LEAST once a week. Tutors who put an announcement up once a week. Tutors who respond in a timely manner to discussions or questions.”

Content in Learning@Griffith
Students report finding it helpful when the instructor makes clear links between the content across the weeks or modules.

Tips
- At the start of each course provide information to students on how to use tools and who to ask for help if they have a problem. Sometimes running a practice session can be helpful even for continuing students.
- Regularly show or explain how things connect and influence each other within the course. Repeat these consistent links in multiple places.

Tip: Attention to course site learning design can improve structure and navigability of content, enhancing the student learning experience.

At least 33% of students on the autism spectrum found:
- It was hard to find weekly content
- It was difficult to navigate through Learning@Griffith
- The pages had to much content

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with the support of a Griffith Arts, Education and Law Learning and Teaching Grant, 2018