



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Neurodiversity and work

Report about what can help neurodivergent people to get jobs and do well at work



About this easy read



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This is how we say this hard word
neurodivergent.



This is the easy read of a bigger report
by the UK Government.

It is about supporting neurodivergent
people at work.



The easy read report tells you about
some of the things in the bigger
report.



This easy read is still quite long.
You do not have to read it all at once.
You can take a break, or just read the
pages you are interested in.

What is in this booklet



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What neurodivergent means



Neurodivergent is when your brain works differently from other people's.



You might think and feel things differently.



And you may **communicate** in a different way.

Communicate means being able to tell other people what you want and how you feel.



There are different ways a person might be neurodivergent. These are called:

- Autism. This affects how you experience the world around you.



- Dyslexia. This affects how you read or write.



- Dyspraxia. This affects how you move different parts of your body.



- Dyscalculia. This affects how you understand and work with numbers.



- ADHD. This is short for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. This affects how you behave.



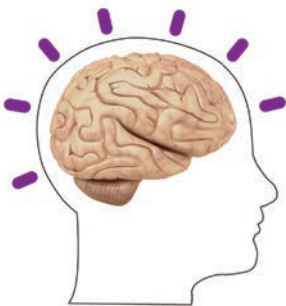
You might find it hard to concentrate or might rush into doing things.



- Developmental Language Disorder. This affects how you speak and understand other people when they talk.



- A tic disorder. This is when your body moves or makes a noise that you can't control.



- Brain injury. This is a problem with any part of your brain.
This might be because of an accident or illness.

About the Expert Panel



The way workplaces are set up can make things harder for neurodivergent people.



The Government wanted to find out how to support neurodivergent people at work.



They set up a group of people called an **Expert Panel**. An **expert** is someone who knows a lot about something.



People on the panel know a lot about things like:

- Disability.



- Getting jobs.



- Neurodiversity in the workplace.



Some of the people on the panel are neurodivergent.

The panel has:



- Looked at lots of work that has already been done about work and being neurodivergent

and



- Written a list of ideas about how **employers** and the Government can make things better.



An **employer** is the service or person you work for.

Problems

There are some problems to look at:

Supporting some disabled people more than others

You cannot see if someone is neurodivergent by looking at them.



Employers often do not understand what it means to be neurodivergent.



They may not understand what small changes people might need.

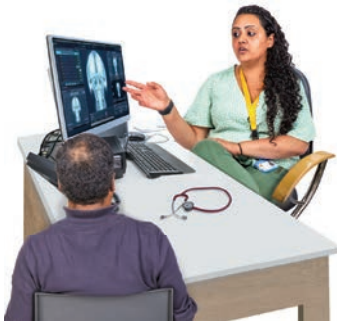


Employers might find it easier to understand a disability if they can see it. Like a person in a wheelchair.



This means some people get changes made. But some people don't.

People with a diagnosis may get more support



A **diagnosis** is when a doctor or other healthcare staff decide if a person is neurodivergent or not.

Things like if they are autistic.
Or if they have ADHD.



It can be hard to get a diagnosis.



Most people have to get a diagnosis to get support at work.



Other people do not have a diagnosis. They might not get any support.

People don't get support for all of their needs



Some people may be neurodivergent in more than 1 way. Things like being dyslexic and having dyscalculia.



They may also have a **health condition**.

A **health condition** is a problem that affects a person's body.

Things like having a bad back, pain, problems with their heart or breathing.



Or it could be to do with **mental health**.

Mental health is things like thoughts, feelings and how a person copes in everyday life.



Workplaces may not be good at supporting all of a person's needs.



And employers may not check that people's support is still right for them. Their needs might have changed.

Finding it hard to talk about being neurodivergent



People are often worried about telling their boss they are neurodivergent.



They don't feel able to ask for support at work.



They are worried their employer might say no. Or that people might think badly of them.

Getting a job

How people are asked to apply for jobs can make it harder for neurodivergent people.



Some things they may find hard are:

- Long job adverts.
- Having to fill in lots of forms.
- Interview questions are asked in ways that are hard to understand.



Ideas to make things better



The panel came up with some ideas for:



- Government who make rules and laws about work

and



- Employers.



The ideas will help to make things better for neurodivergent people at work.

Ideas for Government



Idea 1: When writing new laws about disability and work, think about what neurodivergent people need.

Don't just think about the diagnosis they have.



Idea 2: Give early support to people when they go to an **Employment Tribunal**.



You go to an **Employment Tribunal** when there is a problem at work that you cannot sort out.



Things like when your manager does not give you the changes you need to do your job well.



People should get help with paying for a tribunal.



The Government should also make sure there is more money for Employment Tribunals.



This will help to make sure they happen faster.



Idea 3: Make a rule that says employers must make **reasonable adjustments** within 2 weeks.



Reasonable adjustments are changes an employer must make to support someone in work.



Things like working from home or having a chair that meets their needs.



Idea 4: Make a rule that says employers have to tell the Government:



- How much they pay disabled people.



- And how much they pay people who are not disabled.



Employers should check to see if they are paying disabled people less money than people who are not disabled.

Idea 5: Make the Disability Confident scheme better.



The **Disability Confident** scheme helps employers to support disabled people into work.



Employers should have to show they are getting better at employing disabled people.



Idea 6: Make Access to Work better. **Access to Work** is help people can get from the Government to do their jobs.

Things like:



- Money to help with getting to work.



- Money to pay for a support worker at work.



- Money to pay for things like a laptop. Or a voice on the computer that reads the words out to you.



Lots of people ask for help from Access to Work.



It can take a long time to get the support they need.



Idea 7: The government should **reward** businesses that treat disabled people fairly.



A **reward** is when you are given something for doing a job well.



A business should get a reward if they employ disabled people.



Idea 8: Champions and advisors should have more time off work to do their jobs.



Champions and advisors are people in a work place.

They give advice and support to neurodivergent people.



Idea 9: There are already **standards** that will help to meet the needs of neurodivergent people.

Standards are a bit like rules.



These standards should be known by more people. And they should be used more.



Building and workplace standards say how places should be built and looked after.



These help to keep people safe and well at work. And how workplaces meet everyone's needs.



Things like rooms that are not too bright and quiet places for people to work.



Idea 10: Pay for more **research** into helping neurodivergent people at work.



Research means looking at something to find out more about it.



Neurodivergent people should be involved in doing this research.



Idea 11: Make sure that neurodivergent people can get **Talking Therapies** that are right for them.



Talking Therapy means talking to someone about how you think and how you feel.



Talking Therapy can help with your mental health.



The therapy should be given by someone who understands what things affect neurodivergent people.

Ideas for employers



Idea 1: Help everyone to feel safe at work.



People need to trust each other.



They should be able to ask questions. And share ideas without feeling worried.



Managers should get training about how to support neurodivergent people at work.



Workplaces should speak to neurodivergent people first before they make any changes.



Idea 2: Reasonable adjustments should not feel like a reward or a special thing.



They are just things a person should have, to do their job well.



They do not have to cost a lot of money.



Idea 3: Help people who need it most.



Employers should give people the support they need, as soon as possible.

Things like letting people work at home or work different hours.



Employers should ask people if the support has helped them.



Idea 5: Sometimes workplaces may do things that make it harder for neurodivergent people.



Things like too many bright lights and lots of noise. Or things like the times you need to work.



This might not be on purpose. Employers should check how things are done at work.



They should make sure it is not harder for some people.

Idea 6: Employers should look at things like:



- How long neurodivergent people stay in their jobs

and



- If neurodivergent people can get better paid jobs at work.



Employers should work out if there are any unfair things happening.



And they should decide if they need to do anything about it.



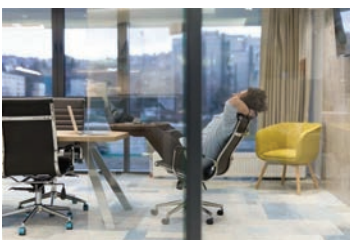
Idea 7: Employers should work with neurodivergent people when they write rules and make changes.



This will help them to make sure the rules and changes work well for everyone.



Idea 8: Make buildings easy to use and get around.



This might be things like quiet spaces for people to work and take breaks.



And putting up clear signs to help people find their way around buildings.



Idea 9: Make sure people's different needs are met.



Employers often make changes that they think will meet the needs of everyone.



Things like using yellow paper to help people who are dyslexic.



But not all people with dyslexia need yellow paper.



People are different and have different needs.



Employers should give people support that meets their needs.

Universal Design



The panel think that some of these ideas can happen if employers use something called **Universal Design**.



Universal Design means doing things to make work better for everyone.



It means thinking about things like:

- How you talk to people and give people information.



- The way you work and how you do things.



- If your building and rooms meet everyone's needs.



If all workplaces had Universal Design, a lot of people's needs will be met from the start.



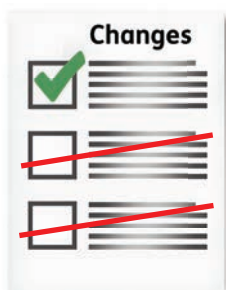
This means less people will need to ask for changes at work.



There might still be some small changes that need to be made.



This is because everyone is different and has different needs.



But workplaces will need to make less changes overall.



The panel thinks that Universal Design is a really good idea.



They think the Government should support employers to use it.



This will help to make workplaces better and fairer for everyone.

Who is on the panel



Professor Amanda Kirby. Amanda led the panel.



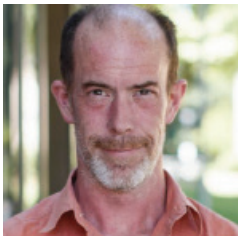
Dr Nancy Doyle. Nancy knows a lot about supporting people to be happy and well at work.



Jean Hewitt. Jean knows a lot about making sure workplaces are easy for everyone to use.



Professor Kim Hoque. Kim knows a lot about disability and work.



Dr Damian Milton. David knows a lot about autism and how people behave.



Professor Huw Williams. Huw knows a lot about brain injury and how the brain works.