

There are a range of ways employers can make workplaces more accessible to those with learning disabilities and/or autism. As everyone is different, the adjustments which may help one person, may not help someone else, therefore it is important to consider each person as an individual.

You should ask the employee what they think will help them as they may already know, otherwise you should work with the person to decide on any adjustments that may be needed. Below you will find some examples of adjustments for different difficulties.

## Reading, Writing and Spelling

- ✓ Give verbal instructions as well as written instructions, this could include recorded verbal instructions so that the employee can listen to them again as needed.
- ✓ Summarise the key information in documents, this could be done by highlighting the important information or summarising the key information in bullet points.
- ✓ Allowing extra time for any tasks involving these skills.
- ✓ Provide software that can help the employee with reading, writing and spelling, such as text to speech or speech to text.
- ✓ Allow the employee to send documents to someone else to proof read.
- ✓ Make use of diagrams, drawings, mind maps & flowcharts.

# Planning, Organisation and Memory

- ✓ Have regular meetings with the employee to help them to manage and prioritise their workload.
- ✓ Support the employee to plan their day using a calendar or app.
- ✓ Break up any complex or long tasks into smaller chunks.
- ✓ Remind the employee of any important upcoming deadlines.
- ✓ Allow the employee to schedule some time in their calendar at the beginning or end of each day to plan out the rest of the day, or the following day.
- ✓ Provide written or verbally recorded instructions for the employee to look back at.
- ✓ Allow the employee to have a script or key information written down when answering the phone or making phone calls.
- ✓ Use color-coding, for example to separate urgent and non-urgent tasks.

## Computer Work

- ✓ Support the employee to make use of the accessibility features built into many computers, such as, enlarged font, screen brightness, mouse pointer size, contrast, and narrator.
- ✓ Allow the employee to take regular breaks away from the computer.
- ✓ Supply the employee with an anti-glare screen filter.

## Sensory Impairments (E.g. Hearing or Vision)

- ✓ Make adjustments to the work area to allow an assistance dog.
- ✓ Provide a sign language interpreter as needed.
- ✓ Make sure to face an employee with a hearing impairment when speaking if they lip read.
- ✓ Install a visual or vibrating fire alarm.
- ✓ Provide alternative document formats, such as large printed or braille.
- ✓ Provide assistive equipment and/or software– this could be funded through Access to Work.

## Physical Impairments

- ✓ Make changes to the workplace, such as installing ramps and handrails or adjusting the layout of a room.
- ✓ Make sure that all rooms that the employee will need to access are accessible.
- ✓ Provide assistive equipment and/or software– this could be funded through Access to Work.

## Verbal Communication

- ✓ Provide a written summary of any instructions given verbally.
- ✓ Give verbal instructions in a quiet location, making sure they are clear and concise and given one at a time.

## Verbal Communication (Continued)

- ✓ Allow verbal instructions to be recorded so that they can be listened back to.

## Group Work

- ✓ Send an agenda, questions and or discussion points in advance.
- ✓ Be clear about the aim of the group work and each members role in the group.
- ✓ Allow a longer processing and response time.
- ✓ Support involvement by asking direct questions as needed.

## Social Skills and Communication

- ✓ Provide someone for the employee to go to for support, that can help to defuse social misunderstandings or workplace issues before they escalate.
- ✓ Be accepting of different ways of communicating as well as differences in eye contact, facial expressions, and body language.
- ✓ Explain any unwritten rules to the employee.
- ✓ Avoid using abstract language.
- ✓ Provide feedback using direct (but sensitive) language and don't rely on the employee to pick up on feedback that is hinted.