



Neurodiversity in the Workplace

An information guide
for employers.





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This resource will help your business to understand and benefit from:

- Developing an understanding of neuroinclusion and diversity in your business.
- Optimising recruitment and retention.
- Identifying and developing the talents and skills needed for your workforce.
- Prioritising innovation and team dynamics.
- The opportunities offered by collaborating with education and training providers.
- Building Social Capital and brand values.
- Strategies to enable your business to benefit from a neurodiverse workforce.

Be Inspired - to think differently

Entrepreneurship, enterprise and innovation are key qualities in every successful economy and business. Transforming vision into opportunity and success in a technology driven, rapidly changing economy and culture requires a new type of workforce.

The skills and competencies required in the workforce are radically different from those of 40 years ago, when computing was only just beginning to change our lives and the economy. With the emergence of new technologies such as artificial intelligence, we are all being challenged to 'Think Differently'.

This different thinking is now recognised in 20% of the workforce who have, until now, remained largely invisible. 1 in 5 human beings display different ways of thinking, finding expression in Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Autism, ADHD and Dyspraxia. Research states that over 40% of millionaires are Dyslexic (1) and that the characteristics of ADHD are positively connected to both entrepreneurship and the initiation of business ventures (2). We now know that university graduates with ADHD are twice as likely to start their own business.

The Neurodiversity paradigm postulates that this prevalence of different neurotypes must have an evolutionary purpose. Why is there such diversity in human neurocognitive capabilities and potential? How can we benefit from the realisation of talent, potential and diversity of intelligence in today's workplace?



The rapidly changing context of work

What are the skills needed for the modern workplace compared to the workplace skills of the past? Context matters.





What is neurodiversity?

The Neurodiversity paradigm proposes that there is an evolutionary purpose for 1 in 5 of the workforce thinking differently. In the 21st century, different minds demonstrate skills and intelligences that are increasingly valued in a variety of roles and functions in every organisation.



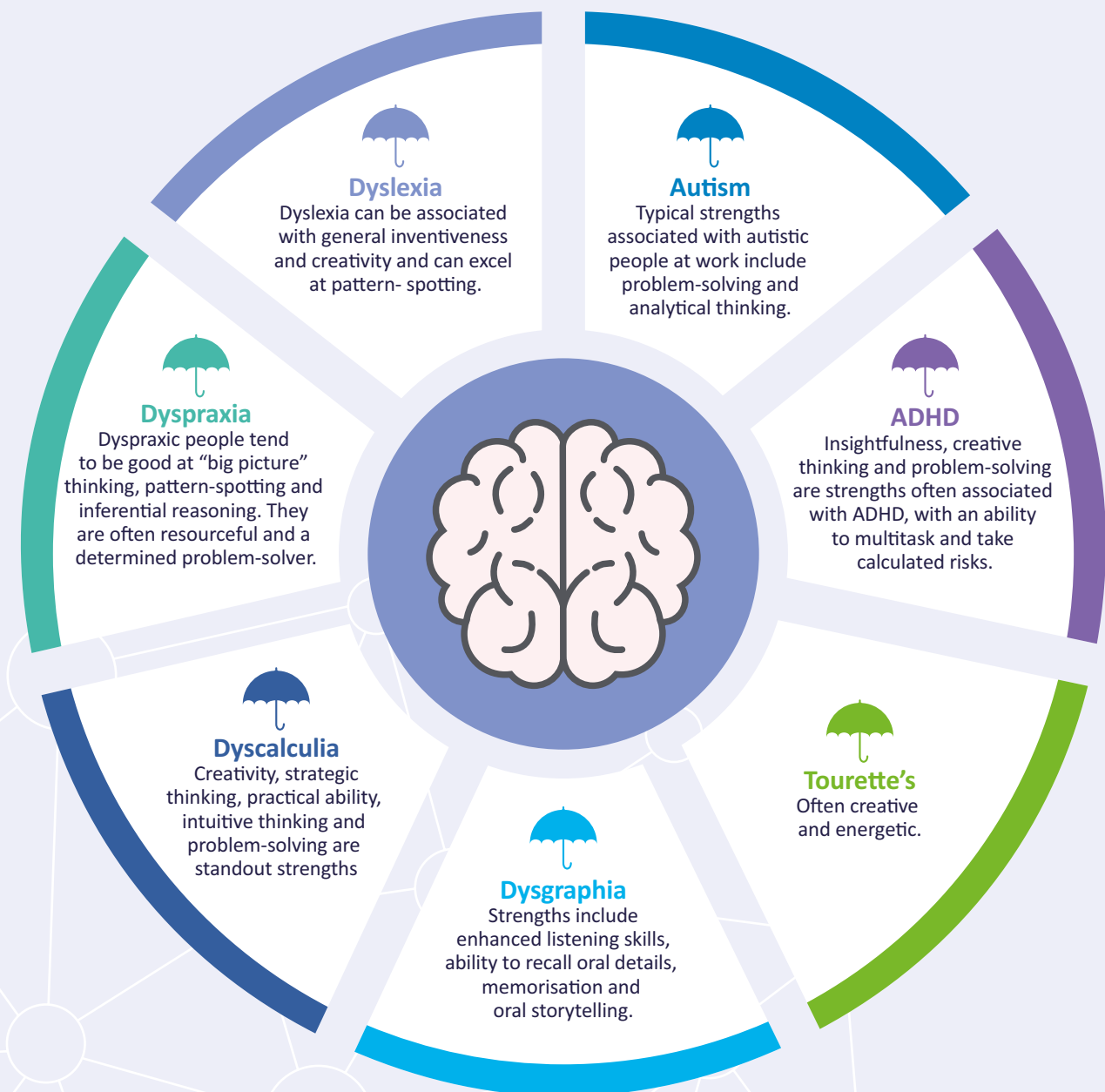
Take a strength-based approach

Historically, it was assumed that neurodiverse minds equalled lower intelligence and ability

The scientific evidence is unequivocal - neurodiverse minds do not automatically equate with low IQ.

Therefore, there is a need to redefine our concept of intelligence, intellect, ability, potential and employability.

A useful starting point is to focus upon the strengths within each Neurotype.





Neurodiversity is good for business

The concept of Neurodiversity is now influencing policy development at a national level in both education and employment. Businesses can wield enormous power in effecting social change, evidenced through their brand values and marketing strategies. Therefore, by actively engaging in this national conversation and cultural change, businesses can win new customers and access new markets. In 2022, The ADHD Foundation, the Neurodiversity Charity partnered with ClearChannel UK, a global advertising company. As a result, ClearChannel are leading the way in encouraging global brands to incorporate Neurodiverse friendly approaches to their advertising.

How could this impact on your business and workforce, particularly recruitment? Research shows us that diverse workforces have a competitive edge, are more innovative and more profitable (3). The premise of hiring a new employee is that they have knowledge, skills, experience and potential to add value to your organisation. In summary, you hire them because of what they can do – not because of what they cannot do.

Businesses wield enormous power in effecting social change, evidenced through their brand values and marketing strategies that are aligned with cultural change. Local and global brands understand and harness this zeitgeist to win new customers as well as impact and shape the economy across a variety of sectors. Demand for new and different skills outstrips supply in many industries.

New understanding about how we ‘enable’ talent and potential in our current and future workforce requires dynamic partnerships with education providers.

5 reasons for encouraging a neurodiverse workforce

1. Attracting the talent you need in key roles.
2. Retaining talent to reduce avoidable costs in recruitment, induction, and training.
3. Productivity gained from putting the right people in the right role with the right tools.
4. Employee wellbeing derived from job satisfaction and effective team dynamics.
5. Brand values that enhance the reputation of your business.

Understanding Neurodiversity in the Workplace: 8 key messages

- 1** There is a **natural variation** in how people think, act, learn, communicate, are motivated and relate to others in society and in the workplace. This can present both opportunities and challenges for individual employees.
- 2** It is the universal design that **human brains function differently** at the individual level. This is the essence of neurodiversity.
- 3** We like to surround ourselves with 'like-minded' people, but risk producing more of the same **at the expense of innovation, agility, and profitability**. Thinking differently is the new mantra in business.
- 4** Fear of **stigmatisation and lack of understanding** from others can prevent individuals from seeking or disclosing a diagnosis. Our education system has mistakenly led people to believe that those who think differently are less able, less intelligent and less employable. We should not assume that underachievement in education means a lack of talent or potential.
- 5** Many workplaces are unwittingly **designed in ways which do not support neurodiverse people's ability to thrive and add value**. Some individuals will navigate these workplaces by hiding signs of their neurodiversity. Masking or camouflaging different thinking can be exhausting, placing an immense pressure on a person's mental and physical health. This waste of energy is also a waste of talent and resource.
- 6** Neurodiversity entails not only **challenges but also important strengths**. Differences in how individual's process information or communicate ideas are not "symptoms" that need fixing or changing, for example, ADHD isn't an "attention deficit": it is variable attention that reflects deep focus, attention to detail and commitment to passions.
- 7** Whilst neurotypes such as Dyslexia, Autism, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, and ADHD are defined as "Protected Characteristics" under the Equality Act (2010), **not everyone identifies as disabled**. People chose to define themselves using different language, for example, "Neurodivergent" or "Neurodiverse." Respect for people's right to identify is important as the language and understanding about neurodiversity evolves.
- 8** Create a **context (culture) that enables and optimises performance and employee wellbeing** and commitment and you will create a fertile environment for innovation.

The business imperative for Neurodiversity: 8 Key Messages



1 Innovation

The ability to compete based on innovation is crucial for many companies. How we work is fundamentally changing. Increased automation is creating a shift in the types of jobs and competencies organisations need. Innovation requires different minds. How can we include colleagues who perceive things, process information, and focus in different ways. Should the board room, the workplace, the decision-making table always be full of people who think and view the world from the same direction?

2 The right person in the right job

In a competitive market, can we afford to overlook qualified, capable individuals who can get lost in the recruitment and interview process? In 2021, just 22% of autistic adults were in paid employment in the UK (4). Companies who have developed recruitment and interview processes that proactively include neurodiverse applicants can be assured that they are recruiting from a wide pool of potential and not missing the right person for that job! Cognitive profiling and personalised performance management protocols ensure recruitment and retention is optimised.

3 The value of recognising and respecting difference

Neurodiverse employees have been prevented from thriving, or completely overlooked, due to rigid ideas about what makes a good employee and strictly standardised work processes. Promoting an understanding of neurodiversity is not just about tapping into skills but also about supporting and developing colleagues. Talking about neurodiversity within your organisation can help all colleagues to identify and accept signs of cognitive differences. This can lead to fewer instances of misunderstandings, better workplace performance and a happier working environment for all.

4 **Harnessing specific skills and talents**

There is much discussion about “neurodiverse talents” – but what are they? A short list includes: lateral thinking (‘thinking outside of the box’); exceptional deep focus; problem-solving abilities; meticulous attention to detail; highly analytical thinking; creativity; intense expertise; and innovation. By enabling neurodiverse colleagues to play to their strengths, these skills and talents can come to the fore for the benefit of your company, your profitability, and your customers.

5 **Retention**

The recruitment and retention of top talent is a strategic priority for all companies. In 2019, an Australian survey into ‘Neurodiversity in the Workplace’ found that 20% of their respondents had lost a job because they were autistic (5). Employee dissatisfaction and turnover have serious cost implications. According to Gallup’s 2021 ‘State of the Global Workplace’ report, the highest quit rates are found among actively disengaged employees (6). It is estimated that the direct cost of replacing an individual employee is 50% to 200% of the employee’s annual salary. High staff turnover can have major indirect costs in lost customer relationships, lost institutional knowledge and decreased team morale. Harvard Business Review stated in their report, ‘Neurodiversity as a Competitive Advantage’ (7), that neurodiverse people overall were 30% more productive at work. These high levels of productivity derive from colleagues who feel understood, respected and enabled to make a meaningful contribution to the workforce and be valued by their colleagues.

6 **Context matters**

When we talk about ability, context matters. What is required to enable access to the workplace for individuals with ‘invisible’ abilities and disabilities is not always obvious. Inclusion is not an onerous HR responsibility. Creating a context where your employees thrive, and therefore add value to your company, is simply good business sense. So, invest in training, peer support and employee-driven initiatives.

Building neurodiverse teams can allow employers to unlock better business outcomes. Companies have already reported marked gains in productivity, efficiency, and work quality because of their neurodiversity initiatives. JP Morgan have reported that employees participating in their ‘Autism at Work’ program were 48% faster and 92% more productive compared to their peers in certain roles (8).

Employers increasingly recognise that a considerable number of the neurodivergent population demonstrate skills and natural aptitudes in high demand roles and industries such as cybersecurity, STEM, analytics and systems design. Employers are also now recognising that neurotypes such as Dyslexia and ADHD often demonstrate good interpersonal and customer facing skills. You will find an abundance of people with ADHD in sales forces including city traders who thrive in a fast-paced environment.

7) **One size does not fit all**

No single person in the workforce is good at everything. Different functions in every company require different competencies; excelling in one role does not mean the employee will be as successful in another. Play to the strengths of the individual - ask them what they need to develop new competencies to add further value to your company. Employees who know they are valued are always more productive and enjoy coming to work.

Relationships with colleagues are a key component of employee satisfaction and wellbeing. When you have an entire workforce that understands neurodiversity, they will communicate more effectively, recognising that some people think differently so we all need to ensure that we are understood.

8 **Even SME's benefit from employee led corporate and social responsibility projects**

Consider engaging in local or national initiatives, projects and schemes that celebrate neurodiversity. Everyone knows someone who has Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Autism, ADHD, or Dyscalculia, whether in our families, friendship groups, hobbies and interest groups or colleagues in the workplace. That is the universal design. We talk not only of equality, diversity, and inclusion: we also talk about belonging. Employee schemes that unite everyone in a common cause build communities and strengthen workplace collaboration. The intersectionality of neurodiversity means that whatever your age, race, religion, class, role, sexual orientation, everyone knows someone who 'thinks differently'. Supporting a local school, charity, or project that benefits those who are neurodivergent, enhances the culture and value of your business.



Questions for employers to consider

- **Accessible, inclusive workplaces:** is the environment neurodiversity friendly?
- **Training:** has your workforce had basic awareness training?
- **'Access to Work' Funding:** how could this be used to purchase equipment, technology, coaching and training for neurodiverse employees?
- **Values:** how does the support provided for your workforce reflect your company and brand values? How does this benefit your customers?
- **Company culture:** how do you cultivate a welcoming and supportive culture? In what ways are you investing in employee development, community relationships and civic responsibility?
- **Disclosure:** how do you enable employees and applicants to share their support needs? How is this information used to help them fulfil their potential within their role?

The ADHD Foundation, Neurodiversity Charity works with many businesses, organisations and companies throughout the UK and abroad to create neuroinclusive workplaces. **Here are a few examples:**

Successful Workplace Adjustments:

A Civil Engineering company in the Midlands who created a low arousal space within an open plan office to support emotional and attentional regulation.

A HR Consultancy in the Home Counties who have designated car parking spaces for autistic colleagues.

A Solicitor's firm in the North West who have a staff member responsible for investigating Dyslexia friendly programmes and software.

A Tech company in London who provide equipment to encourage colleagues with ADHD to be physically active throughout the working day.

A Charity in South Wales who introduced body doubling, pairing colleagues to support sustained attentional regulation.

Recruitment and human resource management

The right candidate is not always the one who is great in interview. Interviews are a unique skill. Ask the applicant how best they may be able to demonstrate they are the right person for the job.

- Establish flexibility of interview protocols. Try employing tasks and activities, use of videocalls and group tasks, metrics such as cognitive profiling and providing the interview questions in advance.
- Ensure talents and needs are understood in the context of the role. Explore how you could enable the employee to know their strengths and potential to develop their skills.
- What assistive technology and workplace adjustments are needed to optimise performance, productivity and employee satisfaction? The Department for Work and Pension's Access to Work funding can be used to offset costs (eg: training, equipment such as standing desks, assistive technology, coaching and training).
- Allow flexibility and creative engagement with induction and on-boarding.
- Discuss and agree identified training needs and time frames.
- Ensure the immediate supervisor or line manager understands the workplace adjustments and support required to best enable the employee in the context of their neurodiversity.
- Who can the employee approach for support? Would a Neurodiversity champion be helpful?

Neurodiversity friendly workspaces can enhance employee health & wellbeing

Are there spaces in your premises (or off-site locations) that are conducive to the employee being able to complete their work responsibilities?

- Do your employees find a large, open plan office too distracting?
- Is it too hot or cold? Are the lights too bright?
- Is there enough space for employees to move around?

Are team meetings planned with clear objectives, reporting, task assignments and conducted in an appropriate space?

- Can in-person meetings be done with a choice of standing or sitting?
- Can you utilise display boards, flip charts, and other 'visual' ways of sharing information, rather than just verbal communication? Could this be done in advance?
- Ask the team what works for them – people process information in different ways.
- Invite feedback so you know everyone understands what is required. Create a psychologically safe space for people to ask questions or gain more clarity.
- Summarise and then disseminate the information in a range of formats, for example, infographics, recordings, diagrams.
- Review and feedback continually. Prioritise affirming any progress made. Colleagues need to hear when they get it right – not only when mistakes are made.

Team dynamics benefit from a diversity of minds. Consider how 'maverick thinkers', 'rebel talent' and innovators can safely test established hypotheses, practices and conventional thinking in your organisation and create efficiencies or new opportunities.

- Encourage and facilitate employee led corporate and social responsibility projects that promote local good causes to build common purpose, relationships, and organisational values.
- Explore how parents and carers in your workforce can be supported with flexitime, this can reduce unplanned absence from work and disruptions or delays to business activity. Make available parent training that will improve their skills and resilience when the needs of their children make demands on their energy and performance in work.
- Use occupational health protocols to support the health of your workforce, for example, negotiating a company discount for the local gym or leisure centre.

There is a value in a range of skills, perspectives and approaches in team projects or around the decision-making table.



Communications Policy and Practice

How can communications be adaptable, flexible and in a variety of formats? Check with employees to ensure a flexibility of mediums for communication across the organisation.

Infographics and charts can make reporting more accessible.

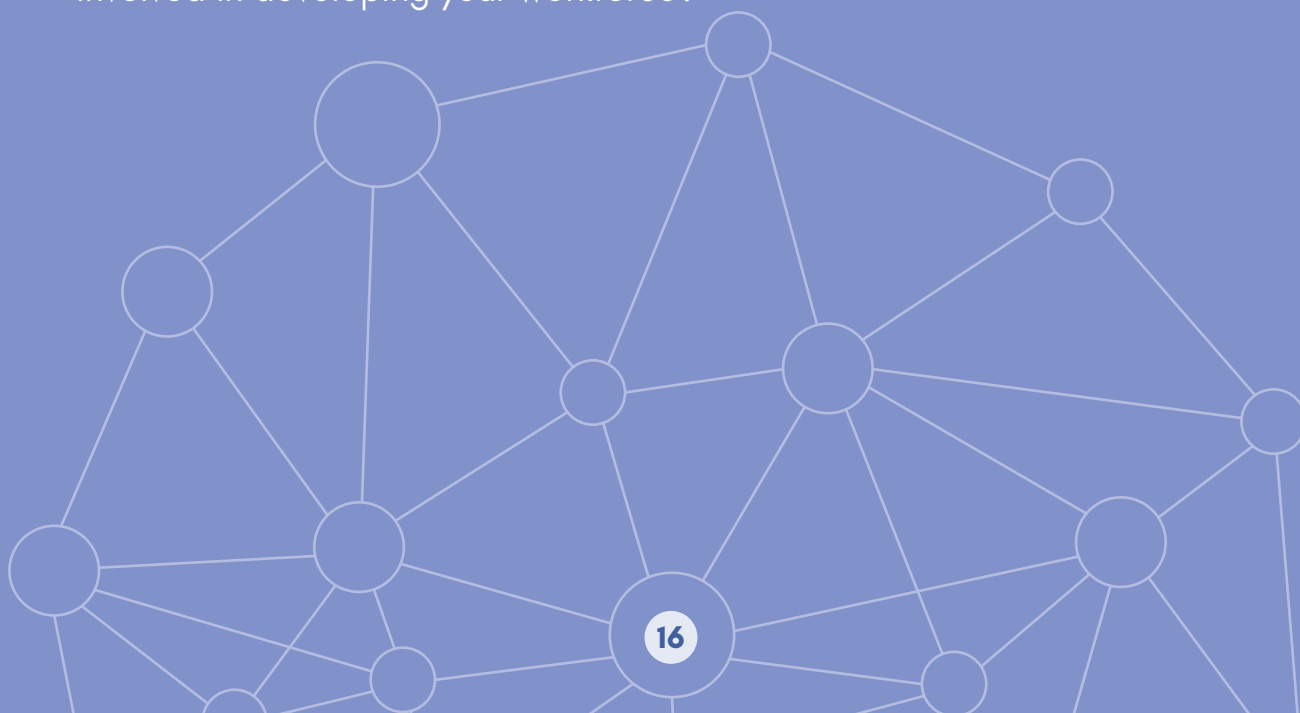
Allow time to read or produce documents and utilise 'alt text' images.

IT Support strategies such as Office 365 applications to auto spell and grammar check documents and emails. 'Text-to-voice' software reads documents aloud. Use 'voice-to-text' software to record minutes of meetings. Electronic planners, reminders and task lists can support organisation, memory and planning skills.

Keep language clear and concise. Always conclude with the questions: what action needs to be taken? By whom? When?

Summary of eight key considerations for employers

- 1 How will you review, define, and re-define the skills, experience and competencies needed for a role and its evolution to meet the changing requirements of the organisation?
- 2 How can you improve recruitment protocols to ensure they are adaptable?
- 3 How can performance management frameworks be adapted to fit a diverse workforce?
- 4 What assistive technology and training does your business need to build capacity and skills in house?
- 5 How will your internal and external communications protocols need to be adapted to ensure they are inclusive?
- 6 How will your current HR function ensure your company benefits through neuro-inclusion?
- 7 How will your induction and onboarding be optimised to improve performance and retention?
- 8 Can DWP 'Access to Work' funding be utilised to meet the costs involved in developing your workforce?



In 2022, the ADHD Foundation
Neurodiversity Charity in partnership
with Do It Solutions launched the:

Neurodiversity Friendly award for Employers



To achieve this prestigious award, employers pledge that:

1. We will ensure that 50% of the workforce have received Neurodiversity Awareness Training.
2. We will work towards adopting strength based Neurodiversity friendly working practices to benefit both the workforce and customers.
3. We will publicly celebrate Neurodiversity.

Heathrow

"This award is really important to us. We are spearheading this new training for the organisation as a whole starting with the Infrastructure Programme Management team at Heathrow. I'm pleased to say that feedback has been extremely positive around raising awareness, creating a better understanding of neurodiversity and how it can have a positive impact on working together in teams - with each member of the team bringing their own strengths and capabilities." **Ben Jones**



SFI Health

"Neurodiversity is a value not a pathology. We are delighted to be one of the first organisations to gain this award. It is a testimonial to our belief in the importance of neurodiversity when we first got involved in 2016 with the Umbrella project." **Gianluca Ligas**

Witherslack Group

"Witherslack Group is proud to be a longstanding partner of the ADHD Foundation and equally proud to be awarded the Neurodiversity Friendly Accreditation. Championing understanding and celebration of neurodiversity is the true foundation of the relationship between the ADHD Foundation and our Group, and long may it continue." **Matt Boyle**

Wales Restorative Approaches Partnership

"Wales Restorative Approaches Partnership believes that all people have strengths, and how we work should promote inclusion and equality for all. Through our work with Amanda and the DoIT Profiler team, we have adapted our processes to ensure we meet the needs of the neurodiverse community." **Julia Houlston Clark**

**"Everyone has potential but some people don't have the means
to recognise this or the tools to optimise their skills."**

Professor Amanda Kirby. CEO DoIt Solutions and Chair, ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity.



ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity training services for employers

We offer a range of training opportunities on all aspects of neurodiversity in the workplace that are flexible, accessible and easily tailored to meet the needs of your workforce.

- ✓ Training sessions can be in person, virtual – online or in recorded formats.
- ✓ Course organisers will be offered a pre-session meeting in order for our trainers to create a bespoke experience tailored to their specific workplace and current needs.
- ✓ All course participants will be offered further reference materials after course completion.
- ✓ All courses are offered in full day, half day or shorter sessions, for example, “lunch and learn” formats of either 60 or 90 minutes.
- ✓ Online multiple choice ‘light touch’ training accessible for a period of twelve weeks to complete basic awareness training that includes access to video links.

Training Menu

Why Neurodiversity is good for business.

This programme introduces you to the basic concepts of what neurodiversity is, why and how recruitment protocols can match cognitive profiles with key job roles and functions in your business and how to optimise retention, performance and efficiency by playing to the strengths of employees and utilising training and technology to develop competencies that are required as part of any role or job function.

This training explains the different thinking and how the context of the workplace can enable some minds to thrive and add value, or not. Assistive technology, strategies and team dynamics are explored to discern how they impact the 1 in 5 of your workforce – and customers – who think differently.

Introduction to Neurodiversity in the workplace.

This course provides more in depth information about neurodiverse conditions. It is an exploration of how different ways of thinking and processing information might impact individuals in the workplace. Identifying the unique skills and qualities associated with neurodiversity, and using screening tools (eg: cognitive profiling) to match the right person to the role.

This course also demonstrates principal strategies to support and enable colleagues, and the advantages of working environments that support neurodiverse employees.

Enabling Neurodiverse minds in the workplace.

This course will focus upon specific neurodiverse conditions as requested and will raise awareness of the condition(s) including up to date research, key features and diagnostic criteria. It will also include discussion of cooccurring conditions, potential impacts on executive functioning skills and mental health. Different presentations can also be included if appropriate, including gender. The course includes key strategies to support individuals.

The following neurodiverse minds (conditions) are explored:

ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia, DCD (Dyspraxia), Tourette's Syndrome, Foetal Alcohol Spectrum.

Understand employee well-being. Facilitating a healthy lifestyle culture in your workforce.

The following mental health conditions can also be included on request: anxiety, depression, self-harming behaviours, eating disorders and compulsive behaviours.

This training also provides a range of strategies to promote and maintain **good mental health and psychological wellbeing**, including stress reduction strategies.

Supporting employees who are parents and carers of neurodivergent children.

This is a series (3 - 6) of 90 minute live streamed webinars for parents and carers, to develop an understanding of their child's needs and strengths, support their education and wellbeing; reducing the stressors experienced by parents you employ.

The ADHD Foundation also offers the following training modules:

Any of these modules can be combined or included in the courses previously listed.

Neurodiversity friendly recruitment, interviewing and onboarding.

Many neurodiverse candidates are put off applying for jobs based upon the information that is available pre-interview, or by the organisation of the interview process. Similarly, some interview processes do not provide neurodiverse applicants with appropriate opportunities for them to demonstrate their abilities. This module will explore neuro-inclusive practice for a range of neurodiverse conditions in recruitment and interviewing. Also, how inclusive practice in onboarding and induction can ensure neurodiverse employees can begin their employment successfully and thrive within the workplace.

Considerations for line managers - models of mentoring and coaching.

This module will explore awareness raising for leaders and managers about the impact of neurodiversity in the workplace and will include inclusive practice, different management approaches, processes, and strategies, including workplace coaching.

Neuro-inclusive marketing and communication.

This module will explore communication and marketing approaches for neurodiverse groups, including internal communications. The module includes reader friendly strategies, design of marketing collateral and publicity campaigns that are neurodiversity friendly to capture new customers.

Starting a Neurodiverse friendly initiative.

This module will explore a range of initiatives to support neurodiverse colleagues in the workplace: from setting up a neurodiverse employee's network, establishing Neurodiversity Champions or Peer to Peer support structures and coaching. The module will explore case studies and other best practice examples. Engaging in national initiatives, such as ADHD Awareness Month or the ADHD Foundation's Umbrella Project can be an effective way of raising awareness amongst all colleagues, starting conversations, and addressing the issue of masking and non-disclosure in the workplace.

Supporting Disclosure.

Many neurodiverse people chose not to share that they are neurodiverse or that they have a clinical diagnosis of a neurodiverse condition. This module will explore the reasons for this and the possible impact upon the individual and provide strategies for line managers or other colleagues on how to start the conversation and how to support a colleague through the process of disclosing their neurodiversity at work.

Explaining the Equality Act 2010.

People with a diagnosis of a neurodiverse condition have legal rights in the workplace under the “protected characteristics” within the Equality Act 2010. Therefore, employers are legally required to put in place “workplace adjustments” to ensure that they can be as effective in their job role as everybody else. This module will explain this provision within the Equality Act and explore what constitutes a “reasonable adjustment.” The session will also include information about support available for neurodiverse employees through Access to Work.

Bespoke branded training films

Pre-recorded bespoke branded training films can also be provided, offering you a permanent training resource that is accessible, thus reducing the costs of taking staff teams away from front line delivery at peak periods of demand.

Training films can be made to your specifications with own branding. For information about this resource, please contact Colin.Foley@adhdfoundation.org.uk



References

- (1) Alexander-Passe N (2015) *Perceptions of success in Dyslexic adults in the UK.*
- (2) Moore C B, McIntyre N H, Lanivich S E (2021) *ADHD related neurodiversity and the entrepreneurial mindset.*
- (3) Austin R, Pisan G (2017) Harvard Business Review *Neurodiversity as a competitive advantage.*
- (4) Office of National statistics (2021)
- (5) Hedley D, Randolph K J, Raymaker D M, Robertson S M, Vincent J (2019) *An expert discussion on Employment in Autism.*
- (6) Gallup *State of the Global Workplace 2021 report.*
- (7) Austin R, Pisan G (2017) Harvard Business Review *Neurodiversity as a competitive advantage.*

Useful Resources

ACAS

<https://archive.acas.org.uk/neurodiversity>

Adjustments examples

<https://www.autism.org.uk/professionals/employers/sign-up/adjustments.aspx>

Case law

<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/news/employment-case-law>

Equality Act 2010

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

The Law and Neurodiversity at work

<https://www.gmb.org.uk/sites/default/files/neurodiversity-law-guide.pdf>

Microsoft – Accessibility information and training – Microsoft Accessibility

<Aka.ms/AccessibilityAtAGlance>

Testimonials



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“The ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity is excellent, comprehensive and accessible training courses have equipped our creative and management teams with confidence, tools and language to implement new ways of working which support an inclusive creative learning environment.”

James MacGillivray, Education and Projects Manager, Ballet Lorent Limited

balletLORENT

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“Working with The ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity and Do-It profiler have really helped our team to gain a better understanding of neurodiversity in our workforce and for our customers at Heathrow Airport. We would recommend this training to anyone looking to ensure they were a truly inclusive team.”

Ben Jones, Head of Capital PMO, Heathrow Airport

Heathrow
Making every journey better

“

“A complicated subject... explained thoroughly in an approachable and easy way.”

Karen Halicki, Principal People Manager, Willmott Dixon Construction Limited

**WILLMOTT DIXON
CONSTRUCTION**

“

“Pre course communication was excellent and a brilliant online session which helped us to develop our thinking about neurodiversity in the workplace, delivered in an engaging and relatable way. One colleague commented that it was the best online session across any topic that she had ever attended.”

Sarah Mendham, HR Manager, Plantlife UK

Plantlife

“

“The trainer was extremely knowledgeable and gave our colleagues a very good insight into neurodiversity... we had some fabulous feedback following the session.”

Katie Marshall, Learning & Development Co-Ordinator, Charities Aid Foundation

CAF
Charities Aid Foundation

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“Creating a workplace where neurodivergent individuals can thrive rather than just survive, is not only benefits the individuals, but also leads to a more innovative, diverse, and productive team overall. By creating a psychological safe space, where all employees feel empowered to speak up when things are not designed for them, and instead of being affected by presenteeism creating mental health challenges. They have the work environment they need to succeed and sustain their wellbeing. This is important for business in reducing turn over rates, ensuring talent is recognised and allowed to progress and in general fostering a engaged and motivated workforce.”

Jenny McLaughlin, Diversity Lead, Heathrow Airport

Heathrow
Making every journey better



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“The ADHD Awareness training has really opened our eyes as a business and will help us to support the teams within our business more effectively and compassionately. The training was interactive and informative and gave all of us the opportunity to open up about our own experiences!”

**Jenny Fairhurst, Head of HR,
Learning & Development, Lyons Bowe Solicitors**



“

“Colleagues commented that ADHD wasn’t what they thought it was and hadn’t understood all the traits associated with ADHD. Educational and helpful with individuals sharing stories in a safe place. Very engaging with real life examples to reinforce the messages.”

**Laura James, Head of Scotland,
Baker Hicks Limited**

BakerHicks.

“

“Very engaging and informative sessions... I could see the lightbulbs going off around the room.”

Cate Eeles Director, Caritas Homes



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“Informative, well-paced and adapted to consider the specific needs of our particular client group. Highly recommended.”

Paul Harris, Crisis UK

Crisis

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“The ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity team are a pleasure to work with, they take the time to carefully listen and understand our desired outcomes. Our team now feels more confident in being neurodiversity aware and are equipped with practical tools and knowledge to support and celebrate the unique contributions and strengths of a diverse team.”

**Fliss Rook, Head of Fundraising
& Communications, Foothold**



“

“The ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity has been a great help sharing expert knowledge about Neurodiversity to our employees.”

Esme Chant, Softwire UK

Softwire



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“SFI Health, a global leader in developing integrative health solutions for cognition, is proud to have been one of the first companies worldwide to receive the Neurodiversity Friendly Accreditation Award during the 2022 ADHD Foundation - The Neurodiversity Charity conference.

Several initiatives were deployed, including two webinars on neurodiversity organized for all SFI Health employees in 2021 and in 2022 in collaboration with UK’s ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity.

During these seminars many employees shared their experience with neurodiversity: among SFI Health employees, one in three live with a neurodiverse family member and 60% of have a close family member or friend, meaning many have a personal connection. They declared that such information helped them in understanding neurodiversity and finally establishing a better relationship with them.”

**Elisa Ranieri, Marketing Consumer Manager,
Soho Flordis International Switzerland SA**



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“In the context of growing successful teams, neurodiversity is who we are. If you are leading people, responsible for the psychological welfare of people, managing people, managing success, then I would strongly recommend reaching out to The ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity for their help and training.”

**John Kelly, Managing Director,
Hanson Regan & Opnflo Ltd**



“

“Thought provoking and informative, backed with real life experiences... has improved the confidence levels of our staff when being with people who are neurodiverse.”

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Chair, Local
Government & Social Care, Ombudsman**



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“I would recommend that every organisation engages with the ADHD Foundation to encourage growth around inter-personal development and relationships.”

Lisa Edmunds, CEO. Unit Chambers



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“The ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity were incredibly receptive to the needs of our business; spending time to really understand and get to know our requirements before delivering a fantastic training session. This has been a real game changer to our business and how we provide advice and support to our employees living and working with ADHD.”

Andrea Fuller, HR Director, Domainex



Glossary

Neurodivergent – Someone whose brain processes, learns, and/or behaves differently from what is considered “typical”. Some people prefer to identify as ‘Neurodiverse’ because the root of the word neurodivergent implies ‘deviating from the norm’, when diversity of mind is actually ‘the norm’.

We must therefore respect the right of the individual to identify using language they embrace. We must recognise that language and terminology evolves in the same way we no longer use terms such ‘invalid’ or ‘handicapped’.

‘**ND**’ is an abbreviated acronym used by many and is acceptable to the community who differ in their preference between neurodivergent and neurodiverse.

Autistic/Autism – Autism Spectrum Condition. This is a umbrella term to cover a very wide range of neurological functioning differences that impact on social and communication skills, information processing and sensory information.

Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia – These are acceptable terms to use and describe a variety of differences in information processing and neurological functioning. They do not equate with low IQ.

ADHD is an umbrella term for a range of differences in neurological information processing and functioning. It is a misleading acronym for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Not all people with ADHD have difficulty with each of these characteristics and many see them as an asset in some ‘contexts’. For example, hyperactivity equates to energy and drive, which can be an asset. Inattention can be interpreted as distractibility because those with ADHD can concentrate but can be distracted by noise and activity in their immediate environment. Impulsivity is also linked to creative lateral and innovative thinking.

Learning differences – is increasingly used instead of ‘learning difficulties’ that focus on the challenges rather than the strengths of different neuro-types.

Neurodevelopmental conditions is the umbrella term to describe all of these ‘**naturally occurring**’ differences in human neuro-cognitive capabilities that find genetic expression in what we name...

- Dyslexia
- Dyscalculia
- Dyspraxia (also known as developmental co-ordination disorder in medical context)
- Autism
- ADHD
- Tourette’s Tics (can occur randomly or cease at any time, and commonly occur alongside other neurodevelopmental conditions in approximately 1 in 100 people)

Disorder – This word derives from medical terminology to describe something that is impairing daily functioning in life and it is not compatible with a neurodiversity culture that sees ‘disorder’ and ‘disability’ as mostly (not entirely) the consequence of ‘context’ and cultural influences. For example, access to employment for wheelchair users is addressed through making buildings accessible. Workplace environments that allow the use of strategies, assistive technology and protocols change the ‘context’, so that learning differences are not impacting negatively on employee abilities and performance.

Workplace adjustments - This term is preferred to 'accommodations' or 'reasonable adjustments.' Workplace adjustments enable colleagues in our workplaces to work successfully and add value to the organisation with their knowledge, skills, experience and application of their capabilities. This is not to deny their protected 'differences' but seeks instead to 'enable'.

Disclosure is a legal term for when people share that they are neurodiverse. 'Share' is preferred in discussion as this is a less negative term than 'disclose'. Employees are not legally obliged to share medical history unless there is a very specific reason why it may impact on their job role. For example, if someone takes medication for ADHD, this 'may' affect their insurance for a job that involves driving or handling dangerous machinery.

Diagnosis does not make the Neurodiversity exist or not. The majority of people are never screened in our education system and many struggle unnecessarily in 'some' curriculum subjects as a result. Many adults with 'ND' minds do not even know they are 'ND'. A formal diagnosis by a medical professional is an official recognition of Neurodiversity, not causal. Obtaining a medical diagnosis relating to Neurodiversity, through public or private health services, can be complicated, expensive, and may take many years.

Language Person-first or identity-first language? 'Person with Autism' vs. 'Autistic person'. A person with ADHD does not identify as 'ADHD-ic' or 'I am ADHD'. Some use the term 'ADHD-er'. Some people prefer one over the other depending on whether they feel their Neurodiversity is an integral part of their person or whether it is secondary to their identity.

Disability "It is/isn't a disability?" -

Legally Autism, Dyslexia, ADHD, Dyscalculia and Dyspraxia (also known as Developmental Coordination Disorder), are protected characteristics and therefore legally, adjustments have to be considered. Diversity of mind is a difference in how the brain interprets and processes information and therefore a different perspective of our environment.





Training menu is available via the QR Code
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