

Reasonable Adjustments

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Recruiting to Autistic Strengths

Employing autistic people adds value to and benefits your workplace

Some employers actively recruit autistic people

- **Examples include: Intelligence & Security, Information Technology (IT), Accountancy and Banking**
- **Autism can be associated with:**
 - **dependability, reliability, being punctual and honest**
 - **attention to detail for long periods of time and focusing on work tasks.**
 - **systemised thinking**



Recruiting to Autistic Strengths

Also

- Autistic people often show high levels of loyalty
- Autistic people may look at things differently
- Autistic people often have logical patterns of thinking and are creative
- These unique thinking skills help autistic people find innovative ways of solving problems



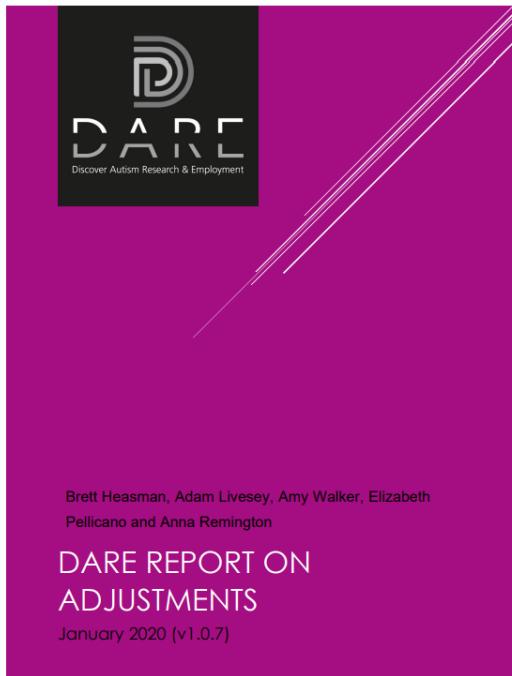
Anti-Discrimination Law and Employment

It is illegal for employers to discriminate against a person because of a disability. Autism is a recognised disability under the Equality Act 2010 which protects a person and covers the following:

- Application forms**
- Interview arrangements**
- Aptitude or proficiency tests**
- Job offers**
- Terms and conditions of employment**
- Promotion, transfers and training opportunities**
- Dismissal or redundancy**
- Discipline and grievances**



Reasonable Adjustment Research



87%

Of participants surveyed felt that adjustments would make a critical difference¹ to their performance at work

53%

Yet just over half of participants felt unable to ask for adjustments, were refused adjustments, or adjustments requested were poorly implemented

Source: Neurodiversity Employment Survey 2019, CRAE. (n = 206).

¹ Impact rated as "very important" or "extremely important"

34%

Over one third of participants reported that their request for adjustments had been successfully implemented

44%

The most common type of adjustment requested related to processes of communication, reported by 44% of participants

2%

Only 2% of participants reported that their employers had proactively supported seeking and implementing adjustments

Source: Neurodiversity Employment Survey 2019, CRAE. (n = 206).



Reasonable Adjustments

- **The Equality Act 2010 requires all employers, educational establishments and statutory organisations to make “reasonable adjustments”**
- **A reasonable adjustment is an alteration employers must implement to an individual's working life, to help support them in their role**
- **These adjustments can only be requested if the individual discloses their autism diagnosis to the employer**
- **Reasonable adjustments should be negotiated with employers and tailored to the individual's specific needs**



Reasonable Adjustments

For autism, this may include consideration of the following:

- **Sensory Challenges**
- **Communication Style**
- **Social Interaction**
- **Executive Functioning Difficulties**
- **Processing Differences**
- **Anxiety**



Challenge	Reasonable Adjustments
<p>Sensory Challenges</p> <p>Many autistic people can be hyper, or hypo sensitive to changes in the environment. This could be changes in the visual environment, such as lights and noise. Such as door slamming, movement or smells.</p>	<p>Provide a quiet room Providing a quiet room to complete any assessments or tasks that require concentration or focus. This can help reduce distractions and sensory overload.</p> <p>Support the use of noise cancelling headphones To reduce auditory distractions when completing assessments</p> <p>Provide a scent free environment This could be ensuring interviewers don't wear perfume, or conduct interviews in a kitchen area</p> <p>Allow individuals to wear sunglasses To reduce the effect of LED lights or glares from other lights</p> <p>Consider flexible/hybrid working</p> <p>Shorter more frequent breaks</p> <p>Use of extra equipment Such as headphones, sunglasses and computer tech. I.e. A screen filter for a laptop or PC monitor</p>



Challenge	Reasonable Adjustments
Communication Style Many autistic people may experience challenges with spoken communication, especially when under pressure or in situations that cause anxiety. This can cause someone to lose focus or not be able to develop your responses fully.	Request written communication Such as using emails. This can help to communicate thoughts and responses more effectively. As well as to use as reference if needed. Offer extra time for processing If you struggle with verbal communication you may struggle in a high-pressure scenario. Extra time can be used to process questions and/or provide responses.



Challenge	Reasonable Adjustments
<p>Social Interaction</p> <p>Autism can really impact social interaction. Especially when so much of our interaction is based on neurotypical preferences, such as keeping eye contact and shaking hands.</p> <p>Many autistic people may experience challenges understanding social cues, nonverbal communication and initiating professional social interactions.</p>	<p>Requesting virtual meetings where possible. This can be less intimidating and provide a more comfortable environment for social interaction.</p> <p>Request to communicate through written communication. This could be email or text message instead of a phone or in person communication. This can be less stressful and give more time to process and respond.</p> <p>Ask for clear instructions Asking for clarity about things can help reduce anxiety and confusion, making it easier to navigate the workplace and know what to expect. This could include the expectation of the role, work processes, HR processes and line management.</p> <p>Allocated desk Rather than hot desking</p> <p>Flexible hours A working pattern to suit the needs and bodyclock of an autistic employee</p> <p>Exemption from team meetings and social gatherings In the form of permission to miss team building exercises, non-essential meetings, brain storming sessions or team nights out without the need to justify.</p>



Challenge	Reasonable Adjustments
<p>Executive Function</p> <p>It's what is needed when we must do something with the information, such as remembering questions, carrying out steps or instructions or engaging in mental arithmetic</p>	<p>Being given written instructions in addition to verbal instructions. This enables autistic employees to refer back to the instructions as needed and can reduce the demand on your working memory</p> <p>Getting extra time to complete tasks or assessments. This can give the extra time needed to process and respond to information.</p> <p>Asking for breaks Breaks give your brain time to rest and recharge</p> <p>Using memory aids Using aids such as a notebook, checklist or other tools can help you to remember important information</p> <p>Visual aids to help you understand complex information Such as diagrams or flowcharts</p> <p>Time management and project management apps These help with scheduling tasks and know what is happening day to day</p>



Challenge	Reasonable Adjustments
<p>Processing differences</p> <p>Some autistic people may hyper focus which can cause difficulties when moving between tasks.</p>	<p>Assistive technology This can help with efficiency and keeping to schedule</p> <p>Ensuring regular breaks</p> <p>Ensuring access to a quieter environment Less stimuli helps to alleviate distractions</p> <p>A clear point of contact to communicate with Using the individuals preferred method of contact</p> <p>More frequent supervision With an appropriate supervision form to include a review of reasonable adjustments already in place and any changes needed.</p> <p>Access to a digital recorder To record meetings particularly if there are actions to be completed</p> <p>Back up of verbal instructions with an email</p>

