

# Neurodiversity Toolkit for Line Managers



# Livewell

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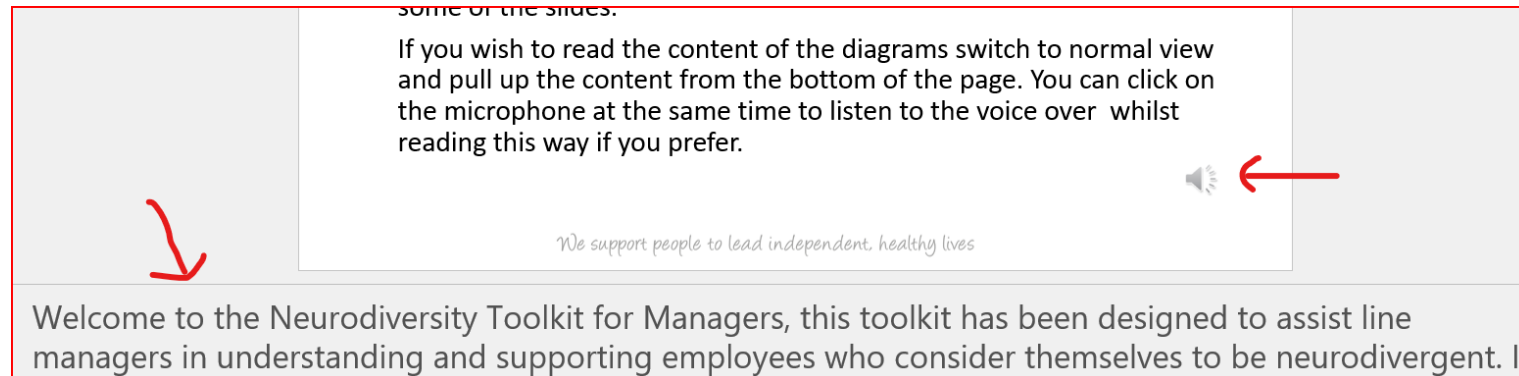


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# Neurodiversity Toolkit for Line Managers

Accessibility: Watch in slide show mode to listen to the voice over on some of the slides.

If you wish to read the content of the diagrams switch to normal view and pull up the content from the bottom of the page. You can click on the microphone at the same time to listen to the voice over whilst reading this way if you prefer.



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Welcome to the Neurodiversity Toolkit for Managers, this toolkit has been designed to assist line managers in understanding and supporting employees who consider themselves to be neurodivergent. It

The screenshot shows a slide with a white content area on a grey background. A red box highlights the content area. A red arrow points to a microphone icon in the bottom right corner of the content area. Below the content area, there is a footer with the text 'Welcome to the Neurodiversity Toolkit for Managers, this toolkit has been designed to assist line managers in understanding and supporting employees who consider themselves to be neurodivergent. It'.



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# Toolkit Content

- Neurodiversity Explained
- Appropriate Terms and Language
- Definition of Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Autism
- Dyslexia
- ASD
- ADHD
- Dyspraxia
- Dyscalculia
- Employment Practical Guidance
- Supporting the Employee on the Job
- Resources

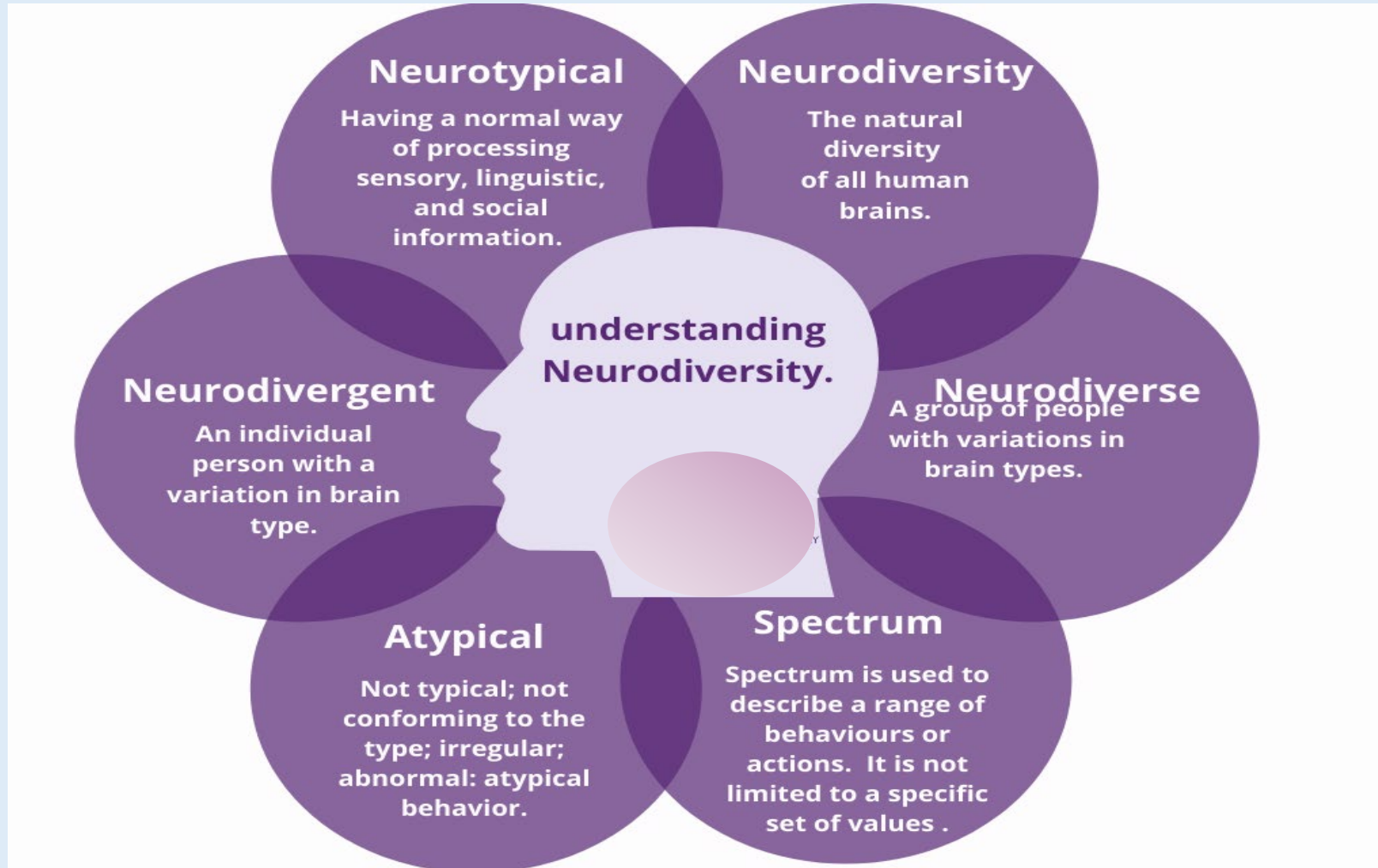
# Neurodiversity Explained



- Please right click to open the hyperlink to watch a short video as an introduction to Neurodiversity; [Neurodiversity Explained](#)



# Terms used to encompass people with a range of cognitive skills and profiles.



# Terms used to Encompass Neurodiversity

There are several terms used to encompass neurodiversity:



Hidden impairments

(Neuro)  
Developmental  
Disorders

Hidden disabilities

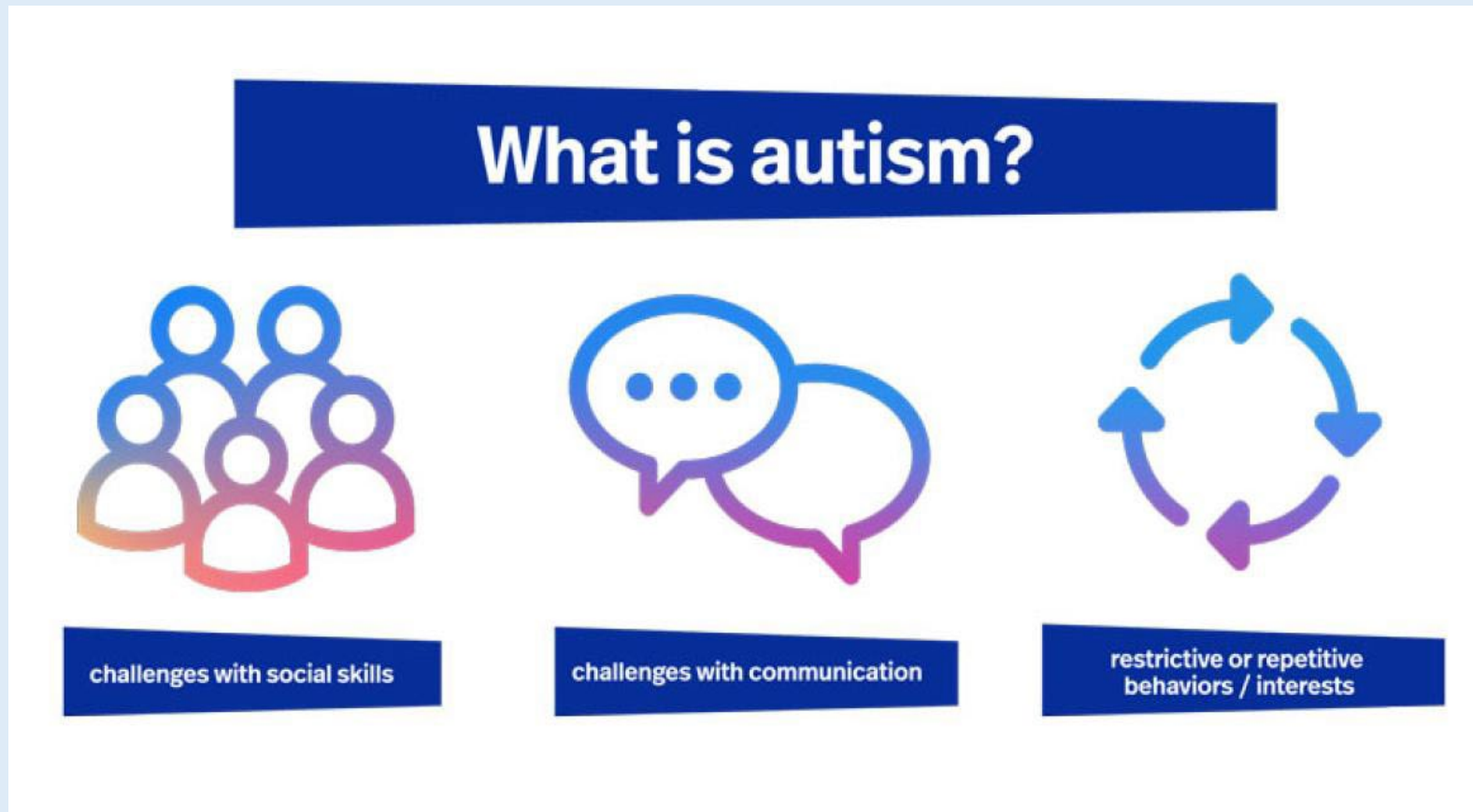
Non-visible impairments

Specific learning difficulties/learning differences

Learning difficulties/Learning differences

# Definition of Autism Spectrum Disorders

Autism is a spectrum condition hence being called Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).



[Please right click to open this hyperlink link to watch a short video which explains \*\*What is Autism?\*\*](#)



# Supporting Social and Communication / ASD

Address the individual by name to ensure they know you are speaking to them.

Ask the individual to repeat back what's been said to make sure they understand. If they don't, try and explain differently. Show, as well as tell, where you can.

If a change is occurring, such as change of staff, work tasks or work setting, describe what will happen beforehand if possible.

Ask if there are specific settings that make it harder for the individual to work, such as background noise, bright lighting or group working.

Avoid making jokes and using of metaphors, such as 'get a grip' etc.

Be specific in what you are asking the individual to do. Avoid saying things like 'in about 5 minutes.'

Maintaining eye contact may be harder and may not indicate the individual is not listening to you. Discuss what is comfortable when communicating if appropriate to do so.

Avoid using work jargon and acronyms.

Create a list of words and terms used in the work setting.

# What is Dyslexia?



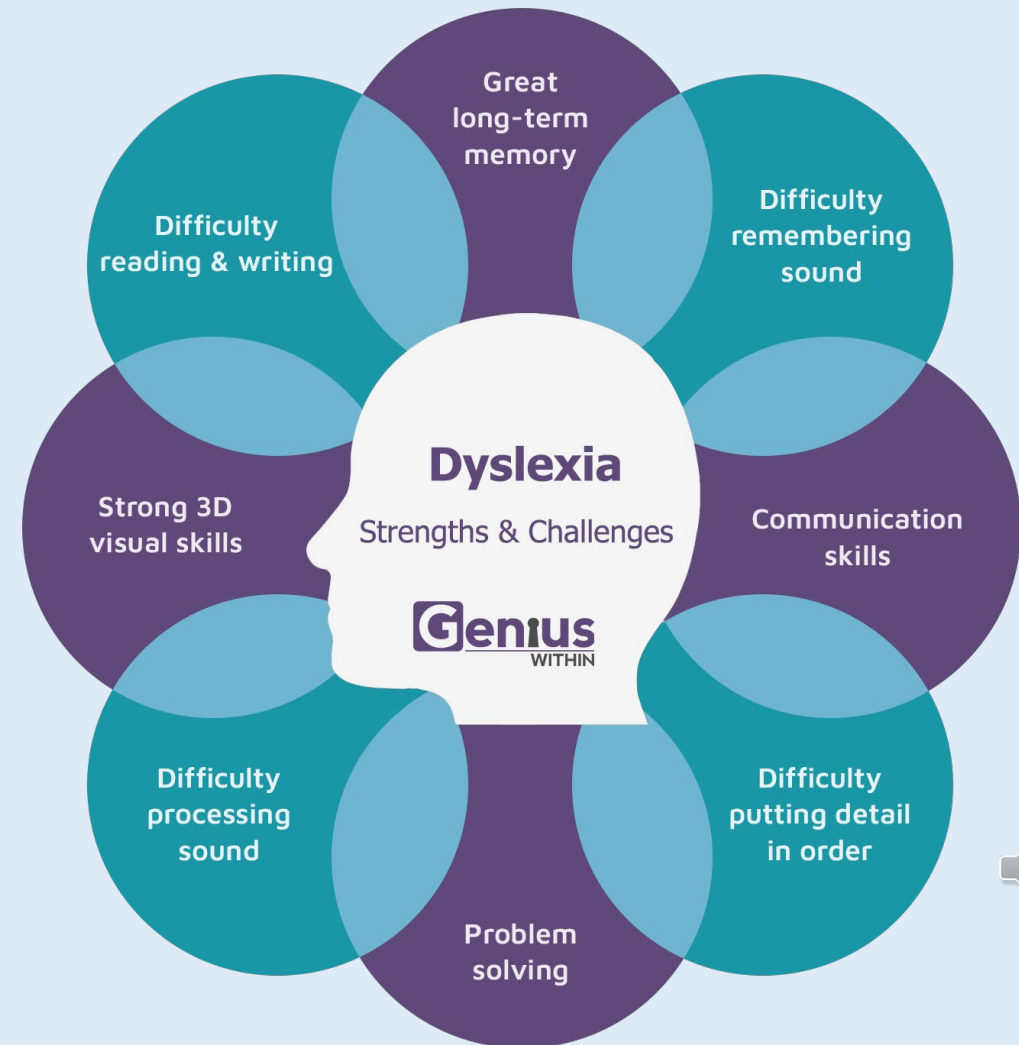
**Dyslexia is a common learning difficulty that mainly causes problems with reading, writing and spelling.**

- It's a specific learning difficulty, which means it causes problems with certain abilities used for learning, such as reading and writing.
- Unlike a learning difficulty intelligence isn't affected.
- It's estimated up to 1 in every 10 people in the UK has some degree of dyslexia.
- Dyslexia is a lifelong problem that can present challenges on a daily basis, but support is available to improve reading and writing skills and help those with the problem be successful at school and work.
- **Please right click to open this hyperlink to watch a short video on Dyslexia; See dyslexia differently**

# Dyslexia; Typical strengths can include:

## Strengths associated with Dyslexia;

- Good problem solvers
- Creative
- Observant
- High levels of empathy
- Excellent big-picture thinkers
- Good at making connections
- Strong narrative reasoning
- Three-dimensional thinking





# Supporting Literacy / Dyslexia

Consider reading materials and how they are presented

Have “easy read” materials available, where possible.

Proofing software, like Ginger or Ghotit, can be a great help to individuals.

Utilise text-to-speech and speech-to-text software which are often built into computer systems as. Dragon software is a commonly utilised by individuals and immersive reading is freely available on most laptops and PC's when viewing documents.

Spell-checkers can also be very helpful tools for individuals

Avoid printing on bright white paper. Use cream or pale blue instead.

Use an easy-to-read font, such as Arial, Verdana, Comic Sans and size of 12+.

Use short sentences and leave plenty of space between lines of text.

Avoid asking the individual to read out aloud in a group, unless this has been discussed beforehand.

Create templates for reports to limit text an individual must enter, saving time.

Write down instructions and use visual prompts to act as reminders.

Email, colour code and / or underline important text.

Allow more time to read information. Explain the meanings of words if not clear.

# What is ADHD?

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a condition that affects people's behaviour. People with ADHD can seem restless, may have trouble concentrating and may act on impulse.

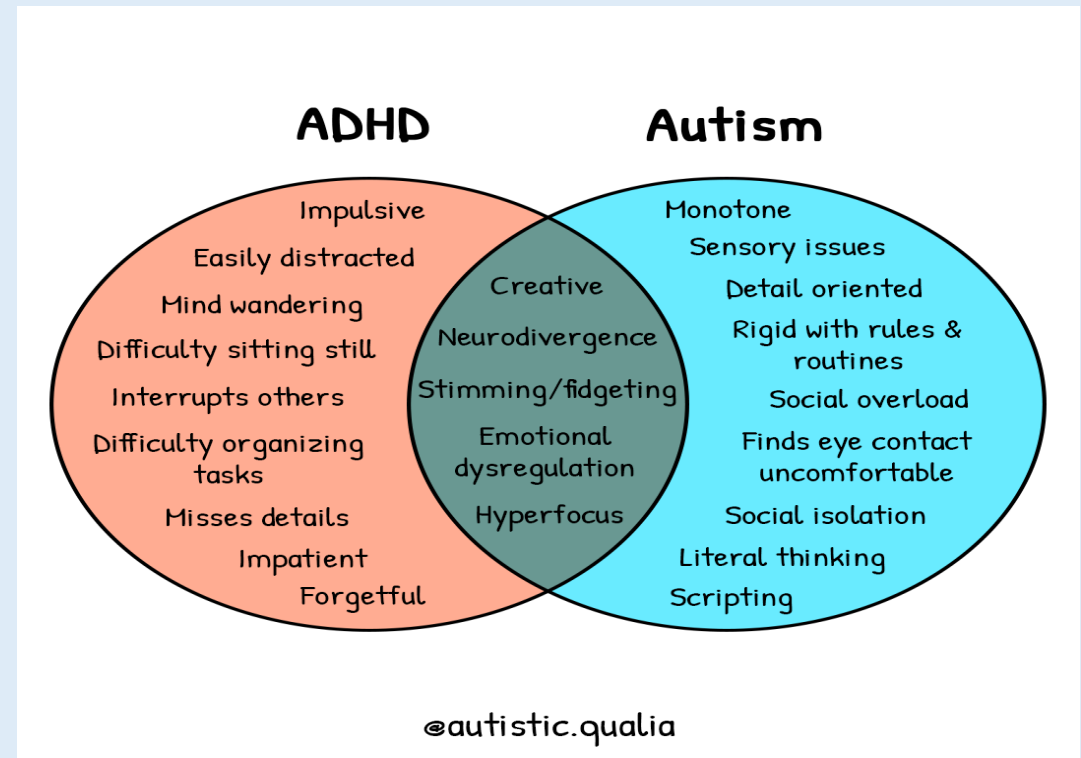


[Please right click to open this hyperlink to understand what ADHD is:](#)

# Typical strengths and difficulties can include:

## Strengths associated with ADHD:

- One significant strength exhibited by individuals with ADHD is their heightened creativity and ability to think outside the box.
- Their minds often operate at a rapid pace, facilitating quick connections between seemingly unrelated concepts. This thinking style allows many innovative ideas and solutions to problems.





# Supporting Attention / Concentration / ADHD

Noisy and / or busy surroundings may make it harder for the individual to focus or understand important information. If possible, discuss what works best for the individual. This could include being away from the 'mainstream' of traffic, or where appropriate, wear headphones to reduce external noise when concentrating.

Discuss taking breaks in work, even for a few minutes, to refocus. Setting alarms can remind the individual to do this on a regular basis.

Where possible, when giving important information, choose a quiet setting.

Short, regular meetings can help to set and review goals and will help the individual stay on task.

Use colour coding for filing and sorting documents and other information to help to find things more easily.

Discuss setting alarms and creating warnings of deadlines using technology, such as MS Outlook, Google, or on their phones.

Show to how to set up diary systems to record work, targets, and set reminders.

# What is DCD / Dyspraxia? Signs & Strengths

- Dyspraxia, also known as developmental co-ordination disorder (DCD), is a common disorder that affects movement and co-ordination. Symptoms of dyspraxia can vary between individuals and may change over time. Dyspraxia does not affect your intelligence. It can affect your co-ordination skills – such as tasks requiring balance, playing sports or learning to drive a car. Dyspraxia can also affect your fine motor skills, such as writing or using small objects.

## Signs of Dyspraxia

- Clumsiness
- Poor balance or posture
- Poor hand-eye coordination
- Poor handwriting
- Perception issues
- Fatigue
- Disorganisation
- Low self-esteem
- Speech difficulties

## Strengths associated with Dyspraxia;

- Enthusiastic
- Thinks outside the box
- Motivates others
- Creative
- Strong sense of justice

- [Right click to open this hyperlink to watch a short video on Dyslexia what is dyspraxia - Google Search](#)



# Supporting Coordination / Dyspraxia (DCD)

Handwriting may often be difficult to read. Discuss the use of technology, including dictation software.

Set-up report templates, where possible, to limit the need for writing.

Encourage the individual to take time to practice their typing skills to increase speed and accuracy.

Help the individual become organised by sorting paperwork, filing, organising their calendar and setting deadlines for work.

Explain how to do new tasks and allow more time to practice and learn a new skill.

Write a list of actions /tasks down so they can see what needs to be done and cross them off as they are completed.

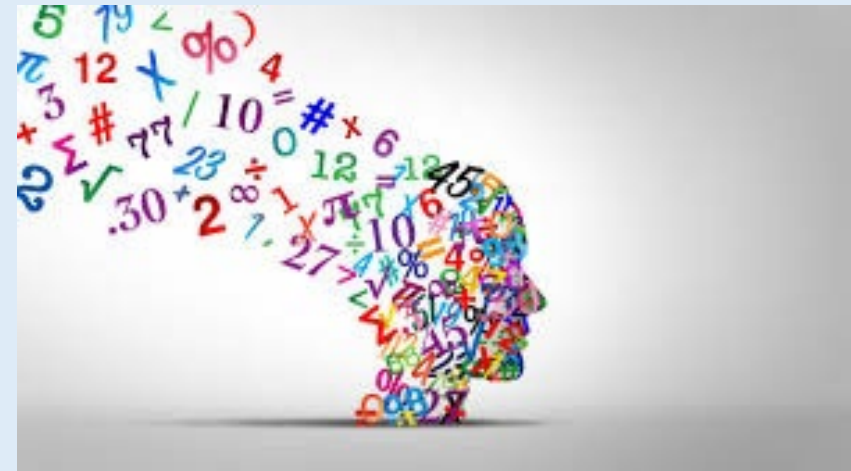
Provide guidance on what is expected and show the individual how to best achieve this.

If new skills are introduced, allow additional time for practice.

Encourage the individual to list actions or tasks that need to be done at the beginning and end of every day.

# What is Dyscalculia?

- **Dyscalculia is a specific and persistent difficulty in understanding numbers** which can lead to a diverse range of difficulties with mathematics. It will be unexpected in relation to age, level of education and experience and occurs across all ages and abilities.
- **Strengths associated with Dyscalculia:**
  - Creativity and artistic talent
  - Strong strategic thinking
  - A love of words, often with excellent spelling and grammar
  - Intuitive thinking
  - Great organisational skills



**Please now right click to open the hyperlink to watch a short video**  
[What is dyscalculia - Google Search](#)





# Supporting Dyscalculia

Handwriting may often be difficult to read. Discuss the use of technology, including dictation software.

Set-up report templates, where possible, to limit the need for writing.

Encourage the individual to take time to practice their typing skills to increase speed and accuracy.

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If new skills are introduced, allow additional time for practice.

Encourage the individual to list actions or tasks that need to be done at the beginning and end of every day.



# Employment and Practical Guidance for all employees

Ask what situations / tasks make it harder for them to complete their work, such as background noises or working in group settings.


Discuss, where possible, the individual's preferred form of communication (e.g. email, face-to-face meetings, in a quiet setting).

Encourage the individual to consider their mental wellbeing, as they may be at greater risk of anxiety and depression.

Where possible, use technology to help with work tasks, including spellcheckers, text-to-speech, proofing and speech-to-text software, organisers, diary systems and alarms.

The individual may need training and sufficient time to practice if learning new skills or accessing software in order to become confident in their work setting.

**Please remember that every individual will be different, and challenges may depend on the specific workplace setting and type of tasks asked of the individual.**





# Supporting the employee on the job

The employee can contact Access to Work to ask for an assessment to guide on assisted software or organisational communication assistance.

Allocate a mentor to assist a new employee, where appropriate, until they are settled in.

Demonstrate as well as discuss new tasks and break down into parts to allow practice first slowly and accurately before building up speed.

Ask the employee what support they require and what environments /tasks can cause them a challenge. e.g. noise, sound, movement, changing settings, talking in a large group.

Provide the rules of the workplace or training setting.

Check for understanding. These should include clothing for different settings, times starting, breaks, etiquette for tea and coffee making, toilet breaks, how to address different colleagues.

Discuss specific adjustments as this will be dependent on each individual e.g. alternatives to note taking in meetings; avoidance of making presentations in front of others; need for one base/desk to work from.



Consider flexible working hours, such as starting early or staying late if this is a potential challenge e.g. noisy work environment, anxiety travelling when busy.



# on the job continued...

Ask the employee's preferred means of communication when being given work e.g. verbal, written, email.

Discuss if they need assistance with organisation e.g. use of colour coding; diary reminders, setting alarms on computer/phone.

Discuss with the employee any particular environmental triggers and work to find reasonable solutions e.g. turn lights off, use of ear plugs.

Provide templates/samples of letters, proformas, reports to show what is expected if this is required.

Feedback explicitly, and sensitively if there are challenges and agree on actions, record and provide this to the employee and agree review dates

Short and regular meetings are useful with one person.

Identify priorities for the day/week on a regular basis.

Discuss, where possible, expected work in advance.

Clearly mark deadlines and review points.

**Most importantly...continuously review the support individuals require as this could alter over time.**

# Resources

## Useful Resources

- [Neurodiversity Staff Profiler Survey \(office.com\)](#)
- [Neurodiversity At Work Network - Home](#)
- [Work and Wellbeing Passport.docx](#)
- [Wellness Action Plan - Wellbeing Hub – Home](#)
- [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- [Workplace Reasonable Adjustments Policy.doc \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- [Access to Work: get support if you have a disability or health condition: What Access to Work is - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

# Resources

## Toolkit References – please right click to open the follow hyperlinks

- [Autism and Neurodiversity Toolkit | DWP](#)
- [Neurodiversity\\_Guidance\\_v1.1.pdf \(merseywestlancs.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [Dyslexia - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [What is Autism? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder \(ADHD\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [Dyspraxia in adults - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [About dyscalculia - British Dyslexia Association \(bdadyslexia.org.uk\)](#)
- [Strengths of Dyslexia • Dyslexia Support South](#)
- [Strengths in people with ADHD - ADHD Direct](#)
- [Understanding the Strengths and Difficulties of Dyspraxia/DCD: a guide for parents \(ed.ac.uk\)](#)
- [Dyscalculia | CUH](#)
- [Supporting Your Team to Embrace Neurodiversity by Ruth Glover - Bristol Early Years Teaching Hub \(beyth.co.uk\)](#)
- [Neurodiversity At Work Network - Home](#)



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