

Neurodiversity toolkit

How managers can support staff who think, learn and communicate in different ways



Contents	Page
-----------------	-------------

Celebrating different kinds of people	3
---------------------------------------	---

How managers can support neurodivergent staff	6
---	---

Making changes to support neurodivergent staff	9
--	---

Different types of reasonable adjustments	15
---	----

Access to work	25
----------------	----

How managers can help staff develop at work	28
---	----

Supporting people to look after themselves	31
--	----

Getting new staff	33
-------------------	----

Supporting new staff when they first start work	35
---	----

Celebrating different kinds of people



Everyone is different and likes doing different things. Being different is great.



Many people have brains that work in the same way.



But lots of people have brains that work and think in different ways.



We call this being neurodivergent.
We say it like this:
new-row-die-ver-jent.



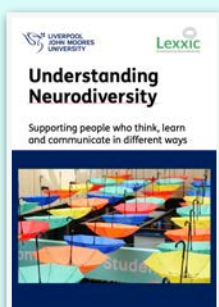
Neurodivergent people often need some support to be the best that they can be.



But we know neurodivergent people have lots of great skills that can help everyone.



Our university is stronger for having different kinds of people working together.



We have an easy read booklet called **Understanding Neurodiversity**. It tells you about different types of neurodiversity.

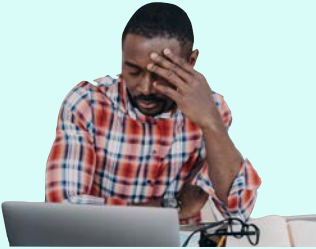


You can find the booklet here:
www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/edi/edi-resources/neuroinclusivity



This booklet tells you about how managers can support staff who are neurodivergent.

How managers can support neurodivergent staff



Without support, many neurodivergent staff can find work hard.



People might:

- Feel worried, sad or unhappy.



- Feel very tired all the time.



- Find work hard to cope with.



We want our university be a kind and supportive place for neurodivergent staff.



We will help people to get the support they need to do well in their jobs.



You can support your team by doing things like:

- Understanding the skills that different people have.



- Having a workforce with different kinds of people.



- Supporting neurodivergent staff to share with other staff what it is like to be neurodivergent.



- Asking neurodivergent staff what things are working well for them and what **barriers** they face.

Barriers are things that stop you or make it harder for you to do something.



- Standing up and speaking out for neurodivergent people.



- Thinking about different ways of working that meet people's needs.

Making changes to support neurodivergent staff



Asking staff what support they need

Neurodivergent people know best what support they need.



We need to support neurodivergent staff to feel comfortable asking for support.



All members of your team can ask for support if they are neurodivergent.



It is up to them if they want to get support or not.

If a neurodivergent member of your team wants support, you should:



- Meet with them in a place where they feel comfortable.

This might be online or face to face.



- Listen carefully to what they tell you about the support they need to do their best.



- Learn about their neurodiversity.



- Let them know how important they are to the university.



- Share information about how the university supports people.



- Have another meeting at a later time.
This will give the person time to think about what has been said.



- Write down what was said in the meeting and what will happen next.
Send it to the person in an email so they can read it when they are ready.

Reasonable adjustments



Reasonable adjustments mean changing the way we do things to meet people's needs.

Things like giving information in different ways or having a ramp to get into a building.



The law says that universities must make reasonable adjustments so that everyone can take part.



The reasonable adjustment must:

- Be agreed between the manager and the member of staff.



- Meet the needs of the person and the job they are doing.



- Be made as quickly as possible so that people can do their job.



- Be checked often to make sure it is still helping people.

If not, then changes need to be made.



Staff do not need to have a **diagnosis** for reasonable adjustments to be made.

A **diagnosis** is when a doctor or health staff say what disability or health condition you have.



There are some times when a reasonable adjustment is good for all staff.

This could be a quieter place to work with lots of sunlight.



Making changes to support neurodivergent staff to feel comfortable at work.



Sometimes a reasonable adjustment cannot be made.

This might be because of things like:



- It costs too much.



- It could harm other staff.



- It is not possible to make the changes.



If a reasonable adjustment cannot be made, you should look at other ways to support the person instead.

Different types of reasonable adjustments



Everyone is different and has different needs. This part of the booklet tells you some of the reasonable adjustments you can make.

1. Making changes to where people work

You can:



- Change the lighting in a room.



- Make a room easy for people to move around in.



- Have more breaks in the day to help people to concentrate.



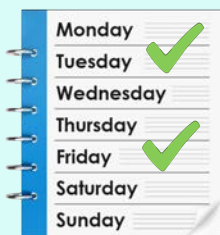
- Give people their own workspace. Things like:

- The same area and desk.
- A quiet place to work in.
- Sunlight and fresh air to work in.

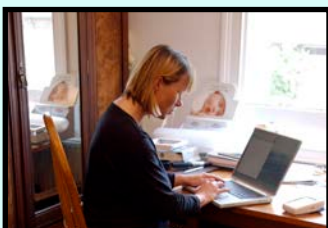


- Change the times that people work to support them. Things like:

- Working at times when it is quiet to travel.



- Working on days in the office when it is less busy.



- Agreeing with the line managers on when to work from home.

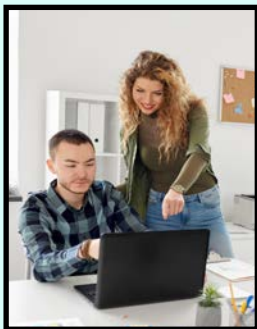
2. Helping people to cope with change



Changes can cause neurodivergent people a lot of worry and stress.



It is important that managers support people to cope with any changes that happen at work.



You can do things like:

- Help people to get ready for any changes that are going to happen

and

- Explain why changes need to happen.



3. Supporting people to do their work



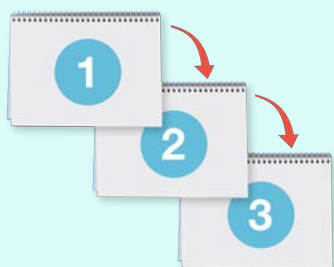
Managers must support neurodivergent staff in their jobs.

You can:



- Help people make a clear plan about how to do their work.

The plan should say when work has to be finished.



- Help people to break down their work into small steps that are easy to understand.



- Give people lots of support to make sure they are doing well.

This includes checking people are meeting their goals.



- Check people are doing their work.
Some people find this helpful to keep their work on track.



- Not have one meeting right after another.
This can be very stressful.

4. Supporting people with reading and writing



This will make it easier to read the information

You can:

- Make sure any information is easy to understand. This might be using things like:

- Large **fonts**. A **font** is the type of writing and how the letters look.
- Bold headings.
- Big spaces between lines.



- Use technology to support people. Things like computers and phones that can record what people say and read information out.



- Use coloured screens on laptops.

5. Understanding how people like to communicate



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

You can:



- Ask people the best way to communicate with them.



- Speak to people in a way that is best for them to understand.

Things like speaking clearly and not using big words.



- Check that people understand what you and other members of the team are saying.



- Make sure the team knows how people like to communicate.



- Make sure that any instructions are given clearly and one at a time. Check that people have understood the instructions



Sometimes a neurodivergent person could be seen as rude, but it is just the way they communicate.

Things like some people do not look you in the eye or like to join in social activities with the team.

6. Supporting people in meetings

You can:



- Make sure people understand what the meeting is about.



- Make sure people have lots of time to get ready for the meeting.



- Record the meeting so that people can listen to it again.



- Make sure people have the chance to speak up in meetings and share their ideas.

This might be things like putting their hand up to show they want to speak.



- Make sure there are lots of breaks in long meetings.



- Have a clear list of things that people need to do after the meeting.

Access to work



Access to Work is help people can get from the government to do their job.



It is given when more support is needed than a reasonable adjustment.

Things like:



- Money to help with travelling to work.



- Things to help people do their job.
This might be laptops and things that can read aloud.



- Money to pay for a support worker to help someone at work.



The amount of money given depends on what the person needs.



The university might have to pay something towards the cost.



You should share information about Access to Work with your staff.



Occupational Health can also help with Access to Work.

Occupational health is the team that supports staff to be healthy and safe at work.



Staff can apply for Access to Work online or by phone.

They will need to explain how their neurodiversity affects their job and what support they need.



You will also need to speak to Access to Work about how to support the member of staff best.



If the staff member's needs change, they must let Access to Work know.



You can find more information about Access to Work online:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-work-factsheet/access-to-work-factsheet-for-customers#overview

This information is not in easy read.

How managers can help staff develop at work



It is really important to support neurodivergent staff to develop their skills. This helps them to be the best they can be.



It is important that managers:

- Help people to learn all the skills they need for their job.



- Support people to know what they do really well.



- Have meetings often to check how people are doing and if they need any more support.



- Make sure that the things people are good at are used in their work.



- Support people to do different jobs and new jobs when they are ready.



- Let people know how well they are doing.

It is important that people feel good about themselves.



- Not blame people for things they have done wrong. Instead, you should:

- Use mistakes as a good way to learn new things.



- Think of ways to help them people understand and do their job better.



- Give people clear things they can do to get better at their work.



- Make sure people get the support they need as soon as possible.

This includes having reasonable adjustments in place.

Supporting people to look after themselves



Neurodivergent people can sometimes find things hard and stressful.

This can cause people to become very tired.



It is important that managers support staff to get the support they need to feel well.



You should make sure staff:

- Are not working too many hours.



- Look after themselves by doing things that make them feel happy.



- Feel included at work.
This includes being part of team activities like nights out.



- Can have some quiet time by themselves, if they need to.



Managers should work with neurodivergent staff around how to cope with stressful situations.



You should help people to get extra support if they need help with their mental health.

Getting new staff



Getting a job can be hard for neurodivergent people.

Think about neurodivergent people when you look for new staff.

Things like:



- Letting people know about any new jobs and how they can apply.



- Being clear about what the job is about and what skills are needed.



- Having clear and easy to understand job descriptions.



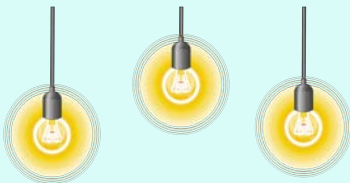
jobcentreplus
Work Coach

- Letting people know where they can get extra support to apply for the job, if they need it.



- Making sure that people have extra support in an interview.

Things like:



- Doing the interview in a quiet room with dimmed lights.



- Asking questions that are easy to understand.

Supporting new staff when they first start work



It is very important to support people in their first days and weeks at work.



Good early support helps people to be good at their job and stay in work.



You can support staff in the best way by:

- Having a good plan about how to support people in their new job.

Things like:



- Talking to the person about how they like to work.



- Introducing them to the team.



- Letting them know where to go to get support.



- Finding somebody who can help new staff get used to the workplace and all the rules.

Things like where their desk is and what time breaks are.



- Getting any reasonable adjustments a person might need as soon as possible.



- Making sure you speak to new staff often.

Check how they are doing and if they need more support.