

TODAY...



- Key Facts
- 7 Co-occurring Neurodivergent Conditions
- Challenges & Strengths
- Mental Health
- How You Can Support

What is neurodiversity?

The idea that cognitive conditions, such as autism, ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia, **are natural variations in the way people think** and process information.

AND

A type of organisational diversity and inclusion that seeks to **embrace and maximise the talents of people who think differently.**

What is the correct terminology?

Neurodivergent - this term is used for those with a learning/processing difference such as dyslexia, dyspraxia etc.

Neurodiverse - this refers to all of us e.g. a neurodiverse workforce will include those with and without a neurodivergent 'condition' such as dyslexia.

Neurodivergent 'conditions'

Neurodivergent 'conditions' co-occur with each other.

- All neurodivergent 'conditions' have associated challenges and strengths.
- At least **15%** of the population have a neurodivergent 'condition'.
- There are many people who do not know that they are neurodivergent and have never been diagnosed.

Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)

- Thought to affect **1%** of the population.
- Some autistic people experience considerable anxiety.
- Only **16%** of autistic adults are in full-time work. **77%** of autistic adults want to work.



Dyslexia

- Thought to affect **10%** of the population.
- Is a learning difference that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling.
- Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities.



Dyscalculia



- Thought to affect **3 - 6%** of the population.
- Results in challenges learning number facts and procedures.
- Affects ability to acquire arithmetical skills.

Dyspraxia (DCD)

- Thought to affect **10%** of the population.
- Also known as Developmental Co-ordination Disorder.
- Males are **4x** more likely to be affected than women.



Dysgraphia



- Thought to affect $< 1\%$ of the population.
- Many experts view dysgraphia as an issue with a set of skills known as transcription.
- One of the main signs of dysgraphia is messy handwriting.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

- Thought to affect between **3 - 4%** of the population.
- ADHD is a behavioural disorder that includes symptoms such as inattentiveness, hyperactivity and impulsiveness.
- ADD & ADHD are sub-types of the same condition.



Tourette Syndrome

- Over **300,000** children and adults are living with TS in the UK.
- The key features are tics – involuntary sounds and movements.
- **90%** of people with TS do not have coprolalia – involuntary swearing.



Associated Challenges

- Short term memory
- Organisation
- Sequence and Order
- Processing speed
- Focus and concentration



Potential work-related challenges

- Arriving to work/meetings on time
- Managing their workload and meeting deadlines
- Taking accurate notes
- Communicating effectively



Things to consider about challenges



- Every ND person will have their own set of challenges.
- Don't assume what challenges someone may or may not have.
- Certain skills may be more challenging to develop.
- Some ND individuals may chose to wear a sunflower lanyard, which symbolises a 'hidden disability'.

Associated Strengths

- Creativity
- Problem solving ability
- Ability to see the big picture
- Visualisation skills
- Innovation

.....and many more!



Misconceptions & Stereotypes

- Not related to IQ.
- Do not just affect those who speak English.
- Most people are unaware that they are neurodivergent.
- Neurodivergent 'conditions' affect people working at all levels in all types of workplaces.

Emotional Impact



- Reduced confidence
- Low self-esteem
- Exhaustion
- Stress and anxiety

Disclosure & Seeking Support

- Stigma – due to misconceptions and stereotyping.
- Lack of understanding from those around them.
- No clear process of support in place.
- Anxiety and stress – may be triggered by a negative experience in the past.



What support is available?

- **Screening** – for those who believe that they may be neurodivergent.
- **Diagnostic Assessment** – recommended for those who are studying/sitting exams as part of their job.
- **Workplace Needs Assessment** - identifies what support/reasonable adjustments an individual needs.

Please note that a formal diagnosis is not required in order to access workplace support.

Neurodiversity and Inclusion

Join a
Neurodiversity
Network.

Be aware of
neuro-inclusive
hiring practices.

Manage your
communications.

Signpost to
further support.

Case study 1: SAP

- Launched an **Autism at Work** program to widen the pool of new applicants.
- The company reported productivity gains, quality improvements & boosts in innovative capabilities.
- One neurodivergent employee helped develop a technical fix worth an estimated **US\$40m** in savings.

Case study 2: Hewlett Packard Enterprise

- One neurodiversity program placed neurodivergent software testers at DHS.
- Found that their neurodiverse testing teams were **30%** more productive than others.
- Australia's Defence Department developed a neurodiversity program in cybersecurity – finding neurodivergent participants with superior pattern-detection abilities.

Key takeaways

Processing differences such as dyslexia co-occur with other 'conditions'.

There are associated challenges and strengths.

We should consider the emotional impact.

Join a Neurodiversity or Disability Network.

A workplace needs assessment can help an ND person get support for their workplace challenges.

Support can also include coaching, technology and training.