



# Neurodiversity in the workplace

Supporting neurodivergent members at work and  
campaigning for neurodiversity-friendly workplaces

# Contents

Introduction	3
<hr/>	
1. What is neurodiversity?	6
<hr/>	
2. Challenging myths and stereotypes	10
<hr/>	
3. Legislation	14
<hr/>	
4. Barriers, workplace change and reasonable adjustments	22
<hr/>	
5. Branch tools	34
<hr/>	
6. Additional resources	49
<hr/>	

# Introduction

## **A union for education workers with minds of all kinds**

As a trade union, UCU represents a diverse membership of workers from different backgrounds, ethnicities, genders, sexualities and neurologies. Neurology is the way that the brain functions.

Society uses labels to describe the differences in how our brain functions – labels such as autism, ADD, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia etc. The National Autistic Society estimates that there are around 700,000 autistic people in the UK today and the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) estimates that at least 10% of the UK population are neurodivergent.

## **UCU policy**

UCU policy, adopted in 2018, called for the development of a factsheet and training, outlined in the resolution below:

### **Neurodiversity and higher education**

This conference calls for a fact sheet and training workplace reps on neurodiversity.

Differences in a way that a person processes information and learns is termed neurodiversity, and includes autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD and other related differences. These differences can become highly disabling as significant misunderstandings exist about the labels, and how they affect people. Simple reasonable adjustments are not put into place creating barriers to participation in the workplace. This has become acute in higher education where staff are being disciplined or placed on capability as their condition or issue is not recognised or understood.

Conference therefore ask for a positive factsheet giving straightforward myth-busting information about neurodiversity from a social model perspective focusing on the strengths and achievements of neurodiverse employees and the importance of reasonable adjustments to create accessibility. UCU should also encourage the Equality Challenge Unit to support this approach.

Although the above resolution refers to the higher education sector, this guidance toolkit will be relevant for the further education sector as well.

It provides practical and useful information on how to increase understanding, improve the diversity and inclusiveness of our workplaces and signpost readers for further help and assistance.

### **Social model of disability**

UCU follows the social model of disability. This is a way of understanding disability which looks at how society is organised and the social and institutional barriers which restrict disabled people's opportunities.

The social model argues that a person may have an impairment or condition, but they are disabled by barriers they face in society, which works in combination with their impairment or condition to restrict their access and rights.

These may include but is not limited to:

- physical barriers such as steps
- communication barriers such as information only being available in a format that some people cannot access (eg print)
- sensory barriers such as noise or lighting
- demand barriers such as long working hours
- attitudes and perceptions around disabilities.

These barriers can make it impossible or very difficult for disabled people to access jobs, buildings, transport, open spaces or services. Removing these barriers is the best way to include millions of disabled people in our society.

### **Why is this a trade union issue?**

As a trade union, our prime concern is to fight for greater equality at work. We also campaign against injustices members face in other areas of their lives, whether on grounds of age, disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other aspect of identity.

We value the principles of equality and inclusion for all, including anyone who is neurodivergent. We provide support and advice for reps and members with neurodivergent conditions to allow full inclusion in the workplace and wider society.

Addressing issues such as neurodiversity and recognising the differences that we all bring to the workplace removes stigma and dispels myths. It also provides a way forward for ensuring that UCU members requiring support at work are

given that support and in turn provides our reps with the tools and skills needed to deliver that support.

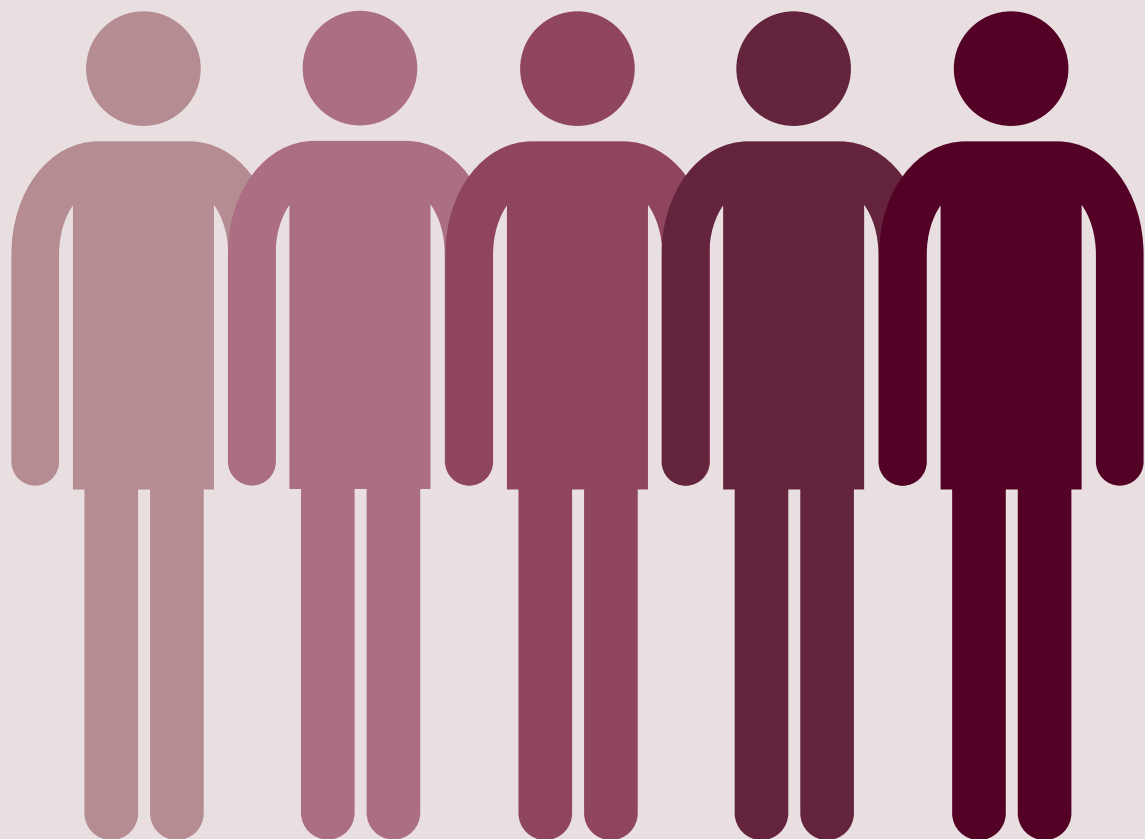
Trade union strength comes from uniting and mobilising our members. The more workers we organise and involve, the stronger we are and the more we can win for workers. If we allow some workers to be left out, we are all weaker. Taking action to include neurodivergent workers makes us more powerful as a union, able to win better pay, conditions and rights for all university, college and prison educators.

All employers have a duty of care to ensure that employees are treated fairly and to provide a safe working environment for our members. This guide is for members working in colleges, universities, prison and adult education.

We also believe that individuals are the experts in their own condition. The best support must start with the person rather than making assumptions on the basis of a particular diagnosis.

We would like to thank UCU's Disabled Members' Standing Committee for their involvement and Janine Booth, author, and trade union trainer in the field of neurodiversity, in the production of this guidance.

# What is neurodiversity?



Neurodiversity is short for neurological diversity. It (is an abstract noun that) refers to the fact that our species is made up of individuals whose brains are 'wired' or structured in different ways.

Neurodivergence means having a neurology that differs significantly from typical neurology. It is an umbrella term for a set of different skills profiles including dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism, Attention Deficit Disorders (ADD), Tourette syndrome and other conditions.

The neurodiversity approach asserts that no one type of mind or brain is 'right' or 'wrong.'

## History and background

The term 'neurodiversity' was coined by Australian autism activist Judy Singer in 1999. Based on the idea of 'biodiversity', it was intended to identify that humanity is neurologically diverse, that this diversity occurs naturally, and that it is in our interests to preserve and value this diversity rather than try to eliminate it.

As work and research developed, autistic author, speaker and educator Nick Walker, in his essay 'Throw away the master's tools: Liberating ourselves from the pathology paradigm (2013)' writes about the principles of the Neurodiversity Paradigm as:

- Neurodiversity is an essential form of human diversity. The idea that there is one 'normal' or 'healthy' type of brain or mind or one 'right' style of neurocognitive functioning, is no more valid than the idea that there is one 'normal' or 'right' gender, race or culture.
- The classification of Neurodivergence (e.g. autism, ADHD, dyslexia) as medical/ psychiatric pathology has no valid scientific basis, and instead reflects cultural prejudice and oppresses those labels as such.
- The social dynamics around neurodiversity are similar to the dynamics that manifest around other forms of human diversity. These dynamics include unequal distribution of social power; conversely, when embraced, diversity can act as a source of creative potential.

## Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a concept used to describe the ways in which oppressions based on various characteristics (race, gender, sexuality, disability etc) are interconnected and cannot be adequately examined separately from one another.

This neurodiversity paradigm is linked very closely to the work of Kimberlé Crenshaw, a legal scholar in 1989 following her paper 'Demarginalising the intersection of race and sex: a Black feminist critique of anti-discrimination doctrine, feminist theory and anti-racist policies' (1989).

UCU encourages all branches to look through the lens of intersectionality when addressing discrimination in the workplace.

### Language

Language plays an important part in how our thoughts and perceptions are shaped. The following terms outline different terms used in explaining neurodiversity.

**Neurodivergent:** (sometimes abbreviated as ND) describes a brain that functions in ways that diverge significantly from the dominant standards of 'normal'. For example, a dyslexic person is neurodivergent.

**Neurodivergence:** the property (of a person or brain) of being significantly different from the typical.

**Neurodiversity:** the existence within a population of individuals with different brain structures.

**Neurodiverse:** an adjective describing populations which contain individuals with different neurologies. The word neurodiverse should not be used to describe an individual or a condition; it refers only to populations.

**Neuroatypical:** synonymous with neurodivergent.

**Neurotypical:** abbreviated as NT is often used to describe people who are not neurodivergent and falls within what society says is "normal"

**Neurominority:** a group or population of neurodivergent people. For example, autistic people are a neurominority.

Neurodivergent people are given different labels that diagnose how a person's brain differs from what society defines as 'normal'. Many of these are categorised as 'disorders'. However, these are not diseases and illnesses, or something that can be cured, and may not be disorders. An individual's neurology is part of that person's identity.

#### **The following are examples of neurodivergent conditions or profiles:**

**Autism:** a spectrum condition characterised by differences in communication, cognitive processing, sensory sensitivities, and with literal thinking and intense special interests.



**Attention Deficit Disorders (ADD):** a group of conditions involving differences in attention span, activity levels, concentration and/or impulsivity.

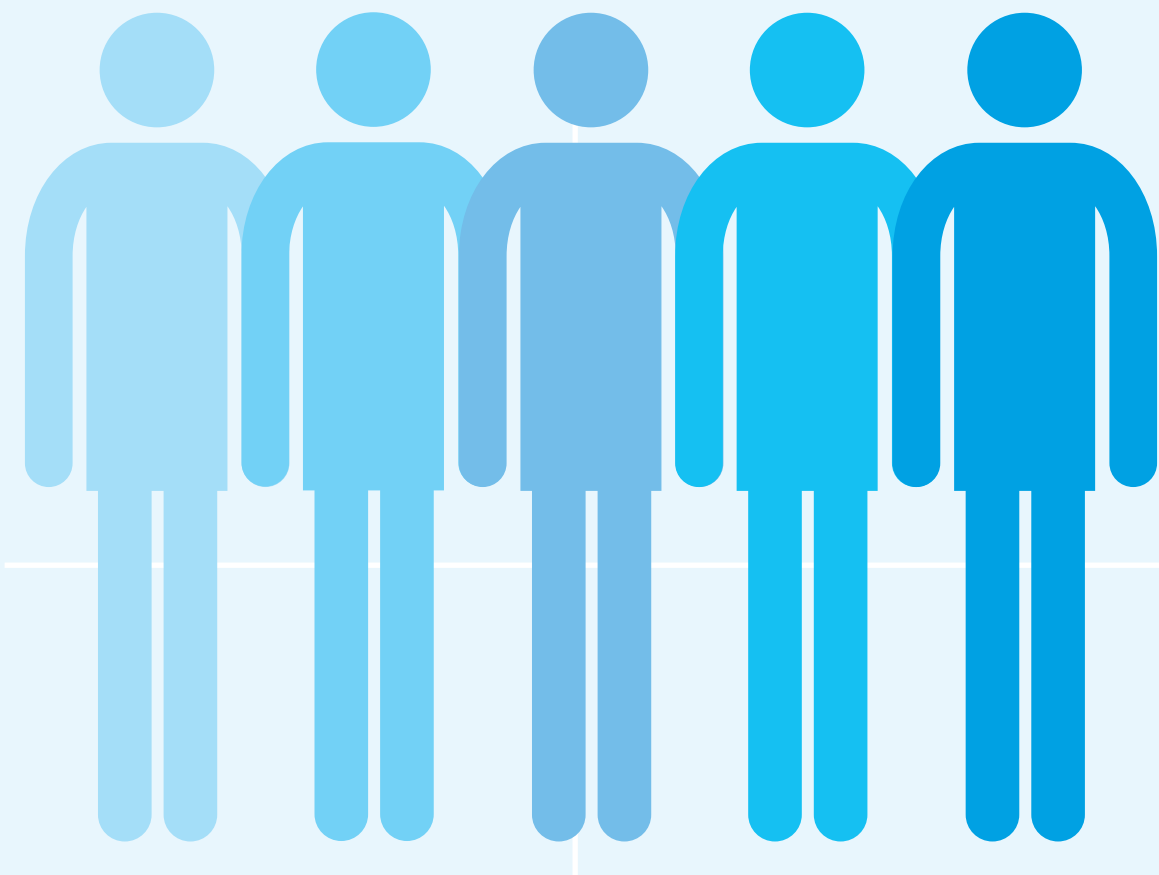
**Dyslexia:** a neurology which is not well-suited to certain forms of written language, leading to difficulties with reading, writing and spelling, and which may also include differences in concentration and planning. It is also associated with certain strengths, particularly in spatial reasoning.

**Dyspraxia:** (also known as Developmental Co-ordination Disorder) – a condition associated with difficulties in movement and co-ordination, but also with strong strategic thinking.

**Dyscalculia:** a condition associated with difficulty in understanding number related concepts, symbols or functions needed for mathematics.

**Dysgraphia:** a condition in which a person has difficulties with fine motor skills such as handwriting, spelling and finger sequencing, which may affect typing.

# Challenging myths and stereotypes



You cannot (usually) tell that a person is neurodivergent just by looking at them. Neurodivergent conditions are invisible conditions. This can lead to barriers and needs being overlooked.

With brain science still in its early days, and in a society that is slow to educate people about neurological diversity, myths and stereotypes have developed which overlook individuality and can lead to mocking and bullying and to needs not being met. They can also make it harder for a person to disclose their condition, which makes it harder for them to get the right type of support.

## Autism

No two autistic people are the same. Over 700,000 people in the UK are autistic – National Autistic Society

Myth	Fact
Autism is a mental health issue	Autism is a neurological variant: a difference in how your brain works. Autistic people can have a good mental health, or experience mental health issues and conditions, just like everyone else. Where autistic people do experience mental health difficulties, it is often due to the stress of living in an autism-hostile society rather than due to the autism itself.

## ADHD

No two people with ADHD are the same

Myth	Fact
ADHD is an excuse for bad behaviour	Society places behavioural requirements that do not suit the neurology of people with ADHD eg requiring them to remain still or to concentrate for long periods of time. 'Bad behaviour' usually occurs as a result of frustration or distress caused by this.

## Dysgraphia

No two people with dysgraphia are the same. It is difficult to estimate how many adults are living with dysgraphia as it remains largely undiagnosed.

<b>Myth</b>	<b>Fact</b>
Most people outgrow dysgraphia	Like all neurodivergent conditions, dysgraphia is lifelong. However, dysgraphic people can develop strategies to succeed at writing and other language-based activities.

## Dyspraxic

No two dyspraxic people are the same. It is thought that dyspraxia affects around 10% of the population, 2%–4% seriously – [Dyspraxia Foundation](#)

<b>Myth</b>	<b>Fact</b>
Dyspraxia is the same as dysgraphia	Dyspraxia and dysgraphia can share similar or overlapping struggles with writing. But they are different conditions. Dyspraxia may affect difficulty in controlling movements such as running, jumping and balancing. Tasks such as driving and cooking may present greater challenges.

## Dyscalculia

No two people with dyscalculia are the same. It is thought that between 2% –5% of the population may be dyscalculic - [Dyscalculia Information Centre](#)

<b>Myth</b>	<b>Fact</b>
Dyscalculia is another name for maths anxiety	Dyscalculia and math anxiety are not the same. Many people feel anxious about math, even if they are not dyscalculic. The difference is that people with dyscalculia struggle with the skills to do math problems, which can be related to their anxiety.

## Dyslexic

No two dyslexic people are the same. Approximately 10% of the population are affected by dyslexia to some extent, with around 4% being affected severely –  
Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities

### Myth

Dyslexia is a sign of low (or high) intelligence

### Fact

Dyslexia is not an intellectual impairment. It affects people of all intelligence levels. It is not an indication of low or high intelligence.

# Legislation



## The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 brings protections to assist and protect a disabled person in employment or seeking work. Not all neurodivergent people will consider themselves disabled, but neurodivergent conditions are likely to meet the legal definition of disability under the Act.

The Equality Act defines disability as: a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on an employee's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

This is an unsatisfactory definition, as it defines disability from a medical-model standpoint; it identifies the impairment as the sole cause of the person's difficulties.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities does not explicitly define the word 'disability'; it does however acknowledge the social-model definition, which acknowledges that societal barriers disable people:

Disabled people include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

As a signatory to the UN Convention, the UK is supposed to incorporate its provisions into domestic law. However, since its opening to signature in 2007, no UK government has done this.

The Equality Act 2010 is applicable in England, Scotland and Wales. The Northern Ireland Act 1998 addresses equality legislation, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 is still the main disability equality law in Northern Ireland.

## The Public Sector Equality Duty

The public sector equality general duty applies to all public authorities in England, Scotland and Wales, including all colleges and universities as well as other settings where education takes place such as prisons. The equality duty does not apply to Northern Ireland – see below.

## The General Duty

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 states that public authorities must have 'due regard' to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act

- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

### Specific Duty

Section 149(3) also imposes specific duties on public sector employers to remove or minimise disadvantages faced by disabled people. These duties are a very useful tool for changing employer practices.

### England

The specific duties regulations are intended to support institutions to meet the requirements of the public sector equality duty. They are specific actions which public authorities need to do to comply.

There are three steps to the specific duties:

1. Information analysis
2. Equality objectives
3. Publication

### Reasonable adjustments

The duty to make reasonable adjustments as set out in section 20 of the Equality Act, operates differently depending on the sector, so, for example, employers and service providers must comply with all three duties; there is no duty on those who let premises to remove or alter a physical feature.

The anticipatory duty is applicable to services, public functions, associations and education. This means that those with responsibility under the Act, have to be positive, and proactive, thinking about the barriers faced by disabled people. They must plan and put into place a range of adjustments a disabled person can use to access the service, when they need to.



### The First Duty: provisions, criteria or practice (PCP)

<b>The Act says</b>	Where a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled people, there is a duty to take such steps as is reasonable to avoid the disadvantage.
<b>Example</b>	A sports centre has a policy of no dogs allowed would place a disabled person who relies on assistance dogs at a disadvantage. The change in the policy would be to amend to allow assistance dogs therefore removing the barrier.

### The Second Duty: physical feature

<b>The Act says</b>	Where a physical feature places disabled people at a substantial disadvantage compared with people who are not disabled, there is a duty to take reasonable steps to avoid the disadvantage.
<b>Example</b>	Examples of a physical feature includes building exits, entrances, a fixture or fitting, furnishings, lifts, escalators, toilet facilities, stairs etc.

### The Third Duty: auxiliary aids

<b>The Act says</b>	Where a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to non-disabled people, there is a duty to take such steps as is reasonable to provide the auxiliary aid.
<b>Example</b>	Auxiliary aids provides support or assistance to a person, for example, computer equipment or software, hearing loop, a British Sign Language Interpreter, or support worker for a disabled worker.

### Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland is not covered by the same Public Sector Equality Duty legislation as the rest of the United Kingdom, and has its own statutory duties for public authorities, required by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Under Section 75 of this Act, public authorities are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
- between men and women generally
- between disabled and non-disabled people
- between persons with dependents and persons without.

Public authorities are also required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

### Scotland

Public authorities subject to the specific equality duties are required to assess and review policies and practices, and requires a university to assess the impact of applying a proposed new or revised policy or practice against the needs of the general equality duty and, in particular:

- report on mainstreaming the equality duty
- gather and use employee information
- publish equality outcomes and report
- assess and review policies and practices
- publish gender pay gap information
- publish statements on equal pay
- consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement
- publish required information in a manner that is accessible.

### Wales

The focus of the specific duties is to deliver positive outcomes through evidence-based equality objectives, developed with the engagement of the

people affected by the objectives, and after relevant information has been collected and analysed.

To meet the specific duties Welsh institutions will need to:

- create an evidence base relevant to their functions
- engage staff, students and other people
- assess the impact of policies and practices
- develop pay difference objectives
- develop equality objectives
- report on compliance with the duty
- embed equality into all functions.

### **Autism Act 2009**

The Act is intended to improve support and services for autistic adults. The Act places a duty of government to:

1. produce and regularly review an autism strategy to meet the needs of autistic adults in England
2. produce statutory guidance for local authorities to implement the strategy locally.

This is the only Act dedicated to improving support and services for people with a specific condition, but because it places the details of what services will be provided in the hands of the government of the day, many autistic people believe that its implementation has fallen short of its potential. It was passed under a Labour government but put into practice by Conservative-led governments.

Campaigners are calling for the Strategy and Guidance to be made much more specific and effective - for example placing much stronger requirements on employers to make workplaces and working conditions more autism-friendly – and for its governance to be led by autistic people: at the moment, it is steered by a group with a minority of autistic members, who are appointed rather than elected.

### **Employment Rights Act 1996**

Under provisions set out in the Employment Rights Act 1996, employees have a statutory right to ask their employer for a change to their contractual terms and

conditions of employment to work flexibly provided they have worked for their employer for 26 weeks continuously at the date the application is made.

However, this is a significantly weaker right than the right to reasonable adjustments, as it is a right only to ask. Disabled workers are on stronger ground asserting their right to reasonable adjustments, which is a right to have not just a right to ask.

### Unlawful discrimination

The following outlines discrimination types and actions:

#### Direct discrimination

Treating a disabled person less favourably than they would treat others

**Example:** not promoting a person because they are dyslexic

#### Indirect discrimination

Applying a provision, criterion or practice that is more difficult for a person to achieve because of their disability

**Example:** if a promotion process includes a social skills test that is irrelevant to the job being applied for and disadvantages an autistic applicant

#### Discrimination arising from a disability

Arises when a disabled person is treated less favourably because of something connected with their disability and where the discrimination cannot be justified

**Example:** if an employer disciplined an autistic employee for rocking on their chair

#### Victimisation

Treating someone badly because they have done a 'protected act' (or because of a belief that a person has done or is going to do a protected act). A 'protected act' is:

- making a claim or complaint of discrimination (under the Equality Act)
- helping someone else to make a claim by giving evidence or information
- making an allegation that you or someone else has breached the Act
- doing anything else in connection with the Act.

**Example:** A non-disabled worker gives evidence on behalf of a disabled colleague at an Employment Tribunal hearing and is subsequently refused a promotion because of that action.

### **Failure to make reasonable adjustments**

Not making a change (for example, providing an auxiliary aid) to help remove a substantial disadvantage to a disabled worker compared to non-disabled colleagues

**Example:** if an employer fails to provide speech recognition and proof-reading programmes for a dyslexic employee

### **Harassment relating to a disability**

Conduct or action which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment

**Example:** making 'jokes' about autism, or treating an autistic worker in a derogatory fashion

### **Tackling third party harassment**

The TUC has produced a guide that looks at the issue of third party abuse and harassment. It explains how it manifests, its impact and what unions and employers should do to prevent it. The guide is available here

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10269/Tackling-third-party-abuse-and-harassment-at-work/pdf/TUC\\_-\\_third-party\\_harassment\\_guide\\_-\\_March\\_2019.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10269/Tackling-third-party-abuse-and-harassment-at-work/pdf/TUC_-_third-party_harassment_guide_-_March_2019.pdf)

# Barriers, workplace change and reasonable adjustments

# 4



## Barriers in the workplace

There are many features of workplaces and working conditions which present barriers to neurodivergent people. Examples of barriers include:

### Heavy workload

- may be unsuitable for the pace at which a neurodivergent person works
- may create anxiety and stress
- long hours may cause mental, physical or sensory overload.

### Distressing sensory environment

- fluorescent lights, loud noise, strong smells, uncomfortable uniform or upholstery, poor ventilation
- over-stimulation from excessive sensory input: clutter, over-decorated walls, etc.

### Lack of provision for breaks and quiet

- workplace stress and anxiety become worse without the facility for 'time out' in a quiet space
- people with unusual concentration spans eg people with ADHD may find long work duties without breaks very difficult
- autistic workers may need the opportunity to 'stim' ie to carry out their preferred activity for emotional regulation eg skipping, humming, rocking.

### Changes to working practices, especially when these are not negotiated and are detrimental

- changes in working practices may cause unnecessary stress and anxiety
- neurodivergent workers may have developed working practices that work for them.

### Inappropriate communication styles

- small type and serif fonts are harder for dyslexic people to read
- workplace jargon and unclear instructions create problems for literal thinkers
- information provided in only one format eg written, presenting difficulties to people whose neurology is better suited to other formats.

## **Unpredictably of working arrangements**

- 'hot-desking' creates barriers for neurodivergent workers who prefer to maintain their own workspace
- anxiety about the journey to work, due to, for example, peak-time public transport or lack of workplace parking
- short notice changes to times and content of work duties.

## **Confusing workplace design**

- unclear or insufficient signage
- illogical layout
- jargonistic labelling of work areas eg a 'yellow zone' that isn't yellow!

## **Computer use**

- screen glare
- on-screen fonts and layouts that are hard to read.

## **Unsuitable work processes**

- alphabetically-based filing systems
- requirement for numerical calculations
- lack of help with organising work.

## **Discriminatory policies and procedures**

- use of disciplinary and / or capability procedures
- discrimination.

## **No policy to support neurodivergence in the workplace**

- lack of policies leads to employees being treated differently by different line managers
- neurodivergent employees are unaware of what they can request in terms of support.

## **Inappropriate recruitment and promotion practices**

- irrelevant personal characteristics included in job specification eg 'team player', 'outgoing personality'



- written exams present difficulties to dyslexic applicants
- interviews judging applicants on irrelevant personal characteristics eg eye contact.

### **Rigid and/or inflexible working practices**

- requirement for all workers to work at the same pace, even though people's work paces differ
- requirement that all workers carry out the work in exactly the same way, even though different working methods suit different people.

### **Hostile workplace culture**

- being discriminated against, treated less favourably than others
- being harassed, bullied or excluded socially
- being unwilling to disclose their condition.

### **Workplace changes**

When considering disabled or neurodivergent workers' needs, we often think about reasonable adjustments for individuals.

However, there are aspects of the working environment which present barriers to neurodivergent people in general, and which we want employers to remove. Many of these workplace changes will make work better for everyone. They are demands that you can raise in your collective bargaining with the employer, with the benefits to neurodivergent workers one of several arguments in favour. This will combine unity and diversity to strengthen your campaign.

It is better to win a change that will benefit workers generally than a change for just one specific worker. For example, if your employer produces all written communication in dyslexia-friendly layout, that will benefit all dyslexic workers - present and future - and other workers too, for example, those with visual impairments. That is much better than an individual dyslexic worker having to negotiate an adjustment where a separate, dyslexia-friendly version of each communication is produced just for them.

Positive workplace changes can be supplemented by reasonable adjustments for individual workers, based on their individual needs - and while employers still refuse to make the workplace changes, individuals will still need adjustments.

In a truly accessible job, neurodivergent and other disabled workers will need no (or minimal) adjustments.

So before we look at ideas for adjustments for individuals, let's consider some workplace changes. Considering the examples of barriers listed above, here are some ways to remove them:

### **Heavy workload**

- manageable workload for all staff
- adequate staffing levels
- shorter standard working hours (without loss of pay)
- plenty of time to read and complete tasks.

### **Distressing sensory environment**

- replace fluorescent lights with full-spectrum lighting
- maximise sound-proofing
- no – or at least, flexible – dress code
- effective and controllable ventilation.

### **Lack of provision for breaks and quiet**

- space for and acceptance of stimming
- an accessible quiet room in every workplace
- provision for flexible break times to suit the individual.

### **Changes to working practices, especially when these are not negotiated and are detrimental**

- provision for individuals to determine their own working methods
- all changes in working practices to be negotiated with the union.

### **Inappropriate communication styles**

- all printed material to be in dyslexia-friendly fonts and layout (see British Dyslexia Association guide for details)
- highlight key points in documents
- record meetings, training etc

- communicate clearly, minimise distractions, check understanding
- provide information in different formats eg verbal, written, diagrams.

### **Unpredictably of working arrangements**

- no 'hot-desking': personal workstations where possible
- the option for working hours to allow travel outside peak hours
- designated parking spaces that can be reserved on the basis of need
- minimum notice periods of any changes to duties
- all workplace changes to be negotiated with the trade union.

### **Confusing workplace design**

- sufficient and clear signage, using both words and symbols
- logical layout
- clear naming of work areas eg 'quiet area'
- new buildings to be fully accessible, using universal design principles
- invitations to meetings and events to include clear venue information, route and visible landmarks.

### **Computer use**

- provide anti-glare screens
- apply web accessibility guidance to ensure readable fonts and layout

### **Unsuitable work processes**

- non-alphabetically based filing systems eg by colour
- calculating devices (including talking calculator)
- work areas to be well-organised, neat and tidy, with important items returned to the same place each time

### **Discriminatory policies and procedures**

- scrapping target-driven and/or competitive performance regimes
- attendance policies to not penalise medically-certificated absence
- 'disability leave', where sick leave is not counted towards disciplinary action where it is related to disability.

### **No policy to support neurodivergence in the workplace**

- a neurodiversity policy negotiated with the union
- reasonable adjustment passports
- 'know your rights' advice publicised to all workers.

### **Inappropriate recruitment and promotion practices**

- job specifications to include only requirements for the job, not irrelevant personal characteristics
- replacing exams and interview with job trials and practical tests
- tests and interviews to take place in a venue with low sensory stimulus
- exam papers in dyslexia-friendly layout
- no personality testing e.g. psychometric or 'situational judgement' tests
- specific and concrete questions rather than hypothetical questions.

### **Rigid and/or inflexible working practices**

- allowing workers to work at a pace that suits them
- allowing workers to adopt working methods that suit them.

### **Hostile workplace culture**

- serious efforts to eliminate discrimination
- managers and others who discriminate to be held accountable
- education to tackle stereotypes and prejudices.

### **Reasonable adjustments**

The provision of reasonable adjustments is a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent a disabled person from being placed at a substantial disadvantage by a provision, criteria or practice in comparison to a non-disabled person. Where an employer is aware of a disability, there is a duty to make reasonable adjustments, and a failure to do so is unlawful discrimination.

Many adjustments do not require specialist equipment but do require employers to think differently on how they can support employees. See above.

Examples of reasonable adjustments:

### **Heavy workload**

- manageable workload
- reallocation of tasks within a workforce eg a dyslexic worker carrying out duties that involve minimal reading/writing
- shorter working hours.

### **Distressing sensory environment**

- controllable lighting at the person's workstation
- allocation to a work location (eg. office, classroom) with natural or full-spectrum lighting
- noise-cancelling headphones
- exemption from (aspects of) the dress code
- a quiet working environment, away from doors, noise, strong smells, etc.

### **Lack of provision for breaks and quiet**

- space for and acceptance of stimming
- break times to suit the individual.

### **Changes to working practices, especially when these are not negotiated and are detrimental**

- personal mentoring through periods of change
- longer notice periods of any changes to duties
- working methods to suit the individual.

### **Inappropriate communication styles**

- all printed material to be in dyslexia-friendly fonts and layout
- information given in a suitable format (written, verbal, pictorial, audio, video, diagram, flowchart)
- assistive technology such as a screen-reader, scanning pen, text-to-speech or mind-mapping software appropriate coloured paper (or colour overlay)
- additional time for some tasks
- communicate clearly, minimise distractions, check understanding
- use of a digital recorder.

### **Unpredictably of working arrangements**

- a reserved parking space
- personal coaching through work changes
- a personal workstation
- adjustments to working hours.

### **Confusing workplace design**

- a map of the workplace
- a personal guide around the workplace.

### **Computer use**

- provide anti-glare screens
- apply web accessibility guidance to ensure readable fonts and layout
- change background colour of screen to suit individual preference
- supply anti-glare screen filter
- allow frequent breaks, at least every hour
- alternate computer work with other tasks.

### **Unsuitable work processes**

- calculating devices (including talking calculator)
- calendars, planners, electronic organisers, mnemonic devices, etc.

### **Discriminatory policies and procedures**

- suitable targets in performance regimes
- relaxed 'triggers' in attendance policies
- adjusted procedures in disciplinary meetings

### **No policy to support neurodivergence in the workplace**

- allocation of a mentor or buddy
- regular meeting with the manager to discuss any problems or issues at an early stage.

### **Inappropriate recruitment and promotion practices**

- extra time in exams or tests, and to answer questions in interviews
- a job trial or practical test instead of exams or interviews
- questions in advance of interviews
- a companion in interviews to explain any unclear questions.

### **Rigid and/or inflexible working practices**

- allowing workers to work at a pace that suits them
- allowing workers to adopt working methods that suit them.

### **Hostile workplace culture**

- support and confidentiality for workers disclosing their condition
- working from home where appropriate.

### **Flexible working**

All workers have the right to request a change to their working hours or location. However, this is only a right to request: so long as the employer follows a set procedure, it has very wide scope to refuse the request.

Flexible working arrangements may include:

- changing from full-time to part-time work
- changing the part-time hours that you work, eg from weekends to week days
- changing working hours to fit e.g. school hours, college hours or care arrangements
- compressed hours, that is, working your usual hours in fewer days
- flexitime, which allows you to fit your working hours around agreed core times
- home working for part or all of the time
- job sharing.

Unless there is a specific agreement for your flexible working to be temporary or subject to review, it will involve a permanent change to your contract of employment.

## Disclosing disability

Disclosing a condition is an individual decision, and there is no obligation on anybody to do so. However, the employer is not obliged to make reasonable adjustments if it does not know (or could not be reasonably expected to know) that the worker is disabled under the terms of the Act.

There are many different factors that affect the choice of whether a person discloses a condition to their employer (or prospective employer). This includes (but is not limited to):

- the nature of the condition and the culture of the organisation; is there a culture of fear, discrimination or prejudice?
- is it welcoming?
- is it safe and inclusive?

Rather than advise members to disclose or not to disclose their condition to their employer, the role of a union rep is to explain the pros and cons of each, and support the member in the decision they take.

For further information on Disclosing a disability, read our guidance here [https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/5445/Disclosing-a-disability-UCU-guidance/pdf/Disclosing\\_a\\_disability.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/5445/Disclosing-a-disability-UCU-guidance/pdf/Disclosing_a_disability.pdf)

## Reasonable adjustment passports

UCU has produced a reasonable adjustment passport for recording the agreed workplace adjustments between you and your manager. You can use this if you have a condition or impairment, visible or invisible.

The aim of the passport is to:

- ensure that everyone is clear and had a record of what adjustments have been agreed
- remove the need to re-negotiate every time a member changes jobs, is relocated or assigned a new manager
- provide a space to record any subsequent changes to adjustments
- provide members with the basis for future conversations about adjustments

### Read our guidance on reasonable adjustment

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/6091/Reasonable-adjustments---removing-barriers-to-disabled-people-at-work-UCU-guidance/pdf/Reasonable\\_adjustments.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/6091/Reasonable-adjustments---removing-barriers-to-disabled-people-at-work-UCU-guidance/pdf/Reasonable_adjustments.pdf)



### **Reasonable adjustment passport**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10225/Reasonable-adjustment-passport/pdf/ucu\\_adjustment\\_passport\\_apr19.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10225/Reasonable-adjustment-passport/pdf/ucu_adjustment_passport_apr19.pdf)

### **Reasonable adjustment policy**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10226/Making-adjustments-work-adjustment-passport-policy/pdf/ucu\\_adjustment\\_passport\\_policy\\_apr19.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10226/Making-adjustments-work-adjustment-passport-policy/pdf/ucu_adjustment_passport_policy_apr19.pdf)

## **Making all workplaces neurodiversity-friendly**

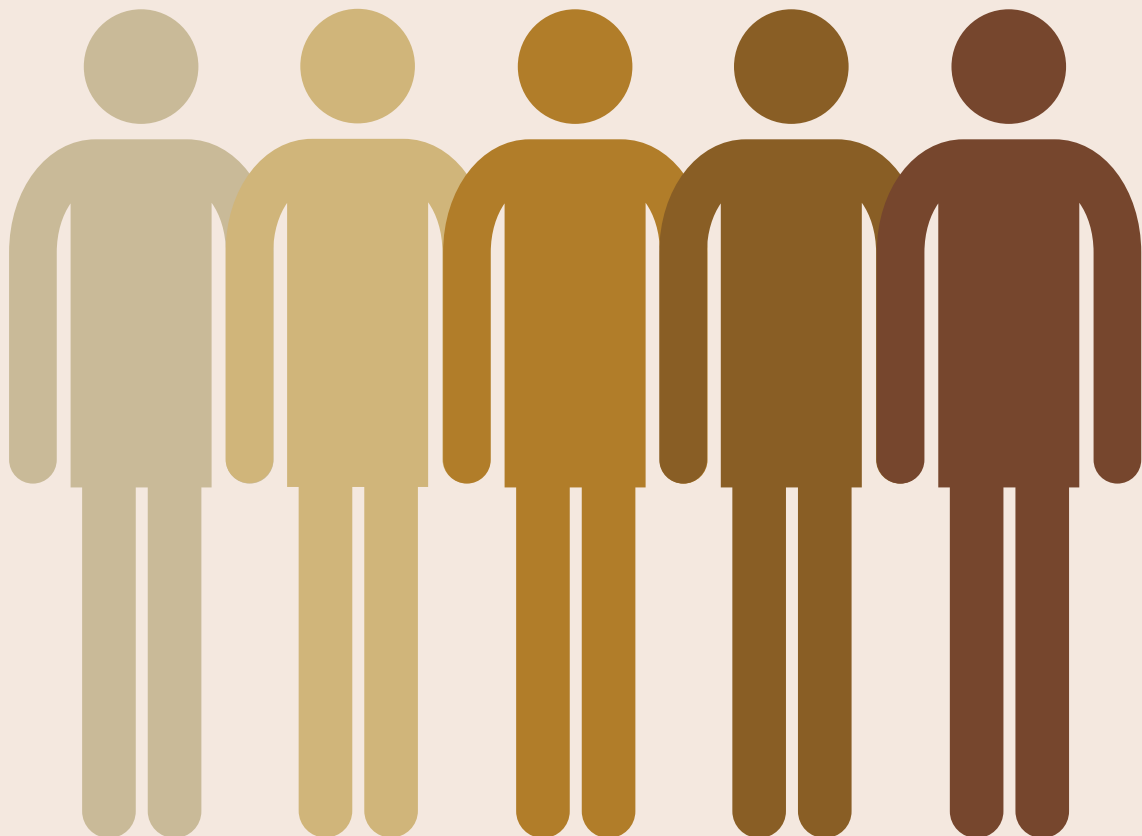
Our workplaces are a microcosm of society and our colleagues and students bring together a wealth of skills, abilities and opinions. Ensuring that our workplaces support all, we must make sure that the needs of neurodivergent people are taken into account.

In addition to the workplace changes listed above, we encourage branches to include the following in negotiations or policy development to support neurodivergent members.

- 1.** Neurodivergent staff and students are included in discussions and in the decision-making processes that affect them and are about them - #IncludeUs
- 2.** All staff (including managers) have an understanding of neurodiversity as it pertains to their roles and responsibilities through training and awareness
- 3.** The culture of the workplace is one of full inclusion regardless of protected characteristics, to allow individuals to feel able to disclose a disability without fear of reprisal and to access adjustments to work to their full potential
- 4.** The workplace environment is inclusive and supports neurodiverse needs. This includes addressing building design issues and any possible triggers that distress neurodivergent people.
- 5.** Non-discriminatory policies and procedures that support neurodivergent people including open and transparent recruitment processes.
- 6.** Employers provide or pay for assessment of staff for neurodivergent conditions if wanted.
- 7.** Implement reasonable adjustments in a timely manner.

# Branch tools

# 5



Branch representatives are in an ideal place to provide support to neurodiverse employees at work as they are most likely to know what the issues are affecting their members at a local level. The following tools are outlined below to assist branches in delivering equality.

### UCU structures

**ACTION:** If you are interested in becoming more active within UCU and would like to find out more about roles and responsibilities, contact your local branch and speak with your officers. You can find out your local branch contacts here <https://www.ucu.org.uk/contacts>

UCUs structures serve to include all members regardless of their protected characteristic to be engaged in issues that affect them. Members who are neurodivergent can help shape discussion and policy around workplace adjustments that can help to overcome barriers to equality. #Includeus – Neurodiverse members can do so through the following routes

- Equality committee
- Equality standing committees
- Annual equality conferences

The terms and conditions of the above can be found in UCU's Standing Orders of the Equality Standing Committees and Annual Equality Conferences

- TUC equality committees and conferences
- Equality reps
- Equality training

### Social model of disability

**ACTION:** UCU policy is for all branches to work with employers to adopt the social model of disability.

UCU follows the social model of disability which looks at the ways in which society is organised and the social and institutional barriers which restrict disabled people's opportunities. The social model sees the person first and argues that the barriers they face, in combination with their impairments, are what disables them.

UCU has produced a video explaining the social model of disability

<https://youtu.be/Do6U1j1vRYU>

**ACTION:** The following checklist serves as a prompt for ensuring the needs of neurodiverse members are addressed:

## Checklist

Organisational	Yes	No	Comment
Does your employer have a clear understanding of the equality legislation and specific Public Sector Equality Duties, as it relates to your nation (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales)?			
Does your employer have a neurodiversity policy or is neurodiversity covered in another policy eg equality?			
Does your employer have a reasonable adjustment policy?			
Does it have reasonable adjustment passports?			
Does your employer subscribe to the social model of disability? Does it put it into practice?			
Is your employer registered with Disability Confident?			

Support	Yes	No	Comment
Is there a named point of contact with whom the union can raise issues relating to neurodiversity in the workplace?			
Does your employer signpost neurodivergent employees for additional support/advice?			

Training	Yes	No	Comment
Does your employer provide neurodiversity training for all staff?			
Have key personnel such as HR and managers who are likely to be involved in recruitment, disciplinary or capability proceedings, received neurodiversity training?			
Does your employer's general equality and diversity training cover neurodiversity?			

Recruitment	Yes	No	Comment
Does your employer encourage neurodivergent job applicants to seek reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process?			
Are recruitment processes clear and inclusive for people with neurodivergent conditions?			

Accessibility	Yes	No	Comment
Are internal documentation systems accessible for neurodivergent employees?			
Does your employer provide suitable work areas for neurodivergent employees?			

Disclosure	Yes	No	Comment
Is there an established clear route through which neurodivergent employees can disclose their condition?			

Policies/Procedures	Yes	No	Comment
Have the following policies/ procedures been reviewed to take into account the needs of neurodivergent employees?			
● Recruitment procedures			
● Performance Management policy			
● Capability / Disciplinary policy			
● Redundancy policy			
● Bullying and Harassment policy			
● Flexible Working policy			
● Family Friendly policy			
● Sickness Absence policy			
● Equality policy			
● Disability policy			
● Reasonable Adjustment policy			
● Health and Safety policy			
● Training policy			

**ACTION:** Join UCUs National Day of Action for Disability Equality in Education to raise awareness and campaign for disability equality.

### Day of Action for Disability Equality in Education

UCU encourages you to undertake any activity that encapsulates highlighting the challenges and barriers faced by disabled people, as well as the gains made, especially during Disability History Month (22 November - 22 December) and on the day of action itself – please contact [eqadmin@ucu.org.uk](mailto:eqadmin@ucu.org.uk) for details on when the day of action will be held.

This national campaign calls for:

- time limits for the implementation of reasonable adjustments
- a review of building regulations to ensure they meet the accessibility needs of disabled people
- a statutory right to disability leave
- the right for disabled people to access mainstream education and a reversal of cuts to SEND provision.

### Getting involved

Branches are encouraged to continue to raise awareness of disability discrimination (e.g. lack of physical access, refusal of reasonable adjustments & disability leave) and to work with institutions and student union groups for increased participation and improvement of disability rights within structures, employment and access to support and services. We hope that by increasing organisation around disability discrimination we will have fewer members needing support in casework in the future and more disabled members involved and active in our branches.

### Suggestions of action are outlined below

1. Nothing about us without us! – Branches should ensure that the planning of any event should and must involve disabled members. This is important as the lived experiences of disabled members can strengthen branch organisation and participation and disabled members can feed their perspectives into all UCU campaigns, locally and nationally.
2. Use our disability equality resources to campaign and understand the issues facing disabled people:

#### **Reasonable adjustments - Making adjustments work: passport and model policy**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10225/Reasonable-adjustment-passport/pdf/ucu\\_adjustment\\_passport\\_apr19.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10225/Reasonable-adjustment-passport/pdf/ucu_adjustment_passport_apr19.pdf)

#### **Disclosing a disability**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/5445/Disclosing-a-disability-UCU-guidance/pdf/Disclosing\\_a\\_disability.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/5445/Disclosing-a-disability-UCU-guidance/pdf/Disclosing_a_disability.pdf)

#### **Disability awareness toolkit**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/8828/Disability-awareness-toolkit/pdf/DA\\_toolkit\\_4equality\\_officers\\_Aug17.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/8828/Disability-awareness-toolkit/pdf/DA_toolkit_4equality_officers_Aug17.pdf)

### **Campaigning for accessible and inclusive workplaces**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/8599/Disabled-Members-Toolkit/pdf/Disabled\\_members\\_toolkit\\_Mar17.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/8599/Disabled-Members-Toolkit/pdf/Disabled_members_toolkit_Mar17.pdf)

### **Enabling not disabling**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/1625/Enabling-not-disabling-UCU-Nov-15/pdf/ucu\\_enablingnotdisabling\\_nov15.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/1625/Enabling-not-disabling-UCU-Nov-15/pdf/ucu_enablingnotdisabling_nov15.pdf)

3. Look at the barriers to disabled people in the workplace in different ways, for example, through the lens of being a disabled LGBT+ person or a disabled black person.
4. Watch our film on the social model of disability and discuss how branches can adopt the social model <https://youtu.be/Do6U1j1vRYU>
5. Display our range of posters

#### **Disability equality statistics**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/9942/Disability-stats-poster-November-2018/pdf/Disability\\_equality\\_stats\\_A4\\_poster.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/9942/Disability-stats-poster-November-2018/pdf/Disability_equality_stats_A4_poster.pdf)

#### **Poster 1**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/9945/Disability-Day-of-Action-Poster-1/pdf/DoA\\_A4\\_disability\\_people\\_poster11.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/9945/Disability-Day-of-Action-Poster-1/pdf/DoA_A4_disability_people_poster11.pdf)

#### **Poster 2**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/9944/Disability-Day-of-Action-Poster-2/pdf/DoA\\_A4\\_disability\\_people\\_poster2.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/9944/Disability-Day-of-Action-Poster-2/pdf/DoA_A4_disability_people_poster2.pdf)

#### **Poster 3**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/9946/Disability-Day-of-Action-Poster-3/pdf/DoA\\_A4\\_disability\\_people\\_poster3.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/9946/Disability-Day-of-Action-Poster-3/pdf/DoA_A4_disability_people_poster3.pdf)

#### **Poster 4**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/9947/Disability-Day-of-Action-Poster-4/pdf/DoA\\_A4\\_disability\\_people\\_poster4.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/9947/Disability-Day-of-Action-Poster-4/pdf/DoA_A4_disability_people_poster4.pdf)

#### **Disability wall chart**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/4260/International-Day-of-Disabled-People--UCU-wall-chart/pdf/ucu\\_disposter.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/4260/International-Day-of-Disabled-People--UCU-wall-chart/pdf/ucu_disposter.pdf)

6. Work with H&S reps to conduct risk assessments of your institution to address issues of inaccessibility
7. Host meetings to discuss how branches can work alongside institutions to address and challenge negative stereotypes in the workplace



8. This is an inclusive campaign – work with campus unions and student unions to raise awareness of issues
9. Ask everyone in the branch to take a solidarity selfie and tweet support of the campaign using the hashtag #Includeus on social media platforms and upload pictures <https://www.ucu.org.uk/disabilityequality>
10. Share your ideas and actions email [eqadmin@ucu.org.uk](mailto:eqadmin@ucu.org.uk)

## **Disability Confidence Scheme**

The Disability Confidence Scheme is a government initiative that helps organisations to recruit and retain disabled people and those with a health condition for their skills and talent. This scheme replaced the previous Two Ticks Positive About Disabled People scheme.

This scheme has three levels and should also help employers from operating discriminatory practices.

### **Level 1 – Disability Confident Committed**

- Employers are required to identify and carry out an action that will make a difference for disabled people.

### **Level 2 – Disability Confident Employer**

Employers will be required to assess their organisations around two themes:

- getting the right people for the organisation
- keeping and developing people.

### **Level 3 - Disability Confident leader**

- having their self-assessment validated
- demonstrated what has been done as a Disability Confident leader.

As with many similar initiatives, UCU believes that this scheme should not and must not be seen as another ‘tick box’ exercise for disability equality but a pro-active change in how employers recruit, retain and provide support for disabled people at work, by changing the culture of the organisation. For further information visit

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign>

UCU as an employer is a member of this scheme.

UCU would like to hear from branches where this scheme has been introduced and implemented by your employer, and in particular, we would like to know:

- 1.** Whether your branch was consulted?
- 2.** Has having the scheme made an impact to how disabled people are treated and supported in the workplace?
- 3.** Any other comments that your branch may have regarding the scheme

## Model Policy

**ACTION:** Use the model neurodiversity policy which can be amended to suit your organisation to support neurodiverse employees

## Neurodiversity Policy

1. INTRODUCTION
  - 1.1 XX University / College is committed to the heightened awareness of rights for disabled workers and those who become disabled at work.
  - 1.2 The National Autistic Society estimates that there are around 700,000 autistic people in the UK today and the Chartered Institute for Personnel Development (CIPD) estimate that at least 10% of the UK population are neurodivergent.
  - 1.3 The scope of this policy covers the neurodiverse workforce, including individuals who are neurodivergent.
  - 1.4 XX University / College has signed up to [enter level 1,2 or 3] of the government's Disability Confident scheme that supports employers to make the most of the talents and skills disabled people bring to the workplace.
2. POLICY STATEMENT
  - 2.1 This policy covers the agreed approach of XX University / College toward potential and existing employees who are neurodivergent or believe they are neurodivergent. XX University / College welcomes the wide range of skills and attributes brought to the workplace by all employees including those with a neurodivergent profile.
  - 2.2 This policy applies to all employees, contractors, voluntary and agency workers working for XX University / College.
  - 2.3 XX University / College is committed to removing barriers that hinder disabled people from accessing jobs, buildings or services as well as invisible barriers such as attitudes and perceptions. XX University / College supports the Social Model of Disability that looks at how society is organised and the social and institutional barriers which restrict disabled people's opportunities.

2.4 XX University / College recognises that every employee who is or thinks they might be neurodivergent has the right to raise and discuss their issues with their line manager, Human Resources and/or Trade Union Rep, in the knowledge that the matter will be dealt with in a sensitive, confidential, non-judgemental and effective manner.

2.5 XX University / College will ensure that as far as is possible, to eliminate any form of discrimination through policies, practices, attitudes or procedures that can impact on neurodivergent employees.

2.6 We acknowledge that:

2.6.1 Every neurodivergent employee is different, this includes employees with the same form of neurodivergence

2.6.2 Failure to provide the right type of support to a neurodivergent worker can affect an individual's performance.

### 3. OBJECTIVE

3.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

3.1.1 Ensure that those employees seeking assistance, whether they are neurodivergent or may believe they are neurodivergent, are confident in approaching XX University / College for assistance

3.1.2 Assist and support neurodivergent employees at work, by issuing of advice and further support, i.e. through (but is not limited to), the University/ College employee assistance scheme and or, counselling service, provision of reasonable adjustments.

3.1.3 Aid managers and colleagues in supporting neurodivergent employees through mandatory training

### 4. DEFINITION

4.1 The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on an employee's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

4.2 Neurodiversity is the property of the human species, that it contains individuals with different neurologies. Neurodivergence is an umbrella term for a set of different skills profiles that including dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism, or Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Tourette syndrome and other conditions.

5. DISCLOSING A DISABILITY

5.1 XX University / College recognises that disclosing a disability is an individual choice and will:

5.1.1 Respect the decision of Neurodiverse employees to disclose / not disclose their diversities but aim to create a culture where disclosure is a positive act

5.1.2 Maintain strict confidence of the neurodivergence and needs of the employee

5.1.3 Not place any undue pressure on any employee to disclose their disability but will make clear the support is available through disclosure

6. WORKING ENVIRONMENT

6.1 XX University / College recognises that neurodivergent people often have atypical sensory sensitivities. XX University / College will review all aspects of the sensory environment in order to make it as benign and accessible as possible, including minimising background noise and using controllable, full-spectrum lighting.

6.2 XX University / College will ensure that navigation around its premises is as clear as possible.

6.3 XX University / College will use dyslexia-friendly print layout in all printed communication, following guidelines issued by the British Dyslexia Association.

6.4 XX University / College will provide a quiet room on every site.

7. ASSESSMENT

7.1 XX University / College recognises that many employees may not have received a formal diagnosis for their neurodivergence and are unaware of the support available.

7.2 XX University / College will provide the following support:

7.2.1 Provide information to employees seeking a formal diagnosis i.e. who to approach

7.2.2 Allow paid time off work to attend appointments

7.2.3 Fund assessments by appropriately qualified persons

7.3 XX University / College will accept previous assessments undertaken by appropriately qualified persons as neurodivergent conditions are lifelong

### 8. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

8.1 XX University / College will adhere to the Equality Act 2010 and associated specific duties for England (or Scotland or Wales and equality legislation in Northern Ireland).

8.2 XX University / College will discharge the requirements as set out in equality legislation that outlines responsibilities for public sector organisations to provide reasonable adjustments.

8.3 XX University / College will implement agreed adjustments within a [enter agreed period].

8.4 Where adjustments require additional time to implement and there are no suitable alternative working environments, the employee shall be offered a flexible working option of working from home until the agreed adjustments have been made.

8.5 All necessary equipment required i.e. laptop / PC / mobile phone / tablet shall be provided by XX University / College

8.6 XX University / College will implement recommendations for reasonable adjustments by GPs, medical specialists, Occupational Health

8.7 XX University / College will find adjustments that provide the right type of support for neurodivergent employees and will discuss with employees using Access to Work

### 9. APPEALS TO REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

9.1 If adjustments are refused, XX University / College will clearly set out its reasons. The employee will have the opportunity to appeal within 14 days.

### 10. ACCESS TO WORK

10.1 XX University / College will support neurodiverse employees with Access to Work applications if additional support is needed, and to facilitate workplace needs assessments and those that may need to be conducted by an independent consultant.

### 11. RECRUITMENT, PROGRESSION AND PROMOTION

11.1 XX University / College will, as far as is possible, remove barriers from the standardised recruitment processes that may discriminate against

neurodivergent applicants during recruitment, progress and promotion processes. This includes but is not limited to tests, overly prescriptive written job descriptions and interviewing styles.

12. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND CAPABILITY

12.1 XX University / College understands that standardised employment practices can be a barrier to neurodivergent workers

12.2 XX University / College will ensure that:

12.2.1 All performance management and capability procedures are reviewed and improved to remove and identify any barriers

12.2.2 When concerns are raised by line managers about the performance and capability of a neurodivergent employee, the performance management and capability procedure will not be initiated until any barrier(s) have been identified, removed or, reasonable adjustments have been identified and implemented

12.2.3 The line manager will not initiate the performance management and capability procedure until after a period of [enter agreed timescale] has passed to allow the adjustment and changes to take effect

12.2.4 XX University / College will not use any part of the performance management / capability procedure to identify employees for redundancy, disciplinary or capability proceedings

13. AWARENESS AND TRAINING

13.1 XX University / College strives to bring greater awareness of the issues facing neurodivergent employees and will develop training and awareness events on the topic of neurodiversity at work

13.2 Neurodiversity training will be mandatory training for all staff.

13.3 XX University / College will fund all awareness and training events

14. TRADE UNIONS

14.1 XX University / College will work with the following recognised trade unions to develop this policy:

Trade Union 1 [ ]

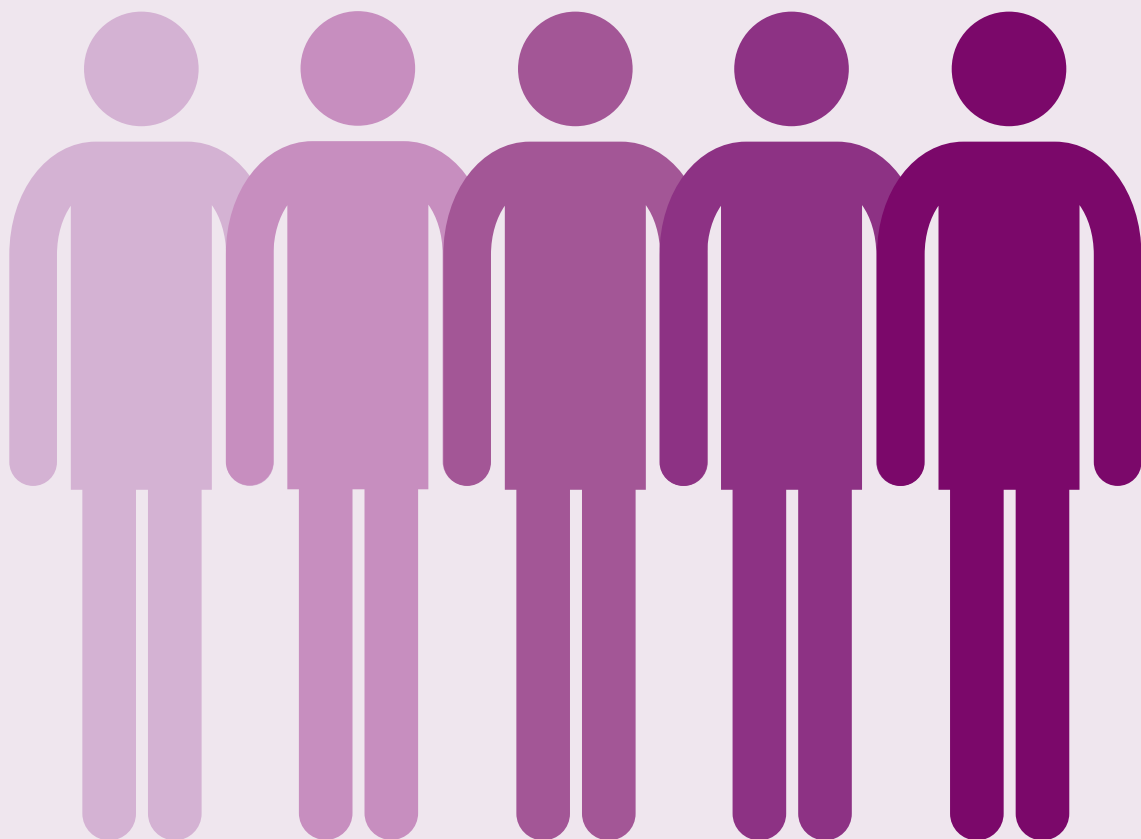
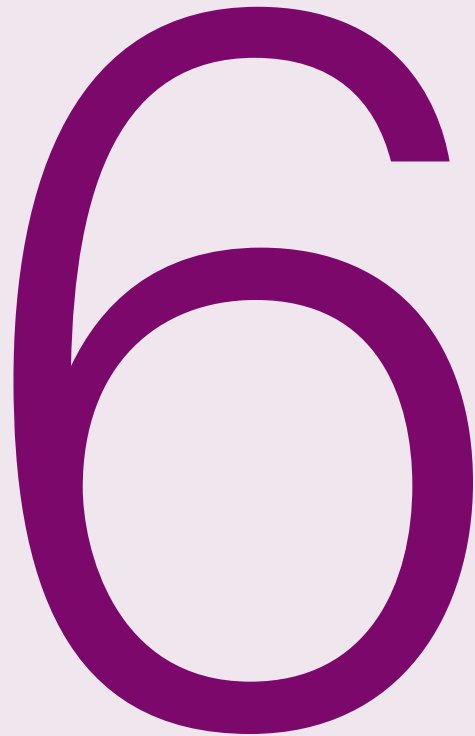
Trade Union 2 [ ]

Trade Union 3 [ ]

- 14.2 XX University / College recognises that the above trade unions will provide representation and guidance to their members
- 14.3 XX University / College will release trade union representatives from duty to attend union-organised training on neurodiversity.
- 15. LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE
- 15.1 XX University / College understands its duties and responsibilities under the [delete as appropriate Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Section 75 Public Sector Equality Duty, Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty Scotland, Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty Wales\*] and related legislation as it relates to Neurodiversity.
- 16. REVIEW OF POLICY
- 16.1 This policy will be reviewed to assess its effectiveness with the recognised trade unions every [enter agreed timeframe] or when legislation changes or is introduced.



# Additional resources



## UCU resources

### **Reasonable adjustment guidance**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/6091/Reasonable-adjustments---removing-barriers-to-disabled-people-at-work-UCU-guidance/pdf/Reasonable\\_adjustments.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/6091/Reasonable-adjustments---removing-barriers-to-disabled-people-at-work-UCU-guidance/pdf/Reasonable_adjustments.pdf)

### **Reasonable adjustment passport**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10225/Reasonable-adjustment-passport/pdf/ucu\\_adjustment\\_passport\\_apr19.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10225/Reasonable-adjustment-passport/pdf/ucu_adjustment_passport_apr19.pdf)

### **Reasonable adjustment policy**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10226/Making-adjustments-work-adjustment-passport-policy/pdf/ucu\\_adjustment\\_passport\\_policy\\_apr19.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10226/Making-adjustments-work-adjustment-passport-policy/pdf/ucu_adjustment_passport_policy_apr19.pdf)

### **Access to Work**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/11006/Guide-to-Access-to-Work/pdf/ucu\\_guide-to-access-to-work.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/11006/Guide-to-Access-to-Work/pdf/ucu_guide-to-access-to-work.pdf)

### **Disability Leave**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/7835/Disability-leave-2016/pdf/Disability\\_Leave\\_2016.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/7835/Disability-leave-2016/pdf/Disability_Leave_2016.pdf)

### **Removing Barriers to Disabled People at Work**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/6091/Reasonable-adjustments---removing-barriers-to-disabled-people-at-work-UCU-guidance/pdf/Reasonable\\_adjustments.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/6091/Reasonable-adjustments---removing-barriers-to-disabled-people-at-work-UCU-guidance/pdf/Reasonable_adjustments.pdf)

### **Challenging discrimination toolkit**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10706/Challenging-discrimination---how-to-build-an-effective-case/pdf/Challenging\\_discrimination\\_toolkit\\_22Oct19.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10706/Challenging-discrimination---how-to-build-an-effective-case/pdf/Challenging_discrimination_toolkit_22Oct19.pdf)

### **Disclosing a disability**

[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/5445/Disclosing-a-disability-UCU-guidance/pdf/Disclosing\\_a\\_disability.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/5445/Disclosing-a-disability-UCU-guidance/pdf/Disclosing_a_disability.pdf)

## TUC resources

### **Autism in the workplace**

<http://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/Autism.pdf>

### **Dyslexia in the workplace**

[http://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/Dyslexia\\_In\\_The\\_Workplace\\_2013\\_LR.pdf](http://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/Dyslexia_In_The_Workplace_2013_LR.pdf)

## Support organisations

**National Autistic Society:** 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG

Tel: (0)20 7833 2299

**The British Dyslexia Association:** Unit 6a Bracknell Beeches

Old Bracknell Lane, Bracknell, RG12 7BW Tel: 0333 405 4555

**Dyspraxia Foundation:** 8 West Alley, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 1EG, Tel: 01462 454986

