

Dyslexia - A guide for employees

Employment
& Workplace

- An estimated 10% of the general population is dyslexic
- It is likely that you will not be the only person in your organisation with dyslexia
- Dyslexia is a combination of strengths and weaknesses
- Strengths can be the ability to think up new ideas, good problem solving and practical skills and being an effective communicator
- Weaknesses could be difficulties with reading, writing, memory and sequencing
- Everyone is different and dyslexia affects people differently
- With the right support, people with dyslexia can achieve their full potential.

Should you tell your employer?

You must decide if you want to tell people that you are dyslexic. It might depend on:

- How much you feel dyslexia affects you at work
- How comfortable you are with telling people
- Whether you feel that you can suggest changes that could help you at work.

You might be concerned that if you talk about dyslexia you may face discrimination. However:

- Your employer can't help you if they don't understand what you need and why
- Under the Equality Act your employer might have a legal obligation to help you.

If you speak to your employer it is useful to think beforehand about some of the things that might help you. Think about how dyslexia affects you at work, what specific tasks it affects and what might help.

Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable Adjustments are changes your employer can make to help you do your job. They can include making changes to the way work is done or provision of equipment.

Some of the costs of reasonable adjustments can be covered by the Access to Work programme. You need to apply for this online at www.gov.uk/access-to-work or telephone Access to Work on 0800 121 7479 for help with the application.

Benefits of asking for Reasonable Adjustments:

- Positive working environment
- Increased self esteem
- Ability to work at the same pace as others
- Less isolating
- Less pressure

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Difficulty	Example of a Reasonable Adjustment
Writing memos, letters reports	Collect examples or templates; ask colleagues to proof read; use text-to-speech software; use Windows shortcuts eg Autocorrect; keep your own notebook of frequently used words for spelling; use bullet points where possible
Managing emails	Flag important ones; file them under headings; use spellcheck; ask for training
Reading	Identify colours or fonts which help; use text to speech scanning techniques; use screen reading rulers for both hard electronic and paper versions
Taking notes	Use a recording device or mobile phone (let other people know)
Remembering to do things	Take notes in diagram form; use Livescribe notebooks and pens to record; ask for repetition; ask a colleague to demonstrate new tasks rather than talk about them; repeat information back to the speaker; make laminated cards with regularly used information
Organising and prioritising	Write to do lists; use coloured or highlighter pens; use mindmaps; break work into smaller sections; use images rather than words; use an electronic diary reminder and task function
Focus and concentration	Identify your best time to work; try using headphones; let people know you need to work quietly; ask if you can get back to people; ask to move your desk somewhere quiet without distraction.

Further information

- 'Dyslexia: A guide for employers', Dyslexia Scotland
- 'What is dyslexia?', Dyslexia Scotland
- 'Assessments for Adults', Dyslexia Scotland
- Dyslexia Scotland Helpline 0344 800 8484 or helpline@dyslexiascotland.org.uk

See all of our leaflets at:

www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/leaflets



Dyslexia Scotland

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