



Job applications and interviews

Traditional application forms and interviews can be challenging for people with dyslexia. Here's how you can approach them well.

Matching your skills to the job

A job application is more likely to be shortlisted when your application form or CV matches up with the person specification for the role.

Some employers will read applications and CVs themselves, but many large companies use Application Tracking System software, a computer programme which selects the most appropriate applications for the position. Either way, what you say in your CV or application form needs to relate very closely to the person specification for you to be chosen for the next stage.

Try using mind maps or a table with two columns to organise your thoughts and help structure your answers. For example:

Excellent customer service	Worked in a shop Got an award for great service
Good communication skills	Member of public speaking club
Team worker	Worked as a team in the shop Also a Mountain Rescue volunteer
IT Skills	Passed the ECDL qualification

Should I tell a potential employer that I'm dyslexic?

It is up to you whether you declare that you are dyslexic on your application form. Employers may ask about health or a disability to determine whether reasonable adjustments need to be made in the application process. If your application is

successful they may need to ask more questions about adjustments for the role itself.

If you have told your potential employer that you are dyslexic, or if you intend to do this at the interview, you need to be prepared to talk about it. This is an opportunity to highlight the strengths that your dyslexia brings and also how you overcome any challenges you might have. It is useful to think about what areas of the job might require reasonable adjustments and what they might be. This way you are not saying that you have a difficulty, but you are offering a solution.

There can be an advantage in letting a potential employers know that you are dyslexic so that adjustments can be made to the recruitment process if necessary.

It might also be useful to provide them with some helpful information, such as information provided for employers by Dyslexia Scotland.

Some advantages to letting an employer know that you are dyslexic include:

- People with dyslexia are entitled to request reasonable adjustments to recruitment processes
- Some Level 2 Disability Confident employers may accept job applications in a variety of formats. You can ask if you can submit a video or speech recorded application. Some may also offer a guaranteed interview scheme, providing your application demonstrates you meet the minimum requirements for the post
- This is also an opportunity to highlight the strengths that your dyslexia brings to the job.

Interviews

Some people with dyslexia excel in interviews. For others, taking time to process questions, organising thoughts and structuring answers while remembering all parts of the question can cause some difficulties. You can ask in advance to allow reasonable adjustments to be in place for an interview to help you express yourself well. Some things that might help are:

- Ask if they can send you the interview questions in advance, or give you them

in writing as well as asking them orally.

- For written tests as part of the recruitment or promotion process, a reasonable adjustment might be extra time (25% extra time is normal).
- You might ask for a longer interview in order to give you time to process and answer questions.
- Ask to use notes, a portfolio of work or visual prompts during the interview.
- Ask if you can deliver a presentation at the start of the interview. This can help you put forward a case for why you're suitable for the job and will raise your confidence ahead of answering the set questions.
- Ask that any large amounts of reading, for example a scenario or case study, is sent in advance or is available in an electronic version so you can use a screen reader.
- If there is a computer-based exercise you might want to ask if you can use your own laptop. This would allow you to use any assistive technology you are used to and will allow you to demonstrate that, with reasonable adjustments, you are fully capable of carrying out the task. Check in advance that this will work.
- Multiple choice and psychometric tests can be challenging for many dyslexic people, although not all. You might want to ask in advance for an alternative style of assessment.
- Request that multiple-staged questions are asked in steps.
- For online interviews, you can request to have your camera switched off for some of the interview if it helps you to concentrate.

Please note that these are just examples and this is not an exhaustive list.

In some cases, Access to Work may also be able to offer support for interviews.