

Let's Talk About Neurodiversity

Manager's guidance

At Carnival UK, we're passionate about creating a great place to work and keeping all our people safe and well. This means supporting employees to do their best, and be their best, whilst at work.

We pride ourselves on our flexible working and inclusion agenda, making our company an open and transparent place to work. As part of this, we want to raise awareness around neurodiversity in the workplace and how we can support our neurodiverse colleagues. Carnival UK is diverse in many ways. While racial and gender diversity are often acknowledged, neurodiversity can be less understood and appreciated.

Around 1 in 7 people in the UK are neurodiverse, meaning their brain may function, process, and learn information differently to someone who is neurotypical. This means many of our colleagues will be neurodiverse.

Carnival UK wants to value and celebrate the differences in our workforce and harness the incredible talents of our neurodiverse employees. We recognise that the workplace in general can be challenging for people who have neurodifferences and we want to do all we can to change that.

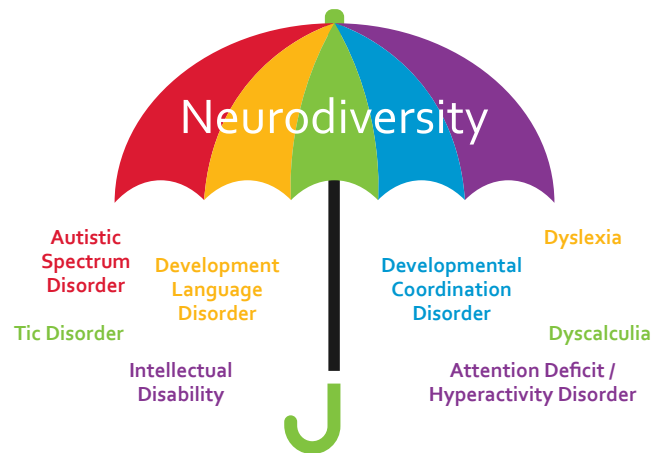
With this guide, the aim is to help managers who may be less familiar with neurodiversity to understand how a neurodiverse team member may experience the workplace differently, through facts and definitions of the various conditions in simple terms. We also hope it will support our neurodiverse colleagues in feeling they can not only be their best self, but their true self at work.

With regards to language, different people will use different language to describe themselves, and sometimes it can feel difficult to keep up with what the 'right' language is. The most important thing is to focus on the person and being respectful.

When talking or writing generically, we recommend using 'people who are neurodiverse' or 'people who have a neurodifference'. You may also hear people talking about being 'neurodivergent'. When talking to or about a specific individual who has a neurodifference, pay attention to the language they use about themselves and try to mirror that. If in doubt, you can simply ask what terms they would like to use and which they would prefer you avoid.

What is neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity refers to the different ways a person's brain processes information. Neurodiversity is an umbrella term used to describe a number of these variations. It is estimated that around 1 in 7 people in the UK have some kind of neurodifference.



The most common neurodiverse conditions that you are likely to come across are:

- Autism, or Autism Spectrum Conditions
- ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Dyslexia
- Dyscalculia
- Dyspraxia, or Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)

Being neurodiverse does not correlate with low intelligence; many people with neurodifferences are highly intelligent. People who are neurodiverse often think about and see the world differently and many are highly creative thinkers, making them an asset to any team.

Reasonable Adjustments

Neurodiversity is covered under the protected characteristic of disability in the Equality Act 2010. This means that neurodiverse people are protected, by law, from any kind of discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the basis of their neurodiversity. It does not necessarily mean that neurodiverse people consider themselves disabled or would use the word 'disability' to describe their neurodifference. The Equality Act also requires us, as an employer, to put in place reasonable adjustments to enable a neurodiverse individual to perform their role.

Workplace adjustments can take many forms, from physical equipment and software to a change in working pattern, hours, or duties. Employers have a legal responsibility to make reasonable adjustments to the workplace to enable their neurodiverse employees to carry out their roles to the best of their ability and help an individual gain the most of their strengths and minimise the challenges that they might experience as a result of their neurodiversity.

These adjustments will vary according to the needs of the employee and the job role. An employee does not need to have had a diagnostic assessment to receive reasonable adjustments. Many reasonable adjustments are simple, inexpensive changes that are easy to implement. What is 'reasonable' will depend on the employee's difficulties, the employer's resources and how practical the changes are.

After adjustments have been agreed and put in place, it is important to monitor their effectiveness and agree a time for follow up and review. Remember to keep notes of all your discussions. The occupational health advisor may also recommend signposting to external specialist support.

Further information regarding neurodiverse conditions:

Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC)

Autism spectrum conditions are a number of different neurological conditions that include a wide range of symptoms and different levels of ability. One in every hundred people are thought to have an autism spectrum condition, although many won't be diagnosed until adulthood, if at all. People who have previously been diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome or Autism fall under what are now called Autism Spectrum Conditions.

People with autism spectrum conditions may have particular abilities in:

- Problem solving and thinking differently
- Visual or spatial processing
- Processing and retaining lots of information.
- Attention to detail.

People with autism spectrum conditions may also find that they:

- Have difficulty interpreting the behaviour and intentions of other people, building relationships, or keeping a conversation going.
- Have limited interests and show a tendency towards compulsive or repetitive behaviours
- Dislike changes to routine
- Find talking about emotions difficult

Suggested support:

- Maintaining routine is important for someone with ASC and supporting them to complete routines can increase their confidence and help them feel settled in their role
- It may be important for your team member with ASC to have a fixed desk in a quiet area
- A discussion around workload can be helpful for someone with a diagnosis of ASC to support their routine and make sure that they have clear time to dedicate to tasks
- Meetings and check-ins with their team should be scheduled for specific times to enable routine
- Managers can support their team member in structuring their time, ensuring that their day is organised and give face-to-face support by reminding them of their strengths
- Providing a quiet area or room in the office to relax when needed

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a condition of the brain that may result in high levels of activity or hyperactivity, impulsivity or difficulty focusing, and affects people in many different ways.

Often wrongly thought of as being something only children experience, ADHD may change the way it manifests from childhood into adulthood, with many people not diagnosed until they become adults. Approximately 4% of adults in the UK have some form of ADHD.

People with ADHD may have particular abilities in:

- Hyper focusing on a task; can be excellent in emergency or urgent situations
- Thinking outside of the box and problem solving, seeing the bigger picture and creativity
- Being personable, and having empathy for others who process differently
- Being passionate about particular interests or subject areas

People with ADHD may also find that they:

- Fidget, doodle or do something with their hands to help maintain concentration
- Can be impulsive and act without fully considering the consequences
- Jump from one thought or activity to another
- Struggle with attention to detail if their brain isn't motivated by the task, or can get lost in their own world

Suggested support:

- Breaking the day/week into smaller chunks so that there is managed time for each activity
- Tasks are switched throughout the day to support concentration and that the most challenging work is done when a person has the most energy
- Checklists are used
- Ensure that the environment is right, for example, minimising distractions by using noise cancelling headphones
- Flexible working if feasible
- Walk at lunchtime or on a break to help stay focused
- Use of a fidget cube can aid concentration and reduce distraction

Dyslexia

Dyslexia primarily affects the skills involved in reading and spelling accurately and fluently. There is more than one kind of dyslexia, it occurs across the range of intellectual abilities and is best thought of as a continuum. Dyslexia can often run in families, with some people born with it and others developing it later in life, sometimes as a result of damage to the brain.

People with dyslexia can find things such as phonological awareness (recognising and working with sounds in spoken language), verbal memory and verbal processing speed more difficult. Around one in ten people have a form of dyslexia.

People with dyslexia may have particular abilities in:

- Being especially approachable, compassionate and understanding, empathetic to what's going on for others and taking time to understand different points of view
- Relating well to other people and fostering strong relationships
- Taking more time and being much more thorough at reading or writing notes or documents, often spotting things that others haven't
- Thinking about things differently and problem solving, being able to see the bigger picture.
- Being able to visualise something and articulate it verbally in a way that's understood, helping people engage with ideas or concepts
- Being organised and creating order
- Creativity, innovation and being hands-on, working flexibly and adaptably
- Great short-term memory

People with dyslexia may also find that they:

- Spell or read words incorrectly, or don't identify when something has been autocorrected to a different word
- Sometimes struggle to think of the right words to say or write to express themselves
- Find it difficult to take in lots of instructions without breaking it down
- Lack confidence in their abilities, especially anything perceived to be academic

Suggested support:

- Basic coping strategies are implemented such as having a large monitor and dyslexia friendly fonts when reviewing documents for example font type arial, font size 12 and 1.5 line spacing
- Using coloured overlays can support reading and help text appear more stable. In addition, reading rulers in the same colour can be useful when reading as they can help keep track of the text on the page
- Ensuring that the environment is right; for example, minimising distractions by using noise cancelling headphone
- Tasks are switched throughout the day to support concentration and that the most challenging work is done when the person has the most energy
- As working off a blank piece of paper is difficult for someone with dyslexia, initially giving them a template to work from is much better
- Mind mapping software

Dyscalculia

Dyscalculia is a learning difficulty that affects the ability to use and acquire mathematical skills. For some, this might affect how they see numbers; others may find reading symbols difficult or might find using finance and numbers in everyday life a challenge. Around 5% of people in the UK have dyscalculia, sometimes alongside other learning difficulties. Having dyscalculia does not mean someone will have low intellectual ability.

Strengths and talents of people with dyscalculia:

- Creativity and artistic talent
- Strong strategic thinking
- A love of words, often with excellent spelling and grammar
- Intuitive thinking
- Great organisational skills

People with dyscalculia may also find that they:

- Find it difficult to do mathematical equations or to retain numerical information
- Have a lack of confidence with numbers
- Find it difficult to give or follow directions – but can walk with someone to the right place

Suggested Support:

- Presenting numbers in a visual way, such as using colours. This can help to ensure the information is bite size and easily digestible.
- Access to a calculator
- Encourage regular breaks when the individual is dealing with numbers, such as transferring data from one spreadsheet to another. After a break, looking at the numbers with fresh eyes may help with spotting unintended errors.
- Using Calendars, Reminders, Alarms & Timers - Dyscalculia can make it challenging to plan the day or know when to move on to the next task. Time management tools, like smartphone calendars, reminders, alarms and timers, can help keep track of time whilst working.

Dyspraxia

Dyspraxia or DCD (Developmental Co-ordination Disorder) is a condition that affects people’s movement and motor skills. It can make people more likely to trip, fall or bump into things, or it might affect fine motor skills such as typing or drawing. It can also affect short term memory and planning and organisational skills. Around 3-5% of adults in the UK are thought to have some kind of dyspraxia or DCD, with many people not diagnosed until adulthood. Some people are born with it, for others it is acquired as a side effect to damage to the brain through stroke, head injury or another neurological condition.

Strengths and talents of people with dyspraxia:

- Creativity and thinking differently with new ideas
- Determination
- Finding different ways to do things
- Being compassionate and empathetic

People with dyspraxia or DCD may also find that they:

- Find it difficult to plan work to meet deadlines
- Work more slowly as a result of challenges with motor skills
- Struggle with some physical tasks or activities such as driving, hospital corners when making beds or writing

Suggested Support:

- Ensure short written instructions are followed up by verbal instructions - this helps with memory and being focused on the task
- Structured meetings - try to keep meetings to the same time every week to allow time to plan and prepare and try to avoid last minute meetings
- Help the individual to understand the priority tasks they should focus on
- Keyboard shortcuts and changing mouse speed

Communication tips

Neurodiversity and work tips	How to communicate more effectively
Email header to reflect the content	Send an email as well as saying what you want
Keep it brief	Be specific in all requests
Bullet information	Help with planning and breaking tasks into parts
Use highlighters to emphasise specific points	Time estimation may sometimes be challenging
Judge the person on productivity and not presenteeism	Avoid impromptu meetings where possible
Cameras off does not mean disinterest	Be explicit about the reason for a meeting to reduce anxiety and aid planning
Fidgeting or doodling does not mean they're not focusing	Encourage use of voice text software
Short reviews and set reminders can help keep on track	Clear font such as Arial or Calibri and adequate spacing
Recognise there may be another way of doing a task you haven't considered	Avoid jargon, acronyms and technical language when not necessary

Assisted technology

Assistive technology (AT) describes products or systems that support individuals with neurodiverse conditions. The most common types of AT for neurodiverse people include screen and text readers, spell checking and word prediction. Some examples of AT which are easily accessible are:

- Office Dictation – Office 365
- Read Aloud – Office 365
- Spell and grammar check – Office 365
- Keyboard shortcuts and changing mouse speed
- Mind Mapping tools free on the internet
- Grammarly www.grammarly.com
- Noise cancelling headphones
- Coloured filter screens

Some individuals may require more specialist AT such as alternative input devices which are tools to enable users with neurodiverse conditions to use computers and related technology more easily, however this is usually advised following a formal assessment and specifically tailored to the individual. These devices include touch screens, modified keyboards, and mice.

Where to signpost for further support

Once you have had a conversation with your team member, you may need further advice. If so, a referral to occupational health can be made so that the occupational health advisor can advise you on any specific diagnosis, whether further assessment is required or signpost to additional support.

The occupational health advisor can also recommend additional reasonable adjustments to support your employee.

Contact: ohs@carnivalukgroup.com

Carnival UK also has an employee led network for supporting employees with disabilities



Contact: mpower@carnivalukgroup.com



EAP provider – for counselling support

Call: 0800 3 58 48 58 (outside the UK +44 141 271 7179)

For online support join: <https://vclub.healthhero.com>

Username: Carnival

Password: Harbour

The following websites provide further information and support

British Dyslexia Association: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/

National Autistic Society: www.autism.org.uk/

Dyspraxia Foundation: www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk/

Dyscalculia Information Centre: www.dyscalculia.me.uk/

ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity:

www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/





Heroes of 'safe and well'