

# **Disability & Neurodiversity at Work**

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# Q1. What is Disability?



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# What is disability?

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as...

A person has a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. 'Substantial' is defined by the Act as 'more than minor or trivial'.

An impairment is considered to have a long-term effect if:

- it has lasted for at least 12 months,
- it is likely to last for at least 12 months, or
- it is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person.



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# Categories of disability (HESA)

- 14.1 million people in the UK are disabled
- 19% of working age adults are disabled
- 1 in 3 disabled people feel there's a lot of disability prejudice

[SCOPE- equality for disabled people](#)

00	No known disability
08	Two or more impairments and/or disabling medical conditions
51	A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D
53	A social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum condition
54	A long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy
55	A mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder
56	A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using arms or using a wheelchair or crutches
57	Deaf or a serious hearing impairment
58	Blind or a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses
96	A disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above
98	Information refused
99	Not available

# Categories of disability (HESA)

- Circled are **some** of the conditions that fall under neurodivergence, there are many more!
- 1 in 5 people are neurodivergent

[ADHD Foundation- the Neurodiversity Charity](#)

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# What is Neurodiversity, Neurodivergent and Neurotypical?

## **Neurodiversity**

- Is a recognition that not all brains think or feel in the same way, and that these differences are natural developmental variations.

## **Neurotypical**

- Refers to individuals of more typical development and cognitive functioning.

## **Neurodivergent**

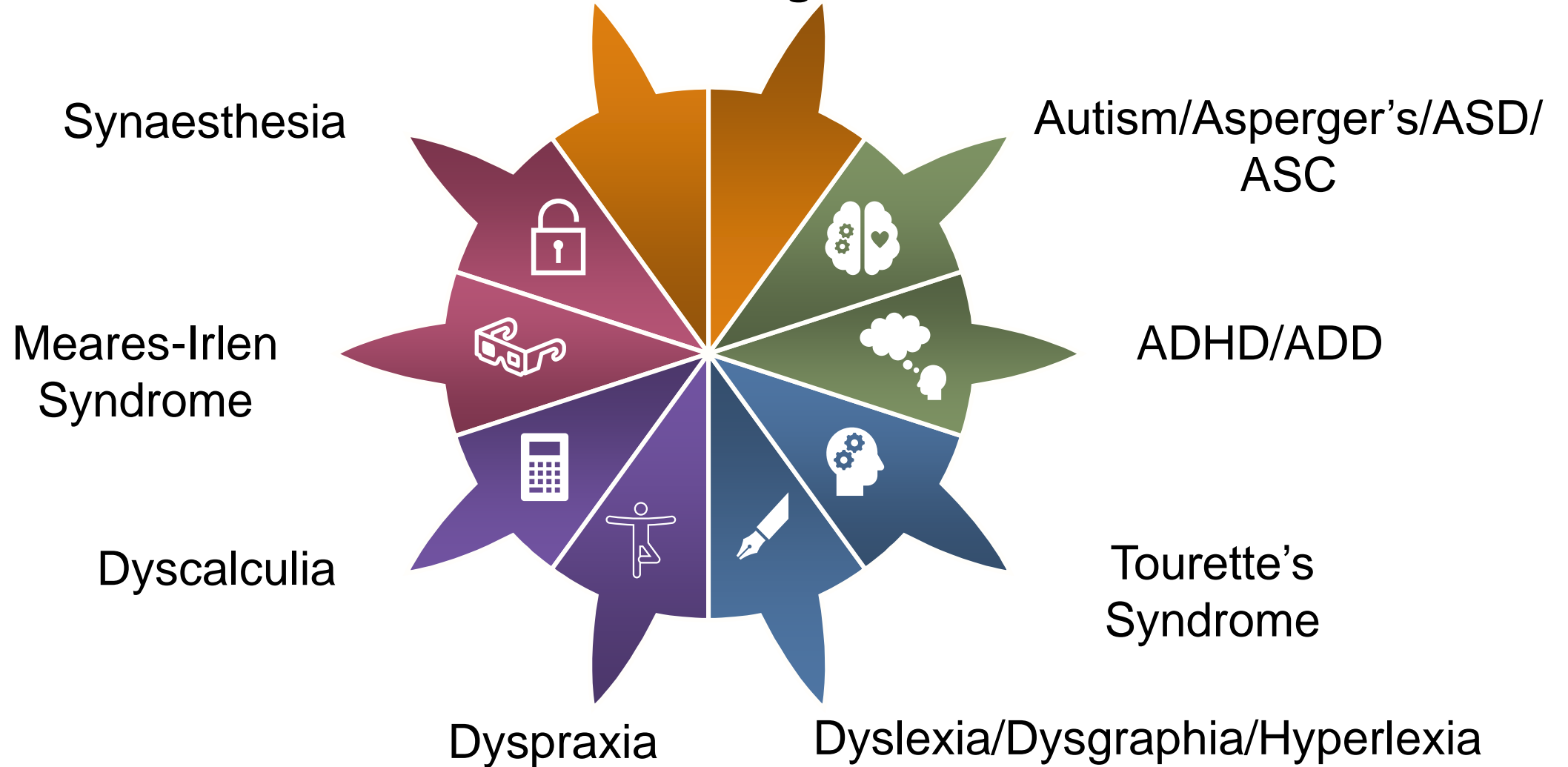
- Refers to an individual who has a less typical cognitive variation such as autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia etc.



# Where does the term Neurodivergent derive from?

- The **self-identifying label** of “Neurodivergent” originally focused on those who are autistic. However, in more recent years it has been used to describe those who think, behave, learn, understand, or socialise differently to what is typical in society, and that being neurodivergent should not be considered an inherent deficit but simply a variation in cognition.
- Examples include...

# Examples of labels/conditions that come under the term Neurodivergent



**Please note that individuals can have two or more neurodivergent labels/conditions (e.g., autism and ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia etc.). This is called multiply neurodivergent.**

# Important Note to Add

- It is important to add that the HESA categories use the Medical Model of Disability, however, the most inclusive practice is to use the **Social Model of Disability**.
- The Social Model of Disability says that people are disabled by their **environment and from negative attitudes of others**, as opposed to being disabled by their condition. For example, a flight of stairs disables a person who is in a wheelchair, not the wheelchair or disability. Therefore, many people don't see their condition as an inherent disability/impairment, so **sensitivity with this terminology is vital**.

# Important Note to Add

- In addition, some people do not consider themselves as disabled or neurodivergent, just different.
- Moreover, some may specify their condition rather than saying they are disabled e.g., “I am a deaf/hearing impaired person”, “I am an autistic person” etc.

# Important Note to Add

- Please bear in mind that disabled and neurodivergent people exhibit their conditions in different ways based upon their upbringing, class, gender, race, and culture.
- Also, **some disabilities are hidden**. Although they are not visible, they are valid and should be taken into consideration in every aspect of working conditions.
- Therefore, it is good to keep an open mind for both awareness and inclusion purposes.



**Q2. How do you think disability effects the disabled person from what has been mentioned?**

# Equity vs Equality





# Equity

- **Reactive approach**
- **Equity** would be making tailored personalised adjustments for certain people in different environments.

# Equality

- **Proactive approach**
- For example, accessible materials to read for all in advance, which would be referred to as providing **equality**.
- Both equality and equity methods are advised to use in a working environment to better accessibility, inclusion and acceptance of diversity.



# Q3. What is Accessibility?





Accessibility is “the quality or characteristic of something that makes it **possible** to approach, enter, or use it”.

If we are taking this into a work context, this means making sure that all staff experiences are as equitable as possible- **this does not mean giving another person an advantage.**

It is important that we not only consider how work materials (including learning materials), emails, meetings, recordings are accessible to all, **but also how to make interactions accessible to all i.e., inclusive of diversity and neurodiversity.**



Many people will not have a diagnosis (or even know they are disabled or neurodivergent).

This is why making things as accessible as possible enhances equity and inclusivity.



**Q4. What have you done to make things accessible at work?**



## Aims & Ambitions

- Base line accessibility for most people, so those who are disabled do not feel uncomfortable when needing to request something from you. This will make the disabled employee more comfortable and accepted.

## How to?

- If someone needs a carer/assistive person/dog/equipment, allow it (e.g., a blind person possibly needing an assistive dog, a deaf person needing for you to not wear a mask so that they can lip-read or having an interpreter sign for them during in person meeting etc).
- Be clear in your aims and structure for people to follow- this will benefit everyone!



## Aims & Ambitions

- Base line accessibility for most people, so those who are disabled do not feel uncomfortable when needing to request something from you. This will make the disabled employee more comfortable and accepted.

## How to?

- Quickly put...
- Structure the meeting and put in breaks for questions;
- Allow an automatic transcript of your meeting;
- Allow cameras to be switched off;
- And ensure links to the meetings are easy to find in the emails.





## Aims & Ambitions

- For staff (and members) to access your content with ease, including your Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policies.

## How to?

- Quickly put...
- Is your EDI policy easy to find on your website?
- Think about your colour and contrast, is it easy to read?
- The readability of your content, is it in simple English and short sentences so that it is easy to read?
- Is it easy to navigate?
- Do your images have alt text?
- Do you have accessibility functions (font enhancer, font written in sans-serif)?



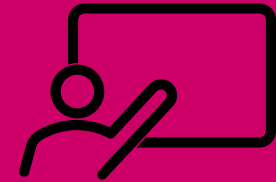
**Accessible  
website**

## Aims & Ambitions

- For your current and future employees to know that all staff are protected under a disability confident scheme and for disabled staff to know that the employer understand disability.

## How to?

- You can ask to be a Disability Confident employer. If this is not possible for you, you can gain similar training, or online training from several charities (e.g., [Do-IT Profiler](#) etc.)



# Disability Training

## Aims & Ambitions

- To gain information on how to be more inclusive and accessible to disabled people.

## How to?

- Create an accessible survey (Microsoft forms is the best), send it out to your previous and current staff and reflect on their feedback.
- Create an Equality Impact Assessment and Diversity Action Plan.



## Aims & Ambitions

- Aim to have a clear structure of where to get support for staff within the charity and clearly signpost this support.

## How to?

- During induction, provide staff with guidance on where to find support.
- Place your EDI strategy and policies clearly on your ShareDrive / website for staff to access.
- Consider creating EDI steering groups and committees, if possible.
- In terms of recruitment and interviewing, review your procedures and see if you are being inclusive. If you would like guidance on this, please follow [Accessible Interviewing](#).



## Remember to self-care!

- Pace yourself with the above information, and do not overwhelm yourself with it- it is a lot to take in!
- Harness strength within yourself to gain clarity, courage, and care to help not only yourself but others too.

## How to?

- Use your own tools on what you like to do for self-care.
- You can also...
- Build positive self-talk;
- Remind yourself of what you've achieved;
- And implement positive change in your future.





**Any  
Questions?**

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# Further Information

- Leigh Abbott's Contact Details: [leigh@scotlink.org](mailto:leigh@scotlink.org)
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# **Please complete Q5. onwards**

- **Please continue to Q5 onwards to complete an evaluation on today's workshop.**





**Thank You!**



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