

**Links, tips and resources shared during our
 15th December 2022 webinar**

“What HR can do to enable and nurture neurodiverse colleagues in the workplace”

List of neurodiverse conditions that Melanie references in the webinar:



Dyslexia - can cause problems with reading, writing and spelling.

Dysgraphia – may cause challenges with a set of skills known as transcription. These skills — handwriting, typing, and spelling — allow us to produce writing.

Dyscalculia - affects the ability to acquire arithmetical skills. Dyscalculic learners may have difficulty understanding simple number concepts, lack an intuitive grasp of numbers, and have problems learning number facts and procedures.

Developmental Coordination Disorder (Dyspraxia) - affects fine and/or gross motor coordination in children and adults. It may also affect speech.

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) - a type of speech, language and communication need whereby the individual may have difficulty talking and understanding language.

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) - the way you think about and experience the world is different to most people. Autism is considered a spectrum because it's different for every autistic person.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder - is an impairment of the brain's self-management system, which also affects executive function (e.g. working memory, planning, time management, organisation, etc.). ADHD is a spectrum and can present differently from person to person. ADHD can present as primarily

inattentive, primarily hyperactive-impulsive or a combined type.

Tourette's Syndrome - a condition that causes a person to make involuntary sounds and movements called tics.

List of additional resources that Mel recommends:

- [Understanding the spectrum](#)
- [Neurodiversity at Work – Professor Amanda Kirby and Theo Smith](#)
- [Rebel Ideas – The power of thinking differently - Matthew Syed](#)
- [Do-IT Profiler – Neurodiversity screening and tools](#)
- [ONS Report - Outcomes for disabled people in the UK: 2020](#)
- [ILM – Workplace neurodiversity – The Power of Difference](#)
- [Neurodiversity and the workplace - Employment law](#)
- [Everymind at work - Neurodiversity resources](#)
- [Board Diversity and Effectiveness in FT350 Companies](#)
- [6 Neurodiversity Recruitment Programs at Leading Companies \(talio.com\)](#)

Links shared during the webinar:

There is a website called I CAN which is run by people who are neurodiverse, and explains things in a much more positive way (great for parents too): <https://www.autism.org.uk/directory/i/i-can>

Here's a link to the profiling info Mel references: <https://doitprofiler.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KoGdEqZIn8M>

<https://www.hok.com/news/2022-04/survey-neurodiverse-employees-workplaces/>

Link to the employment tribunal findings for the specific case Mel mentioned, where the individual did not have a diagnosis, but their OH had stated that he believed he would have been diagnosed with autism if he was to be assessed.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5cdc094740f0b66b042bddad/Mr_T_Sherbourne_v_N_Power_Ltd-1811601.2018-Full.pdf

Link to info on access to work: <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>

Link to the part of the Equality Act regarding duty to make adjustments:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/20>

Business Disability Forum Neurodiversity Toolkit: <https://businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/knowledge-hub/toolkits/neurodiversity-toolkit/>

Questions and comments:

Regarding definitions and umbrella terms:

Q: Could you clarify the terminology please? Neurodiversity or neurodivergent? Does Neurodiverse include neurotypical? Would you phrase a question "Are you neurodiverse" or "neurodivergent"?

Regarding terminology - THANK YOU. People get so caught up in terms that people go silent because they are afraid to offend.

Regarding diagnosis and disclosure:

Q: At offer stage could we ask on our health assessment questionnaire whether employees consider themselves to be neurodiverse so that we can offer support with any adjustments or best to keep the question broad?

Q: Is asking for interview questions prior to an interview a reasonable adjustment and do you need to prove anything for this?

Q: How would we go about supporting an employee to get a diagnosis? There is a complex fear with potential applicants to disclose in fear of missing out on opportunities unless you have a relevant recruitment system in place.

So many people have no idea of their cognitive strengths and challenges. Wouldn't it be great if we all had the chance to understand how our brain works from as early an age as possible?

Employees may get told when they disclose "why didn't you mention this when you started?" I have seen this. One of the reasons may be that they didn't need support when they started and now it is affecting them.

Sometimes employees mention a diagnosis to Occupational health but not to manager /HR.

People can get judged and not the adjustments they need so it makes disclosing any condition challenging.

In my previous employment I was pressured for a diagnosis before reasonable adjustments were put in place.

Regarding adjustments

Q: Who should lead on adjustments for recent diagnosis? Employee or HR?

Q: How do you approach neurodiversity when the organisation focuses on race and gender? which is great.. but disabilities invisible and visible often get forgotten about.

Q: How do you explain to your employer that you struggle with using certain software? I find neurodiversity such a broad spectrum there are many conditions and it effects people differently so not everyone is the same. What if you get the response "but that is not what dyslexia looks like"? Or if you find it takes you longer to use certain software or you find working in certain ways challenging having less autonomy etc?

Absolutely agree with the comment around 'adjustments' within recruitment, it makes the whole conversation more intimidating. Much better to have been given more information to avoid having to chase it and risk being viewed negatively for needing X/Y/Z.

We share our questions with candidates in advance :-)

Yes, the environment has a big impact. HOK has been doing extensive research on that area for the past 6 years and is happy to share their findings.

We believe that you need to take a "3-legged stool" approach. Policies - environment and ability for individual adjustments. One without the others won't truly address the issues.

Where Occupational Health can help is helping people understand the linked mental and emotional health challenges and the neuroscience behind it!

The assumption is often that occupational health can advise on adjustments but we are not experts so often screen for mental health and other conditions and signpost to coaching services to help with performance management.

I believe that within a team to discuss on how you prefer to communicate, receive feedback etc. would help everyone.

What I often see is D&I on diversity of thought but on tokenistic programmes and more often than not focusing on visible diversity e.g. race.

Office 365 - have dictation / read back built in which is very effective now.

Yes, Read Aloud or Dictate on MS Word is cost effective on simple I love having papers etc read out.

3/4 years wait for ASD (School age Autism) pathway assessment for us.

Well said Beverley... removing barriers is levelling the playing field and not giving extra advantage... It is just sad we need to quote legislation to get some companies to do the right thing.... Again, I echo what others have said that many companies focus on visible inclusion and not all areas, especially disability.

Often adjustments to support performance help everyone in the team!

Completely agree, Melanie. It's sad that some companies focus on the idea that traits are challenging, rather than looking at the value a different thinking pattern can bring.

With reference to Access to Work

Q: Do you have to have a confirmed diagnosis/assessment report to be entitled to Access to Work support?

Q: Regarding the funding from ATW for coaching, is this coaching for managers to support staff or is it for the individual?

Access to Work won't help without a diagnosis and won't fund assessments in my experience. Access to Work will fund workplace coaching if you do have a diagnosis.

If you're a new starter in a role, Access to Work prioritise your application now and get back to you within a few weeks! Other applications go on a waiting list of 5+ months though.

Access to Work also provide a mental health service (which can help with the mental health aspects of neuro diverse conditions) which are fortnightly telephone support for 6-9 months to support implementing helpful behaviours - 2 providers on behalf of government link here:
<https://ingeus.co.uk/for-business/mental-health-support> or <https://atw.maximusuk.co.uk/>

Thank yous:

Thanks ladies. Great discussion.

Thank you so much. Such a valuable session.

Brilliant session, I have taken so much away for our company to consider. Thank you!

Yes, an hour well spent. Thank you.

Thank you, some great take aways today!

Really great webinar, thank you!

Very insightful. Thank you so much.

Thank you so much ladies for sharing your expertise and personal experiences. So Helpful.

Thanks all - this was such a worthwhile and informative session.

Thanks for all the info and discussion. Really insightful.

This has been such a good conversation

Thanks everyone this was a really great event

Thank you very much. Really useful and interesting.

Thank you so much everyone. What an amazing webinar! I feel I could keep watching/ discussing this all day long.

Great webinar, thank you all

Thank you for this webinar, it has been extremely useful!