

Reasonable Adjustment Examples

For Dyspraxic Employees

Dyspraxia, also known as Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD), is a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition that affects a person's ability to plan and coordinate physical movements. It's important to note that dyspraxia is not related to intelligence, and individuals with this condition often have average or above-average cognitive abilities. However, they may struggle with tasks that involve fine and gross motor skills, organisation, and spatial awareness.

Challenge

Organisation

Dyspraxia can make it difficult for individuals to organise their work, manage their time effectively and plan tasks. This can result in missed deadlines and disorganised workspaces.

Reasonable Adjustments

- **Flexible Work Arrangements:** Offering flexible work hours or remote work options can help individuals with dyspraxia manage their time and energy levels more efficiently, as well as reducing the impact of possible sensory sensitivities.
- **Reasonable Deadlines:** Employers should be willing to adjust deadlines and workloads to accommodate the pace at which individuals with dyspraxia work. This can help reduce stress and improve overall performance.
- **Regular Check-Ins:** Offer regular check-ins to see how the individual is coping with their job tasks, time management and workload.
- **Additional Space:** Provide extra space in their working area if possible; to allow more room for paper work, planners and personal belongings and reduce the likelihood of a cluttered, disorganised workspace.

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Sensory Sensitivities

Many individuals with dyspraxia experience sensory sensitivities; which can make it difficult to work in environments with bright lights, loud noises or strong odours.

Fatigue

Individuals with dyspraxia often experience fatigue, because their brains have to work harder to compensate for motor coordination difficulties.

Reasonable Adjustment

- **Flexible Dress Code:** Allow for a relaxed dress code to accommodate sensory sensitivities that some individuals with dyspraxia may have.
 - **Quiet Workspace:** Offer a quiet, distraction-free working area to help prevent sensory overload.
 - **Noise-Cancelling Headphones:** Provide noise-cancelling headphones to improve focus and reduce noise sensitivity.
 - **Alternative Lighting:** Offer alternatives to bright, overhead lights; such as desk lamps and natural light.
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- **Structured Break and Rest Periods:** Give additional breaks throughout the day to allow the individual to rest and recharge. These breaks can help to manage fatigue and maintain focus, as well as preventing mental and physical exhaustion.
 - **Workspace Ergonomics:** Provide a workspace that is ergonomically designed to reduce physical strain. Examples include adjusting their chair, keyboard or monitor to promote comfort and minimise fatigue.
 - **Help Prioritise Tasks:** Help the individual to prioritise tasks and work out when to best tackle them. Assign the most important tasks to the time period when their energy and concentration levels are highest.

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Processing Information

Individuals with dyspraxia may take longer than neurotypical people to process and retain information. They may require alternative teaching methods and formats to help them learn more efficiently.

Listening & Communication

Individuals with dyspraxia may have poor listening skills, especially when in large groups, as well as having difficulty with picking up non-verbal signals and tones of voice.

Reasonable Adjustment

- **Task Breakdowns:** Breaking down complex tasks into smaller, manageable steps can help individuals with dyspraxia plan and complete their work more effectively.
 - **Clear Communication:** Employers should ensure that instructions and expectations are communicated clearly and in writing. Visual aids and written instructions can be particularly helpful.
 - **Visual Aids:** Use visual aids, such as charts and diagrams, to aid in understanding and memory retention.
 - **Demonstrations:** Individuals with dyspraxia may find it easier to follow instructions if the tasks are physically demonstrated to them. Be patient and illustrate slowly; in order to encourage the likelihood of them carrying out the task efficiently themselves.
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- **One-to-One Sessions:** Offer one-to-one check-ins and meetings as an alternative to holding workplace discussions in large groups. This can help the individual process verbal information more easily, as well as helping to prevent overwhelm.
 - **Communication Style:** Alter your communication style to avoid using jargon or sarcasm, in order to allow dyspraxic individuals to understand you more clearly.
 - **Provide Notes:** Provide notes from meetings and training sessions to help the individual better absorb the information discussed.

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Coordination & Motor Skills

People with dyspraxia often experience difficulties with coordination, fine motor skills, gross motor skills and spatial awareness; as their brains have trouble planning and executing coordinated movements.

Sequencing

Dyspraxic individuals may experience sequencing problems, making it difficult for them to carry out tasks like spelling, reading and maths.

Reasonable Adjustment

- **Assistive Technology:** Offer access to assistive technology, such as speech-to-text software and digital organisers, to help with tasks like typing and scheduling, reducing the impact of coordination challenges.
 - **Specialist Equipment:** Consider providing specialist equipment, such as an ergonomic keyboard and mouse, as well as providing information about keyboard shortcuts.
 - **Amended Job Tasks:** Carrying out certain job tasks, such as using a stapler, photocopier, laminator or guillotine may not be suitable for someone with dyspraxia. Make amendments to their role where needed to allow for motor difficulties and prevent potential injuries.
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- **Checklists:** Encourage the use of checklists for tasks and projects. These can serve as a step-by-step guide to ensure that each task is completed in the correct order.
 - **Clear Written Instructions:** Ensure that instructions for tasks and projects are provided in a clear, written format; allowing employees to refer back to them if needed.
 - **Mentorship & Coaching:** Pair the individual with someone who excels in organisation and sequencing skills for mentorship and coaching. They can provide strategies and guidance for effective task sequencing.