



Neurodiversity & Mental Health

Making Adjustments That Truly Work: A Practical Guide for HR

The term 'reasonable adjustments' is frequently used, but when it comes to putting it into practice, it often falls to HR and line managers to interpret what that really means.

Under the Equality Act (2010), employers are required to make adjustments that help remove barriers for individuals with disabilities, including those with mental health conditions and neurodivergent colleagues. While the legal duty is clear, determining what's "reasonable" can be challenging. What's too much? What's not enough?

This fact sheet aims to remove the ambiguity. It provides practical, person-centred strategies that can help you create a more inclusive workplace. These adjustments go beyond compliance, ensuring that your workplace truly supports neurodiverse employees and those managing mental health.

Neurodiversity & Mental Health

Making Adjustments That Truly Work: A Practical Guide for HR

A Person-Focused Approach

- **Individual Support:** Take the time to understand each employee's unique needs and tailor adjustments accordingly.
- **Active Listening:** Build strong workplace relationships by creating spaces for employees to express their needs. Encourage open communication by asking, "What do you need from me?" and ensuring employees feel heard and supported.
- **Regular Check-Ins:** Schedule check-ins to offer feedback and track progress, ensuring the adjustments remain effective.

Inclusion Passports

- **Facilitate Conversations:** Implement Inclusion Passports to ensure managers consistently discuss and agree on necessary adjustments with their reports.
- **Universal Participation:** Encourage all employees to complete a passport, highlighting that everyone has needs, not just those with disabilities.
- **Ideas:** Include the Inclusion Passport in new starter packs and promote open discussion among leaders.
- **Example:** [University of Kent's Inclusion Passport initiative](#).

Adjustment Messaging

- **Clear, Strong Statements:** Develop a statement that prioritises employee needs without requiring proof of disability or mental health conditions.
- **Examples of Adjustments:** Provide clear examples of adjustments that are available, such as allowing notes during interviews.
- **Integration into Lifecycle:** Include your adjustment statement in recruitment and onboarding to reinforce inclusivity from the start.
- **Good Practice:** [Sue Ryder's adjustments page](#).

Building an Inclusive Culture

- **Leadership and Reward:** Set the tone from the top by rewarding inclusive behaviour.
- **Personal Stories:** Offer space for employees to share personal experiences and advocate for neurodiversity and mental health awareness.
- **Training:** Conduct training on neurodiversity and mental health for employees, managers, and HR staff.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Launch campaigns to reduce stigma and promote understanding of neurodiversity and mental health.

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

- **Support and Resources:** Establish dedicated ERGs for neurodiversity and mental health, providing them with necessary time, resources, and senior leadership support. [See Tell Jane's website for more information](#).



Neurodiversity & Mental Health

Making Adjustments That Truly Work: A Practical Guide for HR

Accessible Project Outcomes

- **Integrate Equity from the Start:** Ensure all projects incorporate accessibility objectives, ensuring inclusion is prioritised throughout.
- **Weave Accessibility into Existing Work:** For example, include relevant neurodiversity and mental health training in line manager development to keep inclusion at the forefront.

Working with Suppliers

- **Specialised Support:** Ensure Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) offer therapists with expertise in supporting individuals with specific mental health conditions (e.g., OCD) and services for neurodiverse individuals.
- **External Partners:** Collaborate with marketing agencies and learning providers who understand how to create and deliver accessible content.

The Working Environment

- **Quiet Spaces:** Create spaces in the workplace where employees can work without distractions.
- **Work Options:** Offer flexible working hours or remote work options to accommodate the needs of neurodiverse employees and those managing mental health conditions.

Feedback Mechanisms

- **Continual Learning:** Implement anonymous feedback mechanisms to allow employees to share their experiences and suggestions for improvements without fear of reprisal.



Practical AI Tips

- **Email Accessibility:** Use AI to review and rewrite emails to ensure they are accessible for neurodiverse recipients.
- **Clear and Structured Instructions:** Break tasks into smaller, manageable steps with written summaries or checklists. AI can assist with this to help clarify expectations and avoid vague language.
- **Use of Assistive Technology:** Offer tools such as speech-to-text software, grammar checkers, visual planners, or screen readers, which can be particularly useful for employees with dyslexia or ADHD.
- **Tailored Communication Methods:** Some employees may prefer written over verbal communication or need more time to process information. Be sure to check what works best for them.

Neurodiversity & Mental Health

Making Adjustments That Truly Work: A Practical Guide for HR

A Note on Terminology

- **Use 'Adjustments':** Avoid the term 'reasonable adjustments' to prevent implying that some needs might be considered unreasonable.



Questions for Managers

It's not always easy to know exactly what support someone may need. Creating a safe space for open conversations is key. Here are a few inclusive questions managers can ask:

- "What can we do to support you in performing your role to the best of your ability?"
- "How can I best support you in your role?"
- "Let me know if there are any accommodations I can put in place to help you."
- "Are there any adjustments that would make your day-to-day work easier or more comfortable?"
- "Would it be helpful to review your workspace or schedule time together to see what might work better for you?"

These practical strategies will help you build an inclusive, supportive workplace where neurodiverse employees and those with mental health conditions can truly thrive.

Need help improving your ED&I training? Our expert-led e-learning programmes are designed to drive real change. Reach out to us at hello@telljane.co.uk for more details.
