



Social Impact Report  
June 2018 - June 2019

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# Who we are

## *Our Vision*

Our vision is to create understanding, opportunities and an inclusive culture for neurodiverse individuals everywhere. We want to inspire people through our own examples and life experiences. We want to be accessible to anyone who wants to better themselves and the world around them.



## *Our Mission*

Exceptional Individuals provides consulting, recruitment and employment support to employers and individuals with dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD and autism. We provide the benefit of lived experience and are passionate about creating wider employment opportunities and better understanding and appreciation for neurodiverse individuals everywhere.



## Who we are

# Meet our Amazing Neurodiverse Team!



**10 out of 14** members of our team are neurodivergent. This means we can bring the benefit of lived experience to all our work, and we can empathise with the people we support. The personal touch as well as the professional expertise is what makes our approach unique.



# What is Neurodiversity?

**Neurodiversity** refers to all the different ways that people think - this could be within a family, a company, or a whole society.

**Neurodivergence** refers to people whose brain functionality differs significantly from the norm. Forms of neurodivergence include dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADD/ADHD, dyscalculia, and others.

Individuals with one of these types of neurodivergence are called **neurodivergent**.

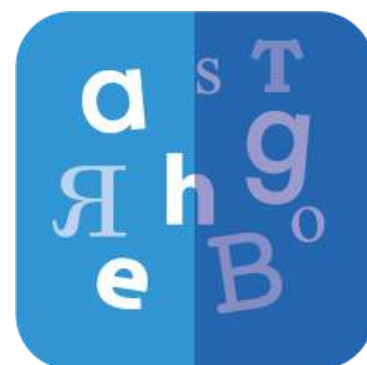
Although these forms of divergence are often thought of as disabilities, we believe that with the right support and understanding, neurodivergent people can contribute just as much as (and sometimes more than) other people who are considered **neurotypical**.

Here's a short description of the neurodiversities we specialise in!

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## Dyslexia

Dyslexia is most commonly associated with reading and writing difficulties. The left side of the brain, which these difficulties stem from, causes dyslexics to become more heavily reliant on the right side of their brains, responsible for creativity and reasoning.



## Dyspraxia

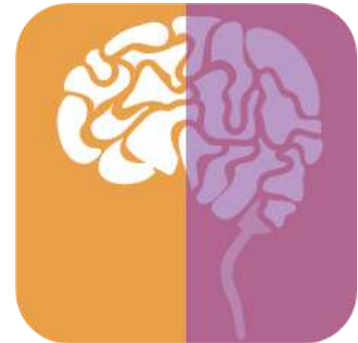
Dyspraxia affects motor coordination, and may also affect speech. Like dyslexia, it occurs across the range of intellectual abilities. Individuals may vary in how their difficulties present: these may change over time depending on environmental demands and life experiences.



# What is Neurodiversity?

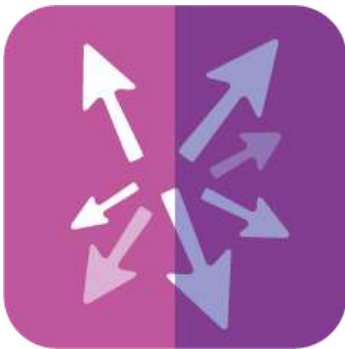
## Autism

Autism affects how people perceive the world and interact with others. Often people feel being autistic is a fundamental part of their identity. Autism is a spectrum condition, so all autistic people share certain challenges, but being autistic will affect them in different ways.



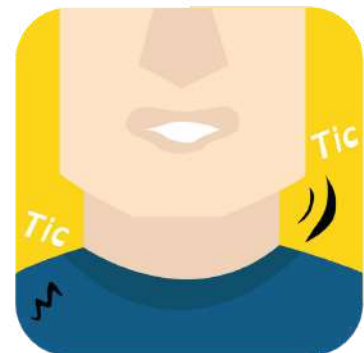
## Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder

ADHD includes symptoms such as inattentiveness, hyperactivity and impulsiveness. Symptoms tend to be noticed at an early age; most cases are diagnosed when children are 6 to 12 years old. ADD covers similar characteristics but without the hyperactivity.



## Tourette's Syndrome

Tourette's makes people tic. These are involuntary sounds and movements, like head shaking, throat clearing, or repeating words. A lot of people think Tourette's makes you swear, but this only affects 10% of people with the syndrome.



## Dyscalculia

Dyscalculia affects your arithmetic skills. Dyscalculic learners may struggle with number concepts and have problems learning number facts and procedures. Dyscalculia can often co-occur with dyslexia.

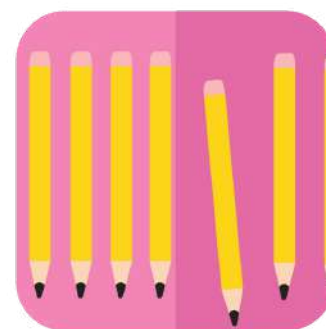




# What is Neurodiversity?

## Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

OCD gives you obsessions (like unwanted and intrusive thoughts) and compulsions (behaviours that you just 'have' to do). Of course, a lot of people have obsessions and compulsions through their life, but OCD occurs when these are extreme and time-consuming.



## Dysgraphia

Dysgraphia can interfere with learning to spell words and with the speed of writing text. It can occur alone, or with other conditions like dyslexia or AD(H)D. There are lots of ways to cope with dysgraphia, for example dictation software and pencil grips.

### Co-occurrence

Many of these conditions overlap with each other. In other words, there is no uniform experience of any of these forms of neurodiversity. Each one can be experienced in many different ways, and will intersect with all the other aspects of a person's identity.

### What is normal anyway?

Talking about neurodiversity and neurodivergence might make us think: what is the 'norm' against which this 'difference' is measured? These terms can help us recognise that, maybe, there IS no 'normal' way for a brain to function.





# 'The Problem'

**The UK economy, for a long time, has not been set up well to accommodate neurodivergent people.**

"Because I find the application process so stressful, by the time the interview comes I'm usually exhausted."

They get screened out of selection processes that are designed for the neurotypical brain

They are fearful of disclosing their condition to their managers or colleagues.

# 73%

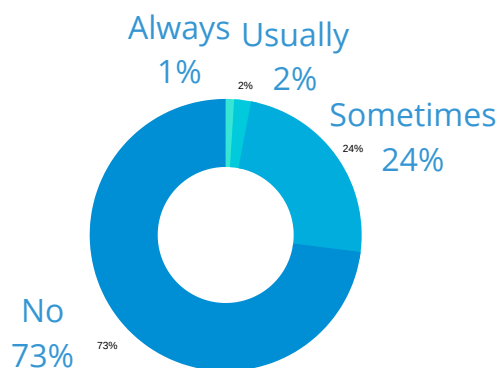
avoid disclosing due to discrimination

"Reasonable Adjustments are pretty half-hearted"

They are often unable to access the limited government support available.

Their cognitive functioning is often poorly understood by co-workers and managers.

**Does your manager understand neurodivergence?**



**1 in 10** people in the UK are dyslexic  
but in the unemployed population, this figure is **4 in 10.**



# Theory of Change

All our **Activities...**

... have concrete **Outcomes...**

## Recruitment

Work placements

Dyslexia Employment Academy

## Employment support

1-to-1 support for neurodiverse candidates

Workplace Needs Assessments

Continued in-work support for neurodiverse employees and businesses

## Consulting

Workshops

Guides and information for businesses recruiting neurodiverse employees

Workplace audits, ensuring they are neurodiverse-friendly

## Advocacy + Education

Speaking events and workshops sharing information about neurodiverse needs and support in the workplace

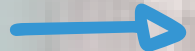
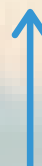
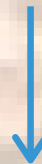
Radio, TV, news appearances, publicising our organisation and the neurodiversity movement in general

Recruitment barriers for neurodiverse candidates are reduced

Skills and confidence of neurodiverse employees are improved

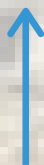
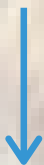
Corporates and SMEs change internal policies to attract and maintain neurodiverse workers

Wider societal understanding of neurodiversity is improved



... which fulfil our **Objectives...**

More businesses employ neurodiverse people into an inclusive working culture



Neurodiverse people are more aware of their career potential, and are more confident to achieve their personal and professional goals



Wider society understands the benefits of a neurodiverse workforce, as well as the adjustments required to enable this

... and achieve our desired **Impact**

Promoting an inclusive working culture for neurodiverse people everywhere allowing them to achieve their full potential.





# What we do: Recruitment

We provide a range of services to support neurodivergent people who are looking for entry-level work and want to improve their employability. We draw on our own lived experiences to tailor all of our activities to the circumstances of each individual. And what's more - all of our services are free. Here's a showcase of what we do in this area, and the impact it has.



In this section:

Dyslexia Employment Academy

Work placements

In Focus - Stewart

# 140

people supported by our  
recruitment activities

*Improving  
confidence*

*Getting neurodiverse  
people into work*



# Dyslexia Employment Academy

## What it's about

Dyslexia academy is a 6-week programme to get people ready for work and feeling more confident about their neurodiversity. This is aimed at people who may have been out of the workplace for some time, or who are struggling with job applications and recruitment/selection processes. The academy ends with a 1:1 session where we discuss progress and next steps.

## Why we do it

Getting people to confront, talk about, understand, and embrace the way their mind works is a crucial first step on the path to getting back into the workplace. As a workshop explicitly linking dyslexia to employment, this is a one-of-a-kind course in the UK.

## What impact we have

Dyslexia Academy means people who have been held back from entering the workforce are given the chance to showcase their talent and ability. We play a big part in advocating for the disproportionate number of dyslexic people who are unemployed in the UK, helping them build their confidence and get ready for work.

Taught me to be confident in myself and dyslexia doesn't limit me, instead it can offer me new opportunities"



# 83%

of participants now feel ready for work

### Preparing people for the job search

By the end of the Academy, people felt

# 45%

more confident about looking for jobs than when they started

# 24

participants since our launch in January 2019



# Work Placements

## What it's about

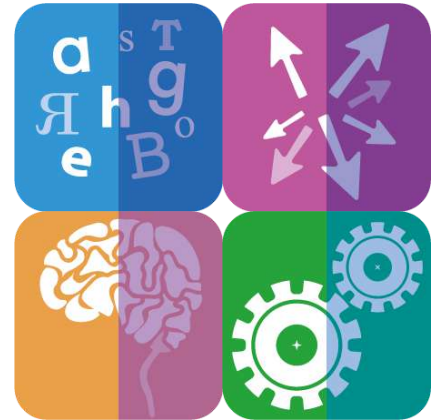
As part of our recruitment work, our recruitment officer helps candidates pursue jobs that are meaningful to them. We organise work placements and interviews directly, as well as connecting neurodiverse jobseekers with our partner organisations when appropriate.

## Why we do it

The standard recruitment process for a UK company throws up a whole host of challenges for neurodiverse applicants, whether it's lengthy written applications or the necessity to network in social situations. A helping hand in these areas helps to level the playing field for neurodiverse people. Our work placements also play a key role in facilitating more neurodiverse-aware recruitment practices in companies. Our work placements mean a key gap in the employment market - between neurodiverse talent and employers - gets filled.

## What impact we have

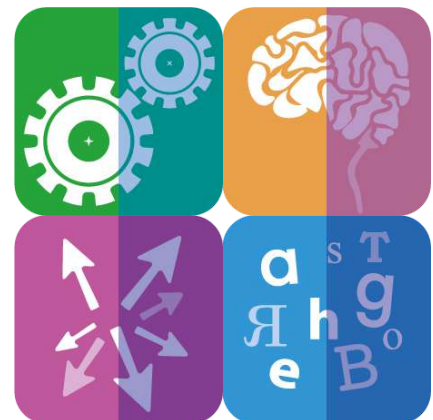
This is a key part of our mission to reduce the barriers to work for neurodiverse people. Although we aim to broader attitudes towards neurodiversity among employers, we think it's also important to be pragmatic, and give neurodiverse people the concrete support they need to get into jobs.



**Connecting neurodiverse  
talent with employers**

116

work placements  
projected for 2018/19







# In Focus: Stewart



Dyslexia  
Academy  
Graduate

Stewart heard about Exceptional Individuals from his JobCenter advisor, and joined the Chelmsford Dyslexia Employment Academy in March 2019. Since graduating from the academy, he has started a 12-week computer training course with the local library, using keyboard stickers and other aids from the academy to help navigate the difficulties he previously faced using computer hardware.

## Why did you join the Dyslexia Employment Academy?

Stewart: It was recommended to me by the JobCenter.

I'm glad they did because it's really helped me; helped me to move forward and the areas I need to work on.





# In Focus: Stewart

## Q: What did you learn with us?

Stewart: It was a mixture of how to do CVs, things about dyslexia, how I can help myself to get back into work and with my life in general.



**"It was a great bunch of people - you couldn't beat them!"**

## Q: How did you find working with other people with dyslexia?

Stewart: You meet people who are on the same page as you are, who know how you feel. It was just a great bunch of people, you couldn't beat them!



## Q: Would you recommend Dyslexia Employment Academy?

Stewart: Oh definitely, you can't go wrong. It will really help you a lot. The more experience you've got, the better.



**"The more experience you've got, the better"**





# What we do: Employment Support

Exceptional Individuals helps people in work with neurodiversity who want to access ongoing support and progress their careers. We do this by assessing their needs, determining the best support structure for them and representing them during the funding process. We provide coaching, equipment and assistive technology to ensure they have the tools and ability to carry out their jobs to the best of their abilities.

In this section:

1-to-1 mentoring

Workplace Needs Assessments

In Work Support

In Focus - Daissy



Meet **Raphael**, he reached out to Exceptional Individuals seeking employment and, with our support, is currently thriving in a Global Technical Support Internship at Bloomberg.

Raphael has 20 years of military service in the United States Air Force with exemplary experience solving challenging situations, directing multi-billion-dollar value projects, and he is fluent in both Spanish and English. And he's dyslexic.

*Equipping  
neurodiverse  
people for the  
workplace*

# 455

people benefited from our  
employment support



# 1-to-1 mentoring

## What it's about

We offer confidential 1-to-1 mentoring sessions for people looking for support with their neurodiversity at work. This includes people struggling to disclose their neurodiversity to an employer, who want to implement Reasonable Adjustments in their workplace, utilise Access to Work funds, or simply learn more about their neurodiversity.

## Why we do it

We recognise the value of mentoring and face-to-face contact when it comes to neurodiversity. Written and online resources are useful up to a point, but individual mentoring offers a more personal type of support.

## What impact we have

People who otherwise would have no access, or wouldn't be able to afford it, are able to receive support for their neurodiversity. This allows them, their employers, and the economy as a whole, to mobilise the full spectrum of their talents.

# 304

individual mentoring sessions  
since June 2018



## Boosting individual confidence

We found a significant increase of

# 32%

in self-reported confidence following our 1-to-1 sessions:

"Brilliant - I can't thank you enough for the hope you have brought me"

"Enabled me to think beyond my experiences and think in a positive light"



# Workplace Needs Assessments

## What it's about

We go to workplaces and assess how well-suited they are to accommodate a neurodiverse employee's needs, and what assistance they require in order to work at their best.



## Why we do it

Without the right support or adjustments in place, a neurodiverse employee will likely be held back from performing at their best. Assessing their workplace needs ensures that this is avoided, and the employee has what they need in order to thrive in work.

# 84

workplace needs  
assessments carried out

## What impact we have

We believe that a 'disability' is only as disabling as the environment around them. So it's important that workplaces have the necessary physical adjustments in place for neurodiverse employees. We want to ensure that all neurodiverse people have what they need in order to realise their potential in work. Assessing their needs is the first step towards achieving this.



**Access to Work**  
Making work possible



# In Work Support

## What it's about

Once we've assessed a candidate's workplace needs, we write up a list of adjustments for them. We then either work with the employee's company directly, or with the government's Access to Work fund, to put the necessary adjustments in place. This might include training courses we provide, or organising assistive technology to be installed in the employee's workspace.

## Why we do it

Our In Work Support activities mean that neurodiverse people either have the skills or the equipment they need to perform their tasks at work unimpeded. This also ensures that neurodiverse people feel included in the work environment

## What impact we have

Our Workplace Needs Assessments and In Work Support activities are part of a broader effort to transform UK workplaces into more inclusive environments for neurodiverse people. And we ensure that the government's designated fund for neurodiverse people in work (Access to Work) gets properly used.

# 1,953

hours of In Work Support  
provided 2018/19

### Some of the things provide people with:

Automatic spelling  
correction  
Speech-to-text  
software  
Dictophone  
Emotional +  
behavioural coaching  
Customised hand  
grips  
Screen  
overlays  
Smart pens

We helped people access

# £95,000

worth of support from the  
Access to Work fund





# Assistive Tech in action

There is a range of assistive technology we can recommend for In Work Support candidates. This varies from computer software that compensates for challenges neurodiverse people might face with numbers or letters, to hardware that can transform a person's relationship to their working environment. Take a look at some of the Assistive Tech in action!



## Text-scanning pen

This pen makes reading a breeze for dyslexic people. It scans text and reads it aloud, and can also store and translate.



## Smart Pen

This is really handy for people who struggle with organisation. Write notes in the book and they appear in digital format on your phone!



## Dictaphone

This allows you to dictate your notes aloud - a great tool for people who struggle with written note-taking.

## Reading overlays

Technology doesn't need to be electronic! We have a variety of overlays that can make reading more accessible.





## In Focus - Daissy

Employment  
Support  
Beneficiary



A First-Class Honours in Criminology and Psychology, Daissy enjoys working in a fast-paced international environment. She has exceptional interpersonal and communication skills with a strong regulatory casework management background. Fluent in Spanish and English. Daissy is currently seeking a challenging position in a compliance/ regulatory role.

### **How has your dyslexia benefited you and what does it mean to you?**

Daissy: It means that I'm different but in a good way. It means that I have a different perspective on things. I can link things, see the bigger picture, find solutions, be creative. It means I'm a hard worker. Because of my dyslexia I have trained myself to make my work perfect.



## In Focus - Daissy

### **Q: How has your dyslexia manifested itself in your education and career so far?**

At university, I felt privileged that I had time to focus on my studies as a mature student and have the time to focus on the academic content and perfect my essay writing. I have really good ideas, and I got really good feedback on my writing. Through the support I got at university with my tutor I was able to put those ideas down on paper and really organise my writing style.

### **Q: What drew you to an organisation like Exceptional Individuals?**

I am so happy I came across you. It was just after a horrible experience with a job and I felt I just couldn't cope. On Google I was typing 'what are dyslexic people good at?' I found you guys on the first page, and I clicked on it straight away. It was a breath of fresh air to come in and speak to somebody who knew exactly what I was talking about. It was just such a relief to know that there's support and there are other people like me who are helping others.

**"Dyslexia has nothing to do with intelligence."**

### **Q: What do you look for in an employer?**

Valuing and celebrating diversity - it'd be a pretty boring workplace if we only employed accountants, you need creativity. And I think neurodiverse people have this ability to come into the workplace and be creative. Employers should maybe take a leap of faith and trust us. Dyslexia has nothing to do with intelligence, so I'd appreciate it if they could overcome that paradigm that dyslexic people can't write, can't spell, can't do anything. They should understand neurodiversity more and see its strengths not its weaknesses.

**"It was a breath of fresh air to speak to somebody who knew exactly what I was talking about"**





# What we do: Consulting

We also engage with a wide range of corporate clients. These are companies who want to improve their understanding of neurodiversity, utilise it in their business operations, and attract more neurodiverse talent into their workforce. We deliver interactive workshops tailored for HR employees, recruitment personnel, learning and development teams and managers employees and managers. We explain the ins and outs of neurodiversity, and how companies can make their organisations and recruitment processes more enabling for neurodiverse people.



In this section:

Corporate training

Workplace audits

Neurodiversity guides

In Focus - Kantar

# 21

corporate partners in 2018/19

# 24

workshops delivered

*Changing  
corporate  
policies*

*Shifting corporate  
attitudes towards  
neurodiversity*





# Corporate Neurodiversity Training

## What it's about

Our corporate workshops are the first of our neurodiversity products aimed at medium and large companies. We deliver interactive workshops, from 1-2 hours in length, aimed at managers, HR departments, or general employees. The workshops are generally geared towards introducing employees to the different forms of neurodiversity. More specific advice and proposals tend to be covered by our audits and guides.

## Why we do it

Ultimately a company is made up of the people that work there. That's why bringing people up to speed with the rapidly growing neurodiversity movement is such a crucial task for us. Interactions with colleagues often constitute formative experiences for neurodiverse people, both positive and negative. Having an inclusive and understanding company culture is also key for people's confidence.

## What impact we have

All of these outcomes are important steps towards creating an inclusive working culture for everyone. Once changes in attitudes start to happen, changes in policies will soon follow.

## Some of our current partners:

**Ryman**



Department  
for Transport



# Workplace Audits

## What it's about

Our second consultancy activity involves auditing a company's workplace, and assessing its suitability for people with any kind of neurodiversity. We will interview a cross-section of employees at the company, as well as analysing their recruitment and selection procedures. We assess the official and cultural stance of the company towards neurodiversity.

### We look out for:

Cultural attitudes

HR practices      Office layout

Selection procedures

Interview styles      Individual experiences

## Why we do it

Creating an inclusive culture for neurodiverse people must go beyond shifting individual attitudes, and tackle the systems and structures that are disabling for them. We take a company-wide approach in order to paint this more holistic picture of a company's stance towards neurodiversity.

## What impact we have

Auditing a company's activities and workplace is one of the most direct ways we can foster a more neurodiverse-friendly work culture in the UK. Our broad, cross-company approach means we can create structural improvements for neurodiverse people





# Neurodiversity Guides

## What it's about

We compile comprehensive handbooks for company managers, HR departments, and employees in general. These provide detailed breakdowns of each form of neurodiversity, explaining their characteristics, how that kind of employee can be supported, and adjustments that can be made in recruitment and selection processes.

## Some of the topics covered in our guides:

Introduction to Neurodiversity

Condition crossover and co-occurrence

Disclosure advice

ADHD

Autism

Dyslexia

Dyspraxia

## Why we do it

It is always possible to find bits and pieces online about dyslexia or autism for example, but it is much harder to find information about such a range of neurodiversities all in one place. We fill this knowledge gap by compiling this information in detail, and in a format relevant to people who will be managing neurodiverse employees.

## What impact we have

Like our audits, these guides are key tools for directly influencing corporate policies on neurodiversity. HR departments and managers are key corporate demographics to target in terms of implementing concrete measures to assist neurodiverse people in work.



The Kantar team holding their neurodiversity guides



# In Focus: KANTAR

**Kantar** is one of the world's leading data, insights, and consulting companies. They are also an Exceptional Individuals partner. With operations in over a hundred countries worldwide, having a diversity of people, specialisms, and points of view is crucial. This means our workshop on understanding neurodiversity aligned perfectly with their desire to utilise neurodiverse talent in their business.

**"Exceptional Individuals delivered workshops within our business that had a significantly positive impact on leaders and managers. It was an engaging, honest, and informative experience with hugely positive feedback across the board"**

Director of Diversity and Talent



**"Without a doubt up there as one of the most insightful workshops I've attended in close to 20 years of working. Thank you very much Exceptional Individuals!"**

World Panel Senior Director



**"Great use of humour to remove any potential barriers to questions or embarrassment people may feel due to lack of knowledge. Really empowering and inspiring"**

HR Director

**"I haven't come across another organisation that is able to understand the needs of a neurodiverse workforce and provide solutions and support in a better way than EI."**

Employee



# What we do: Advocacy and Education

Exceptional Individuals advocate for rights and opportunities for neurodiverse people, and are a voice for education in the field of neurodiversity. Both of these areas focus on creating change in the broader societal, legal, and political arenas in which our activities take place. We don't simply advocate for people on an individual level, but push for recognition and awareness of the growing neurodiversity movement as a whole.

In this section:

News coverage

Communicating neurodiversity

Online resources

Social media

Advisory boards

Disability Confident

In Focus: Neurodiverse Voices



Around  
**50,000**  
people reached by our Education  
and Advocacy

*Increasing  
awareness and  
understanding of  
neurodiversity*

*Advocating for  
neurodivergent  
people*





# News Coverage

Nat talking to BBC Radio 5 live



Filming our feature for BBC London



Matt on London Live News



Matt's interview on BBC London





# News Coverage



Matt presenting evidence to the Westminster Commission on neurodivergence

Nat getting some celebrity coverage on BBC Radio



Rubbing shoulders with MPs and Lords at Westminster



Nat presenting at the Great Minds Think Different conference







## A hands-on approach

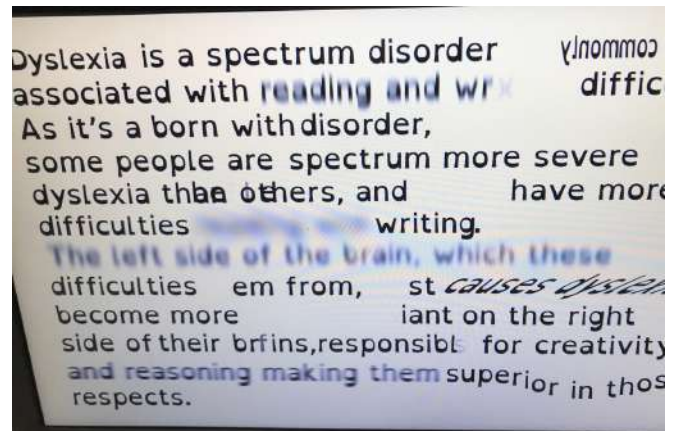


Our dysgraphia pen shakes as you try and write with it. It helps people understand the challenge, and sometimes the frustration, of motor conditions.

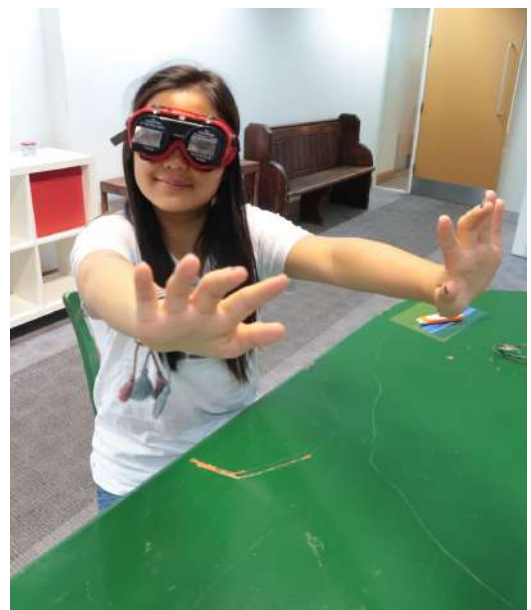


Our funnel exercise is a metaphor for information processing. This works for dyspraxia, and other conditions.

One of our most popular exercises, the shifting text screen is a great way to help people empathise with dyslexic people.



These unique glasses can help demonstrate a range of different conditions. Overall, they show what it's like to see things from a different perspective, and how this can be both a challenge and an advantage.







# Online Resources

## What it's about

We have a series of questionnaires on our website which can help people find out if they might have a form of neurodiversity. They use simple, non-medical language to educate people who might not be aware that they have signs of being neurodiverse.

## Why we do it

Our aim in the Education and Advocacy stream is not just to help society at large get to grips with neurodiversity, but also to help neurodiverse individuals understand themselves. We also signpost our services at the end of each quiz, so that people can get in touch to ask more questions or sign up for support. These surveys are anonymous, so they may be less intimidating first step than seeking help from a medical professional.

## What impact we have

It can be hugely frustrating to struggle in work or with job applications, not knowing that you're neurodivergent, and that this is the thing holding you back. These surveys help alleviate these frustrations, and can be the first step towards understanding your neurodiversity and taking action to make the most of it!



**Helping people  
understand themselves**

**1,722**

people have used our  
online services to find  
out if they have signs of  
neurodiversity





# Social Media

Social media is a key outlet for our education work. And it's a great way to publicise our activities and job opportunities. We use this to create a real neurodiverse community online.

# 3,027

people make up our online community



Our Facebook page publicising general information related to Exceptional Individuals

Our opportunities pages aimed at specific conditions



Our Twitter page for following #neurodiversity and other trends

Our Instagram account for photos of all our events, and feedback from our beneficiaries





# Advisory Boards

We sit on other organisations' advisory boards in order to spread our expertise and help others benefit from our lived experiences. Here's a showcase of the organisations we're involved with!



Inclusive Economy  
Group



school for  
social  
entrepreneurs



Access to  
Employment  
Advisory Board



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions



All-Party  
Parliamentary Group  
for Disability





# Disability Confident

We are a Leader on the government's Disability Confident scheme, which is a 3-tier programme promoting inclusion for 'disabled' people in work.

Disability Confident's mission is closely aligned with Exceptional Individuals, with both aiming to help businesses make the most of neurodiverse talent, and help differently abled people thrive in work.

To become a Leader, an organisation or company has to show significant leadership in creating employment opportunities for disabled people. Exceptional Individuals' extensive activities in this area means we are qualified to call ourselves a leader in this field.

# 12,000

employers signed up to the Disability Confident scheme



# 220

qualify for Leader status



# Neurodiversity Conference

## What it's about

We celebrated 2018 Dyslexia Awareness Week by hosting the UK's first Neurodiversity Employment Conference. This brought together employers and neurodivergent people from across the UK to take part in employment-focused workshops, try out cutting-edge tech, and talk about live vacancies.



## Why we did it

We are committed to broadening the conversation about neurodiversity and so wanted to pioneer a new kind of event to help bring about this change. We wanted to create a new kind of platform to connect employers with neurodiverse talent.



## What our participants said:

**96%** of people who attended would recommend the conference

"Enjoyable, informative, excellent networking opportunity"

"Absolutely fantastic and inspirational! I felt so part of the event and feel very much part of Exceptional Individuals"





# In Focus - Neurodiverse Voices

## What it's about

In 2017, the government teamed up with neurodiversity think tank AchieveAbility to produce the Neurodiverse Voices report. Since Exceptional Individuals represent expertise in recruitment and advising, we were invited to contribute evidence to the commission's research sessions. Other contributors represented organisations like Transport for London, Dyslexia Scotland, and the BBC.

## Why we did it

This was a flagship research project and a real step forward in terms of documenting the barriers that neurodivergent people face in work. It was also a one-of-a-kind opportunity to influence high-level policy circles, and network with some of the most experienced voices in the neurodiversity field.

## What impact we had

Changing public perceptions is one thing, but lobbying for concrete policy change in government is something quite different. Events like this are crucial in order to hold government to account, and ensure that protections for neurodivergent people, such as the Equality Act 2010, are properly adhered to.





## Key Findings - Barriers

- There is very little **awareness** about neurodiversity, among both employers and managers
- Many neurodivergent employees worry about **disclosure**, particularly the negative consequences and discrimination that can follow it
- Several **government measures** are under-resourced, poorly advertised, and under-used by neurodivergent people.
- There are often **structural disadvantages** to neurodivergent people, from disabling psychometric tests and recruitment procedures, to inappropriate performance management.
- Current **Reasonable Adjustments** policies tend to locate the 'problem' in the individual, rather than the environment they are in.

Voices from our survey

"A constant feeling of not fitting in, not being understood."

"...company didn't understand my condition. We're not willing to make allowance."

"I have a line manager who thinks people with dyslexia are pathetic and should get over it."

"My previous employer was not sympathetic to my difficulties and I felt singled out of the team."

"Not enough support or understanding for dyslexic people."

"... was refused support for my condition and allowed to believe I could be sacked for not disclosing at the application stage."

"A lack of understanding leading to stressful situations."

"The structural components of employment were far too rigid."

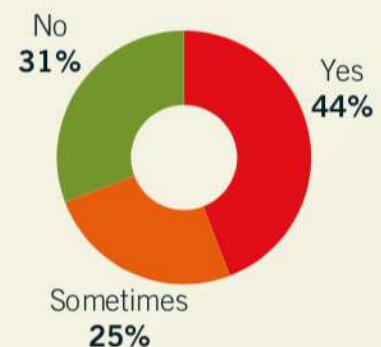
"They failed to understand my difficulties, making my life hell."

"I was suspended from my normal duties for 2 weeks. My training was held back to half the level of people who started at the same time as me due to the perception that I could not handle the work."

"Lack of support and understanding from management and colleagues meant that I felt under pressure and very stressed which made me unwell."

"Got fired and took legal action against them. Successfully :)"

## Experienced discrimination in work



## Manager understands neurodivergence

