

# Neurodiversity Policy Template

## Policy summary

Neurodiversity is a term that acknowledges the natural variation in the way the human brain functions. At **[Company]**, our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is at the heart of everything we do. This policy is based on a set of core principles that guide our actions to foster a workplace where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered to bring their whole, authentic self to work.

### Core commitments

- **Providing reasonable adjustments:** Neurodivergent conditions often meet the legal definition of a disability under the UK Equality Act 2010, meaning we have a duty to make Reasonable Adjustments. We will tailor adjustments to your individual needs, without the need for a formal diagnosis.
- **Confidentiality:** Disclosure is optional. You can approach the **[People Team/HR Team]** in complete confidence.
- **Time Off:** You can take up to **[X]** days off per year for medical appointments relating to neurodiversity, or 'Sick' leave for symptoms that make you feel too unwell to work. Flexible working arrangements can also be used.

### Note from Fertifa:

We've included a policy summary in our internal neurodiversity policy so the key points can be easily accessed, read and digested.

# Definitions and terminology

## 1: Key definitions

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**We want to make sure you're comfortable and well equipped, so we've kept our language straightforward.**

**We recognise that language is constantly evolving, and our aim is to use terminology that is both accurate and validating for everyone. If you feel the language we've used could be changed to be more inclusive or is outdated, please let us know. We are always open to learning.**

### **ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)**

ADHD is a neurodevelopmental condition that affects attention, impulse control, and activity levels. It can impact focus, organisation, time management, and emotional regulation. ADHD can look different from person to person and may include strengths such as creativity, energy, and hyperfocus.

### **Acquired neurodivergence**

Acquired neurodivergence refers to changes in how a person's brain functions due to injury, illness, or life events, such as brain injury, stroke, long COVID, menopause, or trauma. A person was not born neurodivergent but becomes so later in life.

### **Autism**

Autism is a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition that affects how a person experiences the world, communicates, and interacts with others. Autistic people may process sensory information differently and often have distinct strengths, interests, and ways of thinking. Autism is a spectrum, meaning it varies widely between individuals.

### **DCD / Dyspraxia (Developmental Coordination Disorder)**

DCD, also known as dyspraxia, is a condition that affects coordination, movement, and motor planning. It can also impact organisation, time management, and memory. Dyspraxia does not affect intelligence, but everyday tasks may require more effort or support.

**Disclosure**

The voluntary act of informing the employer about a neurodivergent condition. Disclosure is always optional and confidential.

**Dyscalculia**

Dyscalculia is a specific learning difference that affects a person's ability to understand and work with numbers. This may include difficulties with counting, time, money, or mathematical concepts. Dyscalculia is not linked to intelligence and often co-occurs with other neurodivergent conditions.

**Dyslexia**

Dyslexia is a specific learning difference that primarily affects reading, spelling, and written language. It can also impact memory, processing speed, and organisation. Dyslexia is often associated with strengths such as problem-solving, creativity, and big-picture thinking.

**Learning difficulty**

A learning difficulty is a lifelong condition that affects intellectual functioning and everyday skills such as communication, understanding information, and independent living. People with learning difficulties may need ongoing support, and this is distinct from specific learning differences like dyslexia.

**Mental health**

Mental health refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. Mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, or bipolar disorder can affect how a person thinks, feels, and functions. Mental health exists on a spectrum and can change over time.

**Neurodivergent**

A person is neurodivergent if their brain processes information in a way that diverges from what is considered typical. This is an umbrella term for specific conditions like autism, ADHD, and dyslexia. Whilst we are all neurodiverse, not everyone is neurodivergent.

**Neurodiversity**

Neurodiversity is a word that is used to explain the unique ways people's brains work. It is simply the understanding that all human brains are naturally varied and different. It's a biological fact that no two brains are the same. This term includes everyone on the planet; we are all neurodiverse.

**Neurotypical**

A person is neurotypical if their brain and cognitive function fall within the societal standards of what is deemed ‘typical’. The world is largely built for neurotypical people.

**Reasonable adjustments**

A legally required change under the UK Equality Act to a job, work pattern, or environment that helps an employee with a disability, including neurodivergence, overcome a disadvantage and perform their role effectively.

**Tourette syndrome**

Tourette syndrome is a neurological condition characterised by involuntary movements and sounds. These movements can be physical or vocal and may change over time. Tourette syndrome often co-occurs with other neurodivergent conditions such as ADHD or OCD.

## 2: What is neurodiversity?

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**Neurodiversity refers to the different ways we perceive and interact with the world.**

Neurodivergence refers to individuals whose neurological development is different from what is considered typical (neurotypical). Creating a workplace that is inclusive and supportive of different ways of thinking is beneficial not only for those people who don’t process information in the “typical” way but also for all individuals in our workplaces, improving creativity and innovation.

# The practicalities of the policy

## 1: Legal framework

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Neurodivergent conditions often meet the legal definition of a disability under the UK Equality Act 2010. This protects against discrimination and imposes a legal duty upon [Company] to make Reasonable Adjustments.

**Individualised approach:** Adjustments will never be based on assumptions or stereotypes. We will not make any decision without your informed consent, ensuring that support is tailored to your specific needs and working style.

**No diagnosis required:** You do not need to provide a formal diagnosis to request support or reasonable adjustments. We encourage early, open, and confidential discussions based on practical needs.

**Note for HR managers and People teams:** Under the Equality Act 2010, an employee does not need a formal diagnosis to access reasonable adjustments and workplace support for neurodivergent conditions. Legally, employees do not need to provide proof confirming a diagnosis.

## 2: Reasonable adjustments

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**We will work with you to develop a personalised Reasonable Adjustment plan. This is a dynamic document, co-created with you, to address your individual needs, preferences, and timelines.**

The purpose of a Reasonable Adjustment is to make sure you are not put at a substantial disadvantage. We will work with you to implement practical adjustments. Some examples of reasonable adjustments include:

**Environmental adjustments:** Noise-cancelling headphones, a desk shield, a stand-sit desk, non-fluorescent lighting, priority to work in a quieter area of the office, or a fixed workspace.

**Technological aids:** Specialised software that can aid in day-to-day tasks, which can include speech-to-text software, instant caption software for virtual meetings, grammar checks, software to record and summarise meetings, or alternative display setups.

**Communication adjustments:** You can request a preferred style of communication, where reasonable. This may be emails or messaging rather than phone calls, providing clear, written instructions, and requesting agendas in advance of meetings.

**Flexible working:** Including flexible start and end times or working from home arrangements to accommodate energy levels or sensory needs.

### 3: Time off

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At **[Company]**, we understand that accessing a diagnosis for a neurodivergent condition, a Workplace Needs Assessment, or neuro-affirming support may involve appointments and time out of your working day.

You can take up to **[x]** days off for neurodiversity appointments per year.

**[OR]**

Any required time off for neurodiversity appointments should be discussed with your manager or HR

If you need to take time off due to symptoms that make you feel too unwell to work, this can be booked off as standard 'Sick' leave.

How and when you use them is up to you. If you need more time than that, let your manager or HR know. We want this policy to work for you and are happy to adjust as needed. Leave can be taken as a continuous period or as individual days. If it's not time off that you need, flexible working arrangements, including working from home or adjusting working hours, are also available to support you. Just let your manager know what would work best for you, and we can go from there by having a confidential conversation.

**Note for HR managers and People teams:** It's important to state here whether the leave you are offering is paid or unpaid leave for clarity. If you do not wish to specify a specific number of days, note that any required time off should be discussed with the employee's line manager or HR team, and will be dependent on the employee's circumstances.

**Note for HR managers and People teams:** Set this up in your internal HR system. You may choose to have a 'Neurodiversity' category or an 'Other' category that people can use if they don't feel comfortable specifying what it's for. Be sure to emphasise that any time off will be taken in confidence and that only HR and/or their manager will be informed.

## 4: Fertifa wellbeing support

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★ *To be included if [Company] is a Fertifa client*

At [Company], we offer support for neurodivergence through [Fertifa](#).

To use this support, you can download the Fertifa app from the App Store or Google Play and get access to unlimited 1-2-1 support from Fertifa's in-house clinical team, and dedicated neurodiversity specialist partners.

**Included in your Fertifa benefit, you have a [£x] allowance to use towards neurodivergent diagnostics assessments, workplace needs assessments, and neuro-affirming support.**

You'll also have access to a suite of educational resources through the Fertifa App – you can browse articles, attend webinars, and join live Q&A sessions with doctors and nurses.

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