This guidance outlines a range of typical challenges faced by people who are neurodivergent, and intends to help inform conversations around potential reasonable adjustments in the workplace. It acknowledges that the challenges an individual faces can vary over time depending upon other factors, and that there will be differences from person to person. This is an illustrative list and not all examples given will be appropriate in all cases.

Challenge	Examples of Potential Adjustments
Concentration and focus; **Easily distracted;** **Hyperactivity; Fatigue** Individuals may have a difficulty in maintaining focus on task or during conversation/ meeting. They could be easily distracted by their environment (e.g. people chatting, desk near to equipment; photocopier). They may lose train of thought (writing or speaking) when making a point or ideas might go off on a tangent, or excessive talking or interruption of others. Confusion may occur between different tasks. Impulsive/risk-taking: great ideas, but difficulty following tasks through to the end. Difficulty concentrating for verbal instructions and appearing not to	• Taking short breaks (e.g. 10 minutes) away from the desk throughout the day may restore concentration and focus. These breaks can be accommodated by extending start/finish times. • Organise the work to focus on one job at a time rather than multi-tasking as this can be distracting. • A regular and noticeable alarm on a phone or PC can bring back to focus. • Remove disturbances from colleagues by ensuring they are aware when work is being undertaken on specific tasks which require intense concentration. • Arrange a work location that is quiet and away from distractions, for example away from doors, busy phones, loud machinery. • Understand any sensory issues, e.g. open plan offices have lots of noise and lights, which may be minimised by the use of desk partitions, telephones that light up when ringing, noise-cancelling headphones, desk low-lights etc. • Working from home where the job allows it. • Altering working times to avoid busy commutes and to enable work to be carried out before or after the normal working hours to reduce distraction, stress and fatigue. • Relaxation techniques can help with concentration. • Use tools to block access to distracting websites e.g. SelfControl or StayFocusd • Plan annual leave so there aren't long periods without a break from work.

listen when spoken too. Losing things required for a task.	• Put 'fire-break' days in the calendar to allow a calmer time to catch up on admin between intense projects. • Furniture that allows for a wide range of movement, e.g. a standing desk or a balance chair. • Introduce natural movement breaks into the job, e.g. using stairs rather than lift. • Agree a suitable location where movement can be better accommodated, e.g. where someone finds the need to pace up and down while thinking find a suitable area where this will not be a distraction for other colleagues • Suggest the individual does something physical during meetings, e.g. doodling, stress ball, note taking
Social interaction and communication Difficulties include problems organising behaviour and own space (sitting too close or talking too loudly, not taking turns in conversation). Individuals may feel anxious in groups or unfamiliar surroundings. Some may also experience difficulties with understanding humour and sarcasm. Others may have poor listening skills, may miss non-verbal cues and consequently appear rude or tactless. An individual might sometimes have difficulties controlling their emotions.	• Explore whether a mentor will be beneficial to help the individual build awareness of how they communicates with others and help with difficult social situations. This might be the line manager or other trusted colleague. • Breaks away from the team working environment can help control heightened emotion and avoid outbursts. • Providing clear and specific information and instructions about what is expected, especially if returning to work on campus in a different environment with new rules e.g. social distancing, one way routes etc. • Not using hypothetical or abstract questions and understanding that the individual may also interpret language quite literally. • Avoiding questions that are too open e.g. "Tell me a bit about yourself". • With new staff who have disclosed this challenge, ensure a full induction, an introduction to each colleague, a map of the building/office and where each person sits. • Provide an explanation of any unwritten rules of the workplace. • Allow time for someone to come back with a response later. • Allow the individual to recap on points of the conversation. • Allow the individual to bring diary notes to the conversation, or send information in advance.
Arithmetic	• Ensure appropriate tools are provided e.g. a talking calculator. • Allow more time than usual for any tasks that involve arithmetic. • Provide written rather than verbal instructions. • Where possible, provide mathematical data in a visual way e.g. graphs, charts and infographics.

Difficulties with arithmetic calculations such as sizing, ordering, and reading and writing numbers	• Appropriate reasonable adjustment for using security codes for doors and computer log in etc.
Reading, writing and spelling Reading/spelling/speaking - auditory processing (working memory) difficulties can cause problems with reading and spelling and speaking; poor letter/sound knowledge, and ability to blend, separate and sequence sounds within words - eg. spelling words with a missing syllable such as "emidetly" for "immediately" or confusing the word "pacific" with "specific". Difficulties can occur following fast flowing conversations. Reading large reports combines basic difficulties of sequencing and working memory, which reduces reading efficiency, making it difficult to extract specific meaning. Employees may also have difficulty with reading due to visual distress - text may appear distorted or to move around the page, words or numbers may be misread, keeping place can be difficult, white "rivers" between the words can distract and white backgrounds can cause glare for the reader. This type of stress can cause headaches or heavy uncomfortable eyes. Harsh florescent lighting can make these problems worse. Difficulty obtaining correct data from graphs and charts, ruler or tape measure and inputting data into	• Provide extra time for some tasks such as taking the minutes of meetings or reading a page of text. • Where possible use alternative formats such as audio or videotape, drawings, diagrams and flowcharts. • Introduce mind-mapping software, such as Inspiration, Mind Genius. • Use of speech to text software. • Time to plan written work. • Provide a list of appropriate acronyms, abbreviations and subject specific vocabulary/key words • Provide templates for emails, letters, reports • Assistive text software such as ClaroRead or TextHelp. • Allow time for proofreading work. • Appropriate lighting (avoid fluorescent strip lighting and glare from window) • Provide coloured overlays (as per Mears-Iren syndrome testing results) • Provide information on coloured paper and set up a computer screen with a coloured background. • Provide verbal as well as written instructions. • Use alternatives to written information such as voice mail. • Use of screen reading software and scanners. • A Reading Pen may be useful for unfamiliar words. • Keep operating instructions next to office equipment such as photocopiers and scanners.

computer database. Spelling and punctuation errors include forgetting what a word should look like. Spoken language difficulties can mean problems pronouncing words, word finding difficulties, problems structuring ideas verbally. May provide listeners with long-winded repetitive speeches.	
Organisation and planning Short-term memory and sequencing weaknesses, individuals may miss appointments, mix up times/place of meeting, miss deadlines, fail to prioritise, inefficient working methods, appear chaotic and disorganised, have a messy desk, lose things, bring wrong documents to meetings and may have problems dealing with a varied workload.	• Make workspace quiet and free from distractions such as doors, phones and loud machinery. • Provide storage solutions for paperwork. • Regular 1 to 1 meetings with manager to plan workload. • Encourage planning with SMART objectives. • Agree times when it would be helpful to work from home. • Ensure the workspace that is well lit, neat and tidy. • Use a wall planner that visually highlights appointments, deadlines and tasks. • Ask colleagues for reminders of important deadlines and regular reviews of priorities and projects. • Use timetables, mnemonics and mind maps if these help with prioritising work and meeting deadlines. • Set reminders using post it notes in obvious places or electronic reminders. • Colour code items in your workspace. • Use computer features such as calendars, alerts and alarms. • Create a daily "To Do" list. • Break work up into manageable chunks. • Build planning time into each day. • Allow extra time for tasks and projects, for unforeseen circumstances. • Provide templates for detailed work, such as reports. • Use a mind map of all things to be done and highlight the most important.
Memory Can impact daily activities such as forgetting telephone numbers, messages,	• Use mnemonic devices and acronyms. • Use diagrams and flowcharts to organise information. • Use multi-sensory learning techniques such as reading material onto a tape machine and then playing it back whilst re-reading.

instructions or directions. Also problems filing, using a directory, carrying out instructions or following work protocol in the correct order/logical way. This requires repetition of instructions. There may be problems with recalling what is said in meetings, minute taking, multi-tasking - listening and reply/formulation and speaking succinctly. Individuals may participate less or interrupt and may miss certain nuances in conversation.	• Use appropriate computer software such as program menus and help features. • Ensure good use of to do lists, calendar reminders, and notes of important points to discuss with colleagues. • Demonstrate new tasks and build in time to practice. • Provide/develop templates. • Provide written documents rather than rely on verbal, e.g. provide an overview of items discussed after a meeting. • Give instructions one at a time, slowly and clearly, and in a quiet location. • Use a digital recorder if this is agreeable to all parties. • Back up verbal instructions and information with notes or diagrams.
Sense of direction and co-ordination Individuals may have a difficulty with sense of direction, time and map reading they may find it difficult to orientate self in large (particularly unfamiliar) offices, or get lost on the way to new office/meeting place. They may misjudge spatial distances. They may be late for work, meetings or appointments or may misjudge time taken to complete task. May appear untidy or rumpled personal presentation/poor posture. Difficulties occur with handling body's movement in relation to surroundings and itself. Gross motor difficulties might include general clumsiness, poor balance, bumping into objects and people, cooking, riding a bike and driving. Fine motor problems might be poor/slow handwriting, poor note taking, and difficulty using office equipment such	• Try to use the same route each time. • Provide a visual representation of a route (especially if the individual is returning to work on campus with covid safety measures in place), and visible landmarks. • Use detailed maps and/or GPS system. • Encourage use of google maps (provides verbal and visual destination instructions on smart phones). • Time to get used to the geography of the building, especially if returning to work on campus in a different environment. • Angle board to work on to help with posture and position. • Ensure environment is suitable for completing a coordination task, may be more successful if sitting or leaning. • Ensure workspace is free from trip hazards. • Ensure seating is appropriate.

as keyboard, mouse, stapler, calculator or telephone.	
Working at a computer Fine motor skills might cause difficulty using a keyboard and mouse. Visual distress may cause difficulties processing / viewing information on the screen	• Change background colour of screen. • Use of an anti-glare screen filter. • Take frequent breaks, at least every hour. • Alternate computer work with other tasks. • Use an ergonomic keyboard. • Change or slow down the mouse. Keyboard short cuts can also be used as an alternative to the mouse.

Expert advice should be taken when exploring technological solutions. Potential software or applications should also be discussed with IT Services before installing on University equipment.

Examples of General Potential Adjustments and Supportive Actions:

- Allowing time for the individual to undertake coaching on strategies they can put in place, e.g. via the ELTC SpLD Tutorial Service
- Ensure good digital accessibility practices are followed (see guidance here)
- Re-prioritising duties around the individuals areas of strength
- Providing adaptive PPE to those with sensory issues (if this does not compromise functionality)
- Allowing time for individuals to adapt to new routines if working arrangements alter (e.g. if moving from working at home to a return to campus)
- Avoid criticism and find opportunities for positive feedback and praise

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