

Job Interviews

Employment
& Workplace

Information for people with dyslexia

Before the Interview

- Confirm your attendance at the interview if this has been requested and ask for any equipment you might need.
- Make a tick list of what you need to do and what you need to take with you on the day, then work through it.
- If you need reasonable adjustments at the interview, ask for these in good time so there is time for them to be put into place. Only ask for the things you need.
- Decide what you will wear and make sure it is ready so there are no last minute panics.
- Check out the location, how to get there and how long it will take. Use Google Maps to see how long travel time will take and Street View to see what the building looks like. Plan for extra time so you arrive in plenty of time. You could even practise making the journey a day or two before the interview, so you know the route and length of time it will take.

Interview Preparation

- An employer wants to get more of a feel for how well you will fit in to the organisation, so it's important to show your best qualities, as well as talking about your skills and experiences.
- Think about the type of questions that might be asked and how you would answer them.
- Make prompt cards or notes to take in with you so you can refer to them if you panic. Highlight key points and keep them simple so you can find the relevant bits of information easily. You could use images instead of words, if that works better for you.
- If you have to prepare a presentation, structure it using mindmaps or lists. Keep to the subject you have been asked to talk about and don't go off on a tangent. Practise and time yourself.
- If your presentation is electronic, take some paper copies – this way you know you have a backup if something goes wrong with the equipment.
- If you have to demonstrate a task, for example using a particular type of software, practise each day so you are confident using it by the time the interview comes.

Reasonable adjustments in an interview

Under the increased pressure of an interview situation, dyslexic difficulties can become more problematic. Taking time to process questions, organising your thoughts and structuring answers while remembering all parts of the question can cause some people difficulties.

You can ask in advance to allow reasonable adjustments to be in place for an interview to help prevent these difficulties. In some cases, Access to Work may also be able to offer support for interviews.

The following are examples of reasonable adjustments that might be requested at interview:

- Ask if they can send you the interview questions in advance.
- For written tests as part of the recruitment or promotion process, a reasonable adjustment might be extra time. 25% extra time is normal.
- You might ask for a longer interview in order to give you time to process and answer questions.
- Don't be afraid to ask for a question to be repeated.
- Ask for permission to use notes or visual prompts in the interview if you wish to do this.
- If you find you have trouble "fitting" your skills and experiences to the questions, ask as a reasonable adjustment if you can deliver a presentation at the start of the interview. This can help you put forward a case for why you're suitable for the job and will raise your confidence ahead of answering the set questions.
- Ask that any large amounts of reading, for example a scenario or case study, is sent in advance or is available in an electronic version so you can use a screen reader.
- If there is a computer-based exercise you might want to ask if you can use your own laptop. This would allow you to use any assistive technology you are used to and will allow you to demonstrate that, with reasonable adjustments, you are fully capable of carrying out the task. Check in advance that this will work.
- Multiple choice and psychometric tests can be very discriminatory for many dyslexic people, although not all. You might want to ask for an alternative style of assessment. This must be done in advance.
- Request that multiple-staged questions are asked in steps.

Please note that these are just examples and this is not an exhaustive list.

Talking about your dyslexia

If you have told your potential employer that you are dyslexic, or if you intend to do this at the interview, you need to be prepared to talk about it.

This is an opportunity to highlight the strengths that your dyslexia brings and also how you overcome any challenges you might have.

It is useful to think about what areas of the job might require reasonable adjustments and what they might be. This way you are not saying that you have a difficulty, but you are offering a solution.

It might also be useful to provide them with a simple information sheet about dyslexia and a source of further information such as the Dyslexia Scotland Employers' guides and the details of Dyslexia Scotland's website.

Access to Work can help to pay for disabled people to get support in the workplace so it might also be worth suggesting that your prospective employer looks into this.

Further information

- www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance
- <https://www.gov.uk/looking-for-work-if-disabled>
- Dyslexia Scotland's leaflets:
www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/our-leaflets
- My World of Work: <https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/>
- Dyslexia Scotland Helpline 0344 800 8484
or helpline@dyslexiascotland.org.uk



Dyslexia Scotland

Charity No: SC 000951

Registered No: SC 153321

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