

# What is neurodiversity?

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Workplace Academy

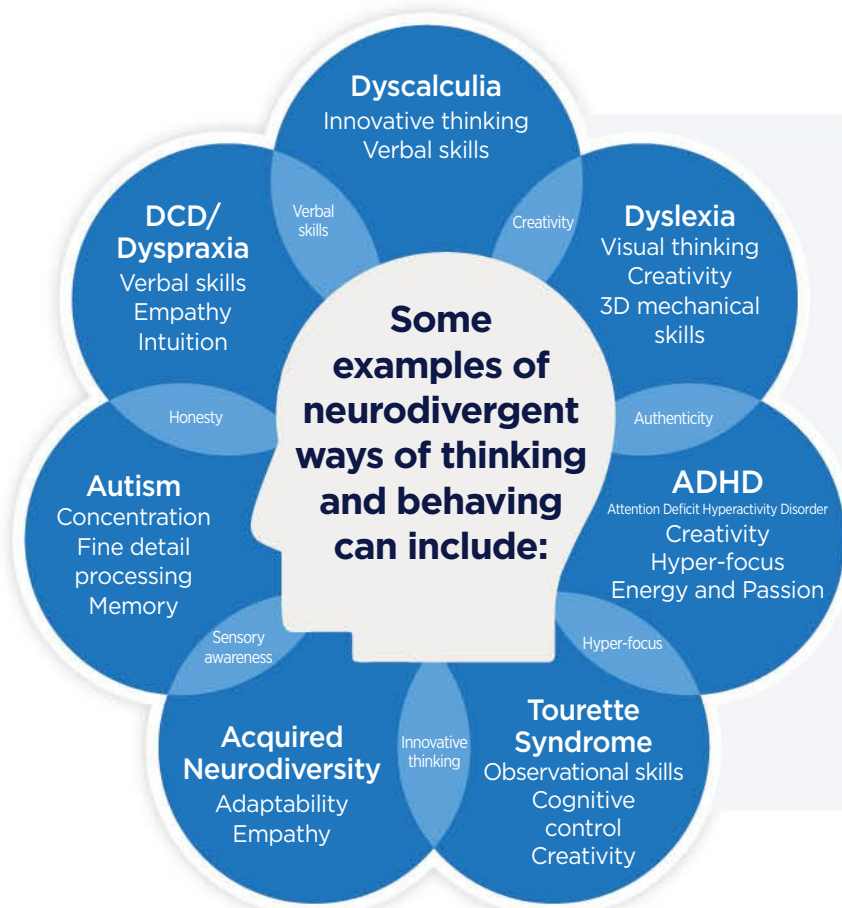


## What is neurodiversity?

The term neurodiversity refers to the way that everyone's brains naturally work differently from one another. Just as you may be born right-handed, or have green eyes, how your brain works and where you sit on the cognitive spectrum will be unique to you.

Most people are not neurodivergent - they are 'neurotypical'. This means they think and behave in a way that society traditionally considers to be 'normal'.<sup>3</sup> But at least 1 in 7 people are neurodivergent, which means they behave, think, process, and interpret information in different ways to most other people.

Traditional working practices are often designed with a neurotypical society in mind, which can make it difficult for neurodivergent employees to thrive at work.



These conditions often exist on a spectrum and can vary in their effects on different people. For example, not everyone with ADHD has the same types or severity of symptoms.



## What are the values of neurodiversity in the workplace?

We all have things we're naturally good at and things we're not so good at. Neurodivergent employees often bring unique skills and talents to their work.

**For example, depending on the individual, they might be particularly good at:**

- problem-solving
- logical thinking
- creativity
- innovation
- consistency
- thinking outside of the box
- spotting patterns and trends
- retaining information
- data analysis
- seeing things from a different perspective
- attention to detail
- taking risks
- pushing boundaries

**Heads up - there are also some aspects of a traditional working environment that neurodivergent employees might find more challenging or feel uncomfortable about.**

# Resources

## Further information:

**Neurodiversity at work.** Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. [www.cipd.co.uk](http://www.cipd.co.uk), published February 2018.

**Neurodiversity in the workplace.** University and College Union. [www.ucu.org.uk](http://www.ucu.org.uk), published January 2022.

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