Reasonable Adjustments Toolkit

For Workplace & Education Settings

Designing environments that reduce harm and unlock capacity

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Important note

This resource is intended to support understanding and good practice in neuro-inclusive workplace design. It provides general guidance and does not constitute legal, medical, or clinical advice. Organisations should apply the principles in line with their own policies, regulatory obligations, and professional judgement.

Reasonable adjustments are often treated as exceptions.

Something to be requested.
Something to be justified.
Something granted reluctantly.

In reality, adjustments are **access tools**.

They are not about giving some people an advantage.
They are about removing unnecessary barriers created by environments that assume one narrow way of functioning.

This toolkit reframes reasonable adjustments as **good design…** for neurodivergent people, and for everyone else too.

How to use this toolkit

This is not a checklist you must complete in full.

Use it to:

- identify friction points in current systems
- explore alternatives without committing immediately
- support collaborative conversations
- normalise adjustments as routine, not exceptional

Adjustments work best when they are:

- proactive rather than reactive
- flexible rather than fixed
- reviewed over time rather than "set and forgotten"

Core principle: adjustments support access, not weakness

Neurodivergent people do not struggle because they are incapable.

They struggle because systems are often:

- overly rigid
- sensory-intense
- ambiguous
- urgency-driven
- socially coded rather than explicit

Reasonable adjustments change the **conditions**, not the person.

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1. ND-Affirming Adjustments

Reducing pressure without lowering expectations

ND-affirming adjustments recognise that capacity fluctuates and access is state-dependent.

Examples include:

- Flexible start and finish times
- Hybrid or remote options where possible
- Reduced emphasis on presenteeism
- Flexible deadlines with clear prioritisation
- Alternative ways to demonstrate competence

What this supports:

- energy regulation
- consistency over time
- reduced burnout risk
- sustainable engagement

Avoid framing adjustments as:

- "special treatment"
- temporary favours
- performance issues

Adjustments are **access supports**, not rewards.

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2. Sensory Accommodations

Reducing overload that drains capacity

Sensory strain is one of the most overlooked drivers of fatigue, shutdown, and withdrawal.

Common sensory accommodations:

- Noise-reducing options (quiet rooms, headphones)
- Control over lighting (natural light, lamps, reduced glare)

- Flexible seating (choice of location, movement options)
- Camera-optional meetings
- Reduced visual clutter in digital and physical spaces

What this supports:

- emotional regulation
- cognitive clarity
- stamina across the day

Important note:

What is regulating for one person may be overwhelming for another. Choice matters.

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3. Workflow Redesign Ideas

Making work and learning doable, not depleting

Many difficulties attributed to "organisation" are actually **workflow design problems**.

Helpful workflow adjustments:

- Clear task ownership and scope
- Explicit priorities (what matters most vs what can wait)
- Breaking work into defined stages
- Reducing unnecessary task-switching
- Allowing deep-work blocks without interruption

For education settings:

- Clear marking criteria
- Predictable assignment structures
- Flexible formats for demonstrating learning
- Staggered deadlines where possible

What this supports:

- task initiation
- follow-through
- reduced overwhelm
- improved output quality

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4. Communication Supports

Making expectations legible

Communication is one of the highest-impact adjustment areas.

Common communication supports:

- Written instructions alongside verbal ones
- Clear agendas for meetings or classes
- Explicit deadlines and success criteria
- Advance notice of changes
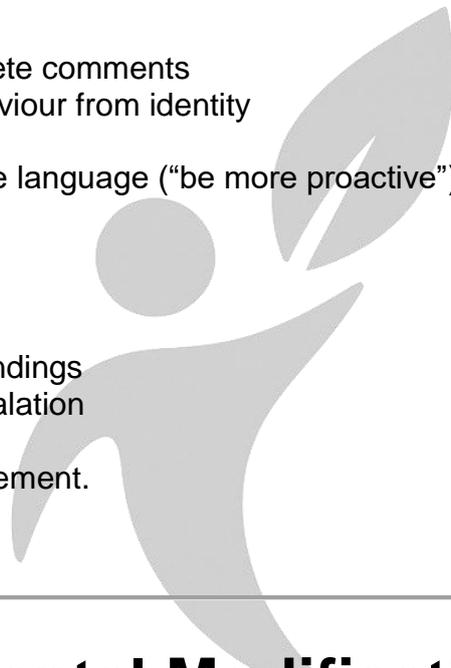- Permission to ask clarifying questions without judgement

For feedback:

- Specific and concrete comments
- Separation of behaviour from identity
- Clear next steps
- Avoidance of vague language ("be more proactive")

What this supports:

- reduced anxiety
- fewer misunderstandings
- less emotional escalation

Clarity is not micromanagement.
It is **access**.

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5. Environmental Modifications

Designing spaces that don't demand constant self-regulation

Environmental design shapes behaviour far more than motivation does.

Examples of environmental modifications:

- Quiet or low-stimulus zones
- Predictable layouts and signage
- Access to movement or breaks without scrutiny
- Reduced crowding where possible
- Digital platforms with simplified interfaces

In education:

- Quiet exam or study spaces
- Flexible seating
- Reduced sensory load during assessments
- Breaks built into longer sessions

What this supports:

- nervous system safety
- sustained attention
- reduced masking

Adjustments should not require disclosure

One of the biggest barriers to access is the requirement to disclose.

Best practice includes:

- offering adjustments universally where possible
- normalising flexibility for everyone
- separating access from diagnosis
- training managers and educators to implement adjustments confidently

Disclosure should be **optional**, not mandatory.

Adjustments are not static

What works at one time may not work later.

Good adjustment practice includes:

- regular check-ins
- permission to adapt or change supports
- shared responsibility between individual and system
- removal of supports that no longer help

Adjustments are a **process**, not a one-off event.

Common myths to challenge

- "If we do this for one person, we'll have to do it for everyone"
  → Often true… and that's a good thing.

- "They're coping fine without adjustments"
  → Coping is not the same as functioning sustainably.
- "This lowers standards"
  → Adjustments remove barriers so standards can actually be met.

What effective adjustments achieve

When adjustments are implemented well, organisations and institutions see:

- reduced burnout and attrition
- improved consistency and output
- better engagement
- fewer crises and conflicts
- increased trust

Inclusion becomes **structural**, not performative.

A final note

Reasonable adjustments are not about asking people to be less neurodivergent.

They are about asking systems to be **less harmful**.

When environments change, people often need fewer accommodations… not because they are masking better, but because **the system finally fits**.

That is the goal.