

City College Plymouth Workplace Information

For many people, dyslexia can present a serious obstacle to finding a job. A bad experience of education may result in a lack of confidence and self-esteem. Problems with reading and writing can make it difficult to apply for jobs. It may also be difficult to do some aspects of a job without the employer making some adjustments. The information on this page is designed to help you towards a successful career.

Careers Advice.

When considering a career or a job move, it is important for the dyslexic candidate to carefully and honestly think about their strengths, weaknesses and skill sets. What do you find difficult? There are many reasonable adjustments and types of support that can be offered to employees with dyslexic tendencies to successfully help with areas of difficulty. However, there are situations and jobs where these may not be sufficiently effective to ensure adequate performance.

Avoiding stress: People with dyslexia can be particularly prone to stress, and struggling to cope in the workplace can often lead to stress related illness.

What are you good at?

It is important to choose a type of work which you would enjoy, would be good at and would be likely to play more to your strengths than your weaknesses.

Supporting the weak areas.

There are many successful adjustments which can be offered to employees with dyslexic difficulties to address their weaker points, such as effective assistive software and training to help with written work and the use of a digital recorder instead of note taking.

Dyslexic strengths:

Many dyslexic people have above average talents in a number of important areas. While not everyone will have outstanding gifts, all will have strengths. Skills such as big-picture thinking, lateral thinking and problem solving, visual strengths and an intuitive understanding of how things work are often the hallmarks of successful dyslexic people.

People with dyslexia are frequently successful in entrepreneurship, sales, art and design, entertainment, acting, engineering, architecture, I.T., computer animation, technical and practical trades and professions.

Analyse your profile of strengths and weaknesses. You may find it helpful to draw up a table of your strengths, your weaknesses and skill sets. Then look at the job description and see how closely you match.

Job Centre Plus.

Jobseekers who have dyslexic difficulties, whether formally diagnosed or not, would be advised to make an appointment at their local JobcentrePlus with the Disability Employment Adviser. Dyslexic jobseekers are only required to apply for a maximum of 5 jobs per week. Some Job centres have contracts with specialist providers who can support dyslexic adults.

You may also be referred to organisations such as the [Shaw Trust](#) and [Remploy](#) who specialise in helping people with disability into the job market.

Work Choice.

Resolving these difficulties will not always be easy. However, people with dyslexia may be eligible for help from government Work Choice scheme, via the Disability Employment Adviser. Work Choice helps people with disabilities whose needs cannot be met through other work programmes, Access to Work or workplace adjustments. This might be because you need more specialised support to find employment or keep a job once you have started work. If Work Choice is for you it will be tailored to meet your individual needs. It will focus on helping you achieve your full potential and moving towards being more independent.

For further information follow this link to the [Work Choice website](#).

Help with starting your own business.

If you are on Jobseekers Allowance and want to start your own business, there is now help available through the Jobcentre. You could be offered a mentor to help with your business plan, a loan and a weekly allowance for 26 weeks.

Princes Trust

The Princes Trust offers courses, opportunities and support for young people who may be unemployed, struggled at school, have been in trouble with the law, or have been in care:

- Young people aged 14-16 years who are not expecting to receive 5 GCSEs,
- Young people aged 16-25 years not in education,
- Training or working,
- Grants and support for people 18-30 years to become self-employed.
- For more information on the Princes Trust please follow this [link](#)

Organisations supporting job seekers with disabilities

National Careers Service:

A government funded organisation which gives you access to information, careers advice and resources, which can help you make more effective skills, work and life choices.

Tel: 0800 100 900.

Web: www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

University Careers Services:

Most University and Further Education establishments will offer a service to their students to support them into the workplace.

EmployAbility:

An organisation providing the essential link for disabled and dyslexic students and graduates to ease the transition from education to employment, giving free guidance and advice on internship and graduate opportunities with top employers, as well as recruitment processes including how to seek disability related adjustments. For more information on EmployAbility follow this [link](#).

Applying for Jobs and Promotions

CVs and Application Forms.

A well-presented C.V. or application form is essential for a job application to progress further. You may need help with this, and it is always a good idea to get a friend or family member to proofread and check it over before it is sent off. People with dyslexia are often not good at spotting their own mistakes. If you have difficulty with handwriting and filling in forms accurately with good spelling, you should request an electronic version from the employer. With an electronic version, you can draft your entries, spell check, and then copy and paste into the form.

Employers have an obligation under The Equality Act (2010) to offer 'reasonable adjustments' to people with disabilities, including dyslexia. If an electronic version of a form is not available, the employer could be asked to accept a C.V. instead of a handwritten form. A good covering letter tailored to the particular application and employer is also recommended.

Should I disclose Dyslexia?

There is no legal obligation to disclose dyslexic difficulties, and many people feel that they would prefer to leave this information off a C.V. or application form because of possible discrimination. Some application forms have a section asking about disabilities, but many people with dyslexia do not see themselves as having a disability.

Dyslexia is a neurological condition and therefore a protected characteristic that is covered under the Equality Act. If you were invited to interview, you may be required to do written tests or other assessment exercises. You may feel that disclosure would be appropriate at this point in order to request accommodations, such as extra time and other arrangements, depending on the nature and severity of your particular dyslexic difficulties.

Evidence of Dyslexia.

If you disclose dyslexia, the employer may request a copy of an adult (post 16 years) assessment report as evidence of disability. Many people have not been formally identified as having dyslexic difficulties, and others were only assessed at school and there may be no available documentation. This can be a problem for many people as dyslexia assessments are not funded, or available from the NHS and cost several hundred pounds. In some circumstances an employer may be encouraged to accept the results of a screening test.

Accommodations in Written Tests

If you are required to do written tests as part of the recruitment or promotion process, you may request appropriate accommodations. Extra time (+25%) is normal. In some cases you may need a specific recommendation from a suitably qualified assessor for particular accommodations in tests and exams. On-screen tests may be challenging for dyslexic people, as we all read less efficiently on screen. You may wish to request hard copy on a paper colour of your choice, and in a font and font size of your choice. Multiple choice and psychometric tests can be very challenging for many dyslexic people, you may wish to request an alternative style of assessment.

Interviews.

Under stress, dyslexic difficulties can become more pronounced. For instance taking on board the questions you are being asked, remembering information, organising your reply and finding the right words may all become problematic. If you feel that you are going to have difficulty giving a good account of yourself at interview because of this, you would be entitled to ask for accommodations. These could include:

- Having a list of the question areas in advance;
- Requesting that the interviewers ask about only one issue at a time, avoiding multiple questions; requesting that you be offered plenty of time to reply and not be hurried;

- Requesting that questions relating to events are asked in chronological order, not jumping about in time (to help your memory).
- Case Studies and Scenario exercises.
- If the interview process includes a case study or scenario exercise, you should request the case study well in advance to give you time to process the information and prepare your views. You should be allowed to take your notes in to the interview.

Prepare well.

In any event, careful preparation before an interview will always pay off. Try to anticipate the questions you are likely to be asked and organise your response, but avoid sounding rehearsed. You may be invited to ask some questions of your own about the job or the company: try to think of some interesting ones.

Organisations supporting Jobseekers with disabilities.

National Careers Service

Provides support with job search advice, skills tests and helping to choose careers. Open 7 days a week, over the phone or a face to face appointment.

Tel: 0800 100 900

Web: www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

Job Search: www.disabilityjobsite.co.uk

For Graduates and Students: www.employ-ability.org.uk

How to Help Your Dyslexic Employees

Please [click here](#) to view tips on how managers can help their dyslexic employees.