

Dyslexia in Adults Fact File No.5

Dyslexia and employment

The Disability Discrimination Act

This Act makes discrimination against disabled people in the workplace illegal. The government have made it clear that severe dyslexia is covered by the legislation.

This means employers must:

Make "reasonable adjustments" to their premises or employment arrangements if these substantially disadvantage a disabled employee, or prospective employee, compared to a non-disabled person.

Employers must not discriminate against a disabled person in any of the following circumstances:

- Recruitment and retention of employees.
- Promotions and transfers.
- Training and development.
- The dismissal process.

Fact Files
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The Data Protection Act reinforces some aspects of the DDA. Under this Act any written or electronically stored information about a person's dyslexia is "sensitive personal data" and may not be passed on without their permission.

Workplace Strengths and Weaknesses

Dyslexic employees can bring strengths to the workplace. These may include:

- Creativity
- Lateral thinking
- Problem solving
- Visual and special thinking
- Spoken communication skills
- A determination to overcome problems.



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Difficulties reported by dyslexic employees include:

- Following written and spoken instructions
- Remembering phone messages and content of meetings
- Filing and using directories, maps, charts and tables
- All aspects of written work
- Finding their way in a strange place
- Formulating thoughts to keep up in discussions
- Organisational skills, such as, keeping track of appointments, schedules and deadlines
- Concentration, especially in certain types of working environments e.g. very noisy or busy places