

Dyslexia Friendly Workplaces

A guide for employees






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An introduction to this publication

This short practical guide has been written to help inform dyslexic employees about support in the workplace, and how to ask for reasonable adjustments. It aims to answer some of the most frequently asked questions received by our helpline.



About the British Dyslexia Association

We believe that everyone with dyslexia should be able to reach their full potential in life. We campaign for an inclusive society that acknowledges, accepts and empowers individuals with dyslexia so that we can help create a kinder, fairer and stronger world.

Around 10% of the population has dyslexia. Dyslexia doesn't discriminate, occurring across all ethnicities and in people from all social groups. A vast number of individuals are undiagnosed and do not receive adequate support.

As a result, they face daily barriers: in education, in the workplace and in life. They may be excluded from activities, shamed for their differences or simply disregarded. Too many children and adults with dyslexia find it hard to thrive within a system that often fails to recognise, value or encourage them. And as a society, we are poorer for it.

At the British Dyslexia Association, we want to help all children and adults with dyslexia flourish. We believe that our world should welcome different ways of thinking and celebrate neurodiversity. By representing our community as the voice of dyslexia, we aim to ensure that all members of society, and especially those most disadvantaged and least privileged, receive the support they deserve.

We advocate for change in 3 ways



Firstly, we cultivate and maintain expertise in the field. For over fifty years we have been at the forefront of knowledge and understanding about dyslexia. We set the standard for professional training and work closely with researchers to enable continued learning and development in our sector. We provide expert information and resources about dyslexia.



Secondly, we engage widely with all stakeholders. We run a national helpline for the general public and regularly deliver events and webinars for groups or organisations to raise awareness and disseminate best practice. We liaise regularly with our members and work closely with our fantastic network of Local Dyslexia Associations who provide local knowledge and assistance. We collaborate with other organisations working in our sector to strengthen our approach.



Finally, we empower people living with dyslexia. We support individuals seeking screening or assessment and help them to understand their statutory rights. We work with schools, employers and other organisations to encourage inclusive practice. We work with policymakers both locally and nationally to challenge the current status quo and call for changes that unlock the potential of our community.

**We welcome you on this journey with us as, together,
we create a dyslexia-friendly society.**

Section 1

Dyslexia in the workplace

Dyslexia is a lifelong genetic neurological specific learning difference that affects around 10% of the population.

- It primarily affects the way people read, process, and remember written information.
- It can also impact upon memory, organisation, planning and sequencing skills.
- Everyone will have their own unique experience of dyslexia and how it affects them.
- The impact of dyslexic challenges will vary depending upon the type of job and the workplace environment.
- Dyslexia is not linked to intelligence, or a result of a poor education. It can impact anyone regardless of gender, age, race, or culture.

Visual Difficulties

- Some dyslexic people also experience visual discomfort or disturbance when they read. These difficulties can impact reading ability or make reading very tiring.
- Visual difficulties are separate from dyslexia and can be experienced by both dyslexic and non-dyslexic individuals.
- Some people find that coloured overlays or lenses can help – but there is a mixed body of evidence to suggest that this works.
- If you experience visual difficulties, you should get these checked by a registered optometrist.

Co-occurring Difficulties

- Dyslexia can also co-occur with other specific learning differences such as dyspraxia, dyscalculia and ADHD which can present additional challenges in the workplace.

Section 2

The Equality Act 2010 - legal protection

Most dyslexic people would not describe themselves as disabled, but because dyslexia can have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on day-to-day activities, it can be a recognised disability under the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act:

- Prohibits discrimination in the workplace.
- Provides legal protection.
- Requires employers to make reasonable adjustments. These are changes or equipment that you might need to help you work easily and productively.

When does an employer have to make reasonable adjustments?

The Equality Act 2010 requires an employer to implement reasonable adjustments when:

- They know, or could reasonably be expected to know, someone is disabled.
- A disabled staff member or job applicant asks for reasonable adjustments.
- Someone who's disabled is having difficulty with any part of their job.

The duty applies when someone who is disabled would be at a substantial disadvantage because of their disability compared with people who don't share that disability. As dyslexia is a hidden disability, your challenges may not be seen by your employer. Some employers may require you to evidence this before they put reasonable adjustments in place.

Your personal dyslexic challenges may not present a substantial disadvantage in the job you do and therefore you may not need reasonable adjustments to be put in place.

Section 3

What is a reasonable adjustment?

What's considered reasonable depends on the situation and will vary for each person and each organisation. It will depend upon things like:

- The impact of your disability.
- How effective the adjustment will be (will it reduce or remove the disadvantage?)
- How practicable the changes are.
- Could it harm the health and safety of others.
- The size of the organisation and the nature of the business activities.
- The cost of the adjustment. Is it affordable for the business.
- Is there any external funding available to support you.

Different things will work for different people. While reasonable adjustments are the responsibility of your employer, it will be helpful for you to think about the sorts of challenges your specific role will present for you, and then think about what would help to reduce the impact of these. It is not possible to give a definitive list of what would be a reasonable adjustment as this will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. The most common adjustments for dyslexic individuals tend to fall into the following categories:

- Assistive Technology and training in how to use the software.
- Workplace Strategy Coaching.
- Policy amendments.

Section 3

What is a reasonable adjustment?

Assistive technology (AT). Many jobs now involve computers and the most commonly used software packages have standard features such as dictation and screen reading ability built in to support accessibility and inclusion. These built-in tools may offer sufficient support for you, or you may need additional software products and applications that can be bought by your employer to support any aspect of working. Identifying your needs and exploring whether AT can support these needs should form part of the discussion on reasonable adjustments.

Assistive Technology training is essential to ensure that you understand and can benefit from using the many specialist features of the technology and integrate this into your role. Even if you have used a software program before, it is worth having a refresher training session to see how any new features may help you.

Workplace Strategy Coaching aims to help you identify and develop your own coping strategies and encourage independent working. The coaching should be delivered by a specialist workplace coach who has a good understanding of dyslexia and strategies that can be used to help support workplace challenges. Access to work can fund workplace strategy coaching.

Reviewing organisational policies. Some policies which apply to everyone in your organisation may disproportionately disadvantage dyslexic employees. For example, policies such as hot-desking may have more of an impact on you if your dyslexia affects your concentration, and you are easily distracted by noise. You may need to see whether your employer would consider the allocation of a fixed desk location to be a reasonable adjustment.

Section 4

Should I tell my employer?

This is a decision for you to make individually. It will depend upon you and your personal circumstances. Everyone is different, and all organisations are different. There may be advantages and disadvantages to sharing this information.

Think about your specific dyslexic challenges, and how much these will impact upon the job you are doing and whether or not you will need additional support to carry out your role. You will have to tell your employer if you want to ask for reasonable adjustments

You may like to consider the following to help you decide whether to tell your employer.

- Will your dyslexia impact your job?
- Do you already have good coping strategies you can use?
- Will you need reasonable adjustments such as assistive software or equipment to help you be successful?
- Do you feel confident in disclosing that you are dyslexic?
- Does your organisation embrace diversity, encourage individuals to disclose their challenges and offer support and encouragement?
- Is there a process in place to request reasonable adjustments?
- Do you know other dyslexic colleagues who already receive support?



Section 4

Should I tell my employer?

Remember that:

- There is no requirement to tell an employer that you are dyslexic.
- But an employer does not have to make reasonable adjustments if they do not know and could not reasonably be expected to know that you are dyslexic.
- If your employer doesn't know that you are dyslexic, any challenges associated with your dyslexia may be misinterpreted and seen as performance or conduct issues.

When should I tell my employer that I am dyslexic?

The Equality Act says that employers have a duty not to discriminate against employees and potential employees. If you need reasonable adjustments to be made, there are various stages at which you may wish to tell your employer you are dyslexic. Remember that it is your choice, you do not have to disclose that you are dyslexic, but you cannot expect to receive reasonable adjustments if they do not know.

- When applying for a job you can request that information about the job and the application form is provided in an alternative format – as long as this format is a reasonable adjustment.
- In an interview or assessment centre. You can ask for reasonable adjustments if you need these to participate fully.
- When you start your new role. If you do not need reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process, you may choose to wait until you start your new role and then discuss this with HR or your line manager.

You may also choose not to tell your employer.

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Should I tell my employer?

Do my colleagues and line manager have to know – or can I just tell HR?

Your employer will need to consider carefully whether other people in the organisation need to be involved, or need to know the precise reason why an adjustment is being made. Your employer may feel that they have to tell your supervisor or line manager about an adjustment and the reasons for it. But they must not reveal information about you to others in the organisation without consulting you first.

I have no proof that I am dyslexic. Will I need to have a diagnosis to get reasonable adjustments?

This can sometimes be a tricky one. You don't need to have a formal diagnosis, but you will need to be able to evidence to an employer that you have an impairment that causes a substantial adverse effect on your normal day to day activities to be covered by the Equality Act. If you do not have proof that you are dyslexic, you may need to find sufficient evidence of dyslexia in your performance to trigger your employer's duty to make reasonable adjustments.

Think about your work:

- Is there evidence in your work which indicates you are dyslexic?
- Has your employer identified any performance issues that are indicative of dyslexia?

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Should I tell my employer?

You could also consider taking an online screening test which will give an indication of dyslexia and could be presented as evidence.

It is worth having a conversation with your employer before paying for any new screening test or diagnostic assessment, so you can understand their requirements. You may also wish to have a conversation with your employer so that they understand that:

- Dyslexia is a life-long condition, so a diagnosis at any age is proof that you are dyslexic.
- Dyslexia is a hidden disability and many of the signs are not obvious.
- It is quite common not to have proof that you are dyslexic if you were diagnosed through a school or college.
- Private assessments can be costly and can take time to arrange. Having an assessment might not be feasible unless your employer is able to arrange and pay for an assessment for you.

How do I ask for reasonable adjustments?

Have a look on your company website or employee handbook. If your organisation has a published policy and process for requesting reasonable adjustments, you should follow their process. If you cannot find a published policy, you may wish to start with an informal conversation with your line manager or HR manager.

- Keep the initial request informal and polite.
- State the specific challenges that you experience because you are dyslexic and ask for a discussion about reasonable adjustments.
- You may wish to discuss the need for a workplace needs assessment.
- Think about possible solutions – equipment or training that might help you.
- Be flexible and work with your employer to find a solution that works for both parties.

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Should I tell my employer?

How do I identify the best reasonable adjustments for me?

- Most likely you will have a good awareness of your specific challenges, and you may already have a good idea from college, university, or a previous job, of the sorts of software and equipment that will help you.
- Have a think about the new role you are doing and the sorts of tasks you will need to carry out. You may not require any adjustments to be made.
- Start with an informal conversation about reasonable adjustments with your line manager or HR manager. This should help determine what is required.
- If you are unsure of what you will need, it might be useful to arrange a workplace needs assessment with a qualified assessor to look at the tasks of the specific job, discuss any challenges you think you may have in carrying out these tasks, and identify appropriate solutions for support.

What is a workplace needs assessment?

A workplace needs assessment explores potential adjustments through a semi-structured interview and job analysis, with you, your manager, and a Human Resources professional. A formal needs assessment is most useful if this is your first job, or this is a very different role than ones you have done before. particular job role. It might be that you are newly diagnosed as dyslexic and do not have any previous experience of reasonable adjustments.

During the assessment the assessor will discuss:

- The specific tasks and competencies of the job. The working environment, and any associated training and assessments that will feature.
- The nature and impact of your dyslexia, specifically in relation to the role. A diagnostic assessment report (from an assessment at any age) may help facilitate this process

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Should I tell my employer?

but don't worry if you haven't got a copy. It should not be needed for you to have a workplace needs assessment or to receive reasonable adjustments.

- Previous experience of using assistive technology and coping strategies and how feasible and effective these are for the new role.
- An agreed set of reasonable adjustments to be implemented. These should be timed and costed. There should also be a plan of phased integration and identification of any support or training which will be needed for these adjustments to be implemented successfully.

Do I need a diagnosis before I book a workplace needs assessment?

You do not need to have a formal diagnosis of dyslexia to book a workplace needs assessment, but you do need to know what you find challenging and to have a good idea of your own individual strengths and weaknesses so that the assessor can ensure that any recommendations are tailored to your individual needs. If you have never been formally diagnosed as dyslexic it would be a good idea to have a diagnostic assessment before booking a workplace needs assessment so that you can understand your own individual profile of strengths and challenges. You should talk to your HR or Line Manager about this and the options available to you.

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Should I tell my employer?

Where can I book a workplace needs assessment?

All workplaces vary. So, you will need to ask your HR manager how to book an assessment. Your organisation may:

- Offer an assessment with an in-house assessor who has been trained to carry out workplace needs assessments.
- Pay for a private assessment with an external provider such as the British Dyslexia Association.
- Tell you to contact Access to Work -a publicly funded service which provides practical advice and support for disabled employees and their employers. This is a service which you must contact yourself, but your HR team should be able to talk you through the process of what to do, if you want them to help you.

Does my employer have to pay for a workplace needs assessment?

There is no obligation for an employer to pay for a private workplace needs assessment. Talk to your HR or Line Manager about the options available. All dyslexic employees are entitled to contact Access to Work. Access to Work will always ask for your permission before talking to your employer.

What sort of adjustments can I ask for?

Here are some examples of simple reasonable adjustments that may help support dyslexic challenges. Many of these are free and simple to introduce, but some may require changes to be made to organisational policies and procedures and these may be more difficult to achieve. Others may require the purchase of specialist equipment or software. Access to Work grants may contribute to some of the costs associated with this.

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Should I tell my employer?

Reading challenges:

- Ask for instructions to be given verbally rather than in writing.
- Highlight salient points in documents.
- Use voice mail as opposed to written memos.
- Ask for written materials, presentations, and agendas in advance of a meeting.
- Allow plenty of time to read and re-read information.
- Ask if the information can be provided in alternative formats which avoid reading – ie videos, graphs, pictures, diagrams, audio files and flow charts.
- Ask a line manager, or colleague to talk you through information.
- Use standard dictation, screen reading and spell-checking features on your pc.
- Change the background colour, font settings on your computer screen.
- Print information onto coloured (not white) paper.

If you need more support that this you may need specialist Assistive Software, Equipment, or training such as:

- Specialist screen reading and/or dictation software.
- A Reading Pen for unfamiliar words in printed material.
- Printed information on coloured (not white) paper.
- Training to use specialist assistive software.
- Workplace strategy coaching to develop new coping strategies.
- Mentoring.

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Should I tell my employer?

If you have not used assistive software before you may benefit from a workplace needs assessment to understand more about the different programmes available and how these might help you. You could also do your own research online. Most software and App providers offer demonstrations or free trials so that you can see the features and benefits.

Writing, spelling and grammar challenges

- Get a colleague to take the minutes of meetings.
- Use standard accessibility features such as Microsoft Office Immersive Reader, or mobile phone Apps to help check spelling, punctuation and Grammar.
- Ask a colleague to proofread work.

You could also ask for specialist assistive software or equipment such as:

- Mind-mapping software.
- A digital voice recorder.
- A mobile phone or tablet with voice enabled features.
- Specialist speech to text software or applications e.g., Dragon.
- Check whether your organisation allows you to download free grammar checking software such as Grammarly.
- Use specialist screen reading software/spell checking software e.g. Texthelp.

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Should I tell my employer?

Working at a computer

- Change background colour of screen and font options to suit individual preference.
- Use built in screen reading and dictation features.
- Use an anti-glare screen filter if required .
- Take frequent breaks, at least every hour.
- Alternate computer work with other tasks where possible.
- Avoid continuous all day computer work.



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Should I tell my employer?

Difficulty remembering and following verbal instructions:

- Ask for instructions one at a time.
- Try to ensure you can give the task your full attention.
- Write down important information as soon as it is told to you and repeat it back to ensure you have everything noted down.
- Dictate notes and instructions onto your mobile phone so you can play it back.

Concentration difficulties/distractions:

- Try to find a quiet workspace away from distractions, for example away from doors, busy phones, loud machinery.
- Switch off email notifications and put phone to voicemail.
- Build in rest breaks and remember to check for urgent messages.
- Find a quiet working environment such as a library, other offices, and meeting rooms when others are not using them. Work from home when needed.
- Use noise cancelling headphones. Play music or white noise to block out other distractions.

Coping with interruptions:

- Use a “do not disturb” sign when specific tasks require intense concentration.
- Turn off notifications on computers.
- Encourage co-workers not to disturb you unless absolutely necessary.
- If you are interrupted ask for a chance to pause and write down what you are doing to refer to when resuming work.
- Ensure that each task is completed before starting another.

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Should I tell my employer?

Remembering appointments and deadlines:

- Set reminders for important deadlines and appointments.
- Hang a wall planner that visually highlights daily/monthly appointments, deadlines, tasks and projects.
- Use post it notes or other visible reminders.
- Use mobile phones for appointment reminders. Set an alarm.
- Use the daily calendar and alarm features on your computer or phone.

Organisation of property:

- Ensure that work areas are organised, neat and tidy.
- Keep items where they can be clearly seen, for example shelves and bulletin boards.
- Colour code items.
- Ensure work areas are well lit.

Organising workflow:

- Use a wall planner or digital calendar or planning tool.
- Prioritise important tasks.
- Create a daily, dated “To Do” list.
- Use diaries.
- Allow extra time for unforeseen occurrences.
- Build planning time into each day.

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Should I tell my employer?

Reversing numbers:

- Say the numbers out loud or write them down.
- Where possible, copy and paste numbers rather than rekeying them.
- Use a talking calculator or use the calculator function on TextHelp software.

Directional difficulties:

- Always try to use the same route.
- Plan the route and visible landmarks.
- Use detailed maps or sat nav.

Short term memory problems especially names, numbers and lists:

- Use mnemonic devices and acronyms.
- Organise details on paper so that they can be referred to easily using diagrams and flowcharts.
- Check back understanding.
- Use multi-sensory learning techniques such as reading material into a phone or voice recorder and then playing it back whilst re-reading.
- Use a calculator.

Section 4

Should I tell my employer?

Can I record meetings?

Most organisations have a policy on this. It may be considered to be a reasonable adjustment.

- Your employer may prefer to delegate note taking to another colleague.
- You must always ask permission to record work meetings, including grievance meetings, if you require this as a reasonable adjustment.
- Your employer may prefer to arrange to make the recording themselves and provide you with a copy or a transcript of the recording.

What happens if my employer says the adjustment is not reasonable?

Sometimes your employer will not consider an adjustment to be reasonable. This might be on the basis of cost, or feasibility of implementing the adjustment. If this happens, try to work together with your employer to find alternative solutions. It will be helpful to ask why your employer does not consider something to be a reasonable adjustment, and for you to tell your employer:

- Why you have suggested a particular reasonable adjustment.
- Specifically, how this adjustment will help you with your dyslexic challenges.
- Any concerns you have about the alternative adjustments being offered.

An open dialogue and working together to find a suitable alternative is most likely to help create a successful outcome for both you and your employer.

Section 5

Reviewing and amending reasonable adjustments

It is important to recognise that reasonable adjustments are not an instant remedy guaranteeing immediate success. Although progress in overcoming dyslexia related difficulties is likely to be seen quite quickly, it may take three to six months to achieve maximum benefit, depending on the nature of the dyslexic difficulties in relation to the job specification.

For reasonable adjustments to be effective, the following need to be in place:

- Appropriate adjustments with any related training.
- A willingness on your part to embrace the adjustments and training.
- Support and understanding from colleagues and management.
- A culture of openness which encourages and acts upon on-going feedback.

It will be beneficial to talk to your line manager about setting up a process which encourages regular discussion and review of any reasonable adjustments that have been implemented.

This is likely to include:

- Regular check-ins to ensure that assistive technology and other adjustments are working well.
- Identifying when coping strategy training may be beneficial.
- Identifying when colleagues and line managers would benefit from dyslexia awareness training.

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Reviewing and amending reasonable adjustments

- Assistive Technology refresher training.
- Mentoring support from a senior manager who is dyslexic or has good awareness of dyslexia in the workplace.
- Identifying changes within the role which may require new adjustments to be made.
- Helping you manage your workload and deadlines.
- Helping you manage stress.

Can I get help for professional exams and training?

You may have received some reasonable adjustments (known as access arrangements) in any formal qualifications that you took at school. If so, it is likely that you would benefit from similar adjustments in order to sit timed assessments and professional exams as part of your employment. Access arrangements from education are not automatically transferable into the workplace so you will need to have a discussion about how to secure any arrangements you may need.

Exam Access arrangements that can be requested are likely to include some (or all) of the following:

- 25% extra time (50% in exceptional cases.)
- Use of a computer or human reader or scanning pen.
- Use of a human scribe, dictation software or laptop in place of handwriting.
- Rest breaks.
- Own room.
- Alternative format paper (this may be digital, or paper based.)
- Use of a coloured overlay or questions printed onto coloured paper.

Section 5

Reviewing and amending reasonable adjustments

It is important to know that:

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

Some of the above access arrangements may require you to provide formal evidence to show your entitlement based on certain pre-determined criteria.

Being dyslexic does not automatically entitle you to receive extra time.

Most exams and assessments set by external and professional bodies will require evidence in the form of test scores, prior to agreeing to the adjustment.

Individual awarding bodies should be contacted in advance to understand their specific requirements and to ensure you have sufficient time to be tested and submit the evidence. This information may be available on the website of the professional body.

For training and assessments within your organisation you should talk to your HR or line manager if you need access arrangements to be made. Most internal assessments will grant arrangements informally without evidence.

Reasonable adjustments must not impact upon the standard of skills being tested.

Section 6

Resolving workplace disputes

If you have a concern or complaint about your employer, you may wish to raise this as a grievance. There may also be circumstances where your employer raises a grievance against you. Your employer should have a formal grievance process which you should follow. This should comply with the ACAS Code of Practice for Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.

It is usually better to try to resolve any issues informally first before raising a formal grievance.

Raising a grievance

- You should put your grievance in writing (or dictate it into a written document if this is your preferred means of communication) It can be helpful to provide a timeline of events and to attach any supporting documents – i.e. a report for a workplace needs assessment, or a copy of a screening report or diagnostic assessment report if one is available.
- Your employer must arrange for a formal meeting to be held with you within a reasonable period of time after the grievance is received.
- You have a right to be heard and should be allowed to explain your grievance and how you think it could be resolved.
- Your employer will then carry out an investigation. They can ask any questions that they need to and may adjourn the meeting to allow time for an investigation to take place.
- You may also suggest adjourning the meeting so that further investigation can be considered. This might include time for example for a diagnostic assessment to be carried out, or for reasonable adjustments to be put in place.

Section 6

Resolving workplace disputes

- Your employer should take notes of the meeting and send you a copy.
- You can also take your own notes – or you may ask for a notetaker to accompany you in the meeting.
- You may be allowed to make a recording of the meeting, but you will need to seek permission from your employer first. Alternatively, your employer may make their own recording and supply you with a copy, or a transcript of the recording.
- You have the right to be accompanied at grievance meetings by a colleague, a trade union representative or an official employed by a trade union.
- Your employer may sometimes agree that you can be accompanied by a friend or relative instead. They should be allowed to address the hearing and sum up your case on your behalf. They should also be allowed to confer with you during the hearing, but do not have the right to answer questions on your behalf.
- There is no right to legal representation at a grievance hearing.
- Your employer must send you their decision in writing within a reasonable time, setting out any action that they intend to take.
- You should be allowed to appeal and take the grievance further if it has not been resolved.
- The appeal should be dealt with impartially, if possible, by a manager who has no previous involvement.
- You have a right to be accompanied to the appeal hearing or meeting as well.
- The outcome of the appeal should be sent to you within a reasonable time.

Section 7

Legal Advice

Where appropriate you should follow your organisation's grievance procedure before starting legal proceedings.

- Legal advice should ideally be given by a suitably qualified person with professional liability insurance.
- Detailed below are some places where professional legal advice can be obtained free of charge and others where more general free advice and information about legal matters can be obtained.

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

The main function of ACAS is to provide employers and employees with advice to try and prevent or resolve employment disputes. ACAS must also legally be notified before bringing any claim to an employment tribunal, so that they can offer both parties the option of early conciliation.

ACAS is the best place to start for anyone in need of advice about a workplace dispute.

ACAS operates a free, impartial, and confidential helpline for advice: call 0300 123 1100.

Full details of the helpline and other services are available on the ACAS site:

Website: [acas.org.uk](https://www.acas.org.uk)

Legal Aid

In discrimination claims brought under the Equality Act 2010, legal aid is still available from the government. Legal Aid is not available for other employment law cases.

For more information including how to apply, see the Gov.uk page on legal aid.

Website: [gov.uk | Legal Aid](https://www.gov.uk/legal-aid)

Trade unions

Trade unions often provide legal advice and representation for their

members. This might include personally representing union members in employment tribunal proceedings, or engaging lawyers. Your organisational union representative should be able to advise you on joining and on the services that the union provides.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Government Equalities Office. It has a statutory mandate to challenge discrimination and protect and promote human rights. It provides free advice on equality law issues. It also provides funding and legal assistance to people pursuing discrimination claims.

Further information and guidance are available.

Website: [equalityhumanrights.com](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

The Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS)

The EASS is an independent service for people who need advice on discrimination or human rights law. It does not provide legal advice itself but can help people find a solicitor who can then apply to the Equality and Human Rights Commission Legal Support Scheme for funding.

More information can be found here: equalityadvisoryservice.com

The Disability Law Service

The Disability Law Service provides a free advice line for anyone who thinks they might have been subject to disability discrimination. They can also sometimes provide full support, including tribunal appearances for those in the London area.

For more information call: 020 7791 9800 (Mon – Fri 10am- 1pm and 2- 5pm)

WorkRights

WorkRights is a digital legal information platform offered by the Disability Law Service. It can provide guidance on reasonable adjustments in the workplace, including providing a template letter that you can use to send to your employer.

Website: workrights.org.uk | [Pathways](#)

Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice provides free face-to-face and telephone advice on a range of issues, including employment rights. For legal advice, help in employment matters and to find your nearest bureau, visit their site:

Website: citizensadvice.org.uk

LawWorks

LawWorks is a charity that provides free legal help to individuals and community groups who cannot afford to pay for legal advice and are unable to access legal aid. It connects eligible individuals with solicitors that are willing to act for them for free. It also provides assistance through free legal advice clinics and offers a search function to find your nearest clinic. More information can be found on their site.

Website: lawworks.org.uk

Law Centres Network

Law Centres work within their communities to defend the legal rights of local people. All Law Centres are independent and operate on a not-for-profit basis. They offer legal advice, casework, and representation to individuals in their local area.

Website: lawcentres.org.uk | [I am looking for advice](#)

Advocate

Advocate is a charity that provides free legal assistance from volunteer barristers in all areas of law, including employment law. It is available for individuals who are unable to pay for legal advice and are not entitled to Legal Aid. For more information and to find out if you are eligible.

Website: weareadvocate.org.uk

Disability Rights UK – Right to Participate

This website is part of Disability Rights UK's Right to Participate project, funded by the Legal Education Foundation. The project aims to increase awareness of the Equality Act, especially the ways it can protect disabled people from discrimination in everyday situations. The Take Action section contains 'guided pathways' through Employment with drop-down menus for each situation.

Website: righttoparticipate.org.uk

Advice Now

Publish a series of information guides to help you make sense of the law and your rights. Includes advice about employment.

Website: advicenow.org.uk

The Free Representation Unit (FRU)

The FRU provides free representation in employment tribunals for some people who are not eligible for legal aid and cannot afford lawyers. Most of their work is done by law students or early career legal professions. Most cases are referred to the FRU by one of their referral agencies, including Citizens Advice. They also operate a self-referral scheme where you can get in touch directly and ask for representation at a short tribunal meeting. To find out more about eligibility criteria visit:

Website: thefru.org.uk

The University of Law

The university of law aims to help people who would not otherwise be able to access legal advice. Their pro bono service provides free legal advice to members of the public across a range of legal issues. The service is supported by law students who play a crucial role in providing the service by interviewing clients, undertaking research, and providing advice. They are supervised by experienced and qualified lawyers at all times and this service is part of their training to become the lawyers of the future.

Website: law.ac.uk | [Legal Advice for the Public](#)

Section 5

How the BDA can help

Helpline: bdadyslexia.org.uk | [Helpline](#)

Our helpline offers free, confidential, impartial information and signposting for anyone with a question about dyslexia.

Call: **0333 405 4567** or email: helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk or through direct message from our Facebook and Instagram.



Section 8

How the BDA can help

Assessments

We offer a range of assessment services.

Individual Assessment Service

Our Individual Assessment Service will put you in contact with a BDA Approved Assessor that can organise and carry out a Diagnostic assessment for Dyslexia.

Corporate Assessment Service

If the assessment is being funded by your employer, we will organise the assessment for you through our Corporate Assessment Service.

We offer face to face assessments and remote assessments via video platforms such as Zoom for both assessment services.

Workplace Needs Assessments

A workplace needs assessment is designed to identify reasonable adjustments that can be implemented to support you in the workplace. The assessment involves a semi-formal remote interview with an experienced workplace needs assessor, followed by a report of recommendations.

For further information on any of our assessment services and to book visit:

Website: bdadyslexia.org.uk | [Assessments](#)

Section 8

How the BDA can help

BDA website

The BDA website contains more information on our full range of services plus lots of helpful advice for adults in the workplace which can be found by visiting:

Website: bdadyslexia.org.uk | [Advice](#)

Access to Work

Access to work is a publicly funded service which can help dyslexic people get or stay in work. It will contribute to the additional employment costs that an employer would not normally be expected to cover.

Who is eligible?

Dyslexic employees can get support from Access to Work if they meet the following criteria:

- Are aged 16+ years and need support to do their job.
- Have a full time or part time paid job, or about to start or return to one.
- Live and work in England, Scotland, or Wales. Northern Ireland has its own system.

This includes:

- Those on an apprenticeship, internship, work trial or work placement provided that the employee is paid. Voluntary work is excluded.
- Self-employed people
- Employees who work from home some or all of the time.
- All employees regardless of earnings or savings.

Section 8

How the BDA can help

- Those claiming most benefits, as long as an employee works more than 1 hour a week.
- Those claiming Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) if they work less than 16 hours a week. (Subject to certain rules)

Access to Work support is not available for:

- Voluntary work
- Civil servants. Employers will provide support instead of Access to Work.

How to Apply: - There are 4 simple steps.

Step 1: You can apply online or by phone providing the requested details. You will need to do this yourself; your employer cannot do this for you.

Step 2: Access to Work will phone to follow up to collect more information and determine whether or not you would benefit from a workplace visit or a video call to discuss and determine your needs.

Step 3: A decision letter will be issued telling you how much your grant will be and what it should pay for.

Step 4: Claiming money from the grant. The decision letter will explain how to claim the money from the grant. Your employer may need to help you pay for the support first and then claim the money back. For some services Access to Work pays the provider direct. Grants can be renewed 12 weeks before expiry if ongoing support is needed. The decision letter will say when the grant ends.

Further information is available from the [Government Website | Access to Work](#)

The British Dyslexia Association
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RG12 8FB

Helpline: 0333 405 4567
Website: bdadyslexia.org.uk