SOLAS An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna Further Education and Training Authority

Dyslexia Ireland

Dyslexia in the Workplace



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Who is this Booklet for?

Although Dyslexia is often discussed within the context of education, it is a lifelong difference that continues into adulthood and working life.

Despite growing awareness, misconceptions about dyslexia and uncertainty around workplace support continue to create barriers to workplace inclusion.

This booklet aims to bridge gaps in workplace support by providing clear, practical guidance on understanding dyslexia, navigating disclosure, accessing and implementing supports and creating inclusive workplaces.

Defining Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a learning difference that can cause difficulties with learning and work. It affects approximately 1 in 10 and occurs on a spectrum with some people mildly affected and others more severely.

While everyone with dyslexia is different, it commonly affects reading, spelling, writing, and related cognitive/processing skills. It may also impact areas such as maths and learning another language.

Dyslexia is not a general learning difficulty; it affects specific skills. Its impact can vary depending on the demands of the job role, the tasks involved, and the support available.

With the right understanding, accommodations and support people with dyslexia can achieve success in education, the workplace and in wider society.

Watch this video to hear dyslexic adults share their reflections on dyslexia: First signs of Dyslexia

Adult Dyslexia Assessment

Deciding to pursue an adult dyslexia assessment is a deeply personal and emotionally charged choice. For many, a formal diagnosis validates lifelong challenges, providing closure and greater self-acceptance. It represents a clear path forward, providing tailored guidance on effective workplace supports.

Our psychologists carry out comprehensive, contextualised assessments that consider the individual's personal, educational, and employment history.

- **Location:** at our Dublin city centre office or online
- **Duration and cost:** approx. 1-2 hours - €350 (as of autumn 2026)
- **Results:** immediate brief verbal summary, followed by a written report with recommendations within 4 weeks

To book, learn more, or watch our video guide on what to expect, visit https://dyslexia.ie/assessment/.

Private assessments are also available from independent educational psychologists via the Psychological Society of Ireland directory.

Hear from adults with dyslexia about the impact of having their dyslexia identified: Impact of assessment video.



Myths vs Facts

Despite growing awareness, myths about dyslexia persist. These can have a negative impact on self-esteem, career progression and day-to-day work life.

It's important to challenge these myths and develop an accurate understanding of dyslexia. Some of the most common are outlined below:

Myths	Facts
People with dyslexia see words "moving" or "dancing" on the page.	Dyslexia is a language processing difference, not a visual difficulty.
Dyslexia only affects reading, writing and spelling.	Dyslexia can also affect working memory, planning, organisation, and time-management.
Dyslexia is associated with lower IQ.	Dyslexia is unrelated to IQ; dyslexic individuals have a range of intellectual abilities, like the general population.
A person with a third-level education has "overcome" their dyslexia.	Dyslexia is lifelong; successful individuals have developed strategies to manage it, but they are still dyslexic.
All employees with dyslexia need the same supports.	Dyslexia affects people differently; supports should be tailored to their needs, strengths and role.

Myths vs Facts

Myths

- Reasonable accommodations give an unfair advantage.
- People with dyslexia are better suited to practical, hands-on jobs than academic or office-based roles.
- Dyslexia is easy to identify.
- Reasonable accommodations are expensive and difficult to implement.

Facts

- Reasonable accommodations level the playing field by removing barriers.
- People with dyslexia succeed accross all sectors: career success depends on aligning roles with individual strengths.
- Dyslexia is often invisible and may be masked through coping strategies.
- Most accommodations are low-cost or no-cost and involve simple adjustments.

Challenges

Dyslexia primarily affects **phonological processing** (the ability to recognise and manipulate sounds), making reading, spelling and writing more difficult.

It can also impact lesser-known areas such as working memory, orgnaisation and time-management and mental health, as outlined below:

Reading

Difficulty mapping letters to sounds (**decoding**) reduces reading speed, accuracy and comprehension making text processing more time-consuming and effortful.

Spelling and Writing

Difficulty mapping sounds to letters (**encoding**) causes spelling errors and slows writing, impacting organisation and expression.

Working Memory

The ability to hold and process short-term information. Difficulties can make it harder to retain instructions, follow discussions and complete multi-step tasks.

Organisation and Time-Management

Processing and sequencing challenges make it harder to break down tasks, prioritise, and manage competing demands.

Mental Health

Past negative experiences can lower confidence, fuel imposter syndrome, and limit career progression. Watch Mental Health and Adult Dyslexia to hear personal experiences and practical coping strategies.



Strengths

While supporting day-to-day challenges is important, so is recognising and leveraging the strengths dyslexic employees bring to the workplace.

Although certain strengths are often associated with dyslexia (outlined below), they are not universal and will vary between individuals. Unlocking them requires teamwork: employees sharing their unique skills, and managers providing opportunities to apply them.

Creative Problem-Solving

Managing lifelong challenges can build strong adaptability and resourcefulness, leading to fresh, innovative perspectives.

Visual and Spatial Skills

Strong visual and spatial skills can help with visualising concepts, spotting patterns, and solving complex design or system problems.

Verbal Communication

Strong spoken skills can support success in leadership, public speaking, negotiation, and client-facing roles.

Resilence and Determination

Navigating ongoing setbacks can build the resilience and growth mindset needed to excel in high-pressure roles.

Empathy

Lived experiences of challenges can foster strong interpersonal connections and peer support.

Disclosure

Disclosure and the Law

Dyslexia is recognised as a disability under Irish and EU law, supporting an individual's right to reasonable accommodations in the workplace.

Under the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 an employer must provide reasonable accommodations if an employee discloses dyslexia.

The Human Rights and Equality Commission (HREC) provides information and advice on workplace rights and responsibilities.

If an employee believes they have experienced discrimination, they should first raise the issue with their employer. If unresolved, a formal complaint can be made to the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) within six months of the incident.

Disclosure - A Choice

Disclosing dyslexia is a personal choice. Employees often weigh the potential benefits (e.g. accessing reasonable accommodations), against the possible risks (e.g. labelling, or discrimination).

If you are unsure whether to disclose, AHEAD's Guide on How to Tell Employers About Your Disability can help you make an informed decision.

You can also hear from adults with dyslexia about their workplace disclosure experiences in this video.

Disclosure

Disclosure - A Two-Way Street

Disclosures work best as a **partnership** -employees and employers working together to balance individual support needs with organisational demands.

Supporting Disclosure at an Organisation Level

Encourage disclosure by embedding the inclusive practices outlined in this booklet, e.g. clear policies, staff training, and access to support networks and resources.

For further guidance check out AHEAD's Disability Disclosure in the Workplace An Employer Toolkit



Disclosure Tips for Employees

1	2	3	4
Prepare Reflect on how dyslexia affects your work. Locate relevant policies and trial supports.	**Be open and specific** Dyslexia affects everyone differently. Share your challenges and encourage open discussion.	**Focus on solutions** Outline what currently helps you succeed, and potential future needs.	**Agree, review and follow-up** Document agreed supports, set review dates, and follow up as needed.

Disclosure Tips for Employers

1	2	3	4
Prepare Review disability legislation, internal policies, and support processes.	**Create a "safe space"** Be empathetic, patient, and let the employee share at their own pace.	**Focus on job impact and supports** Limit questions to job impact. Collaborate positively on supports without assumptions.	**Agree, review and follow-Up** Contact Dyslexia Ireland if you've questions. Document supports, set review dates, and follow up.

Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations are formal, tailored supports agreed between employer and employee to remove barriers and enable equal participation.

Most accommodations for dyslexia are low-cost or free, involving simple changes to working practices, the environment, or assistive technology.

Reading	• **Text-to-speech software.** • **Accessible written communication** (plain language, accessible/readable fonts (e.g. Arial, Verdana). • **Alternative formats** (e.g. infographics, voice notes).
Writing and Proofreading	• **Speech-to-text software.** • **Grammar and spell-checking tools.** • **Digital voice recorders.**
Verbal Communication	• **Follow-up emails** summarising discussions. • **Scheduled discussions** instead of unplanned interruptions.
Meetings	• **Agendas and materials shared in advance.** • **Avoid cold-calling.** • **AI transcription and note-taking tools.** • **Audio recordings.**

Reasonable Accommodations

Organisation Time-Management	• **Flexible deadlines.** • **Regular check-ins with manager.** • **Digital planning tools.**
Work Environment	• **Dedicated quiet workspace** (no hot-desking). • **Hybrid and flexible working arrangements.**

For more information on **assistive technology** in particular, check out:

- Dyslexia Ireland's website (Technology section)
- AHEAD's AT Hive
- CALL Scotland poster iPad apps for learners with dyslexia



Practical Strategies

Employees may develop their own practical strategies to manage workplace challenges. These can complement reasonable accommodations or be used independently where formal accommodations are not required or requested (e.g. due to concerns about stigma or discrimination.

Reading	• **Use free, built-in text-to-speech tools** (e.g. Immersive Reader, Read Aloud in Word). • **Access approved AI tools** to summarise complex information.
Writing	• **Use free, built-in speech-to-text tools** (e.g. Dictate in Word) to draft ideas and refine later. • **Use free, built-in text-to-speech tools** to proofread. • **Create templates** for recurring written tasks. • **Break writing into stages** (plan, draft, edit, review). • **Use approved AI tools** to improve clarity and structure.
Meetings and Collaborations	• **Review agendas and material in advance.** • **Use approved AI transcription tools** to summarise key information.
Planning and Organisation	• **Prioritise tasks by energy levels** (high for complex tasks, low for routine). • **Use approved AI tools** to brainstorm, plan, prioritise and break down tasks. • **Use free, mind-mapping tools**.

Practical Strategies

Time-Management	• **Use the Pomodoro technique:** focused work blocks with short breaks. • **Buffer in extra time** to allow for delays. • **Set calendar reminders and alarms.** • **Schedule time to review and proofread.** • **Submit drafts** early to check progress.
Focus and Concentration	• **Schedule dedicated email time.** • **Silence your phone, email and messaging notifications** during focused work. • **Keep your workspace organised.**

For guidance on using AI and practical strategies to support dyslexia in the workplace, check out the Artificial Intelligence and Workplace Strategies sections of our Adult Dyslexia Hub.



Building Inclusive Workplaces

Universal Design supports workplace inclusion by embedding choice, flexibility and accessibility into workplace systems, processes and communications from day one.

While this can reduce the need to request certain accommodations, it is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Some employees may still require tailored support.

Workplace inclusion is a team effort. Everyone, regardless of their role can contribute through inclusive daily practices. Line managers and HR have an added role in influencing the systems and conditions that enable inclusion. The table below describes the practices each group can adopt.

For further information on creating inclusive workplaces, explore our Inclusive Workplaces section on the Adult Dyslexia Hub and the WIDE Framework.

Everyone	• **Make text clear and accessible:** See our Inclusive Communications Guidelines. • **Support verbal processing**: Schedule and record meetings, allow processing time, and follow up in writing. • **Use multi-modal formats:** Combine or swap written text for audio/voice-notes, infographics, videos. • **Share agendas and materials in advance.** • **Learn about dyslexia:** participate in awareness training. • **Normalise assistive technology:** treat it just as “standard technology”. • **Build a “safe space”:** avoid public correction, putting employees on the spot, speak positively about dyslexia and challenge misconceptions.

Building Inclusive Workplaces

Line Managers	• **Avoid assumptions.** Ask employees what supports they need to be successful. • **Be flexible:** Adapt communication and workflows to suit individual strengths and preferences. • **Schedule regular check-ins** to manage workload, check progress and discuss concerns. • **Provide opportunities to disclose** during 1:1 meetings • **Provide specific, balanced and timely feedback** that supports a growth-mindset.
HR	• **Make recruitment accessible:** clear job descriptions and applications, accommodations upfront and flexible interview and assessment formats. • **Develop clear policies:** outline available supports and how to access them. • **Build psychological safety:** establish buddy systems and employee resource groups. • **Provide dyslexia training** for all staff. • **Offer flexible training options:** (in-person, virtual, self-paced and peer learning). • **Provide multiple opportunities for disclosure** throughout recruitment, onboarding, training etc.



Grants

Work and Access Scheme

The Department of Social Protection's Work and Access Scheme funds practical workplace supports to help people with disabilities gain, retain, and progress in employment in Ireland.

Supports are available for private-sector employees, employers, and self-employed people, depending on individual needs and eligibility.

For employees and self-employed people with dyslexia, supports may include:

- Work Equipment (e.g. assistive technology)

For employers supporting employees with dyslexia, supports may include:

- A Workplace Needs Assessment
- In-Work Support (1:1 workplace coaching)
- Disability Equality and Inclusion Training

For eligibility, terms and how to apply, visit the Government's Work and Access website.

Employment Support

Finding employment as a dyslexic person may require a more thoughtful and considered approach. The Adult Dyslexia Hub offers practical interview guidance, alongside tips on how to use AI to improve your CV and interview skills.

Specialist employment support organisations can also provide tailored guidance and support to job-seekers and employees with disabilities, employers, or both. The table on the next page provides an overview of their services.

Employment Support

Specialist Employment Support Organisations

	For Jobseekers and Employees	For Employers
EmployAbility	Career planning and skills support, job matching, coaching and mentoring	Database of skilled job-seekers, coaching and advice on employment grants and supports.
Towards Work	Job coaching, CV prep, accommodation guidance and self-employment advice.	-
Employers for Change	-	Guidance on inclusive hiring, supports, policies, and awareness training.
AHEAD WAM Programme	Paid graduate placements aligned with qualifications and career goals.	Access to skilled graduates, workplace assessments, and manager training.
Specialisterne Ireland	CV and interview prep, disclosure/accommodation advice, recruitment support and coaching.	Neurodiversity training, coaching, guidance on inclusive recruitment, policy and accommodations.

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If you would like further information, advice or support, please contact Dyslexia Ireland at:

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