



Australian Government

Geoscience Australia

Workplace Adjustment Procedure

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

1. Geoscience Australia values a diverse workforce and is committed to providing an accessible and inclusive work environment.
2. Workplace adjustment is any form of assistance or adjustment that is necessary, possible and reasonable to working arrangements, work methods, equipment or the work environment to reduce or eliminate barriers to enable full participation in all aspects of work and to enable workers to perform their duties safely. Workplace adjustments may be temporary, or long term.
3. The purpose of this procedure is to ensure all workers understand and follow the principles of workplace adjustment which are outlined in this document.
4. Requests for workplace adjustment(s) will be managed in a timely, sensitive and confidential way, taking into consideration relevant Work Health and Safety (WHS) requirements and the organisation's anti-discrimination obligations.
5. Our workplace adjustment procedure aligns with our *Strategy 2028*, where we have committed to enhancing an inclusive and positive organisational culture. We have committed to becoming an employer of choice with a workforce that continues to embrace diversity and is inclusive and supportive of all individuals. In addition, in our *Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021*, we have committed to encouraging and enabling flexible working arrangements for workers with diverse abilities. We have also committed to providing assistive technology to support reasonable adjustments.

1.2. Principles

6. The organisation is committed to providing an accessible and inclusive workplace to enable individuals to fully participate in all aspects of work and to do so safely.
7. Wherever reasonably possible, the organisation will offer workplace adjustments to workers to remove barriers to participation in the workplace.
8. In addition, reasonable adjustments should also be offered to people applying for a job. These are captured in our recruitment procedure.
9. Workplace adjustment is a joint responsibility of the organisation, managers and workers. The organisation will consult with the workers and (where necessary) consider relevant evidence from health practitioners when considering requests for and in the implementation of workplace adjustments. Workers are required to cooperate and provide necessary personal information to Human Resources and managers so they can properly consider requests for workplace adjustments.
10. The workplace is made up of workers with different needs and abilities. Managers should work with their workers to identify how they can support them to be most effective workers and contribute to the workplace. From time to time a worker may need an adjustment to help them participate to their full extent.

2. Workplace Adjustments

Aim: Geoscience Australia values a diverse workforce and is committed to providing a safe, accessible and inclusive work environment.

Definition: A workplace adjustment is a change to a work process, practice, procedure or environment that enables a worker to perform their job in a way that minimises the impact of their injury, illness or disability.

Workplace adjustments allow a person to:

- perform the inherent or essential requirements of their job safely in the workplace
- have equal opportunity in recruitment processes, promotion and ongoing development
- experience equitable terms and conditions of employment
- maximise productivity.

Policy:

Geoscience Australia will ensure our workers are provided with safe workplaces and exposure to hazards and risk are removed, minimised or managed.

Geoscience Australia will develop and maintain safe working conditions and practices.

Geoscience Australia is committed to creating a diverse, accessible, inclusive and flexible workplace.

11. Workplace adjustments may be required for any number of reasons in relation to a worker's health or personal circumstances. These may include:

- people with a disability. A disability includes:
 - physical, psychological or neurological disease or disorder
 - illness, whether temporary or permanent
 - injury, including work-related injuries.
- people at greater risk of more serious illness with communicable diseases
- people with caring responsibilities
- people experiencing domestic or family violence.

12. Examples of workplace adjustments may include:

- changes to work methods
- flexible work arrangements, such as changes to hours of work and the location in which work is done
- redistributing duties amongst workers
- approving more regular breaks, for example, for people with chronic pain or fatigue
- buying desks with adjustable heights for people using a wheelchair
- providing additional training, mentoring, supervision and support

- purchasing equipment or computer software, for example, specialised equipment, furniture or work-related aids, adaptive technology, head sets, and voice activated software
 - adjustments to the form or format in which information is available, such as providing printed copies of documentation rather than screen-based viewing
 - adjustments to existing technology, providing larger screen computer monitors or ergonomic keyboards.
13. Workplace adjustments may be temporary to enable/assist a worker to accommodate a short-term personal or health situation, or an ongoing arrangement to enable/assist a worker to safely undertake the inherent requirements of their position.

2.1. Process for Workplace Adjustments

2.1.1. Requests for Workplace Adjustments

14. A workplace adjustment may be an informal or formal arrangement. Any arrangements which require substantial changes, will be ongoing, will incur a cost to the organisation or will potentially impact on the organisation's operations must be considered through a request for a formal arrangement.
15. Workers are to discuss their request for workplace adjustment(s) with their manager in the first instance. In making a request for a workplace adjustment the worker is responsible for providing information about the adjustments they propose and the reasons for the adjustment(s), including any supporting evidence if relevant.
16. Supporting evidence could include a workstation self-assessment or a letter from a medical practitioner or allied health professional.

2.1.1.1. Request for informal arrangement

17. An informal workplace adjustment may be put in place following a conversation between a manager and worker if it can be easily accommodated within the team and the work requirements of that team. For example:
- a. a worker who has carer responsibilities for an aged relative may need to work from home for a week until an in-home care service can commence. This request will not impact the operational requirements of the team, and because it is only a short-term arrangement, it does not need to be formalised other than via written approval by the manager
 - b. a worker with hearing difficulties may request to sit in a particular position for team meetings. The request can be easily accommodated by the organisation on an ongoing basis and there is no need for any further information or for the arrangement to be formalised in writing.
18. Informal arrangements are unlikely to require a formal review, however, the manager should check in with the worker regularly to ensure the informal workplace adjustment continues to meet the worker's needs. Managers should make a file note that a check in has occurred, including what was discussed and any items for action. If there are ongoing issues, or if an arrangement to work outside the office is to extend beyond two weeks, a formal workplace adjustment request should be progressed.

2.1.1.2. Request for a formal arrangement

19. A request for a formal workplace adjustment will require more detailed information from the worker. In addition to details about, and reasons for the workplace adjustment/s the worker is proposing, a worker should include:
 - a. any supporting evidence held by the worker, including letters from their treating health practitioners if relevant
 - b. details of how long the worker requests the workplace adjustment for (including on an ongoing basis)
 - c. for ongoing workplace adjustments, details of how the worker believes that the proposed adjustment will assist them to meet the inherent requirements of their substantive position
 - d. for requests for workplace adjustments covered by the Flexible Working Arrangement Procedure, any information required by that Procedure.
20. The worker can seek further assistance from Human Resources in relation to the information required for the organisation to consider a request for a formal workplace adjustment.

2.1.2. Consideration of request for a formal Workplace Adjustment

21. All requests for formal workplace adjustments must be discussed between the worker, their manager and Human Resources in the first instance before seeking delegate approval.
22. If a worker is not an employee, for example a labour hire contractor, who is engaged through another employer, Human Resources and/or the Contract Manager, in conjunction with the manager, must liaise with the worker's employer in respect of their request for a workplace adjustment.
23. Where the request for a formal workplace adjustment is due to a disability, the organisation will need to consider medical evidence and/or an assessment by a health professional to ensure that the worker is able to safely perform their work. The medical evidence may be provided:
 - a. by the worker, from their treating health practitioner
 - b. through Human Resources engaging with the worker's treating health practitioner, with the consent of the worker
 - c. through Human Resources engaging an external rehabilitation provider, for example to assist with a graduated return to work program, or to assess the requirement for additional adaptive technologies
 - d. through an independent medical assessment obtained in accordance with the [Rehabilitation and Injury Management Procedure](#).
24. Each request for a workplace adjustment should be considered on its merits, taking account of the whole situation, including operational requirements, personal circumstances, impact on others, advice from Human Resources and medical evidence.
25. The organisation has a legislative obligation to provide reasonable workplace adjustments for a person with a temporary or permanent illness, injury or disability unless making the adjustment will cause unjustifiable hardship to the organisation. What constitutes an unjustifiable hardship depends on the circumstances and is determined on a case by case basis, but will involve an objective consideration of factors including:
 - a. the duration of the requested workplace adjustment
 - b. the cost of the requested workplace adjustment in light of the organisation's financial situation, including any funding available through JobAccess (see section 2.5) and (for non-employees) any support offered by the worker's employer

- c. whether an ongoing workplace adjustment will assist the worker to undertake the inherent requirements of their substantive position
 - d. the extent to which allowing or disallowing the adjustment will cause a benefit or detriment to the worker seeking the adjustment
 - e. the impact of the requested adjustment on the organisation's operational requirements including management of risks and other workers.
26. The organisation may propose a trial period of a workplace adjustment to assess operational impacts (including the impact on other workers) before making a final decision about the requested workplace adjustment.
 27. Before making a final decision to decline a request for a workplace adjustment, the organisation will advise the worker of the organisation's preliminary view, and provide the worker with an opportunity to provide a response.

2.2. Recording of Workplace Adjustments

28. The organisation and the worker will record the details of the workplace adjustment in writing, including whether it is temporary (in which case an end date must be included) or ongoing.
29. The record of the workplace adjustment will be retained on the worker's personnel file and a copy provided to the worker, and if relevant, their manager.
30. Any amendment to the workplace adjustment, including the conclusion of an ongoing workplace adjustment, should also be recorded in writing.
31. Any area with responsibility for implementing or maintaining the workplace adjustment should keep a record of the workplace adjustment, for example:
 - assistive technology would be recorded and maintained through the area responsible for information technology support
 - ergonomic office equipment would be recorded and maintained through the property area.
32. Workers who require a workplace adjustment to assist them to enter and exit the organisation's buildings must also liaise with their Health Safety Representative (HSR) and Emergency Warden and advise of their location so appropriate plans can be developed and implemented in the event of an evacuation.
33. The worker should also develop a [Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan \(PEEP\)](#). The PEEP should be provided to their manager, the relevant HSR, Fire Marshall and WHS@ga.gov.au.

2.3. Monitoring and review

34. Monitoring and review of a workplace adjustment should be an ongoing process for both the worker and the manager.
35. The review period will vary depending on the nature of and reasons for the workplace adjustment, however, reviews will usually take place:
 - a. within four weeks of an initial review by the worker and the worker's manager to discuss whether the workplace adjustment is effective and meeting the needs of both parties and whether any follow up is necessary

- b. if the worker's personal situation changes, including any change to a disability, medical condition and/or receipt of new medical evidence
 - c. In line with any rehabilitation program recommendations
 - d. if the operational requirements of the organisation change.
36. The organisation may withdraw its agreement to a workplace adjustment if changes mean that an unjustifiable hardship will result. The organisation will provide a worker with an opportunity to provide a response before making a decision to withdraw agreement to a workplace adjustment.
37. If the workplace adjustment is impacted by an update to equipment or technology the adjustment should be reviewed and assessed. When the change is proposed the worker and manager should be conduct a review to ensure the workplace adjustment is still relevant and will continue or need to be modified once the changes are implemented. The business area implementing the change should be advised if there is an impact on the worker.

2.4. Confidentiality and Privacy

38. It is not discriminatory to ask a person about their disability if the information is required by the organisation to consider or implement workplace adjustments. A worker does not legally have to disclose their condition. If a worker is not willing to provide the required information, this will impact on the organisation's ability to assess a request for a workplace adjustment and support the worker in fulfilling the inherent requirements of their substantive position.
39. The organisation will maintain confidentiality and privacy requirements in respect of personal information provided in connection with a workplace adjustment in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth). Managers and other organisation personnel involved are responsible for maintaining confidentiality and privacy.
40. Personal information regarding a workplace adjustment will only be shared within the organisation on a need-to-know basis, and with external parties with the consent of the worker or as permitted by the organisation's Privacy Policy, the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and the Australian Privacy Principles. Human Resources representatives who are directly involved with a request for a workplace adjustment and any relevant delegate will have a need to know the detailed reasons for a workplace adjustment, including medical evidence.
41. The worker's manager will only need to be aware of the reasons for a workplace adjustment to the extent that this information is required to support the worker and to ensure their safety in the workplace. Workers are encouraged to provide their manager with any information that may have a bearing on their ability to perform their role. The worker can make contact with Human Resources to discuss any concerns they have requiring disclosing information.
42. The worker may or may not choose to provide any further information to their manager or colleagues about the nature of their personal circumstances requiring the workplace adjustment.
43. Notwithstanding the organisation's commitment to maintain confidentiality and privacy, the implementation of a workplace adjustment may indicate that one is in place. For example, if a worker is completing the majority of work outside an office, it is possible for other workers to assume that this is due to the existence of a workplace adjustment.

2.5. JobAccess

44. Further information in relation to workplace modifications, creating flexible work environments, financial support and a range of other tools for supporting people with disability is available through [JobAccess](#).
45. Funding assistance for workplace adjustments may be available through the [Employment Assistance Fund \(EAF\)](#) as part of JobAccess. The EAF can cover more than just physical changes to the workplace. Funding could include buying equipment and accessing services for people with disability, communication technology, Auslan (Australian Sign Language) interpreting, disability awareness training and specialist support for people with mental health conditions or learning disorders.
46. Human Resources coordinate and submit all applications for EAF on behalf of the worker. The applications are assessed by JobAccess and the worker will be advised of the relevant actions required.
47. Information regarding JobAccess can be found at www.jobaccess.gov.au or by contacting JobAccess on 1800 464 800.

2.6. Portability and ownership of Workplace Adjustment equipment

48. Any equipment provided as part of a workplace adjustment is considered an organisation resource and is portable across Geoscience Australia offices. If a worker changes jobs (within the organisation), teams, divisions or offices, any workplace adjustment equipment which continues to be appropriate and meets their needs should move with them.
49. On leaving the organisation, the worker must return any workplace adjustment equipment provided by the organisation in the same condition as it was provided to the worker, with the exception of reasonable wear and tear. An exception to this is any workplace adjustment equipment:
 - a. sourced and funded through JobAccess Employment Assistance Fund (EAF)
 - b. funded by Comcare as part of a workers' compensation claim
 - c. that is the property of the worker.
50. Workplace adjustments that are not equipment-related, such as access to flexible working arrangements are not automatically transferrable from one role to another. The worker should ensure the new work area/manager is aware of the arrangements in place. The new manager can elect to review the adjustments with the worker. Human Resources can support these discussions to consider the adjustment and its suitability in the new work area.

2.7. Disputes

1. If a worker requests a workplace adjustment and it is declined or delayed, the manager should communicate with the worker as soon as possible and explain why the adjustment cannot be made.
2. If the workplace adjustment is declined the worker can ask to have the decision reviewed through the dispute resolution procedures or the [Review of Action Procedure](#).

3. Supporting Information

This section is informative

3.1. Roles and Responsibilities

Delegate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will assess requests for workplace adjustments that require delegate approval in line with this Procedure or the Flexible Working Arrangements Procedure on a case by case basis, based on the individual needs of the worker making the request, the needs of the organisation and in compliance with relevant legislation. • Will consider relevant medical evidence as relevant to determine the requirement for and suitability of workplace adjustments.
Employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing their manager and employer of their requirements and work with their manager and related parties to identify and implement appropriate strategies to overcome barriers. • Seeks approval for workplace adjustments.
Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing their manager of their requirements and work with their manager and related parties to identify and implement appropriate strategies to overcome barriers. • Seeks approval for Workplace Adjustments.
Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the worker who has identified any requirements to develop, approve and implement workplace adjustments. • Considers requests for workplace adjustment(s) in line with this procedure on a case by case basis, based on the individual needs of the worker making the request and the needs of the organisation. • Will consider relevant medical evidence to determine the requirement for and suitability of workplace adjustments, applying good decision-making strategies to the request. • Liaise with the worker's employer in respect of their request for a workplace adjustment. • Liaise with other internal stakeholders as required. • Seeks advice from Human Resources. • Monitors and reviews current workplace adjustments of workers within their team.
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will provide advice and support to manager/s or delegate/s in relation to workplace adjustments at all stages of a worker's engagement cycle, when required. • Support managers to liaise with the worker's employer in respect of their request for a workplace adjustment. • Retain a copy of formal workplace adjustments on the worker's personnel file. • Liaise with other internal stakeholders as required.

3.2. Related Procedures

Flexible Working Procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on how workers can access and use flexible working arrangements.
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3.3. Related Policies

Work Health and Safety Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geoscience Australia's commitment and agreed principles to comply with Work Health and Safety legislation.
Privacy Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on how Geoscience Australia manages personal information it collects, how individuals may access and correct their information, and how individuals may complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles.

3.4. Definitions

Term (and acronym)	Definition
Organisation	Geoscience Australia
Contractor	Contractor means an individual who undertakes work for the organisation pursuant to a contract either directly between the individual and the organisation, a service provider and the organisation or through a contracting company (such as a labour hire provider).
Delegate	HR Delegate in accordance with the Employment Delegations
Disability	<p>This procedure adopts the broad definition of disability used in the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> (Cth). The Act defines disability as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or total or partial loss of a part of the body; or the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour; <p>and includes a disability that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> presently exists; or previously existed but no longer exists; or may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or

Term (and acronym)	Definition
	k. is imputed to a person (meaning believed to be suffered by the person whether they have that disability or not).
Employee	An employee of the organisation engaged on behalf the Commonwealth of Australia pursuant to the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i> (Cth).
Inherent Requirements	Inherent requirements are the essential activities and tasks of a worker's substantive position. Inherent requirements relate to results, or what must be accomplished, rather than means of work, or how it is accomplished.
Manager	Means the person responsible for the daily management of a worker.
Substantive Position	The role within the organisation for which the worker is engaged, including the full duties and responsibilities of that position. It does not include any temporary alternative position or duties which may have been offered by the organisation as part of a return to work or rehabilitation program.
Unjustifiable Hardship	As defined by section 11 of the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> (Cth) in respect of a proposed workplace adjustment.
Worker	Includes all workers and contractors of the organisation.
Workplace Adjustment	Is any form of assistance or adjustment that is necessary, possible and reasonable to make to working arrangements, work methods, equipment or the work environment to reduce or eliminate the effects of certain health, physical or personal circumstances, including a disability, and enable the worker to fulfil the inherent requirements of their substantive position without risk to the workers' health and safety. An adjustment will not be reasonable if it results in unjustifiable hardship.

3.5. External Mandates

Workers should be aware that compliance with these procedures does not necessarily guarantee compliance with all external mandates, laws and policies. Workers should satisfy themselves of their compliance with all relevant laws and policies, including those listed below. In the event of conflict, legislation and binding whole of government directions take precedence.

Legislative mandates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i> (Cth); • <i>Public Service Act 1999</i> (Cth); • <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) and Information Privacy Principles; • Australian Public Service Commissioner's Directions; • <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> (Cth); • <i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984</i> (Cth); • <i>Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986</i> (Cth); • <i>Age Discrimination Act 2004</i> (Cth) • <i>Carer Recognition Act 2010</i> (Cth); • <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> (Cth).

Change history

Version	Date	Change
1.00	21/12/2020	Creation of procedure

A.1. Workplace adjustments for physical injuries or disabilities

Workplace adjustments are changes to a worker's job that can enable them to perform their duties more effectively in the workplace. Workplace adjustments refer to the administrative, environmental or procedural changes that enable workers or potential workers with permanent or temporary illness, injury or disability to:

- access workplace facilities
- perform their duties
- participate in work-related programs
- be considered for transfer, promotion, training or other employment opportunities.

A worker, or potential worker, may request an adjustment to eliminate or reduce barriers to enable them to perform the key requirements of their job. Some common reasonable adjustments are:

- allowing some flexibility in working hours, such as working part-time or starting and finishing later
- providing temporary alternative duties
- moving furniture, widening a doorway or providing a ramp so that a person using a wheelchair or other mobility aid can get around comfortably and safely
- reallocating minor duties that are not an inherent requirement of a role
- allowing time off during working hours, for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment, for example, physiotherapy appointments
- arranging a workstation assessments and implementing any recommended reasonable adjustments, including purchasing ergonomic equipment with support from Human Resources
- purchasing or modifying specific equipment, for example, voice activated software or a digital recorder for a worker who finds it difficult to take written notes, specialised software or equipment for a worker who is vision impaired, or an amplified phone for a worker who is hearing impaired
- providing additional training, mentoring, supervision and support
- making changes to tests and interviews so a worker or potential worker with a disability can demonstrate their ability to do a job

Managers are encouraged to seek support from Human Resources for any questions regarding workplace adjustments for a worker.

A.2. Workplace adjustments for mental health injuries, illnesses and disabilities

Making workplace adjustments for workers experiencing mental health conditions assists them to remain productive, connected and safe. The organisation has a duty of care to make reasonable workplace adjustments for mental health conditions, unless doing so would cause 'unjustifiable hardship' to the organisation.

Providing workplace adjustments for workers with mental health conditions is often less clear-cut compared with adjustments for workers with physical health conditions. Workplace adjustments may include:

- preventing the deterioration of a worker's health and allowing them to remain at work and feel safe to do so
- providing support for workers to remain at work or to return to work after an illness or injury
- assisting workers or potential workers with a disability to enter and remain in the workplace.

Workplace adjustments should address the specific needs or issues of the worker and may include:

- offering flexible working arrangements such as variable start and finish times, providing a quiet space for breaks away from the main workspace or job rotation
- altering some aspects of a role or work tasks, such as swapping a single demanding project for a number of smaller tasks or reassigning tasks with critical deadlines
- modifying the workplace or work area by moving the worker to a quieter work location
- maintaining regular contact with the worker to see how they are managing or increasing the frequency of supervision
- sourcing or modifying equipment
- providing the services of a workplace rehabilitation provider to help monitor the worker's progress and implement recommendations
- supporting the worker to prioritise their work.

Managers are encouraged to seek support from Human Resources for any questions regarding workplace adjustments for a worker.

A.3. Workplace adjustments for neurodiverse workers

1. Being neurodiverse simply means having a brain that's wired differently. In the workplace context it refers to alternative thinking styles, such as dyslexia, autism, ADHD and dyspraxia. Autism is probably the most well-known and common of these. Below are some tips for working with neurodiverse people. Many of the tips are about being flexible and will have benefits for other workers.
2. Adjustments to create an autism inclusive workplace are not over and above the needs of neurotypical workers – and they often don't cost anything to implement. The most common adjustments include:
 - Flexible hours for example, be open to starting early, finishing late
 - Sensory considerations for example, noise cancelling head-phones
 - Written or visual communication
 - Clear and concise information (including clarity of role and expectations)
 - Regular opportunities for feedback, providing sensitive but direct feedback for reassurance and confidence building
 - Providing structure
 - Offering ongoing support, such as a buddy system.
3. Workers should provide documentation from their treating medical practitioner to support the need for workplace adjustments and ensure that the necessary adjustments are made correctly.

Don't make assumptions

4. Each autistic individual has different skills, perspectives and support needs. Managers should get to know each individual as an individual. Not all autistic people are good at maths or IT which are broad generalisations or stereotypes. It is important to understand the individual.

Clarify expectations of the job

5. Be very explicit about expectations of the job. As well as the job description, explain the etiquette and unwritten rules of the workplace.
6. Be clear about when breaks should be taken and for how long and about appropriate dress and behaviour.
7. Provide clear and structured training informally on the job, or more formal training if required. Always check for understanding and any specific needs.

Make sure instructions are concise and specific

8. Provide clear instructions about exactly how to carry out each task, from start to finish. Don't assume the person will infer the correct meaning from informal instructions – for example, rather than saying 'give everybody a copy of this', say 'make three photocopies of this, and give one each to Tim, Mary and Lisa.
9. It may be preferable to provide written or visual instructions. It can also be helpful to ask the person to repeat back instructions, to be sure that they have understood correctly.
10. It may also be important to re-teach instructions in new contexts or when there is a change within the team or to the process.

Ensure the work environment is well-structured

11. Some individuals on the autism spectrum will thrive in a structured work environment. Many autistic workers also have anxiety and providing structure helps to reduce anxiety.
12. Work with the worker to prioritise activities, organise tasks into a timetable for daily, weekly and monthly activities, and break larger tasks into small steps. Some will appreciate precise information

about start and finish times, and help getting into a routine with breaks and lunches, the use of agendas for meetings should specify the topics to be covered and how long each will be discussed.

Regularly review performance.

13. As with any worker, managers should have regular one-on-one meetings with their worker to discuss and review performance and give overall comments and suggestions. This is very important for workers on the autism spectrum because it provides confirmation and reassurance when they are on the right track, increasing efficiency and reducing anxiety about whether they are doing a good job.
14. For an individual on the autism spectrum, brief and frequent reviews may be better than longer sessions at less frequent intervals.

Provide sensitive but direct feedback.

15. Individuals on the autism spectrum often find it difficult to pick up on social cues, so make sure your feedback is honest, constructive and consistent. If they complete a task incorrectly, don't allude to or imply any problems – instead, explain tactfully but clearly why it is wrong, check that they have understood, and set out exactly what they should do. Be aware of how your feedback may be received and ensure that any criticism is sensitive.

Provide reassurance in time of change or stressful situations.

16. Individuals can be meticulous and can become anxious if their performance is not perfect. This means they may become very stressed in a situation such as an IT failure. You can help by providing solutions to these situations – for example, by explaining "If the photocopier breaks, use the one on the third floor." Similarly, reassure them that if they occasionally arrive late due to transport problems or other unpreventable factors, this is not a problem.
17. Give information about any changes to the workplace or tasks well in advance. For example, if their Manager or Supervisor is going on leave or if there is a change to the structure of their role.

Sensory distractions.

18. Many individuals on the spectrum are overwhelmed with lots of noise, distractions or sensory input. This is different for everyone, so asking people what they need is the best course of action. Example reasonable adjustments may include:
 19. Noise
 - Being seated in a quiet area of the office away from thoroughfare traffic/break out areas
 - Use of Noise Cancelling Headphones
 - Installing screens around a desk
 20. Lighting
 - Being seated in a dimmer area of the office or beside a window with blinds to control the level of light coming through the window
 - Not being seated under fluorescent lighting
 - Use of tinted glasses
 21. Smell
 - Not being seated near a kitchen
 - Encouraging the team to not wear strong fragrances, perfumes or spray air fresheners.

Other Adjustments

22. Interviews- people on the autism spectrum may not interview well. Interviews measure a person's capacity to communicate, be likeable and build rapport. Work trials and practical assessments can be more effective.
23. Flexible hours can be beneficial for some workers: working up to full-time hours by gradually increasing hours, or the ability to start work at a later time i.e. 10.00am instead of 9.00am.

Communication

24. Understand that autistic workers may communicate in ways that seem a little different to what you expect. For example they may:
 - use less eye contact
 - seem less or more excited than expected
 - have difficulty reading body language
 - not engage in fluent back and forth conversation
 - be honest and literal (that is, blunt).
25. The best way to determine how someone is feeling about something is by asking them directly, rather than interpreting their non-verbal communication.
26. The best way to inform someone of something is to communicate it literally, rather than using non-verbal language or hinting (or if using non-literal language, ensure the message has been accurately received). Sarcasm and hints can be completely missed.
27. Give clear guidance to someone if they have said or done something that was considered rude. Provide sensitive but direct feedback and let them know and explain how the same message could have been given in a socially appropriate manner.
28. If instructions are provided verbally, follow this up with written instructions (for example, email/hand out) and check for understanding.
29. Keep verbal instructions short and to the point, break down tasks into smaller steps, give clear timeframes and give them time to process the instructions.