

THE  
*undiscovered*  
WORKFORCE



LOOKING FOR A JOB?



# 1 Having a job

*“I've been working for five-and-a-half years now. I've learnt how to prepare the stock in the receiving department and how it goes out to the shop floor. The best thing about working for Virgin is being part of a team. I also enjoy preparing the new releases ready for the shop floor.”*

Reggie Uhegbu  
Virgin Megastore Receiving Department

*“I have worked at Circle 33 since the end of 2000. I work in the central scanning team and I am responsible for scanning and indexing all of the incoming post for our customer services department. It is a very busy and friendly team and the work is varied and interesting. There is always plenty to keep me busy.”*

Katherine Buchanan  
Data Administrator, Circle 33

*“Mark joined Max Fordham's in March 2002 as a drawing filer, quickly grasping the complex procedure. He applies care and attention to detail, constantly using his initiative to improve efficiency. He regularly attends progress meetings where his input is invaluable and he supervises temporary cover within his group.”*

M Jones  
Partner/Head of Administration,  
Max Fordham LLP



Having a job and earning a wage is a fundamental part of most adults' lives. It brings an income, independence and respect. Many people with autism or Asperger syndrome share this wish to work, yet currently only 6 per cent have full-time jobs.

People with an autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) often find it hard to get and keep a job because of the challenges they face as part of their condition and because employers lack an understanding of autism. Employers often do not realise a person with an ASD can bring strong skills, abilities and talents to the workplace.

This pack provides information about how you can overcome these difficulties and the support that is available to you if you want to get a job.

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In this pack the term 'autistic spectrum disorder' or 'ASD' is used to cover the range of conditions associated with the autistic spectrum, including Asperger syndrome. Contact details for further information appear throughout the pack. To the best of our knowledge they are correct at the time of going to press, but The National Autistic Society cannot guarantee their accuracy.



The National Autistic Society, 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG  
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Fax: 020 7833 9666 Email: [nas@nas.org.uk](mailto:nas@nas.org.uk) Website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

## 2 Different kinds of work

People with an ASD, like anybody else, can apply for a whole range of jobs, depending on their skills and interests. IT consultants, proof-readers, journalists, research scientists, librarians, stock room workers, shop assistants and administration officers are just some of the roles already filled by people who have an ASD. If you have already worked, you may have a good idea of what you want to do. If you have not worked, you can start by thinking about all the options which are available and what your skills, qualifications and interests are. There is more about this in the leaflet in this pack: **How to start looking for a job**.

If you have not worked before, it may be helpful to gain work experience through voluntary work or a work trial. These do not usually affect your benefits, so they can give you the opportunity to find out what work is like and whether you are comfortable in the workplace without making too many changes at once. There is more information about benefits, voluntary work and work trials below.

### Full-time or part-time work

Many people with an ASD work full-time very successfully in demanding jobs and bring excellent skills to their employers. The National Autistic Society (NAS) employment consultancy, Prospects, has supported people to get jobs in a wide range of fields.

Part-time work may be a good way to enter the career ladder, especially if you have not had paid work before. It can be less stressful than full-time work and gives you time to settle into the workplace more gently, or to continue to focus on other areas of your life.

People with an ASD in full- or part-time work should be paid the going rate for the job, on the same terms and conditions as their immediate colleagues.

### Self-employment

Some people have skills and abilities which mean they can work, but do not need to be employed by another person or company. Typical jobs self-employed people do include being a consultant, musician, artist or journalist. People who are self-employed have to keep good financial accounts and pay their own tax.

### Voluntary work

Voluntary work is work for which you do not get paid. There is a huge range of voluntary work available, from providing legal advice to gardening, or administration work for charities. You can do most voluntary work if you are receiving benefits and it can be a very good way of getting used to working or getting and trying out new skills. Many organisations are keen to have volunteers who have skills or qualifications to offer. Sometimes organisations want volunteers who can come regularly each week, or they may want volunteers for a short time to complete a particular project.





## Permitted work

Permitted work is work you can be paid for without losing your benefits. You can do permitted work if you receive incapacity benefit, severe disablement allowance, national insurance credits, or income support because you have an illness or disability. It can be helpful if you want to continue receiving your benefits until you feel confident that you will be comfortable in the workplace.

There are different options for permitted work. You may be able to work for up to 16 hours a week and earn up to £72 per week (this is the rate at the time of going to press). You can do this for up to 26 weeks and you may be able to continue for another 26 weeks after this. If you are interested in doing permitted work, you will need to discuss it with a Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) at your local Jobcentre or Jobcentre Plus who can advise you on the different options and the exact amount you can earn. Your benefits will be affected, but you will not have to stop them.

## Work trials

Some people who have not worked before or who want to try a new job do a work trial. You do not get paid for this work but you can continue to get benefits. A work trial should be for a short period. Disability Employment Advisers can give advice on arranging a work trial, and there are also government schemes which can help. There is more information on government schemes in the leaflet in this pack: **Support to help you get a job.**

## Work and benefits

If you are receiving benefits, some of them are likely to change if you get a job. The rules about this are very complicated and you will need to talk to somebody who can give you expert advice on how working might affect your benefits. Some benefits, like disability living allowance (DLA), should not be affected by working. Others, like income support, will almost certainly be affected.

Your DEA may be able to give you more information. Another organisation which will be able to help is Disability Alliance. You can contact their rights advice line on:  
tel: 020 7247 8763 (textphone available); email: [office.da@dial.pipex.com](mailto:office.da@dial.pipex.com);  
website: [www.disabilityalliance.org](http://www.disabilityalliance.org)



The National Autistic Society, 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG  
Tel: 020 7833 2299 Autism Helpline: 0845 070 4004 Minicom: 0845 070 4003  
Fax: 020 7833 9666 Email: [nas@nas.org.uk](mailto:nas@nas.org.uk) Website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)



# 3 How to start looking for a job

Before applying for a job, it is important to think about what type of work would suit you. You may have a strong idea of what you want to do, especially if you have worked before, or you may not have thought about this yet.


Most people do jobs which suit their personality and skills. People also work for a variety of reasons: money, self-esteem, or opportunities for personal development and social interaction. All of these reasons are valid and the emphasis different people place on each one affects the kind of work that they choose to do.

## Think about what you are good at

You may want to spend some time thinking about what your particular strengths are and what kind of jobs use these skills. The suggestions below may help you to identify your individual strengths.

- Make a list of your interests and activities you enjoy, such as working with numbers, working with computers, cookery, drawing technical diagrams. You may have extensive knowledge or skill in one area, which you might be able to use in a vocational way. Think about all your interests – not just those which you think are about work. For example, if you have extensive knowledge of trains or transport, you might want to work in this field – whether the job is engineering or cleaning.
- Make a list of your qualifications and also make brief notes about why you decided to get those qualifications in the first place – what interested you about them?
- Make a list of any work experience you have (including voluntary work) and the things you did in those jobs. Note what you were good at and the things you need to improve on.
- Make a list of your skills, abilities and things you are good at. This could include areas like:
  - General skills – eg: good with numbers, good rote memory, good at reading, able to focus for long periods on repetitive tasks or those that demand attention to detail.
  - Interpersonal – eg: honest, loyal, reliable. Focus on your strengths – everyone has areas where they have difficulties, so think first about the sort of things that you are good at or you could become good at.

Don't worry if you find writing this list difficult. This doesn't mean that you don't have skills, but that you find it hard to identify them. Most people find this difficult, and it may be a good idea to ask someone who knows you well to help you.



You may also find it useful to write a list of things you don't like doing or are not good at, as this may help you to 'eliminate' some job ideas. For example, if you have hypersensitive hearing, you are unlikely to enjoy working in a noisy environment.

### Think about jobs which use your skills

Now look at the skills, qualifications and interests you have listed and think about jobs where they would be useful. Again, it may be helpful to do this with somebody you know well, especially someone who has a lot of work experience or you could do this with your Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) or a teacher at college.

For example, if you are good at numbers, think of jobs that use these skills eg: book keeping, data input, accounting, warehouse work. If you have good knowledge of your local area, you might be interested in working as a postal worker. Good computer skills are highly sought after by many employers and this may be an area in which you are proficient.

Many people with an ASD find that when they are looking for work it is better to look at jobs which do not rely heavily on social skills, as this is often an area which is difficult for them. So jobs like receptionist, sales person or others where there is a large amount of time spent with the public may not be the most suitable. People with an ASD often prefer jobs which are highly structured and task based with a certain degree of routine and predictability. However, **everybody is different**, and the most important thing is to find work which matches your own skills and interests – some people with an ASD are very happy and do well in jobs where they work a lot with the public.

"I like my job as it is to do with trains and it's a customer service job. I would hate to be working as an engineer or a builder or something like that. Also my job gives me the opportunity to mix with people. Occasionally I may chat to a customer i.e. if they live in an area where I know or even a tourist and I can help them have a most enjoyable stay in the UK."  
David Harris – Customer Services Assistant – First Great Western.

### Using computer programs

There are some computer programs which can help you think about the kind of work you might want to do. They ask you about your skills and interests and then gives you a list of jobs which might be appropriate for you. One of the best known is called 'Kudos'. If you go to college you should be able to use Kudos there, or a DEA at a local Jobcentre or Jobcentre Plus office may be able to help you find a place where you can use it. You can also find Kudos or other similar services online. If you type 'career matching' or 'Kudos career' into a search engine like Google you should find them. You may have to pay to use some of these programs.

### Find out more about jobs

If you are interested in a particular career or type of work which you have not done before, it is a good idea to find out what it is really like to do that work. The easiest way to do this is to talk to people who already do the job. Your DEA or an employment agency like Prospects may be able to help you do this.

Also find out what qualifications you need to do the job, or to do it at the level you want. If you don't already have those qualifications, would you be able to get them? Getting new qualifications is often a long process, so if you need to get qualifications to do a particular job, think hard before you start about whether that job or career really interests you.

### Be realistic – but think about what you can change

When you are thinking about what kind of work you want, you need to be realistic. For example, are you good at time-keeping? If you aren't, don't think about jobs where good time-keeping is vital, but if that kind of work interests you, you could consider whether there are other jobs in the same field where this is less important. Or could you learn to be a better time-keeper? If so, who could help you do this?

Obviously it can be hard to answer these questions about yourself. It might be helpful to ask people who know you as well, like family members or your DEA. Then you can compare your answers with theirs. If you have answered differently to the other person on some questions, these are areas you should look at. You may have more skills than you realised, or you may think you are already good at things that you actually need to improve.

It is also important to apply for jobs that you have the relevant qualifications and experience for. If you do apply for jobs you are not qualified to do, you will not be shortlisted for an interview and it can be very disheartening if this happens a lot.

### Training courses

There are training courses you might be able to do to help you prepare for work. Some are run by specialist employment agencies like Prospects, but there are others. Your local DEA will be able to give you information about training courses, but before you start one it may be a good idea to ask if the college or trainers have experience of working with people with an ASD.

If you are aged 16-25 and considering starting a training course, it may be worthwhile speaking to Connexions. Connexions will be able to give you advice about whether a particular course will enhance your job prospects. Your DEA should be able to put you in touch with them.

### There are lots of options

Remember that employment does not only have to be between the hours of 9 to 5, five days a week. It is possible to work part-time, a few hours a day or a few days a week. There are some jobs you can do from home. Some people find that it suits their lifestyle and personalities to do this.

Others feel that they need to gain experience in the workplace before being able to secure paid work. This can be done in a number of ways and it may be worth asking a DEA about work trials. Voluntary work can also be a good way of learning about a potential career and how it might suit you. There is more information about all these things in the leaflet in this pack: **Different kinds of work.**



## Writing a curriculum vitae (CV)

A CV is a brief written account of your education and work experience, which employers often want to see to find out whether they think a person has the right skills for a job. Your school, college, university or your local Jobcentre or Jobcentre Plus office will have more information about what a CV should include and what it should look like.

A lot of employers now ask for an application form instead of a CV, and will give you this form to fill out. However, it may be useful to write your CV anyway, as it will be helpful to refer to it when you complete these forms.

Libraries and book shops often stock books on how to write a CV. The internet is also a valuable source of information on this topic. To find it on the internet, type 'writing a CV' into Google or another search engine.

## Applying for a job

An application form is your chance to tell the employer why you are the most suitable person for the job. You need to include all the relevant information about yourself that will help you get an interview. It is usually a good idea to photocopy an application form before you fill it in, and fill in the photocopy first in case you make mistakes.

It may be helpful to ask someone who knows you well to help you complete application forms. Application forms for different jobs often require similar information, such as details of your work experience, education and qualifications. It may be a good idea to prepare information about these with a friend before you start applying for jobs. If you do this, you will probably only need to change the responses slightly for specific forms (sometimes you may not need to change them at all). This will mean that you need less support when you fill in application forms and that you can do them more quickly.

Sometimes application forms ask you if you have a disability. It is up to you to decide whether you say you have an ASD or not. There is more information about this in the leaflet in this pack: **Your rights under the *Disability Discrimination Act*.**

There is useful information and advice on how to apply for a job on the Jobcentre Plus website: [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/)

## References

Robert Warman (2003). *Support into employment project*. Berkshire Autistic Society



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Fax: 020 7833 9666 Email: [nas@nas.org.uk](mailto:nas@nas.org.uk) Website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

# 4 Support to help you get a job

There is support available to people with an ASD who want to get a job. Some of this support is provided through specialist agencies like Prospects, and other support can come from government offices and schemes. This leaflet outlines the support that is available.

## **Prospects employment consultancy (London, Glasgow, Manchester, Sheffield)**

Prospects employment consultancy is run by The National Autistic Society. It works with people with an ASD who want to find paid work. Prospects can provide you with training and support before you start work and once you have got a job. Staff at Prospects will also help your employer to understand what autism or Asperger syndrome is and how they can support you in the workplace.

Prospects focuses on matching a person's individual skills to a specific job so you can be sure that both you and your employer will benefit from the work you do.

### **Work preparation**

For most people who come to Prospects, the first step is a work preparation programme. This programme provides one-to-one and group training to help you to build confidence, decide what kind of work you want to go for and secure a job. Work experience is offered and is particularly helpful for people who have never worked before.

### **Support in the workplace**

Once you get a job, your employment consultant will give you support to enable you to carry it out well, to learn your role and responsibilities and to help you settle in. They will give the right level of support for you in the ways you need, for example giving guidance on establishing a routine and structuring your tasks. They can also work with you to come up with solutions if any problems arise.

### **Support for your colleagues**

Employment consultants can also advise your supervisor, line manager and colleagues and help them to understand autism and Asperger syndrome and how your ASD affects you at work.

### **Contacting Prospects**

Prospects has offices in London, Glasgow, Manchester and Sheffield. If you live in these areas and want support from Prospects, you should make an appointment with the Disability Employment Adviser at your local Jobcentre or Jobcentre Plus. Explain that you have autism or Asperger syndrome and ask them to refer you to Prospects. The contact details for Prospects are at the end of this leaflet.



## Other employment agencies

There are other employment agencies in the UK which support people with an ASD or other disabilities to find and keep a job. There are different agencies in different parts of the UK. You can get information on what is available in your local area from your local Jobcentre or Jobcentre Plus. There are also contact details for some agencies at the end of this sheet and in the leaflet in this pack: **Further advice and information**.

## Jobcentres, Jobcentre Plus and government support

Jobcentres and Jobcentre Plus are offices funded by the Government which advertise and provide information about local jobs. Over the next few years, all Jobcentres will become Jobcentre Plus offices. As well as advertising local jobs, Jobcentres and Jobcentre Plus offices can provide support to disabled people who want to get jobs and information about local and government schemes which can help you get work.

## Disability Employment Advisers

Most Jobcentres or Jobcentre Plus offices have a Disability Employment Adviser (DEA). They provide support to disabled people who are having difficulty in getting a job or who are concerned about losing their job because of their disability. Your DEA is unlikely to have any specialist training in autism or Asperger syndrome, but they know about the government schemes that are available to help you get work and the law about disability.

Your DEA can provide information and support on:

- local jobs
- training which may be available to you
- work trials
- employment assessment – this can help you find out how a disability can affect the work or training you want to do
- work preparation – a programme similar to the one offered by Prospects, to get you ready for work
- Access to Work
- Workstep
- the Job Introduction Scheme
- New Deal for Disabled People.

If you want to register with your local DEA, contact your local Jobcentre or Jobcentre Plus office and ask for an appointment. It is important that the DEA understands something about autistic spectrum disorder and how it may affect you, so it might be a good idea to take some information about autism or Asperger syndrome. You can get information from The National Autistic Society (NAS) Autism Helpline or the NAS Information Centre for professionals. Alternatively the DEA could look at the NAS website to find out more about autistic spectrum disorders. The contact details for the Autism Helpline are at the end of this leaflet.

It may be helpful to take a list of things you are good at, details of any work experience and your CV with you when you see the DEA. There is more about this in the leaflet in this pack: **How to start looking for a job**.

## An employment assessment

An employment assessment is an in-depth interview with a DEA which can help you find out what kind of work or training you want to do and identify your abilities and strengths. At the interview you can talk about your skills, what you like doing and any work experience you have. You can discuss what kinds of job are suitable and what work you are interested in. The interview can take half a day (sometimes longer) and you may be asked to do practical tasks or written work. Sometimes you may be referred to a work psychologist for a further assessment of your needs and the kind of support that may be appropriate for you.

During the employment assessment you will work with the DEA to create an action plan of what you need to do to get the job you want. This might include training or work preparation.

An employment assessment does not affect your benefits. You can claim travel expenses to cover your travel costs to the assessment.

If you want an employment assessment, or to get more information, contact your local DEA.

## Work Preparation

Work Preparation is a training programme designed for a specific disabled person to help them return to work. It can also be helpful for people with a disability who are concerned that they may lose their job because of problems occurring for them in their work.

Work Preparation is provided by organisations called ‘providers’. It can last for a few days or for weeks, depending on what you need. At the end of the programme the provider will write a report for you and your DEA. It will have recommendations for what you should do next. You will then have an appointment with your DEA to discuss the recommendations and make an action plan.

For more information on Work Preparation, contact your local DEA.

## Government schemes to help you get and keep a job

### Access to Work

Access to Work (AtW) can give you and your employer advice and information and can also pay a grant towards any extra costs you or your employer might have because of your disability. It applies to any paid job and includes self-employed work.

Grants may be available for employers of people with an ASD for various kinds of support. This could include a support worker to help you learn a job or settle into the workplace and help with additional costs of travel to work for you if you cannot use public transport or drive.

It is usually the employer who arranges an AtW grant, but you can talk to your employer about the scheme if they do not know about it. AtW is very complex and often difficult to understand, but you can get more information about it from your local DEA.

## WORKSTEP

WORKSTEP is a government scheme which enables people with disabilities to work with support in ordinary jobs, with the aim of progressing into unsupported work. The employee gets the same wage as colleagues who do the same or similar work.

An organisation called the WORKSTEP provider supports both the employee and the employer and helps you both to create a development plan which should help you learn and improve the skills you need for the job.

Your local DEA can give you more information on WORKSTEP and let you know if you are eligible for the scheme.

## The Job Introduction Scheme

The Job Introduction Scheme (JIS) can help if you want to do a particular job, but you are not sure whether the job or workplace will suit you because of your disability. The scheme pays a small weekly grant to your employer for the first few weeks of your job to help with any extra costs, like the costs of extra training. Your employer will pay you the normal wage for the job you do.

Your employer has to apply for the JIS grant before you start the job. If you think the JIS would help you and want to talk to your employer about it, you should discuss it first with your DEA. They will be able to decide if you are eligible for the scheme and talk to your employer about it.

## New Deal for Disabled People

New Deal for Disabled People is a national scheme aimed at helping disabled people on certain disability benefits into work. Specialist job brokers from employment agencies provide assistance with securing employment, and offer support and advice to both employer and employee. The NAS Prospects employment consultancy is a New Deal job broker.

If you want to try New Deal, qualifying benefits include: income support with a disability premium, incapacity benefit, severe disablement allowance, disability living allowance, national insurance credits (on the grounds of incapacity) and housing benefit or council tax benefit with a disability premium.

Your DEA can give you more information about New Deal.

## Are any of these schemes right for you?

Different people with an ASD have very different experiences and different feelings about the government schemes outlined above. Some people have found them helpful, while others feel that they have not helped at all or are too difficult to understand or use. The details in this sheet are to give you information about the schemes which may be available to you, but The National Autistic Society and Prospects cannot give specific recommendations or take responsibility for the experiences of employers and employees using them.



## Contact details

### The National Autistic Society Autism Helpline

Tel: 0845 070 4004

Email: [autismhelpline@nas.org.uk](mailto:autismhelpline@nas.org.uk)

[www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

### Prospects employment consultancy

#### Main office

Studio 8

The Ivories

6-8 Northampton Street

London N1 2HY

#### London

Tel: 020 7704 7450

Email: [Prospects-London@nas.org.uk](mailto:Prospects-London@nas.org.uk)

#### Glasgow

Tel: 0141 248 1725

Email: [Prospects-Glasgow@nas.org.uk](mailto:Prospects-Glasgow@nas.org.uk)

#### Manchester

Tel: 0161 998 0577

Email: [Prospects-Manchester@nas.org.uk](mailto:Prospects-Manchester@nas.org.uk)

#### Sheffield

Tel: 0114 225 5695;

Email: [Prospects-Sheffield@nas.org.uk](mailto:Prospects-Sheffield@nas.org.uk)

### Other supported employment agencies

#### Asperger Norfolk

Upper floor, 2 Lower Goat Lane

Norwich NR2 1EL,

Tel & Fax: 01603 620500

Email: [info@asperger.org.uk](mailto:info@asperger.org.uk)

[www.asperger.org.uk](http://www.asperger.org.uk)

### ASpire Employment Service

Unit 415, The Green House

Gibb Street, Digbeth

Birmingham B9 4AA

Tel: 0121 244 7844

Fax: 0121 244 7845

Email: [aspire@autismwestmidlands.org.uk](mailto:aspire@autismwestmidlands.org.uk)

[www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk](http://www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk)

### Mencap Pathway Employment Service

Mencap, 6 Nightingale Court

Nightingale Close, Rotherham

South Yorkshire S60 2AB

Tel: 01709 830 956

Email: [jill.bates@mencap.org.uk](mailto:jill.bates@mencap.org.uk)

[www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

### Remploy Interwork

Stonecourt, Siskin Drive

Coventry CV3 4FJ

Tel: 0845 8452211

Email: [interwork@remploy.co.uk](mailto:interwork@remploy.co.uk)

[www.rempoy.co.uk](http://www.rempoy.co.uk)

### Intowork

Norton Park, 57 Albion Road

Edinburgh EH7 5QY

Tel: 0131 475 2369

[www.intowork.org.uk](http://www.intowork.org.uk)

### Supported Employment Project

The King Ecbert Resource Charity

(Sheffield only)

Meadowhall, Sheffield;

Tel: 01142 263 5635

Email: [SEP@fsmail.net](mailto:SEP@fsmail.net)

## **Employability, Surrey County Council**

White Lodge Adult Centre,  
Holloway Hill, Chertsey  
Surrey KT16 0AE  
Tel: 01932 567 075

## **Other agencies**

### **Jobcentre Plus**

[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/)

Correspondence Manager  
Jobcentre Plus Secretariat  
Level 6  
Caxton House  
Tothill Street  
London SW1H 9NA



The National Autistic Society, 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG  
Tel: 020 7833 2299 Autism Helpline: 0845 070 4004 Minicom: 0845 070 4003  
Fax: 020 7833 9666 Email: [nas@nas.org.uk](mailto:nas@nas.org.uk) Website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

## 5 Interview tips

Most employers want to interview a person before they offer them a job. Most people find interviews stressful, but they can be harder for people with an ASD because interviews focus on good communication skills.

If you have a disability and have told the employer about this on an application form, they should make 'reasonable adjustments' for you during an interview (see the leaflet in this pack: **Your rights under the *Disability Discrimination Act***). The most helpful adjustment for most people with an ASD is to take a supporter to the interview. It is entirely up to you whether you want to take a supporter with you, but it can often make things easier.

You can ask for support at your interview even if you did not mention your ASD on the application form. If you are offered an interview, you or the person you want to support you should contact the employer, explain that you have an ASD and that you want to bring somebody with you to the interview to ensure you are able to put yourself forward well. Do this as soon as possible so that the employer has enough time to make adjustments.

Because having a supporter is likely to be a reasonable adjustment under the *Disability Discrimination Act*, employers should allow this or at least consider it properly. If they do not, or they cancel the interview, they are highly likely to be breaking the law.

If you do want to take a supporter, think carefully about who this could be. The supporter should be there simply to help you communicate well with the people who are interviewing you. They should not be telling you what to say or trying to make your mind up for you about whether you want the job or not, so think about who can support you in an objective way. It can be anybody you want – they do not need to have any special qualification. If you cannot think of anybody who you would want to be your supporter at an interview, you could ask your DEA for advice. They may be able to support you or put you in touch with an advocacy organisation.

### Preparing for an interview

Before any interview it is usually a good idea to think about the questions you might be asked, and what you want to say. It might be helpful to write short notes, but don't 'learn' answers as this will sound unnatural in the interview.

Usually in an interview you will also be offered the opportunity to ask questions yourself if you want more information about the job. It might be a good idea to write the questions you need to ask, but make sure that you don't ask too many questions – one or two is usually a good number.



## Things to remember in an interview

The interview is your opportunity to explain why you are the right person for the job. You need to make your skills clear, but don't talk too much. Here are some good things to remember:

- Shake hands with the person or people interviewing you when you are introduced.
- Try to relax, but not too much. Don't 'slump' in your chair or shuffle around.
- Try to keep some eye contact with the person or people interviewing you, but try not to stare at them. If more than one person is interviewing you, try to make some eye contact with all of them and talk to them all, not just to one person.
- Answer the questions clearly. Give examples of what you can do. For example, if the interviewer asks how you would do a particular task, and you have done the same or a similar task in the past, say this, and explain how you did it.
- If you haven't understood a question, or are not sure you have understood, politely ask the person interviewing you to explain the question more clearly. It is better to get clarification than to answer badly or give a lot of irrelevant information.
- The interviewer may ask if you have any questions about the job. If you have any notes, ask if you can refer to them. Don't ask too many questions, and don't ask about something they have already explained. If you are offered the job, you will be able to ask more questions later if there are still things you want to know.

And remember – the people interviewing you want to find the right person for the job. It is not a confrontation – they want you to do well.

## Work trials

If you find interviews difficult, especially if you have already been to a few and have not done well in them, you might want to consider asking an employer if they can assess your skills for a job through a work trial instead. Your DEA should be able to give you more information about how you could do this.

## References

Robert Warman (2003). *Support into employment project*. Berkshire Autistic Society



The National Autistic Society, 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG  
Tel: 020 7833 2299 Autism Helpline: 0845 070 4004 Minicom: 0845 070 4003  
Fax: 020 7833 9666 Email: [nas@nas.org.uk](mailto:nas@nas.org.uk) Website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

# 6 Your rights under the *Disability Discrimination Act*

The *Disability Discrimination Act* 1995 (DDA) gives disabled people at work protection from discrimination. This means that employers:

- must not treat a disabled person **less favourably** because of their disability
- are required to make reasonable adjustments to working conditions or the workplace where this would help a particular disabled person
- must not victimise employees because of their disability.

Since 1 October 2004 these provisions apply to all employers except the armed forces (previously they only applied to employers with 15 or more employees).

It is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a disabled person either when they are recruiting for a job, or when the person is employed. This includes:

- application forms
- job advertisements
- interview arrangements
- selection tests
- job offers
- terms of employment
- promotion, transfer or training opportunities
- benefits
- dismissal or redundancy.

There are questions which people commonly ask about the DDA. You will find some of these overleaf.





## What are 'reasonable adjustments'?

Employers have a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments', which means that they have to take reasonable steps to reduce or remove any substantial disadvantage that is caused to a disabled employee or job applicant by any of their existing employment arrangements.

Reasonable adjustments only have to be made for difficulties employees face specifically because of their disability.

The DDA gives a list of examples of adjustments, which may be useful. For individuals with autism or Asperger syndrome, the following are examples of adjustments which may be useful:

- making adjustments to your work tasks by reallocating work (so, for example, if you find using the phone difficult, colleagues could make phone calls where necessary, and you could do some of their tasks in return)
- providing more structured training
- making instructions and manuals more accessible (this could be something as easy as making sure clear instructions are given for each part of a job, or written down if you find this easier)
- being flexible about your hours of work – allowing you to have different core working hours and to be away from work for assessment or treatment
- using a job coach, support worker or having 'mentors' among your colleagues
- allowing you to work in another place, for example an office which is close to your home, if you find travelling to work difficult.

## Can an employer ask me about my disability on application forms?

The DDA does not prevent employers from asking you for information about your health or disability, but your employer must not use it to discriminate against you. If all job applicants are asked for the same information and this information is, or may be, relevant to the ability to do the job (after a reasonable adjustment), this would not be discriminatory.

Asking about the effects of your disability might also be important in helping your employer to decide what adjustments ought to be made.

## Do I have to say I have an autistic spectrum disorder on an application form or when I apply for a job?

It is entirely up to you whether you wish to disclose your disability to an employer or a potential employer. If an application form asks if you have a disability, you do not have to answer this question. Clearly, you cannot say anything untrue but you can leave this space blank. If you want the employer to consider how they could make any 'reasonable adjustments' for you, you should say that you have autism or Asperger syndrome. This is because an employer cannot make reasonable adjustments (and is not expected to do so) unless they are aware that they may be necessary.

If you do not say you have a disability on the application form and then get invited to an interview, you can tell the employer about your ASD at this stage. This will mean that they should make 'reasonable adjustments' for you (for example, having a supporter with you at the interview). If they were to cancel the interview, they may well be breaking the law. You should inform the employer as early as possible before your interview to give them time to consider and make adjustments. There is more about this in the leaflet in this pack called **Interview Tips**.

Once you are employed, if you have not told your employer about your disability but then feel that you need a reasonable adjustment, you can tell your employer at this stage. From that time onwards your employer must consider your disability and may have to make some adjustments.

It may be preferable to disclose any disability you have, since this allows the employer to consider making reasonable adjustments which may help you at work. But this is up to you and should be your own decision.

### Case study – person with Asperger syndrome

"My line manager told me that other colleagues had started complaining about me being rude. I explained to him that I had Asperger syndrome. His response was to consult Human Resources and Occupational Health (OH) and to set up a programme of six weekly 3-way counselling-type meetings between him, OH and me. During these meetings, my line manager and I would discuss and resolve issues that had cropped up. This enhanced my working relationship with colleagues and also with my line manager."

## How to find out more about the *Disability Discrimination Act*

There is a dedicated 24-hour DDA Information Line which can give you a wide range of information about the *Disability Discrimination Act* (DDA) and which is also available to employers.

Tel: 08457 622 633

Textphone: 08457 622 644

Calls are charged at local rates.





The National Autistic Society, 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG  
Tel: 020 7833 2299 Autism Helpline: 0845 070 4004 Minicom: 0845 070 4003  
Fax: 020 7833 9666 Email: [nas@nas.org.uk](mailto:nas@nas.org.uk) Website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

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# 7 When you start work

Like interviews, starting work or a new job is daunting and stressful for most people, but can be harder for people with an ASD. You will have to learn the job, and usually meet lots of new people. For anybody this can be bewildering at first. The following hints may be helpful.

## Talking about your ASD

It is not a legal requirement to tell your employer or your colleagues about your ASD. However, it may be a good idea to do so, as this will enable your employer to make any 'reasonable adjustments' to your job or the workplace to help you overcome difficulties you might have. A reasonable adjustment could be something like having your tasks for the day written down in the order you need to do them, so you are always clear what you should be doing next or having a job coach or mentor to help you learn the job. Remember that reasonable adjustments only have to be made for difficulties you face because of a disability. There is more information on this in the leaflet in this pack: **Your rights under the *Disability Discrimination Act*.**

If you tell your employer or your manager about your ASD, you do not have to tell other colleagues, but again, this may be helpful as they may find it much easier to work with you (and give you any support if necessary) if they understand that you have an ASD and how this affects you. For example, if you say something honest, but one of your colleagues interprets it as blunt or rude, it will probably help if they understand that this is down to your ASD, not because you meant to offend them. It might be possible to get a person who understands ASD to come in and talk to your employer and colleagues about what ASD is. Or you could write about this and explain what you find hard and what you or other people can do to make things easier for you, so your employer, manager and colleagues can read it in their own time.

## Think about difficulties which could arise

Some people with an ASD have support when they start work. If you don't, try to think about any problems you might have and consider how you could overcome them. Thinking back to other things you have done in the past and how you dealt with problems which arose will help, and it might also be helpful to ask the opinions of other people who know you, especially people who also work.

For example:

If you find it difficult to talk to people and make friends, breaks and lunchtimes at work may be very stressful for you. You could take things to do to help you pass the time, like a book to read or crosswords. Make sure they are things which do not irritate other people, like playing music loudly on a personal stereo.



Think about 'unwritten rules' in a workplace. Most people socialise at work and there will be many things that people do that they do not explain but just assume you will understand. For example, people may take it in turns to make tea or coffee for themselves and the people they work with. You could ask colleagues to explain what they expect of you besides the exact tasks of your job and to tell you if you are not doing something they expect you to do.

You may have rituals or find that actions such as talking to yourself or walking around help calm you down, but these could be irritating to the people you work with. If you are getting stressed, it might be helpful to go outside for a minute or two, or there might be a quiet room you can go into for a short time.

### Getting support in the workplace

If you do not have regular one-to-one meetings with your manager, you could ask him or her to start these with you. You could use these meetings to discuss what you are doing well, where you could improve and any concerns or worries you have. You may also find it helpful to have a mentor or 'buddy' in the workplace, who you can go to if you are feeling stressed, anxious or confused. This person does not need to be your line manager, but simply a colleague who can give you some support. This may help you to deal with stress and problems more easily and stop them getting worse.

If you are concerned that things may be going wrong and you feel people are unhappy about your behaviour or how you are doing the job, talk to your manager, mentor or a supportive colleague. Ask them to explain how you could do things differently to improve the situation.

#### **Case study – Ben Good, Administration, Criminal Appeals Department, High Court, London**

"After my first day, I was convinced that I was going to fail. Like many people who have been out of work for a long time or have never had meaningful employment, I worried that I was unemployable or unable. As I began my training at the job, I felt overwhelmed because of the amount of information I had to try and take in. Early on in the job (day 2), I telephoned my support worker from a public phone and told her I was not coping. But I had not understood the fact that everyone takes time, maybe months, to learn a new job. I had simply failed to realise the fact that nobody would get fired because they were not perfect after the first two days. Thankfully, I didn't give up and I am now enjoying my job very much."



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Fax: 020 7833 9666 Email: [nas@nas.org.uk](mailto:nas@nas.org.uk) Website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)



# 8 Information for parents or carers of someone with an ASD who wants to work

Many people with an ASD, especially those with ‘high-functioning’ autism or Asperger syndrome, work very successfully in a number of jobs. However, it is fair to say that they often face difficulties in getting and keeping jobs, which they may need support to overcome, and that sometimes this support may need to be specialist or intensive.

This information leaflet gives a brief outline of some of the support which is available to people with an ASD who want to work. There is more information in the rest of this pack. If you do not have the whole pack, contact the NAS at the address at the end of this leaflet.

## Thinking about the future

It is important to start thinking about employment as an option for people with an ASD as early as possible, as realistic encouragement and early support can make a lot of difference to their own expectations and determination. It makes sense therefore, to begin thinking about the options when you and the person you support or care for start talking to the local authority to plan the transition from school to adult life. The young person and his or her supporters can use this opportunity to consider what kind of jobs the person is interested in, what qualifications and support might be necessary, and how these can be gained.

Many adults with an ASD have never worked and have not had the benefit of good transition plans or support. There is no reason at all why older adults should not find and retain work, but they often need more support, especially at the initial stages. Training may also be necessary, especially if they do not have the qualifications they need to take up the kind of work they are interested in.

## Thinking about jobs

The key to anybody finding work suitable to them is to consider jobs which use their particular skills and interests. This is also true of people with an ASD. For many people with an ASD, work which places great emphasis on areas where the individual may have difficulties – such as person-to-person communication skills – may not be a suitable job. However, everybody with an ASD is an individual and a job is not automatically unsuitable just because it appears to focus on an area typically considered problematic. Many people with an ASD do extremely well in jobs which involve communication and social interaction.

## Think laterally and be realistic

Being realistic about what jobs are suitable is vital, but it is very important to remember that being realistic means working to a person's strengths – it is not about assuming that a person will only be able to do low paid or low status jobs. It is often useful to think 'laterally' about suitable work. As well as particular skills and strengths, strong interests can also be useful in getting a job.

It is often a good idea for a person to make a list of their skills and interests, including those which may initially seem irrelevant to work. There are also computer programs which help people to consider jobs. There is more about all of this in the leaflet: **How to start looking for a job.**

## What support is available?

There is a variety of support available for adults of all ages with an ASD who want to get jobs. This includes:

**Specialist employment agencies** – these provide training and support to people who need it to find work. There are some which specialise in autism, like the NAS employment consultancy Prospects. Others work with people with disabilities, including learning disabilities, and may be able to support people with an ASD.

**The Disability Employment Adviser (DEA)** at your local Jobcentre or Jobcentre Plus office. DEAs specialise in helping people with a range of disabilities get jobs. As well as providing information about jobs available locally, the DEA can refer people to supported employment agencies, like Prospects, help people get onto training courses, or help people do work trials if they are not yet ready or confident to apply for a job in the open market. Because DEAs deal with the whole range of disability, they may not know much about autism, so if you (or a person you know with an ASD) are going to talk to one, you should consider taking them some information like *The Undiscovered Workforce* pack from the NAS or information about autism from the NAS website.

**Government schemes** like WORKSTEP or New Deal for Disabled People. These provide some support to employee and/or employers. A DEA can advise on these or refer people to them.

There is more information on all of these in the leaflet in this pack: **Support to help you get a job.**

## What happens to benefits if a person works?

This is a highly complex area. If a person works, some benefits are likely to be affected, particularly means tested benefits like income support and housing benefit. Disability living allowance (DLA) should not be affected. Because this area is so complex, and differs for each individual depending on the benefits they get and the work they want to do, you should get expert advice. A DEA may be able to help. Another organisation which may be able to help is Disability Alliance.

You can contact the Disability Alliance rights line on:

Tel: 020 7247 8763 (textphone available)

Email: office.da@dial.pipex.com

www.disabilityalliance.org

### Should job applicants say they are disabled when they apply for a job?

This is always a difficult decision. Many people prefer not to mention their disability when they apply for a job.

However, under the *Disability Discrimination Act* an employer should make 'reasonable adjustments' in the recruitment and employment process to overcome problems a person with a disability faces in work because of their disability. Clearly they can only do this if they know the circumstances and what adjustments to make.

It is entirely up to the individual applying for the job whether they want to say they have a disability or not. But if a person does not wish to disclose their disability on an application form or in an application letter, it may be a good idea for them to do so if they are invited for an interview. This will allow the employer to make 'reasonable adjustments' for them (such as having a supporter at the interview).

Many people with an ASD perform much better in interviews if they take a supporter. If an employer were to cancel an interview on hearing that an applicant has a disability, or if they refused to make a 'reasonable adjustment', it is likely they would be breaking the law.

There is more information on this in the leaflet in this pack: **Your rights under the *Disability Discrimination Act*.**

### What about people who have profound autism or learning disabilities?

People who are severely affected by autism, including those with learning disabilities, may also be able to work, but will probably face more difficulties. If they want to work, there is no reason why they should not be encouraged to do so, as long as encouragement is realistic.

People with learning disabilities can and do find work, and there are services which support them to do this. If you support somebody with more severe autism and/or learning disabilities who wants to work, talk to your social worker or your DEA. Other organisations like Mencap may also be able to help or give advice.

See overleaf for further reading and useful contacts.



## Further reading

There are more further reading suggestions in the leaflet: **General advice and information**

NAS/Prospects: *The Undiscovered Workforce: looking for staff?* – information packs for employers of people with ASD and people with ASD who want to get a job.

Robert Warman, Berkshire Autistic Society: *Support Into Employment Project – Helping someone with Asperger syndrome into employment: A practical guide for parents, carers and advocacy services.*

Robert Warman, Berkshire Autistic Society: *Support Into Employment Project – Finding and sustaining employment: A guide for people with Asperger syndrome*

Robert Warman, Berkshire Autistic Society: *Support Into Employment Project – A Guide to Supporting Employees with Asperger syndrome*

## Useful contacts

See also **Further advice and information** in this pack.

## Autism Helpline

The National Autistic Society  
393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG  
Tel: 0845 070 4004  
Monday to Friday 10am-4pm  
Fax: 020 7833 9666  
Email: [autismhelpline@nas.org.uk](mailto:autismhelpline@nas.org.uk)  
Website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

## Prospects employment consultancy

(NAS employment service for people with ASD and training and consultancy for employers)

### Main office:

Studio 8, The Ivories  
6-8 Northampton Street  
London N1 2HY

### London

Tel: 020 7704 7450  
Email: [Prospects-London@nas.org.uk](mailto:Prospects-London@nas.org.uk)

### Glasgow

Tel: 0141 248 1725  
Email: [Prospects-Glasgow@nas.org.uk](mailto:Prospects-Glasgow@nas.org.uk)

### Manchester

Tel: 0161 998 0577  
Email: [Prospects-Manchester@nas.org.uk](mailto:Prospects-Manchester@nas.org.uk)

### Sheffield

Tel: 0114 225 5695  
Email: [Prospects-Sheffield@nas.org.uk](mailto:Prospects-Sheffield@nas.org.uk)

## Disability Rights Commission

DRC Helpline, FREEPOST MID02164  
Stratford upon Avon CV37 9BR  
Tel: 08457 622 633  
Textphone: 08457 622 644  
Email: [enquiry@drc-gb.org](mailto:enquiry@drc-gb.org)  
Website: [www.drc-gb.org/](http://www.drc-gb.org/)

## Jobcentre Plus

Website: [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/)



The National Autistic Society, 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG  
Tel: 020 7833 2299 Autism Helpline: 0845 070 4004 Minicom: 0845 070 4003  
Fax: 020 7833 9666 Email: [nas@nas.org.uk](mailto:nas@nas.org.uk) Website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

# 9 Further advice and information



## **NAS Autism Helpline**

The National Autistic Society  
393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG  
Tel: 0845 070 4004  
Monday to Friday 10am-4pm  
Fax: 020 7833 9666  
Email: [autismhelpline@nas.org.uk](mailto:autismhelpline@nas.org.uk)  
Website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

## **British Council of Disabled People**

Litchurch Plaza, Litchurch Lane  
Derby DE24 8AA  
Tel: 01332 295 551  
Email: [general@bcodp.org.uk](mailto:general@bcodp.org.uk)  
Website: [www.bcodp.org.uk](http://www.bcodp.org.uk)

## **Careers Scotland**

Head Office, 150 Broomielaw  
Atlantic Quay, Glasgow G2 8LU  
Tel: 0845 8502 502  
Email: [hq@careers-scotland.org.uk](mailto:hq@careers-scotland.org.uk)  
Website: [www.careers-scotland.org.uk](http://www.careers-scotland.org.uk)

## **Connexions**

Connexions Service National Unit  
Department for Education and Skills  
Moorfoot, Sheffield S1 4PQ  
Email: [info@dfes.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info@dfes.gsi.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.connexions.gov.uk](http://www.connexions.gov.uk)

## **Employers' Forum on Disability**

Nutmeg House, 60 Gainsford Street  
London SE1 2NY  
Tel: 020 7403 3020  
Fax: 020 7403 0404  
Email: [website.enquiries@employers-forum.co.uk](mailto:website.enquiries@employers-forum.co.uk)  
Website: [www.employers-forum.co.uk](http://www.employers-forum.co.uk)

## **Jobcentre Plus, Department for Work and Pensions**

Website: [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/)

## **RADAR (Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation)**

Head Office, 12 City Forum  
250 City Road, London EC1V 8AF  
Tel: 020 7250 3222  
Fax: 020 7250 0212  
Email: [radar@radar.org.uk](mailto:radar@radar.org.uk)  
Website: [www.radar.org.uk](http://www.radar.org.uk)

## **SKILL (The National Bureau for Students with Disabilities)**

Chapter House, 18-20 Crucifix Lane  
London SE1 3JW  
Tel: 0800 328 5050  
Tue 11.30am-1.30pm and Thurs 1.30-3.30pm  
Email: [info@skill.org.uk](mailto:info@skill.org.uk)  
Website: [www.skill.org.uk](http://www.skill.org.uk)

## **SKILL Scotland**

Norton Park, 57 Albion Road  
Edinburgh EH7 5QY  
Tel: 0131 475 2348  
Fax: 0131 475 2397  
Email: [admin@skillscotland.org.uk](mailto:admin@skillscotland.org.uk)  
Website: [www.skill.org.uk/scotland/index.asp](http://www.skill.org.uk/scotland/index.asp)

## **Legal advice**

### **Disability Law Service**

39-45 Cavell Street, London E1 2BP  
Tel: 020 7791 9800,  
Monday to Friday 10.30am-1pm and 2-4.30pm  
Email: [advice@dls.org.uk](mailto:advice@dls.org.uk)



### **Disability Rights Commission**

DRC Helpline, FREEPOST MID02164  
Stratford upon Avon CV37 9BR  
Tel: 08457 622 633  
Textphone: 08457 622 644  
Email: [enquiry@drc-gb.org](mailto:enquiry@drc-gb.org)  
Website: [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org)

### **Supported employment agencies**

#### **Prospects Employment Consultancy**

Studio 8, The Ivories  
6-8 Northampton Street  
London N1 2HY  
(NAS employment service for people with an  
ASD and training and consultancy for  
employers)

#### **London**

Tel: 020 7704 7450  
Email: [Prospects-London@nas.org.uk](mailto:Prospects-London@nas.org.uk)

#### **Glasgow**

Tel: 0141 248 1725  
Email: [Prospects-Glasgow@nas.org.uk](mailto:Prospects-Glasgow@nas.org.uk)

#### **Manchester**

Tel: 0161 998 0577  
Email: [Prospects-Manchester@nas.org.uk](mailto:Prospects-Manchester@nas.org.uk)

#### **Sheffield**

Tel: 0114 225 5695  
Email: [Prospects-Sheffield@nas.org.uk](mailto:Prospects-Sheffield@nas.org.uk)

#### **Asperger Norfolk**

Upper floor, 2 Lower Goat Lane  
Norwich NR2 1EL  
Tel & Fax: 01603 620500  
Email: [info@asperger.org.uk](mailto:info@asperger.org.uk)  
Website: [www.asperger.org.uk](http://www.asperger.org.uk)

### **ASpire Employment Service**

Unit 415, The Green House  
Gibb Street, Digbeth  
Birmingham B9 4AA  
Tel: 0121 244 7844  
Fax: 0121 244 7845  
Email: [aspire@autismwestmidlands.org.uk](mailto:aspire@autismwestmidlands.org.uk)  
Website: [www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk](http://www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk)

#### **Mencap Pathway Employment Service**

Mencap, 6 Nightingale Court  
Nightingale Close, Rotherham  
South Yorkshire S60 2AB  
Tel: 01709 830 956  
Email: [jill.bates@mencap.org.uk](mailto:jill.bates@mencap.org.uk)  
Website: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

#### **Remploy Interwork**

Stonecourt, Siskin Drive  
Coventry CV3 4FJ  
Tel: 0845 8452211  
Email: [interwork@remploy.co.uk](mailto:interwork@remploy.co.uk)  
Website: [www.remploy.co.uk](http://www.remploy.co.uk)

#### **Intowork**

Norton Park, 57 Albion Road  
Edinburgh EH7 5QY  
Tel: 0131 475 2369  
Website: [www.intowork.org.uk](http://www.intowork.org.uk)

#### **The King Ecbert Resource Charity Supported Employment Project (Sheffield only)**

Meadowhall, Sheffield  
Tel: 01142 263 5635  
Email: [SEP@fsmail.net](mailto:SEP@fsmail.net)

#### **Employability**

Surrey County Council White Lodge  
Adult Centre  
Holloway Hill  
Chertsey  
Surrey KT16 0AE  
Tel: 01932 567 075

## General resources

Hesmondhalgh, M. and Baggott J. (2002). *Autism and employment – building bridges*. Sheffield: King Ecgbert School. Video. Available through NAS Publications (See overleaf)

### Key 4 Learning website:

[www.key4learning.com](http://www.key4learning.com)

## Resources for people with an ASD

*The Undiscovered Workforce: looking for a job?* – this information pack about getting and retaining work for people with an ASD. Available from the NAS Autism Helpline or download at [www.autism.org.uk/workforce](http://www.autism.org.uk/workforce)

SKILL (2003). *Help for disabled jobseekers from Jobcentre Plus*. London: SKILL. Available from SKILL or download at [www.skill.org.uk/info/infosheets/emp\\_service.doc](http://www.skill.org.uk/info/infosheets/emp_service.doc)

SKILL (2003). *Looking for work: disclosing disability*. London: SKILL. Available from SKILL or download at [www.skill.org.uk/info/infosheets/emp\\_disclose.doc](http://www.skill.org.uk/info/infosheets/emp_disclose.doc)

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SKILL (1999). *Get that job*. London: SKILL. Available to download at [www.skill.org.uk/info/getthatjob/getthatjob.asp](http://www.skill.org.uk/info/getthatjob/getthatjob.asp)

*Jobcentre Plus, Department for Work and Pensions, website:*

[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/cms.asp?Page=/Home/Customers/HelpForDisabledPeople](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/cms.asp?Page=/Home/Customers/HelpForDisabledPeople)

Provides information for and enables users to search for their nearest Jobcentre Plus office.

Warman, R. (2003). *Finding and sustaining employment: a guide for people with Asperger syndrome*. Available at [www.autismberkshire.org.uk/employment.htm](http://www.autismberkshire.org.uk/employment.htm)

## Resources for employers

*The Undiscovered Workforce: looking for staff?* – an information pack for employers working with or interested in recruiting people with an ASD. Available from the NAS Autism Helpline or download at [www.autism.org.uk/workforce](http://www.autism.org.uk/workforce)

Jobcentre Plus, Department for Work and Pensions, website: [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/cms.asp?Page=/Home/Employers/DisabilityServiceshelpforEmployers](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/cms.asp?Page=/Home/Employers/DisabilityServiceshelpforEmployers)

Provides information and advice on good practice in employing people with disabilities.

*Information for employers, Prospects*. Available at: [www.autism.org.uk/prospects](http://www.autism.org.uk/prospects)

Warman, R. (2003). *A guide for supporting employees with Asperger syndrome*. Available at [www.autismberkshire.org.uk/employment.htm](http://www.autismberkshire.org.uk/employment.htm)

## Resources for advisers

Prospects (2003) *Student support information*. London: The National Autistic Society. Available from the NAS Autism Helpline.

## Resources for parents, carers or other supporters

Warman, R. (2003). *Helping someone with Asperger syndrome to find employment: A practical guide for parents, carers and advocacy services*. Available at [www.autismberkshire.org.uk/employment.htm](http://www.autismberkshire.org.uk/employment.htm)

## Further reading

Fast Y. et al. (2004). *Employment for individuals with Asperger syndrome or non-verbal learning disability: stories and strategies*. London: Jessica Kingsley. Available from the NAS Publications Department.

Jobcentre Plus Disability Support (2003). *Getting and keeping a job: how the Jobcentre Plus office can help you if you have a learning disability*. Sheffield: Jobcentre Plus Disability Support.

Meyer, R. N. (2001). *Asperger syndrome employment workbook*. London: Jessica Kingsley. Available from the NAS Publications Department.

SKILL (2003). *Into work experience: positive experiences of disabled people*. London: SKILL.

## Membership of The National Autistic Society

The NAS has over 12,000 members and we would like you to join us! A strong membership enables us to strengthen our campaigns for the rights of people with autism and their families. Your membership will give you priority information on workshops and training in your area and you will receive the leading magazine *Communication*, giving information on autistic spectrum disorders and updates on the work of the NAS. Your membership will also help us to provide our essential support networks and information to people affected by ASD throughout the UK. If you would like to become a member, please contact: [membership@nas.org.uk](mailto:membership@nas.org.uk) or telephone: 020 7903 3563.

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*To the best of our knowledge this list is correct at the time of going to press, but The National Autistic Society cannot guarantee its accuracy.*



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