

For Employers - How to carry out an APD-friendly interview

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When interviewing an applicant with APD (or any communication difficulties) please follow these guidelines in order to give them equal access to the interviewing process.

Prior to the interview, please ensure that the applicant has been sent an invitation to the interview in written format, via letter or email, clearly stating the date, time and location of the interview. If they have APD, they might not process this information completely or correctly over the phone and it is the employer's duty to ensure that they have the correct information in order to arrive on the correct date and at the required time and place for their interview. Any documents they need to bring with them should also be included in the written information.

1. On arrival, give the applicant a list of the questions you will be asking, with spaces provided for their notes and a pen.
2. Also provide space for them to list any questions they might have and any reasonable accommodations they might need in order to fulfill the duties of the post applied for.
3. Allow them a short period to process the questions and make their notes for each one. Some applicants will need more time than others and this should be allowed.
4. Allow the applicant time to also rehearse their replies.
5. If the applicant has difficulties with reading/writing the questions could be recorded and provided to them in that format also, as added multi-sensory reinforcement, to aid access to the information
6. In the interview, always face the applicant and seat them not too great a distance from you so that they can read your lips and body language, if they need to.
7. If more than one person is interviewing, make it clear before you start if you are going to be taking turns in asking questions and then allow time for the applicant to become accustomed to the change in speaker.
8. Each interviewer should chat to the applicant for a short while, to allow them to get used to their speech pattern/accents. If possible, they should be interviewed by someone without a strong regional accent, unless it is the same as their own - this is because unfamiliar voices and accents can cause great problems in processing/comprehension for people with APD and puts them at a disadvantage from the start.
9. Make sure that all interviewees speak clearly, pausing between long phrases to allow for delayed processing. Questions might need to be repeated or rephrased, to meet the preference of each applicant if they have not processed it clearly.
10. Allow plenty of time for the applicant to reply, allowing for delayed processing and word retrieval issues. Remind them that they can read from the notes that they made earlier.
11. Offer to inform the applicant about the outcome of the interview by the method of their choice. In writing is usually preferred - by email, or by letter – because a lot of people with APD have problems using the telephone (because of processing speech when there is degraded sound quality). Some applicants without this problem might still prefer a phone call, so all methods should be offered, but I would recommend also sending a letter as reinforcement, in case an applicant has not fully processed all that was said / has not fully understood all the details.

PLEASE NOTE - With reasonable and appropriate accommodations, a person with APD is as capable of fulfilling the duties of any job in which they are experienced and qualified, as any other employee with the same experience and qualifications, so please do not hold their APD against them when appointing a candidate – to do so is disability discrimination according to the Equalities Act 2010.
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>