

# **Preparing for Your Online Autism Assessment (Adult): A guide for adults and their supporters**

## **What is an adult autism assessment?**

An adult autism assessment is designed to help us understand your experiences, communication style, relationships, interests, sensory experiences, and how you have experienced the world throughout your life.

The assessment is based on the criteria for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) described in the DSM-5 and may involve a range of assessment methods, including clinical interviews and standardised assessment tools.

Your assessment will take place online via video call with a assessor experienced in assessing autism in adults.

## **Who should attend?**

You are welcome to attend the assessment on your own.

However, it can be very helpful if a partner, friend, relative, or other person who knows you well is able to contribute information about your experiences and development.

Where possible, information from someone who knew you during childhood can be particularly useful, as autism is a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition and part of the assessment involves exploring your early development.

We understand that this is not possible for everyone. If no one is available to provide childhood information, your assessment can still go ahead.

## **Before the Appointment**

### **Technology Check**

Please:

- Use a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet if possible.

- Ensure your camera and microphone are working.
- Test your internet connection before the appointment.
- Have access to a quiet, private space where you feel comfortable talking.

## **Your Environment**

Try to:

- Minimise background noise and interruptions.
- Sit somewhere with good lighting so your face can be seen clearly.
- Use headphones if this helps with privacy or concentration.

## **What Information Will We Discuss?**

The assessment is likely to explore:

- Your current experiences and day-to-day life.
- Communication and social interaction.
- Relationships and friendships.
- Interests, hobbies, and routines.
- Sensory preferences and sensitivities.
- Education, employment, and independent living.
- Your early childhood development and family history.

You may be asked to give examples from different stages of your life.

There are no right or wrong answers. The assessment is about understanding your experiences as accurately as possible.

## **During the Assessment**

### **What to Expect**

Your assessor will guide you through a structured conversation and ask questions about your experiences.

Depending on the assessment approach being used, you may also be invited to take part in additional activities or tasks. These are not tests and there is no preparation required.

The assessment may feel detailed, as we often explore experiences from both childhood and adulthood.

## **Your Role**

- Answer questions as honestly and naturally as you can.
- Ask for clarification if a question is unclear.
- Take your time when responding.
- Let your assessor know if you need a break.

We recognise that talking about personal experiences can sometimes feel tiring or emotional, and breaks can be arranged whenever needed.

## **Supporting Yourself**

You may find it helpful to:

- Plan some quiet time before and after the assessment.
- Have water or a hot drink nearby.
- Keep any notes you would like to refer to during the session.
- Have a trusted friend, partner, or family member available for support before or after the appointment.

Some people find it useful to think in advance about examples of situations that illustrate their experiences, although this is not essential.

## **After the Assessment**

At the end of the assessment:

- You will have an opportunity to ask questions.
- The assessor may explain whether any further information is needed.
- The next steps in the diagnostic process will be discussed.
- Information about when and how you will receive feedback will be provided.

## **Questions or Accessibility Needs?**

Please let us know before your appointment if you have any accessibility requirements, such as:

- Additional breaks.
- Use of subtitles or captions.
- Support from another person during the assessment.
- Communication preferences.
- Any concerns about using video technology.

Our team will do their best to make the assessment as accessible and comfortable as possible.

### **A Final Reminder**

There is no test to pass and no "correct" way to present yourself.

The purpose of the assessment is to understand your experiences and how you interact with the world. The most helpful thing you can do is be yourself.