

Preparing for Your In-Person 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 appointment will take place in person at our clinic with an 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.

If someone is attending with you, please let us know in advance where possible.

Before the Appointment

Planning Your Journey

Please:

- Check the clinic location and travel arrangements before your appointment.
- Allow extra time for traffic, parking, or public transport delays.
- Aim to arrive a few minutes before your appointment time.
- Contact us if you think you may be late or have difficulty attending.

What to Bring

You may wish to bring:

- A bottle of water or preferred drink.
- Any notes you would like to refer to during the assessment.
- Glasses, hearing aids, or other items you regularly use.
- Comfort items that help you feel more relaxed, such as fidget tools or sensory aids.

No special preparation is required.

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.

If a family member, friend, or supporter is present, they may be invited to share their observations and experiences where relevant.

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.

Making Yourself Comfortable

We understand that attending a clinic appointment can feel unfamiliar or anxiety-provoking.

You are welcome to:

- Bring sensory aids, fidget items, or comfort objects.
- Ask for breaks during the assessment.
- Move around, stand, or change seating position if this helps you concentrate.
- Take your time when answering questions.

Please let us know about any adjustments that may help you participate comfortably.

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.
- Reduced sensory stimulation where possible.
- Support from another person during the assessment.
- Communication preferences.
- Mobility or access requirements.

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.