

Lloyds – This is Me.

Accessible Course - November 2024.

Public version.

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This is me: Championing disability and neuro-inclusion.

About this course.

At Lloyds Banking Group, we're paving the way for a consciously inclusive workplace, where every colleague can truly be themselves and thrive. We want to unleash the full potential of our people, empowering them to perform at their best and deliver excellence for our customers.

We're driven to be better, and that means creating a truly disability and neuro-inclusive organisation.

This module is beneficial for any organisation looking to understand more about disability and neurodiversity, support the upskill of their own colleagues and create an environment in which disability and neurodiversity can be discussed openly.

Public version.

Why should I be doing this?

Join us in creating a more inclusive society where everyone can thrive! Whether or not you have a disability or neurodivergent condition, this e-module will empower you to understand others and create an inclusive environment for all.

At Lloyds Banking Group, we're leveraging diversity, equity and inclusion to help Britain prosper. A more inclusive society is a more prosperous society, and a diverse business is a better business.

What will I get out of it?

Discover the benefits of disability and neuro-inclusion. Develop the skills to recognise and challenge biases, stigma, and microaggressions – in yourself and others.

You will hear experiences of our colleagues first hand which will touch on some emotive topics. If you need to take a break and come back to this e-module, please do so.

How can I apply this?

Use what you learn to make a positive impact. You'll be equipped to engage in open conversations, understand the importance of reasonable adjustments in the workplace, and practise allyship.

Topics covered in this course.

This course has four topics.

Topic 1. Why does it matter?

Discover what we mean by disability and neurodiversity, plus the benefits inclusion can bring to a high-performance culture.

You'll need about 10 minutes to complete this topic.

[Select this link to go to the Why does it matter? topic.](#)

Topic 2. Stigma and bias.

Find out how stigma and bias impact people with disabilities and neurodivergent conditions.

You'll need about 6 minutes to complete this topic.

[Select this link to go to the Stigma and bias topic.](#)

Topic 3. Have a good conversation.

Ever felt worried about saying the wrong thing? Find out how to have conversations that help colleagues feel included.

You'll need about 7 minutes to complete this topic.

[Select this link to go to the Have a good conversation topic.](#)

Topic 4. Take action.

Start being an ally today. Take a pledge and commit to one action that will help build a more inclusive society.

You'll need about 5 minutes to complete this topic.

[Select this link to go to the Take action topic.](#)

Topic 1. Why does it matter?

We're here to help Britain prosper. That means everyone.

Hear from Rachel Osikoya, LBG's Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Jas Singh, LBG's Executive Ally for Disability and Neurodiversity, about why disability and neuro-inclusion is so important to who we are as a business. And meet some of our colleagues with disabilities and neurodivergent conditions who'll help build your understanding throughout this e-module.

Rachel says: We're currently in the middle of the UK's largest financial services transformation, and we have the perfect opportunity to leverage diversity, equity and inclusion to help Britain prosper. But we can't do this without our people.

We're committed to creating a consciously inclusive workplace where our colleagues love to work, can be themselves and thrive. However, we know this isn't currently the case for everyone. Our colleagues with disabilities, long-term health, and neurodivergent conditions, who account for 28% of our workforce, have told us that they experience barriers in the workplace, face bias, and feel less likely to achieve their career aspirations.

Our managers have told us that, despite good intentions of wanting to support their team, they sometimes avoid having open conversations with their teams about disability and neurodiversity due to a lack of confidence and the fear of getting it wrong.

Jas says: Disability and neuro-inclusion benefits everyone. It's an important part of our high-performance culture which creates brilliant products and services for our customers, driving profit, and delivering on our strategy to Grow, Focus and Change. That's why we're rolling out our first ever groupwide upskill programme focused on disability and neurodiversity.

Through this upskill programme we are striving to create experiences for our colleagues that are inclusive every day. This needs to show up

through our behaviours, decision making, language and the way we support our teams. Getting this right is at the heart of helping Britain prosper – a more inclusive society is a more prosperous society, and a diverse business is a better business.

Rachel speaks again: Throughout this training, you'll get to meet some of our colleagues, and get to know the real them, including their disability, long-term health or neurodivergent condition, and how we can all have more open conversations.

A number of colleagues with disabilities and neurodivergent conditions speak to camera as they go about their work and hobbies.

- Sirinya says: I'm more than my ADHD, dyslexia, and dyscalculia.
- Ross says: I'm more than my spinal muscular atrophy.
- Ella says: My rheumatoid arthritis.
- Sirinya says: I'm also an accessibility advocate for Lloyds Banking Group.
- Ross says: I'm also a keynote speaker.
- Ella says: I was chosen to be part of the Future Makers Leadership programme.

Everyone says: When you view someone only through the lens of their disability, or neurodivergent condition, you limit yourself, in terms of how you see value, potential, and success.

Because I'm more than my long-term health conditions.

That's why you'll meet the real me.

This is me.

Talking about definitions.

The topic of disability, long-term health conditions, and neurodiversity is deeply personal to individuals. Many people don't consider themselves 'disabled', or want to be identified as such, and the language they choose to describe themselves can vary.

The way we talk about neurodiversity has changed a lot in recent times and continues to do so.

On the following screens you'll find out what we mean by disability and neurodiversity at LBG and how this relates to the Equality Act 2010.

What is a disability?

As an organisation we are guided by the Equality Act 2010, which defines a disability as:

A physical or mental condition that has a substantial and long-term adverse impact on your ability to do normal daily activities.

We also have legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 which we will learn more about later in this module.

The details.

To break that definition down:

- A 'substantial adverse effect' means more than minor or trivial.
- 'Long-term' means it has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months.
- A condition can still be considered long-term if the effect fluctuates and is likely to recur.
- 'Normal day to day' includes travelling, communicating, computer use etc.

Examples of disabilities.

There are some conditions which are automatically deemed as disabilities including cancer, multiple sclerosis, HIV, and visual impairments.

Outside those previously mentioned, there is no set list of what is or isn't a disability, but it could include things like: mental health conditions (e.g. depression) or long-term health conditions (e.g. epilepsy, long covid, heart conditions, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia).

The social model of disability.

Separate to our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010, at LBG we champion the social model of disability – so people are ‘disabled’ by the barriers in society rather than their condition.

These barriers could include attitudes (e.g. stigma and bias), physical obstacles (e.g. access to buildings), technology (e.g. systems), lack of auxiliary aids or services, or policies, processes and arrangements. We are therefore focused on removing these barriers for our colleagues, so that everyone can perform at their best and feel included.

What is neurodiversity?

As humans we’re all different, and our brains and minds are all different too. This diversity is a natural and valuable part of humanity.

Neurodiversity is often used to describe the variations in how people think and process information, including neurodivergent conditions.

There are many different neurodivergent conditions, including ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia and Tourette’s syndrome – just to name a few! People with one neurodivergent condition are more likely to have at least one other condition. This is known as ‘co-occurrence’.

Are neurodivergent conditions covered under the Equality Act and considered a disability? The short answer is, it depends. The focus is on the impact of the neurodivergent condition on the individual, rather than the condition itself.

True or false?

There are many misconceptions out there when it comes to disability and neurodiversity. Coming up next are a series of five statements. Pause after each statement to decide whether you think it is true or false. The correct answer will follow, along with further information.

Statement 1. 3% of people in the UK have a disability.

Do you think this is true or false?

Pause your screen-reader and consider the answer.

It's false.

It's actually higher – according to the Department for Work and Pensions Family Resources Survey 2021/22, 24% of people in the UK have a disability.

Statement 2. Companies with a greater representation of people with disabilities and neurodivergent conditions perform better financially.

Do you think this is true or false?

Pause your screen-reader and consider the answer.

It's true.

According to an Accenture study, companies that have led on disability inclusion have 1.6x more revenue, 2.6x more net income, and 2x more economic profit. The benefit comes from diversity of thought.

(Source: The Disability Inclusion Imperative 2023.)

Statement 3. 80% of disabilities are acquired during working life.

Do you think this is true or false?

It's true.

Pause your screen-reader and consider the answer.

Over 80% of people acquire their disability between the ages of 18 and 64, so whilst they're working.

(Source: DWP Disability Confident November 2016.)

Statement 4. 10% of disabilities are non-visible.

Do you think this is true or false?

Pause your screen-reader and consider the answer.

It's false.

It's estimated that 70-80% of disabilities are not immediately visible. If a colleague decides not to share their disability or neurodivergent condition with you, you might never realise.

(Source: UK Government report published August 2023: Approved work: Invisible disabilities in Education and Employment.)

Statement 5. Teams who embrace neurodiversity are more productive than those that don't.

Do you think this is true or false?

Pause your screen-reader and consider the answer.

It's true.

According to a 2022 Deloitte article, research suggests that teams with colleagues with neurodivergent conditions can be 30% more productive than those without them.

(Source: Deloitte, 'A rising tide lifts all boats', 2022.)

How did you find that activity?

Make a note of some of these facts and use them in your team inclusion conversations.

Creating diverse teams isn't just the right thing to do, it's essential to driving performance. You may think you don't work with anyone with a

disability, or neurodivergent condition, but the data tells us you probably do or will do in the future.

Our commitment.

At LBG we're creating an inclusive and accessible workplace where everyone is supported to thrive in our high-performance culture. The inclusion of our colleagues is an important part of becoming a purpose-driven organisation and delivering on our strategy to Grow, Focus, and Change.

In 2023 we committed to doubling the number of colleagues with disabilities in senior management roles by 2025 to 12%. We also made a number of commitments to dial-up our focus on disability and neuro-inclusion. We're driving forward improvements in our recruitment processes, career development opportunities and the physical working environment.

Having greater diversity means we make better decisions for customers, through products and services that are tailored and inclusive of their needs.

Legal obligation.

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. All employers have a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to remove or reduce barriers that cause substantial disadvantage to colleagues with disabilities.

Rate your confidence.

Consider how confident you feel about approaching conversations on disability and neurodiversity. You're about to see two statements. Decide how you feel about each one, from strongly disagree to strongly agree. You'll be able to rate your confidence again at the end of the e-module so you can check your progress.

Statement 1. When I talk to people with a disability or neurodivergent condition, even if I have one myself, I worry I'll say the wrong thing.

Statement 2. I know how to be disability and neuro-inclusive every day, so that everyone can perform at their best.

How did you do?

Select one of the three options below to receive some tailored feedback.

[Option 1. I feel confident already.](#)

[Option 2. I feel somewhat confident.](#)

[Option 3. I don't feel confident yet.](#)

Option 1 tailored feedback.

It's great you're already feeling confident.

Our research tells us that even when colleagues want to be inclusive, fear of saying the wrong thing often stops them from having conversations.

This e-module will help build your confidence even further to have open conversations, so we can all thrive at work and benefit from the greater diversity of thought that inclusion offers.

Option 2 tailored feedback.

It's good that you're feeling somewhat confident already.

Our research tells us that even when colleagues want to be inclusive, fear of saying the wrong thing often stops them from having conversations.

This e-module will help build your confidence to have open conversations, so we can all thrive at work and benefit from the greater diversity of thought that inclusion offers.

Option 3 tailored feedback.

Don't worry that you're not feeling confident yet.

Our research tells us that even when colleagues want to be inclusive, fear of saying the wrong thing often stops them from having conversations.

This e-module will help build your confidence to have open conversations, so we can all thrive at work and benefit from the greater diversity of thought that inclusion offers.

Coming up.

According to the disability equality charity Scope, two in three people say they feel awkward around people with disabilities. Often this is driven by people worrying that they will say the wrong thing.

(Source: Scope, End the Awkward Campaign.)

This e-module will help you understand more about the stigma and bias that people with disabilities or neurodivergent conditions often experience. It'll give you the tools to have good conversations and be more inclusive.

The important thing is to embrace opportunities to have these conversations, to grow and thrive together.

This is the end of the “Why does it matter?” topic.

Continue to the next topic, or [select this link if you'd like to return to the “Topics covered in this course” section.](#)

Topic 2. Stigma and bias.

Hear from some colleagues.

Did you know that three out of four people with disabilities experience negative attitudes or behaviours?

(Source: Scope.)

Four colleagues are sat in a breakout area about to have a conversation. They have come together to discuss how stigma and bias has affected them. They start by introducing themselves.

- I'm Sarah. I work in the Operational Resilience team. I'm profoundly deaf and I have mobility problems.
- My name's Ross and I work in Digital Engagement and I have ADHD.
- My name's Spencer and I work in OKYC and I have dyslexia.
- My name's Lauren. I work in Customer Financial Assistance and I have autism, dyslexia, fibromyalgia, anxiety and two auto-immune diseases.

The colleagues discuss their lived experience.

- Lauren: So I think we should start by sharing everyone's experience of stigma and bias. Sarah would you like to start us off?
- Sarah: The problem I have with stigma is that I don't fit people's stereotypes of what they think a deaf person is going to be. I get a lot of "Oh, you're not really deaf are you?" or "Are you just a bit hard of hearing?" or just a lot of people telling me, "I just don't think of you as deaf", which is for me just very much, well, good for you! I still am deaf and I'm working really hard to keep up and to lip read and to manage all of the background noise. But yeah, it's that whole idea that they think it's a positive thing that I don't match my disability and that I seem to be coping really well with my disability. And that can be quite hurtful because it's the implication that being deaf is a bad thing and it's a thing that I should not be happy about.
- Lauren: With being autistic, I have been told, I don't know how many times, "But you don't look autistic"! One of my biggest barriers – I have a blue badge for parking because of my physical

conditions and I've actually stopped using it because I get challenged so much on it. People have shouted at me...

- Sarah: It's the fatigue of it almost isn't it...?
- Lauren: Yes
- Sarah: ...of constantly having to defend yourself.
- Spencer: Same as when I was a kid. I was diagnosed, by the doctors, with dyslexia when I was about seven or eight. You know, I'm not saying everybody's the same, well, a black kid in the 80s, that was hard enough! [friendly laughter] But then having dyslexia and not having the support, they thought, "Oh you're just being difficult". It's the first time, in 30 years, that I'm actually trying to tell people that I've got dyslexia, so they understand. But I think now, people are starting to understand.

The colleagues move onto discussing masking behaviours.

- Lauren: Who here masks or changes their behaviour to try and avoid stigma and bias?
- Ross: It's not so much that I do it, it's that people want me to do it. The one I hate the most is when people say, "You need to find out how to play the game. You need to change who you are, depending on who you're talking to." I can't do that. My impulses and my need to say things and jump in is too strong. Just let me be me.
- Spencer: I'm the opposite, I mask it every single day. I try not to let people know. So when I come and go out to like a restaurant or get food, I see what everybody else is ordering. Half the words, I can't make out what it says. Yeah I mask every single day, but friends wouldn't have a clue. It's the same as like Workday. So Workday, the system that we have, there was a part on there talking about your disability, and it took me years to say that I've got dyslexia on there. There's many people probably out there like me, probably not wanting to talk about their disability, one way or another.
- Ross: 100%
- Spencer: Probably too scared, because of the reaction or what someone's going to say.
- Sarah: Even I find that I mask behaviours at work. And that's one of the problems isn't it, when we're masking our behaviours at work is we're not just kind of doing ourselves out of the support that we need, we're unintentionally giving that message to other

people that “we’re hiding these aspects of ourselves, maybe you should too.” Whereas, if we manage to stop those behaviours, share who we authentically are and what we authentically need, that gives other people, who are maybe not as far on the journey, the space to do the same.

The colleagues move on to discuss positive action.

- Lauren: What positive action would you recommend?
- Ross: For me, it’s just patience and understanding. That’s all I need.
- Lauren: I think for me, it’s just treating everyone as an individual, regardless of what condition they have.
- Spencer: I’ll say it’s taking the time to get to know somebody and then working with them to be stronger, better, more motivated and more focused.
- Sarah: For me it would be always start from a place of belief, believe people about their condition.
- Spencer: If somebody can take something positive away from this discussion we’ve had, because that’s the main thing isn’t it really? That’s why we’re here today, to leave a positive message but to give someone that motivation to drive them to want to say something, like me. It’s driven me to tell you now that I’m dyslexic. You know, it’s the same as you, you talk about ADHD, you talk about your disabilities, you’ve explained about your situation as well. I think it will be a massive impact.

What are stigma and bias?

Our brains use mental shortcuts to quickly process information. However, these shortcuts are often based on assumptions or stereotypes. This leads to stigma and bias – holding unfair beliefs and attitudes about others, leading to prejudice or favouritism.

For example, assuming someone with a disability or neurodivergent condition can't do certain tasks or is less capable. These assumptions might not reflect the reality of someone's abilities or experiences. It can lead to unfair treatment, discrimination and exclusion. This can then impact their wellbeing, quality of life, how they feel at work, and their ability to excel in their careers.

Common myths.

As a result of stigma and bias, many people hold misconceptions and believe common myths, like assuming or believing that:

- People with neurodivergent conditions can't communicate effectively.
- People with disabilities take lots of time off work, and will need looking after when they are in the office.
- People with anxiety wouldn't want to present in front of their peers.
- People with disabilities take much longer to complete tasks.

All these assumptions can negatively impact a colleagues' experience of LBG and their ability to succeed in the organisation.

What are microaggressions?

Microaggressions are small, often unintentional comments or behaviours that are offensive to an aspect of someone's identity. In some cases that can even be well-meaning comments or actions. They are often based on stigmas, bias and assumptions.

People with disabilities and neurodivergent conditions may experience many microaggressions in their everyday lives. As they are often subtle, they can feel confusing, frustrating and distressing. This might be your own reality.

Examples of microaggressions.

Microaggressions can take many forms. For example, telling a person with a neurodivergent condition that "everyone is a bit like that", suggesting that their experience is insignificant. Or telling a person with a disability "you don't look disabled". Or someone with a mental health condition "oh everyone gets anxious".

It can also present as people not being given certain tasks because a manager wants to "protect" them and not add to the colleague's "burden".

Pitying people with disabilities or neurodivergent conditions, or calling them "brave" for simply existing with their condition, is a microaggression too.

Does this reflect your experience?

If you experience stigma, bias or microaggressions, we want you to know that we hear you. It can be frustrating, especially when disability and neurodiversity brings so many positives, like innovation and unique skills, which can be overlooked.

We're committed to shining a light on this positivity, through this e-module and our wider inclusion efforts. Together, we can work to tackle negative perceptions and create a culture where everyone can thrive.

And if you don't personally experience these, how might it feel if you did? By understanding and empathising with others, we can all play a part in creating a more inclusive society.

Is it bias?

Coming up are a series of scenarios. You'll need to decide whether they show bias, or what should have happened instead.

Are you ready?

Part 1. Joan and Adam.

Adam, who uses a crutch as a mobility aid, is organising some files. Joan sees him and comes over.

She picks up the files and says "Don't worry Adam, I can do this. You go and sit down."

Did Joan make a mistake here? Consider which answer you think is correct from these three options.

Option 1. Yes, she took work away from him, without checking in with him first

Option 2. No, Joan was being thoughtful and proactive by helping Adam

Option 3. Maybe, it depends whether Adam asks her not to do that again, or has mentioned it in the past

Pause your screen-reader and consider the answer.

Wanting to help someone with a disability with a task, even when they're capable of doing it themselves, is a common microaggression. Instead of telling Adam to sit down, she should have asked him if he wanted any help.

Part 2. Maya and Raoul.

At a team meeting, Maya, who has ADHD, is fidgeting, appearing distracted by noise outside the room during a presentation. However, when discussing the team's future strategy, she's passionate and a strong problem solver.

Her manager, Raoul, knows she has ADHD but sees her fidgeting as unprofessional and lack of interest. He mentions this in her next one-to-one.

Raoul is showing bias here. What could he have done instead?

Consider which answer you think is correct from these three options.

Option 1. Asked Maya to explain her experience of ADHD and how it can present itself at work.

Option 2. Told Maya what she could do to stay focused during meetings.

Option 3. Asked Maya to stop fidgeting or not to attend the meetings in the future if she can't focus.

Pause your screen-reader and consider the answer.

Raoul should have taken the time to speak to Maya and understand how her ADHD impacts her.

He would learn that fidgeting supports Maya to stay focused. He should also explore what else would support Maya to make sure that all future meetings are inclusive.

Part 3. Mark's presentation.

Mark is Deaf and has a British Sign Language interpreter as a reasonable adjustment. He's been working on a presentation to senior

leadership and expected that he would deliver part of this. His manager Taylor said they had selected someone else because it had to be polished and using an interpreter wouldn't be professional.

Was Taylor's rationale appropriate? Consider which answer you think is correct from these three options.

Option 1. Yes, Mark's delivery is not good enough for presenting to a senior audience.

Option 2. Yes, because it would be the interpreter and not him actually delivering it.

Option 3. No, Mark has done the work and should be given the same opportunity as any other colleague.

Pause your screen-reader and consider the answer.

Mark should be given equal opportunity to develop and be visible to senior leaders. His reasonable adjustments are enablers; not giving him this opportunity is likely to be discrimination.

How did you do?

According to the Business Disability Forum, 56% of employees with disabilities said there are still disability-related barriers in the workplace after adjustments have been made. (Source: Business Disability Forum 2023 Great British Workplace Adjustments Survey.)

As a society, and organisation, it's important that we champion an inclusive environment so that everyone is set up to thrive. It's also important that we comply with the Equality Act and our obligations regarding disability discrimination.

Tackling stigma and bias.

Stigma and bias can negatively impact our beliefs and behaviours, and cause harm to others.

They get worse when they are ignored and not spoken about openly.
So how can you help to tackle these problems?

Notice your own.

Earlier in this topic you saw that biases are caused by our brains taking mental shortcuts, often based on assumptions or stereotypes. This often happens without realising, but you can choose to slow down and pay attention.

Notice when you're making assumptions about others, and question whether your thoughts are being impacted by stigma or bias.

Challenge others.

If you notice someone acting on bias or displaying microaggressions, you can choose to speak up and challenge their behaviour.

It doesn't need to be heated or confrontational – sometimes simply asking someone why they made a particular comment is enough for them to realise that they shouldn't have said it.

This is the end of the “Stigma and bias” topic.

Continue to the next topic, or [select this link if you'd like to return to the “Topics covered in this course” section.](#)

Topic 3. Have a good conversation.

Hear from Ella.

Hear from Lloyds Banking Group colleague Ella, who shares parts of her daily routine in the form of a video diary, and some tips on how to have a good conversation about disability and neurodiversity.

Ella: So it's Monday morning, start of the working week. I logged on about 7:15, looking forward to what the day's going to bring.

I'm Ella, and I'm a Communications and Engagement Manager at Lloyds Banking Group. I have rheumatoid arthritis, aphantasia and generalised anxiety disorder.

My rheumatoid arthritis causes me joint pain, issues with my dexterity and my mobility, and that can be really frustrating. I see a personal trainer twice a week and it's made a huge difference to my joint pain, my mobility, so I see it as a vital part of how I keep myself well.

I can't tell the amount of times that I've told people I've got rheumatoid arthritis, and the first thing they say is "you're too young to have arthritis" - minimises my experience. It makes me reluctant to actually talk to them about what I'm going through.

I've had my anxiety disorder for many years now, and it's just part of who I am. So I get panicky in quite a lot of situations, particularly when I'm overstimulated, there's lots of noise, lots of sensory impacts, or around a lot of people. So going into the office can really inflame both my joint pain and my anxiety.

One of the real benefits in the workplace for me is that I'm highly organised. If you have to manage all your appointments with the NHS, getting diagnoses, managing medications, deliveries, appointments. I'm one of the most organised persons you will ever meet, and this is a huge benefit in terms of ordering my time, at getting work done.

I'm actually really open about talking about my health conditions and disabilities, a lot of people can have assumptions and stereotypes. I'm quite confident, come across as quite extroverted, and so often when I tell people that I have anxiety, they're completely shocked at this, and I think it makes me feel like I should be acting in a certain way, it closes down the conversation. What I want to be asked is, "is there any support you need?" Or even just a simple, "how are you?"

I quite frequently have really positive interactions at work that people don't realise are related to my health, but they are because people just maybe have noticed that I'm a bit slower, or I may be not looking my best on calls, but instead of asking me, "oh, you having a bad day?", they just ask open-ended questions of either "how are you doing?" or "I've actually got a bit of capacity today, is there anything you need support with?"

They don't reference my disability. The way they're acting is just fully inclusive like I'm any other member of the team, and it means I can get

the support I might need. I don't feel forced into a position of having to ask for help.

If there was one piece of advice I could give it would be to treat everybody as an individual. Treat them with respect, treat them with empathy, and just go into it wanting to have a really positive conversation to get to know somebody.

Reflection activity.

Take a moment to consider whether you've ever avoided a conversation, or diminished someone's experience, because you felt awkward talking about their disability or neurodivergent condition. You're about to see four statements, consider which one most applies to you.

Option 1. I have experienced this at least once in the past.

Option 2. I haven't experienced this because I feel confident having these conversations.

Option 3. I haven't experienced this because I've never had a conversation like this.

Option 4. I'd prefer not to say.

Pause for a moment to consider the options.

As you saw earlier, according to the charity Scope, two thirds of people, feel awkward around a person with a disability. Our colleague insight tells us that it's often caused by the fear of saying the wrong thing.

But even when it's well intended, it still has a negative impact on colleagues, preventing them from being their authentic self.

This topic will help you move past those awkward feelings and have good quality conversations with everyone in your team.

Good conversations.

Having authentic and open conversations can help everyone feel included and valued. This is especially true for our colleagues with

disabilities or neurodivergent conditions, who we've seen are more likely to experience stigma and discrimination.

Connecting with someone through a good conversation, can be a really simple way to create a sense of belonging and safety. When we achieve that, we'll foster an environment where everyone can thrive.

Next, you'll find some tips to get you started.

Get started.

If you meet a person with a disability or neurodivergent condition for the first time, say hello, ask their name and go from there. It's really that simple.

It might not always feel that simple. You might find you have a lot of thoughts about not wanting to offend or upset that person. Notice those thoughts and try to put them to one side. Concentrate on being yourself and taking a genuine interest in the other person, as you would with anyone else.

Consider language.

If you're worried about saying the wrong thing, here are some things to think about:

- Say someone is 'living with' a condition, instead of 'suffering from' it, as the latter suggests they're a victim.
- Say 'disability' instead of using euphemisms (e.g. differently-abled). Disability isn't a negative word!
- Describe people without a disability as 'person without a disability' instead of 'able-bodied' or 'normal'.
- Everyone wants to be thought of and spoken to as a person; they don't want to be defined solely by their disability or neurodivergent condition, so avoid saying 'the blind colleague' or using collective terms like 'the disabled', 'the deaf'.

Don't make assumptions.

People with disabilities and neurodivergent conditions will often have different preferences and views on what language they find appropriate

or inappropriate. If you're unsure about how to say something, ask the person what they'd prefer.

Remember that many disabilities are non-visible, and regardless of a condition that someone has, they may not refer to it as a disability themselves. Also, if you've met one person with a disability or neurodivergent condition, you've just met just one person – with their own individual experience and preferences.

Offering assistance.

Don't assume a person with a disability wants or needs your help. As a basic courtesy, always ask and wait until the person accepts your offer.

If your offer is accepted, listen or ask for specific instructions. If they don't accept your offer, that's OK too!

Seek advice.

You aren't expected to be an expert on disabilities or neurodivergent conditions, so get advice if you need to and use our support resources. You can find the resources at the end of this e-module.

Ask me anything.

You're about to meet Louis, an LBG colleague. He's here to help you practise having an open and authentic conversation. You'll hear a series of respectful questions and his response.

The views and responses are Louis' own. Other people might answer differently. You can use these questions as a way of starting a respectful conversation and avoid making assumptions.

- Hi, what's your name?

Louis: Hello, I'm Louis and I'm joined by my guide dog, Kite.

- What reasonable adjustments help you perform at your best?

Louis: So, the key adjustment for me is my guide dog, Kite, who helps me to get around independently. I use JAWS screen reader in order to access the computer, and working from home is really important to me as I'm able to manage my environment and wellbeing to avoid getting migraines, which I'm rather prone to in the office environment.

- What are the biggest barriers you experience at work?

Louis: I use a screen reader called JAWS, which effectively reads everything to me that is on screen. The biggest challenge for me is where I'm sent slide decks or documents that are inaccessible, so haven't been checked using Microsoft's accessibility checker. If I get a PowerPoint that is not accessible, then I cannot do my job independently and I need a person, so a support worker, to read that information to me, which takes a lot more time.

- What can I do so you can be your best at work?

Louis: The best way that you can help me to be my best is to use the accessibility checker when you're creating documents and PowerPoints. But it's also really small things, like if you see me around, offering support if you think that it could help. So, a prime example recently was where I was waiting outside an accessible toilet and the person who'd last been in there had presumably crept past me on the way out and it was another colleague who stopped to check that I was aware that the toilet was now empty. Taking those few seconds just to ask me if I needed support really made a difference to my day, as I'd been stood there for ages before I checked again.

- What does a challenging day look like?

Louis: A challenging day for me is one where I've got lots of calls. Which I appreciate is something that everybody has but, for me, I'm listening to the call, I'm listening to my screen reader, perhaps looking at notes, as well as hearing Teams messages ping in my ear. And that's not just a ping but JAWS literally reads out the message. And when I'm also trying to talk to those on the call, it becomes really difficult.

- Is there any language you don't like me using?

Louis: For me, I don't mind what language people use. I start conversations off by saying that "you are not going to offend me." But one thing that can make me feel uncomfortable is when I know that you are uncomfortable and trying to avoid using certain words. It's always better just to ask the person if you're unsure.

What is allyship?

Allyship means being an active supporter or advocate to people with disabilities or neurodivergent conditions.

Allies play an important role in creating a safe and welcoming environment where everyone feels included and respected.

Allies can also champion the many positive contributions that people with disabilities and neurodivergent conditions bring to the workplace and our society.

What does it look like?

You don't always have to speak up or confront others to show allyship (although you can do that too). Simple gestures can signal that you're a safe space for people with disabilities or neurodivergent conditions.

For example, listen to their experiences and challenges with empathy and respect; show understanding; proactively implement reasonable adjustments (if you're a line manager); and respect their personal space, communication choices, and privacy.

What if it's uncomfortable?

Being an ally can feel uncomfortable at times, especially if you're challenging your own biases or challenging inappropriate behaviour. If you make a mistake, apologise, learn from it, and move forward.

Moving out of your comfort zone can help you build stronger and more trusting relationships in the long term. By being an ally, you build trust and show that you're someone your colleagues can talk to.

Recap.

Fear of saying the wrong thing makes many people feel awkward around people with a disability or neurodivergent condition.

Imagine if two thirds of people acted awkwardly and avoided conversations with you. How would you feel?

It makes it almost impossible to perform at your best or achieve everything you could, compared with an environment where you felt accepted.

Take a moment to pause and reflect on what you've just learnt. What could you start doing differently? Do you always:

- Use respectful language?
- Ensure the way you communicate is accessible and inclusive?
- Involve all your colleagues in conversations equally?
- Offer assistance and wait for it to be accepted?
- Be an ally by signalling you're a safe space and speaking up?

This is the end of the "Have a good conversation" topic.

Continue to the next topic, or [select this link if you'd like to return to the "Topics covered in this course" section.](#)

Topic 4. Take action.

True or false?

Recap some of the key points from this e-module in this quiz. You're about to see five statements. Pause after each statement to decide whether you think it is true or false. The correct answer will follow, along with further information.

Statement 1. The social model of disability is the view that people are 'disabled' by the barriers in society, rather than their condition.

Do you think this is true or false?

Pause your screen-reader and consider the answer.

It's true.

According to the social model of disability, people are 'disabled' by the barriers in society rather than their condition e.g. attitudes, physical obstacles, or policies and processes.

Statement 2. All employers have a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments to remove or reduce barriers that cause substantial disadvantage to colleagues with disabilities.

Do you think this is true or false?

Pause your screen-reader and consider the answer.

It's true.

The Equality Act 2010 requires employers to make reasonable adjustments to remove or reduce barriers that cause substantial disadvantage to colleagues with disabilities, and it would be discrimination if they fail to do this. The adjustment must however be reasonable within the context of the role and individual business requirements.

Statement 3. Creating an environment that is inclusive for people with disabilities and neurodivergent conditions, benefits everyone.

Do you think this is true or false?

Pause your screen-reader and consider the answer.

It's true.

Being inclusive of your colleagues with disabilities and neurodivergent conditions supports a high-performance culture, which enables you to better serve the needs of your customers.

Statement 4. Allyship means having a disability or neurodivergent condition and supporting those with the same condition.

Do you think this is true or false?

Pause your screen-reader and consider the answer.

It's false.

Statement 5. It's preferable to say 'able-bodied' for people who don't have a physical disability.

Do you think this is true or false?

Pause your screen-reader and consider the answer.

It's false.

Saying 'able-bodied' suggests that people with physical disabilities are deficient in something and aren't able to do things, which isn't the case.

How did you do in that activity?

[Option 1. I did well.](#)

[Option 2. I didn't do very well.](#)

Option 1 tailored feedback.

Good! You can come back to this e-module if you ever need to refresh your knowledge.

Option 2 tailored feedback.

Keep going. Consider reviewing the e-module again to build your knowledge.

Rate your confidence.

At the start of this e-module, you considered how confident you felt about disability and neuro-inclusion. Consider the statements again. How do you feel about them now?

Statement 1. When I talk to people with a disability or neurodivergent condition, even if I have one myself, I worry I'll say the wrong thing.

Statement 2. I know how to be disability and neuro-inclusive every day, so that everyone can perform at their best.

How did you do?

Select one of the three options below to receive some tailored feedback.

[Option 1. I feel more confident.](#)

[Option 2. I feel less confident.](#)

[Option 3. I feel the same.](#)

Option 1 tailored feedback.

Time for action.

It's great that you're feeling more confident now that you've completed this e-module. It's time to start applying what you've learnt.

Option 2 tailored feedback.

Keep going.

Don't worry that you're feeling less confident. There's a lot of information and it can feel overwhelming at first. Take some time to go back and review the content.

Option 3 tailored feedback.

Keep going.

Don't worry that your confidence has stayed the same. Take some time to go back and review the content.

Change starts with action.

Take a moment to think about one achievable action you can start taking today, as a result of this e-module.

Choose one action you can commit to today from the following list.

- Change the language I use.
- Challenge myself to be well-intended, curious, and embrace vulnerability.
- Challenge my assumptions and biases.
- Be a better ally.
- Have better conversations.
- Something else.

Have you chosen one action? Now take a moment to open an email, write the action you chose and more detail about the change you're going to make, so that it's relevant to you. This could be something like: 'Make a point of talking to my colleague with a disability. If I say the wrong thing, apologise and learn from it'. Then send the email to your work email address.

Check-in with your pledge regularly to make sure you're working towards it. You might want to create a calendar invite to review it on a monthly basis.

When you're ready, move on to complete this course and find out about ongoing support.

This is me: Championing disability and neuro-inclusion.

You have now completed this e-module, but there is more you can do.

Make space in your week to continue working on your pledge.

The links on this page will open in a new window.

In the meantime, if you need support, there are plenty of resources to help:

- [Access to Work \(AtW\)](#)

- [The Disability Confident Scheme](#)
- [Scope](#)
- [The Business Disability Forum \(BDF\)](#)
- [Business Disability Forum SME Toolkit](#)
- [Disability in the Workplace | Business Guides | Lloyds Bank Business](#)
- [Mental Health In The Workplace | Business Guides | Lloyds Bank](#)

A big thank you.

Thank you to all involved.

We wanted to extend a huge thanks to our contributors and executive sponsors.

Finally, thank you to the Business Disability Forum for the use of their images within this e-module.

[Select this link if you'd like to return to the "Topics covered in this course" section.](#)

You can now close the e-module.