

10 practical adjustments that support autistic students

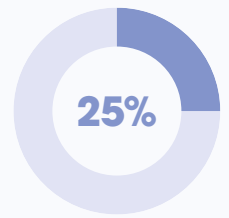
Infosheet 2 for educators Changing assessment techniques

All students need to be supported to demonstrate what they know, however sometimes the assessment design can act as a barrier for autistic students. Simple changes to assessments - such as providing additional reading time, using checklists to assist with planning and breaking down tasks into stages - can help autistic students demonstrate what they know to the best of their ability.

The purpose of all assessment is to provide evidence of what the student knows and can do. However, the design of assessment can have an impact on whether the results truly reflect the student's abilities.

Because of challenges with their executive function (the ability to organise, plan, implement instructions, problem solve, prioritise and follow tasks through), it is more difficult for an autistic student to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

As a consequence, providing the same assessment method for all students without considering the needs of individuals may be discriminatory. Adapting the assessment of a task to make it suitable for the student is a professional judgment that should be based on the teacher's knowledge of the individual student.



25%
of autistic students surveyed have had this adjustment implemented at their school*

A student may benefit from a combination of several adaptations including:

- Assistance with management of work load and due dates.
- Use of checklists to assist with planning assessment tasks.
- Breaking down tasks and presenting the task in stages.
- Providing templates which explain the structure of the task and the content to be included in each of its sections.
- Immediate, specific and constructive ongoing feedback.
- Providing multiple ways for students to demonstrate knowledge.
- A range of assessment methods e.g. role play, oral presentation, verbal responses.
- Use of laptops in tests and exams.
- Extra time for reading and completion of tests and exams.
- Allowing the opportunity for set breaks/ student to walk around during tests and exams.

Contact Amaze for professional development training and forums for teachers and school staff [here](#) or contact us on 03 9657 1600

*Source: 'Community Attitudes & Behaviours towards Autism; and Experience of Autistic People and their Families': Research report prepared by Centre for Health and Social Research, Australian Catholic University, Social Research Centre for AMAZE 12 December 2017