

Neuro-inclusion in-person meet-up

Welcome!

28th March 2025



What is the Engineering Professors' Council?

Represent - Inform - Network - Support

- We represent engineering academics
- We speak out to government and other stakeholders
- We speak 'in' to support our members
- We produce reports, data analysis and toolkits
- We hold events
- We share news and articles
- **We are a community of 8,500 engineering academics who reach > 70,000 engineering university students**



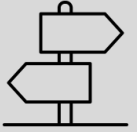
Engineering Academics
NETWORK

The voice of engineering academics



If you want to move around or step outside, please do

If you want to take a break, please do



Toilets, non-food/quiet space

This is a co-design process, so we are shaping something together and working out how to get there together

All of our voices are valued and our experiences are valid



NEW MODEL INSTITUTE FOR
TECHNOLOGY & ENGINEERING

NMITE team - please put your hands up



Today's plan

- 10.00 *Early arrivals/networking. coffee & pastries.*
- 10.30 **Welcome and Neuro-inclusion maturity model recap**
- 11.00 **Inclusive kick-off session**
- 12.00 *Lunch*
- 12.45 **Navigating a deficit framework with authentic voices**
- 14.00 *Break*
- 14:15 **Neuro-inclusive assessment**
- 14:45 **Neuro-inclusive resources**
- 15.15 **Wrap-up and forward planning**
- 15.45 *Close*



Aims:

- Update and reminder of framework for working groups.

Outputs:

- Shared understanding on model progress, timescales, population and toolkit vision
- Outputs from working groups

WELCOME

NEURO-INCLUSION MATURITY MODEL RECAP

(10:30 – 11:00)



Maturity Model

	Compliant	Defined	Mature	Leading
Inclusive Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders are familiar with the concepts of equality and discrimination and seek to comply with relevant statutory obligations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The leadership team have publicly committed to reducing inequality and promoting diversity and inclusion via the organisation's strategic plan and its implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership can demonstrate its commitment to EDI using tangible evidence e.g. actions with KPIs and timeframes. Monitoring and evaluation processes occur annually and include internal and external stakeholders. EDI integrated into accountability systems. Senior staff model inclusive practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders are recognised as models of good practice across the Public Service and among external stakeholders for championing EDI. EDI integrated into wider strategic planning process. Forums established by public bodies to share and capacity build on good practice.
Diversity Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collection meets various legislative requirements (e.g. Part 5 of the Disability Act, 2005). Data disclosed to data collectors is kept private and the confidentiality of individuals' responses is maintained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organisation is clear about what sources of data (internal and external) are relevant and useful. The organisation understands obligations under the GDPR. Goals are clearly defined and measurable. The organisation has assessed all existing policies to establish priority actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human rights-based principles inform the design, collection and use of equality data, boosting trust in the EDI data collection initiatives among relevant stakeholders. Data is mapped across the employee life-cycle. Data is regularly and consistently updated and used to set/amend priorities across the organisation. Plans are underway to plug gaps in data and to develop enhanced EDI metrics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organisation has a sophisticated understanding of its diversity profile, with insights into the full range of protected characteristics or groups at risk of discrimination. Diversity outcomes are benchmarked externally. Objectives are regularly monitored and reviewed. Progress is tracked and published in an accessible manner.
Recruitment & Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility is a key consideration when designing all aspects of the recruitment process including job advertisements, applications forms and aptitude tests. Organisations' recruitment policies state their commitment to supporting the career progression for all employees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organisation has identified which groups are under-represented in the workforce and potential barriers to access. Recruitment initiatives aim to widen the pool of applicants. Selection panels are diverse. Organisations actively communicate and implement policies to support career progression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Movement towards greater diversity in workforce profile. Proactive actions and timeframes to increase the recruitment, retention and promotion of a diverse workforce including out-reach & in-reach engagement with targeted groups. Concrete steps taken to eliminate bias from the selection process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The workforce profile broadly reflects wider society. Structured programmes in place to support the on-going recruitment of underrepresented groups. Diversity of thought recognised to be an organisational asset.
Training & Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and development opportunities are made available to all staff. Accessibility is a key criteria in the procurement of all aspects of training and development services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of existing CPD arrangements conducted to determine gaps and accessibility. Diverse networks established and visible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bespoke training and development opportunities provided to minority groups e.g. mentoring. Inclusive Leadership training available to senior staff. Intercultural awareness training available and participation encouraged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff EDI competencies training. Diverse thinking/communication/leadership styles recognised and supported. EDI competency training reviewed and updated regularly.
Structures & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment policies and procedures comply with equality legislation. Issues that arise are dealt with in accordance with published policies where applicable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organisation has ensured that all employment policies and procedures comply with equality legislation. There are examples of discrete EDI initiatives which go above-and-beyond legal compliance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organisation has a coherent set of policies and practices to enhance EDI e.g. reasonable adjustments, equal pay, flexible working policies. Staff are widely familiar with such policies/practices and feel supported to avail of same. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organisation has an excellent set of EDI policies and procedures which are actively promoted to all staff. Availing of flexible working arrangements is not seen as detrimental to one's career. EDI is embedded into the organisation's core values and culture as detailed in strategic plans and annual work plans.

Example EDI maturity framework: Government of Ireland

Work to date

- Recruited 57 participants: 18 students, 27 academics, 11 professional services
- Completed first survey round to look at levels and domains
- Steering Group (Stella, Bev, Jo-Anne Tait, a student) met to review results; concluded sufficient consensus had been reached
- Move to round 2 next week



Levels

Option 4

Less than/non-compliant	Pockets of individual compliance / not integrated	Organised compliance	Joined-up systems, continually improving	Innovating/sector leading
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Option 5

legal/regulatory compliance	consistent and structured	interpersonally connected	embedded systems	leading best practice
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- Students clearly had a preference for more straightforward language
- Specific question on the appropriateness of a 'Not Compliant' option – good support across all constituencies
 - Will be looking to couch this in QA language rather than phrases such as 'substandard' or 'not compliant'
 - We also feel we need a separate resource (in the resources toolkit) that provides links to outline what it means to be compliant.....not something we should be stating ourselves



Domains

Option 4

Recruitment and Admission	Enrolment and Transition In	Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Navigating Services	Transition onto careers or further study
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Option 5

Curriculum & Pedagogy	Assessments	Environment - physical and digital	Funding & Resources	Transitions	Student Journey and Experience
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- Preferences here supported concepts that were readily accessible to front-line staff (“things we know about and are within our domain”)
- Sense of student journey was well supported
- Interactions of staff and students came through strongly in qualitative comments
- Scratching our heads over role of inclusive leadership – not a popular choice, but was mentioned in one comment



Round Two

- Will go out again to all 57 participants (“all rounds” approach)
- Will pay more attention to plain language.....
- and clear sense of progression around preferred options
- Will have a first draft of descriptors in each element
- Will keep opportunity for respondents to make qualitative remarks



Aims:

- Clear rules of engagement, warmer exercise for language and voice discussions.

Outputs:

- Agreed rules of engagement
- Clear roles

INCLUSIVE KICK-OFF SESSION

(11:00 – 12:00)





Engineering Professors' Council: Neuro-inclusion framework -Rules of Engagement

Emma Lewis, Head of Quality Assurance, NMITE






Aims of session

- Discuss how we can all best work together
- Space for everyone to have their voice heard
- Establish clear guidelines that everyone can sign up to, covering how we will work together
 - set of “We will..... statements





Introducing ourselves – What helps you focus? (15-20 mins)

- Break into small groups (4 people max)
- Please introduce yourselves to each other
- Can you each share with the group – 1 thing that helps you feel comfortable and/or focused when working with others – write this on a post-it note
- Whole group reconvene and those who feel comfortable share some of the post-its with group



Behaviours, boundaries and strategies (15-20 mins)

- Break into groups of 4
- Focus on ideal behaviours, boundaries and strategies
 - i. What behaviours make it difficult to work with others
 - ii. What do you think are common challenges when working with others we can address
 - iii. How we ensure everyone's needs are understood and met when we're working together on this project?

(Each group will have sheet of flip chart paper to write on.)

- Feedback to whole group – are we seeing any themes emerging?





Starting our own Rules of Engagement (10 mins)

- Using the format “We will.....” – can everyone write down 1 or 2 suggestions of our group Rules of Engagement
- You can either write on a post-it note or use Slido link:





What are your suggestions for this group's "Rules of Engagement"?



Lunch will be served at 12.45 and will be buffet style.

If you need fresh air and/or natural lighting and/or to step away for a moment, feel free to use the lawned area to the front of NMITE.

A meeting room adjacent to the Main Hall is available as a food-free space for rest or prayer

LUNCH
(12:00 – 12:45)



Aims:

- Capturing the right language for use by the community.
- Definitions for facilitating inclusive conversations.

Outputs:

- Definitions explainer outline from medical model to super strengths
- Other possible “translation” approaches

NAVIGATING A DEFICIT FRAMEWORK WITH AUTHENTIC VOICES

(12:45 – 14:00)





Definitions and Authentic Voice for the Neuro-inclusion Maturity Framework



DEFINITIONS

- WHY do we need definitions
- WHO are the stakeholders
- WHAT glossary of terms
- HOW they are relevant to engineering
- **Your input and views**
- **30-45 minutes**

Facilitator: Dr Sarah Peers
sarah.peers@nmite.ac.uk



Why?

To aid communication between

- Students
- Staff: Academic and Student Support
- External partners/bodies

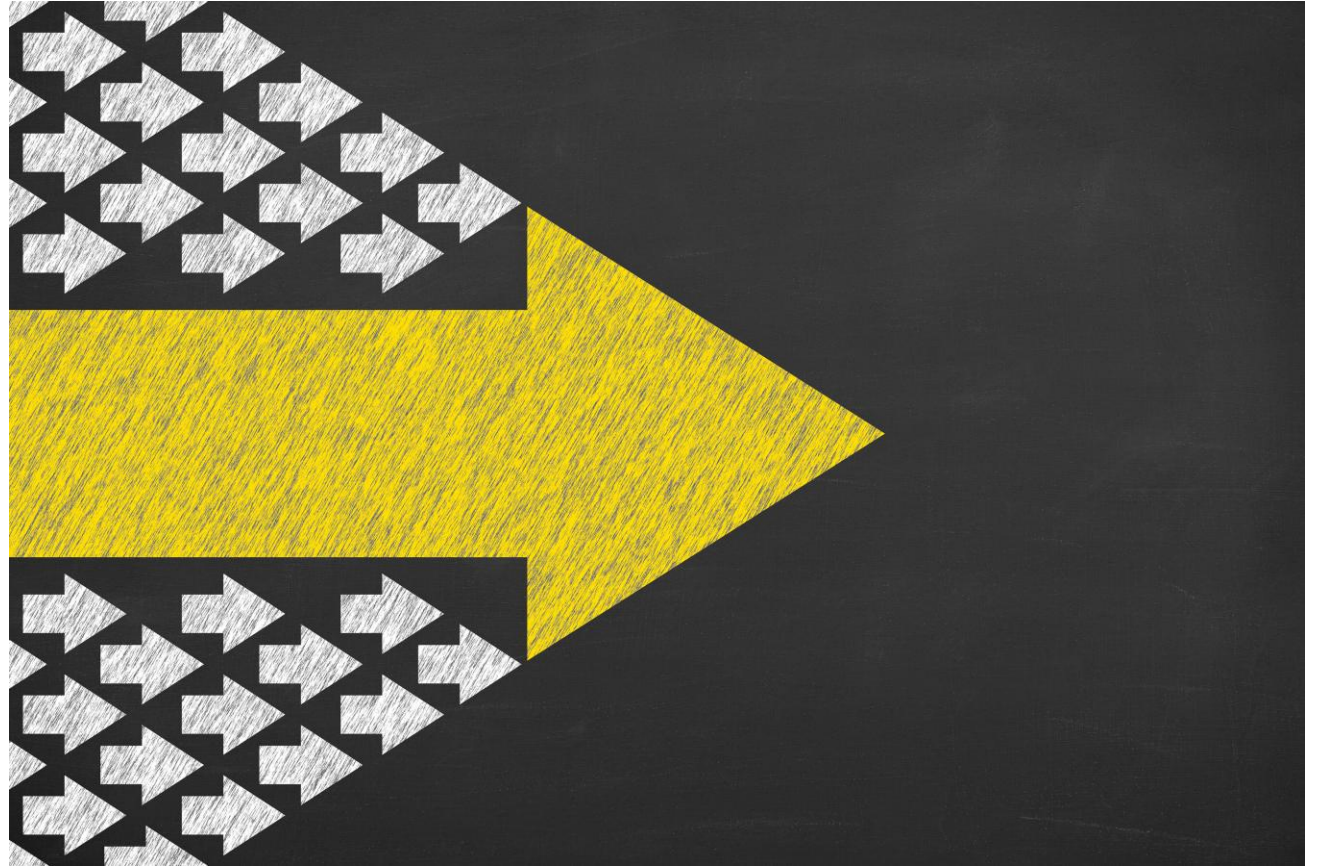
And a move away from the deficit model to recognising strengths

AIM

- Common terminology that is
- Descriptive
- Positive
- Inclusive

Outputs

- Definitions explainer outline from medical model to super strengths
- Other possible “translation” approaches

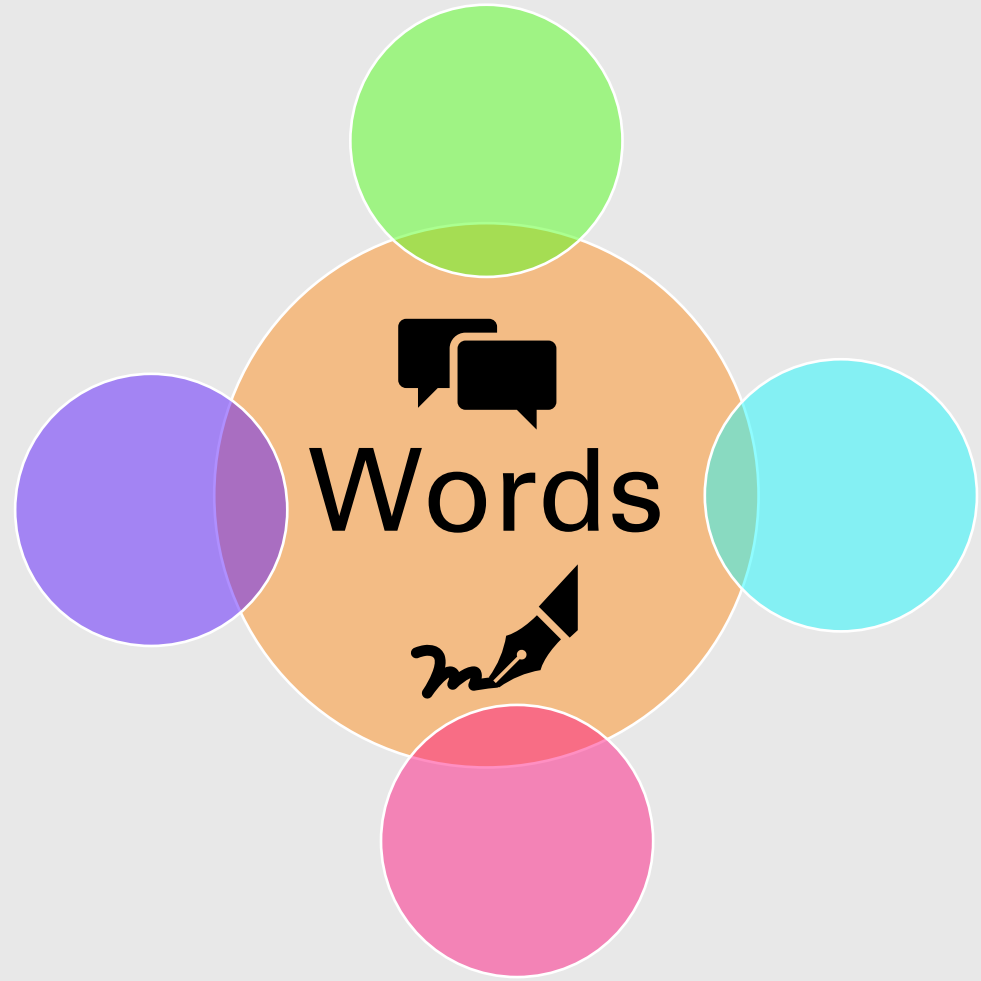


Activity 1 – Words associated with Neurodiversity

A 3-minute DASH!



- Conditions
 - Impacts
 - Actions
 - **Positive** and **Negative**
-
- We will use this to identify any gaps in terms!





Who?

Who do we need to communicate with?

Whose language do we have to be aware of?

- Thinking about the Student Journey
- This will feed into “translation”.

Some stakeholders + who else?

Internal

Or in other words, us in the HEI.

- Students
- Student Support Services,
- Personal Tutors
- Engineering Academics
- Careers Services

External

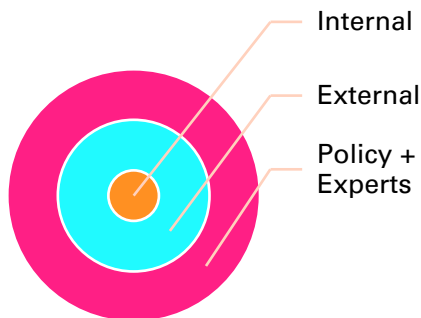
The bodies and organisations outside an HEI that students and staff may need to communicate with.

- Students' families/ carers
- GPs, NHS, CAMHS
- Social Services and Police
- Student Finance England and DSA
- Student Loans Company

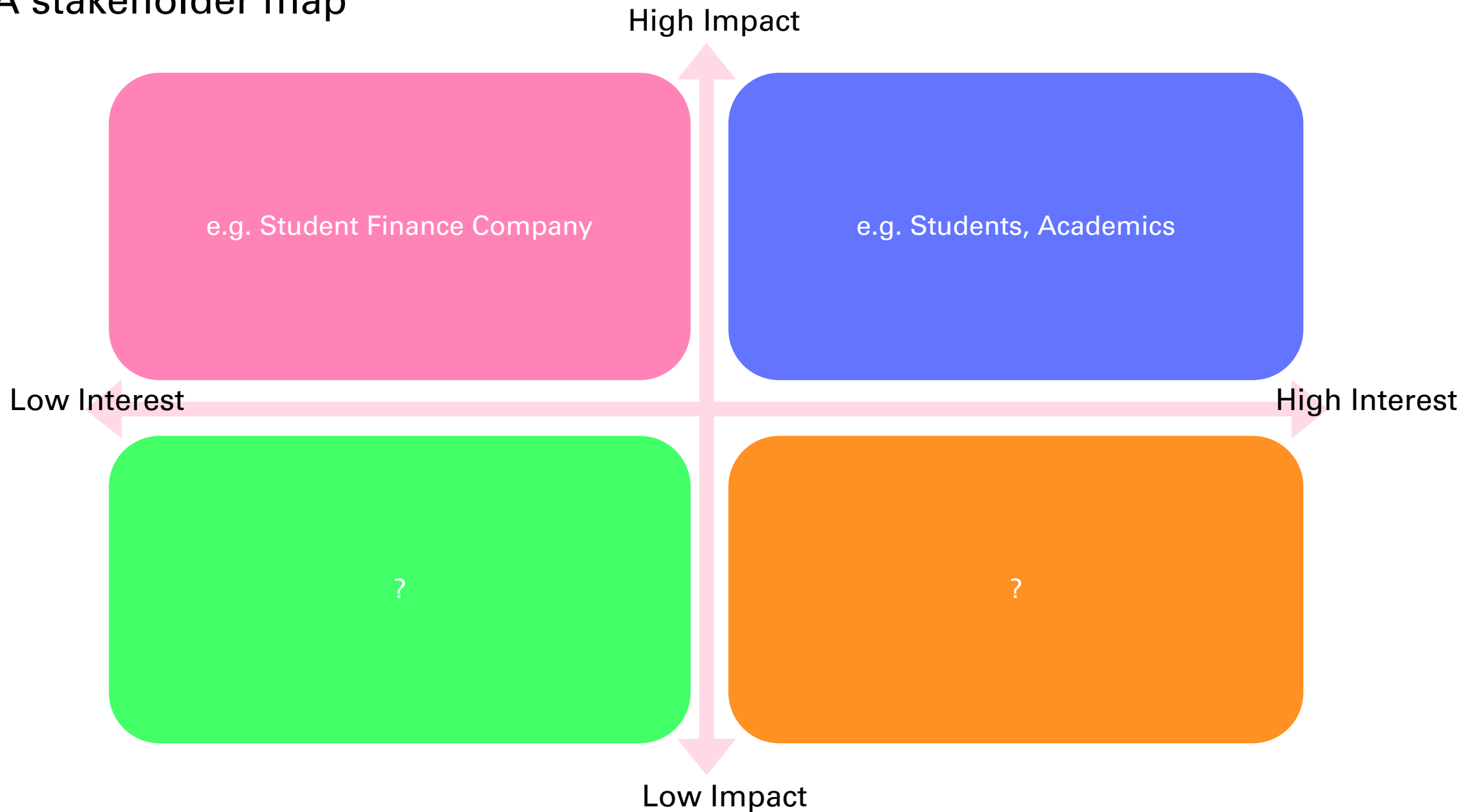
Policy & Experts

There are many experts and charities that have views and impacts on neurodiversity:

- As a “condition”
- On good practice
- Strengths for engineering
- Regulatory: DFE and other Policy makers, Equality Act 2010
- EngCouncil and AHEP4
- OfS and Access and Participation Plan



A stakeholder map

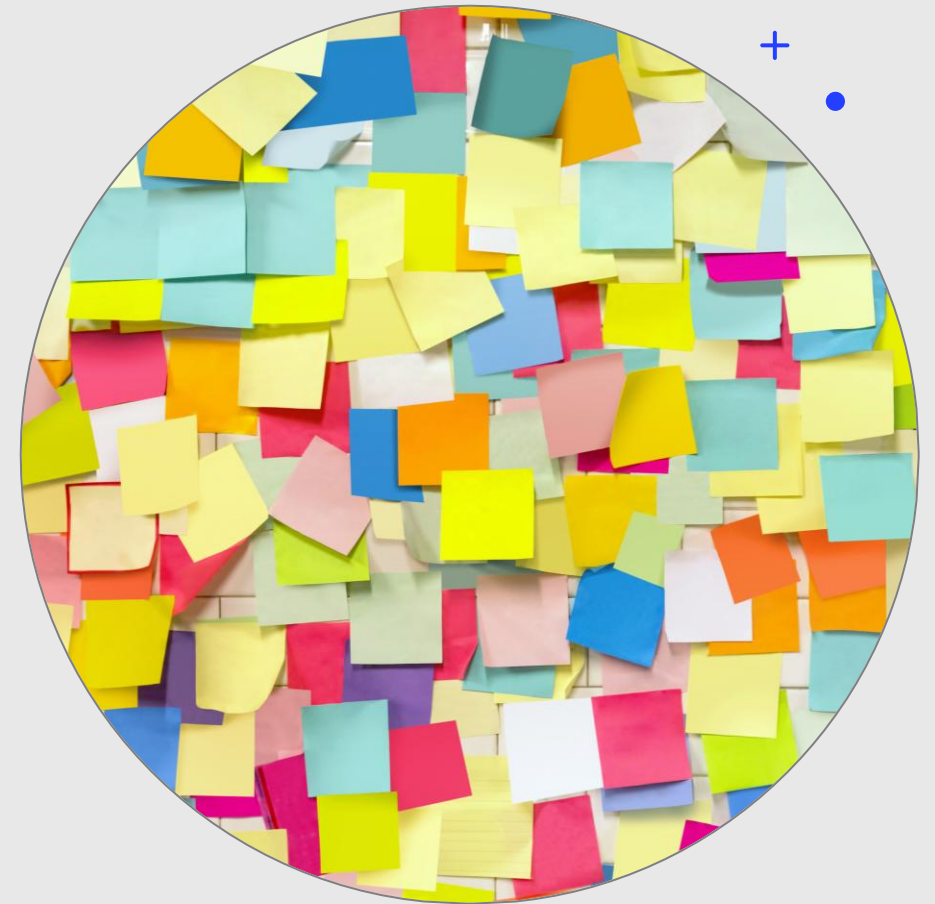


Activity 2: Stakeholder Map

People and Organisations and Experts

- Think about the whole student journey
- Add them to the map on the table
- Any experts/ sources/ organisations to note?

Scribbles or sticky notes, etc.



5 minutes



What, When and How?

What terms should we use for the
EPC Neuroinclusion Framework?

In what situations? When and How?


- Outputs!

Activity 3: Challenges and Strengths

Each table has a subset of possible Definitions:

1. Choose 3-4 terms – DON'T OVER THINK IT!
2. As a group, discuss:
 - What connotations? Are there better terms?
 - How do they relate to engineering skills and attributes?
3. Write comments on a sticky note and add to the table. (Write the term on the sticky note please!)
4. IF TIME: Are there any terms that you particularly like to add? What Super Strengths should we add?



 15 minutes

Blue

1. **Accountability buddy:** Someone who acts as support for another person to keep them moving towards a desired goal.
2. **ADHD:** Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (Attention Deficit Disorder). The name of a neurotype characterised by hyperactivity, distractibility, processing issues and many other traits.
3. **Co-occurring conditions:** Refers to neurotypes or conditions which occur concurrently.
4. **Dyscalculia:** A condition characterised by an individual's difficulty in understanding numbers and arithmetic.
5. **Echolalia:** A trait or symptom whereby the person repeats sounds and phrases from others.
6. **Executive function:** A series of brain functions managed by the frontal lobe including memory, learning, decision making, organisation and time management.
7. **Hyperlexia:** Usually discovered in childhood, the ability to read much faster and at much more complex levels than the average child at the same age.
8. **Masking:** A person may 'mask' their true feelings, personality, mood or opinions to be accepted socially and to not be outed/seen as neurodivergent.
9. **Neurologically typical/neurotypical/NT:** Neurotypical people are those who have the average neurotype. Someone who is not neurodivergent.
10. **Non-verbal communication:** Neurodivergent people often use non-verbal methods of communication such as gestures, facial expressions, writing, etc.
11. **Sensory Overload/Burnout:** Sensory issues or sensory processing disorders, which can make life overwhelming. This can be anything visually, physically, auditorily and so on.
12. **Sensory processing disorder:** A condition characterised by a sensitivity to sensory stimuli and a difference in processing sensory stimuli.

Green

1. **Aphantasia:** A condition characterised by difficulty generating mental images or visualisations.
2. **Dyschronometria:** A condition characterised by an individual's difficulty in estimating time or having an awareness of time passed.
3. **Dysgraphia:** A condition characterised by an individual's difficulty in writing by hand and translating what they want to say into written words. It may also be characterised by reduced spatial awareness. It does not affect reading comprehension.
4. **Hyperacusis:** A condition characterised by a sensitivity to noise which can cause discomfort and pain.
5. **Hyposensitivity:** A decreased awareness of sensory, physical or emotional inputs.
6. **Meltdown/Shutdown:** When a person becomes overwhelmed or overstimulated and has an emotional outburst or becomes mute to regulate their emotions.
7. **Neurodivergent:** A neurotype which is not neurotypical and diverges from the average neurotype..
8. **OCD: Obsessive Compulsive Disorder,** a condition characterised by obsessive thoughts and repetitive or compulsive behaviours.
9. **Reasonable adjustments:** changes, typically minor, to teaching or work environments/practices in response to the ND conditions.
10. **Rejection-sensitive dysphoria (RSD):** When a person experiences severe emotional pain or distress because of perceived rejection.
11. **Spectrum:** The Spectrum refers to the wide-ranging traits and characteristics of autism and highlights how no one autistic person has the same experiences.
12. **Synesthesia:** A condition characterised by an individual's experience of one sensory or cognitive pathway being stimulated and another, unrelated sense, being activated at the same time. E.g. people who can taste colours or see sounds.

Yellow

1. **Autism/Autistic spectrum conditions (ASC)/Autistic spectrum disorders (ASD):** Autism is a neurotype characterised by communication challenges, sensory issues and repetitive behaviours, among many other traits.
2. **Body doubling:** When people work in a shared space together to create a productive environment which encourages and motivates each other to accomplish tasks.
3. **Dyslexia:** A condition characterized by an individual's difficulty with processing information, which can impact reading, writing, spelling and organizational skills.
4. **Dyspraxia:** A condition characterised by an individual's difficulty with coordination, and occasionally, speech.
5. **Hypersensitivity:** Heightened awareness and discomfort caused by sensory, physical or emotional inputs that others might not notice.
6. **Identity-first language vs person first language:** Naming someone by their neurotype or condition first vs naming someone as having that neurotype or condition, e.g. Saying someone is autistic vs someone has autism.
7. **Misophonia:** A condition characterised by an intolerance to everyday sounds. This intolerance can cause individuals to have a strong emotional response.
8. **Savant:** Where a person with a neurodivergence demonstrates expert skill or knowledge in a specific area.
9. **Self-diagnosis/Self-identification:** where person sees in themselves traits that are associated with a Neurodivergent existence and identity; and assigns this identity to themselves as a way of understanding and navigating their lived experience.
10. **Self-stimulation/stimming:** Activities carried out by neurodivergent people to soothe or calm themselves to regulate and stabilise their emotions and nervous system.
11. **Tourette Syndrome/Tourette's Syndrome:** A neurological condition characterised by tics and involuntary sounds and movements.



Examples and Sources

The following slides provide some sources and extra terms, for reference only.

CAMHS

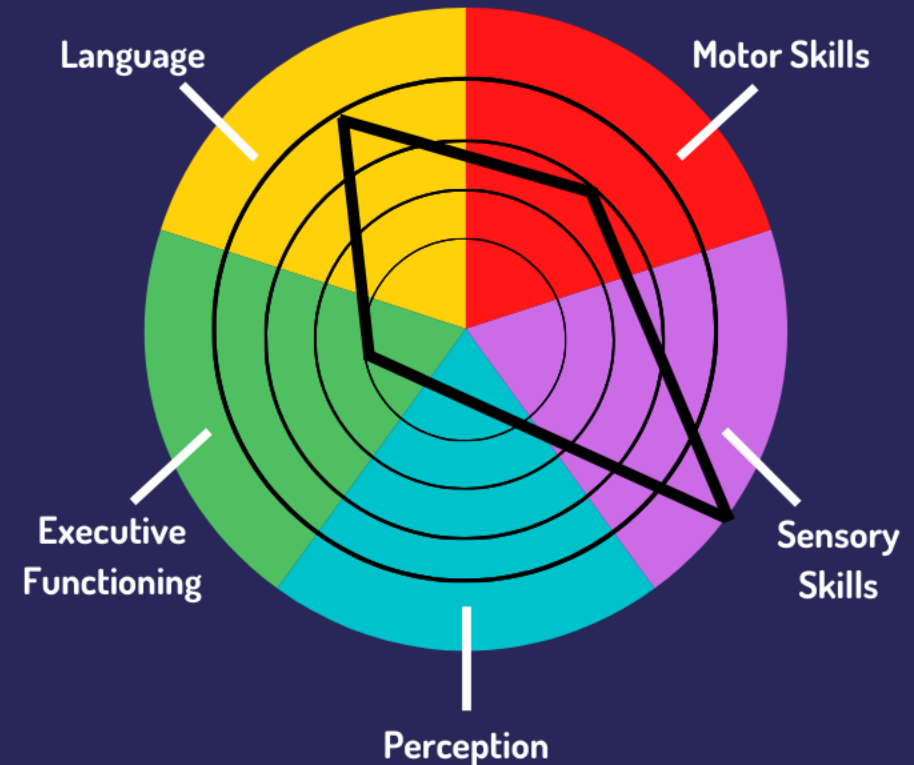
THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

What people think the autism spectrum looks like:

Less
Autistic

More
Autistic

What it can actually look like:



Police

Glossary of terms

Acquired or traumatic brain injury

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

Autism

Behaviour

Cognition

Comorbidity or coexistence

Developmental coordination disorder (DCD)
or dyspraxia

DSM-5

Dyscalculia

Dysgraphia

Dyslexia

Echolalia

Equality Act 2010

Executive functioning

High-functioning

Flexible working

Hypersensitivity

Hyposensitivity

ICD-11

Intellectual disability

Intersectionality

Mental ill health

Neurodiversity

Non-verbal communication

Reasonable adjustments

Savants

Self-stimulation or stimming

Spectrum of effects

Tourette syndrome

Engineering

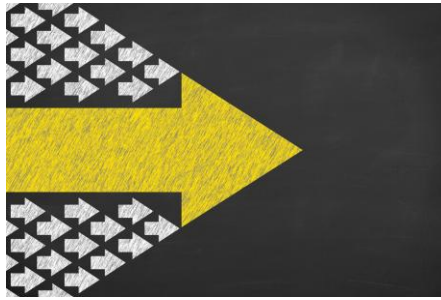
AHEP4 has a greater emphasis on EDI!

- Innovative problem-solving: [Neurodivergent individuals often approach problems from unique angles](#), leading to innovative solutions that might elude neurotypical thinkers
- Attention to detail: Many neurodivergent individuals exhibit heightened attention to detail, which is crucial in engineering where precision is paramount
- Pattern recognition: Skills such as pattern recognition can be especially beneficial in identifying trends and anomalies in data, a common requirement in engineering tasks
- Sustained concentration: The capacity for intense concentration can significantly boost productivity and progress in complex engineering tasks

*From The Benefits of Neurodiversity Talent in Engineering,
The Chemical Engineer*



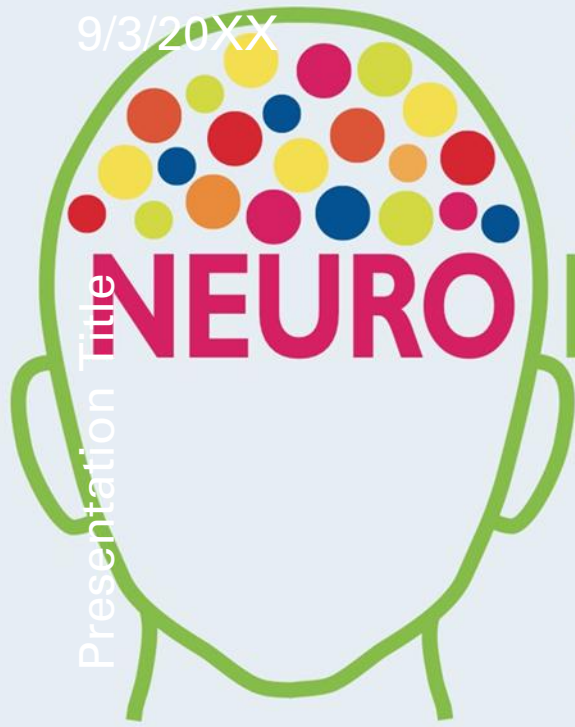
Why Neurodiverse People Make Good Engineers	
Indeed Engineering Job Skill	I AM Autism Strengths of neurodiversity
Problem-solving	1. Diverse Perspectives 2. Innovation
Computer skills (IT skills)	13. Tech Savvy
Technical knowledge	6. Deep Focus 7. Memory Skills 11. Specialised Knowledge
Working under pressure	9. Persistence
Teamwork	14. Honesty 15. Loyalty
Creativity	3. Creativity
Analytical ability	5. Pattern Recognition 8. Logical Thinking
Communication skills	
Eye for detail	4. Detail-Oriented 10. Attention to Detail
Continued education	
Leadership	12. Empathy



Definitions explainer outline

Term	Definition	Sources/ References	Relation to Engineering / Strengths and Challenges
Autism/ Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC)	<p>Autism is a neurotype characterised by communication challenges, sensory issues and repetitive behaviours, among many other traits.</p> <p>Autism influences how people experience and interact with the world.</p>	<p>Inclusive Employers https://www.inclusiveemployers.co.uk/blog/neurodiversity-glossary/</p> <p>National Autistic Society https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/what-is-autism</p>	<p>Different ways of thinking</p> <p>Different life experiences</p>
Deep focus	<p>Ability of some neurodivergent individuals to become deeply absorbed in activities, losing track of time and surroundings.</p>		<p>Able to focus on difficult technical problems/questions.</p>
Neurotype	<p>The type of brain a person has.</p>	...	
Self-regulatory behaviours	...		

9/3/20XX



Engineering Academics
NETWORK
The voice of engineering academics

NEURO DIVERSITY ALL IN FOR ENGINEERING

Thank you!



Another way to give feedback, and
to join the Definitions Working Group:
sarah.peers@nmite.ac.uk

This all leads to...
Capturing the Authentic Voice



Autism as a strength

Why Neurodiverse People Make Good Engineers

Indeed Engineering Job Skill	I AM Autism Strengths of neurodiversity
Problem-solving	1. Diverse Perspectives 2. Innovation
Computer skills (IT skills)	13. Tech Savvy
Technical knowledge	6. Deep Focus 7. Memory Skills 11. Specialised Knowledge
Working under pressure	9. Persistence
Teamwork	14. Honesty 15. Loyalty
Creativity	3. Creativity
Analytical ability	5. Pattern Recognition 8. Logical Thinking
Communication skills	
Eye for detail	4. Detail-Oriented 10. Attention to Detail
Continued education	
Leadership	12. Empathy

Aims:

- Highlighting synergies with Engineering and capturing how we self-describe.

Outputs:

- Aligning neurodivergent strengths to Engineering skills
- Model of real-world explainers of how student Engineers manage support.
- Clear scope (including ethics), format and voice approach for working group.
- What does this all look like in the toolkit?

NAVIGATING A DEFICIT FRAMEWORK WITH AUTHENTIC VOICES

(12:45 – 14:00)



Activity 2: Stakeholder map – Identify experts,
organisations and bodies for Neurodiversity?

Activity 1: **Challenging (Negative) words** associated with
Neurodiversity (conditions, impact, and actions)?



Activity 1: **Positive words** associated with Neurodiversity
(conditions, impact, and actions)?

Activity 2: Stakeholder map – Identify experts,
organisations and bodies for
Neurodiversity?

Activity 4: What are the **Challenges of Neurodiversity** in relation to Engineering technical and employability Skills (AHEP 4)?



Activity 4: What are the **Strengthens of Neurodiversity** in relation to Engineering technical and employability Skills (AHEP 4)?

Activity 3: What terminology has **negative** (**Challenges, problems, etc**) connotations of neurodiversity?

Activity 3: What terminology has **positive** (**Strengths, benefits**) connotations?

Drinks top-ups will arrive at 2.30pm.

The Main Hall has basic kitchen facilities and a vending machine which you are free to use.

If you need fresh air and/or natural lighting and/or to step away for a moment, feel free to use the lawned area to the front of NMITE.

BREAK
(14:00 – 14:15)



Aims:

- To outline what have done to date, and live questions and to move exciting plans forward through the wider development group

Outputs:

- Clear plan for next steps

NEURO-INCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT

(14:15 - 14:45)



Aims:

- To get the resources work off the ground and convene a repository

Outputs:

- Part-populated Padlet for development
- Working group and lead

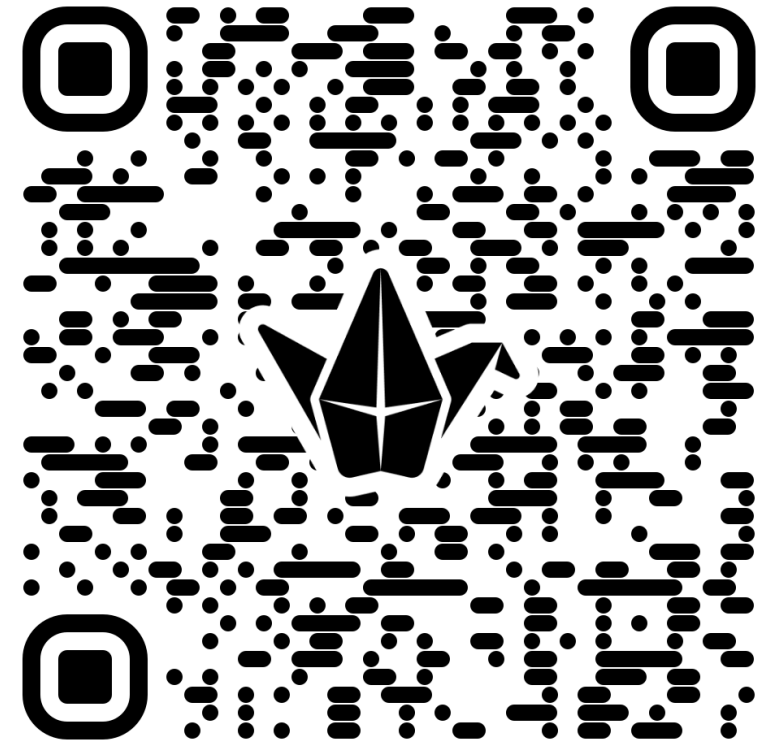
NEURO-INCLUSIVE RESOURCES

(14:45 – 15:15)



Neuro-inclusive resources

- An example from research in the Energy sector:
 - Dr vanda Papafilippou slides below
- Padlet (interim)
- Repository structure
- Cataloguing and curating
- Working group
- Lead(s)



Supporting neurodivergent academics and students

DR VANDA PAPAFILIPPOU,
SENIOR LECTURER IN
HRM, UWE BRISTOL





Introductions

“If there’s an inequality in the workplace, I’m on it”

- ‘Paired Peers project’ –impact of social class, gender, and type of university on the transition to the workplace
- ‘Networked self’ –women’s networks in engineering contribution to gender equality and their impact on professional identity
- ‘Expatriate bubbles’ –how South European self-initiated expatriate engineers experience expatriation and why they form ‘expatriate bubbles’
- ‘Neurodiversity in Engineering’- how neurodivergent engineers experience the entire employee lifecycle (from recruitment to career progression)
- Energising Equity: Co-developing a Framework for the inclusion of neurodivergent energy researchers



Today

- Go through the main findings of our research on neurodiversity in engineering and the energy sector (energy researchers) in relation to recruitment, experience in the workplace, career development, and career progression (getting in, getting on, moving up)
- Offer some implications for practice

Our research



(WITH THE AMAZING MISS LUCY
DOWNES, LECTURER IN HRM, UWE
BRISTOL)





The studies

- **Neurodiversity in engineering:** 34 interviews (11 of which with women) with professional engineers. The study focused on how neurodivergent engineers experience the entire employee lifecycle, from recruitment to career development and progression.
- **Energising Equity:** 26 interviews (10 of which with women) with researchers (HE & industry) in the energy sector. The study focused mostly on the career progression of neurodivergent energy researchers.

Findings



Getting in





Recruitment and selection (industry)

- Barriers faced in formal education – low grades
- Most participants found job descriptions rather difficult to decipher, and for this reason, they found writing cover letters challenging
- **Presenting oneself in a certain –neurotypical- way**
- **Answering non-technical questions**



Recruitment (ECRs)

Precarity – employment depending on **publications** and **funding**: all the ECRs we interviewed said that they were successful with securing funding but struggled a lot with publications (ie tight deadlines, time management, time needed to process and write)

Getting on





Challenges (industry + academia)

- **Physical:** written communication, online messaging platforms, space, time and task management (could overcome – ‘job crafting’)
- **Social:** make their voice heard in teams/ have their way of approaching an engineering problem accepted, socialising in and outside the workplace (difficult to overcome)
- **Mental health:** mental health was seriously affected, especially before their diagnosis – all autistic and ADHD participants experienced burnout – all autistic participants experienced bullying and harassment



Challenges (academia only)

- Strong **stigma** around neurodiversity in HE– the majority of academics we interviewed had not disclosed due to “discussions behind closed doors”
- **Limited support**/ appropriate reasonable adjustments – PIs/ manager’s discretion



Students' perspective (PhD)

- Many were **diagnosed** while doing their PhD
- Relationship with their **supervisor**: most of the PhD students shared negative experiences as they met significant resistance to their interdisciplinary approaches to work – their supervisors didn't seem to understand how they approached their research topic, BUT those with neurodivergent supervisors (same condition – ADHD) had very positive experience and were encouraged to be creative

Moving up



Challenges for career progression

- Most of the participants felt that the **role requirements** of senior positions, such as managing people (industry) and **publications** (academia), created barriers to progression
- Some **line managers** appeared to block career progression: many instances of unsupportive line management with often bullying behaviours/ examples of **constructive dismissals**; **lack** of understanding and **recognition** of **different and often innovative ways of working**/ neurodivergent strengths

Implications for practice

HR & line managers

- **Interviews:** What are we really looking for?
- Revisit **promotion criteria**
- **Guidance** for managing performance and PDRs specific to neurodiversity: Why are some colleagues struggling to meet the promotion criteria (esp publications)? What can we do to support them?
- Revisit the **reasonable adjustments available:** Are they appropriate for academics?
- **Mentoring** schemes (esp. for ECRs)
- Awareness **training**
- Support with the **diagnosis**



PhD/MSc supervisors

- Awareness **training**
- **Revisit the way we supervise** students: Do we provide structure? Do we encourage our students to be creative? Do we monitor their wellbeing?
- **Supervisory team**: Have we chosen the right people? Perhaps we could consider including some experts in pedagogy?
- Provide support for **publications** (timeline, reasonable deadlines, meaningful contribution)

Thank you!



Aims:

- Clear record and understanding of what we've got from the day that we didn't have before.
- Clear next steps.

Outputs:

- Material for community update and asynchronous contributions
- Project plan timeline
- Agreed points of contact

WRAP-UP AND FORWARD PLANNING

(15:15 – 15:45)





Thank you for your continued support.
Feedback to Bev or Stella please.

CLOSE
15:45

