

SUPPORTING WORKPLACE COGNITION

Supporting attention in employees with FASD

Being able to pay attention allows us to minimise errors and produce work of a high standard. People with FASD can have difficulties with paying attention, even if they are genuinely trying their best to perform well.

People with FASD have difficulties with attention but this should not be interpreted as a sign of laziness or poor motivation. Addressing these difficulties can minimise attention-related challenges, and improve task completion.

Difficulties with attention can look like:

- Poor focus or concentration.
- Carelessness.
- Short attention span.
- Distractibility when faced with irrelevant information or with noises.
- Difficulties multi-tasking.
- Difficulties shifting from one task to another.
- General difficulties taking in and understanding information.



To support attention, employers may consider:

- ✓ Getting the individual's full attention before starting a discussion or providing instructions.
- ✓ Minimising distractions such as reducing noises and decluttering workspaces.
- ✓ Allowing or encouraging the person to focus on one thing at a time.
- ✓ Advising of changes that will occur in the work environment during the day.
- ✓ Minimising abrupt changes between tasks.
- ✓ Gently redirecting the person's attention if they become distracted.
- ✓ Having the individual repeat back information to ensure understanding and fill in any gaps.
- ✓ Providing frequent breaks and rest periods between tasks.
- ✓ Praising/rewarding improvements in attention and focus.