

## Resource 2: Adjustments Workbook

This activity is designed to help you think about what supports might help you succeed at university. There's no right or wrong way to approach this - you know yourself best! Use this as a starting point to identify what might be helpful before meeting with your disability support services.

### How to use this workbook

1. Read through each section and tick or highlight anything that sounds like it might be helpful for you
2. Add your own ideas - these lists aren't exhaustive, and your needs are unique
3. Think about your strengths too - what already works well for you that you want to protect or build on?
4. Consider different contexts - what you need might vary between lectures, tutorials, assessments, or social situations
5. Don't feel you need everything - pick what feels most important or urgent for you right now

**Remember:** asking for adjustments isn't asking for special treatment - it's about creating equal access to your education.

## Academic learning and assessment supports

### Information capture and processing:

- Access to peer note takers or professional note taking services for lectures and tutorials
- Lecture recordings or transcription services so you can review content at your own pace
- Written summaries of key points from verbal presentations or discussions
- Early copies of lecture slides, reading lists, or tutorial discussion points
- Speech recognition software or other assistive technologies for written work
- Alternative formats for course materials (e.g., audio versions, larger fonts, simplified layouts)

### Assessment arrangements:

- Alternative examination arrangements (separate rooms, extended time, alternative formats)
- Assistive technology access during exams and assessments
- Alternative assessment formats that play to your strengths (e.g., portfolio instead of exam, written instead of oral presentation)
- Extended deadlines or staged submission dates for large assignments
- Clear, detailed assessment criteria and marking rubrics provided well in advance

### Tutorial and class participation:

- Smaller tutorial groups or consistent tutors
- Advance notice of discussion topics or questions
- Options to contribute in writing (polls, forums, email) rather than speaking aloud
- Designated speaking order rather than spontaneous contributions
- Permission to step out of class if you need a sensory break

### For research/higher degree students:

- Flexible supervision arrangements and meeting formats
- Written communication options with supervisors
- Structured milestone planning and clear thesis requirements
- Alternative thesis formats (e.g., thesis by publication)
- Extended candidature timeframes where appropriate

### Your ideas and notes:

## Environmental and communication supports

### Sensory environment modifications:

- Access to quiet study spaces or reduced-sensory zones
- Seating away from high-traffic areas, doors, or distracting elements
- Adjustments to lighting (avoiding fluorescent lights, dimmer options)
- Temperature-controlled spaces or permission to adjust your immediate environment
- Noise-reducing options (carpeted rooms, sound dampening, permission to use noise-cancelling headphones)
- Consistent, predictable classroom locations
- Avoiding hot-desking arrangements - having a designated workspace

### Communication and information processing:

- Clear communication protocols with staff about your preferred communication methods
- Reasonable response timeframes that account for your processing needs
- Written information about course structures, expectations, and requirements provided in advance
- Permission to have a support person present during meetings, presentations, or fieldwork
- Extended time for processing information and completing complex tasks
- Email communication preferred over phone calls or unscheduled drop-ins

### For research/higher degree students:

- Advance notice of conference presentations or public speaking requirements
- Flexible attendance arrangements for seminars or workshops
- Hybrid or remote supervisory meeting options
- Clear, final versions of all milestone documentation and requirements
- Structured research planning tools and templates

Your ideas and notes:

## Study skills and transition supports

### Case management and planning:

- Regular check-ins with a disability support coordinator
- Help developing study engagement strategies that work with your brain
- Collaborative development of personalised planning and time management systems
- Support with self-advocacy skills and communicating your needs to academic staff
- Transition planning that builds on your existing strengths and interests

### Peer connections and social supports:

- Peer connection programs with other autistic or neurodivergent students
- Support with campus navigation and finding your way around
- Social skills support or structured social opportunities that feel comfortable
- Study groups or peer support that accommodates different communication styles
- Mentorship opportunities with other autistic students or graduates

### Skill development:

- Academic writing support that understands neurodivergent thinking styles
- Time management and executive functioning strategy development
- Research skills workshops (for research students)
- Sensory-friendly writing retreats or study intensives
- Technology training for assistive tools or university systems

### For research/higher degree students:

- Structured peer support networks within research communities
- Writing retreats with sensory considerations
- Research skill development workshops
- Career development support that recognises autistic strengths

Your ideas and notes:

## Reflecting on your notes and ideas

1. What are your top 3-5 priorities right now?
2. What are your key strengths that you want to make sure are recognised and supported?
3. What concerns or questions do you want to discuss with disability support services?
4. What would success look like for you at university?

## Taking this to your meeting

Bring this brainstorm with you to your disability support services meeting. Here are some tips for when you advocate for your needs:

- Remember that this is a collaborative process - you and the disability support team are working together
- You don't have to justify your needs, but explaining how things impact you and how the adjustment would help can help staff understand what adjustments might work best
- It's okay to ask for time to think about suggestions or to try adjustments and modify them based on your experience
- Your needs might change over time, and that's completely normal

You've got this! 🌟