

## SUPPORTING EMPLOYMENT

# Interview adjustment tips for people with FASD

People with FASD have diverse cognitive abilities. It is important to adapt the interview process when seeking to recruit a person with FASD.



## Simple ways to adjust interview processes:

- ✓ **Provide interview questions in advance**  
Up to two days earlier before the interview to allow time for them to prepare
- ✓ **Provide clear, concise information about the interview process**  
This includes a clear timetable of events during the interview time (e.g., the first 20 minutes will focus on questions about your CV and experience relating to the role, the following 30 minutes will comprise of an aptitude test or technical trial, etc).
- ✓ **Provide the applicant with directions to the interview**  
Include a map of the location and provide photographs of the entrance of the building.
- ✓ **Provide information on what to expect on arrival**  
From the moment they arrive at the agreed interview locations (e.g., sign in at the front desk, wait for person called Sally to come and collect you shortly before the interview, etc).
- ✓ **Provide the applicant with a quiet, distraction-free and calm space**  
Allow them to wait prior to the interview away from other visitors and staff.
- ✓ **Avoid asking general questions**  
Use specific questions such as ‘In your last job, did you enter data?’; ‘What processes or procedures did you use to do this effectively?’
- ✓ **Avoid asking questions that are based on experience**  
Some people with FASD have not held jobs previously, particularly if they are still young or have a criminal record.
- ✓ **Guide the level of detail**  
People with FASD may find it difficult to gauge how much information you need – e.g., “Thank you, you have provided us with some very useful information about this. I’d now like to ask you another question”.

## Interview adjustment tips for people with FASD

### ✓ **Avoid asking abstract questions or hypothetical scenarios**

Consider asking the applicant how they dealt with past situations 'Think back to your last job. Can you tell us how you coped when people interrupted you/when it got too noisy'?

### ✓ **Be aware that some questions may be interpreted literally**

Ensure to ask direct questions with specific and concrete wording.

### ✓ **Make sure to provide breaks during long interviews**

Encourage the individual to take a break when needed.

### ✓ **Allow and prompt the applicant to refer back to any notes**

This will allow them to gather thoughts and reflect on information before responding.

### ✓ **Allow the applicant to attend the interview with a support person**

This may help ease communication problems. The support person may assist by rewording questions and understanding what exactly the interviewer is asking.

### ✓ **Consider interviews that are more experiential in nature**

It may be worth including a task-based assessment, allowing the person to demonstrate their skills in the work environment. This could also provide the employer the opportunity to assess the employee's capabilities and comfort.

## Consider alternatives to the traditional interview:

If adapting your interviewing procedures to the needs of an individual with FASD feels daunting or if you determine that the more traditional interview formats may not be the best way to gauge the individual's suitability for the job, consider less traditional approaches such as;

### ✓ **Inviting a supporter to accompany the individual**

Some individuals with FASD may be able to perform better in interviews if they are accompanied by someone they feel comfortable having.

This person can provide support and ease the communication between yourself and the individual with FASD by clarifying or rewording questions.

The support person's role is not to respond on behalf of the individual with FASD but purely to facilitate the communication between yourself and the individual with FASD and help the latter more clearly articulate their knowledge and skills.

### ✓ **Implementing Work Trials**

Consider that a work trial or a period of work experience might be a useful way of assessing the individual's work attributes than an interview. Such an approach will not only give you an idea of not only how the person with FASD is likely to do well in the job in the long term but also how well they will be able to cope within the work environment.