



**POWERING THE FUTURE, FUELLING INNOVATION:**  
Neurodiversity in Energy and Utilities



## What is neurodiversity?

**Neurodiversity refers to the different ways a person's brain processes information.**

It is an umbrella term used to describe alternative thinking styles such as Dyslexia, DCD (Dyspraxia), Dyscalculia, Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

**15%** of the UK population are neurodivergent. They have unique talents and qualities and can excel in certain areas; for example, creativity, hyper-focus and thinking outside the box. In the right environment that allows them to fulfil their potential, their difference can bring real value to any organisation.

**Unfortunately, many organisations see neurodiversity as an after-thought.**

According to The Power of Difference Report, **50%** of respondents stated that they would be uncomfortable employing or line managing someone with a neurodifference.

The Great Big Workplace Adjustments Survey (2019-2020) found that **34%** of employees have not asked for adjustments because they fear their manager would treat them differently



## Why is neurodiversity good for business in the energy and utilities industry?

**The energy and utilities sector has a critical role to play in powering the nation's economy, and employs just over half a million people.**

However, demand for trained and talented employees outstrips supply in the industry. It is forecast that the sector will need to replace or retrain 48% of the current workforce between 2020 and 2030 (due to growth in demand, changing skill requirements and retirement), equating to 277,000 vacancies. Research has also identified an urgent need to address the lack of diversity in the industry.

**(Workforce renewal and skills strategy 2020–2025)**

**Increasing neuro-inclusion should be seen as essential to delivering this ambition.**

For these reasons, 42 leading employers and stakeholders in the energy and utilities sector have agreed to work collaboratively to attract, recruit and retain more diverse talent to the sector as part of the Energy and Utilities Skills Partnership.

**(Workforce renewal and skills strategy 2020–2025)**





*There are estimated to be around*  
**820,000 neurodivergent engineers**  
**working in the UK**

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## A neuro-inclusive energy and utilities industry is good for business. It can bring:

- Diversity of thought
- Innovation
- A positive culture
- Improved customer relationships
- Enhanced employee performance, engagement and wellbeing
- Increased retention
- And more!

Diversity and inclusion are also increasingly important to clients and investors.

The industry is predicting particular challenges in meeting future demand for engineering, digital, analytical, data science, cyber security and project management roles. Neurodivergent individuals often have skills relevant to these roles, including problem solving, technical and analytical skills, logic and attention to detail.

Others have the skills needed for strategic and leadership roles, such as big picture thinking, creativity, adaptability and strong verbal skills.

**The energy and utilities sector has an important role to play in creating opportunities, unlocking talent and removing barriers facing neurodivergent employees. This will pay dividends for both individuals and the future of the energy and utilities sector.**



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*The total workforce is likely to increase by an **estimated net 3%** (19,000 people) over the course of 2020-2030.*

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*Workforce diversity and inclusion numbers for the sector **continue to be below UK averages** for gender, BAME, disability and employment of younger people.*

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**277,000** vacancies over the course of 2020-2030

**To address skills shortages, the sector must become more attractive to young people, and those from diverse backgrounds, including the relatively untapped neurodiverse talent pool.**

Other sectors are competing for the same, or similar talent, often at higher rates of remuneration. In 2016–17, of the 82,000 graduates from STEM subjects in the UK, just 1% entered employment in the sector (EUSG (2019) HESA Data Analysis – Higher Education Statistical Summary 2017/2018).

The Energy and Utilities Skills Partnership (**Workforce renewal and skills strategy 2020-2025**) identified that:

**“** *Boosting apprenticeships across the sector’s technical occupations is paramount. These new recruits will often fill key operational roles, and gain skills that are specific to the sector.* **”**

**1 in 4/5 apprentices are thought to be neurodivergent.** Whilst good progress is being made in attracting and supporting neurodivergent graduates and apprentices in the engineering profession (for example, with support through **Foothold’s Differently Wired Hub**, funded by Neptune Energy) there is more to do to extend and embed these approaches across the wider sector.

Neuro-inclusive practices, including recruitment, talent management and employee support, are vital to unlocking skills and empowering neurodivergent talent to thrive, which can create a competitive advantage for your organisation.



“ *Everyone is unique. At Centrica, we want everyone to use their diverse, unique experience to spark solutions that create a better colleague and customer experience and a sustainable world. We believe that an inclusive workplace, products and services are central to achieving that vision. From serving our customers better to reaching net zero, our ability to overcome challenges and seize opportunities is only possible if our team reflects the full diversity of our communities.*

*Neurodiversity is key as we explore alternative solutions for our customers and our planet. That's why our goal is to create a neuro-inclusive workplace where difference is celebrated, and everyone can be themselves and succeed. Working with Lexxic has provided us with invaluable expertise, structure and support, as we work to build a more inclusive and sustainable future.* ”

**centrica**



## Supporting neurodivergent individuals to thrive: Case study

1. Michael has ADHD. He has excellent communication skills so his customer services role for an energy company suits him well, and he has good relationships with his team.

2. However, he is easily distracted and has challenges concentrating which were impacting him in his role. His line manager was unsure how to support him.

3. Michael decided to disclose his ADHD diagnosis to his manager, and was referred to Lexxic for an ADHD Screening, and Workplace Needs assessment (to identify support that could enable him to perform at his best in his current role).

4. Based on the recommendations, Michael was given noise cancelling headphones and had coaching sessions with a specialist neurodiversity coach. Michael's line manager completed training on ADHD so he would be better equipped to provide support.

5. Michael said: "Working with my coach at Lexxic has really helped me to put structure to my day. The tomato timer is such a simple change, but really helps me to break up my day, taking regular short breaks and helps me to keep focused. The relationship with my Line Manager has improved. He now understands how and why my mind works differently so he has tailored my role around my strengths. I also now have a standing desk, which allows my body to move but my mind to stay on task. Small changes can have such a huge difference!"





It is important to consider all areas of the employee lifecycle when developing neuro-inclusive practices:

- Recruitment and hiring practices
- Onboarding
- Adjustments processes
- Talent management
- Ensuring all processes are communicated effectively across your organisation



## Lexxic can help you!

Lexxic are leaders in empowering neurodiversity. As a specialist psychological consultancy with over 15 years experience, we believe that all minds belong, so it is our mission to inspire a world that supports and values the talents of neurodivergent minds, empowering individuals to be their authentic selves while setting them up for success in education, the workplace and beyond.

We maintain strong working relationships with the people we work with, adapting to suit needs and requirements where necessary. We are not only reacting, but shaping the industries we work in, and with our expertise we can show you the way.

In addition to our one-to-one support for neurodivergent individuals, there are many ways Lexxic can help your organisation on it's journey to become neuro-inclusive. Here are a few of our top recommendations...



## Lexxic can help you!



### 1. Neurodiversity Smart Assessment & Accreditation

Neurodiversity Smart® is our maturity model which takes organisations on a journey to become neuro-inclusive across all aspects of their business.

#### The assessment process

The assessment and accreditation process allows you to gather evidence in relation to the ND Smart inclusion criteria which will be reviewed by our neurodiversity experts to identify your strengths and areas for improvement.

#### You will receive:

A comprehensive report and recommendations, and our neurodiversity experts will work with you to produce a roadmap for future action. A ND Smart accreditation award at committed, certified or champion level, which will enable you to demonstrate your ND Smart credentials to your employees, customers and partners.

Neurodiversity Smart Model



“ Completing the assessment and accreditation was really interesting, the questions were so helpful and made us look beyond the obvious. It was very thought provoking and generated some great conversations. There are areas where we can improve and areas where we unexpectedly found pockets of great focus. The really humbling part for us as individuals completing the assessment, was discovering areas in the business where we have already made a difference with our employee community for disability, Thrive! ”

**Su Greatrex, PMO Manager - Cadent**

**Cadent**

Your Gas Network



## Lexxic can help you!



### 2. In-depth Audits

Lexxic offers in-depth audits which provide a detailed, expert review of specific segments of the Neurodiversity Smart model model, including environment, adjustments and recruitment.

For example, a recruitment audit would review key job advertisements, application forms, selection and onboarding processes, supporting you to develop neuro-inclusive recruitment processes that will enable you to attract the best talent for your business. An audit can help you and your neurodivergent employees to think creatively about how your working environment and practices can be made neuro-inclusive.

**This is particularly important in practical working environments where the challenges and solutions may be different to office environments.**



### 3. Awareness Workshops & Webinars

Lexxic's awareness workshops and webinars enable you to increase understanding of the value of neurodiversity across your organisation, with practical advice tailored to the particular needs of your organisation, and the interests of different teams and roles within it.

Workshops and webinars are engaging, informative and interactive, delivered by our experts in neurodiversity.

Here are some popular workshop and webinar topics:

- The Value of Neurodiversity in the Workplace
- Workplace Adjustments & Technology
- A Neuro-inclusive Working Environment
- Recruitment & Talent Acquisition Teams
- Leadership & Line Management

Our sessions are available individually or can be part of a co-designed programme.

**[Enquire today: lexxic.com/resources/utilities](https://lexxic.com/resources/utilities)**



#### 4. Neurotalent Unlocked – e-Learning Modules

Broaden your organisation's awareness of neurodiversity with our two **brand new** e-Learning modules! The perfect step in your journey to creating a workplace where **all minds belong**.

Designed and created by psychologists and neurodivergent individuals with over 15 years experience, our two new modules include:

**An Introduction to Neurodiversity in the Workplace**

**Neurodiversity Awareness for Line Managers**

We also have six new updated skills modules coming soon, please feel free to ask us about these!



#### 5. Co-creating Policies, Strategies & Toolkits

Our expert consultants can partner with you to develop a tailor-made neurodiversity policy or strategy for your organisation. We can also work with you create tailormade toolkits, providing practical advice and resources for employees.



#### 6. Neurodiversity Passport

Lexxic can provide you with a Neurodiversity Passport, tailored to your particular requirements, which can be used by neurodivergent individuals and their line managers to provide a record of their key strengths, workplace challenges and any adjustments or support that have been agreed to enable them to perform at their best.

**Enquire today: [lexxic.com/resources/utilities](https://lexxic.com/resources/utilities)**

## Lexxic can help you!



### 7. Apprenticeship Support

Apprentices are vital to developing your talent pipeline and 1 in 4/5 are thought to be neurodivergent. Apprenticeships have a 47% apprenticeship dropout rate (UK Government, 2022) so it is imperative that apprenticeship schemes support different learning styles to facilitate success and retention.

- We can work in partnership with you to conduct an audit of your apprenticeship programme, undertaking a comprehensive review of your recruitment processes as well as your policies, tools, training, content and resources, and making recommendations to ensure they are neuro-inclusive.
- We also offer a triage service for apprentices and graduates during their onboarding. It will identify individual strengths, development areas, and characteristics associated with neuro-differences, identifying those who would benefit from a formal assessment. This will ensure that new starters are empowered and understood from the moment they join your organisation, setting them up for success.



**Enquire today: [lexxic.com/resources/utilities](https://lexxic.com/resources/utilities)**

# Get in touch with us today to start your journey to become neuro-inclusive!

[lexxic.com/resources/utilities](https://lexxic.com/resources/utilities)

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Partners of Neurodiversity  
Celebration Week



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