

<b>Title:</b>	Autistic Individuals: Communication, Social Interaction and the Role of the Professional
<b>Level:</b>	2
<b>Credit value:</b>	3
<b>GLH</b>	26
<b>Unique Reference Number:</b>	D/650/8153
<b>Aim:</b>	The aim of this unit is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to be able to understand the communication differences and challenges experienced by autistic individuals, the impact these differences and challenges may have and how best to support them.
<b>Assessment</b>	Assessment of this unit will be internally set and internally assessed via a portfolio of evidence. It is important to design the assessment in an appropriate way that does not promote neuro-stereotyping and is neuro-affirming.

### Learning outcomes

*The learner will:*

1. Be able to understand the communication differences and challenges experienced by autistic individuals.

#### **Delivery content:**

The aim of this learning outcome is to provide the learners with the knowledge and skills to understand the communication differences and challenges experienced by autistic individuals.

The learner must:

- Define **non-verbal communication** and describe how it may be different for autistic individuals.
- Explain the challenges associated with **verbal communication** for autistic individuals.
- Describe the role of repetitive behaviours and special interests in communication for autistic individuals highlighting the potential impact on interactions and social engagement.
- Discuss the potential **barriers to communication** experienced by autistic individuals.

2. Explore strategies and approaches to support effective communication for autistic individuals.

**Delivery content:**

The aim of this learning outcome is to provide the learners with the knowledge and skills to explore strategies and approaches to support effective communication for autistic individuals.

The learner must:

- Identify strategies to enhance **visual communication** for autistic individuals.
- Explain the importance of **clear and concise language** when communicating with autistic individuals.
- Describe **augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)** strategies and tools that can support individuals with limited verbal communication.
- Discuss the value of creating a **communication-friendly environment**.

3. Discuss the impact of social interaction difficulties on autistic individuals.

**Delivery content:**

The aim of this learning outcome is to provide the learners with the knowledge and skills to discuss the impact of social interaction difficulties on autistic individuals.

The learner must:

- Identify the challenges autistic individuals may face in understanding and interpreting **nonverbal cues**.
- Discuss how **rigidity in thinking** or difficulties with flexibility can influence social interactions for autistic individuals.
- Describe the potential impact of sensory sensitivities on social interaction for autistic individuals.

4. Describe and analyse strategies to promote positive social interactions in professional practice with autistic individuals.

**Delivery content:**

The aim of this learning outcome is to provide the learners with the knowledge and skills to describe and analyse strategies to promote positive social interactions in professional practice with autistic individuals.

The learner must:

- Describe **active listening** techniques and their importance in fostering positive social interactions with autistic individuals.
- Analyse the value of **structured social skills training** programs for autistic individuals.

- Describe visual supports or social narratives and their role in facilitating social interactions with autistic individuals.
- Analyse the significance of **positive reinforcement** strategies.

### Scope of Training

The Scope of Training identifies areas that must be covered during the delivery of this unit. This is the minimum that is expected but tutors are expected to include other areas, knowledge of which will benefit their learners, based on location, types of work available and from the tutors own professional experience.

For up to date and appropriate language, terminology and current practice, visit:

Tigger Training - Bridging the Neuro Divide ( <https://www.bridgingtheneurodivide.com/> )  
 The National Autistic Society ( <https://www.autism.org.uk/> )

\* - a collaborative partner in the writing of this qualification.

### Scope of Assessment

#### Requirements

<b>Non-verbal communication:</b>	Examples include: Facial expressions. Body language. Eye contact. Proxemics. Tone of voice.
<b>Verbal communication:</b>	Examples include: Social reciprocity. Pragmatics. Figurative language.
<b>Barriers to communication:</b>	Examples include: Sensory sensitivities. Difficulties with information processing. Executive function challenges.

<b>Visual communication:</b>	<p>Examples include:</p> <p>Visual supports.</p> <p>Visual schedules.</p> <p>Visual aids to augment verbal information.</p>
<b>Clear and concise language:</b>	<p>For example:</p> <p>Avoiding abstract language.</p> <p>Using concrete terms.</p> <p>Using straightforward language.</p>
<b>Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC):</b>	<p>Examples include:</p> <p>Using picture communication systems.</p> <p>Sign language.</p> <p>Makaton.</p> <p>Technology-based communication devices.</p>
<b>Communication friendly environment:</b>	<p>Examples include:</p> <p>Minimising sensory distractions.</p> <p>Providing predictable routines.</p> <p>Using assistive technology.</p>
<b>Non-verbal cues:</b>	<p>Facial expressions.</p> <p>Body language.</p> <p>Tone of voice.</p>
<b>Rigidity in thinking:</b>	<p>Adherence to routines.</p> <p>Difficulty with perspective-taking.</p> <p>Resistance to change.</p>
<b>Active listening:</b>	<p>Maintaining eye contact.</p> <p>Using verbal and non-verbal cues to show understanding.</p> <p>Paraphrasing.</p>
<b>Structured social skills training:</b>	<p>Examples include:</p> <p>Turn-taking.</p> <p>Initiating conversations.</p> <p>Understanding personal space.</p>
<b>Positive reinforcement:</b>	<p>Examples include:</p> <p>Providing praise / reward for specific actions.</p> <p>Encouraging and reinforcing desired behaviours.</p>