



5 Top Tips for working with autistic students

- **Autism** is a neurodevelopmental condition which is associated with differences in communication, social interaction, information processing and sensory processing.
- The following tips are designed to help academic staff **teach and support autistic students effectively**. These tips have no cost beyond time and willingness, and all represent **inclusive practice**, which will also benefit the wider student population.

1

Get to know your student

- Don't make assumptions – **talk** to the student, and **listen** to them
- Be **responsive, flexible, proactive** and **empathic**
- Understand, accept and embrace **novel learning styles** and ideas

2

Adjust your communication

- **Ask** the student which **communication methods** work best for them
- Be **clear, concise, unambiguous** and **logical** in all **communications**
- Check the **sensory environment** to minimise distraction

3

Anticipate and prepare

- Provide **clear detailed information in advance** (e.g. course requirements)
- Be explicit about **expectations** and explain **consequences**
- **Limit key contacts**: create a 'who to contact when and how' list

4

Adjust your teaching

- Adopt **inclusive practice** principles
- Provide teaching materials **in advance**
- Be **clear** and **explicit** in assignment briefs; give written **feedback**
- Manage and adjust **group work** and **practical work**

5

Remember your ABC

- **Anticipation**: transitions, changes, challenges, unfamiliar activities
- **Boundaries**: roles, responsibilities, relationships; start/end points
- **Consequences**: clearly explain immediate and long term consequences. Use 'this means that'.

Remember

Every experience of autism is unique and no two people experience autism in the same way. We all have individual skills, attributes and characteristics that are as unique as our personalities, and we all learn in different ways. This is the power of neurodiversity.