

NEURO-INCLUSION POLICY – GUIDANCE

*A practical guide to developing your organisation's
Neuro-Inclusion Policy*

This guidance is a companion resource to *The NEW E.R.A. Method®: The Practical Framework for Building a Neuro-Inclusive Workplace*.

It has been developed to support use of the example Neuro-Inclusion Policy, providing practical guidance on adapting the policy to reflect your organisation's own structure, requirements and approach to neuro-inclusion.

The example policy provides a starting point rather than a prescribed approach. Use this guidance alongside the relevant chapters of *The NEW E.R.A. Method®* and adapt the policy to reflect how your organisation works, while keeping the information clear, accessible and easy for people to use.

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Introduction

The example Neuro-Inclusion Policy provides a practical starting point for organisations developing or reviewing their approach to neuro-inclusion.

The example uses Neraclear Ltd, a fictional company, to demonstrate how neuro-inclusion can be reflected within a controlled organisational policy and connected to the wider documents and processes that support it.

The policy has been developed with reference to current Acas guidance on neurodiversity at work. It is an example rather than a prescribed approach. Your organisation's structure, existing policies, document management arrangements, workforce and legal responsibilities will affect what is appropriate for you.

Neraclear has chosen to use a standalone Neuro-Inclusion Policy. Acas guidance also recognises that neurodiversity may be addressed within another policy, such as a broader equality, diversity and inclusion policy. The important question is not whether your document structure matches the Neraclear example, but whether people can clearly understand the organisation's commitment, what it means in practice and where to find the information or support they need.

The example policy deliberately remains relatively high level. Detailed requirements and procedures are contained in the relevant supporting documents rather than repeated within the policy. This helps keep information maintainable and reduces the risk of different documents providing conflicting requirements.

Before adapting the example, consider what already exists within your organisation and how the Neuro-Inclusion Policy will connect with it. A policy alone will not make an organisation neuro-inclusive. Its commitments need to be reflected in the processes, working practices and everyday decisions that affect people's experience of work.

This resource provides practical guidance on the design decisions made within the Neraclear example and points to consider when adapting it for your organisation.

This resource does not constitute legal or HR advice. Organisations should seek appropriate professional advice for their own circumstances and check that the legislation and external guidance they rely on remain current.

About The NEW E.R.A. Method® Resources

This guidance and the example Neuro-Inclusion Policy form part of a wider collection of practical resources developed alongside *The NEW E.R.A. Method®: The Practical Framework for Building a Neuro-Inclusive Workplace*.

The Neuro-Inclusion Policy and this guidance are designed to be useful in their own right. You do not need to have read the book to use or adapt the example policy. However, the book provides the wider context and thinking behind the approach, which can help organisations explore what needs to change and apply the policy more effectively.

The Neraclear example has been created using the **Universal Document Template**, which provides an editable structure for developing organisational documents. Separate **Universal Template Guidance** explains how to use and adapt the template, including its document-control fields, formatting and styles. The wider resource collection also includes worked examples and implementation guidance covering other areas of organisational practice.

Some resources are available as free companion downloads for readers of *The NEW E.R.A. Method®*. Other resources, including this Neuro-Inclusion Policy pack, may be made available separately.

Further information about *The NEW E.R.A. Method®* and the accompanying resources is available at neweramethod.com.

Key Design Features

The Neraclear example has been designed to be clear, usable and maintainable rather than to include every piece of information relating to neuro-inclusion within a single policy.

The following design features explain some of the decisions made and can be considered when developing or reviewing your own policy.



Give the Policy a Clear Job

Neraclear has a broader Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy as well as a

separate Neuro-Inclusion Policy.

This is a deliberate division by purpose, rather than an attempt to give neuro-inclusion greater importance than other aspects of inclusion.

The broader policy establishes Neraclear's overall approach to equality, diversity, inclusion and appropriate treatment. The Neuro-Inclusion Policy focuses more specifically on the barriers that can arise through areas such as communication, processes, recruitment, working arrangements and workplace support.

Your organisation may choose a different structure. What matters is that the purpose and boundaries of each document are clear and that important information does not disappear into the gaps between them.



Keep High-Level Documents High Level

A policy establishes the organisation's position, commitments and high-level requirements. It does not need to contain every procedure required to put those commitments into practice.

Neraclear therefore refers to supporting documents for areas such as workplace support, recruitment, communication, document management and formal workplace procedures.

This also supports maintainability. Policies may require approval at a high organisational level. If frequently changing operational detail is included within the policy, relatively small procedural changes can trigger unnecessary policy revisions and approval cycles.

Keep the policy detailed enough to be meaningful, but consider whether information that is likely to change belongs in a supporting document with its own owner, approval authority and review arrangements.



Cross-Reference Rather Than Duplicate

Where a requirement or process is already controlled elsewhere, the Neuro-Inclusion Policy points the reader to that document rather than recreating it.

For example, the policy makes clear that colleagues can ask for workplace support without having a diagnosis or already knowing what solution they need.

The detailed process for requesting, considering and reviewing that support remains in **Flexible Working and Other Workplace Support (INT-003)**.

Duplicating controlled information can create a maintenance problem: when the requirement changes, every copy needs to be identified and updated. Cross-referencing helps maintain one clear source of the detailed requirement.

Explain a Reference When Its Relevance May Not Be Obvious

A document title will sometimes tell the reader everything they need to know about why it has been referenced. Sometimes it will not.

The Neraclear policy provides additional information after referring readers to **Flexible Working and Other Workplace Support**, explaining that it includes workplace adjustments, workplace needs assessments, Occupational Health, Access to Work and other support.

This additional context is useful because someone looking for neurodivergence-related support may not realise from the document title that it contains the information they need.

Add explanation where it helps someone decide whether following a reference is worthwhile. It is not necessary to describe every referenced document simply for consistency.

Make Boundaries Between Documents Visible

Related subjects do not necessarily need to be combined into the same document.

Mental health and neurodivergence are distinct, although they can overlap. The Neraclear policy therefore makes the boundary explicit within its Scope and points to the **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy** for requirements specifically relating to mental health.

However, that document boundary does not create a barrier for the person seeking support. The same workplace-support route can be used whether the person's need relates to neurodivergence, mental health or another circumstance.

Where related subjects are separated across documents, make it easy for the reader to recognise the boundary and find the right information.



Do Not Require People to Categorise the Problem before Asking for Help

A person may know that something about their work is creating difficulty without knowing why, whether it relates to neurodivergence, mental health or something else, or what change would help.

The Neraclear policy therefore connects to a common workplace-support process rather than requiring the individual to identify the correct category of support first.

This reflects a wider principle within *The NEW E.R.A. Method®* (see *About The NEW E.R.A. Method® Resources*): identifying that something is not working can be enough to begin exploring the barrier. The solution does not need to be known at the starting point.



Define the Organisation Once

The Neraclear example defines Neraclear Ltd as “the Company” on its first use within the body of the policy. “The Company” is then used throughout the remaining policy text.

This reduces unnecessary repetition and improves maintainability. If the organisation's name changes, the name does not need to be identified and amended throughout the document.

Your organisation may already have an established convention for referring to itself within controlled documents. If so, use the appropriate terminology.



Put Definitions Where Readers Expect to Find Them

Where a term needs explanation, consider placing the definition in a dedicated Definitions section rather than explaining it only at the point where it first appears.

For example, the Neraclear policy uses the term colleague throughout. Rather

than repeatedly qualifying who this includes, the Definitions section explains that a colleague is a person working for or on behalf of the Company, including employees and, where applicable, contractors or other workers, and that use of the term does not imply employment status.

This gives the reader a predictable place to look if they are unsure how a term is being used and allows the same term to be used consistently throughout the document without repeatedly interrupting the information with explanation.

Not every term needs defining. Include definitions where they help the reader understand the scope or meaning of the document, rather than simply because a term appears several times.



Assign Accountability to a Role

The document control information identifies an HR Manager as Document Owner and the Managing Director as Approval Authority.

Where an individual needs to be accountable for maintaining or approving a controlled document, naming a department such as HR can leave responsibility unclear. Identifying the organisational role makes accountability visible while avoiding dependency on a named individual.

Further information about document ownership and approval is provided in the Universal Template Guidance (see *About The NEW E.R.A. Method® Resources*).



Apply Document Management Requirements Consistently

The Neuro-Inclusion Policy states when review is required but does not recreate Neraclear's rules for managing controlled documents. Instead, it refers to Document Management (INT-001).

Requirements that apply across the document estate are generally easier to maintain when they have one appropriate source rather than being rewritten within every document.

Your organisation's document numbering, ownership, approval, revision, review and publication arrangements should therefore follow its own document management requirements. Further information about completing the document-control fields is provided in the Universal Template Guidance (see

About The NEW E.R.A. Method® Resources).



Be Precise Where Precision Matters

Consistency can make documents easier to understand, but standardisation also creates something that needs to be maintained.

The Neraclear example uses neuro-inclusion and neuro-inclusive consistently within the policy. Acas currently uses neuroinclusion and neuroinclusive. The Neraclear terminology has been selected to remain consistent with The NEW E.R.A. Method®: The Practical Framework for Building a Neuro-Inclusive Workplace and to retain the prominence of inclusion within the term.

Either convention can communicate the intended meaning. An organisation may choose to establish terminology across its document estate, but consider the benefit and maintenance implications of doing so.

Precision is particularly important where inconsistent language could change meaning, affect what somebody does or create risk. Where a variation is unlikely to affect understanding or performance, greater standardisation is not automatically an improvement.



Don't Assume the Reader Knows the Wider Document Set

A reader may encounter a document without having seen the documents or resources that surround it. Where another document or resource is referenced, provide enough information for the reader to understand why it is relevant and how to find it.

Avoid relying on organisational knowledge that the reader may not have. A reference is only useful if the reader can recognise what it is and locate it.

Adapting the Example Policy

The Neraclear policy is intended to be adapted rather than simply renamed. Before issuing an adapted version, consider how each part of the example relates to your organisation and whether the commitments it contains are supported by what happens in practice.



Before You Start

Identify the policies, processes and support arrangements that already exist within your organisation and consider how neuro-inclusion currently connects with them.

Do not begin by simply replacing references to Neraclear. First consider whether the structure and content of the example reflect how your organisation actually works and where changes may be needed.



Document Control Information

Replace the Neraclear document-control information with the information required by your organisation.

Document numbering, ownership, approval, review, revision and publication arrangements should follow your organisation's own document management requirements.

Further information about the fields and formatting used in the example is provided in the Universal Template Guidance (see *About The NEW E.R.A. Method® Resources*).



Purpose and Scope

Review the Purpose and Scope against your organisation's chosen document structure.

For example, Neraclear uses a standalone Neuro-Inclusion Policy alongside separate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Mental Health and Wellbeing policies. Your organisation may structure these subjects differently.

Make clear what the policy covers, who it applies to and where closely related information can be found.



Definitions

Review the definitions against the terminology actually used within your organisation and the policy.

Retain definitions that help readers understand how a term is being used, remove those that are unnecessary and add definitions where organisational or specialist terminology may otherwise be unclear.



Policy Requirements

Consider each requirement individually and check that it reflects what your organisation intends to commit to and what happens in practice.

In particular, check that the processes, support routes, responsibilities and other arrangements described or referenced within the policy actually exist and operate as stated.

Where the review identifies a gap, consider whether the policy needs to change or whether the organisation needs to address the gap.

A policy is only useful if what it says matches what happens.



References

The Neraclear policy refers to fictional supporting documents that form part of its wider document structure. Replace these with the appropriate documents within your organisation.

Do not simply substitute a document with a similar title. Check that the document being referenced actually contains the information, requirement or process that the Neuro-Inclusion Policy says it contains.

Remove references that are not relevant and identify any gaps where the policy needs to point to information that does not yet exist.



Formatting and Styles

The example policy has been created using the Universal Document Template and uses its named styles.

You can retain the existing formatting or adapt it to reflect your organisation's visual identity and document management requirements. Where possible, use the existing styles rather than manually changing individual fonts, sizes or spacing.

Further information about adapting the formatting and styles is provided in the **Universal Template Guidance** (see *About The NEW E.R.A. Method® Resources*).