# ED1 – Educator guidance

## About us and your course/classes

*These guidance notes and questions may be helpful to use as a starting point to encourage thought about how to support an autistic student to engage and cope with a new establishment/class/teacher. Use them to identify information to share with your prospective or current autistic students in advance of*

*their commencement/classes. Ideally, they will also share information about themselves with you, using the A2 form or an alternative toolkit or form.*

*We may be used to asking for (or hearing information about) autistic students and their individual needs, and this is valuable, but more can be done. This form seeks to encourage you to consider what you can share about yourself and your establishment/course/classes to increase predictability and ease anxiety for the autistic individual.*

*The questions are grouped in three sections about: the establishment and environment (Student Support Services); the individual/s involved in teaching the autistic student; a specific workshop/class or course.*

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| **The establishment and environment (Student Support Services)** |
| * What systems are in place to support transition to the establishment and how far in advance do they start?
* Is there a map of the campus/site?
* Which are key buildings?
* Where are key classrooms?
* How is the information presented, is it autism (neurodiverse) friendly?
* What are the quietest routes in and out?
* Is there an induction day/half day/ session for new autistic students?
* Are some times of the day/week quieter than others?
* Can autistic students gain early entry or early departure from classes?
* What classrooms/lecture theatres are involved? Is advance viewing possible?
* Where are the quiet spaces to wait or escape to?
* Is there a specialist autism mentor/ advisor/contact and if so, is there a photo to share, where can they be found and when?
* Do all staff have a baseline general understanding of autism? What training have they taken part in?
 | * How is communication about specific autistic students initiated, facilitated and followed up?
* What systems of both academic and social support are in place for autistic students?
* How effective/reliable/consistent are the systems of support? What is the experience of the autistic students themselves?
* Is there consistency of best practice between departments?
* Are personal tutors who are appropriately trained identified for autistic students?
* How is the ongoing wellbeing of autistic students monitored? Is this process passive or active?
* Is there awareness/understanding of autism among non-autistic students?
* Is there a nurture group, club, social media support group, mentor etc. for autistic students?
* Can staff provide advance information about themselves and their classes to the autistic student? Can they meet in advance?
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| Teacher/lecturer specific information |
| * Can you provide a photo?
* What do you teach?
* Do you tend to speak fast/slow?
* Do you have a loud/quiet voice?
* Are you generally calm/patient?
* Are you punctual? Do you sometimes arrive/start/finish late?
* Do you tend to move about the room?
* Do you wear perfume/aftershave/ scent?
* Do you sometimes get stressed? How will they know if you are stressed?
* Do you ask a lot of questions?
* Will you make things visual wherever possible? What will you do?
 | * Does it matter if a student doesn’t look at you?
* Have you any experience of working with autistic relatives/friends/ students?
* Will you avoid asking individuals direct and unplanned questions?
* Is it okay for them to say they don’t know the answer or that they don’t understand the question?
* Will you say things again if they don’t understand something? How will they let you know that they don’t understand?
* Can they ask you questions afterwards? Can this be via email or in person?
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| The class or course |
| * Will you share a lesson/workshop/ lecture-plan in advance? How far in advance?
* Is the plan in plain English?
* Is the plan given as a bulleted list or in readable chunks including learning outcomes, format, timings, any group work, activities, end points?
* How many students are expected?
* Is it possible that the class will overrun?
* For a specific class can you say if there will be group work? Is it
* possible to prepare for this, are there any options here?
* Are there likely to be any sensory distractions, for example noise from outside; bright lights, do you allow students to chat?
 | * Can they enter the room early to find a seat where they feel comfortable?
* Will you ask questions of specific individuals? Will they be asked to present?
* Can you give advance warning of questions that you might ask to allow for processing?
* Do you mind if they take measures to reduce sensory input or to reduce anxiety, e.g. looking away, closing eyes, looking at phone, using headphones?
* Do you mind if they exit the class without explanation?
* Is the class essential, beneficial or ‘nice to have’?
* Will you put up a recording of the class? Where will this be? When will it be available?
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| **Any helpful numbers or helplines (points of contact)** |
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