

A guide following your ASD assessment.

This information has been provided to support you in moving forward after not receiving an ASD diagnosis. We understand how frustrating and disappointing this can be, and we absolutely commend the effort and courage you've shown in seeking answers. Please know that ruling out ASD at this stage doesn't mean the end of your journey. This is a stepping stone in exploring other possibilities and finding the support and resources that will best help you move forward. This process is a vital part of understanding your needs and ensuring you're on the right path

We understand that this outcome may feel frustrating or disappointing, and we want to emphasise that we are not dismissing or minimising the challenges you face.

It is hoped that this guide will help you come to terms with not receiving an ASD diagnosis and explore the next steps for seeking support with the challenges you are facing.

"Why didn't I meet the criteria for an ASD diagnosis even though I experience significant difficulties?"

An autism diagnosis at Psychiatry UK is based on criteria listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM-5). Your assessment report will hopefully clearly explain why you did not meet all the criteria for an ASD diagnosis.

It is important to remember that while you may experience certain traits associated with autism, your behaviours did not fully align with the diagnostic criteria outlined in DSM-5 framework.

The diagnostic process looks for evidence of clinically significant impairments in functioning.

If your challenges do not substantially impact areas like daily living, relationships, or work performance, a diagnosis may not be appropriate.

It should be noted that a diagnosis of ASD often requires evidence of symptoms being present in early childhood, therefore its characteristics typically appear during early development and persist throughout life.

It's possible that some of your difficulties might stem from other conditions, such as ADHD, anxiety, sensory processing issues, or learning disabilities, which can present similar traits to autism.

"Is there a possibility that I could be misdiagnosed or overlooked, and should I seek a second opinion?"

Our process for diagnosing ASD is detailed, evidence-based, and clinically rigorous, ensuring that we provide accurate and well-supported assessments.

However, if you feel that you'd like a second opinion, you are welcome to seek one. Please note that for this, you would need to be referred to another healthcare provider for further assessment.

"What kind of support or resources can I access if I don't have an official ASD diagnosis?"



Therapies and Counselling: You may be able to access therapies such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), occupational therapy, or speech and language therapy.

These therapies can help address challenges with social interaction, emotional regulation, and sensory sensitivities. Speak with your GP or another health or social care professional about this.



Mental Health Support: If you're dealing with anxiety, depression, or other emotional difficulties related to your challenges, talking therapies such as counselling or psychotherapy are available through the NHS or private providers.

https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/5760/mind-guide-for-employees-wellness-action-plans_final.pdf



Access to Work: If you're employed or looking for work, you can apply for the Access to Work scheme through the government. This can provide funding for workplace adjustments, such as specialised equipment, travel costs, or support workers, to help you succeed in the workplace.

Work coaches and employment support services may also be available through Jobcentre Plus to help with job searches and workplace difficulties.



Another tool which is useful is a **Wellness Action Plan (WAP)**. The WAP helps identify what keeps us well at work, what triggers can cause us to become unwell and how to address any mental health needs.

It is a good way to open up a dialogue with your manager or supervisor, in order for them to better understand your needs and experiences and ultimately better support your mental health. This in turn leads to greater productivity, better performance and increased job satisfaction.