

Take-home Assignments

How to create and implement neuro-inclusive Take-home Assignments.



About Take-home Assignments

Take-home Assignments are a type of assessment method used during recruitment where candidates are given a specific project or task to complete on their own time, outside of the traditional interview setting. These assignments are designed to assess a candidate's technical skills, creativity, and problem-solving abilities in a practical context.

Benefits

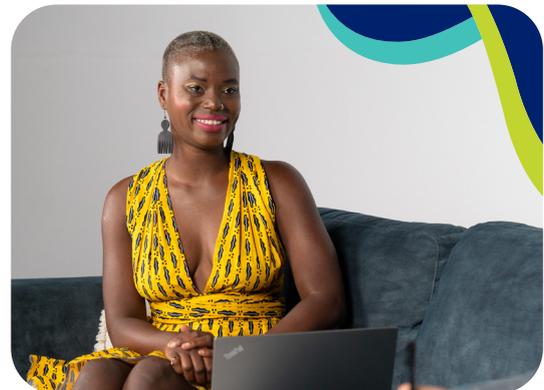
The benefits may include:

- Allows candidates to demonstrate their actual skills and how they approach real-world problems.
- Candidates can work on assignments at their own pace and schedule, which can help them produce their best work.
- Helps alleviate the stress of on-the-spot interviews and gives a more comprehensive view of the candidate's capabilities.
- Ideal for evaluating technical and problem-solving skills, creativity and ability to work independently.



Ideal for:

Software development, marketing, data analysis, academic or research-based roles.



Considerations and solutions

There are considerations to address to ensure the assessment is neuro-inclusive. These include:

Considerations

Time commitment:

Assignments might require considerable time, which could deter candidates who are currently employed or have other commitments.

Evaluation consistency:

Ensuring that all assignments are assessed fairly and consistently can be challenging.

Solutions

Limit the scope of the assignment to something that can be completed in a few hours and always be clear about the expected time commitment.

Develop a clear rubric or scoring system to evaluate all submissions equally.

Create and implement neuro-inclusive Take-home Assignment

Example: Marketing industry

A digital marketing firm is looking to hire a content strategist. They provide candidates with a take-home assignment to create a content calendar based on hypothetical product launch. Candidates submit their strategies along with justifications for their choices, highlighting their ability to plan, research, and align content with business goals.



Take-home Assignments can be effective for evaluating candidates' real-world skills. When designed inclusively, they enable all candidates, including neurodivergent individuals, to perform at their best.

Pre-test preparation

Proper preparation helps candidates feel confident and reduces anxiety by offering clarity and removing unnecessary barriers. This allows candidates to perform at their best.

Neuro-inclusive strategies

Clear instructions

- Deliver instructions in multiple formats (For example, written, verbal, and visual)
- Break down tasks into manageable steps and provide clear criteria for success
- Use consistent, plain language to reduce ambiguity
- Contact details of a support person from the organisation to answer any questions.

Flexibility

- Offer timeline flexibility to accommodate diverse working styles and personal commitments
- Allow candidates to complete the assignment in their preferred format
For example, a written report, presentations, or video.

Accessibility

- Ensure all required materials are provided in accessible formats
- Confirm any specialised tools or software are compatible with assistive technologies.

Environment familiarisation

- Provide information about the assignment, timeline, and resources to help candidates prepare.

Create and implement neuro-inclusive Take-home Assignment

Assignment execution

Take-home Assignments should focus on assessing skills relevant to the role.

Neuro-inclusive strategies

Structured feedback

- Provide templates or outlines to help candidates organise their work.
- Guide candidates on how to approach the task

Flexibility in scope

- Allow adjustments in the complexity or depth of the task to match candidates' strengths or comfort levels.

Break periods

Encourage candidates to pace themselves and take breaks as needed.

Post-assignment follow up

Constructive feedback and reflection ensure the process is neuro-inclusive.

Neuro-inclusive strategies

Feedback opportunities

- Share specific observations about the candidate's strengths and areas for growth.
- Use constructive language.
For example, "Your approach was thoughtful; next time, try incorporating [specific method]. Does that sound manageable?"
- Gather feedback from candidates about the process, focusing on inclusivity and accessibility.

Regularly update

Regularly revise assignment designs Incorporating feedback from neurodivergent individuals to ensure continuous improvement.

Example of a neuro-inclusive Take-home Assignments

Scenario

A software development company asks candidates to complete a coding task designed to test their programming and problem-solving abilities.

Actions taken

- The company provides written instructions, a recorded walkthrough, and example templates.
- Candidates can choose a submission deadline within a three-day window.
- Tools required for the task are verified for compatibility with assistive technologies.
- Candidates can explain their approach through written documentation or a short video.

Outcome

These accommodations enable the candidate to focus on demonstrating their skills without distractions, allowing the employer to fairly evaluate their skills.



Neuro-inclusive Take-home Assignments can help organisations assess candidates' abilities in a fair and equitable manner. By offering flexibility, clear communication, and accessibility, employers can attract a diverse talent pool and gain deeper insights into candidates' strengths. This inclusive approach fosters innovation, equity, and a commitment to diversity in the workplace.

Learn more and access resources

To learn more about Neuro-inclusive Recruiting and how to create and maintain neuro-inclusive workplaces, scan the QR code or visit neuroinclusiverecruiting.org.au.

