

MARSH McLENNAN: ACHIEVING AUTISM CONFIDENCE 2021-2024



A WELCOME FROM OUR CEOs



Jolanta Lasota
Chief Executive
Ambitious about Autism

We are delighted that Marsh McLennan has achieved Autism Confidence. This has been made possible by the commitment and determination of Marsh McLennan senior leaders and colleagues, whose incredible efforts have raised awareness and funds and have helped shape recruitment practices and a workplace culture that both welcomes and celebrates autistic people.

We are really proud of what we have achieved together. It's been a partnership in every sense of the word, and we hope others will be inspired to follow Marsh McLennan's lead. A huge thank you to the senior leaders and colleagues at Marsh McLennan for enabling more autistic young people to realise their ambitions in the world of work.

We know our partnership will have a long-lasting legacy.



Chris Lay
Chief Executive Officer
Marsh McLennan UK

Marsh McLennan has been on an incredible journey with Ambitious about Autism over the past three years, helping to drive systemic change across our organisation and provide life-changing employment opportunities for autistic young people.

We are enormously proud to have been awarded Autism Confidence in recognition of the strategic work we have undertaken to review our recruitment and workplace practices to help improve the working environment for neurodiverse colleagues.

Our partnership has served as a transformational shift for us as an organisation, inspiring us to think differently about neurodiversity and the power fresh perspectives can bring to our business. Through elevating the voices of our autistic colleagues, we have changed our workplace for the better and hope to inspire others within our sector to do the same.

We take this moment to celebrate our achievements and thank Ambitious about Autism for their expert guidance and advice and look forward to continuing our journey and commitment for many years to come.



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OUR JOURNEY TO AUTISM CONFIDENCE

In 2021, Marsh McLennan embarked on a four-year UK strategic charity partnership with Ambitious about Autism to help create brighter futures for autistic young people by empowering talent and unlocking opportunities. This effort was underpinned by a business commitment from Marsh McLennan UK to achieve “Autism Confidence” status through a strategic multi-year project that involved reviewing workplace and recruitment strategies and embedding best practices.

Throughout this groundbreaking work—in scale and in scope—the inclusion of the autistic voice has remained central. Autistic consultants and young people, along with a newly developed Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG), have played a key part in guiding this project and its outcomes.

This collaboration has set the “gold standard” for inclusive employment practices, and as pioneers

on this journey, Marsh McLennan has been instrumental in the development of Ambitious about Autism’s framework for Autism Confidence, enabling other employers to realise this status in the future.

The partnership has resulted in multiple benefits for both organisations, allowing each to fulfil their goals and grow. Together, Marsh McLennan and Ambitious about Autism have amplified the voices of autistic young people, provided life-changing job opportunities, enriched the work culture, brought fresh perspectives and enhanced colleague engagement through autism-awareness training.

But Marsh McLennan’s journey doesn’t end here. The partnership will continue throughout 2024. The remaining time will be used to build on the learning and knowledge gained so far, sustainably embedding it throughout the business.

This report sets out the achievements of the partnership under the five workstreams that lead to Autism Confidence and a pledge for the future.





2021-2024

AUTISM CONFIDENCE WORKSTREAMS

INCREASE UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS

Objectives

- Deliver a programme of autism awareness-raising through specific sessions.
- Provide access to training on understanding autism.
- Maintain positive change in the understanding of autism.
- Elevate the voices of autistic colleagues.

“Interesting and enlightening. Really made me think about my actions/comms style.”

— UK Lunch and Learn attendee



Headline achievements

3,000

colleagues attended a training session (25% of the total Marsh McLennan UK workforce).

97%

of attendees who undertook training say they now have a good or better understanding of autism.

4,000

hours of volunteer time were dedicated to increasing autism awareness and acceptance.

15

bespoke training sessions were developed for people managers, HR managers, Mental Health First Aiders, mentors, the UK Talent Acquisition team, front of house colleagues, and parents and carers.

Success stories

A 'Neurodiversity Learning Hub'

The Marsh McLennan UK Benefits team has implemented a Neurodiversity Learning Hub on the company benefits portal. On this dedicated platform for accessing resources, diagnostic support and signposting, colleagues can find the information they need and are encouraged to actively develop their learning and inclusive practice.

Elevating voices

Marsh McLennan's partnership with Ambitious about Autism has empowered autistic colleagues to share their stories at internal and external events, bringing to life the experience of finding and securing employment. A particular highlight was Ambitious about Autism's Power of Autism Inclusion event, where one colleague shared her journey to permanent employment at the House of Lords. The audience of over 200 heard a powerful message about the realities of participating in Ambitious about Autism's Employ Autism programme and the difference it makes. Those in the room, including MPs and corporate partners, were inspired to be more inclusive.

“There is autism in my family, and the important point for me is that an employer recognises the enhanced skills autistic people can offer.”

— Lunch and Learn attendee



Next steps

- Marsh McLennan commits to keeping its knowledge of autism up to date, regularly reviewing activity and delivery alongside experts with lived or learned experience.
- The creation of an e-learning module on Understanding Autism in the Workplace will be a key tool for increasing awareness and understanding of

autism. The aim is for this to become a compulsory training module for all HR colleagues.

- With the help and guidance of internal networks, Marsh McLennan will continue to recognise World Autism Acceptance Month each year through campaigns that bring the autistic experience to life with storytelling, videos and podcasts.

SUPPORT EXISTING COLLEAGUES

Objectives

- Launch a lived-experience advisory group.
- Provide training for key audiences.
- Support parents and carers.
- Provide resources and toolkits for supporting autistic colleagues.

Headline achievements



LEAG

Marsh McLennan launched the Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG) of neurodivergent colleagues to work strategically to implement and influence inclusive changes.

10+

resources were developed to support autistic people and their parents/ carers, including toolkits, networks, newsletters and training sessions.

20

autistic young people received mentoring from a trained colleague over six sessions or longer.

50+

communication pieces have been shared so far, keeping colleagues across the UK up to date on partnership progress and achievements.

Success stories

Lived-experience networks

The newly created Lived Experience Advisory Group focuses on delivering in three key areas:

1. Diagnosis
2. Awareness
3. Workplace environment

There has been great success in all areas, with colleagues supported in obtaining and disclosing diagnoses and increased awareness for autism, helping to build a more inclusive workplace.

The partnership and its communications resulted in the creation of a Neurodiversity Network across operating companies and UK regions. This community is open to everyone, providing access to support in the workplace and signposting for key resources. In addition, a Parent and Carer forum is available for those colleagues with an autistic child.

Mentoring talent

Through the partnership, Marsh McLennan piloted and launched a new virtual mentoring programme, Mentoring Talent. Colleagues completed a two-day training course to become mentors. Each colleague was then paired with an autistic young person at the

“Nothing could have prepared me for the emotional intensity of that first call with my mentee. She became upset and very overwhelmed, and I decided to end the call early and rescheduled for another time.

During our second call, the tension was still palpable as we worked to build trust. However, as we continued to connect and support each other, our relationship began to flourish. Witnessing my mentee’s progress has been truly remarkable. She now has a part-time job, and our calls have become incredibly rewarding.

I want to encourage others to persevere through the tough moments and stay focused on the end goal. It is in those moments of difficulty that we find the most growth and fulfilment.”

— UK mentor

beginning of their employability journey. Many of those six-month-long mentoring relationships were greatly beneficial, with the young people supported to find, sustain or access work as well as build their confidence and self-esteem.

Next steps

- To evolve the Mentoring Talent programme, Marsh McLennan will convene a network of colleagues, who will offer professional development and support to new and existing autistic colleagues within the workplace, helping to retain the

specialist skill base within the organisation and nurture new talent.

- The LEAG will form a sub-section of the UK disability-focused Colleague Resource Group, continuing to give its members a platform to amplify their voices.
- The UK HR directors will ensure there is a consistent level of understanding among the HR manager and people manager communities, making the relevant signposting, guides and support for colleagues easily accessible.

REVIEW POLICY AND PRACTICE

Objectives

- Review key people policies and practices to improve inclusivity.



My personal mission at the start of my post-diagnosis journey was to ensure no one else had to go through the same process I went through a couple of years ago, which was utterly overwhelming and stressful. The Reasonable Adjustments Guide removes a lot of uncertainties and makes you feel as though the business is supporting you as a neurodivergent person. I am grateful for HR and support from Ambitious about Autism for creating the document.”

— Marsh McLennan UK colleague

Headline achievements

3

HR policies have been reviewed to ensure language is clear and inclusive.

7

practices have been adapted and updated to include autism. These support disclosure, performance reviews, reasonable adjustments and the hiring process.

74

colleagues who work in recruitment have undertaken training on understanding autism.



Success stories

Reviewing practices through an autism lens

During the partnership, with help from the Lived Experience Advisory Group, Marsh McLennan was able to identify several processes that required adaptations to make them more accessible. As a result of these reviews, two guides were produced:

- **Reasonable Adjustments Guide**—Created to provide guidance on navigating requests for reasonable adjustments in the workplace and disclosure to line managers.
- **Performance Competencies**—Developed to support colleagues in identifying shortfalls with goal-setting, performance and managing expectations.

Accessing a diagnosis

There are often barriers to obtaining an autism diagnosis, including the long NHS waiting times and the financial implications of seeking a private diagnosis.

As a direct result of the Lived Experience Advisory Group, the Marsh McLennan UK Benefits team worked to source and recommend a reliable diagnosis partner. Colleagues who have been



waiting to get a diagnosis can now use that provider, with Marsh McLennan covering costs up to £2,000.

In collaboration with the provider, Marsh McLennan has also mapped out and clearly communicated the pathway to obtaining a diagnosis, removing uncertainty about the process and what might be involved.

Next steps

- HR managers in the UK will refer colleagues to a new benefits provider for diagnosis. Information will be made available for colleagues to find out more about what's on offer.
- Marsh McLennan will continue to review UK policy and practice through an autism lens, seeking lived and learned experience where required.

CREATE INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES

Objectives

- Carry out workplace assessments of UK office environments.
- Create a manual for future office refurbishments.
- Design resources to support autism-confident workspaces.
- Train front of house teams on understanding autism.

“The Property Playbook is proving to be an invaluable tool for our workplace designers. By following the guidelines outlined in the Playbook, our workplace designers can create environments that celebrate neurodiversity, enhance employee wellbeing and unlock the full potential of all team members.”

— Real Estate Services

Headline achievements

5

UK offices across Marsh McLennan have been assessed and adapted.

1

UK Property Playbook was created to share best practices.

55

UK front of house staff members were trained on understanding autism.



Success stories

Considering the environment

Five of Marsh McLennan's UK smart offices at sites in Manchester, London, Norwich and Edinburgh have undergone a full sensory and environmental assessment.

The UK Real Estate teams received a report for each office that was assessed, with recommendations for changes to sensorial cues (noise, smell, light, temperature), signposting, assistive technology and building access. Information from the five reports was collated to create a Property Playbook—a guide to best practices that can be delivered in all UK workplaces.

Next steps

- The UK Property Playbook will be used by the local Real Estate teams when redesigning or refurbishing workspaces.
- Front-of-house staff training will be kept up to date, ensuring autistic colleagues, clients and visitors are accommodated when onsite.
- Existing autistic colleagues will be consulted on plans and changes to workplaces to ensure the lived-experience voice is represented.



RECRUIT AND RETAIN AUTISTIC TALENT

Objectives

- Offer paid placements to autistic young people via Ambitious about Autism's Employ Autism programme.
- Commit to clear accessibility messaging in recruitment communications to encourage disclosure.
- Train the Talent Acquisition team in inclusive recruitment practices.
- Ensure access to Early Careers roles for autistic people by reviewing practices and assessment centres.

“Our intern became a popular colleague in the office, and we were pleased to see him grow in confidence and shine over the course of the internship. The initiative was also helpful for our team—colleagues collaborated to create a positive experience for our intern and the experience reinforced our shared values.”

— Marsh McLennan UK colleague

Headline achievements

22

paid work experiences were provided to autistic young people across Marsh McLennan UK.

50%

of those placements have become permanent hires.

UK

recruitment processes were adjusted to make the hiring process more accessible.

238

people received specialist training to be able to support an autistic person within their teams (in either a managing or colleague role).

AUTISM CONFIDENCE PLEDGE



Marsh McLennan UK has recognised that to future-proof the business, the achievements in this partnership with Ambitious about Autism are not a finishing point but rather the foundations to build upon.

As pioneers in Autism Confidence, Marsh McLennan UK is committed to demonstrating to others what can be accomplished, while acknowledging that there is still more to be done in its own business.

Marsh McLennan pledges to:

- Provide training to colleagues on autism in the workplace
- Amplify the voices of autistic colleagues, empowering individuals to bring their whole selves to work
- Keep resources and guides developed during this partnership up to date and relevant

- Maintain representation of autistic people in colleague resource groups
- Review policy and practice through an autism lens, seeking lived and learned experience where required
- Create inclusive workplaces, using the Property Playbook to inform design and refurbishment
- Maintain accessible hiring practices to attract, recruit and retain autistic talent across the business

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Chris Lay', positioned above a horizontal line.

**Chris Lay, Chief Executive Officer,
Marsh McLennan UK**

About the organisations

This report was written collaboratively by Ambitious about Autism and Marsh McLennan. If you would like to find out more about these organisations, please see below.

About Ambitious about Autism

Ambitious about Autism is the national charity standing with autistic children and young people.

We believe every autistic child and young person has the right to be themselves and realise their ambitions.

We started as one school and have become a movement for change. We champion rights, campaign for change and create opportunities.

Contact us

The Pears National Centre for Autism Education
Woodside Avenue, London N10 3JA

Telephone: 020 8815 5444

Email: info@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk

Web: ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk

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About Marsh McLennan

Marsh McLennan (NYSE: MMC) is the world's leading professional services firm in the areas of risk, strategy and people. The Company's more than 85,000 colleagues advise clients in over 130 countries. With annual revenue of \$23 billion, Marsh McLennan helps clients navigate an increasingly dynamic and complex environment through four market-leading businesses.

Marsh provides data-driven risk advisory services and insurance solutions to commercial and consumer clients. Guy Carpenter develops advanced risk, reinsurance and capital strategies that help clients grow profitably and pursue emerging opportunities. Mercer delivers advice and technology-driven solutions that help organizations redefine the world of work, reshape retirement and investment outcomes, and unlock health and wellbeing for a changing workforce. Oliver Wyman serves as a critical strategic, economic and brand advisor to private sector and governmental clients.

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