

# Student Spotlight: Celebrating Students with Reasonable Adjustments



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She/Her

## About my disability:

I have ADHD, which mainly affects my concentration, memory and attention regulation. A lot of people think ADHD just means being distracted or hyperactive, but for me it can also mean struggling to process multiple things at once, forgetting small details, or finding it difficult to stay focused in busy environments. At the same time, when I'm really engaged in something, I can become extremely focused and lose track of time completely.

ADHD can look very different from person to person, and just because someone seems to be coping well externally doesn't mean they aren't putting in a huge amount of effort internally

## What my disability makes me appreciate:

Having ADHD has made me appreciate flexibility, understanding and patience from the people around me. Small adjustments or supportive supervisors can make a huge difference to my confidence and ability to work well.

It has also made me more aware of how differently people learn and work, and I really value environments where people feel comfortable asking for support without feeling judged.

## The challenges I face in the Lab environment:

One of the biggest challenges for me in lab environments is distraction, especially when the lab is very busy or noisy. When there are lots of people moving around or multiple conversations happening at once, I can find it difficult to maintain concentration and process information clearly.

I can also become very hyperfocused when working, which means I sometimes lose track of time or become overly absorbed in a task without realising it. Another challenge for me is staying organised with data collection and storage. When handling large amounts of information or multiple experiments, it can sometimes feel overwhelming to keep everything structured and tracked consistently.

## Accommodations I need to do my science:

Something that helps me is having flexibility with my working schedule where possible. During my thesis research in Malaysia, ADHD support was not as formally recognised as it is here, so I didn't have official accommodations. However, my supervisor was very understanding and allowed me to work during quieter lab hours. I found afternoon and evening sessions much easier because the lab was less crowded and distracting, which helped me focus much more effectively and work more independently. Clear instructions, written reminders, and quieter working environments also help me manage my work better. My supervisor also provided me with a structured template for organising and recording data, which was extremely helpful in helping me stay on track and manage my work more confidently.

Since moving to the UK, I'm still learning about the support systems available here and I personally don't really have lab work here. However, I think there are several things departments could do that would really help students with ADHD and other neurodivergent conditions.

For example:

- allowing more flexibility with quieter lab hours where possible
- providing clearer written instructions and expectations
- offering templates or structured systems for data recording and organisation
- improving awareness and understanding of ADHD within academic and lab environments

I think small adjustments like these can make a really big difference and help students work more confidently and effectively.