

# Gathering Evidence: School Reports, Work Challenges & Personal History

## TL;DR · QUICK SUMMARY

- Evidence from different life stages helps build a fuller picture for an assessor.
- Useful sources include old school reports, work feedback, and your own personal history.
- You don't need everything on this list. Gather what's realistically available to you.
- Evidence supports your account; it doesn't replace it.

## A Note Before You Read On

This resource offers general guidance and reflects common experience, not professional, legal, medical or financial advice. It is not a substitute for employment law, HR policy, occupational health guidance, or individual professional assessment. Every person's experience of neurodivergence is different, so please adapt anything here to your own situation. The Uniquely Wired Network does not accept liability for decisions, actions or outcomes arising from the use of this material. If you need advice specific to your circumstances, please consult a qualified professional (e.g. HR, legal, medical, or financial advisor).

## Why This Matters

Assessors often look for patterns across your whole life, not just how things are now. Evidence from childhood and work can add useful context, especially if you mask well.

## What This Might Look Like

- Digging out an old school report that mentions “daydreaming” or “struggles with transitions.”
- Realising a pattern of leaving jobs or roles around the same point each time.
- A parent or old friend remembering something relevant you'd forgotten.

## Where to Look

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### School reports and records

- Old report cards, SATs/GCSE comments, or SEN (special educational needs) records if you have them.
- Ask parents or schools directly; some schools retain records for years.

### Work history and feedback

- Old appraisals, performance reviews, or feedback. Look for recurring comments, positive or negative.
- Patterns like frequent job changes, disciplinary issues linked to communication, or particular strengths.

### Personal and family history

- Your own memories of childhood, friendships, sensory experiences and routines.
- Family members' recollections, if you're comfortable asking and they're available.
- Whether traits run in the family; many types of neurodivergence have a genetic link.

## If You Don't Have Much Evidence

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- That's very common; records get lost, schools close, and relationships change.
- Your own detailed, specific written account can carry real weight on its own.
- A good assessor will not expect a complete paper trail.

## Helpful Phrases You Can Borrow

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You don't have to use these exact words. Take what fits and leave the rest.

"I'm exploring an ADHD/autism assessment and wondered if you still have any of my old school records?"

"Do you remember what I was like as a kid, anything that stood out, good or tricky?"

## Quick Tips

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- Start early; requesting old records can take weeks.
- Photos, old exercise books or diaries can jog memories too.
- Focus on patterns, not single incidents.
- It's okay if evidence is patchy. Do what's realistically possible.
- Keep a simple folder (physical or digital) as you gather things.
- You control what you share; only bring what feels relevant and comfortable.

## Want to Know More?

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- See our companion guide: "Writing Your Life Narrative" to help pull evidence into a coherent account.
- Some schools and local authorities have processes for requesting historical SEN records. Ask directly.

### Before You Go

Whatever evidence you can or can't gather, your own experience is valid and matters most.

This process is about building understanding, not building a legal case.