

## Reasonable Adjustments - FAQs

### **Am I required to provide a reasonable adjustment to someone who is not disabled?**

No. Whilst it may often be appropriate to provide temporary support or make changes to assist a non-disabled colleague to return to work following sickness absence or to improve their performance, the duty to provide a reasonable adjustment as defined in the Equality Act, only applies to people who meet the definition of disability set out in the Equality Act.

### **Do I have to provide *any* adjustment that a disabled colleague requests?**

The duty to provide a reasonable adjustment arises where:

- The employee has a disability as defined in the Equality Act
- The disadvantage is “substantial”
- The adjustment is a reasonable step to avoid the disadvantage

The University is committed to ensuring disabled colleagues are provided with reasonable adjustments to ensure that they are able to make a full and effective contribution in the workplace. It is for the University to decide what it considers to be reasonable although ultimately an Employment Tribunal would decide this.

### **What does the Equality Act say about reasonable adjustments?**

The Equality Act sets out employers’ obligations to support disabled employees including what is meant by a “reasonable adjustment”. In summary this means where a provision, criterion or practice or a physical feature of premises puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage, the employer is required to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take, to avoid or mitigate the disadvantage.

### **To help me understand what is meant by reasonable adjustments, can you give examples?**

Adjustments which may be reasonable include:

- Providing a sign language interpreter at a training event
- Providing or modifying equipment or software, eg providing a special keyboard if they have arthritis
- Providing additional training or supervision
- Modifying procedures for testing or assessment
- Making physical changes - eg installing a ramp for a wheelchair user or an audio-visual fire alarm for a deaf person
- Allowing employees who become disabled to make a phased return to work - eg working flexible hours or part-time

- Considering broader health conditions and circumstances to identify adjustments with no cost implications. For example someone with social anxiety could be assigned their own dedicated desk rather than being required to “hot desk”

### **How can my disabled member of staff find out what sort of adjustments might help them at work?**

The employee can contact Access to Work [atwosu.london@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:atwosu.london@dwp.gsi.gov.uk) or ask their line manager to make a referral to Occupational Health to request guidance on reasonable adjustments.

### **I am not an expert in these matters where can I get help and advice?**

The disabled employee may be the best source of information on what may assist. However, because changes can occur it will often be appropriate to seek professional up to date information or advice. The employee can seek advice from Access to Work. Alternatively, a manager should contact the People Directorate to discuss whether a referral to Occupational Health would assist.

### **How do I know what is reasonable?**

A template is available to help managers consider the adjustment fully and fairly in discussion with their member of staff.

### **I've agreed some adjustments with my member of staff. Do I need to complete a form?**

It is good practice to have a record of reasonable adjustments that are in place so you can review these with the employee from time to time. This will also assist any new incoming manager to understand what has been agreed in the past. The Reasonable Adjustments Form provides a structured template to assist with this.

Please see **Reasonable Adjustments Form**