



# Toolkit for supporting disabled staff

## Case studies for reasonable adjustments

A guide for staff and managers on the types of adjustments that can be agreed to support disabled and neurodivergent staff

## Introduction

This guide forms part of the [University of Nottingham's toolkit for supporting disabled staff](#).

Introduction	Legal context	Case studies	Guidance	Support
<p>What is a disability?</p> <p>Legal overview</p> <p>The social model of disability</p> <p>How to share a disability</p>	<p>Staff equality legal pod-briefing</p> <p>Mandatory</p>	<p>Types of disabilities and neurodivergence</p> <p>The definition of a reasonable adjustment</p> <p>Examples of adjustments and case studies</p>	<p>The process to make adjustments</p> <p>Practical hints and tips</p> <p>Frequently asked questions</p>	<p>The role of the manager</p> <p>Developing your knowledge and skills</p> <p>Support from the university</p> <p>Getting medical advice</p> <p>External support</p>

### 3. Case studies – this component of our toolkit:

- Explains what we mean by a reasonable adjustment
- Describes how disabilities might require adjustments
- Explores neurodiversity
- Guides you on when to make reasonable adjustments
- Explores reasonable adjustments during recruitment
- Suggests adjustments that can be made during employment
- Describes the support available from Access to Work
- Brings all this to life with several case studies

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### What is a reasonable adjustment?

The Equality Act (2010) defines nine protected characteristics making it unlawful to discriminate against anyone in any of these groups: age, **disability**, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. This [ACAS guide](#) shares good practice on avoiding disability discrimination.

The act states that there is a **duty to make reasonable adjustments** where someone is placed at a substantial disadvantage because of their disability compared with non-disabled people or people who don't share their disability. It also requires employers to provide reasonable adjustments to staff with disabled relatives or dependents. Making reasonable adjustments may help support with problems at work and may help to reduce sickness absences and ultimately increase work productivity.

It defines a disability as:

*"A physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities."*

**Substantial** means more than minor or trivial. This requires employers to make 'reasonable adjustments' to support disabled job applicants and employees. **Long term** means the

condition has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months or for the rest of the person's life. Some conditions are progressive and are therefore likely to have a long-term impact. Staff with these conditions may therefore qualify as a disabled person before the adverse effects of their condition become serious. This could include, for example, dementia, muscular dystrophy and motor neurone disease.

All staff are required to complete our [Staff Equality Pod Briefing](#) to understand the requirements and implications of the Equality Act (2010).

The **social model of disability** suggests that disability is caused by the way society is organised, rather than by a person's difference. It looks at ways of removing barriers that restrict life choices for disabled people. Adjustments can help remove these barriers in a managed and supportive way.

A reasonable adjustment is **a measure put in place at work to remove or reduce the effect of:**

- **an employee's disability so they can do their job**
- **a job applicant's disability when applying for a job**

A reasonable adjustment could include changes to policies, working practices or physical layouts, or providing extra equipment or support to help a disabled person perform their function effectively. A reasonable adjustment may also include the employment of support workers.

To decide when an adjustment is **reasonable**, we should consider:

- How effective it will be in avoiding any disadvantage
- How practicable it is to make the adjustment
- How much the adjustment will cost
- How it will affect others' health and safety

As a large employer, the University is expected to consider seriously all opportunities to make reasonable adjustments and any failure to do so, even if unintentional, can be considered direct and/or indirect discrimination under the 2010 Equality Act.

The disabled person's line manager has a critical part to play in engaging with the disabled person to discuss and agree any reasonable adjustments that could help them. HR and occupational health are there to support and guide where required.

## What **disabilities** might require adjustments?

An individual may have one or more disabilities, which can be mental or physical, and visible or hidden so we should all avoid making assumptions based on what we can or can't see!

**Physical conditions** can be visible or invisible. Examples include:



**Mental health conditions** can also have a physical impact on an individual and these conditions can include:

- Depression
- Seasonal Affective Disorder
- Anxiety disorder

Not all disabilities are visible or easy to recognise. Individuals with the same condition will experience it differently in their daily lives.

Certain diseases are **officially classified as disabilities** under the Equality Act, from the point of diagnosis:

- Cancer

- HIV/AIDS
- Multiple Sclerosis

The University supports the nationally recognised 'Sunflower lanyard' scheme which supports staff who have a hidden disability. The lanyard is a sign that can easily be recognised from a distance but also discreet enough for people with a hidden disability to feel comfortable to use it. Not everyone with a hidden disability requires assistance but for those that do the sunflower lanyard discretely indicates that a person may need additional support, understanding or simply more time. It may be also worn by those who are exempt from wearing a face covering. Please bear in mind, however, that not everyone who identifies as having a disability will choose to wear a sunflower lanyard. Find out more [here](#).



Whether a condition is formally classified as a disability or not, the relevant line manager should, in accordance with our University values, try to provide as much support as reasonably possible to enable the staff member to perform in their role.

## What is neurodiversity?

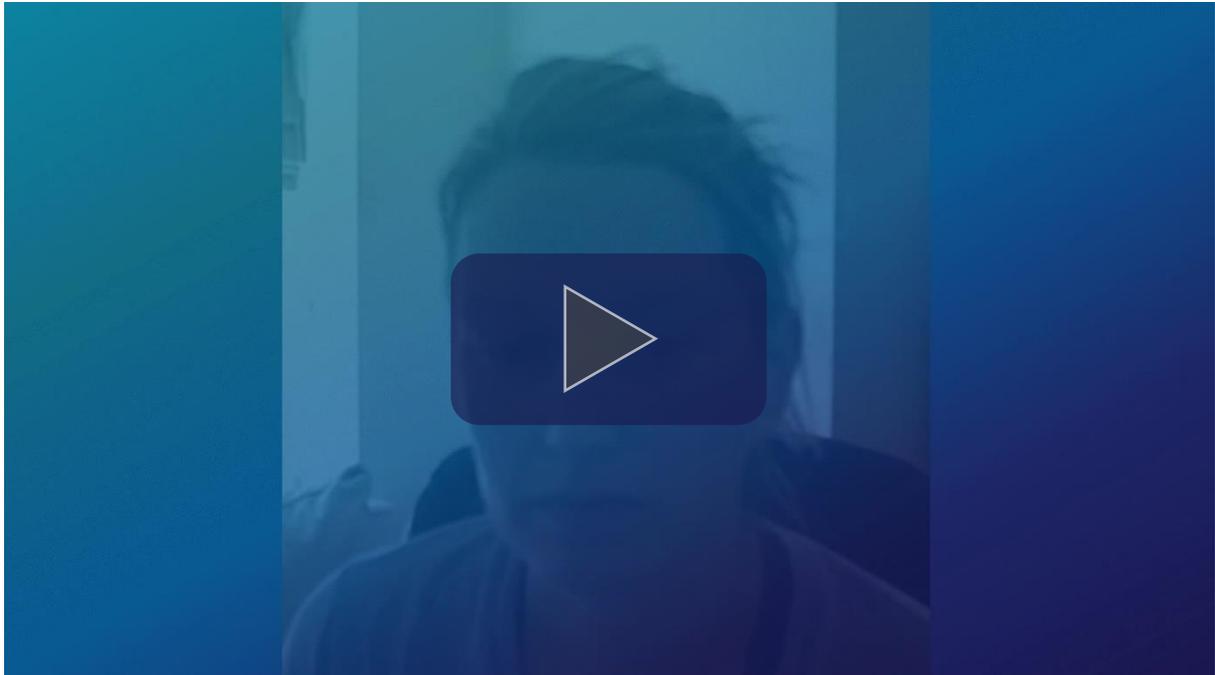
Neurodiversity refers to the different ways the brain can work and interpret information. It highlights that people naturally think about things differently. We have different interests and motivations and are naturally better at some things and poorer at others.

Most people are **neurotypical**, meaning that the brain functions and processes information in the way society expects.

However, it is estimated that around 1 in 7 people (more than 15% of people in the UK) are **neurodivergent**, meaning that the brain functions, learns and processes information differently. Neurodivergence includes Attention Deficit Disorders, Autism, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia.

A neurodivergent colleague may not see themselves as being disabled but may benefit from working and being managed differently. Adjusting their job, workplace, working hours and the way they are tasked and managed can help them be more effective, productive and engaged in their job.

Watch the following video to learn more about a manager's experience of supporting a neurodivergent member of their team:

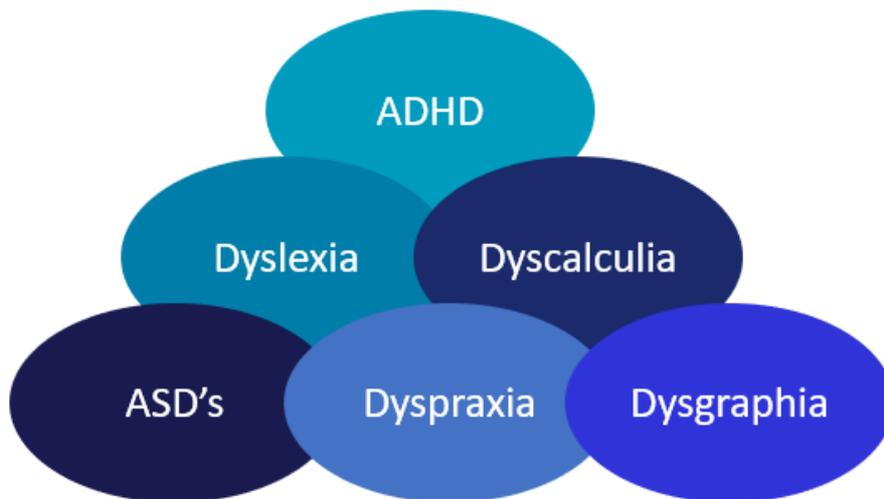


This video (along with a transcript) can also be accessed at: [Jodie Chatfield: Supporting a member of staff with a disability](#)

## What are the forms of neurodivergence?

Most forms of neurodivergence are experienced along a 'spectrum' and each form has a range of associated characteristics and these can vary between individuals. For example, the effects of dyspraxia on one person can be different to another person who also has dyspraxia. The effects on the individual can also change over time.

Additionally, an individual will often have the characteristics of more than one type of neurodivergence which may overlap. You can read more about different types of neurodiversity [here](#).



ADHD – Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Dyspraxia – developmental co-ordination disorder

ASD – Autism spectrum disorder

Dyscalculia – a calculations disorder

Dysgraphia – a handwriting and fine motor skills disorder

Dyslexia – a reading, writing and spelling learning disorder

### **When should we make an adjustment?**

Many staff need support from their manager to adjust their working practices and these may be agreed on a temporary or permanent basis.

Managers should also consider adjustments for staff with disabled relatives or dependents.

Staff experiencing the menopause or gender transition may also benefit from agreed adjustments to help them continue to perform in their role.

Sometimes these adjustments and/or the reasons for them need to remain confidential and the line manager is not compelled to share this with the team. This may cause other team members to feel that the adjustment is unreasonable and may result in 'ill will' towards the disabled team member. The manager has a duty to ensure that they support the disabled person and ensure that any inappropriate behaviour from other team members is not tolerated.

At other times, with the agreement of the staff member, it is advisable to share these adjustments and the reasons for them with the wider team who can then provide support and encouragement for their colleague.

The law requires us to make reasonable adjustments for disabled job applicants, contractors and staff and this guide provides suggestions on what these might include.

## What adjustments could I make in recruitment?

The University of Nottingham is a registered Disability Confident Committed (Level 1) employer. Our commitments include offering an interview to applicants with a disability who meet the minimum essential requirements of the role, anticipating and providing reasonable adjustments as and when required, and providing support to any existing employee who becomes disabled or acquires a long-term health condition.

Candidates are invited to tell us about their disability or neurodivergent condition in their application and suggest reasonable adjustments we should make to our selection process. These might include:

- Avoiding discriminatory criteria and use of more inclusive language in job descriptions and adverts
- Making changes to the location of the interview, such as holding it on the ground floor, or adapting the environment, for example to enable wheelchair access or to dim down the lights for someone with epilepsy
- Offering additional breaks where the individual is waiting or being assessed for a sustained period. This is particularly useful for neurodivergent candidates
- Being aware of biases that may have adverse impact on disabled people during selection. For example, non-verbal bias against tics/poor eye contact/poor delivery at interviews as a result of a hidden disability and the proper

use of probing to help those who struggle with interview situations as a result of a disability

- Avoiding discriminatory interview questions and discrimination during the deliberation process (e.g. health status impacting on the decision to appoint)
- Avoiding nested questions i.e. questions within questions since these may be challenging for neuro diverse candidate
- Being prepared to repeat questions when asked to do so and to be comfortable with any pauses made by the candidate as they process the questions and formulate their response.
- Providing clear and focused instructions and using questions to check understanding
- Providing written or visual material in an [accessible format](#) for ease of reading – details on how to do this are found in 'How to make reasonable adjustments'
- Making changes to any assessment and the time that we give to a candidate to complete them
- Providing access to a computer and assistive accessibility software

Once a job offer is made, successful candidates are asked to complete an online health assessment questionnaire which is reviewed by our Occupational Health provider. This may flag conditions or disabilities that would benefit from reasonable adjustments.

Following a job offer, the line manager should meet the new member of staff to discuss the role in as much detail as possible to identify any reasonable adjustments that could be made, since the disabled team member will often have a clear idea of what they need.

We have provided information later in this guide on how to:

- Request changes to buildings/facilities
- Obtain specialist equipment
- Access specialist software

This may take time to enact and so managers are encouraged to discuss reasonable adjustments with the new disabled team member before they formally start their new role.

Not all disabled staff require reasonable adjustments, but if they do, these should be agreed and in place by the start of their employment so that they can begin settling in immediately.

### What adjustments could I make in employment?

Every individual has a different experience around their own disability and the extent to which their day to day life is affected. Some disabled staff experience multiple conditions and require several reasonable adjustments.

In situations where a current employee has recently become disabled, they may be less likely to understand their long-term requirements and may take some time to come to terms with their impairment. The disabled person and their manager should review the required adjustments more regularly in this initial phase which could include changes to:

1. Flexible working hours
2. Equipment
3. Work practices
4. Working environment
5. Software

Disabled and neurodivergent staff may benefit from some of the following suggested adjustments.

## Flexible working hours

Often agreeing flexibility in working hours and location can make a huge difference for disabled staff. Furthermore, being open to enabling disabled and neurodivergent staff to manage their schedule flexibly, where operationally possible, promotes higher engagement and productivity.

Our [flexible working policy and guides](#) and [disability leave policy](#) provide more information on the approaches and support available to staff and managers to do this. It is important for the managers and disabled staff member to fully understand the impact that any changes to working patterns may have on pay.

Managing changes in work practices across a team can be challenging so we have provided some questions and answers below to help with this:

Q Should I explain the reason for this change to other members of the team?

A Not without the express permission of the disabled staff member. Managers should discuss and agree with the staff member what should be disclosed, and how it should be shared.

Q What if someone else in the team (who is not disabled) has asked for flexible working before and I have said no?

A Flexible working requests are dealt with on a first-come-first-served basis and depend on the individual circumstances. If the

member of staff whose request was turned down queries why the disabled member of staff has been granted flexible working, you should only provide this information if the disabled member of staff has given permission for their circumstances to be shared; if they haven't given permission, then you should explain to the other member of staff that there are good reasons why that request has been granted, that the reasons are confidential and you cannot therefore discuss them.

**Q How long can I make the change for?**

A change can be temporary or permanent and should be in place for as long as the individual needs it. However, any changes should be reviewed regularly, and any end date should be agreed with the member of staff and confirmed in writing.

**Q When should I review it?**

A This depends on the circumstances – it could be once a week, once a fortnight, once a month, or longer, depending on the adjustments in place.

**Q The change results in more work to deliver whilst we still have the same capacity in the team. How should I manage this?**

A This situation may suggest that the request/adjustment is not reasonable, and we would recommend you contact HR for guidance ([hr@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:hr@nottingham.ac.uk)).



### Ideas – Flexible working hours

- More flexible working hours i.e. to avoid rush hour travelling or where individuals feel more, or less well at certain points in the day. This could also comprise part-time working, reduced hours, or job share.
- Home working to enable increased flexibility of working and avoid excess travel
- Flexible or increased rest breaks throughout the day which is especially helpful for those with progressive conditions or who need to self-medicate throughout the day
- Changing shift patterns
- Allow reasonable time off for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment. Employees who have registered a disability with the University have a right to paid time off

## Provide equipment

Disabled staff may have used effective equipment in previous roles or at home. A manager should discuss this with them to identify what equipment they have used previously, the benefits and, where reasonable, source this for them.

All staff are invited to complete an online [display screen equipment \(DSE\) assessment](#) when they join the University or when their working environment changes. This assessment highlights staff who require additional support and these are then contacted by a trained [DSE assessor](#). Managers and staff can also contact DSE assessors to discuss adjustments to equipment to support disabled staff.

The University offers a facility on University Park Campus which contains a selection of specialist equipment available for purchase from preferred suppliers including ergonomic mice, adapted computers, chairs and desks.

[DSE assessors](#) can arrange access to this facility and provide support with sourcing suitable equipment and they can, in turn, contact experienced Health and Safety Advisors for additional guidance and support.

Any equipment must be purchased and funded by the faculty/school/department through our finance system and funding from 'Access to work' can be used to facilitate this. More information is available on this later in this guide.

Staff requiring large monitors can request/order these by raising a service request with the [IT services helpdesk](#). IT can

be contacted via email at [itservicedesk@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:itservicedesk@nottingham.ac.uk) or over the telephone on 0115 95 16677. Telephone support is available Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm (excluding UK public holidays and [University closure days](#)).



#### Ideas – Provide equipment

- Acquire or adjust working equipment. This could be physical equipment such as ergonomic desks, chairs, keyboards and mice
- Use assistive listening devices e.g. hearing loop
- Use larger monitors and/or multiple monitors
- Providing the right type of phone for someone who uses a hearing aid
- Providing noise reducing headphones (these reduce external noises; they don't eliminate sound!)

### Try new work practices

There are many examples of changes to work practices (or ways of working) and the adjustments required vary from employee to employee.

Often staff will be able to suggest work practice changes that have benefited them before, and a supportive conversation can help identify potential changes.



#### Ideas - Changes to the way the job is done

- Reallocate tasks amongst the team
- Allow extra time to read documents or to complete work
- Provide information in advance of meetings
- Avoid lone working
- Conduct meetings in quieter environments
- Relocate the worker to a more accessible workplace, a location closer to home
- Home working may be feasible on a temporary or permanent basis for some or all the time



### Ideas - Support from the line manager

- Give, or arrange for, training or mentoring, whether for the disabled worker or any other person/team
- Provide the services of a support worker, reader or interpreter
- Don't expect them to answer other people's phones
- Allow the consumption of food/drink whilst working or providing regular breaks. Food and drink should only be consumed in suitable locations i.e. not in Labs or workshops
- Assign a buddy/mentor to assist in navigating office culture for those with a neurodisability
- Use [plain English](#)
- Use your [Microsoft office 365 accessibility checker](#) when preparing documents. Open your document, click on 'Review' then click on 'Check accessibility' to see tips
- Consider using pictures to tell a story or explain a concept
- Consider printing documents needed on coloured paper or PDFs with coloured (not white) backgrounds. Ask the disabled person what works for them
- Give more one-to-one support to help prioritise the work of an employee suffering from anxiety

## Change the working environment

The physical environment in which we work has a huge impact on our mood, productivity and effectiveness. Disabled staff will benefit from knowing about [accessible facilities](#) and some staff may require changes to their physical workplace i.e. a desk on the ground floor, a ramp, a defined parking space.

Often neurodivergent staff benefit from having a defined desk rather than a hot desk or being in the corner in a quieter location.

Once managers and staff have discussed the needs of the disabled or neurodivergent staff member and identified that a physical change to the workplace may be required, the line manager can raise a work request via the [estates helpdesk](#). You can also call them on 0115 951 6666 between 8.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

You will be asked to complete an online [works request form](#) and will need your University IT login to do this. Please ensure you start your request with 'Reasonable Adjustments'. In addition to providing contact details and information about the request, you will be asked for a 'project code' to charge any costs to. The system will enable you to view progress on reviewing and delivering your request.

Requests can take several weeks to complete so if you require estates support for a new hire then it is worth requesting this before they join us to ensure the changes can be made as quickly as possible.



### Ideas - Changes to the work environment

- Increase accessibility by widening doors or providing ramps for a wheelchair user, audio-visual fire alarms for a deaf person, and improving lighting and airflow levels
- Talk to Estates Security Parking team to see if a close proximity disabled parking space can be provided
- Locate their desk on the ground floor, by a window, close to a lift, in a well-lit and/or quiet area Consider allocating a desk with a wall behind and/or to the side with little passing 'traffic' to help neurodivergent staff focus
- Make changes to lighting and ventilation
- Reposition printers and other working equipment at convenient locations and heights

## Provide software

Sometimes disabled and neurodivergent staff benefit from using specific software to do their job.

The University widely uses Microsoft Office 365 which offers a wide range of [accessible features and functionality](#) which might be useful to you. These include:

- Changes you can make to your display and setup
- Features you can enable within products such as PowerPoint or Microsoft Teams, such as:
  - Read Aloud
  - Real time subtitling
  - Immersive Reader
  - Office Lens

The [Microsoft accessibility website](#) provides an up-to-date list of these features. The University also shares information on [Microsoft Office 365 updates](#) available here.

The University offers specialist software as part of our [software library](#). Some software installations may require manager approval in writing i.e. by email.

Our [IT services helpdesk](#) is here to help. Contact them via email at [itservicedesk@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:itservicedesk@nottingham.ac.uk) or over the telephone on 0115 95 16677 between Monday and Friday, 8am to 6pm (excluding UK public holidays and [University closure days](#)).



## Ideas – Provide software

- Use screen reader, dictation and voice to text software
- Subtitle software for people with hearing loss
- Switch on videos for online calls to support lip readers
- Use our mind mapping software called Mindview, to help you visually organise your work tasks
- Provide information in [accessible formats](#)
- Blur backgrounds when making video calls
- Use Microsoft OneNote to organise reference material
- Use advanced grammar and spell checkers
- Increase font size (minimum 14)
- Use clear fonts (Arial and Verdana)
- Change background colour to reduce visual stress
- Use Read and Write Gold for dyslexic readers

### What is Access to Work?

Access to Work is a UK Government scheme for disabled people which offers individually tailored advice and support for the costs of any adjustments needed through a grant to pay for items such as adapted equipment, support worker services, mental health support, and help travelling between work and home. You can find out more at <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>.

To be eligible for Access to Work a disabled person must be in, about to start, or returning to a paid role. This can be part or full time, temporary, or permanent and applications to the scheme must be made by the employee themselves.

For new team members applying within six weeks of starting their role, the grant will cover up to 100% of the cost of the support agreed in the package. This is another reason why it is important to encourage your team member to start the application as soon as possible. Support workers, fares to work and communicator support at an interview will also be fully paid for by Access to Work, regardless of how long the employee has held the role.

For disabled staff who have been in their role for six weeks or more Access to Work pays a proportion of the cost of making reasonable adjustments.

Approved Cost	Access to Work pays....
Less than £1000	Nil
Between £1000 and £10,000	80% of the costs over £1000
Over £10,000	80% of the costs between £1000 and £10,000 and 100% of the costs over £10,000

*Financial support from Access to Work*

Access to Work will not pay for any diagnostic assessments. They will also not fund purchases retrospectively, i.e. you cannot pay for equipment or services that have not been already agreed with Access to Work and then try to claim the money back later.

All financial help is for a maximum of three years after which the Access to Work Business Centre will review the case. Funding may be extended if your disabled team member continues to be eligible for support under the rules that then apply.

## How to benefit from Access to Work

1. Staff member contacts [Access to Work](#)

2. Access to work advisor contacts staff member to discuss support needed and/or arrange for an assessment to be undertaken

3. Access to work may arrange for an assessment at the workplace and ask to meet with key people

4. Access to work will provide a report of the identified support and may recommend suppliers

5. Staff member investigates providers of equipment and services and provides a quote to Access to Work

6. Access to Work will probably contact the staff member to discuss how the university can contribute towards payment

7. Access to Work will send the university details of the financial support package agreed

8. Manager arranges for reasonable adjustments to be made

The following tips help you get the most from Access to Work:

- Only the disabled person can contact Access to Work
- Access to Work will ask the disabled person to complete a form and provide written evidence of a disability and share their thoughts for guidance on their requirements
- If Access to Work need to visit the University the disabled staff member will need to accommodate the availability of the Access to Work assessor and try to arrange for key University people to be available i.e. Estate Office, Occupational Health, IS, Health and Safety Department
- Access to Work will not pay for equipment which should be generally provided as a matter of course, for example an ergonomic chair or a large computer screen. The quotations provided by Access to Work may be more expensive than those obtained through the University
- Costs for equipment and services should be initially met by the School/Department's budget and then claimed back from Access to Work. Orders should be made following the University purchasing guidance.

### Case study 1

Martin has dyslexia and applies for a role as a research technician in the faculty of science.

The recruitment team contacts the recruiting manager to advise that Martin has requested adjustments to the selection process due to his disability.

The recruiting manager works with the recruitment team and Martin to agree the following reasonable adjustments:

- Tell Martin what to expect in advance of meeting them i.e. presentation, written exercise, interview
- Offer Martin more time to complete assessments (typically 25% more)
- Ensure any assessments are designed to be inclusive i.e. specifically designed to not disadvantage anyone
- Enable Martin to complete assessments using a laptop/computer
- Consider any practical assessments being used to ensure any adaptations required are accommodated i.e. screen reader for a laptop
- Consider providing interview questions in writing during the interview

Please contact [hr@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:hr@nottingham.ac.uk) for guidance and support on any part of the recruitment and selection process.

Martin is offered the role and his manager agrees the following adjustments during employment:

#### Flexible working hours

- Where feasible allow Martin to work from home occasionally
- Allow frequent breaks, at least every hour

#### Equipment

- Use of phone, laptop, tablet/iPad to make notes, photograph diagrams, etc. but avoid heavy use of these due to their impact on posture

#### Work practices

- Provide all hard copy resources on coloured paper (find out which is the best colour for Martin)
- Highlight key points in documents
- Allow plenty of time to read and complete the task
- Use different formats to convey information e.g. audio or videotape, drawings, diagrams and flowcharts
- Don't ask Martin to minute a meeting
- Alternate computer work with other tasks, where possible

- Communicate instructions slowly and clearly and minimise distractions, and check understanding
  - Support important communications by supplying the information in more than one format e.g. verbally and using hard copy resources
  - Back up multiple instructions in writing or with diagrams
  - Calendars, planners and alerts are standard on most computers and phones. Ask Martin if physical calendars and wall planners would be useful
  - Use mnemonic devices and acronyms
- 
- Give verbal as well as written instructions
  - Provide glossary of key terms to explain terms
  - Offer extra time for preparation, checking and completion of tasks, as appropriate and reasonable in the placement context
  - Be patient and avoid using ambiguous language, which could be interpreted in different ways
  - Give concise instructions in the same order as they are meant to be carried out
  - Be aware of information overload and break down long, complicated instructions into smaller, manageable steps

- Make background 'light beige' instead of white
- Use 'read over'
- Use left justified with ragged right edge
- Avoid narrow columns (as used in newspapers)
- Aim for lines of approximately 60 to 70 characters
- Space out paragraphs and break up long paragraphs
- Use a line spacing equivalent to 1.5
- Use bullet points and numbering rather than continuous prose

### Working environment

- Consider acoustic shielding around noisy equipment such as photocopiers.
- Reduce distractions for focused tasks (opportunity to sit away from doors, noisy machinery, etc)
- Allocate a private workspace if possible
- Provide a quiet working environment for Martin by allocating libraries, file rooms, private offices and other enclosed areas when others are not using them
- Ensure work areas are organised, neat and tidy
- Ensure the team returns important items to the same place each time

- Ensure work areas are well lit

### Software

- Change background colour of screen to suit Martin's preference
- Consider assistive technology i.e. screen reader, scanning pen, text to speech or mind mapping software
- Use apps/calendars as reminders

The British Dyslexia Association offer a comprehensive list of suggested reasonable adjustments that managers and staff can benefit from [here](#).

## Case study 2

Donna has been diagnosed with cancer and would like to discuss her proposed treatment with her manager.

After preparing for and meeting with Donna (see 'How to make reasonable adjustments'), her line manager agrees to the following reasonable adjustments:

### Working hours

- Discuss Donna's treatment plan to understand and the impact of this on work - different treatments have different impacts
- Flexible working hours around medical appointments. These should not be included in any 'absence management triggers' (see [Sickness Absence Policy](#))

### Work practices

- Be supportive of more frequent rest breaks to counter fatigue
- Where operationally possible, be supportive of home working to 'wrap around' appointments

A cancer diagnosis is automatically classed as a disability under the Equality Act and requires sensitive and long-term support from managers. Our toolkit component on [guidance](#) for making reasonable adjustments provides information and advice on this.

### Case study 3

Ruby is an administrator and is autistic. She is very sensitive to the intensity and placement of lights in the office and sensitive to sounds such as machinery. After six months in the school her manager has noticed that her performance has fallen, and she seems very frustrated and 'snappy'.

After several discussions with Ruby, her line manager agrees to the following reasonable adjustments:

#### Equipment

- Provide noise cancelling headphones

#### Work practices

- Have regular catchups to see how Ruby is doing
- Keep instructions short and focused
- Trial some working from home for an agreed period
- Contact HR to seek specialist support

#### Working environment

- Move Ruby's desk to a corner away from walkways
- Contact Estates to explore potential changes to lighting

The National Autistic Society offer a comprehensive list of suggested reasonable adjustments that managers and staff can benefit from [here](#).

## Case study 4

Belinda's husband has recently died. She is feeling very depressed and is struggling to cope. Her manager has approved her bereavement leave but she is still struggling to perform effectively now she is back at work.

After preparing for and meeting with Belinda (see 'How to make reasonable adjustments'), her line manager agrees to the following temporary reasonable adjustments:

### Working hours

- Reduce Belinda's working hours temporarily
- Be open to giving Belinda time off work to see her GP and do not count this time as a 'trigger' for sickness absence purposes

### Work practices

- Reprioritise and reallocate Belinda's tasks to other members of the team and avoid allocating high-pressure tasks to Belinda
- Schedule regular conversations with Belinda to check how they are doing and review their needs

### Working environment

- Belinda agrees to attend occupational health appointments and contact a Mental Health First Aider to understand the full support available to her

## Case study 5

Pujah has an inflammatory bowel condition and has been trying to manage this over several years with varying success.

Her line manager agrees to the following reasonable adjustments:

### Working hours

- Flexible working hours around appointments to get medical advice

### Work practices

- Be supportive of more frequent rest breaks to counter fatigue
- Where operationally possible, be supportive of home working to 'wrap around' appointments
- Schedule regular review meetings to discuss Pujah's adjustments and flex these
- Be flexible around providing time for more frequent rest breaks to visit the toilet

### Working environment

- Locate suitable/contained toilet facilities and a means to safely store medication (if required) i.e. a locker, fridge, drawer

## Case study 6

Jim's daughter has anxiety and depression and he is requesting support to be able to care for her.

After preparing for and meeting with Jim, his line manager agrees to the following adjustments:

### Working hours

- Agree some temporary adjustments to Jim's working hours with regular review meetings
- Flexible working hours so Jim can attend appointments with his daughter, making up the time in an agreed way

### Work practices

- Jim agrees to contact our employee assistance programme and a Mental Health First Aider to identify support available
- Jim considers scheduling an appointment with the University counselling service
- Jim joins the staff carers network at the University
- Where operationally possible, be supportive of home working to 'wrap around' appointments
- Jim may wish to review the University's [information booklet for carers](#)

Getting more support from our toolkit

This guide forms part of the [University of Nottingham's toolkit for supporting disabled staff](#).

Introduction	Legal context	Case studies	Guidance	Support
<p>What is a disability?</p> <p>Legal overview</p> <p>The social model of disability</p> <p>How to share a disability</p>	<p>Staff equality legal pod-briefing</p> <p>Mandatory</p>	<p>Types of disabilities and neurodivergence</p> <p>The definition of a reasonable adjustment</p> <p>Examples of adjustments and case studies</p>	<p>The process to make adjustments</p> <p>Practical hints and tips</p> <p>Frequently asked questions</p>	<p>The role of the manager</p> <p>Developing your knowledge and skills</p> <p>Support from the university</p> <p>Getting medical advice</p> <p>External support</p>

Click [here](#) to access the full toolkit.

Please contact [hr@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:hr@nottingham.ac.uk) for further guidance and support.

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