Workplace Adjustments: Functional Examples

Contents

Overview

This document provides examples of workplace adjustments and has been co-produced with:

- Occupational Therapists
- Peer advocates
- People with disabilities or long-term health conditions
- People who are neurodivergent
- Employers

Whilst the examples have been categorised, we know that they can be connected and you may need support in more than one category, e.g. pain can have significant impact on mental health. For this reason, you may find that an example in one category would help you in another. These examples are not an exhaustive list, so there may be an adjustment you need that isn't included.

To ensure consistent and inclusive application of flexible working adjustments and policies, employers should conduct regular review meetings. If an employee has a support worker, they should also be included in the conversations.

This resource is intended as practical guidance for both organisations and job seekers/employees. Adjustment provisions are dependent on individual circumstances and organisational factors such as size, available funding, and operational context. We hope this resource helps all parties understand the range of potential workplace adjustments that may be considered.

What are workplace adjustments?

Workplace adjustments are changes to the workplace or working practices that support and enable a disabled worker to do their job.

What adjustments are needed depends on an individual's needs and the job they are doing.

Examples include modifying equipment, adjusting working hours, providing extra support, or making physical changes to the environment.

What are reasonable adjustments?

A reasonable adjustment is a term used in the Equality Act (2010), which states that employers have a legal duty to proactively consider and implement reasonable adjustments, so that a disabled worker has the same access to everything that is involved in doing and keeping a job as a non-disabled person.

The Equality Act doesn't define "reasonable", but it is a question of what workplace adjustments are fair and practical in the given circumstances.

Reasonable adjustments can be requested at the time of application and include changes to the interview and recruitment processes.

Factors considered include the cost and practicality of the adjustment, the size and resources of the organisation, and the extent to which the adjustment would help the individual.

Many of the adjustments shared in this document are low cost and easy to implement. You can find case study examples of these being implemented in our **Workplace Adjustments Lived Experience Examples** document, from

employees and employers who have shared their experiences about reasonable adjustments.

More information about reasonable adjustments, and support and guidance about having these discussions with your employer can be found in our **Reasonable Adjustments Guidance for Employees** document.

An employee may be eligible for funding to support the adjustments they need from Access to Work. For more information about the Access to Work scheme and process, refer to our **Access to Work Guidance for Employees** document.

Examples of workplace adjustments

Built environment

Needs and challenges	Adjustment examples	Considerations
Step access	Permanent or temporary ramp. Provide ground-floor workspace where possible.	Check building regulations, cost, feasibility and height of steps. Consider temporary/portable ramps and signage, height of steps.
Stair access/lift availability	Provide lift access or the option to work on accessible floors. Relocate meetings if needed. Consider adaptation to lift access.	Assess which areas (toilets, break rooms) are only accessible via stairs. Feasibility of adaptations (e.g. building regulations and costs. Explore interim solutions.
Desk space (including display screens)/DSE.	Provide equipment such as suitable or adjustable desk height (sit-to-stand), ergonomic chairs, footrests, monitor arms. Adjustments to keyboard, mouse, and screen position. Brightness and contrast adjustments on screens and provision of regular screen breaks.	All staff who use Display Screen Equipment (DSE) for continuous periods of an hour or more should **complete a DSE assessment (Health and Safety Executive) with their employer.** Seating provisions may be helpful for people to use in a fitness/gym environment.
Toilet facilities	Always consider the location and inclusion of accessible toilets. Ensure accessible toilets include a range of grab rails,	Regular checks for maintenance and compliance with accessibility guidelines.

	height appropriate seating, sinks and mirrors, sufficient space, emergency alert equipment that is within reach, and clear signage.	
Entrance/ Room Access	Power-assisted doors, clear signage, and routes. Remove furniture or clutter which may prevent access.	Consider door widths, thresholds, and floor surfaces. Plan for visitor routes, not just staff. If power assisted doors not available, consider solutions such as staff being available to meet and support people arriving.
Meeting Rooms	Ensure there is enough space in the meeting room for mobility aids and wheelchairs. Ensure furniture such as desks and chairs meet the attendees' needs.	Check accessibility of rooms prior to arranging meetings. Consider other needs that will need to be met in a meeting room, e.g. communication and the sensory environment.
Parking and Arrival	Designated accessible parking bays or drop-off points close to entrance. Clear information on accessible routes from public transport. Provide travel notes for visiting attendees.	Ensure accessible parking is enforced. Consider alternative start locations for staff with travel limits.
Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)	Create PEEPs where required. Conduct fire and evacuation drills including disabled people;	Ensure there are processes in place so that it is known who has a PEEP in the event of a fire or evacuation.

	provide safe refuge where appropriate.	Link PEEPs to risk assessments and health and safety policies.

Notes: It is advisable to conduct an accessibility audit before making permanent structural changes.

Information on the Building Regulations (2010) Access to and use of buildings can be found here.

Sensory environment

Needs and challenges	Adjustment examples	Considerations
Auditory (sound)	Provide quiet workspaces or use of noise-cancelling headphones. Avoid placing desks near high-traffic or noisy areas. Explore acoustic treatments.	Quiet rooms can be a shared resource. Low-cost relocations often have a high impact.
Visual (sight)	Explore a variation of lighting e.g. adjustable lighting, low lighting areas and use of natural light. Minimise glare on windows/shiny surfaces. Avoid bright and bold colours and busy patterns in offices and on websites. Provide colour overlays, large-print materials or screen-readers.	Coordinate with estates/IT for lighting changes. Consider inclusive digital design for documents and intranets.
Olfactory (smell)	Minimize fragrances and avoid workstation being placed near food areas. Limit the use of strong cleaning and paint products during working hours.	Consider a fragrance policy. Communicate expectations to staff and contractors.

Communication

Needs and challenges	Adjustment examples	Considerations
Hearing impairment	Hearing-aid compatible phone systems, captions on meetings, text/email alerts, and British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters for events. Utilise video calling to allow lip reading. Provide voice-to-text software. Provide text or email alerts in lieu of audio announcements. Use meeting accessibility checklists.	Ensure good lighting and acoustics. Support staff with communication etiquette. Check software captioning accuracy. Consider consulting UK Deaf Sport.
Visual impairment	Provide information in alternative formats, e.g. larger print or braille. Provide speech-to-text software and screen readers. Use accessible templates and test internal documents and websites with screen readers. Share information that requires reading in advance, e.g. presentation slides. Use meeting accessibility checklists. Take steps to ensure an employee's assistance dog can do its job properly, e.g. allow access to water, toilet breaks, and educate	In the UK, it's generally unlawful to refuse access to a disabled person accompanied by a trained assistance dog, except in very limited circumstances. Consider consulting British Blind Sport.

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	staff on how to interact with the animal.	
Use of alternative and augmentative communication (AAC).	Use and/or provision of assistive devices. Provide staff training on devices or methods used to communicate. Use email, text, or other communication methods instead of phone calls. Use meeting accessibility checklists (captions, plain language, slides in advance).	AAC is any communication method used to supplement or replace speech when someone has difficulty communicating verbally.
Individual communication needs and preferences	Consider a range of communication methods that can be used, e.g. email, text, instant messaging, and phone calls. Agree on preferred methods of communication; allow written instructions.	Consider making it the 'norm' to find out all team members' communication preferences, as this will benefit everyone.

Cognitive and executive function

Needs and challenges	Adjustment examples	Considerations
Attention and Concentration	Allow 'walk and talk' meetings, movement breaks and time away from the desk. Permit fidget tools where suitable. Adapt the working environment to minimise distractions, e.g. use of quiet spaces. Build in extra time for processing instructions. Schedule high focus tasks at optimal times.	Provide guidance on suitable fidget tools to minimise disruption whilst encouraging choice.
Planning and organisation	Communicate changes to routine proactively. Break tasks into smaller steps and have regular check-ins to clarify priorities and deadlines. Explore time-keeping strategies other than diary use, e.g. apps on alarms Find out the best way to communicate information. Explore time management software, e.g. Trello.	Explore ways all team members can utilise tools to support planning and organisation.
Memory	Limit concurrent tasks, use reminders, and provide written instructions and meeting summaries. Explore the use of to-do list software. Provide regular check-ins and adapt working environments to minimise distractions.	Consider a 'handover' note system for when staff are due to be absent.

Physiological

Needs and challenges	Adjustment examples	Considerations
Pain	Flexible working hours and locations dependent on pain levels. Provide ergonomic equipment and regular breaks. Provide regular check ins which focus on health and wellbeing and reviewing adjustments needed. Flexible arrangements for medical appointments.	Ensure a flexible working policy is in place, considering its inclusivity.
Fatigue	Flexible working hours and locations dependent on fatigue levels. Plan for reduced hours or task reallocation during low-energy periods. Provide and encourage regular breaks and pacing activities. Provide regular check ins which focus on health and wellbeing and reviewing adjustments needed. Flexible arrangements for medical appointments.	Monitor workload; schedule important meetings when energy levels are highest; review after changes. Part-time employment may be more manageable. 'Screen time' may need to be carefully managed.
Long-term health condition(s) or impairments	Flexible working hours and location, regular breaks. Regular health check ins, option to work nearer home or relocate office. Flexible arrangements for medical appointments.	Line managers to complete awareness training. Consider appointment frequency when planning; support phased returns and workplace passports.

		Consider laptop provision for flexible working around appointments.
Allergies	Allergy-safe work areas, flexible location, clear management plans for known allergens.	Introduce a fragrance/product policy and communicate to staff.

Psychological

Needs and challenges	Adjustment examples	Considerations
Stress and burn-out	Provide regular check ins to review workloads, with a focus on health and wellbeing. Provide flexible working hours, locations, and arrangements for appointments. Provide access to an external mentor. Utilise Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) for support.	Encourage an open, honest and supportive culture. Create trusting environments where employees can discuss their wellbeing and personal circumstances. Implementation of a Mental Health First Aider can benefit all staff and support awareness of stress and burn out.
Mental health conditions	Identify workplace triggers and strategies to support these. Provide regular check ins with a focus on health and wellbeing. Provide flexible working hours, locations, and arrangements for appointments. Provide access to an external mentor or workplace 'buddy'. Offer wellness spaces and activities.	Encourage an open, honest and supportive culture. Create trusting environments where employees can discuss their wellbeing and personal circumstances. Consider a referral to an Individual Placement and Support (IPS) service. You can **search for your local IPS service.**

Neurodivergence

Needs and challenges	Adjustment examples	Considerations
Information processing – individuals may process information differently or more slowly, especially with large amounts or abstract concepts.	Provide written as well as verbal instructions. Use example-based learning and practical demonstrations. Break complex tasks into smaller, manageable steps. Allow extra time to absorb and respond to information.	Avoid information overload. Present information clearly and consistently. Recognise that varied learning styles benefit everyone.
Communication – some may find aspects of verbal or social communication difficult, including interpreting tone, body language or maintaining eye contact, which can be uncomfortable or distracting.	Use plain, direct language and avoid idioms or implied meanings. Accept that limited eye contact does not indicate disinterest. Offer alternative communication methods such as email. Allow processing time before expecting responses. Provide slower or phased introductions to the wider team to reduce social pressure and sensory overloading.	Focus on clarity and mutual understanding rather than social norms. Provide agendas or written summaries for meetings.
Environment – sensory sensitivities to light, sound, movement or temperature can cause discomfort and affect focus or wellbeing.	Provide quiet spaces or noise-cancelling headphones. Allow flexibility in workspace setup such as lighting, seating or desk location. Permit hybrid or remote working where appropriate.	Involve the individual in identifying specific triggers and solutions. Small sensory changes can have a significant impact.

New information and sudden changes – unclear expectations or unexpected changes can increase anxiety and reduce performance.	Give advance notice of changes whenever possible. Explain clearly what is changing, why, and what the next steps are. Use written timelines or visual aids to show updates.	Predictability builds confidence. When change is unavoidable, offer reassurance and extra time to adapt.
Tools and aids – different forms of neurodivergence such as dyslexia, ADHD and autism can benefit from assistive tools that support organisation, communication and information processing.	Use text-to-speech or speech-to-text software. Encourage use of grammar and spell-check tools. Provide coloured overlays or tinted screens. Use digital planners, reminders and visual scheduling tools.	Access to technology should be individualised. Provide training and support to ensure effective use.

Travel and working from home

Needs and challenges	Adjustment examples	Considerations
Travel	Plan travel routes in advance. Provide clear guidance on accessible routes. Provide travel buddies or support whilst travelling e.g. a team member to remain in contact. Offer alternative workplace locations depending on day-to-day needs. Agree expected need to travel, particularly if long distances e.g. one travel event per month.	Signpost to Access to Work and Transport Support. Consider travel time when scheduling and keep up to date with travel disruptions. Consider travel safety and commute reduction. Consider the impact of travel on the individual's health and wellbeing. Is the safest mode of transport being used by the employee?
Homeworking and digital access	Provide guidance on setting up home office, including loaned equipment and remote-accessible systems. Provide IT support for assistive technology.	Ensure remote platforms are accessible (captions, keyboard navigation). Consider accessibility of internal systems, websites, and documents. Face to face for technology training may be required initially.
Travel, parking and drop-off	Provide designated disabled parking, permit systems, or close drop-off areas.	Consider local transport links and parking provision when recruiting or assigning sites.

Further resources and support

Further information and support about reasonable adjustments and employers' legal responsibilities can also be found here:

Advise on reasonable adjustments at work - ACAS

Reasonable adjustments for workers with disabilities or health conditions guidance - UK Government

Reasonable adjustments guidance - NHS England

Asking for reasonable adjustments if you're disabled - Citizens Advice