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**Reasonable Adjustments Guide**





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# 1 Introduction

The University of Leicester is committed to being an inclusive and supportive employer where disabled people can be open about their disabilities and are valued as an individual for their skills and contribution to the organisation.

Under the Equality Act 2010, the University, and therefore its managers and staff, has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled people are not disadvantaged in service provision or employment, including removing barriers that might get in the way of a disabled person doing their job.

This document provides guidance on making reasonable adjustments in employment, for use by both managers and staff. It has been developed in collaboration with the Staff Disability Forum and Disability Action Group.

This Guide applies to making reasonable adjustments for any member of staff on a University employment contract, including apprentices, PGR students (with UoL employment contracts), and those employed on fixed-term, temporary and honorary contracts.

# 2 Disability

## 2.1 What is disability?

The social model of disability holds that people are not disabled by their impairment but by attitudes, barriers and structures in society that exclude them.

As such, inclusive design and proactive consideration of disability implications in service provision and working practices are essential to prevent barriers, and to enable disabled people to contribute positively and fully.

Disability is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and disabled people are protected from discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

## 2.2 What constitutes a disability under the Equality Act?

Whether a person is disabled for the purposes of the Act is generally determined by the **effect** that the impairment has on that person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, rather than a clinical diagnosis. It is important to remember that there are both visible and non-visible disabilities, and that some disabilities may fluctuate.

A person who is no longer disabled, but who was disabled in the past, or is in remission, is still protected under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to their past disability, even when the effects of the disability have subsided.

In relation to employment protection extends to any disabled person who:

* Works for the University, or
* Applies for a job with the University, or
* Tells the University that they are thinking of applying for a job

For further information about what constitutes a disability under the Equality Act 2010, and for examples of impairment **see Appendix A.**

# 3 Reasonable Adjustments

Disability inclusion should be built into working practices and processes, however, specific individual reasonable adjustments may still be required.

## 3.1 What is a reasonable adjustment?

A reasonable adjustment is a change or adaptation which has the effect of removing or minimising barriers to enable a disabled person to carry out their job. They must be effective in removing any disadvantage and can include:

* adjustments to working practices – the way things are done
* adjustments to the physical environment
* provision of auxiliary aids and services

or a combination of these.

The aim is that all employees should be treated in an equitable way, according to their different needs, and **this may mean that in some circumstances a disabled employee may be treated more favourably to remove disadvantage**.

Reasonable adjustments have to be made when there is awareness – or where it is reasonable to be aware - that a member of staff is disabled.

The University and its managers are legally required to make reasonable adjustments to make sure disabled employees are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in their job.

## 3.2 Examples of reasonable adjustments

Adjustments can take many forms and will depend upon the person’s condition and its impact, the requirements of their role and where it is carried out. The following provides some illustrative examples of more common adjustments:

* in recruitment providing details of tests in advance or more time to complete
* pre-start orientation visit for new members of staff
* flexing of start and finish times
* moving desks/team location
* flexibility to work remotely/from home with adjustments required for homeworking.
* consideration of sensory needs, for example access to quiet space
* opportunity for breaks
* frequent breaks from repetitive tasks e.g. changing tasks regularly
* reallocation of specific tasks within the team
* taking account of access needs when scheduling lecturing, meetings etc.
* extra time to complete specific tasks (and consideration of this in workload models for academic staff)
* providing information in advance
* installation of specific software e.g. screen reader
* provision of physical equipment and aids e.g. adaptive computer mouse
* provision of information in different ways e.g. large print, coloured paper
* additional training and support e.g. to use accessibility features of existing software, or to develop additional skills
* provision of an auxiliary service, e.g. a support worker, sign language interpreter, lip speaker
* time off to attend medical related appointments and treatments
* consideration of disability related absence when reviewing absence triggers.

Adjustments may be informed by an initial assessment by Health and Safety Services, Occupational Health, Access to Work recommendations and Staff Disability Adviser.

Many adjustments are inexpensive or cost nothing, with the average cost being £75[[1]](#footnote-1).

## 3.3 Deciding what is ‘reasonable’

The line manager is accountable for deciding what reasonable adjustments will be made. When deciding whether an adjustment is reasonable, consider:

* how effective the change will be in removing the disadvantage the disabled person would otherwise experience
* its practicality, in particular for the disabled person
* the health and safety of the disabled person or others
* any substantial negative impact on colleagues or the student experience.

Whilst the majority of adjustments are likely to be reasonable some may not be. Managers are required to seek advice from their HR Team and the Staff Disability Adviser if they feel an adjustment is not reasonable. The Staff Disability Adviser can be contacted for advice on reasonable adjustments, by either employee or line manager. Email: [Staffdisability@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:Staffdisability@leicester.ac.uk)

Where an adjustment is considered by the manager to be ‘not reasonable’, the, manager will need to justify why the adjustment is not reasonable to HR and the member of staff concerned.

Where it is agreed that a specific adjustment cannot be accommodated alternative adjustments to address the disadvantage should be explored and several adjustments may be needed to overcome a disadvantage.

# 4 Making Reasonable Adjustments in practice

## 4.1 Disability Disclosure

Whilst disclosure of a disability is a choice, where adjustments are needed, disabled employees are encouraged to disclose their disability to their manager, so that appropriate adjustments can be put in place. This may not always be easy, for example, due to a fear of not being supported or being perceived as a ‘problem’.

Managers should enable people to feel more comfortable to disclose their disability by fostering a supportive and disability inclusive environment, where adjustments are viewed positively as a way of enabling people to fulfil their role. They can create opportunity for disclosure by asking open questions as part of regular meetings, appraisals and return to work sickness absence meetings. For example, ‘Is there anything you need putting in place to support you in your job role?’

If a person discloses that they have a disability to their manager, the manager should have a confidential conversation with them to establish whether they need any support or adjustments to fulfil their role. Consider less frequent situations when adjustments might be required, for example fire drills, large campus events etc.

It may be that the person experiences no barriers and they simply want their manager to be aware. It may be that they are coming to terms with an identification of disability, or have a developing disability, and may not yet know what support they need. They may want to try some adjustments on a temporary basis. They can speak to the Staff Disability Adviser for advice and in some cases, a referral to Occupational Health for professional guidance may be appropriate.

**Confidentiality**: If a member of staff declares a disability to their manager, even in confidence, then in the eyes of the law the University is deemed to know. If the employee wishes to keep conversations confidential then the manager should respect this but advise the member of staff that this may limit the support they can provide the individual. **It is important that the member of staff gives permission ahead of any information being shared with other colleagues to support the implementation of reasonable adjustments. Any information shared should focus on the adjustment and not disclose the nature of a disability.**

There may be circumstances where a manager will have an obligation to advise HR, even though it may be against the wishes of the employee, for example, where Health and Safety of the employee could be compromised. Disability and associated adjustments may be shared with HR, where appropriate, and should be treated confidentially by the manager, HR, and where relevant Occupational Health and the Staff Disability Adviser, as disability status is sensitive special category data under GDPR.

**Note:** If an individual discloses a disability as part of the recruitment process this information is not automatically passed onto the manager. If the candidate has asked to be considered under the Disability Confident Interview Scheme on their application on Eploy, the recruiting manager will be aware of this but not what the disability is. Similarly, if an individual discloses a disability in the personal information section in the Employee Self Service system this information is not passed to their line manager (or anyone else). Personal information is confidential and only used for University monitoring and statutory reporting purposes. The individual would still need to disclose their disability to their line manager separately, if they choose to do so.

## 4.2 Manager responsibilities

Managers have a crucial role in ensuring their disabled team members are enabled to perform their role and make a full contribution to the University.

All staff who are PDD reviewers are required to undertake mandatory [Disability Confidence for Managers Training](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/equality-diversity/SitePages/Disability-Confidence-Training-for-Managers.aspx) to enhance their understanding of how to support disabled colleagues and make reasonable adjustments.

Managers have a responsibility to:

* recognise that a staff member may have a disability and require adjustments
* discuss need for adjustments with a disabled staff member
* respond to and consider requests from a disabled staff member for a reasonable adjustment, and decide whether the adjustment is ‘reasonable’
* ensure agreed adjustments are in place in a timely manner
* ensure expert guidance is arranged, where relevant e.g. an assessment with Health and Safety Services, referral to Occupational Health or signposting to the Staff Disability Adviser and/or Access to Work
* discuss requirements for reasonable adjustments with new members of staff and ensure they are in place before, or as soon as possible after, they start work
* ensure the work environment is inclusive and free from harassment
* be informed and confident in dealing with disability matters, engaging in training ([Disability Confidence for Managers Training](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/equality-diversity/SitePages/Disability-Confidence-Training-for-Managers.aspx)) and resources ([Disability Toolkit](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/:u:/r/sites/staff/equality-diversity/SitePages/Disability-Toolkit.aspx?csf=1&web=1&e=v6fI7v))
* ensure disabled staff have the same equality of opportunity for development, support and guidance as non-disabled colleagues.

Adjustments should be documented and regularly reviewed through one to one meetings and the [PDD process](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/performance-appraisal/SitePages/Home.aspx), to ensure they are effective, and to identify any changes or further adjustments that may be needed. Records of adjustments should be transferred to any future manager to ensure continuity of support.

For more tips for managers on supporting disabled employees see **Appendix B.**

## 4.3 Identifying and putting reasonable adjustments in place

## **New Staff**

The University’s application process asks all candidates whether they require any reasonable adjustments. Where this is the case, the recruiting manager would need to ensure appropriate adjustments are put in place for the interview and associated tests, and are advised to contact the Recruitment Team for support, if required. Ideally all interviews, where not online, should take place in an accessible venue with accessible parking provision nearby, as a matter of course. Examples of adjustments could include:

* a sign language interpreter at interview
* a hearing loop
* extended time to prepare a presentation
* a support worker accompanying the candidate
* additional time to complete a test (e.g. 25% additional time).

**As a** [**‘Disability Confident Scheme Employer’**](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/equality-diversity/SitePages/Disability-Confident.aspx)**, the University commits to interview all candidates who declare a disability where they meet the essential criteria of the job**. Candidates can ask to be considered under the Disability Confident Interview Scheme in their application.

Once appointed, the [induction checklist](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/staff/information-for-managers/staff-recruitment/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B4502C0AB-3395-49DC-A8D3-FE1E5AFA1798%7D&file=Induction%20Checklist%202020.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1) requires the manager to explore with the new starter any need for reasonable adjustments to support them in undertaking their role. If reasonable adjustments are required, a conversation between the new starter, their line manager and/or a [HR Adviser](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/corporate-services/hr/SitePages/Staff%20listing%20and%20contact.aspx), should take place, prior to them starting, to discuss and identify the adjustments. Where there is any uncertainty about the nature or extent of adjustments required, an initial assessment with Health and Safety Services and/or a referral to Occupational Health should be made at the earliest opportunity.

### Existing Staff

For staff with existing, developing or new conditions, including flare-ups, the manager should discuss the need for adjustments with the individual. The conversation should focus on the **impact** the disability may have on them in their role, and what might be needed to remove or minimise the impact, rather than on the disability itself. In many cases, the disabled member of staff will have an idea of what adjustments would be helpful. Existing colleagues are encouraged to explore assessment of needs through Health and Safety Services and/or Occupational Health before contacting Access to Work as the majority of reasonable adjustments can be put in place for under the £1000 Access to Work threshold.

Reasonable adjustments may be implemented by:

1. **Local adjustments –** consider first, reasonable adjustments that can be provided locally, supported by the manager and department, for example, workload allocation, work patterns, work location e.g. working from home, travelling required for the role and accessibility to those locations, equipment, training, time off for appointments/treatment etc.

All staff are required to undertake a DSE assessment. This can highlight equipment needs. The line manager should check the status of and any required actions resulting from the latest DSE assessment which can be done via the [DSE Line Manager App](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/health-safety/display-screen-equipment/SitePages/DSE-Line-Manager-Application.aspx).

The manager should contact the following for specific equipment, furniture and software needs:

* Staff Disability Adviser is able to meet with employees and managers to discuss possible adjustments (email: [staffdisability@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:staffdisability@leicester.ac.uk))
* Requests for office furniture, such as chairs, desks should be raised through Estates and Campus Services (email: [ecs-service@le.ac.uk](mailto:ecs-service@le.ac.uk) )
* For IT equipment requests, please contact IT Services (email: [ithelp@le.ac.uk](mailto:ithelp@le.ac.uk) )
* Health and Safety Services have a suite of ergonomic equipment that is available for loan to trial. This can be arranged by contacting Health and Safety Services (email [safetyservices@le.ac.uk](mailto:safetyservices@le.ac.uk) )

1. **Building adaptations (Estates) -** for adaptations to offices or buildings contact the Building Surveyor in Estates (email: [ecs-service@le.ac.uk](mailto:ecs-service@le.ac.uk)).
2. **Assessment by Health and Safety Services** – it is recommended thatthe manager arrange an initial assessment by Health and Safety Services (email [safetyservices@le.ac.uk](mailto:safetyservices@le.ac.uk)). Equipment needs are identified and sourced and specific needs escalated where necessary.
3. **Occupational Health** – in some cases a referral to Occupational Health may be appropriate. Occupational Health provide advice and support to management on suitable changes to help a person who is disabled or has an ongoing health problem, or is returning to work after absence, to stay in or return to, work. Some examples of when this may be appropriate include:

* If suitable adjustments are difficult to identify or hard to provide;
* A person has recently become disabled or has a fluctuating/ progressive condition and is not sure what impact this may have or what would help them do the job;
* A need to establish whether an underlying medical condition is the cause of workplace problems;
* A medical opinion is required to ensure a safe and healthy working environment.

If a member of staff believes a referral to Occupational Health would be of benefit, they must speak with their manager who would make the referral. Early intervention can prevent a period of absence occurring. Should a member of staff have any concerns, then they should contact their [HR Advisory Team](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/corporate-services/hr/Shared%20Documents/HR%20staff%20list.pdf?csf=1&e=7bBN5T&cid=ef825575-252a-4e4c-91ef-1f2d093cf57d). Visit the [Occupational Health website](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/wellbeing/occupational-health/SitePages/Home.aspx) for more information.

1. **Access to work** – ***New employees*** - Access to Work pays up to 100% of the approved costs for adaptations and equipment for employees who have been in the job for less than six weeks. The new employee needs to contact [Access to Work](https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work) directly to make an application either online or via telephone within the first 6 weeks of employment. New employees can apply up to 12 weeks in advance of starting a new role.

***Existing employees*** - where the employee has been employed for 6 weeks or more, they can still apply to Access to Work for a workplace assessment and support. This also applies to those working from home, or working at a mixture of at home and on campus. For some recommendations, Access to Work would ask the University to agree to a cost share, this usually consists of the first £1,000 and 20% thereafter, which is funded centrally. In both cases,if the application is successful, Access to Work will arrange for a workplace assessment, after which the employee will receive a full report and any recommendations. For more detailed information see the [EDI Webpages](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/equality-diversity/access-to-work/SitePages/Home.aspx?web=1) where you can also find the [HR Access to Work Guidance](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/equality-diversity/access-to-work/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2Fstaff%2Fequality%2Ddiversity%2Faccess%2Dto%2Dwork%2FShared%20Documents%2FHR%20Access%20to%20Work%20Guidance%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2Fstaff%2Fequality%2Ddiversity%2Faccess%2Dto%2Dwork%2FShared%20Documents).

1. **Access to Work Mental Health Support (Maximus)** Maximus ‘Access to Work Mental Health Service’ provides independent support and advice for people who are employed and who experience mental ill health or stress at work. The University are an embedded model employer and have a named vocational rehabilitation consultant within Maximus who works closely with the Occupational Health Team. You can self-refer or can be referred via Occupational Health. Further information can be found on the [Maximus website.](https://www.maximusuk.co.uk/our-services/employability)

Managers are responsible for ensuring agreed adjustments are put in place as promptly as possible. Delays can be distressing for the employee and potentially have an adverse impact on the activities of the University. Where an individual is experiencing delays they can contact the Staff Disability Advisor for advice. The manager is responsible for liaising with the employee and keeping them updated. Where an adjustment cannot be implemented immediately (e.g. adjustments to a building), alternative adjustments should be considered in the meantime.

If an individual no longer needs equipment, furniture or software provided as a reasonable adjustment they should return these items to the University. Contact the [Staff Disability Adviser](mailto:staffdisability@leicester.ac.uk) for further details.

## 4.4 Alternative Employment

Whilst every effort should be made to enable a disabled member of staff to continue in their position, it may be that adequate adjustment is not possible. Redeployment will be considered as one route for making reasonable adjustments for disabled staff, as defined under the Equality Act, and can be explored and considered as part of the management of such a situation.

For more information on the redeployment process, please see the [redeployment and retraining policy](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/staff/information-for-managers/staff-recruitment/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B50E25A62-CA62-45E9-BD71-F1A1626E6341%7D&file=Redeployment%20Policy%20and%20Procedure_v15%20updated%20March%202021.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true) including opportunities where reasonable adjustments are, and are not, required.

Once a suitable vacancy has been determined, employees should meet with the appropriate manager and HR to investigate the need for further reasonable adjustments in the workplace, as per the process for new employees highlighted above. As with any new employment, appropriate training should be provided.

## 4.5 Leaving the University

Where an individual leaves the University and they have been provided with equipment, furniture or software as a reasonable adjustment, these items must be returned to the University before leaving. **This applies in all cases, including where the adjustments were part of an Access to Work claim.**

It may be possible for the individual to retain items by agreement, for example, where the item is specialised to the needs of that individual. Requests to retain equipment will be considered on a case by case basis - individuals should contact the [Staff Disability Adviser](mailto:staffdisability@leicester.ac.uk) for more information.

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# 5 Appendices

## Appendix A: Definition of Disability

#### What is impairment?

The definition of disability in the Equality Act refers to ‘impairment’. Impairments can be physical or mental, visible or non-visible. There is no list of conditions that qualify as impairments for the purposes of the Equality Act, as it depends on the nature of the condition and its level of impact, but examples may include:

* Chronic pain;
* Mobility related impairments caused by accident or illness;
* Sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing;
* Impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects such as rheumatoid arthritis, myalgic encephalitis (ME), chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), fibromyalgia, depression and epilepsy;
* Progressive, such as motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy, forms of dementia and lupus;
* Diabetes;
* Organ specific, including inflammatory bowel conditions such as colitis and respiratory conditions, such as asthma and cardiovascular diseases, including thrombosis, stroke and heart disease;
* Developmental/neurodivergence, such as autistic spectrum conditions (ASC), ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia;
* Learning disabilities;
* Mental health conditions and mental illnesses such as depression, schizophrenia, anxiety, eating disorders, bipolar affective disorders, obsessive compulsive disorders, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as well as personality disorders and some self-harming behaviour;
* Injury to the body or brain.

In relation to the Equality Act 2010, a disability is a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on someone’s ability to perform normal daily activities, where;

• ‘Substantial’ is more than minor or trivial - e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed.

• ‘Long-term’ means 12 months or more - e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection.

There are special rules about recurring, fluctuating or progressive conditions, such as arthritis, severe or certain visual impairments or mental health conditions, which protects disabled people from discrimination even if they have since recovered. Some conditions and disabilities meet the definition from the point of diagnosis. These are cancer, HIV and Multiple Sclerosis. People registered as blind or partially sighted are automatically regarded as disabled under the Act.

A person who is no longer disabled, but who has had a disability in the past, or the condition is in remission, will still be protected under the Equality Act, even when the effects of the disability have subsided. Also protected would be someone who continues to experience debilitating effects as a result of treatment for a past disability. For example, four years ago, a woman experienced a mental illness that had a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, so it met the Act’s definition of disability. She has experienced no recurrence of the condition, but if she is discriminated against because of her past mental illness she is still entitled to the protection afforded by the Act, as a person with a past disability.

A comprehensive guide to disability and what is considered as a disability under the Equality Act 2010, can be found on the [Gov.UK Website](https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010).

#### Disability Protection

Disabled people are protected from discrimination, harassment and victimisation under the Equality Act 2010 and protection in employment covers:

* Application forms
* Interview arrangements
* Aptitude or proficiency tests
* Job offers
* Terms of employment, including pay
* Promotion, transfer and training opportunities
* Dismissal or redundancy
* Discipline and grievance

## Appendix B: Supporting Disabled Employees – tips for managers

Discussing and managing adjustments:

* Avoid making assumptions about what a person can and can’t do, and the support they might need. Talk to them to get a clear understanding of what they can do and the impact of their disability in their role.
* Talk at an early stage. The earlier you notice that an employee is experiencing difficulties, the quicker you can act to prevent the situation becoming worse.
* Identify early signs of distress. Look out for changes in behaviour, poor performance, tiredness and increased sickness absence. Regular work planning and one to one meetings provide non-stigmatising opportunities to find out about any problems an employee may be having.
* Try to engage with someone even if they’re reluctant to talk. Consider why they might be reluctant to talk, e.g. negative past experience. Is it safe for them to be open with you? Will any disclosures be treated sympathetically and positively? Colleagues who have lived in other countries may have a very different experience of how disability is considered.
* Be clear about confidentiality and who will be told what. Explain the limits of your confidentiality (personal information is confidential but issues that may have a health and safety risk will need to be discussed further).
* Agree with the person whether they wish colleagues to be informed, and if so what information can be shared and with who.
* Check their understanding of safety requirements for evacuation in an emergency when working on campus and agree to arrange to contact Health and Safety Services (email: [safetyservices@le.ac.uk](mailto:safetyservices@le.ac.uk) for a [Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/health-safety/Shared%20Documents/Policies/UHSP-16d%20PEEP.pdf?csf=1&e=DplxX1&cid=bd328ec6-94b0-4a58-8fd2-3e72b77ec6c2)).
* Ensure they are aware of support available to them and make them aware of the [Disability Staff Forum](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/equality-diversity/edi-and-you/SitePages/Disability%20Staff%20Equality%20Forum.aspx?csf=1&e=909swl&cid=6763320d-920a-474f-8846-5405aa2202e9how) where they have the opportunity to talk to someone who isn’t their manager, and a Trade Union Representative. The [Staff Disability Adviser](mailto:staffdisability@leicester.ac.uk) can also be contacted for advice by employees, or line mangers or to attend a meeting with both.
* Be aware of the impact an employee’s disability could have on the team, whether as a result of reasonable adjustments that have been made or because of a person’s particular symptoms or behaviour while unwell. Any impact should be managed sensitively and not interfere with the individual’s reasonable adjustments.
* It is your responsibility to ensure that staff members are not being bullied or harassed on account of a disability. Deal with unacceptable behaviour promptly and effectively. Further guidance available from the [Dignity and Respect website](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/equality-diversity/SitePages/Dignity%20and%20Respect%20at%20Leicester.aspx).
* Keep in touch during disability related absence. Employees have a responsibility to keep in contact, and should be informed of this, but it is important that communication is supportive and does not create additional pressure or exacerbate any mental health conditions. Work with the employee to agree on an appropriate and helpful framework for communication. If an employee calls to notify of sickness absence take the call personally. Agree how follow up contact will be made. At an early stage, being in contact may be more important than what is actually said.
* It may be necessary to adjust work in the early days after an extended spell of absence to promote full recovery and to ease the individual back into their role.
* Occupational Health is there to provide support and advice to both staff and management, but they do not replace regular supportive management or the employees GP. It is the manager’s decision whether or not the recommendations made can be reasonably accommodated and they need to be able to justify to the individual and HR where recommended adjustments can’t be made.
* Be proactive in discussing disability with staff before initiating a referral to Occupational Health. It is important to make staff aware of why they are being referred to prevent potential anxiety, particularly where the disability is a mental health condition.
* Find out more about disability or a specific condition so that you feel more confident having conversations – [Disability Toolkit](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/:u:/r/sites/staff/equality-diversity/SitePages/Disability-Toolkit.aspx?csf=1&web=1&e=v6fI7v)
* Five questions to be considered when deciding what makes it ‘Reasonable’:

1) Will it solve the Problem / issue?

2) How practical is it?

3) What is the potential disruption?

4) Are there Health and Safety risks?

5) What are the costs?

**Appendix C: Case Studies**

### Case Study 1

Sam has recently been assessed as requiring reasonable adjustments relating to neurodivergence (ADHD and Autism). As a result of the condition Sam can get anxious about social situations and finds changes to everyday routines and multi-tasking difficult to manage.

This has impacted their self-confidence which they have found traumatic, causing them to need to take time off work. In addition, Sam feels that many of their colleagues do not fully understand neurodivergence and are quick to be critical of their work.

Sam was referred to Occupational Health and was encouraged to make an Access to Work application. As a result, the way that work is allocated to Sam has been altered to ensure they are able to work on discrete pieces of work, with clear objectives and timeframes, more structured planning, and increased opportunity for regular catch ups with their manager. Additional software has also been provided to assist Sam in planning and undertaking their work. Specific neurodiversity awareness training was organised and delivered to their manager and colleagues by an external organisation as part of their Access to Work recommendations. The training was designed to raise awareness of neurodiversity and increase understanding to create a more supportive working environment.

#### Using the 5 questions:

**1) Will it solve the Problem / issue?**

Yes, this provides Sam with clear objectives, and reduces the breadth of new things they would need to take on.

**2) How practical is it?**

Clarity of what is expected has helped Sam’s line manager too, as they have a clear indication of when specific work will be completed by.

**3) What is the potential disruption?**

None, Sam can work with minimal supervision where clear instructions and objectives are provided.

**4) Are there Health and Safety risks?**

None

**5) What are the costs?**

Sam has been able to use one of the two mind mapping applications that any staff can access via the software centre – [Mind Manager](https://www.mindmanager.com/en/?link=wm) and [Inspiration](https://www.inspiration-at.com/assessor-toolkit/).

If Sam has applied to [Access to Work](https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply), then training to use the software and the Neurodiversity training is usually funded. See also Access to Work Guide on the [Disability Toolkit.](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/:u:/r/sites/staff/equality-diversity/SitePages/Disability-Toolkit.aspx?csf=1&web=1&e=v6fI7v)

### Case Study 2

Following a recent divorce, Nadya was diagnosed with anxiety and depression and had to take three months off work. Before returning to work Nadya was referred to Occupational Health to discuss reasonable adjustments to their work patterns. Nadya’s GP and OH recommended a phased return over four weeks in the first instance with regular reviews over this period with the GP to ensure compliance with medication and improvement in Nadya’s mental health. Nadya also has informal fortnightly meetings with their manager to assess whether their workload is manageable and discuss whether any additional support, such as flexible working, is needed. Nadya has requested that they be allowed to start work later in the mornings as they finds commuting in heavy traffic stressful. Nadya’s teaching timetable has been adjusted to allow for this reasonable adjustment. Occupational Health encouraged Nadya to complete a Wellness Action Plan that could be shared with their manager in order to have an agreed strategy if symptoms occurred at work. Nadya was also referred to Remploy for 9 months of additional support from the vocational rehabilitation consultation who was able to assist them in completing the Wellness Action Plan and provide additional coaching to help improve their psychological wellbeing.

#### Using the 5 questions:

**1) Will it solve the Problem / issue?**

Potentially yes. The regular reviews and informal check-ins will help to give Nadya opportunity to voice if this is not the case.

**2) How practical is it?**

It sounds very practical as it allows Nadya to return to work, with support in place, and gradually allowing them to increase confidence, and take breaks when needed.

**3) What is the potential disruption?**

Nadya’s timetable has been possible to adjust.

**4) Are there Health and Safety risks?**

Potentially the risks of impact have been reduced as the stress of peak time travel has been reduced.

**5) What are the costs?**

None for changing their start time. For Phased return, if an employee is entitled to sick pay, this will usually be used when calculating their pay.

### Case Study 3

Mo, a new staff member, has complex health problems, including Crohn’s disease, muscular skeletal problems and a chronic pain syndrome with impacts on mobility, noise and light sensitivity. They were referred to Occupational Health before starting their role to ensure that all required adjustments had been identified. The manager suggested Mo’s role was suitable for hybrid working, allowing them to work at home 3 days a week and on campus 2 days. An Access to Work application was made, and assessment of both the campus and home work environments, resulting in ergonomic chairs, height adjustable desks, and specialist computer equipment provided through the scheme. In addition, the Department located Mo a ground floor space close to both the kitchen and toilet facilities and ensured provision of a disabled parking space

#### Using the 5 questions:

1) **Will it solve the Problem / issue?** – Yes, and the equipment has been considered for suitability for the individual, both on campus and at home, and ability to work from home alleviates impact. The positioning of the work station in relation to facilities whist on campus will solve aspects of the issue.

2) **How practical is it?**

Hybrid working is an option, so practical and as there is a work station near kitchen and toilet facilities on the ground floor, it is practical.

3) **What is the potential disruption?**

If someone else is already using that work station it might be a bit of change for them, but unless they also require such and adjustment, it is not unreasonable for an employee to be asked to change work station.

4) **Are there Health and Safety risks?**

This reduces health and safety risks of not meeting the need to be close to facilities to manage their condition.

5) **What are the costs?**

As the employee was encouraged to apply for access to work early on (before 6 weeks with a new employer), all the equipment costs should be met through Access to Work.

#### Case Study 4

Bali works on a reception desk. They have to book appointments and direct students. In between appointments they have a number of administrative tasks. Bali has been making mistakes and when questioned about this by their line manager explains they have difficulty concentrating associated with a disability they do not wish to disclose. Bali asks to start work before the reception desk opens so most admin tasks can be completed when less likely to be disrupted. Bali asks for 6:30 am.

The line manager contacts the Staff Disability Adviser for advice. The line manager looks at the last 6 months of appointments, and finds out how many afternoon appointments have been attended. From this they can get a better idea of the work load required in the afternoons.

Several afternoon appointments are not well attended both in terms of no shows and of not being booked.

The line manager agrees to trial allowing Bali to start early, but at 7:30 when the building opens so other staff are in the building too. This allows Bali some quiet time to help concentration with admin tasks.

Their working hours are then till 3:00 pm, so staff who had previously offered appointment slots from 3:00 pm take it in turns to cover the last 2 hours of the reception desk opening times. During the trial staff covering the afternoon period feedback that they found it interesting and it helped them to understand the types of student enquiries, thus helping provide a better service to students.

#### Using the 5 questions:

**1) Will it solve the Problem / issue?**

If the issue is being distracted by callers to the reception desk, potentially yes.

**2) How practical is it?**

The building where the reception desk is based opens to staff at 7:30 am, so accommodating 6:30 am would be difficult. This would also leave the reception desk unstaffed for the afternoon. The service should remain available for students at the same times as other services in the building are open, which is until 5:00 pm. Only one person is employed in the role Bali undertakes.

**3) What is the potential disruption?**

Large disruption to a number of services if the reception desk is not covered in the afternoon, as it acts as a reception point for a number of appointment based services. To be accessible to all students the appointments need to be available at a variety of times for the students, including afternoons.

**4) Are there Health and Safety risks?**

Starting work in a building before it opens does raise issues for lone working, and possibly security if the building would need to be opened up especially.

**5) What are the costs?**

Some of the appointments in the building are part of audited services who have to meet certain criteria, cancelling appointments would not be a good outcome and potentially jeopardise accreditations and thus funding.

## Appendix D: References and Further Information

#### University Resources

* [Accessible Home Working Guide](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/staff/equality-diversity/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B3F0A5B53-F7E7-4EFE-88AA-52D5FBC7440D%7D&file=Accessible%20home%20working%20guide.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1)
* [Dignity & Respect](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/equality-diversity/SitePages/Dignity%20and%20Respect%20at%20Leicester.aspx)
* [Disability Staff Forum](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/equality-diversity/edi-and-you/SitePages/Disability%20Staff%20Equality%20Forum.aspx?csf=1&e=909swl&cid=6763320d-920a-474f-8846-5405aa2202e9how)
* [Disability Toolkit](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/:u:/r/sites/staff/equality-diversity/SitePages/Disability-Toolkit.aspx?csf=1&web=1&e=v6fI7v)
* [EDI Webpage](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/equality-diversity/SitePages/Home.aspx)
* [HR Access to Work Guidance](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/equality-diversity/access-to-work/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2Fstaff%2Fequality%2Ddiversity%2Faccess%2Dto%2Dwork%2FShared%20Documents%2FHR%20Access%20to%20Work%20Guidance%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2Fstaff%2Fequality%2Ddiversity%2Faccess%2Dto%2Dwork%2FShared%20Documents)
* [HR Webpage](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/corporate-services/hr/SitePages/Home.aspx)
* [Induction Checklist](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/staff/information-for-managers/staff-recruitment/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B4502C0AB-3395-49DC-A8D3-FE1E5AFA1798%7D&file=Induction%20Checklist%202020.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1)
* [Making a referral to Occupational Health](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/wellbeing/occupational-health/SitePages/Management%20Referrals.aspx?Mode=Edit)
* [Occupational Health](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/wellbeing/occupational-health/SitePages/Home.aspx)
* [PDD Process](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/performance-appraisal/SitePages/Home.aspx)
* [Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/health-safety/Shared%20Documents/Policies/UHSP-16d%20PEEP.pdf?csf=1&e=DplxX1&cid=bd328ec6-94b0-4a58-8fd2-3e72b77ec6c2)
* [Staff Health and Wellbeing Support Toolkit](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/wellbeing/SitePages/Support-Toolkit(1).aspx)

#### University Emails

* [Estates and Campus Services](mailto:ecs-service@le.ac.uk)
* [HR Advice](mailto:hradvice@leicester.ac.uk)
* [Occupational Health](mailto:ochealth@leicester.ac.uk)
* [Safety Services](mailto:safetyservices@le.ac.uk)
* [Staff Disability Adviser](Mailto:%20staffdisabilility@le.ac.uk)

#### External Resources

* [Able Futures](https://able-futures.co.uk/individuals)
* [AccessAble Website – University of Leicester Page](https://www.accessable.co.uk/university-of-leicester/)
* [Access to Work](https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work)
* [British Dyslexia Guide for Employers](https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/advice/employers)
* [Equality Act: Code of Practice](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/employment-statutory-code-practice)
* [Equality Act 2010: Definition of disability](https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010)
* [Genius Within support for neurodiversity](https://www.geniuswithin.co.uk/)
* [Government overview of Access to Work](https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/overview)
* [Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme](https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/equality-diversity/SitePages/Hidden-Disabilities-Sunflower-Scheme.aspx)
* [Maximus](https://www.maximusuk.co.uk/our-services/employability)
* [Mind Guide to Wellness Action Plans](https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-your-staff/employer-resources/wellness-action-plan-download/)
* [National Autistic Society Employing autistic people – a guide for employers](https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/employment/employing-autistic-people/employers)
* [NHS Mental Health Adjustments Guidance](http://www.nhshealthatwork.co.uk/images/library/files/Government%20policy/Mental_Health_Adjustments_Guidance_May_2012.pdf)
* [Royal National Institute of Blind People guidance on accessibility and inclusion](https://www.rnib.org.uk/employers-and-businesses/employing-blind-or-partially-sighted-person)
* [Royal National institute for Deaf People guidance on adjustments](https://rnid.org.uk/information-and-support/your-rights/your-rights-at-work/#:~:text=Under%20the%20Equality%20Act%202010,Reasonable%20adjustments%20could%20include%3A&text=giving%20you%20time%20off%20work%20for%20your%20audiology%20appointments)

1. https://ablemagazine.co.uk/survation-poll-majority-of-business-leaders-apprehensive-about-recruiting-disabled-people-to-senior-positions/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)