



## List of Common Workplace Adjustments





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## Introduction

This document provides a list of common workplace adjustments for all employees within the Civil Service, not just those with a disability. It should be read in conjunction with existing departmental policies and procedures, along with the Workplace Adjustment Passport. It has been developed to be a useful guide for managers to work through with their employees. This document contains examples of common workplace adjustments, but is not an exhaustive list. These examples are not specific to a condition, and it may be appropriate to implement other workplace adjustments that are not included.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) requires an employer to make 'reasonable adjustments', for employees with a disability. The Act defines disability as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal activities.

An employer is required to make adjustments where a provision, criterion or practice places an employee with a disability at a substantial disadvantage compared with employees who are not disabled.

Adjustments are a change to a physical feature, environment or working arrangements to make sure that employees are able to do their job without being at a disadvantage compared to others. You can find out more about employer's obligations and how to meet them on the [Equality and Human Rights Commission website](#).

Aside from the legal requirement, it is also good practice to consider a workplace adjustment for any employee who experiences a barrier or difficulty at work. For this reason, we refer to workplace adjustments as the steps taken to remove, reduce or prevent the obstacles employees may face. In all of our products we refer to workplace adjustments in the wider sense, and we specify where the action is only applicable to employees with a disability.

Whether an adjustment is 'reasonable' will depend on a number of factors including the needs and capabilities of the employee, their role, the effectiveness of the adjustment, and business needs. The adjustments captured in the List of Common Workplace Adjustments will not always be appropriate or reasonable. What is reasonable for one person in a particular role and department might not be reasonable for someone else even in the same department.



Each adjustment needs to be considered on an individual basis to ensure it is suitable for the employee and sustainable for the business. Employees with the same condition won't necessarily require the same workplace adjustments. Everyone needs to be flexible and work in partnership to implement effective workplace adjustments.

All requests for adjustments should be dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner and should be reviewed regularly, to ensure they remain effective. Individual circumstances may change over time, as a minimum, adjustments should be reviewed annually.

Adjustments cannot be imposed on an employee and both the line manager and employee need to accept and agree proposed adjustments.

Adjustments should be recorded on the Workplace Adjustment Passport (available in departmental Workplace Adjustment Guidance or on Civil Service Learning) to allow easy transition between job roles and/or departments. If you need further support it is recommended you seek advice from **[DN: Department to insert relevant team]** when considering any requests from employees. The Review Route from the Civil Service Workplace Adjustments Team at [cswat.enquiries@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:cswat.enquiries@cabinetoffice.gov.uk) or 0114 294 8902, if the employee is not satisfied with the adjustments agreed or as a line manager you have already contacted your departmental workplace adjustment team but still need advice on more complex cases.

Additional guidance on supporting employees with a disability can be found in:

- departmental Workplace Adjustment Guidance
- [Workplace Adjustment Passport](#),
- [Workplace Adjustment Line Manager's Best Practice Guide](#)
- and [Line Manager's Best Practice Guide for Supporting Disabled Employees](#).



## Absence management

<b>Adjustment</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Considerations</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
Adjustment of trigger points	An employee with a disability or long-term health condition may experience higher than usual levels of absence.	In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to adjust absence trigger points if an employee reaches a trigger level of days and/or spells as a result of disability related absence.  Line manager's need to ensure they understand the reason for the absence to take appropriate action.	Attendance Management policy
Phased return	An employee with a disability returning to work after a period of absence may need to return gradually.	If an employee is returning to work after a period of absence, it may be appropriate to arrange a phased return. This is a formal arrangement where an employee will increase the number of hours and/or days they work over a period of time until they resume their usual working hours.	Attendance Management policy Wellness Recovery Action Plan



## Civil Service HR

<p>Special or disability leave to attend appointments</p>	<p>Allowing paid or unpaid leave to attend medical appointments.</p>	<p>If an employee is otherwise fit for work but needs time off to attend an appointment in relation to their disability or condition, you could consider allowing special or disability leave. Any arrangements will need to be considered in line with departmental policy.</p>	<p>Special Leave policy Disability Leave policy (if available) Attendance Management policy</p>
<p>Special or gender reassignment leave to attend appointments.</p>	<p>Allowing paid or unpaid leave to attend appointments or undergo treatment.</p>	<p>If an employee is otherwise fit for work but needs time off to attend appointments or undergo treatment in relation to their gender reassignment, you could consider allowing special or gender reassignment leave. Any arrangements will need to be considered in line with departmental policy.</p>	<p>Special Leave policy Gender Reassignment Leave policy (if available)</p>



## Assistive technology

Adjustment	Example	Considerations	Useful Resources
IT software	An employee with a visual impairment could use software to convert text on the screen to another format such as audio or braille.	Some employees may require assistive technology to allow them to undertake tasks using IT. There are many software packages designed to support employees to help them use their computer more effectively and improve access to digital documents.	

## Communication support

Adjustment	Example	Considerations	Useful Resources
Interpreter	An employee with a hearing impairment may need a British Sign Language interpreter to participate in meetings.	When arranging events, meetings or making announcements it is important to allow sufficient time to book an interpreter. Team members also need to consider etiquette around working with interpreters.	



Translation services	A Palantypist or Speech to text reporter is a specially trained and qualified person who can assist with communication for the deaf and hard of hearing.	When arranging events or meetings it is important to allow sufficient time to book these services and provide materials in advance if requested.	
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## Equipment

<b>Adjustment</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Considerations</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
Furniture	An employee with a back injury may need a chair that provides additional support.	An assessment may be needed to identify the barriers an employee is experiencing and whether there are any adaptations needed. This could also include changes to a desk or additional furniture such as a footrest.	Workstation Assessment guidance Occupational Health
IT equipment	An employee with a repetitive strain injury may need a different type of keyboard or mouse to alleviate symptoms.	There is a range of IT equipment available to support employees. This could be a laptop instead of a desktop computer or specialist hardware such as a tracker ball mouse. These may require an assessment to identify the most suitable equipment.	Display Screen Assessment guidance Workstation Assessment guidance Occupational Health





Stationery	An employee with manual dexterity issues may need a chubby pen, which is easier to hold.	There is a wide range of specialist stationery available such as notebooks with different background colours and sizes, and pens that have additional functions.	Workstation Assessment guidance Occupational Health
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## Health and safety

<b>Adjustment</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Considerations</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan	An employee may require assistance to evacuate their building in an emergency.	If an employee requires assistance to evacuate a building in an emergency, you will need to ensure they have a personal evacuation escape plan set up, with an appropriate risk assessment and a buddy if required.	Health and Safety Team Building or Facilities Management Fire Warden
Flexible or regular breaks	This could be allowing time for exercises to help with musculoskeletal conditions or a short rest for employees with conditions that cause fatigue.	An employee may find frequent breaks or regular break times during the day helpful as an adjustment. Flexibility to take breaks could help the employee to manage their impairment or condition and participate fully at work.	Flexible Working policy



## Induction

<b>Adjustment</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Considerations</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
Visit to the office or new location	An employee with a visual impairment, or who requires routine, may want to familiarise themselves with their new office surroundings before they start work there.	In advance of an employee joining a new team or starting work at a new, office it may be helpful to offer them a site visit. This will give them an opportunity to find out the layout of the building, and to meet their team.	Induction processes
Extra support during induction	An employee with an autism spectrum condition may need a more detailed, structured induction plan to help them settle in.	Ensure that any new employee is given the appropriate level of support during their induction and have point of contact to ask any questions.	
Extended induction	Some employees may need longer to get used to their new role or to understand new ways of working due to their disability.	It may be worth considering extending the induction period to allow more time to settle into their new role.	



## Job carving

Adjustment	Example	Considerations	Useful Resources
Change of role	An employee with an autism spectrum disorder working in an office reception may be uncomfortable interacting with customers.	Where an employee is no longer able to perform their role due to their disability you may be able to consider moving them to a different role within the team, or wider department. This decision should be undertaken with clear communication and in consultation with the employee.	<a href="#">Job carving guidance</a>
Job redesign	An employee with mobility restrictions and is required to travel frequently to other sites, it may be possible to limit travel, and arrange meetings by phone or video-conference.	If an employee is finding elements of their job difficult due to their disability it may be helpful to review their duties.	<a href="#">Job carving guidance</a>
Job creation	This may be used by Recruitment Managers when designing job roles to meet the skills and talents of the available resource pool; or as an adjustment for an employee returning to work from a serious illness such as a stroke, or suffering from a degenerative disease.	This is where a new job role is designed to meet the specific needs, talents or as an adjustment for someone who experiences a difficulty or barrier.	<a href="#">Job carving guidance</a>



Job share	An employee who has a progressive condition may require a change in working hours to help manage their symptoms may wish to job share.	This is an arrangement for two part-time employees to share a full-time post could be used to achieve a better work-life balance or to facilitate a reduction in working hours.	<a href="#">Job carving guidance</a> <a href="#">Job share finder</a>
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## Learning and development

Adjustment	Example	Considerations	Useful Resources
Mentoring/coaching	When a new system or process has been introduced, an employee may need longer to learn or need extra support as an adjustment.	The employee may require additional coaching or mentoring support. Coaching for line managers may also be beneficial so they have the necessary skills to support their employee.	
Training	An employee has an impairment and uses assistive technology, they may need training material in another format or in advance of training for a support worker.	Training courses that aren't accessible may need to be adapted to enable employees with a disability to participate. Other adjustments could include larger print, sending out materials in advance or ensuring the room is fitted with a hearing loop system.	



Training on specific disability awareness for colleagues	An employee with a hearing impairment may find it helpful for colleagues to learn more about their condition.	It may be helpful to ask team members to undertake training that explains the impacts a specific condition has on their colleagues and how to communicate effectively with them. You will need to ensure you ask the employee if they are happy to share information about their condition before arranging any training or awareness sessions.	<a href="#">Civil Service Learning</a> Occupational Health Employee Assistance Programme
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## Performance management and managing workload

Adjustment	Example	Considerations	Useful Resources
Amending objectives and/or tasks	An employee with anxiety who may not feel able to deliver a face-to-face presentation on certain occasions, amending their communication objectives could help.	An employee may require amendment to their personal work objectives or tasks. This could include, a reduction in workload, altering tasks or providing additional time or support to complete these.	<a href="#">Mental Health: a guide for managers</a>  Performance Management guidance



<p>Reallocating work, assistance with time management and prioritising tasks</p>	<p>An employee whose disability may require them to need extra support to help them prioritise their workload, this could be training or coaching.</p>	<p>If a reduction in workload or additional time or support is required for task completion, it may be possible to extend deadlines and/or reallocate some of this work within the team. You may also be able to provide training to help the employee manage their time and prioritise tasks. This may help to maintain their workload.</p>	<p><a href="#"><u>Job carving guidance</u></a></p>
<p>Providing supervision or additional support</p>	<p>An employee whose disability leads to lack of confidence may require additional reassurance to complete certain tasks.</p>	<p>A buddy can help an employee by giving advice and coaching which can help build their confidence in completing their tasks. Or a line manager could arrange more frequent discussions to go through any complex tasks in depth.</p>	<p><a href="#"><u>Mental health: a guide for managers</u></a></p>



## Publications

Adjustment	Example	Considerations	Useful Resources
Accessibility	An employee with dyslexia who uses assistive technology or require documents in a different format.	Web content and products need to be accessible to those employees using accessibility software, such as JAWs, magnifying or text to speech. Alternatively, they can provide versions in a different format.	Government Digital Service accessibility guidelines  Accessibility guidance

## Recruitment

Adjustment	Example	Considerations	Useful Resources
Providing information in an alternative format	An employee with a visual impairment may require an application form in larger font or braille.	When providing additional information such as job specifications, it is important to ask if candidates require these in an alternative format.	Accessibility guidance Recruitment guidance
Disability Confident and offering interviews	If an employee declares they have a disability on their application and they meet the minimum requirements for the job, they can be offered an interview.	Although not an adjustment, when an employee has declared a disability, they can request an interview.  Please note that candidates choose to request a guarantee interview but they may choose not to.	<a href="#">Disability Confident</a>



Interview related adjustments	An employee with a speech impairment may find it difficult to speak in front of people and may request a laptop or screen during an interview to type their answer.	It is important to ask candidates what adjustments they need in advance of the interview and these are put in place. An interviewee may require adjustments at the interview stage. For example, a change of venue or interview date, an interpreter, special equipment, or being allowed to bring notes.	Recruitment guidance
Modified assessment	An employee with a neuro-diverse condition who cannot participate in group exercises may need a different type of comparable assessment.	Any assessments used in recruitment may need adjusting, for example larger print, or another assessment method.	Recruitment guidance





## Working hours and patterns

<b>Adjustment</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Considerations</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
Flexible approach to working patterns	An employee may have a fluctuating condition which means that they need to work from home or come in later.	To help manage symptoms of their condition an employee may need to take time off or temporarily change their working pattern. This could be a change of working days or reducing hours. It may not always be possible to accommodate this due to the needs of the business. Any arrangements will need to be considered in line with departmental policy and reviewed regularly.	Working Hours and Flexible Working Guidance
Moving core hours	An employee may need to change their core hours to help manage their condition. This could be starting later to allow medication to take effect.	Depending on the job role and operating hours it may be helpful for an employee to adjust their core hours. This may allow them to start and finish earlier or start and finish later. It may not always be possible to accommodate this due to the needs of the business. Any arrangements will need to be considered in line with departmental policy and reviewed regularly.	Working hours and flexible working guidance



<p>Compressed hours</p>	<p>An employee with a condition such as arthritis who experiences fatigue may find working fewer days per week helps to manage their symptoms.</p>	<p>Some employees may find that compressing their working week into a smaller number of days helpful. It may not always be possible to accommodate this due to the needs of the business. Any arrangements will need to be considered in line with departmental policy and reviewed regularly.</p>	<p>Working hours and flexible working guidance</p>
<p>Reduction in working hours</p>	<p>An employee who is returning to work after an absence may need to work fewer hours as part of a phased return to work.</p>	<p>An employee may request a reduction in working hours. This should be considered for business feasibility as well as ensuring the employee is clear about the financial implications. This could be a temporary or long-term adjustment as part of a return to work.</p>	<p>Working hours and flexible working guidance Attendance Management guidance</p>



## Work environment

<b>Adjustment</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Considerations</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
Fixed workstation	An employee with anxiety may need to have their own desk in an office that operates a hot-desking environment, in order to assist in minimising their symptoms	It may also be appropriate to assign a fixed workstation to an employee who requires adjustments to the standard workstation.	Display Screen Equipment guidance Workstation Assessment guidance
Workstation assessment	An employee may need a desk height adjusting or may need a special chair to provide additional lower back support.	A standard workstation assessment may help to ensure that the employee's workspace (including desk, monitor, chair and others) is suitable for their needs. An assessment should highlight any additional or alternative equipment the employee may need.	Display Screen Equipment guidance
Lighting/glare reduction	An employee with light sensitivity may require a desk not in direct sunlight or where the lighting can be adjusted.	An employee may need an assessment to see whether reducing glare or adjusting lighting is required. Providing a screen filter to attach to a monitor or changing their seating location.	Display Screen Equipment guidance Workstation Assessment guidance



Noise reduction	An employee with anxiety or a neurodiverse condition may need to work somewhere quieter or use a noise-reducing headset.	Some employees can be affected by the level of noise in the working environment. Moving them to a quieter environment can help manage their condition. It is important to consider if the building can accommodate this and may be dependent on local arrangements.	Workstation Assessment guidance
Parking	An employee who requires routine due to their condition may need to be allocated the same parking space.	If an employee has mobility issues, requires routine or ease of access to the building, providing a parking space near to their work location may be an adjustment. It is important to consider if the building or parking facilities allow for this and could be dependent on local arrangements.	



Visiting another building	An employee with a visual impairment may need to familiarise themselves with the layout of a building if they haven't been there before.	If working or visiting an unfamiliar building, an employee may need assistance with finding their way around. This could be due to a visual impairment or another condition such as anxiety. It is important to consider when arranging events that you ask in advance if attendees have any special requirements.	
Work location	An employee with a fluctuating condition may benefit from working from home occasionally to help alleviate their symptoms. Or an employee going through the menopause may need access to a cooler working environment and/or a desk fan.	It may be worth considering if working from home (part or full-time) for a specified period, or from another location may support an employee. A home-working risk assessment should be undertaken.  You also need to check if an employee needs to be situated in particular location such as ground floor or close to the exit due to their condition.	