

Reasonable Adjustment Guidance

RECRUITMENT & SELECTION POLICY



1 Introduction

The council is committed in supporting a wide range of people and diverse communities and we would like our workforce to be reflective of this diversity.

As well as our legal obligations to make reasonable adjustments, as an inclusive employer we have an ethical and social responsibility to accommodate and support reasonable adjustments in the workplace.

2 Reviewing the job role, placing the advert and job application

Reasonable adjustments can be put in place at the onset of a recruitment exercise, including the review of JD/PS's to ensure they are inclusive - it may be that they can be amended to encourage and attract disabled people.

The advert wording should encourage contact from a disabled applicant from the outset so that reasonable adjustments can be discussed and accommodated wherever possible.

It maybe that an applicant may require adjustments or additional support at the application stage, and we can identify and refer them to appropriate support services for this purpose. It maybe for example, that a disabled applicant requires the application form in a different format or requires additional time to submit their application.

As an inclusive employer, applicants will be encouraged to declare their disability via the application form and state any reasonable adjustments that may support them. It is the individual's right, not to divulge a disability if they do not wish to, however should an individual declare their disability and state what adjustments they require, it is important that we consider them and accommodate them wherever possible.

If an applicant has declared a disability and they have declared this to be in relation to a learning disability or a disability related to Autism Spectrum Disorder, the Lead Officer and panel members must consider any bearing this may have on the quality of the application and not discriminate on this basis.

3 Shortlisting

Where a disabled applicant demonstrates they meet the 'essential' criteria of the post, they must be guaranteed an interview under council policy, even in the event that for other candidates the 'desirable' criteria has been applied.

Whilst an applicant will have to demonstrate they meet the essential criteria for the role, a disabled candidate who has declared their disability at application stage will be excluded from any testing to be carried out prior to interview (known as 'pre-testing'), which is sometimes used to reduce numbers for interview.

4 Interview process

If a candidate has not requested adjustments or declared their disability at application stage, the invite to interview issued by the Resourcing Team (via the North East Jobs portal) will provide a further opportunity for applicants to request reasonable adjustments. Where an applicant has provided information about reasonable adjustments required for the interview process; these will be communicated to the Lead Officer so that adjustments can be accommodated where possible.

Interviews can be an anxious process for all applicants, however a disabled person may find an interview additionally difficult and may require support to allow them to participate on a 'level-playing' field.

It maybe that an applicant who has declared themselves with a learning disability or with a condition related to the Autism Spectrum Disorder, a 'storyboard' approach maybe useful for them in preparation for an interview.

A storyboard approach allows more visual outline of the interview process and may help to place a disabled person at ease prior to the interview date.

An example of a storyboard is available from HR Advice and Support on request.

In the main, they should include **pictorial and step-by-step** information, such as:

- Car parking information and what to expect
- Pictures of the building
- How to access the building
- Who will greet them or where to go on arrival
- Who will be on the panel
- Example of the meeting room

It maybe that support from an appropriate person at the interview maybe required and this should be accommodated wherever possible.

Other support at interview maybe, adjustments to questions, additional time to complete the interview and/or adjustments to the interview venue/accommodation.

During the interview, should the candidate raise the need for reasonable adjustments in the workplace then it is acceptable for the recruiting panel to clarify what adjustments are required, however they must not ask questions directly relating to the condition, health or attendance.

As an inclusive employer we must consider supporting reasonable adjustments in a positive way; ensuring we aim for a diverse workforce.

Unless the applicant themselves raises the need for specific adjustments, recruiting officers must avoid any questions that could be considered 'health-related'. Questions ideally should be competency-based and must be non-discriminatory.

Where there is any doubt around the availability or effectiveness of a reasonable adjustment, the Lead Officer must seek advice from HR Advice and Support and the Resourcing Team.

5 Testing candidates with a disability

Where a test is used as part of the interview process e.g. in-tray exercise, all candidates will be required to participate in the testing at this stage, however if required, reasonable adjustments to the tests can be made to allow a disabled person participate fully in the process.

Adjustments might include additional time to complete the tests or adjustments to the questions, where appropriate.

For further advice on applying reasonable adjustments, please contact the Equality and Diversity Team on equalities@durham.gov.uk

6 Offer of appointment

Where a conditional offer of appointment is made in writing to the successful candidate; it may be that the applicant at this stage requests a reasonable adjustment.

As part of the clearance process, managers will be provided with advice from Occupational Health Service with a view of accommodating adjustments where they are possible. Reasonable adjustments that can or cannot be accommodated will be communicated with the successful appointee.

When the recruiting manager considers the successful candidates references, which at this point can include information regarding the appointees sickness absence information, they must seek advice from the HR Advice and Support Team if they have concerns. Reasonable adjustments will be viewed positively and accommodated where possible.

7 Induction

The induction process will need to cover any reasonable adjustments with a view of enabling the new starter to undertake their role effectively.

Reasonable adjustments should then be discussed and considered through the employee's employment to ensure continuous and appropriate support is provided within the workplace.

8 Continuous support

The [Reasonable Adjustment Disability Passport Scheme](#) provides continuous support and consistency for employees who require adjustments at work.

Other supportive HR policies include Redeployment, Flexible Working Policy, Flexi-leave, Attendance Management, Annual Leave and Managing Employee Performance (PDR).

'Access to Work' is a publically-funded body that provides support from disabled people to start or remain at work. The scheme is initiated by the employee and grants can be provided to provide specific support and equipment relating to reasonable adjustments in the workplace. Further information about Access to Work can be found at www.gov.uk/access-to-work.

The Equality and Diversity Team, HR Advice and Support Team, Resourcing Team and Occupational Health Service can support Managers with advice on reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process and following appointment.