

Reasonable Adjustments for Recruitment

A Guide for Recruiting Managers

Contents

Reasonable Adjustments for Recruitment	3
Our Commitment as a Disability Confident Employer	3
What to expect from this guide.....	3
A proactive approach to recruiting disabled people	4
How do I know if my candidate has a disability?	5
Talking to someone about their disability	5
Your practical steps for inclusive recruitment	6
Preparing for the interview	6
Preparing inclusive interview questions	7
Interview assessments.....	7
During the interview	8
At the end of the interview.....	8
A proactive approach to employing disabled people	9
Access to Work	9
Our Employment Support Team	9
Our Organisational Development Team.....	9
Other considerations	10
Confidentiality	10
Legal Considerations	10
Useful Resources.....	10
Glossary	11

Reasonable Adjustments for Recruitment

It's important that everyone feels they are able to demonstrate their potential throughout our recruitment process. It's fundamental that we ensure everyone has a fair opportunity when applying for a role with us, regardless of a disability including long term physical and mental health conditions. But this doesn't need to mean big changes to what you already do, this is about making small changes to our recruitment process to support all candidates to perform at their best. These changes are called Reasonable Adjustments.

Our Commitment as a Disability Confident Employer

As a Disability Confident Employer, inclusive recruitment helps us demonstrate our commitment to creating a workplace where disabled colleagues can thrive and have the same opportunities as everyone else.

As part of our commitment, we ensure that all disabled candidates who meet the 'must have' requirements of the job profile are guaranteed an interview.



What to expect from this guide

This guide aims to help you to:

- Foster an inclusive environment where everyone is treated fairly.
- Be confident about your role in recruiting people with a disability or long term physical or mental health condition.
- Understand and reduce the barriers that could prevent a candidate from performing to their full potential in a recruitment process.
- Identify appropriate adjustments to support candidates to help them thrive during the recruitment process.

A proactive approach to recruiting disabled people

You don't always have to follow your usual recruitment process to get the best candidate. There are a variety of ways to approach recruitment which can help support disabled candidates demonstrate their potential.

Two alternative routes to recruitment are highlighted below:

- **Workplace Trials:** These are opportunities for candidates to try out a job for a short time. It helps both you and your candidate assess if the role is a good fit without the pressure of a formal interview process.
- **Carved Roles:** This involves tailoring a job role to match the strengths and abilities of a candidate. Instead of fitting the candidate into an existing role, the role is adjusted to match the candidate's strengths, ensuring that they are supported and can thrive.

You can find out more about these approaches by watching our 2 minute video [here](#) or by getting in touch with Organisational Development at od@orkney.gov.uk.

Our Community Learning, Development and Employability Team offers practical assistance to people returning to the work market after an absence or looking to re-train for a better job. They can provide support to gain qualifications, look for and apply for jobs, arrange work tasters/ volunteering, access career information, and in-work support. Find out more by visiting the [CLDE webpage](#).

The Learning Link supports adults to gain new skills and increase their self-confidence. Support includes improving reading, writing, spelling and grammar, understanding everyday maths and numbers, and learning how to use a laptop or tablet and getting online. You can get in touch with The Learning Link team by emailing thelearninglinkenquiries@orkney.gov.uk.

How do I know if my candidate has a disability?

You should be able to identify if your candidate has disclosed a disability.

Application form:

- Candidates may answer yes to the question 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability?'
- Candidates may also reference their disability or long-term health condition within the supporting information section of the application form.

Interview stage:

- The standard invite to interview email sent to your candidate asks whether they require any adjustments to the interview process to ensure they can perform to the best of their abilities.
- When your candidate has requested a reasonable adjustment, you should make every effort to provide this. To ensure that the recruitment process is inclusive as possible, you may need to contact your candidate to gather further information to best support their experience.

Some candidates may not feel comfortable disclosing their disability at application stage. However, if a candidate discloses a disability at any stage of the recruitment process you should ensure that the relevant reasonable adjustments are accommodated.

Talking to someone about their disability

When a candidate talks to you about their disability, you should take the lead from them. It's up to the person how much they share.

You should:

- listen and try to understand how their disability affects them – for some people the effects might fluctuate or change at different times
- consider their specific situation – everyone is different
- not make assumptions about what they can and can't do
- talk with them about the support they need

Your practical steps for inclusive recruitment

-  **As part of our Disability Confident Employer commitment, we provide alternative methods for applying for a job such as support to complete an online application, offline paper applications and workplace trials.**

Preparing for the interview

To support disabled candidates prepare and set themselves up for success you should:

- Offer choice and flexibility of interview days and times.
- Offer a choice of in-person or Microsoft Teams interviews.
- Change the location of an in-person interview to a more accessible location.
- Let candidates know beforehand, the name and job role of interviewers.
- Provide clear instructions on where the interview is being held, where they need to go and who to ask for when they arrive.
- Provide somewhere quiet for candidates to wait before their interview.
- Provide interview questions in advance, typically this can be up to 48 hours before interview.



Manager Tip

Some candidates who are autistic or have a learning disability may find it helpful to receive photographs of the building, interview room, and interview panel (including names and job roles) before the interview.

Preparing inclusive interview questions

When preparing interview questions, to ensure a fair and effective interview process it's important to consider the diverse ways candidates may respond

Here are some key guidance points to support inclusive interviewing:

- **Clarify expectations when asking for examples:** When you say, "Give me an example...", candidates may respond with one or several examples. To ensure fair scoring, clearly state how many examples you expect.
- **Use focused questions:** Instead of general prompts like "Can you give more detail?", ask for specific examples. This helps candidates understand exactly what you're looking for.
- **Avoid long, multi-part questions:** These can be confusing, especially for candidates who process information differently. Keep questions concise and focused on one idea at a time.
- **Be specific in your wording:** For instance, asking "What information governance processes did you use in your last job?" is clearer and more effective than "What would you do to look after people's data?"
- **Accept literal responses:** Neurodivergent candidates may interpret questions literally. For example, if you ask, "How did you approach your last role?", a candidate might respond with, "By bus and then I walked." Be prepared for this and clarify if needed.
- **Prompt and reassure as needed:** If a candidate's response is brief or unclear, feel free to repeat or rephrase the question. Let them know when you have enough information to help them feel confident and reduce anxiety.

Interview assessments

Some interview tests and assessments can be discriminatory. These need to be carefully considered and must always be clearly linked to the requirements of the role.



Manager Tip

- Allow extra time for the interview or an interview assessment. Remember 25% extra time for written tasks is expected where reasonable adjustments are required.
- Allow candidates adequate time for replies during the interview.

During the interview

The more relaxed and comfortable your candidate feels, the more likely they will perform to the best of their abilities at interview. Some candidates may be more likely to be distracted by noise and surrounding environment. If you are hosting an in-person interview you should ensure the interview room is as distraction free as possible.

Getting the setting right:

- Provide paper and a pen in case your candidate wants to make notes. This can help them organise their thoughts when giving detailed answers.
- Don't always expect eye contact, for example an autistic candidate may find this uncomfortable, or it may impact their concentration.

Hosting an interview on Microsoft Teams:

- Make ensure that you have a suitable background set up such as blurred or OIC background to reduce any distractions.
- Use the microphone mute function when you are not speaking to reduce any background noise.
- Ensure that only one person speaks at a time.

At the end of the interview

You should provide clear guidance and timescales of when and how your candidate will receive notification of the interview outcome. If these timescales are likely to change then you should let your candidate know.

Providing feedback: You should provide feedback to your candidate after the interview. Remember, this is part of our Disability Confident Employer Commitment.

Offering a job: If your candidate has been successful then you will need to let them know what to expect next. You can find a separate Managers Guide to Pre-employment checks on MyView/Useful HR Information.

A proactive approach to employing disabled people

There is a range of support available to help disabled employees successfully settle into their new role.

Access to Work can support people in obtaining or maintaining employment if they have a physical or mental health condition or disability. The support provided is tailored to meet the specific needs of each person. You can find out more by selecting the following link: [Access to Work](#).

Our Employment Support Team can assist you in making adjustments to ensure new and existing Autistic team members, or those with a learning disability, can meet their full potential. They can also offer on-the-job coaching to support colleagues learn their job tasks. The team work in partnership with recruiting managers and HR and OD colleagues to provide supported employment opportunities. You can find out more on the [Employment Support Team webpage](#).

Our HR and Organisational Development Team plays a role by providing guidance on implementing reasonable adjustments for candidates and employees. This helps create an inclusive recruitment and onboarding process, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to perform at their best. Get in touch with our EDI Adviser in the first instance, by emailing OD@Orkney.gov.uk.

Other considerations

Confidentiality

It is important that information relating to health conditions and disabilities is treated sensitively and confidentially. We are committed to ensuring that all personal information provided by candidates is used only for the purpose of evaluating their applications. This approach helps maintain trust and integrity throughout the recruitment process.

Legal Considerations

Disabled people are protected against discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. The term disability can include conditions which you might not necessarily think of as a disability.

If people have got a physical or mental health condition that has lasted, or is expected to last, for 12 months or more and it has a significant negative impact on their ability to do day-to-day activities, they are protected by the law.

Under the Equality Act 2010, you are responsible for making Reasonable Adjustments for disabled candidates and employees to remove any barriers that prevent people performing to the best of their abilities.

Useful Resources

There are a number of links below that may be useful to consider when supporting Reasonable Adjustments during the recruitment process

- ACAS guidance on reasonable adjustments [What reasonable adjustments are - Reasonable adjustments at work - Acas](#)
- Government guidance on recruitment and disabled people [Recruitment and disabled people: Reasonable adjustments - GOV.UK](#)
- Best practice for supporting Disabled people [Disability Guide](#)

Glossary

Having a shared understanding of the terms and terminology that are frequently used in discussions about conditions or disabilities ensures we are all clear on what we mean and helps to reduce and potential confusion. Here is a list of some of the terms we have used in this guide:

Term	Definition
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	A neurodevelopment disorder that affects both children and adults. It is caused by signs such as difficulty with focus, hyperactivity and impulsivity.
Autism	A lifelong neurodivergence and disability. Autistic people are different from each other, but for a diagnosis they must share differences from non-autistic people in how they think, feel and communicate.
Dyslexia	A specific learning difficulty, which means it causes problems with certain abilities used for learning, such as reading and writing.
Learning disability	A general term for disorders that affect a person's ability to learn and use specific skills, particularly in areas such as reading, writing, mathematics and reasoning.
Long term health condition	A health issue that has lasted, or is expected to last, for 12 months or more.
Neurodiverse	Having a brain that functions differently from what is considered typical. This includes conditions like autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and others. Neurodiverse individuals may have unique strengths and challenges, and the term emphasises that these differences are natural variations rather than deficits
Neurodiversity	An umbrella term used to describe variations in the human brain affecting mental functions like sociability, learning, and mood. It promotes respect and highlights the positive aspects of different neurocognitive functioning, rather than focusing on deficits.
Neurotypical	Refers to people whose brain functions and behaviours align with societal norms and expectations. They typically develop skills and process information in ways considered standard or typical.
Physical disability	A substantial and long-term limitation affecting a person's mobility, physical functioning, stamina or agility.