**ACCESSIBILITY GUIDANCE – FAQ’s**

**What is a disability?**

The [Equality Act 2010](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents)  defines Disability as follows: “a person will be classed as disabled in law if he or she has a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

As disability is a protected characteristic under Equality Act, the the University must take action to:

* eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
* advance equality of opportunity between people whether they have a protected characteristic or not.
* foster good relations between people whether they have a protected characteristic or not.

**How do I know if my condition is considered a disability?**

The important factor in determining whether something is a disability is whether the impact of the condition has an effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities and the extent and timescale of this effect. In general one would be considered to have a disability if one has an impairment that is either physical or mental, the impairment has adverse effects which are ‘substantial’ and the substantial effects are long-term.

**Why should I share my disability or long term condition?**

Bournemouth University promotes sharing of a disability or long term condition to enable the university to best support all staff and students.

There is no obligation for an employee to disclose/share their disability or long term condition to their employer. However, if an employee has a disability or long term condition, they are protected under the Equality Act 2010. This makes it unlawful for an employer to treat them less favorably than other employees for any reason connected with their disability or long term condition, unless there is justification for such action. There is also a duty for employers to make reasonable adjustments to ensure workers with disability or long term condition aren’t seriously disadvantaged when doing their jobs.

If a disability or long term condition impacts upon a staff member's professional fitness/ability they are personally responsible for disclosing relevant information about their disability or long term condition in line with professional performance and/or accreditation requirements.

**What is a ‘reasonable adjustment’?**

The following list sets out some possible examples of a reasonable adjustment which could be made to support an individual. Reasonable adjustments can potentially be implemented on a temporary, occasional or a permanent basis.

• Modifying instructions or reference manuals, e.g. providing them in Braille or large print;

• Providing additional or tailored development, coaching or mentoring, for example for someone with dyslexia;

• Working with Additional Learning and Disability Support when undertaking a period of study;

• Adjusting working hours, for example allowing someone who may be fatigued as a side effect of medication a later or flexible start time, or more frequent rest breaks;

• Changing the place of work, for example moving an individual with limited mobility to a ground-floor location;

• Providing specialist equipment, for example assistive software or other specialist equipment;

• Facilitating a reader or interpreter;

• Agreeing to part-time working;

• Changing the method of doing the job, e.g. allowing an employee who cannot drive due to epilepsy to use taxis for business travel;

• Adjusting the duties of the job, for example exempting an employee with a musculoskeletal condition from the elements involving physical work;

• Modifying procedures for testing and/or assessments as part of a recruitment exercise;

• Extending an individual’s probationary period if the impacts of a disability or long-term condition has prevented the individual from being able to demonstrate an acceptable level of performance during the usual probationary time-scale for the role;

• Arranging for meetings to be held at a location or at a time to suit the individual or arranging for short breaks during long meetings.

**Who should I disclose/share my information with?**

Ideally you should be able to discuss any issues in relation to your health and wellbeing with your line manager in confidence. If you feel that speaking to your line manager is not an option, you can discuss in confidence with HR and/or the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team.

**What if I decide not to disclose/share?**

You have the right not to disclose or share your disability or long term condition or to request that the existence or nature of your disability or long term condition be treated as strictly confidential and therefore not shared with relevant staff across the University.

However, if we do not know about a disability or long term condition then we will not be able to take the necessary action to support staff with reasonable adjustments.

**As a line manager, how do I determine whether a reasonable adjustment is required?**

As a manager you should be alert to wellbeing aspects of your team. Don’t waste time trying to work out whether a situation meets the legal definition of disability, talk to your team member and find out what would help in order to make any changes you reasonably can to help fulfil their role.

It is best practice to make adjustments for anyone who is having difficulties at work, this way you have done all that you reasonably can, whether a team member discloses a disability/long term condition or not.

**A reasonable adjustment may impact on others within a team, how do I discuss this with them without breaching any confidentiality?**

How colleagues view reasonable adjustments made for an employee will depend very much on the culture that you as a manager create and promote in your workplace. If your team know that you are a fair manager and realise that their needs will also be considered carefully should they need adjustments, they are much more likely to look at adjustments made for a colleague in a positive way.

**Are adjustments permanent? Can they be reviewed?**

Reasonable adjustments can potentially be implemented on a temporary, occasional or a permanent basis.

**I am a Blue Badge holder. Is there accessible parking at BU?**

Registered Disabled Blue Badge holders have the same rights on the University campus as they have on the public highway.

Parking on campus is currently free for blue badge holders and there are disabled spaces near all buildings on campus.

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