



Contact information

Access to work

You should contact the centre below by telephone, textphone, fax, email or by post. Please note that there are no walk-in facilities. You will need to know your National Insurance number when you contact them.

Access to Work
Operational Support Unit
Harrow Jobcentre Plus
Mail Handling Site A
Wolverhampton
WV98 1JE

E: atwsu.london@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk

T: **0345 268 8489**

Textphone: **0345 608 8753**

You could also contact your local Jobcentre or Jobcentre Plus office and ask to talk to an access to work adviser or a disability employment adviser for advice and an application form.

Equality and Diversity Adviser

Margaret McFee, ext 8459, m.mcfee@tees.ac.uk

Occupational health service

Occupational Health Adviser, ext 2213,
occupationalhealth@tees.ac.uk

Further information

Detailed guidance is available from the following documents:

Guidance for Providing Disabled Staff with Reasonable Adjustments

Car parking for disabled staff and students

Guidance for Staff with Dyslexia

More information is available from the University website:

> **Disability access and support**
tees.ac.uk/sections/jobs/disabilities.cfm

> **Equality and diversity**
tees.ac.uk/sections/jobs/equalopportunities

The University has a Disability Focus Group which raises awareness of disability issues and advises on policy. To join the group or for further information contact the Equality and Diversity Adviser or visit the equality and diversity web page.



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Inspiring success



Positive about disability

Supporting disabled staff at Teesside University



CA9 8757HR

This guide is for new and existing disabled staff. It is also aimed at staff who may have a long term health condition but may be unsure if their condition is a disability.

At Teesside we support the social model of disability, believing that what really disables a person is not the impairments they have but the physical, organisational and attitudinal barriers society creates.

We also recognise that disabled staff may require some practical adjustments, support or guidance to ensure that they can give of their best and achieve their full potential.

Am I disabled?

There are many kinds of disability, some more widely understood and visible than others. You may be one of many staff that have a disability that is covered by the Equality Act without even realising it.

Legally a person is likely to be considered disabled if they have a mental or physical impairment that has an adverse effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. This must be:

- > substantial – in other words, not minor or trivial
- > long-term – which is usually taken to mean that it has lasted, or is likely to last for more than 12 months

There is no definitive list of disabilities but it can include people with cancer, depression, dyslexia, arthritis, HIV, or repetitive strain injury (RSI)

You may not realise that you are still considered disabled if the affects of your impairment is alleviated or removed by ongoing treatment or aids.

For example, if you have rheumatoid arthritis, which is well controlled by medication, you may show no signs of any impairment. However the law would still consider you to be disabled because, without the medication, the condition would have a serious affect on your ability to carry out day to day activities. Without continuous medication you would have a serious impairment.

I am still not sure if I am disabled.

If you would like an informal discussion in confidence with someone who can offer guidance and signpost you to help and support, then contact the Equality and Diversity Adviser, who is the main point of contact for disabled staff.



I think I am disabled. What should I do now?

It is up to you whether or not you tell the University that you are disabled. However, we would hope that you would feel happy to disclose your disability because unless we know how many disabled staff we have and where they are in the organisation we cannot measure how well our equal opportunities policies and practices are working.

Even if you do not need any adjustments in the workplace it is important to ensure that your

disability status is recorded correctly on the HR system. If you did not notify us of a disability during your recruitment then this can be done by updating your personal details in UNITY. This can be done via the following link:

<https://unity3.tees.ac.uk/myuniversity>

If you do not have access to a computer you should contact HR about changing your disability status.

What can the University do to assist me?

The University must make 'reasonable adjustments' for staff with disabilities. Reasonable adjustments are adaptations in the workplace to ensure that you are able to do your job to the best of your ability and/or have equal access to facilities and services. Some of the most common types of adjustment include:

- > equipment (eg assistive computer software packages or a specialist chair)
- > the services of a support worker (eg a personal assistant or a BSL interpreter)
- > adjustments to workplaces or the physical environment

> adjustments to an employee's duties, working routine or conditions of service

It is important to note that adjustments must be reasonable. Clearly, not all potential adjustments would be reasonable to make, but if a request is not accepted then you will be given a clear explanation of why it was not reasonable.

Please do not purchase equipment or pay for any tests before it has been agreed that these costs can be refunded by the University.

I think I need some adjustments. What should I do now?

If you feel that you need any adjustments you should, ideally, talk to the Equality and Diversity Adviser and/or to your line manager. Once your line manager is aware of the issues he or she can seek advice on how best to assist you. Details of any discussion and actions taken will be recorded on a 'Reasonable adjustments form', and agreed by both you and your line manager, to ensure that you both understand what is required and what will happen next.

If you are uncomfortable talking to your line manager you can contact the Equality and Diversity Adviser or your HR Manager.

It may not be obvious what adjustments are required and specialist advice may need to be sought. The Equality and Diversity Adviser will be able to identify appropriate sources of support. This may involve Human Resources, the Occupational Health Adviser, and/or Access to Work.



What is Access to Work?

Access to Work is a government scheme managed through Jobcentre Plus. It provides practical, individually-tailored advice and support to disabled people who are in or seeking paid work. It is the primary source of funding for disability support.

What help is available?

Whatever your employment status Access to Work will pay up to 100% of the approved costs of:

- > fares to work if public transport can't be used;
- > a support worker or reader to provide help in the workplace;
- > a communicator for support at job interviews.

Access to Work also offers other help, which includes special aids or equipment for employment and adaptations to premises and existing equipment. Access to Work will not however fund items which are regarded as standard equipment, standard business costs or standard health and safety requirements.

This means that any item which would normally be needed to do the job, whether a person is disabled or not, will not be paid for.

If you are a new member of staff and make a claim for Access to Work during the first six weeks of commencing work at the University, Access to Work will pay 100% of all approved costs. It is

therefore very important that if you need help at work, you contact Access to Work as soon as you can so that the University does not have to share any costs.

Otherwise, if you have been in your job for six weeks or more when you first apply for help, access to work will pay a proportion of the costs of support. Large organisations like Teesside University have to pay the first £1,000 and Access to Work pay up to 80% of the costs up to £10,000. Access to Work would normally cover all additional costs over £10,000.

How do I claim it?

Contact the Access to Work Centre directly where you will be offered advice and guidance from an Access to Work adviser. It would be helpful to keep your line manager informed about your Access to Work claim.

What happens after the adjustments have been made?

Hopefully the adjustments that have been made will enable you to do your job to the best of your ability. However, we understand that sometimes what works for one person does not always work for everyone. We also recognise that circumstances may change. Impairments may get better or worse over time. Therefore your line manager will need to review the situation regularly with you to make sure adjustments are appropriate to your needs.

If you are experiencing problems please do not feel you need to wait until your scheduled review, but seek help straight away. It is in everyone's interest that you can perform your duties to the best of your abilities.

The Equality and Diversity Adviser is there to help and support you with any issue related to your disability.

