

# Positive about Disability

Supporting disabled staff  
at Teesside University



**AMBITION  
DELIVERED  
TODAY**



# Welcome

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.

**Scan to learn more about the social model of disability or click here:**



# Contents

- 2 Am I disabled?
- 4 I think I'm disabled, what should I do now?
- 5 What can the University do to assist me?
- 6 I think I may need some adjustments, what should I do next?
- 7 What is the Reasonable Adjustments Passport?
- 8 What is Access to Work?
- 9 What happens after the adjustments have been made?
- 10 Contact Information



## Am I Disabled?

**There are many kinds of disability, some more widely understood and visible than others. You may be one of many staff who have a disability which is covered by the Equality Act 2010 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, arthritis, HIV/AIDS, repetitive strain injury (RSI) and mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety and PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). It also includes neurodivergent conditions such as ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), Autism, Dyslexia, OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder) and Tourette's Syndrome.

**Scan to view the Equality Act 2010 or click here:**



You may not realise that you are still considered disabled if the effect 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 effect on your ability to carry out day to day activities. Without continuous medication you would have a serious impairment.

If you think you have a neurodiverse condition such as ADHD, Autism and Dyslexia, please contact your GP who will refer you for assessment. If you do not have a diagnosis or are awaiting assessment you can still complete the Reasonable Adjustments Passport with the adjustments you need.

**Scan to download Reasonable Adjustments Passport or click here:**



**I'm not sure if I'm 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 Lead, who is the main point of contact for disabled staff.





## I think I'm 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 on Unity, the staff intranet. Followed by Employee Self Service, (ESS) via My HR.

Update your records using the below QR codes or click Unity or My HR.

**Unity**



**My HR**



## What can the University do to assist me?

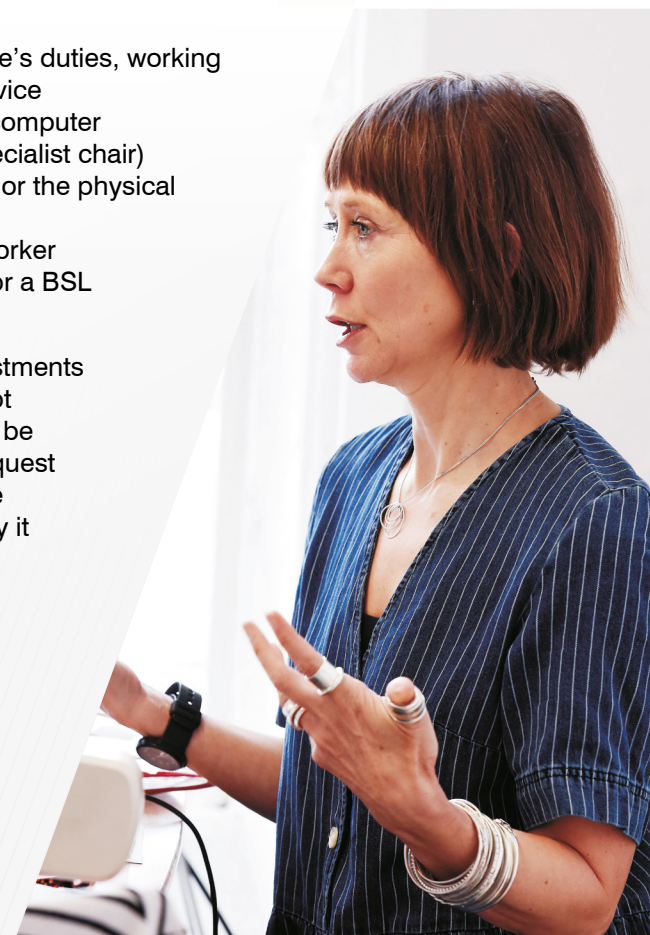
The University is required to make “reasonable adjustments” for staff with disabilities. Reasonable adjustments refer to changes to prevent a disability from putting an individual at a disadvantage compared to those without disabilities. These adjustments involve adaptations in the workplace to ensure that employees can perform their jobs to the best of their ability and have equal access to facilities and services.

### Some of the most common types of adjustment include:

- > adjustments to an employee's duties, working routine or conditions of service
- > equipment (e.g., assistive computer software packages or a specialist chair)
- > adjustments to workplaces or the physical environment
- > the services of a support worker (e.g., a personal assistant or a BSL interpreter).

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.

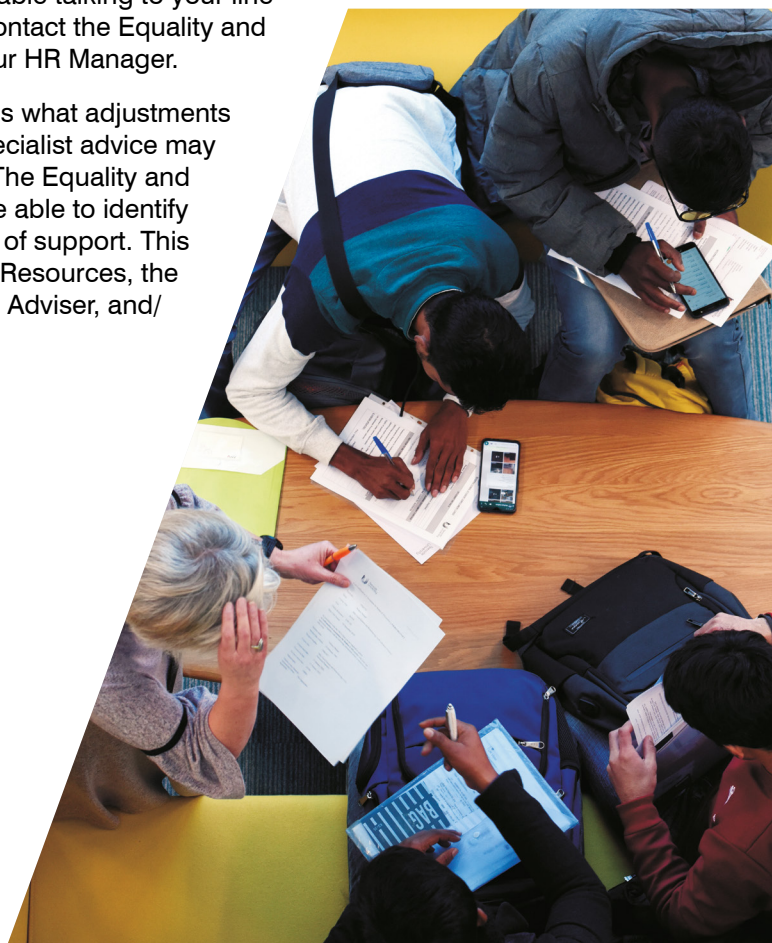


## I think I may need some adjustments, what should I do next?

If you feel that you need any adjustments you should complete the Reasonable Adjustments Passport and talk to your line manager. Once your line manager is aware of the issues, they can seek advice on how best to assist you. Details of any discussion and actions taken will be recorded on the Reasonable Adjustments Passport, and agreed by both you and your line manager, to ensure that you both understand what is required and what will happen next. Once this form has been completed by the employee and manager, it will need to be uploaded by the manager to the employees iTrent system.

If you are uncomfortable talking to your line manager, you can contact the Equality and Diversity Lead 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 Lead 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 the Reasonable Adjustments Passport?

The Reasonable Adjustments Passport provides a live record of adjustments agreed between a disabled worker and their manager to support them at work.

**The purpose of this agreement is to:**

- > Ensure that both parties, the individual and the employer, have an accurate record of what has been agreed.
- > Minimise the need to re-negotiate adjustments every time the employee changes jobs, is re-located or assigned a new manager within the organisation.
- > Provide employees and their line managers with the basis for discussion about adjustments at future meetings.

Some disabled people might not need or want adjustments, although this might change over time.

**Scan to view Reasonable Adjustments Passport Guidance or click here:**





## 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.

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.

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.

Please see the Access to Work Factsheet provided for more information on how access to work can help.

**Access to Work apply online or  
Telephone: 0800 121 7479**

**Access to Work**



**Work Factsheet**



## 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- seek help straight away. It is in everyone's interest that you can perform your duties to the best of your ability.

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



# Contact information

## Equality Diversity Inclusion Lead

Saliah Hameed

E: s.hameed@tees.ac.uk

## Occupational Health Service

Occupational Health Adviser

E: occupationalhealth@tees.ac.uk

## Further Information

Detailed guidance is available from the following documents:

**Download Providing Staff with Reasonable Adjustments guidance or click here:**



**Visit website for information on car parking for disabled staff and students or click here:**



**More information is available from the University website:**

**Visit Equality & Diversity webpage or click here:**



**Visit Disability Matters webpage or click here:**



## Disability Focus Group

The University has a Disability Focus Group which raises awareness of disability issues and advises on policy. The group has a Disability Matters webpage advocating for disabled colleagues and students to influence positive change so everyone has the opportunity to reach their potential.

**Visit Disability Matters webpage or click here:**



**R N I B**



**Better Health  
at Work Award**

