



British
Acupuncture
Council



The British Acupuncture Council's Reasonable adjustment policy

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1 Introduction

The British Acupuncture Council (BAcC) works to maintain common standards of education, ethics, discipline, and Codes of Practice to always ensure the health and safety of the public.

We are also committed to promoting research and enhancing the role that traditional acupuncture can play in the health and well-being of the nation.

Our members belong to an accredited register, regulated and approved by the Professional Standards Authority for Health & Social Care (PSA). The PSA protects the public by overseeing the regulation and registration of healthcare professionals - including statutorily regulated professions, such as the Nursing and Midwifery Council, and Accredited Registers like the BAcC. This offers a quality mark for high standards of training, safe practice, and professional conduct.

We must take reasonable steps in the way that we work to ensure we are compliant with Equality & Diversity legislation and regulations.

The Equality Act 2010 (and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in Northern Ireland)

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.

It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone.

The BAcC's Reasonable adjustment policy sets out what a reasonable adjustment is, how to make a reasonable adjustment to us, our duties and responsibilities, and what considerations we will take into account when reviewing a request.

This policy is not intended to explain how we will approach every situation, it is meant as a general statement of our policy and

- confirms our commitment to improving accessibility for every person we deal with,
- sets out some of the basic principles of our duty to provide reasonable adjustments; and
- sets out the circumstances that we will consider in dealing with requests for reasonable adjustments.

2 What is a reasonable adjustment?

A reasonable adjustment involves making a change to the way we usually do things to ensure that we are fair to all our members, our staff and people who access our services.

This may involve:

- departing from our usual practice in the way we do things, if we find that the current position places that person at a substantial disadvantage, for instance by allowing more time than we usually would for someone to respond or provide information; or
- providing specialist equipment or additional support, such as a sign language interpreter for a meeting or event; or
- making sure our buildings do not present obstacles for disabled people, for instance by providing a lift or ground level meeting rooms.

We will not make assumptions about whether a disabled person requires any adjustments or about what those adjustments should be. We will discuss the requirements with the person concerned and seek to reach agreement on what may be reasonable in the circumstances.

3 Our legal duties in relation to disabled people

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled people, defined by the Act as those who have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

This may, in some circumstances, mean that disabled people receive more favourable treatment than non-disabled people, which is lawful in the context of disability.

4 Requesting reasonable adjustments

Initial requests for a reasonable adjustment will be made to the relevant manager communicating with the requestee and supported by the Systems and Operations department, if necessary. Details will be in the instructions we send at the start of the request.

We will inform the person of the reasonable adjustments we can provide for example, in the following ways:

- By including a paragraph in written communications (e.g. welcome letters);
- By asking whether an adjustment might be required over the telephone;
- by including a note on our published documents indicating that we can provide the document in an alternative format on request;
- by publishing this policy on our website; and

- by working with key representative groups and others to raise awareness of this policy.

5 Types of reasonable adjustments we can offer

Whilst we will consider each request for reasonable adjustments individually, there are some common adjustments which we will offer as a matter of course and some other adjustments that we can arrange to provide.

The adjustments will always be agreed with the person concerned to avoid making incorrect assumptions about a person's needs.

Some examples of the simple reasonable adjustments that staff can make may include:

- providing documents or correspondence in a larger font size
- providing documents on coloured paper or with a specific colour contrast which can often help people with conditions such as dyslexia
- allowing a person who has a learning disability or mental health problems more time than would usually be allowed to provide further information—except where there is a statutory deadline which we have no power to change
- using email or the telephone in preference to hard copy letters where appropriate, which may assist those with a vision impairment
- speaking clearly to the people who we deal with and offering additional time to cover the issues they need to discuss—this will help everyone understand our processes and procedures
- using plain English appropriate to the person we are dealing with and avoiding jargon
- arranging meetings in rooms which have appropriate facilities.

Some other arrangements that we can provide will include:

- providing information on audio,
- providing a sign language interpreter,
- translating documents or correspondence into Braille,
- providing electronic documents that support Read out Loud text to speech conversion and support screen readers and screen magnifiers
- communicating with people through their representative, if requested and approved by them.

Some requests may require more detailed consideration and our approach to these requests is discussed in the section below.

6 Our response to requests for reasonable adjustment

In most cases we will be able to agree and deliver the required reasonable adjustments with a minimum of delay. In some cases, we may need to consider in more detail how best to overcome the difficulty a disabled person may be experiencing. For example, where the adjustment requested may be difficult to provide or where it may interfere with our statutory or regulatory obligations.

7 How do we decide what is "reasonable"?

The Equality Act does not define what is "reasonable" but guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission suggests that the most relevant factors are:

- Will the adjustment help in overcoming the difficulty that the disabled person may have? The adjustment should be designed to fully address the disadvantage it is meant to overcome—for example providing a meeting room which is accessible by wheelchair may not properly overcome the barriers faced by the wheelchair user if there are no disabled toilet facilities also available.
- How practical is it to provide the adjustment?
- What are the resource implications of making the adjustment? How much will it cost and is this proportionate to the adjustment being requested.
- Would the adjustment cause disruption to others?
- For example, it would not usually be reasonable for a fee earner to drop all other cases and devote all their time to one person, as others would inevitably suffer. The amount of extra time provided must therefore be "reasonable" in all the circumstances.

8 Monitoring

The BAAC will record and monitor the reasonable adjustments that have been requested and made. This will allow us to review what we have provided and help us identify whether there are any wider steps that we can take to improve what we offer.

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