

DISABILITY SUPPORT IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY & PROCEDURE

Contents

1. What is the definition of disability?	2
2. Who does it apply to?	2
3. When does it apply?.....	3
4. What are the main points?.....	3
5. Declaring a disability	4
6. Staying in employment	4
7. Ongoing discussions during employment	4
10. Disability awareness	5
11. Making reasonable adjustments.....	5
12. Considerations for reasonable adjustments.....	5
13. Terms and conditions of employment	6
14. Training and development	6
15. Workplace risk assessments	6
16. Emergency Procedures	6
17. Roles and responsibilities	7
17.1 Line Manager’s responsibilities.....	7
17.2 Employee responsibilities (disabled and non-disabled).....	8
17.3 Employee responsibilities (disabled).....	8
18. Advice and guidance	8
19. Policy Review.....	8

This policy and procedure sets out a framework of support for employees and prospective employees (job applicants and prospective job applicants) who have or have had a disability. It also applies to employees who become disabled during the course of their work.

1. What is the definition of disability?

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Substantial means not minor or trivial and could include long term medical conditions such as asthma and diabetes and fluctuating or progressive conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis. Long-term means that the condition must last, or be likely to last, for more than 12 months, or that it is a terminal condition.

A mental impairment would include mental health conditions (such as bipolar disorder or depression), learning difficulties (such as dyslexia) and learning disabilities (such as autism and Down's syndrome). Some people, including those with cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS, are automatically protected. People with severe disfigurements may also be covered by the Act.

Under the Equalities Act, there is no longer a requirement to show that the condition impacts on one of the 8 normal day to day activities set out in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), but the condition must still have a substantial impact on normal day to day activity.

2. Who does it apply to?

The support outlined in the policy should be made available to all employees and prospective employees who have declared that they have a disability. This policy and procedure should be implemented and adhered to by all employees of QRS.

Reasonable adjustments should also be considered for other groups of employees who have protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010 these include:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

Menopause

QRS is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment to all staff members throughout all stages of their working lives.

QRS recognises that staff experiencing the menopause, whether before (i.e. perimenopause), during or after the period of hormonal change and associated symptoms, may need additional consideration, support and adjustments (**post seeking advice from a medical professional**). QRS acknowledges that menopausal symptoms can impact an individual's well-being and productivity.

QRS recognises that the menopause and menopausal symptoms may not only affect women but also non-binary, transgender and intersex people.

QRS are committed to ensuring health, safety and overall well-being of its workforce.

QRS want to create and maintain a positive and supportive working environment in which its staff members feel able to speak freely and openly about the menopause in a respectful and supportive manner.

*Please refer to separate Factsheet ***

3. When does it apply?

This policy and procedure applies at all times prior to employment, during the recruitment process, and throughout employment.

Where an employee or job applicant has not declared a disability or where a manager could not reasonably be expected to know that an employee has a disability, support under this policy may not automatically be offered.

4. What are the main points?

QRS has set out a clear policy statement in the equality and diversity policy and procedure which includes a commitment to treat all employees with dignity and respect, to value diversity and provide equality of access to opportunities in the workplace. You should not receive less favourable treatment or be unfairly disadvantaged by policies, procedures, conditions or requirements unless this can be shown to be justified.

This policy and procedure sits within the framework of the equality and diversity policy and procedure and sets out details of the support and assistance available to you, if you have declared that you have a disability, which all managers are required to follow and adhere to including:

- Making reasonable adjustments (within a reasonable adjustment budget).
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (agreed as per individuals risk assessment).

If you have a disability you are encouraged to declare this to ensure that you receive the support and assistance that is available. You can declare your disability at any point during your employment including where you acquire a disability, or an existing condition deteriorates further during your employment.

5. Declaring a disability

If you have a disability you are encouraged to declare this at the earliest possible opportunity. This information enables the company to identify where further support or action needs to be addressed and to monitor the effectiveness of our policies and procedures.

You will not be at any disadvantage for disclosing this information and in fact there are further rights and support available for disabled staff who declare that they have a disability as outlined in this policy and procedure.

You can make a declaration in writing to the HR Director and to the Managing Director. Once your letter has been received, they should arrange to meet with you to discuss and work through the options of support.

If you declare that you have a disability, QRS will provide you with support in accordance with this policy and procedure. This support may subsequently be withdrawn in the event that your condition does not fall under the definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010.

Information relating to declaring a disability will be kept appropriately confidential and in accordance with our obligations under the Data Protection Act relating to sensitive personal data.

6. Staying in employment

If you have declared that you have a disability or have become disabled during your employment and you have made your manager aware of this, your manager should make the company aware of your disability and QRS would be responsible for ensuring that every effort, as far as is reasonable, is made to enable you to stay in employment.

Your manager will arrange to meet with you to explore what action, if any, needs to be taken to enable you to remain in employment and will work with you supportively to identify whether there are any steps which need to be taken to remove potential barriers at work.

QRS are responsible for making reasonable adjustments as set out in this policy to ensure that you are not placed at any substantial disadvantage.

7. Ongoing discussions during employment

If you have declared that you have a disability, your manager should ensure that there is a mechanism in place to maintain ongoing discussions with you, at any time, but at least once a year (with periodic reviews), about what can be done to make sure that you can develop and use your abilities. This could be undertaken as part of the appraisal process or at a separate meeting.

You are also encouraged to let your manager know as soon as possible if you identify or need to discuss an issue affecting your access and progress at work. Your manager may seek additional advice and support both internally and externally in relation to reasonable adjustments as appropriate.

10. Disability awareness

The company Directors have overall responsibility for ensuring that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness. This could be through training, information sharing, discussion or coaching or some other appropriate method. For example, where a personal emergency evacuation plan has been agreed with your manager, it may be important to share this with your colleagues.

11. Making reasonable adjustments

Under the Equality Act 2010, managers need to make reasonable adjustments which will include making a decision about whether adjustments are reasonable and appropriate. Managers will need to give reasonable adjustments serious consideration and think broadly about these.

The need to make reasonable adjustments may occur prior to employment (from the planning stages of recruitment, including advertising vacancies) in relation to prospective employees and at any stage of employment for existing employees.

The duty to make an adjustment will only apply if you have declared that you have a disability, or the employer could be reasonably expected to know that you have a disability. If you are disabled and expect a reasonable adjustment to be made for you, you will need to provide the appropriate manager with sufficient information for them to consider and carry out that adjustment. If you require support with understanding your needs at work, you should approach your line manager.

If you are a prospective employee or existing employee applying for a vacancy, who has declared that you have a disability, the recruiting manager for the vacancy will be responsible for making reasonable adjustments during the recruitment stage and will contact you about this in advance.

If you are an existing disabled employee, your manager is responsible for making reasonable adjustments where appropriate throughout your employment. You and your manager should meet at any time but at least once a year (with periodic reviews) to discuss what can be done to make sure that you can develop and use your abilities. This will include an exploration as to whether reasonable adjustments may be required and whether any current adjustments are still effective.

12. Considerations for reasonable adjustments

In terms of giving consideration as to whether a reasonable adjustment should be made, your manager or the recruiting manager for the vacancy, will need to comply with the duty to consider whether you would be placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with a person who is not disabled in relation to the following three requirements:

1. The way things are done (specifically a provision, criterion or practice; this could be a written or unwritten policy or procedure).
2. Physical feature of the workplace which creates a barrier (including parking areas, building entrances, doors, toilets, steps, lifts etc.).
3. The absence of an auxiliary aid or service e.g. extra equipment or getting someone to support or assist.

Your manager should consider the following factors when considering a reasonable adjustment:

- How effective the adjustment will be in helping you to do your job.
- Whether it is practical to make the adjustment.
- How much disruption, if any, will be caused to the work of the section/service or other people.
- How much, if anything, the adjustment will cost.
- Whether any help is available in making the adjustment and towards its cost from a national scheme or the reasonable adjustments budget (please see section below).

All adjustments would be assessed on an individual case by case scenario.

13. Terms and conditions of employment

In line with the equality and diversity policy and procedure, all terms and conditions of employment should be applied fairly and equitably to you. These are set out in your statement of particulars and the companies policies are available on the company website.

If you are off sick due to your disability/impairment your absence will be recorded by your manager (in addition to SAP).

14. Training and development

Access to training and development will be related to the needs of the job and section/department, the available resources and by an assessment of the employee's needs on a case-by-case basis.

15. Workplace risk assessments

Where you have declared that you have a disability, your manager may decide that they need to undertake a risk assessment if your disability affects the way that you do your job to ensure your health and safety and the health and safety of others.

If your disability does not affect the way that you do your job, the need to undertake a risk assessment will be made on an individual basis as for all employees. If a risk assessment is carried out, you should also be involved in the assessment.

16. Emergency Procedures

If you have a disability, your manager should consider any additional needs that you or a visitor with a disability may have in relation to safe movement within the workplace and in particular the means to get to a place of safety in the event of an emergency.

17. Roles and responsibilities

17.1 Line Manager's responsibilities

To ensure that the support outlined in this policy and procedure is provided to disabled employees fairly and consistently.

To carry out recruitment and selection in accordance with the current policy and guidance and to ensure that prospective disabled employees are also treated fairly and consistently in line with the principles outlined within this policy including the need to make reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

Where an employee declares that they have a disability to meet with them to work through an action plan.

Where an employee declares that they have a disability to ensure that there is a mechanism in place to discuss, at any time, but at least once a year (with periodic reviews), what can be done to make sure that they can develop and use their abilities – this can be through the appraisal process or at a separate meeting.

When an employee declares their disability, to ensure that reasonable adjustments are implemented to remove barriers for disabled staff which potentially put employees at a disadvantage to ensure that they can perform effectively and have equal access to progression in the workplace.

To comply with the responsibilities to disabled colleagues and visitors in the event of an emergency evacuation as outlined in this policy and procedure.

To make every effort when employees become disabled to enable them to stay in employment including redeployment where appropriate.

To ensure that disabled employees receive an appropriate and fully accessible induction including information about policies, practices and procedures when they start a new post and that they continue to be informed and updated about changes to these.

To apply all other employment related policies and procedures and terms and conditions of employment fairly and consistently and to implement reasonable adjustments for disabled staff where appropriate.

To be mindful and take action to avoid all forms of discrimination as set out in this policy and procedure and the equality and diversity policy and procedure to ensure that equal rights and opportunities are provided to all.

To challenge discrimination and unfair treatment in the workplace and ensure that it is dealt with appropriately.

To provide support to any employee who is the subject of unlawful or unacceptable discrimination in the course of their employment.

17.2 Employee responsibilities (disabled and non-disabled)

To treat colleagues, managers, service users and members of the public with dignity and respect and to be supportive of disabled colleagues, in accordance with the principles set out in this policy and procedure and the equality and diversity policy and procedure.

17.3 Employee responsibilities (disabled)

In addition to the responsibilities above to:

- Declare your disability on the form provided to enable your manager to evaluate the support required in line with this policy and procedure.
- Work positively with your manager and HR, to provide information about barriers which place you at a disadvantage at work and help to identify reasonable adjustments or solutions to overcome these barriers.
- To co-operate fully in assisting managers to undertake risk assessments and put together personal emergency evacuation plans, where these are identified as necessary to ensure your health and safety and/or the health and safety of others.
- Where applicable to follow instructions from your medical consultant/doctor for example if you are on medication, it is your responsibility to ensure that the medication is taken as prescribed.
- To take personal responsibility for matters relating to your personal health and safety and for informing your employer and colleagues of your needs.

18. Advice and guidance

If you require help in understanding this policy, you should contact your line manager or HR.

There are a number of related policies and procedures that you should be aware of which are all listed on the company website.

19. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually.

These policies supplement your terms of employment but are not of contractual effect. Their purpose is to explain the Company's current policies and procedures, but they may be subject to change without notice if changes are considered appropriate by the Company or if there are changes in relevant legislation.