



Government
Equalities Office

Questions about assessments and reasonable adjustments in the application / interview process

Some application processes may involve assessment tests or interviews. These processes should not unreasonably disadvantage disabled people.

You can ask questions about disability and health at an early stage in the application process, so that you can establish whether the applicant can comply with a requirement to undergo an assessment or establish whether you must make reasonable adjustments for a disabled applicant in relation to an assessment. Making a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person could mean changing the way in which an interview is structured, providing special equipment, removing physical barriers, or providing extra support.

The Act seeks to achieve a balance between the rights of disabled people and the interests of employers, and employers are therefore only required to make adjustments that are reasonable in all the circumstances of any particular case. What is 'reasonable' will vary from one situation to another, so employers need to think about factors such as the cost and practicability of making an adjustment and the resources available to them in deciding what is reasonable.

Employers are not subject to the reasonable adjustment duty if they do not know, and could not reasonably be expected to know that an applicant has a disability.

Further information on what is a reasonable adjustment can be found at: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/guidance-for-employers/the-duty-to-make-reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-people/>

You can't ask questions about disability and health if you are trying to establish what reasonable adjustments might be required for the applicant to actually do the job. **Questions relating to the job itself can only be asked once a job offer has been made.**

Example 1

Andrew applies for a job as a secretary. During the application process Andrew is asked whether he is able to undergo an assessment to demonstrate he can type sufficiently quickly and accurately. This would be acceptable because it enables Andrew to show the employer that he has the relevant skills for the job.

Example 2

Meena is a wheelchair user and is applying for a job in an office. The employer asks Meena if she needs any reasonable adjustments to participate in the interview. Meena asks for the interview to take place in a wheelchair-accessible room.

Example 3

Adrian is not shortlisted for interview for the position of a clerk, a post which involves typing, because he states on his application form that he cannot type. The reason Adrian cannot type is because he has severe arthritis, but he does not state this anywhere on the application form. The employer would not be expected to make a reasonable adjustment to the typing requirement in these circumstances as they had no knowledge of Adrian's disability and could not reasonably be expected to know of it. This is because employers are not subject to the reasonable adjustment duty if they do not know, and could not reasonably be expected to know that an applicant has a disability.