REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AT WORK

A practical checklist workbook by EDS UK

From noticing a difficulty, to exploring adjustments, agreeing a plan, trying it out and reviewing what works.

Name	
Role / team	
Date checklist started	
What I would most like to be different at work	

You do not need to complete every page or have all the answers before asking for support. Use the sections that are helpful, skip anything that is not relevant, and return to the workbook as your needs or work change.

This workbook supports conversations. It is not a medical assessment, legal opinion or substitute for advice from an occupational health professional, union representative or qualified adviser.

A useful starting point: focus on the work-related barrier and what would help. You do not need to arrive with the perfect solution or a particular diagnosis.

How to use this workbook

Work through the stages in order, or jump straight to the checklist you need. You can complete it alone or with a manager, HR contact, union representative, occupational health professional or occupational therapist.

The journey at a glance

1. Notice what is difficult, when it happens and how it affects work.
2. Identify what helps already and what could make work more manageable.
3. Prepare for a conversation and decide who to speak to.
4. Explore possible adjustments together.
5. Agree a clear plan, including who will do what and when.
6. Trial the adjustments and record what happens.
7. Review, adapt and keep the plan under review.

Adjustments are individual. What helps one person may not help another, and the right approach may change from day to day or over time. Some adjustments may be temporary; others may be ongoing.

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1. Noticing the barriers

Start with the tasks, situations or parts of the working day that are difficult. You do not need to share more personal or medical information than is relevant.

What is getting in the way? *Tick all that apply*

☐ A task takes much longer or requires more effort than it used to.
☐ Pain, fatigue, stiffness, joint instability or other symptoms build during the day.
☐ Concentration, memory, processing information or organising tasks is difficult at particular times.
☐ The workstation, equipment, lighting, noise, temperature or layout makes work harder.
☐ Travel or commuting affects my ability to work effectively.
☐ My role involves prolonged sitting, standing, walking, lifting, reaching or repetitive movements.
☐ The pace, workload, deadlines, caseload or number of meetings is difficult to sustain.
☐ My working pattern does not allow enough flexibility, recovery time or breaks.
☐ Symptoms or needs vary, so a strategy that works one day may not work another.
☐ Uniform/dress code makes it difficult to use braces, compression garments, orthotics or other items I need.
☐ Other -

Look for patterns

☐ I have noticed when the difficulty tends to happen (time of day, day of week or after a task).
☐ I have noticed whether it is linked to duration, repetition, posture, workload, travel or the environment.
☐ I have considered whether it happens at home, in the workplace, when travelling or in more than one setting.
☐ I have noticed what happens afterwards (for example, increased symptoms, slower recovery or difficulty completing later tasks).
☐ I have considered whether the difficulty is predictable, fluctuating or linked to flare-ups.
☐ Other –

Tasks or situations that are difficult:	
When / where / how often this happens:	
What happens to my work, energy or wellbeing:	

2. What helps already?

Notice what is working, including informal strategies you have developed. These can provide clues about useful adjustments.

My current strategies and supports

☐ Changing position or alternating between sitting, standing and moving.
☐ Taking short, regular microbreaks or changing task every so often.
☐ Pacing work and avoiding doing too much on a better day (the boom-and-bust cycle).
☐ Breaking large tasks into smaller steps.
☐ Planning, prioritising or spreading demanding tasks across the week.
☐ Alternating physical, cognitive and lower-demand tasks.
☐ Using reminders, checklists, calendars, templates or written instructions.
☐ Using voice dictation, captions, transcription or other assistive technology.
☐ Keeping frequently used items within easy reach.

☐ Using equipment, aids, braces, splints, orthotics or mobility aids when helpful.
☐ Having access to water, snacks, medication or temperature-control strategies where appropriate.
☐ Asking for clarification, written follow-up or help with prioritising.
☐ Other –

What already helps me:	
What I have tried that did not help (and why):	
What I would like to try next:	

3. Preparing to ask for a conversation

You can ask for a conversation without having a complete list of adjustments. Explain the work-related difficulty, give examples and say you would like to explore options.

Before I speak to someone

☐ I know who I could approach (line manager, HR, adjustments contact or occupational health).
☐ I have thought about the main work-related barriers I want to discuss.
☐ I have chosen one or two examples that explain the impact on my work.
☐ I have thought about what would make the task or working day easier or safer.
☐ I have considered whether I want someone to accompany or support me in the meeting.
☐ I have considered what information I am comfortable sharing and what is relevant.
☐ I have thought about whether I prefer to start with a conversation or make a written request.
☐ I have noted any urgent issues that need attention before a longer-term plan is agreed.

Questions I may want to ask

☐ What is the process for requesting workplace adjustments here?
☐ Can we arrange an occupational health assessment or workplace assessment?
☐ Who will be involved in discussing and agreeing adjustments?
☐ How will information be handled and who needs to know?
☐ Can we trial an adjustment before making a longer-term decision?
☐ When can we review whether it is working?

Who I plan to speak to:	
What I want them to understand:	
Questions I want to ask:	

A simple way to explain what I need

"I would like to discuss some adjustments that could help me do my role more comfortably and consistently. I am finding _____ difficult, particularly when _____. It affects my work by _____. I have found _____ helpful so far, and I would like to explore options such as _____. Could we arrange a time to discuss this and agree some next steps?"

4. Exploring possible adjustments

Use these prompts to generate options, not as a list of things you must request. The most useful adjustment addresses your particular barrier and can work in your role.

Workstation, seating and equipment

- ☐ An adjustable chair that supports a comfortable, stable sitting position.
- ☐ Suitable lumbar or back support, seat cushion or other seating support.
- ☐ Armrests or forearm supports to reduce the effort of holding my arms up.
- ☐ A footrest or other support so my feet and legs are comfortably supported.
- ☐ Monitor height and distance adjusted so I can work without sustained neck strain.
- ☐ Keyboard and mouse options that support a comfortable hand, wrist and arm position (for example, split keyboard, vertical mouse or central pointing device).
- ☐ Frequently used items positioned within easy reach.
- ☐ A sit-stand option or permission to change position when needed.
- ☐ A suitable fixed workstation rather than hot-desking, if consistency is important.
- ☐ Adapted furniture, accessible layout or space for mobility aids and equipment.
- ☐ An assessment to identify suitable equipment rather than guessing what to buy.

Pacing, breaks and task organisation

- ☐ Short, regular microbreaks or movement / position changes.
- ☐ A planned break pattern that reflects the demands of my work.
- ☐ More time for tasks involving prolonged typing, handwriting or repetitive grip.
- ☐ Alternating demanding tasks with lighter or different types of work.
- ☐ Breaking tasks into smaller stages with realistic deadlines.
- ☐ Help to prioritise when several tasks compete.
- ☐ Calendar buffers between meetings or appointments.
- ☐ Fewer back-to-back meetings or opportunities to move during long meetings.
- ☐ Written instructions, reminders, task lists or prompts.
- ☐ A review of workload, caseload, targets or deadlines.

Hours, location and travel

- ☐ Flexible start and finish times.
- ☐ A later start or adjusted hours during difficult mornings or flare-ups.
- ☐ A shorter day, reduced hours or phased increase in hours where appropriate.
- ☐ A different pattern across the week (for example, a midweek shorter day).
- ☐ More flexibility to take breaks or pause when symptoms increase.
- ☐ Hybrid or home working for some tasks, where the role allows.
- ☐ Reduced or adjusted travel, or meetings held remotely where suitable.

☐ A review of shift patterns, long days or consecutive demanding days.

Duties and the working environment

☐ Temporary or ongoing changes to particular duties.
☐ Reducing heavy lifting, prolonged standing, repeated reaching or repetitive gripping.
☐ Redistributing specific tasks or sharing a physically demanding duty.
☐ A smaller caseload, fewer visits or reduced travel between locations.
☐ Seating available in areas where I would otherwise need to stand.
☐ A quieter or less distracting workspace, or access to a space for focused work.
☐ Adjustments to lighting, screen glare, noise or temperature.
☐ Easy access to drinking water or a personal fan / temperature-control option where appropriate.
☐ Flexibility in dress code so I can wear braces, compression garments or orthotic footwear.
☐ A more accessible route, storage arrangement, desk location or bathroom access.

Assistive technology and communication

☐ Voice-to-text or dictation software.
☐ Meeting captions, transcription or agreed meeting notes.
☐ Templates, text expanders or standard responses for repetitive writing.
☐ Calendar reminders, task-management tools or prompts.
☐ Accessible software, larger text, screen magnification or alternative input devices.
☐ Permission to record agreed work instructions where appropriate and permitted.
☐ Clear written follow-up after verbal instructions or meetings.
☐ A named colleague or point of contact for checking priorities.

Adjustments I want to explore first:	
Which barrier each adjustment is intended to address:	

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5. Choosing and agreeing adjustments

It can help to agree a small number of practical changes first, then review them. Be specific about what will happen, who is responsible and when it will start.

Before agreeing the plan

- ☐ The adjustment addresses a barrier I have described.
- ☐ We have discussed whether it is practical in my role and work setting.
- ☐ We have considered any equipment, training, access or implementation needed.
- ☐ We have discussed whether it is temporary, a trial or ongoing.
- ☐ We have considered what will happen on days when my needs are different.
- ☐ We have agreed how to handle urgent changes or flare-ups.
- ☐ We have agreed who will arrange, approve, purchase or set up each item.
- ☐ We have agreed a start date and a review date.
- ☐ The plan is written down and shared with the people who need to implement it.

My adjustment plan

Barrier / task	Adjustment to try	Who will action it?	Start date	Review date

Agreed boundaries, exceptions or things to avoid:	
How we will know whether the adjustment is helping:	

6. Trialling adjustments

A trial is a chance to learn what works. It is not a test you pass or fail. An adjustment may need fine-tuning, combining with another change or replacing.

During the trial

- ☐ I know what adjustment is being trialled and when it should be in place.
- ☐ The equipment or change has been set up and I know how to use it.
- ☐ I have had any necessary instruction or training.
- ☐ I am giving the adjustment enough time to assess it, where appropriate.
- ☐ I am noticing whether the task feels easier, more comfortable or more manageable.

☐ I am noticing whether I can sustain work more consistently across the day or week.
☐ I am noting any new discomfort, practical problems or unintended effects.
☐ I am recording what works on better days and more difficult days.
☐ I know who to contact if the adjustment is not available or is not working.
☐ I am raising problems rather than feeling I must struggle on.

Quick trial log

Date	Adjustment used	What helped?	What was difficult?	Change to consider

7. Reviewing what is working

At the review meeting

☐ We have reviewed each adjustment agreed in the plan.
☐ We have discussed whether it was put in place as intended.
☐ We have considered what difference it made to the task, workload or working day.
☐ We have discussed any difficulties or unintended effects.
☐ We have considered feedback from the employee and, where relevant, the team or service.
☐ We have decided whether to keep, adapt, stop or replace each adjustment.
☐ We have identified any new barriers that have emerged.
☐ We have agreed actions, owners and dates for the next steps.
☐ We have updated the written plan and set the next review date.

What is working well:	
What is not working / what needs to change:	
Decisions and next actions:	
Next review date:	

Needs can fluctuate. A plan should be flexible enough to respond to changes in symptoms, responsibilities, equipment, workplace layout or personal circumstances.

Revisit the plan when

- ☐ My symptoms, energy levels or functional needs change.
- ☐ I start a new role, take on new duties or change location.
- ☐ My workstation, software, equipment or work pattern changes.
- ☐ An adjustment stops being effective or becomes difficult to access.
- ☐ I return after sickness absence or a period away from work.
- ☐ A temporary adjustment is due to end.
- ☐ There is a change in team structure, manager or working arrangements.
- ☐ I notice early signs that the current approach is not sustainable.

What has changed:	
What needs to be reviewed:	
Who needs to be involved and by when:	

9. If the process gets stuck

If an adjustment is delayed, unclear or not working, ask for the next step and a timescale. Keep a factual record of requests, discussions, agreed actions and follow-up. You may wish to seek support from a union representative, employee representative, HR, occupational health or an independent adviser.

Possible next steps

- ☐ Ask for an update and clarify what is preventing progress.
- ☐ Ask who is responsible for the decision or implementation.
- ☐ Ask whether a temporary measure can be used while a longer-term option is considered.
- ☐ Ask for an occupational health or workplace assessment if one would help.
- ☐ Ask for the reasons if a requested adjustment cannot be agreed, and explore alternatives.
- ☐ Speak to a union representative or other workplace representative if available.
- ☐ Seek independent advice if I am unsure about my rights or next steps.
- ☐ Keep copies of relevant emails, plans, assessment recommendations and review notes.

What is currently unresolved:	
Who I will contact next:	
What I am asking them to do and by when:	

10. Support and useful UK resources

These resources can help you understand workplace adjustments and find further support. Availability and eligibility can depend on your circumstances and location.

Useful starting points

- **The Ehlers-Danlos Support UK – Employers' Toolkit —** ehlers-danlos.uk
- **Benefits and works guides –** free to all members of EDS UK
- **ACAS – Reasonable adjustments at work —** https://www.acas.org.uk/reasonable-adjustments
- **GOV.UK – Access to Work —** https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work
- **Jo Southall Occupational Therapy —** https://Jboccupationaltherapy.co.uk
- **Health and Safety Executive – Display screen equipment —** https://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/dse/

Access to Work may provide practical or financial support for eligible people, for example with specialist equipment or travel to work. It complements rather than replaces an employer's responsibilities to consider reasonable adjustments. An employer's legal duties depend on the circumstances. In Great Britain, the Equality Act 2010 is relevant; different legislation applies in Northern Ireland. For advice about an individual situation, consult ACAS or an appropriate adviser.

11. Personal summary – my next steps

My immediate actions

☐ I will write down my main work-related barriers.

☐ I will identify the person I want to speak to.

☐ I will request a conversation or assessment.

☐ I will take this workbook or the relevant pages to the conversation.

☐ I will agree a small number of first steps and a review date.

My first action:	
Who will support me:	
Date I will take the first step:	
What would a better, more sustainable working day look like for me?	

You do not have to figure it all out on your own.

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