

# Reasonable Adjustments

## The facts (based on The Equality Act, 2010)



Please note: 'child' = 'child or young person'

Under the [Equality Act 2010](#), education providers have a legal duty to make '**reasonable adjustments**' for disabled pupils\*.

In addition, the law says that this duty is "anticipatory," meaning that schools or colleges should, wherever possible, plan ahead and consider what students who have a disability might need, instead of waiting for individual requests. However, if the school or college does not plan ahead, parents/carers, children and young people can also request reasonable adjustment themselves.



\***Disability Definition:** A student is considered to have a disability under the law if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a "substantial" (more than minor or trivial) and "long-term" (lasted or is likely to last 12 months or more) adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

## Types of Reasonable Adjustments:

(NB: these are **examples** only. Reasonable adjustments vary according to individual needs)

- ❖ **Changes to provisions, criteria, and practices. For example:**
  - Modifying rules or policies, such as timetable changes, modified homework arrangements and other individualised adjustments, e.g. adapting the school or college's behaviour policy, to meet the needs of students with SEND or
  - Adjusting a healthy snacks policy for a student with diabetes or
  - Allowing a student with sensory needs to wear a different uniform or
  - Assessing students (and awarding those who are eligible) for exam Access Arrangements (see our separate factsheet on Support in Exams for further details).
- ❖ **Provision of auxiliary aids and services. For example:**
  - Providing additional support or equipment, like a laptop or adapted workspace or
  - Providing assistive software, a scribe for exam, etc or
  - Providing other aids, as recommended by relevant specialists.
- ❖ **Changes to physical features. For example:**
  - Making the physical environment more accessible, such as installing ramps, lifts, or ensuring a timetabled classroom is on the ground floor.
  - **Please note:** While schools and colleges must have accessibility plans for physical access to their sites, they are not always required to make immediate physical alterations to existing buildings. If they cannot make a requested alteration, they must try to find alternative solutions to avoid disadvantage to individual students.

## Important Facts

- Reasonable Adjustments are not intended to give a disabled student an advantage, but to remove barriers and to create a "level playing field".

- **What is "Reasonable"?** The term "reasonable" is not legally defined and depends on individual circumstances. Factors considered include the effectiveness of the adjustment, its practicality, cost, and the resources of the institution.
- In some cases, a request for a 'reasonable adjustment' will be refused on the grounds that it is not practicable. The setting must explain their decision and work with parents/carers, children and young people to try to find a fair solution.
- Cost alone does not make an adjustment unreasonable.
- A formal diagnosis is not required for a student to receive reasonable adjustments.
- A school or college can also make reasonable adjustments for students who do not have a disability. For example, a child or young person who experiences temporary anxiety could be offered a temporary timetable modification.

## What to do next

- Speak to the school SENCO or the college's Additional Learning Support (ALS) Department about Reasonable Adjustments.
- If reasonable adjustments are agreed, the SENCO or ALS staff will work with the student, their family and any other professionals involved, to implement the agreed action.
- Ask how teachers and support staff are made aware of Reasonable Adjustments. For example, a uniform pass may be issued if a uniform exemption is agreed.
- It's recommended that reasonable adjustments are regularly reviewed to make sure that they are effective. They can be adjusted if a student's needs change.
- For students on the school or college Special Education Needs (SEN) register, there will be regular SEN reviews. See our separate factsheets about SEN Support and EHCPs for further information.
- If the school or college do not agree to a request for a reasonable adjustment, parent/carers can challenge the decision by making a formal complaint.



## More Information:

Our SENDIAS website offers a range of information and advice at: <https://westsussexsendias.org/sendias-resources/>

## Service Statement

The role of the SENDIAS service is to ensure all parents, children and young people have access to impartial information, advice and support so they can make informed decisions related to their situation. Any information that is shared with the service is in confidence unless permission has been obtained to share this with any individuals, services and agencies that may be able to help in the circumstances. For more detail, view our [policies and privacy notice](#) on our website.

**How to contact us:** Tel: 0330 222 8555 / Email: [send.ias@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:send.ias@westsussex.gov.uk) or [cyp.sendias@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:cyp.sendias@westsussex.gov.uk) (up to age 25) / Website: [www.westsussexsendias.org](http://www.westsussexsendias.org)

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