

Reasonable Adjustments in placements

(V1 06/2020)

Supporting students in General Practice

If a student discloses a disability and/or health condition, the practice placement must make reasonable adjustments, in line with the Equality Act (2010), to ensure that students are not disadvantaged in accessing learning and assessment.

The NMC state that: “The Equality Act defines a ‘competence standard’ as an academic, medical, or other standard applied for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability. Reasonable adjustments cannot be made to a competence standard. However, adjustments can be made in order to help the student meet the standard. Education providers and environments must abide by the duty to make reasonable adjustments to the way a standard is assessed, for those that are disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010.” (NMC, 2019)

If needed, in conjunction with the University and the student, practice staff should also consider making adjustments to a student’s learning, for example by removing barriers to learning to enable religious needs to be met, within the requirements of the standards (NMC, 2019)

It is important that practice staff discuss with the student and the academic assessor to plan how the student’s specific needs can be reasonably met to facilitate learning whilst ensuring required professional standards of proficiency and values are not jeopardised.

The student’s university will have a reasonable adjustments procedure and this should be used to help guide practice staff. The RCN has also published some useful guides – please see references below.

All Staff have a responsibility to ensure that they do not:

- Treat a disabled person less favourably than someone else for a reason relating to the person’s disability
- Indirectly discriminate against a student with a disability by failing to make a ‘reasonable adjustment’ when a disabled student is placed, or is likely to be placed, at a ‘substantial disadvantage’ in comparison with a person who is not disabled
- If the student discloses a disability, the Practice Supervisor/Practice Assessor must request the student’s permission to forward this information to relevant colleagues.

Types of reasonable adjustment may include:

- Enabling the use of equipment such as voice activated software or an ergonomic mouse.
- Changes to working patterns such as shift patterns, working from home, working nearer home. Changes to the workplace such as altered lighting.
- Training to educate colleagues and change attitudes.
- Re-deployment of student to another placement area to enable the student to undertake a more suited placement.
- Time off for regular needs related to a disability
- Additional time for learning

Reasonable adjustments should be made for students with Dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia. The RCN have published a toolkit for nursing staff to help make decisions around what constitutes “reasonable” adjustment for each student.

For more information, please consult your local University or Training Hub.

Further reading

RCN GUIDE: “Reasonable adjustments: the peer support service guide for members affected by disability in the workplace”.

RCN: Dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia: a toolkit for nursing staff

References

NMC (2019) [Reasonable Adjustments](#)