

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Community Head Injury Service

Published with the support of
The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia



Introduction

The Acquired Brain Injury Reasonable Adjustments series of information has been designed to provide employers, employees and job seekers with a series of tools to help provide ideas for reasonable adjustments in the workplace. The series covers

- Aphasia
- Attention
- Emotions
- Fatigue
- Initiation
- Memory
- Social changes
- Processing speed
- Visual difficulties
- Blank template

There is also a blank template that you can complete yourself. You can personalise it for yourself. Due to its layout/formatting it can be difficult to complete so you may need some help or someone to double check it before you use it. You can print these to take to interview, to Occupational Health, to show your manager or anyone else who may benefit from it.

APHASIA

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

What is aphasia

Aphasia is a language disorder which can affect a person's ability to communicate.

This is usually caused by a stroke or traumatic brain injury resulting in damage to the language areas of the brain.

Community Head Injury Service

Published with the support of
The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia

The
Tavistock Trust
for Aphasia

Adjustments you can make for me



Be patient and give me time.



Use shorter sentences and ask one question at a time.



If I appear not to have understood, rephrase the question.



Summarise or repeat what I have said to check/confirm my response.



Do not worry if I have to use alternative means to communicate e.g. phone, pen and paper.



An interview is a stressful situation, so it may be harder for me to communicate here than in a day to day situation.

Strategies I need To remember



Take my time.



Use this information sheet.



Use my communication strategies e.g. phone, pen and paper



Don't be afraid to ask for repetition.



Plan ahead any questions I might want to ask.

Safe & compassionate care,

every time

Attention

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS INTERVIEW

Community Head Injury Service

What are attention problems after brain injury?

It can be difficult to remain focused on things after a brain injury, this could be because you get easily distracted or it is tiring focusing for long periods. This can affect us learning or finishing things.



Adjustments you can make for me



Do more complex tasks earlier in the day in case I get tired which affects attention



Try to minimise distraction, e.g. work in a quieter section of the office



Multi-tasking could be challenging, doing one task at a time will help



Repetition, structure and routine will all help.



Write down the tasks I have to achieve and by when then if I get distracted I can refer back to it.



I may not realise I am getting distracted or I might but not know what to do next this can be frustrating for us both, your patience helps.

Strategies I need To remember



Don't stop using your strategies, keep referring back to them



Diaries, emails reminders, Post-it notes. Can help you keep on track with tasks



Attempt complex tasks when you are less likely to be fatigued.



Try to avoid distractions eg switch phone off, avoid chatter.



Breakdown complex tasks into smaller manageable steps



Safe & compassionate care,

every time

Emotions

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

How we feel can be affected by an Acquired Brain Injury This could be due to changes to parts of the brain or to adjusting to the differences following the injury

Community Head Injury Service

Published with the support of
The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia



Adjustments you can make for me



Allow me to have 5/10 mins break if I need space.



Communicate and keep me in the picture



Constructive regular feedback and one to one's will help me know exactly how I'm doing.



Flexible hours can help e.g. starting late or early.



Help me manage my workload if needed



Have access to staff wellbeing or Occupational Health

Strategies I need To remember



Take a short break if you need it.



Monitor your activity to ensure you find a good balance



Ensure you give yourself time for appointments don't put them off



Communicate with your Supervisor re how you are doing



Maintain a good work life balance

FATIGUE

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

What is Fatigue?

Fatigue is an overwhelming tiredness that can be caused by carrying out everyday activities following brain injury. This can increase the affect of other difficulties.

Community Head Injury Service

Published with the support of
The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia



Adjustments you can make for me



Enable me to take flexible breaks,
eg split lunch into three shorter
breaks.



Consider flexible working hours.



Enable me to complete my
complex tasks when less fatigued.



If I'm looking tired let me
know as I might not realise.



Encourage me to record when I am
getting fatigued



Fatigue can make my other
difficulties worse e.g.
memory, speech.

Strategies I need To remember



Take your breaks



Sleep and eat well



Make sure you continue
to use your strategies.



Tell your manager about
your fatigue



Initiation

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

What are initiation difficulties?

These are difficulties with getting started on a task they could be due to problems with planning things or knowing what to do/when to do it. It is not being lazy but an actual difficulty.

Community Head Injury Service

Published with the support of
The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia

The
Tavistock Trust
for Aphasia

Adjustments you can make for me



Structure and routine will help me, knowing what I need to do makes getting going easier.



If I seem stuck a slight prompt may be all I need to get going. This could happen if I get distracted half way through.



If I have more complex tasks to do discussing what is expected and showing me the first steps may help.



Clutter can be confusing, a tidy workplace can help me see what needs to be done.



The more I do things the easier it becomes getting started on them.



I might get embarrassed if I have to keep asking for help especially as I never had to do this before, please bear with me.

Strategies I need To remember



Try and schedule your tasks and time whilst at work



Routine will help you as you can follow this



Ask for help if you are not sure what to do, get someone to write it down



Ask a trusted colleague to look out for you. If you look confused they could direct you



Try and write out, step by step what you have to do.



Safe & compassionate care,

every time

Memory Difficulties

NHS

Buckinghamshire Healthcare

NHS Trust

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

What are memory difficulties ?

These are more significant than just being forgetful, which is something we can all be.

They can relate to short or long term memory and difficulties with attention/concentration can affect this.

Community Head Injury Service

Published with the support of
The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia

The
Tavistock Trust
for Aphasia

Adjustments you can make for me



Give me time to make notes or use my diary or phone.



If giving verbal instructions write them down as well.



Ask me to repeat things back to help make sure I have remembered them.



Back up instructions with things like, lists, emails. Structure and repetition help.



Use a whiteboard to write down tasks jobs etc.



Some of these strategies might help my colleagues and not just me, introducing things for everyone might help me to not stand out.

Strategies I need To remember

Take time to use your strategies



Make sure you keep Your whiteboard, diary up to date



Being somewhere where distractions are few can help with this



Don't worry about asking for things to be repeated



Check back over your notes from time to time, you do this with your manager



Safe & compassionate care,

every time

Relating to others

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

How can relating to others change after brain injury?

This can often be very subtle and can be things like not picking up on social cues, being more or less talkative, going off track, struggling to follow a conversation or forgetting conversations, names etc.

Community Head Injury Service

Published with the support of
The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia

The
Tavistock Trust
for Aphasia

Adjustments you
can make for me

Strategies I need
To remember



Give me time to get it right



Count to 5 and think
through what to say to
someone



If I go off track feel free to
bring me back



If you get something
muddled up, try not
to dwell on it.



Be aware that I can
sometimes
misinterpret situations



Rephrase repeat and ask
people to confirm that
you have understood
something



If I'm talking too much feel
free to be politely blunt as I might
miss subtle hints.



If you miss or don't
understand part of a
conversation ask
people to repeat



I might find it hard to join in
Please help me to keep up with
conversations
or banter it's not because I
don't want to.



Try to manage your work
to include social based
work tasks when you are
at your most alert



I may muddle emotions.
Saying in a calm
way how you feel can help
me understand. If I react in a
surprising way this may be
why.

Safe & compassionate care,

every time

Processing Speed

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

What is a reduced processing speed?

This is a reduction in the brain's ability to process information which can make us slower to think things through, plan, give an answer etc. Fatigue can make you slower.

Community Head Injury Service

Published with the support of
The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia



Adjustments you can make for me



Give me time to think things through. Reduce multi-tasking, one task at a time.



It can take me longer to answer a question but I will get there.



In a group it may be hard to keep up, checking I understand is great.



If you are in a rush write things down for me rather than tell me, that way I can work on them at my pace



Think about my tasks I might be better at ones that need accuracy not speed.



Just because I might come across slow doesn't mean I can't do things. Slow and steady wins the race!

Strategies I need To remember



Take your time, don't rush, this could lead to you being less effective



Focus on one task at a time get it done then move on



If you get slower as you get fatigued, adjust your breaks to give you more smaller breaks



If you don't understand get it repeated



Break large tasks down into smaller steps

Visual Difficulties

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

What are visual difficulties after a brain injury?

Your vision alter after a brain injury including visual field loss as well as visual acuity loss which can impact what you see and how you see it.

Published with the support of
The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia



Adjustments you can make for me



Give me longer to read or look at things as I may be slower at this



Ask me what you can do to help



Help me to avoid a cluttered work place, this will make it easier for me to see



If a task involves using my sight, lots having regular breaks will help me rest my eyes and stop me getting fatigued



There may be things like magnifiers, screen enlargers, readers, that can help me do things.



The lighting in the area I work in bright strip lights or dim lighting can cause problems for some people

Strategies I need To remember



Take breaks, using your sight a lot can be a cause of fatigue, regular breaks can help this



Take your time and be thorough when reading etc to avoid errors.



Don't be afraid to ask if you are unsure of something



REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AINTERVIEW

What?

Published with the support of
The Tavistock Trust for AphasiaAdjustments you
can make for meStrategies I need
To remember