



Reasonable Adjustments for Service Users Policy

Effective date	July 2025
Policy owner	Head of Equality & Access to Justice
Approval and review	July 2025
Circulation	Published externally

Introduction

1. This Policy sets out our commitment and approach to making reasonable adjustments for anyone who wants to access our services. It explains our legal duties; how we consider requests for reasonable adjustments and the types of adjustments we will generally be able to make.

What are reasonable adjustments?

2. A reasonable adjustment is a change to the way we offer our services to ensure people with disabilities and/or health needs have a fair and equal chance of accessing our services.

Who is this Policy for?

3. This Policy applies to any person with a disability, health condition and/or additional need who uses or seeks to use our services, including but not limited to barristers, people reporting information, contractors, applicants, suppliers and people contacting us on behalf of an individual from these groups.
4. This Policy does not apply to anyone seeking reasonable adjustments for an examination. Pupil barristers preparing for the centralised assessment in Professional Ethics should refer to our separate policy here: [Adjustments and Other Arrangements Policy for the Professional Ethics Exam in Pupillage](#). Anyone enrolled on one of the vocational Bar training courses, the Bar Transfer Test, or the Bar Training Resit Programme must speak to your Bar training provider about their reasonable adjustments policy. It is Bar training providers who are responsible for managing reasonable adjustments at this

stage of training. This includes reasonable adjustments for the centralised assessments in Civil and Criminal Litigation. Many adjustments at the vocational stage of training can be implemented directly by Bar training providers without any input from the BSB, but where an adjustment does require BSB input, your Bar training provider will liaise with the BSB to arrange this.

Our legal duty

5. Section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 (“the Act”) requires the BSB to provide reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities in the provision of our services.
6. We have an anticipatory duty as a service provider to members of the public. This means we have to anticipate, think about and try to predict what adjustments could be needed by people with different types of disability, support and access requirements. The BSB must think about all potential disabled service users and not just those who are known to us. This duty also applies to organisations that provide services on our behalf.

What is a disability?

7. The Act defines people with disabilities as: *“those who have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”* “Substantial” means more than minor or trivial and “long-term” means 12 months or more.
8. The Equality Act’s definition of disability is broad; for example, it can include autism, ADHD and long-term injuries and illnesses. HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are deemed to be disabilities from the date of diagnosis. People with severe disfigurements are also deemed to be disabled under the Act, as are people who are registered as blind or partially sighted with their local authority or an ophthalmologist. The Act’s definition of a disability also covers people with hearing, visual and speech impairments as well as other impairments such as learning disabilities or difficulties, chronic pain, mental health conditions, diabetes, asthma and back problems. A disability may be visible or non-visible.
9. In most cases, we will not need medical evidence or a letter from a doctor to support a request for reasonable adjustments, but if this is required to help us assess what is reasonable, we will let you know.

How can we provide reasonable adjustments?

10. We will always consider requests for adjustments to remove or reduce disadvantages in accessing our service, but we are only required to provide adjustments that are reasonable. There is a [Code of Practice](#) which gives guidance as to the kind of adjustments that could be made.
11. People with disabilities and/or additional needs are usually best placed to tell us the extent and nature of any adjustments that they require: we do not want to make assumptions about whether you require any adjustments or about what those adjustments should be.
12. What is “reasonable” will depend on the circumstances of an individual case and an assessment of factors, which may include:
 - a. The effectiveness of the adjustment at removing or reducing the disadvantage(s) experienced by the person with a disability;
 - b. The practicality of the adjustment, i.e. the resource implications of making it;
 - c. The cost and availability of resources, including external help and the finance needed in making the adjustment;
 - d. The impact of the adjustment on other people and to our systems or processes;
 - e. The health and safety implications of making the adjustment; and
 - f. Whether it would disrupt our other activities unreasonably.
13. There is no set definition of what constitutes ‘a reasonable adjustment’ in the Act and we consider requests for reasonable adjustments on a case-by-case basis. The following non-exhaustive list includes some of the types of reasonable adjustment that we may make:
 - a. Providing information or correspondence in an alternative format (e.g. larger font size, specific colour contrast);
 - b. Extended time for an application or submission of a response or information;
 - c. Using email or the telephone rather than hard-copy letters where appropriate;
 - d. Providing access to an ‘Easy Read’ version of key documents for those with a learning difference disability.
14. If we cannot make the reasonable adjustment that has been requested, we will explain why and will work with you to try to agree a suitable alternative.
15. Even if you are not disabled as defined under the Act, you can still ask for changes if you think you are facing barriers in accessing our services.

How to make a request for Reasonable Adjustments

16. A reasonable adjustment request form is at Annex 1 of this Policy and we ask you to fill this out and send it back to us. You should set out in detail how you are disabled under the Act, what reasonable adjustments you need and how you will be disadvantaged without the adjustments. Our Contact and Assessment Team can also take your request over the phone.
17. When making a request, you could also ask for support from people who know you well, like friends or family members. They may be able to help you explain how a lack of adjustments is affecting you, help you work out what adjustments you need, or even make a request for adjustments on your behalf.
18. We consider requests on a case-by-case basis. Our focus will be on whether a reasonable adjustment can remove the barrier or disadvantage a person is experiencing. We will not judge whether someone meets the legal definition of a disability and we will not usually ask for medical evidence.
19. We will respond to a request for a reasonable adjustment as soon as we can. In some cases, we may need to consider the request in more detail. Where we have agreed reasonable adjustments, we include a clear note on relevant internal records that alerts our staff to this.

Complaints

20. If you are unhappy with all or part of our decision about a request for a reasonable adjustment, or the way in which we handled the request, then you can:
 - a. Share your feedback or concerns with the member of staff or the manager of the team which handled the request;
 - b. Share your feedback or concerns with our Equality and Access to Justice Team, at equality@barstandardsboard.org.uk; or
 - c. Submit a [service complaint](#) to servicecomplaints@barstandardsboard.org.uk.

Monitoring and Review

21. We record reasonable adjustments that have been requested and/or made. These records may be used to review and improve the quality of the services that we provide. We will treat this data in line with our Records Management, Retention and Disposal Policy.

22. We will review this policy every three years and/or when the law changes. The next review is due in **July 2028**.

Annex 1: Reasonable Adjustments Request Form



REGULATING BARRISTERS

Reasonable Adjustments Request Form

The BSB is an inclusive organisation and is committed to ensuring that everyone can access our services in line with our [Reasonable Adjustments for Service Users policy](#). This form should be completed by individuals who have a disability or health condition and require a reasonable adjustment to enable them to access the BSB's services and/or resources.

If you are unable to complete this form or need any other help, please call us on 020 7611 1444 or email us on contactus@barstandardsboard.org.uk.

Please send all completed forms by email to contactus@barstandardsboard.org.uk or by post to:

The Bar Standards Board
289-293 High Holborn
London
WC1V 7HZ

Your Details	
Please enter your details below so we can keep in touch with you about your request.	
Name:	
Address:	
Contact no:	
Email:	
Preferred contact method (please tick)	Post <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone <input type="checkbox"/>

Request for reasonable adjustments

Please tell us how you're disabled under the Equality Act (if relevant). This will help us to ensure that we meet your needs and can make the required reasonable adjustment(s).

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Please outline why you need reasonable adjustments:

- Identify what's causing a problem
- Explain how the problem is making things difficult for you

Please outline how you are disadvantaged without the reasonable adjustments