

## **Tailored Adjustment Plans – Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. What is a “Tailored Adjustments Plan” (TAP)?**

Where an employee feels they require workplace adjustments to enable them to work to their potential (due to having a disability and/or a long term health condition), a TAP is a “good practice approach to ensure there is a living record of adjustments agreed between an employee and their line manager.

The TAP provides a structure for an employee to have a confidential conversation with their line manager about workplace adjustments. Relevant information can be captured on the [Tailored Adjustment Plan \(TAP\) Form](#) and enable adjustments to working practices and work environments to be actioned in a timely manner.

### **2. Who can initiate a conversation about a TAP?**

Normally it would be for an employee who has a disability or a long-term health condition to speak to their line manager to make them aware that workplace adjustments would be beneficial to them.

This may be something that is raised prior to or at the beginning of their employment with the University or it may come up during the course of their employment should they develop a long term health condition or disability and/or find over time that there may be workplace barriers to them working to their potential.

### **3. What can I do as a line manager to raise awareness of the TAP and its benefits?**

Good practice would be for all new starters to be made aware of how they can confidentially disclose if they have a disability and/or request a TAP conversation with their line manager if, for example, there are adjustments that need to be made and/or considered ahead of them commencing their employment with the University. This can be done as part of the new starter induction.

You could also provide information about the TAP in regular team communications and via the [PDR](#) process. This may then encourage employees who have not felt comfortable disclosing a disability early in their employment or where they receive a diagnosis whilst they have been in employment with the University for a while to ask to have a TAP conversation with their line manager. For example, there are a number of employees who will be undergoing or living with the after-effects of cancer treatment and cancer is a health condition which is automatically considered to be a disability under the Equality Act 2010, even when someone has completed treatment and may be in remission.

### **4. What if I am not sure what workplace adjustments may be helpful?**

Some workplace adjustments may include;

- changing a working pattern if you are taking medication which means you are drowsy at particular times of the day and so you would be more productive working a different shift pattern
- Thinking about how and in what format information is shared with you e.g font size, colour background of documents, electronic or hard copy
- allowing flexibility for you to attend physiotherapy or other specialist appointments during

your working day if these are not able to be arranged outside normal working hours.

However, it is advisable that your line manager refers you to our [Occupational Health Services](#) so you can speak, confidentially, to one of the Occupational Health Advisors. You will be able to discuss your disability and/or long-term health condition and the barriers or difficulties you are experiencing. This may be relating to how you are being required to do your role or could be related to the workplace environment. The Occupational Health Advisors, with your consent, may also refer to medical information provided by your G.P or treating specialist.

The Occupational Health Advisor will then make some recommendations of options to consider via an Occupational Health report which will be sent to your line manager. You will have an opportunity to review the report prior to it being sent to your line manager. You can then discuss those ideas further with your line manager to see what adjustments can be made.

The Occupational Health Advisor may, in some cases where mental health conditions are disclosed, discuss a personal care plan with the you which you can manage alongside the other adjustments agreed in the TAP.

#### **5. How will my line manager decide if an adjustment is “reasonable”?**

Line managers will refer to the guidance from the [Business Disability Forum – “What is reasonable?”](#) which sets out the 2 steps to assessing whether an adjustment is reasonable. Step 1: Is an adjustment required? Step 2: Is the adjustment “reasonable”? Your line manager may also seek advice from an [HR Partner or HR Advisor](#).

#### **6. Is there anyone else who can provide advice about workplace adjustments apart from Occupational Health?**

Other 3<sup>rd</sup> party specialist advisors may be able to provide advice and/or help to undertake or support workplace assessments, for example [Access to Work](#) or the [Business Disability Forum](#).

The University is a member of the Business Disability Forum so any member of staff can access resources on their website or contact them for advice via email; [advice@businessdisabilityforum.org.uk](mailto:advice@businessdisabilityforum.org.uk) or by telephone on 020 7403 3020.

#### **7. Does the TAP need to be regularly reviewed?**

The TAP can be reviewed and amended as necessary with the agreement of both you and your line manager:

- At any regular one-to-one meeting;
- At a return to work meeting following a period of sickness absence;
- At appraisal or performance review meetings (PDRs – where these are conducted by the line manager);
- Before a change of job or duties or introduction of new technology or ways of working;
- Before or after any change in circumstances for either you or the organisation (for example, if there is planned restructuring to a team and job roles need to be reviewed as part of that process).

**8. What if I have disclosed that I have a disability to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party (e.g. the Staff Disability Network) as I am nervous about instigating a conversation with my line manager?**

Where you disclose to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party, you will be encouraged to instigate a discussion in relation to workplace adjustments with your line manager. However, you may request that a member of the Staff Disability Network accompanies you to a meeting as a “friend” in a supportive capacity if that is helpful.

**9. What are the benefits of having a TAP in place?**

Disabled employees or employees who may have a long term health condition are able to work to their potential and workplace barriers can be removed or reduced.

Where an employee has a change of line manager, a TAP can be shared with them, confidentially, to ensure that they are aware of the impacts of an employee’s disability / long term health condition. They can also be aware of required and agreed adjustments which are in place without the need for the employee to repeat potentially difficult conversations.

**10. If I have a disability do I have to complete a TAP?**

Completing a TAP is entirely **voluntary** but it may be helpful if you are finding that there are things which are making you not able to work to your potential in your role due to the job design or workplace environment. You can contact a member of the [HR Advisory Team](#) if you want to have an informal chat about the TAP and your own personal circumstances. You may also want to discuss TAP with one of the University’s [Diversity and Inclusion Advisors](#), a member of the Staff Forum or your trade union. The [Staff Disability Network](#) can also provide you with additional, general information about TAP.

**11. Who will see a copy of my TAP form?**

An up-to-date copy of this form will be retained by you, your immediate line manager, your Head of School or Head of Function and a copy will be retained on your personnel file in HR. A copy of this form may then also be given to a new line manager with your prior consent.

You may also feel that it would be helpful for some of the information in the TAP (for example, the details relating to the workplace adjustments agreed) to be shared with other work colleagues where this will enable the agreed workplace adjustments to be implemented effectively.

**12. How can I provide feedback on how I think the University and colleagues can improve the usage and functionality of the TAP form?**

Feedback on how the University can improve the usage and functionality of the TAP process/Form is very welcome. Please contact Rachel Thorns, HR Partner with any feedback or suggestions you have.