

# Reasonable Adjustments

## Dyslexia and other Specific Learning Difficulties

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### Dyslexia, the courts and reasonable adjustments

I respectfully ask the court to make the following reasonable adjustments due to my dyslexia and in consideration of article 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 and under the Equality Act 2010.

I respectfully draw the court's attention to sections 5.5 and 5.6 of the Judicial Studies Board's Equal Treatment Bench Book [[www.jsboard.co.uk](http://www.jsboard.co.uk)].

'Trial management aims to recognise and accommodate any aspects of disability that could cause difficulty in court and place the affected individual at an unfair disadvantage.' [Equal Treatment Bench Book]

The reasonable adjustments which would assist me with court proceedings are:

1. **Support prior to proceedings** (please tick ✓ whichever reasonable adjustments will assist you)

- That prior to the first directions or pre-trial hearing, I have the opportunity to attend the court building, and for the court's Customer Services Manager or Disability Contact Officer to show me the room when the hearing will be.
- That the Customer Services Manager should call me the day before proceeding because I have problems remembering dates.
- I would be grateful for assistance in completing any further court paperwork.
- That the court grants permission for a McKenzie Friend to assist me during proceedings if I am not using a solicitor.
- It may assist the court if there were pre-trial directions in consideration of the reasonable adjustments which I am requesting within this document.

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2. **Assistance with paperwork** (please tick ✓ whichever reasonable adjustments will assist you)

- All correspondence, documents and written evidence (including within court bundles) to be printed and provided on matt (not glossy) coloured paper (such as cream or blue) as text on plain white paper is difficult for me to understand.
- Printed documents to be on paper of a reasonable thickness so the other side does not show through.
- Wherever possible, all correspondence, documents and written evidence (including within court bundles) to be provided with the following formatting:
  - using a clear font such as arial;
  - the font size to be 12-14 point;
  - with a minimum of one and a half or double line spacing;
  - no or minimal use of italics and text underlining and passages of text in capital letters (e.g. HEADING and COURT);
  - Important passages to be highlighted;
  - That there be no use of abbreviations, acronyms, and that technical or legal words include an explanation (or better still plain English to be used).
  - Text to be left-aligned rather than justified.

3. **A record of proceedings** (please tick ✓ whichever reasonable adjustments will assist you)

- Due to difficulties in processing and remembering what is said in court, it would assist me if I was allowed to make a sound recording of proceedings, or provided with a copy of the court's tape, or provided with a typed transcript of any hearing which I attend.

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4. **Support during proceedings** (please tick ✓ whichever reasonable adjustments will assist you)

- My dyslexia causes me to have difficulties concentrating, and I may require regular breaks.
- Someone available in court who can read out any written evidence and the opportunity granted to confirm my understanding.
- I would be grateful if the court would allow me to use computer equipment and text reading software during proceedings, if it is necessary for me to read and understand written evidence.
- Handwritten evidence is particularly difficult for me to read, and I would be grateful for a typed transcript of any written evidence.
- If being cross-examined, it would be of assistance if I had the questions in a typed format.
- If being cross-examined I would ask that there be understanding that when under stress I may get dates wrong, become hesitant, and get the order of events wrong (and similar)
- It would assist me if questions could be repeated if required, and if I am presented with new information, that sufficient time be provided and if necessary a recess ordered so I can digest this information (with assistance if required).

5. **Support during proceedings for unrepresented parties** (please tick ✓ whichever reasonable adjustments will assist you)

- It would assist me if I had the support of a McKenzie Friend in court as I am not represented by a solicitor.
- It would assist me if my McKenzie Friend could speak on my behalf (is granted “rights of audience”).

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These additional reasonable adjustments would also assist me (include your own):

I would be grateful for there to be understanding that the exceptional stresses of court and proceedings are likely to exacerbate my dyslexia.

The court may wish to avail itself of “The Good Practice Guide for Justice Professionals” published by the Dyslexia Association which can be downloaded at [http://www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk/docs/justice/Justice guide to SpLDs.pdf](http://www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk/docs/justice/Justice%20guide%20to%20SpLDs.pdf)

Solicitors are recommended to read <http://www.dyslexia-malvern.co.uk/docs/justice/Coping%20With%20Courts%20%26%20Tribunals.pdf>