



## Recruitment Adjustments

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## We are Guide Dogs

We are here to help people with sight loss live the life they choose.

Despite the impact of vision impairment, 70% of adults receive no support within the first 12 months of diagnosis, and are likely to encounter poor education, high unemployment, depression, loneliness and financial insecurity throughout their lifetime.

There are around 35,000 children and young people with a vision impairment living in the UK. Some 80% of a child’s learning takes place using vision and every day they go without support can affect their development. We provide a number of services that help children and young people reach their potential as adults and working alongside our colleagues in the sector, we are here to provide that support from the day they are born.



There are around two million people with a vision impairment living in the UK, and this figure is expected to double by 2050. Every six minutes in the UK, one more person loses their sight.

Our ambition is a future where every person with sight loss has the confidence and support they need to live the life they choose. Our current five-year strategy, *By My Side*, sets out how we aim to reach and support many more people by 2024, albeit significantly disrupted by the pandemic.

Our targets for the future are exciting. But they are also ambitious. So we are making improvements and embracing innovation across the whole charity, from our training to our tech, our services to our sites.

## About Guide Dogs

### Our people

We are working to maximise and develop our culture of accessibility, inclusion and teamwork, through our staff and the way we support those who use our services. Our staff are passionate about what they do, as are our incredible volunteers who give more than 18.5 million hours of their time each year. Our volunteers fulfil roles such as: caring for our wonderful puppies and dogs, providing transport, raising funds and so much more.

Guide Dogs is three years into the journey to become a diverse and inclusive organisation, ensuring our workforce and Board is representative of the communities we support. We welcome applicants with a wide range of lived experience. We are a Disability Confident Employer and guarantee an interview to candidates who declare a disability and meet the essential criteria for the role. Our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Strategy is available on our website as an accessible PDF, Audiobook and in Welsh.

## The Recruitment Process

We want our recruitment process to be inclusive and accessible for all.

Candidates can request recruitment adjustments to support them in the recruitment process from start to finish.

This is a guide to the type of adjustments which we can consider, it is based on previous candidate experiences, and although it is extensive it will not be

an exhaustive list. Candidates may request other adjustments which we can and should also consider. The Recruitment Team are there to help with any specific requirements and wider support.

## **How to agree adjustments**

Recruitment adjustments should be implemented on a case by case basis; people are unique and individual, so is each person's requirements to be their best self.

Potential candidates may reach out to us before applying to evaluate whether they can fulfil the role with workplace requirements implemented. This is a great opportunity for the hiring manager to book in a video or telephone call with them to run through in detail.

## **Adjustment Options**

### **At Application Stage**

For some candidates, typing up answers to our application questions can be challenging. When candidates reach out to explore alternative submission options, this is likely to be handled by the Recruitment Team without the hiring manager being made aware, to keep the anonymity of the process.

If the candidate is subsequently shortlisted, the hiring manager would then discuss adjustments for interview and work with the Recruitment Team to implement.

This may include:

- Sharing information about all the stages of assessment for the role ahead of time.
- Providing extra time for tasks or assessments.
- Sharing the application questions in different formats, such as a Word Document.
- Submitting answers to application questions via dictation to the Recruitment Team.
- Exploring access to one of our Offices to use our equipment if the candidate doesn't have access to a smart phone or computer with a camera etc.



## Preparing for interview

When we think about great candidate experience, much of this comes down to sharing information upfront and the candidate having the opportunity to be their best self during interviews and assessments with us.

There are various requirements to think about for candidates requesting recruitment adjustments at this stage:

- Virtual tour of our offices and information about arriving for on-site interviews, facilities, waiting area, etc.
- In person orientation support on site from a Vision Rehabilitation Specialist.
- Confirming the recruitment process to candidates prior to them attending and stick to this process and timings.
- The names of the people who will be on the interview panel and information about what their role will be during the interview.
- A description of the room as well as where people are sat within the space.

## Interviews & Assessment Stage

Feedback indicates that it's uncomfortable to share personal information about conditions with a potential employer and therefore we don't receive many requests for recruitment adjustments. We want hiring managers to feel confident talking about adjustments with candidates and implementing great techniques that makes our process inclusive and fair for all candidates.

- Pasting the interview questions into the Teams Chat Box for candidates to refer to during the assessment.
- Providing adequate breaks during interviews, which may be several for some candidates.
- Allowing candidates to disable their cameras during virtual interviews so they can look at the screen closely without feeling uncomfortable.
- Provide verbal feedback as interviews progress to provide an indication of engagement.
- Inviting a supporting person to accompany the candidate.
- Using specialist IT equipment or software for the candidate as part of the assessment process.
- Accommodating Assistance Dogs for in-person interviews.

- Prompting the candidate to extract all of the relevant information, to any written notes that they have made.
- Rooms available with step-free access for interviews and ensuring there is a ramp for wheelchair users.
- Rooms available with audio-visual for candidates with hearing impairments.
- Extra time at interview/ assessment.
- Sign Language Interpreter present in interview.
- A verbal test rather than a written one or perhaps assistance for computer tests where appropriate.
- Work trials; nominated periods to assess on-the-job skills.

## **Having A Great Conversation About Adjustments**

If we're approached by a candidate before application or interview stage to discuss adjustments available, the Recruitment team member will reach out to the hiring manager, as it's important that together we make time to agree the best adjustments that would create a comfortable assessment environment.

- We want everyone to feel that they can be themselves at Guide Dogs; both as a candidate and an employee.
- It's important not to ask for a diagnosis or medical information; we're only focussed on what requirements we can adopt to make the process more comfortable for the individual. We don't need proof that they require these adjustments.

## **Top Tips for an Adjustments Conversations**

- Highlight what the output is for this role i.e. why are we asking the successful candidate to travel or have a hybrid location, being clear that travel could potentially be supported by a Support Worker, depending on circumstances.
- Work with your HR Support Manager to understand where minimum requirements of the role can be fulfilled but perhaps in a different way than we're currently used to.
- Make sure you're clear on things like travel time, working hours, and other associated expectations.

- Give confirmation on stays & travel. Confirm whether there would be overnight stays, visits to the office, welfare facilities available, travel options, etc. have been thought through and determined.
- Leave the decision with the candidate. Your role isn't to make a decision on behalf of the candidate, so conclude the meeting when it feels right and leave the decision with the candidate to think through.
- Offer alternative roles if the candidate doesn't feel they can fulfil this role, think about if there are any other roles that we're currently recruiting for in the same team/ division that might suit their needs.
- Offering mentoring support as an introduction to a role.
- Offer to talent pool candidates if no other roles are available similar, offer to talent pool them for organisation-wide opportunities.

End of document.