RICHMOND CHAMBERS.
immigration barristers

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND ACCESS

Pupillage Recruitment and Training

1. Our commitment

Richmond Chambers is committed to ensuring that disabled applicants and pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in recruitment, training or working life.

We will make reasonable adjustments where required and will consider requests individually and constructively.

Our objective is to remove unnecessary barriers while maintaining the professional competencies and standards that all pupils must ultimately demonstrate.

2. Who this document applies to

This document applies to:

- applicants for pupillage;
- candidates attending interviews or assessments;
- individuals who have accepted an offer of pupillage;
- pupils during both the non-practising and practising periods; and
- where relevant, newly qualified barristers transitioning from pupillage into practice.

It should be read alongside Richmond Chambers' wider Reasonable Adjustments Policy and equality and employment policies.

3. What is a reasonable adjustment?

A reasonable adjustment is a change to a usual arrangement, process, working practice or physical environment intended to remove or reduce a disadvantage experienced because of disability.

The appropriate adjustment depends on the individual and the circumstances.

We will not assume that two people with the same condition require the same adjustment.

Where possible, we will discuss proposed arrangements directly with the person concerned.

4. Requesting an adjustment during recruitment

Applicants may request a reasonable adjustment at any stage of the recruitment process.

Requests should normally be made to:

Kian Richardson
Senior Chambers Administrator
kian.richardson@richmondchambers.com

Applicants are encouraged to contact us as early as possible so that arrangements can be considered in good time.

However, a request will not be refused merely because it was not made at an earlier stage.

5. Information about disability is separate from selection

Information provided for the purpose of arranging a reasonable adjustment is not used to assess whether the applicant meets our Pupillage Selection Criteria.

It will be shared only with those who reasonably need the information to consider or implement the adjustment.

Recruitment assessors will not ordinarily receive medical or diagnostic information.

Where an assessor needs to know that an adjustment is being made - for example, that additional time has been granted - they will normally be told only what is necessary to administer the assessment fairly.

6. Examples of adjustments during recruitment

Depending on the circumstances, adjustments might include:

- additional time for a written exercise;
- rest breaks;
- adjusting the timing of an interview;
- providing written material in an accessible format;
- providing larger text or altered contrast;
- use of assistive technology;
- a remote interview where appropriate;
- an accessible interview room;
- altered communication arrangements;
- allowing additional processing time before answering;
- changes to the format of an exercise where these do not alter the competency being assessed; or
- another reasonable arrangement suited to the applicant's circumstances.

These examples are illustrative, not exhaustive.

7. Evidence

We do not automatically require formal medical evidence before considering a request.

In many cases, discussion with the applicant will be sufficient.

Where further information is reasonably required to understand the disadvantage or identify an effective adjustment, we will explain what information is needed and why.

We will seek to avoid unnecessary or disproportionate requests for sensitive information.

8. Adjustments during pupillage

Reasonable adjustments may also be made during pupillage.

Depending on individual circumstances, these might include:

- adapted equipment;
- assistive technology;
- altered workstation arrangements;
- changes to communication methods;
- accessible documents;
- reasonable flexibility in working arrangements;
- altered scheduling of training;

- adjustments to the way an assessment is conducted;
- additional breaks;
- changes to office attendance arrangements;
- adjustments connected with hearings or conferences; or
- other practical measures.

Where a proposed adjustment affects the structure, duration or regulatory arrangements for pupillage, Richmond Chambers will consider whether approval or notification to the Bar Standards Board is required.

9. Competence standards

Reasonable adjustments are intended to enable a pupil to demonstrate the required competencies fairly.

They do not lower the professional standards or competencies required for successful completion of pupillage.

Where a particular competence must be demonstrated, we will consider whether the method by which it is demonstrated can reasonably be adjusted without changing the competence itself.

10. Review during pupillage

Adjustments are not necessarily fixed for the entire year.

A pupil's needs may change as:

- their work changes;
- they move from first six to second six;
- they begin undertaking advocacy;
- their health or circumstances change; or
- the effectiveness of an adjustment becomes clearer.

Adjustments should therefore be reviewed periodically with the pupil.

A pupil may request a review at any time.

11. Temporary conditions and other needs

Not every accessibility need will fall within the statutory definition of disability.

Where practicable, Richmond Chambers will also consider reasonable practical support relating to matters such as:

- temporary injury or illness;
- pregnancy;
- religious observance;
- caring responsibilities; or
- another temporary circumstance affecting participation in recruitment or training.

Different legal obligations may apply, but our general approach is to identify unnecessary barriers and consider proportionate solutions.

12. Confidentiality

Information about health, disability or adjustments will be handled sensitively and in accordance with applicable data-protection obligations.

Information will be shared internally only where there is a legitimate need to know.

A pupil may discuss an adjustment confidentially with the Senior Chambers Administrator, a pupil supervisor or the person responsible for pupillage.

13. If a requested adjustment cannot be agreed

If we consider that a particular proposed adjustment is not reasonable or would not be effective, we will explain our concerns and, where possible, discuss alternatives.

An applicant or pupil who disagrees with the outcome may request a review.

The review will be undertaken by a Managing Partner or another senior person who was not primarily responsible for the original decision wherever practicable.

The request should identify why the applicant or pupil believes the proposed arrangements do not adequately address the disadvantage.

14. No disadvantage for requesting support

No applicant or pupil will be treated adversely because they:

- request a reasonable adjustment;
- disclose a disability;

- raise an accessibility concern; or
- seek a review of an adjustment.

We want applicants and pupils to ask for the support they need.

15. Contact

For recruitment-related or confidential accessibility enquiries:

Kian Richardson
Senior Chambers Administrator
kian.richardson@richmondchambers.com

Pupils may also raise adjustment needs with either pupil supervisor or the person responsible for pupillage.