

Reasonable adjustments

Under the Equality Act, organisations must, by law, make adjustments to make sure services are accessible by everyone.

Adjustments only need to be made if it is reasonable to do so. Knowing if something is reasonable or not may depend on:

- Your disability
- How practicable the changes are
- If the change you ask for would overcome the disadvantage you and/or other disabled people experience
- The size of the organisation
- How much money and/or resources are available
- If any changes have already been made

For example

If you were asking a GP surgery if there was a separate room to wait in, quieter than the waiting room and they have a room available, this is reasonable.

3 categories of reasonable adjustments

1 Change the way things are done

This could be:

- A carer or advocate attending an appointment too
- Using text messaging or email instead of phone
- Asking someone to speak more slowly or clearly
- Flexibility with appointment times

2 Change a physical feature

This could be:

- Removing a ticking clock
- Changing a piece of furniture or furnishings
- Reducing volume of music or turning off bright lights
- Removing strong smelling air fresheners

3 Provide extra aids or services

This could be:

- Providing Easy Read format for information
- Using hospital passports
- Providing a quiet place to wait
- Support from a disability lead or liason team

What reasonable adjustments can you think of that would make things easier for you?

Reasonable or unreasonable?

I only want to see a female doctor

Reasonable 

It's completely acceptable to request a preferred gender for an appointment. Depending on availability you may need to wait a bit longer for your appointment.

I want you to change that room colour to pink because I prefer pink

Unreasonable 

Painting a whole room would be costly, take quite a bit of time and only supporting your preference - it would not be a reasonable adjustment.

Please could I wait in a different waiting room that is less noisy and bright?

Reasonable 

This is a very reasonable request but may depend on availability of a separate quieter room. It may be that they could allow you to wait in your car until your appointment or stay outside until they are ready for you in another room is not available.