

Selection and Assessment Policy on Accommodations and Reasonable Adjustments

For candidates attending a senior selection process

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy applies to candidates requesting reasonable adjustments (RAs) or accommodations for College of Policing's Selection and Assessment's (S&A) senior selection processes, which include the Fast Track National Assessment Centre for serving constables, Direct Entry (Inspectors and Superintendents) assessment centres, assessment processes for the Strategic Command Course (including senior PNAC and senior police staff assessment process (AP for the SCC)), and the Senior Leaders Development Centre (SLDC). For candidates sitting any other College of Policing S&A examination or assessment process, please refer to the RA and accommodation policy for the process you have applied to.
- 1.2. The College of Policing's S&A team are committed to providing valid, fair and reliable assessment products for the police service. In doing so, it is sometimes appropriate to make accommodations or RAs to these assessment products for candidates with particular requirements, to enable them to undertake a fair assessment.
- 1.3. The term 'specific learning difficulties' (SpLDs) is becoming less frequently used in the workplace when referring to dyslexia and related conditions, as it is considered to be a term focused more on education than the workplace. The Division of Occupational Psychology working group in this area is called the Neurodiversity in Employment Working Group, and the Department for Work and Pensions and some other public sector bodies have adopted the term 'neurodiversity' in place of SpLDs. From this point onwards, this policy will therefore use the terms 'neurodiversity' and 'neurodiverse conditions' to refer to those neurodevelopmental conditions termed SpLDs in previous S&A policies.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) prohibits unlawful discrimination against people within specified protected characteristic groups. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 2.2. The Act requires the College of Policing, police forces and agencies to take steps to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against individuals within a protected characteristic group in a range of circumstances, covering the provision of goods, facilities and services, the exercise of public functions, disposal and management of premises, work, education and associations. This includes the provision of testing and assessment processes.
- 2.3. The aim of this document is to outline to forces, agencies and candidates the process by which candidates who feel they may require an accommodation or an RA can apply for this for an S&A senior selection process. This includes candidates who are requesting an RA because of a neurodiverse condition or other disability.

3. Reasonable adjustments and accommodations

- 3.1. As previously stated, the Act prohibits discrimination against people within protected characteristic groups that are specified in the Act. There are a number of circumstances under which candidates may require an accommodation or adjustment to their assessment. The most common of these is when a candidate has a disability and requests an RA. Under the Act, the College of Policing and police forces and agencies have a duty to make RAs to practices, premises and services to support a person with a disability at a 'substantial disadvantage' because of their disability, in comparison with people who do not have a disability. Failure to carry out this duty can constitute discrimination.
- 3.2. There are also instances when a candidate may request an accommodation because of a physical or mental condition that is not considered a disability.

- 3.3. An important distinction is made between an RA and an accommodation. An RA refers specifically to a requirement within the legislation relating to disability, whereas an accommodation may be considered and supported in a wider range of circumstances. An example of an accommodation would be allowing a candidate who has a bad back – but which did not meet the definition of a disability – to use a customised chair. The sections below provide more guidance on the circumstances in which an RA or accommodation might apply.

4. Reasonable adjustments

- 4.1. The Act defines a person with a disability as **‘Someone who has a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’**.
- 4.2. Only an individual who has a disability that complies with the above legal definition is entitled to an RA. However, those who have a condition that is not a disability may still be eligible to receive an accommodation and should refer to Section 5. A condition must have a long-term effect to be categorised as a disability. Schedule 1 of the Act tells us that to be long-term, the effect of the condition is likely to last, or must have lasted, for at least 12 months.
- 4.3. If a candidate is in doubt as to whether their condition meets the definition of a disability, they should seek clarification from a specialist. The guidance given under section 6 and Schedule 1 of the Act should be considered.
- 4.4. The Act’s definition of a disability includes physical impairments (eg, hearing impairments, mobility impairments) and mental impairments or differences in functioning (eg, mental health conditions and neurodiverse conditions). Both physical and mental impairments are subject to the requirement that they meet the requisite criteria under the Act of having a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the individual. The term neurodiversity includes dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, attention deficit disorder, specific language impairment (SLI) and Asperger’s syndrome, among other differences.

5. Accommodations

- 5.1. The College of Policing aims to provide all candidates with a fair assessment and will aim to support requests for accommodations where these are appropriate. However, in considering whether an accommodation is appropriate, it is important to ensure that the accommodation does not change the standard that the candidate is being measured against, nor that the candidate is provided with an unfair advantage over other candidates.
- 5.2. It will be unlikely that an accommodation would lead to a candidate being awarded additional time in an assessment process, as this could potentially provide the candidate with an unfair advantage. It will also be necessary to consider the cost and logistical impact of supporting any accommodations and whether this is reasonable in the circumstances. For this reason, all requests will be considered on an individual basis.

6. Determining reasonable adjustments or accommodations

- 6.1. Every application for RAs or accommodations is considered individually to reflect the understanding that every individual has unique requirements. However, in determining any RAs, it is the responsibility of S&A to decide that the adjustment is 'reasonable'. The 'reasonableness' of any adjustment is determined by the following principles.
 - Whether or not the RA would affect the competency being assessed. RAs that affect what is being assessed could invalidate the measure of the candidate's suitability against role requirements. This would **not** be an RA.
 - Whether the RA can reasonably be replicated in the working environment. Where an RA is applied within the context of the assessment process but cannot be applied in an analogous way within the role, this would render the assessment invalid. This is because it cannot measure a candidate's suitability against role requirements. This would **not** be an RA.
 - The RA should be sufficient to provide the candidate with an equal opportunity to meet the requirements of the assessment process. However,

the extent of the RA should **not** place the candidate at an advantage, as this would be unfair to other candidates.

- It will also be necessary to consider the cost and logistical impact of supporting any accommodations, and whether they are reasonable in the circumstances. For this reason, all requests will be considered on an individual basis.

7. Candidates resitting

- 7.1. A candidate who was granted an accommodation or RA and failed to reach the standard at a S&A senior selection process will need to reapply for the accommodation or RA for any future attempts at the same process.
- 7.2. The candidate should declare on their reasonable adjustment and accommodation declaration form (Appendix A) that they are seeking an accommodation or RA provision and specify when they previously applied for this. S&A will then review whether this was for the same assessment process that they are applying to on this occasion. If the candidate was previously granted an RA or accommodation for the process, then the same will be granted again.
- 7.3. If a candidate has previously been granted RAs or an accommodation for a senior selection process but would like additional RAs or accommodations to be provided at a future assessment process, they will need to complete the declaration form (Appendix A) and provide supporting information to evidence their request. This will need to be reviewed to identify which RAs or accommodations would now be appropriate.
- 7.4. Please note that the provision of RAs and accommodations is based on an individual's needs at that specific time, as well as the context and format of the assessment processes. It therefore follows that the RA or accommodation will reflect the current situation and may not necessarily be consistent with previous provisions.

8. Process for applying for a reasonable adjustment or accommodation

The section below provides specific guidance for candidates on the process for applying for a RA or accommodation for S&A's senior selection processes.

As the assessment provider, the College of Policing will be responsible for determining the RAs or accommodations that should be granted for its candidates and will communicate this with candidates. All medical reports or supporting information sent to the College of Policing by forces, agencies or candidates will be handled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018. Access will be strictly controlled to those individuals who need to be involved with establishing the correct provisions for the candidate. Where the College is provided copies of the medical information and reports, these will be deleted one year after the assessment process. During this time, they will be held securely and confidentially in a restricted area on the secure College network. For individual police forces' or agencies' policies in regards to information and data retention, please contact the force or agent directly.

There are six stages in the process of requesting a RA or an accommodation. This represents the process that will be followed in relation to all RA and accommodation requests. These stages are outlined below and are intended to ensure that candidates are treated fairly and on an individual basis.

In many instances where a candidate has requested an accommodation, it is likely that it will not be necessary to complete all of the steps outlined below, as these will not always be relevant. S&A and the force or agency will discuss this with the candidate, after the candidate has notified them. However, both candidates and forces or agencies should familiarise themselves with the details provided below.

Process for candidates when applying for reasonable adjustments or accommodations for an S&A senior selection process**Stage 1**

If you believe that you require RAs or accommodations, you can declare this when applying for the senior selection process. You are not required to notify your line management of your application for RAs or accommodations.

After your declaration, the College of Policing senior selection team will contact you to check that you wish to apply for RAs or accommodation. If you wish to apply, then you will be sent a copy of the declaration form (Appendix A) and asked to provide supporting information.

If you have previously been granted RAs or an accommodation for the process you are applying to, then you will not need to submit supporting information. Instead, you just need to complete the declaration form.

Stage 4

After undertaking any consultation with you or the specialist, the psychologist will determine the RAs or accommodations that can be offered, based on the information they have been provided with. The psychologist will then communicate their decision with you, which will be one of the following.

- Outlining the recommended RAs or accommodations by way of an acceptance form.
- Advising that the information does not warrant RA or an accommodation.
- Advising that the supporting information contains insufficient details.

If you disagree with the decision, please refer to section 9 of this document.

Stage 5

If you agree with the RAs or accommodations offered, then you should sign and return the acceptance form to the senior selection team. This must be signed and returned at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the assessment process. Please note that this is two weeks prior to the assessment process overall, which will not necessarily be two weeks prior to your assessment date. This is necessary in order to provide sufficient time for the appropriate arrangements to be made.

If you attend an S&A senior selection process without having submitted a completed acceptance form, you will be offered a choice: to sign a disclaimer before continuing with the process without any RAs or accommodations; or to defer to the next scheduled process, if this is applicable and possible.

If you disagree with the RAs or accommodations offered, please refer to section 9 of this document.

Stage 2

You should complete and sign the declaration form and provide supporting information (if required), and return this to S&A's senior selection team. Forms should be submitted as soon as possible to ensure that your needs are met.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the supporting information contains the information required. See Appendix B for further details on what is required.

Stage 3

A psychologist dealing with the request on behalf of the College of Policing will review your declaration form and check the RAs or accommodation requested. If you have previously successfully applied for RAs or accommodations for the S&A senior selection process, then the same will be granted. If you have not previously applied, the psychologist will review your supporting information, checking it complies with the College's policy (see Appendix B).

Stage 6

You will sit the S&A senior selection process with the RAs or accommodations granted.

Once RAs or accommodations are agreed, there can be no further changes to these unless discussed and agreed with the senior selection team. If you request further or different RAs or accommodations, it may be necessary to delay your assessment process (where possible).

9. Process if reasonable adjustments or accommodations are disagreed with

- 9.1. Where a candidate is advised that the information provided in the report does not warrant an adjustment or accommodation, or where a candidate disagrees with the adjustments or accommodations offered and they wish to appeal this, they should contact the College of Policing's senior selection team in the first instance. Where the report has provided insufficient information, the senior selection team will provide guidance as to what additional evidence is required.
- 9.2. Where a candidate disagrees with the adjustment being offered and no agreement can be gained through discussion, the psychologist should escalate the request to the College of Policing Reasonable Adjustment product lead within S&A. Where necessary, the College of Policing Reasonable Adjustment product lead will consider further action (for example, advice from an independent specialist who is an expert in RA requests for occupational assessments). However, it should be noted that the psychologists acting on behalf of the College of Policing will need to ensure that the suggested RAs or accommodations are reasonable, as set out in section 6 of this document.

Appendix A – Example reasonable adjustment and accommodation declaration form

Reasonable adjustment declaration form for College of Policing S&A senior selection processes (to be completed by candidates and distributed by the force).

Name:
Candidate number (if known):
Police force or agency:
Process (eg, Senior PNAC, AP for SCC, Fast Track or SLDC):

1. Will you require a reasonable adjustment or accommodation during the Senior PNAC, AP for SCC, Fast Track or SLDC assessment process?

For instance, you may require a reasonable adjustment, such as extra time, or an accommodation, such as changing the background colour on your device's screen (where applicable).

Yes

No

2. Have you previously been granted reasonable adjustments or an accommodation for a College of Policing process?

(Please note: processes include initial police recruitment processes and examinations.)

Yes

No

If Yes, please state the previous reasonable adjustments or accommodation you received and the date you received them:

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3. What is your reason for requiring a reasonable adjustment or accommodation?

Provide details of any disabilities, neurodiversities or conditions. These details better enable us to support you.

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4. Please state the reasonable adjustments or accommodation you would like to be provided with at the Senior PNAC, AP for SCC, Fast Track or SLDC process.

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Candidate declaration

I declare that the above information and any supporting information I have provided is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I consent for this information to be shared and used with the College of Policing, who will use it to process my application for reasonable adjustments or an accommodation.

I accept that the information will be stored on the secure College network and all associated documentation will be permanently deleted after 12 months of the assessment process. I also acknowledge that a positive indication of my requirement for a reasonable adjustment, by way of a Yes/No tick box, may be stored on the College's Assessment Information Management System (AIMS), and that this will be removed when my candidate identifiable information is deleted. In line with the AIMS retention policy, this will be three years or 30 years depending on whether I am unsuccessful or successful, respectively, in my chosen assessment process. I also understand that I may be required to provide additional supporting information from an appropriately qualified specialist to support my request and it is my responsibility to provide this to my force if required to do so.

Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Appendix B – Supporting information requirements

1.1. Where candidates are applying for an RA, they are required to provide supporting information. The purpose of the supporting information is to establish whether or not the candidate has a disability as defined by the Act. Secondly, where a candidate does have a disability, the purpose of the supporting information is to obtain initial recommendations about what may constitute an RA for the candidate.

Please note: in some instances where a candidate has requested an accommodation, no further information might be required. However, in all instances where a candidate is requesting an RA, the candidate will be required to provide supporting information (if the force does not hold any information) or evidence of previous RAs.

1.2. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the supporting information provided contains the information required in order to offer RAs. The College of Policing will **not** be responsible for meeting the cost of any assessments or reports.

Candidates with a disability or medical condition – supporting information requirements

2.1. Supporting information should take the form of a medical or specialist's report that provides information regarding the candidate's disability or the difficulties they experience. To ensure that the most appropriate RAs are granted, it is helpful if this also includes recommendations that would be helpful to the candidate within an assessment process. This will enable police forces to better support candidates by ensuring that the RAs they grant will meet their needs.

2.2. Psychologists working on behalf of the College of Policing will determine the RAs that should be granted based on the specialist's recommendations. Where these are not available, it may be appropriate to offer RAs, which have been found to help support candidates and create a level playing field. Where these are not available, these will be determined following a conversation with the candidate and/or discussion with the specialist (where possible), as well as with the force or agency.

Candidates with neurodiverse conditions – supporting information requirements

3.1. Neurodiversity is an overarching term that applies, but not exclusively, to conditions such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, attention deficit disorder, SLI and Asperger's syndrome, among other neurodevelopmental differences and hidden disabilities.

Diversity reports for neurodiverse conditions

In most cases, the first step in determining RAs is to ensure that the individual concerned has undergone a formal assessment of their neurodiverse condition.

The aim of an assessment and the resultant report is to:

- determine if someone has a condition under the term neurodiversity
- identify the nature of the condition(s) (eg, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia or attention deficit disorder)
- diagnose the specific cognitive processing abilities affected
- determine the extent of any impairment or difference
- provide practical advice and guidance associated with the diagnosis
- provide recommendations for RAs that support the candidate and the specific impairments diagnosed

A good-quality diagnostic assessment also ensures that the candidate receives the most appropriate advice, guidance and RA(s) to meet the needs of their impairment. It also helps to ensure that there is clarity about what their condition is and avoids the need to generalise about what their needs might be. This can be helpful in ensuring that the candidate receives the appropriate adjustments for their needs.

Candidate diagnostic reports that were completed before the age of 16 will be accepted.

Alternative supporting information for candidates with neurodiverse conditions

- 4.1. While diagnostic assessments for neurodiverse conditions are helpful in providing an accurate picture of an individual's abilities, it is recognised that there can be barriers in obtaining such assessments (for example, the cost of reports).
- 4.2. In support of an application for RAs, alternative forms of supporting information – completed by suitably trained and qualified individuals – will therefore be accepted for candidates who have a neurodiverse condition but do not yet have a diagnostic report. These alternatives include evidence of:
 - exam or assessment access arrangements obtained while in education (known as Form 8)
 - a Disabled Students Allowance report
 - a Study Aids and Study Strategies report completed while in education
 - a Workplace Needs Assessment report

Please note: in cases where supporting information does not provide specific personal recommendations for assessments, it is likely that standard RAs will be offered, which have been found helpful for candidates who experience this neurodiversity.

Candidates with a neurodiverse condition whose first language is not English

- 5.1. Candidates who have a neurodiverse condition, such as dyslexia, in a first language other than English are likely also to have it in English. The same procedures should apply for candidates whose first language is not English. However, please note that the College of Policing is unable to support the translation of supporting information from an individual's native language to English.

About the College

We're the professional body for the police service in England and Wales.

Working together with everyone in policing, we share the skills and knowledge officers and staff need to prevent crime and keep people safe.

We set the standards in policing to build and preserve public trust and we help those in policing develop the expertise needed to meet the demands of today and prepare for the challenges of the future.

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