



Training and Enabling Line Managers to Support Disabled Staff

Lizzy Allman, *University College London*
EDI Manager & Disability Equity lead

Outline

- UCL approach to disability equity
- UCL support systems for line managers and Disabled and Neurodivergent Staff
- Equipping line managers with the tools and knowledge to support staff:
 - Agreement of Consistent Treatment (UCL disability passport)
 - Confidential reasonable adjustments advice line
 - Reasonable adjustments training for line managers

UCL's approach to supporting Disabled and Neurodivergent staff

The Social Model underpins the UCL approach to supporting Disabled and Neurodivergent staff

UCL Governance Structures

- Disabled and Neurodivergent staff involved in governance, advising and influencing policy decisions
 - Disability Equality Steering Group
 - Disability Equality Implementation Group
- Disabled Staff Network (Enable) and the Neurodivergent Staff Network – for peer support

UCL support systems for Disabled and Neurodivergent staff

- Workplace Needs assessments for Neurodivergent staff (diagnosis not needed)
- Disability passport (ACT – Agreement of Consistent Treatment)
- Guidance documents for managers on supporting Disabled and Neurodivergent staff
- Disability training included in the online mandatory training
- Digital accessibility hub
- Access to Work bridge funding
- Training – reasonable adjustments training for line managers
- Confidential email address for advice on reasonable adjustments

Issues identified with reasonable adjustments at UCL

Survey of staff revealed a very inconsistent picture of reasonable adjustments implementation across UCL, with a wide variety of experiences, positive to negative. Some main themes were highlighted:

1. Failure to implement reasonable adjustments;
2. Low awareness of UK law and UCL policy;
3. Administrative burden of Access to Work claims;
4. Lack of trust and fear of sharing information about disability.

“[The line manager] said that ‘everybody has problems’ so I did not feel that I can discuss any adjustments with her.” [UCL Disabled staff respondent]




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**Equipping line managers with the ability
to support Disabled staff**

Agreement of Consistent Treatment (ACT)

- Helps facilitate conversation and discussion between staff and their line about reasonable adjustments.
- Minimise the need to re-negotiate adjustments every time the employee changes jobs, is re-located or assigned a new manager within the organisation.
- Ensure that both parties, the individual and the line manager, have an accurate record of what has been agreed.
- Can be used as a basis for future conversations about adjustments



Confidential

Agreement of Consistent Treatment (ACT)

Individually tailored reasonable adjustments and flexible working arrangements

Managers who need help in deciding whether or not an adjustment for a Disabled staff member is reasonable may find it helpful to contact UCL's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team equalities@ucl.ac.uk or HR Business Partnering.

This ACT is a living record of the reasonable adjustments and flexible working arrangements (hereafter 'adjustments') agreed between an employee and their line manager.

The purpose of this agreement is to:

- Ensure that both parties, the individual and the employer, have an accurate record of what has been agreed.
- Minimise the need to re-negotiate adjustments every time the employee changes jobs, is re-located or assigned a new manager within the organisation.
- Provide employees and their line managers with the basis for discussion about adjustments at future meetings.

The agreement allows the employee to:

- Explain the impact of their impairment(s), health condition(s), caring or other personal commitments on them at work.
- Suggest adjustments that will make it easier for them to do their job and safeguard their wellbeing.
- Offer further information from their doctor, specialist or other expert.
- Request an assessment by Occupational Health, Access to Work or another expert.
- Seek input from HR or the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Team
- Review the effectiveness of the adjustments agreed.
- Explain any change in their circumstances or health.
- For staff with long term or progressive conditions, be reassured that their manager knows what to do if they become unwell at work.
- Know how and when their manager will keep in touch with them if they are absent from work because of illness, caring or an access-related reason.
- Be assured that their manager is committed to meeting their access and other needs in the workplace.

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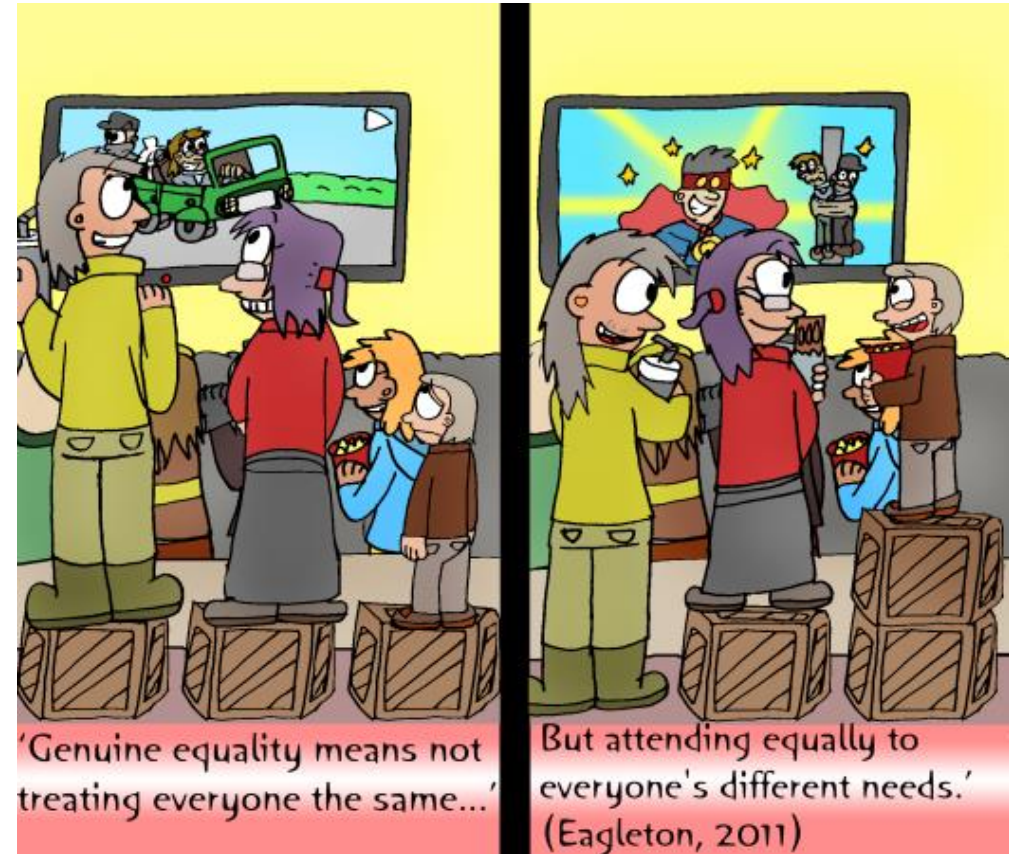
Confidential reasonable adjustments advice line

- UCL provides a confidential reasonable adjustments advice line (via an email address) for line managers, HR and Disabled and Neurodivergent staff
- Managed by only two members of the EDI team with disability and neurodiversity training
- For advice and guidance if there are complex queries about reasonable adjustments, or disagreements between line managers and their staff
- Clarity on the legal requirements around reasonable adjustments.

Reasonable adjustments training for line managers

Providing background and context:

- The moral, legal and business case for reasonable adjustments
- Outlining what the disability and neurodiversity umbrella involves and encouraging input
- Outlining the Social Model vs the Medical Model
- Reasonable adjustments *remove barriers*, not provide advantage
- The Equality Act 2010 and the legal requirements around reasonable adjustments



Reasonable adjustments training for line managers

Implementing reasonable adjustments at UCL

- Quotes from UCL staff on their experiences of reasonable adjustments
- Examples of different kinds of reasonable adjustments
- Advice on approaching conversations with employees on reasonable adjustments: focus on the *barriers* not the condition
- Assessing performance or barriers?
- Integrating a culture of disability equity
- Case studies

Getting reasonable adjustments right

“Being able to control my work environment with the support and understanding of my Department has meant the world to me and I believe it is really the only way I have been able to progress in an academic career.”

- *Professor, UCL*



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Questions?