

## The Test of Competence

### Policy on Reasonable Adjustments for disability

#### Introduction

This policy relates to the reasonable adjustments that can be made for the assessment of applicants through the Test of Competence (TOC), that is, applicants for registration who have graduated from an institution which does not have a programme recognised by the GCC. This policy does not seek to explain every situation but is intended as a general statement of our policy.

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled people, defined by the Act as those who have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This will, in some circumstances, mean that disabled people receive more favourable treatment than non-disabled people, which is lawful in the context of disability.

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the *competence standards* against which assessment is made – in the case of the TOC and the GCC the reasonable adjustments do not alter the standards set out in The Code [2016]. They can, however, affect how the assessment of that standard is carried out. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors. These factors include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of the disabled applicant
- the effectiveness of the adjustment
- the cost of the adjustment
- the extent to which the adjustment reflects the normal practice of a person working within the occupational area
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the applicant and other applicants.

Adjustments must not put in jeopardy the health and wellbeing of the applicant or any other person.

#### Our commitment to equality

Many people with a disability or long-term health condition are able to undertake chiropractic education and training, achieve a chiropractic qualification recognised by a chiropractic regulatory authority, and practise chiropractic with or without adjustments to support their practice.

The GCC is committed to equality and diversity. We will treat any individual with a disability who is considering applying to practise as a chiropractor in the UK with the respect they deserve. This policy is designed to encourage individuals with a disability who wish to practise chiropractic in the UK to take the Test of Competence.

## **What we can do**

The GCC aims to ensure that all applicants who are eligible to apply for registration are able to do so. Every application for reasonable adjustments will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

We will seek to ensure that the locations in which we hold the TOC assessment panels are accessible for individuals with physical disabilities. However, as we are likely to hire rooms in which to hold TOC assessment panels, we will not be in the position to anticipate all of the different aspects that we might need to consider. As far as possible we will plan ahead and anticipate the requirements of individuals with disabilities.

Reasonable adjustments for the TOC may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- providing documents on coloured paper or with a specific contrast colour
- providing documents in a larger font size
- additional time
- opportunities to take supervised rest breaks
- the assessment panel being made aware of a medical condition
- a place of privacy to take medication
- disabled access
- the need to be accompanied
- arranging for a loop system to be available for individuals with hearing impairments or providing interpretation from sign language into the spoken word and vice versa.

A reasonable adjustment may be unique to that individual and consequently not included in the list above.

## **How we decide what is 'reasonable'**

The Equality Act does not define what is "reasonable" but guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission suggests that the most relevant factors are:

- Will the adjustment help in overcoming the difficulties that the disabled person may have?

The adjustment will need to be designed to fully address the disadvantage it is meant to overcome. For example, providing access for a wheelchair user to the room in which the TOC is to be held as well as ensuring that there are appropriate disabled toilet facilities.

- How practical is it to provide the adjustment?

The earlier we know that we need to make an adjustment the more likely it is that it is reasonable for us to do something about it. For example, if an applicant arrives and alerts us to the need for reasonable adjustments to be made on the date the TOC is being held, we will make every effort to consider and respond to the request. However, we will be limited by the venue in which the

assessment is being held and the requirements of other applicants being seen on that day.

- What are the resource implications of making the adjustment?

We receive our funding from our registrants – that is chiropractors working in the UK. Whilst every effort will be made to consider an adjustment for the Test of Competence, we must bear in mind the overall cost of it to the organisation and the impact it would have on the annual registration fees of UK chiropractors.

- Would the adjustment cause disruption to others?

There are always a number of people seeking to take the Test of Competence. We will have to make sure they are not disadvantaged by us devoting all our time, for example, to one person.

The GCC does not grant exemptions from any part of the TOC or any elements of it as all are required components of the assessment process and for assessment of the competence standards.

As the GCC is concerned with the protection of public in the UK where English is the agreed language and a required standard, applicants may **not** apply for reasonable adjustments on the basis that English is not their first language.

### **Applying for an adjustment**

Any applicant for registration with the GCC through the Test of Competence and who has a disability (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) may apply for an adjustment to be made.

Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to let the GCC office know of their need for an adjustment to be made prior to that date of their Test of Competence being arranged. This is so the appropriate arrangements can be put in place in the venue and with the assessment panel. Applicants are encouraged to apply for an adjustment at the earliest opportunity so that we have sufficient time to consider the request and make reasonable adjustments in advance of the assessment.

If you have a disability and think that you will need an adjustment to be made so that you are able to sit the Test of Competence, you should contact our Registration Department by phone or by email. We will need to know:

- a. the nature of your disability
- b. the adjustments that you would like to see in the assessment as this is likely to help us understand the disability. For example, this could describe the adjustments that have been made to assessment processes in the past.

Applications for adjustments will be dealt with in a confidential manner. Everyone involved in the process has a duty to maintain confidentiality. However, in order to consider the application and/or make the approved adjustments, it will be necessary to disclose the identity of the applicant to the TOC assessment panel and administrative staff involved in the organisation of the TOC prior to or during the day of the assessment panel.

## **Monitoring**

The GCC will record and monitor the adjustments that have been requested and the reasonable adjustments that have been made. This will allow us to review the services we provide and help us identify whether there are any wider steps that we can take to improve our services.

## **Dealing with complaints about our service**

We are committed to providing a high standard of service, dealing with everyone in a way that is fair, and free from discrimination.

If someone is dissatisfied with the arrangements, we have made for providing reasonable adjustments, we will respond in accordance with our complaints policy. Further information about our complaints policy is available <https://www.gcc-uk.org/contact-us/complain-about-the-gcc>