

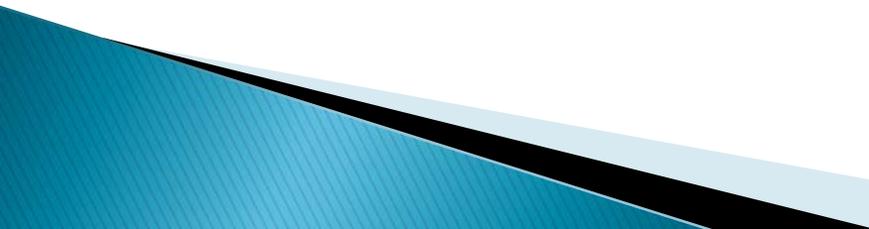
HEOPS

Higher Education Occupational Physicians / Practitioners

Adjustments for students training in regulated professions

- ▶ This is a request for a conversation between ANHOPS and HEOPS members to ensure patient safety and to ensure that new healthcare students and workers are offered realistic adjustments and given realistic expectations about adjustments in their training environment and then their working environment.
 - ▶ Written guidance could improve consistency and transparency of practice across the educational and working sectors.
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General requirement for adjustments for students:

- ▶ Equality Act section 60, section 53, part 6 and schedule 13.
 - ▶ Educational institutions must consider reasonable adjustments for disabled students on training courses.
 - ▶ Whether an adjustment is “reasonable” depends on cost, effectiveness and level of risk.
 - ▶ Patient and service user safety is paramount consideration.
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Legal constraints on adjustments

Equality Act

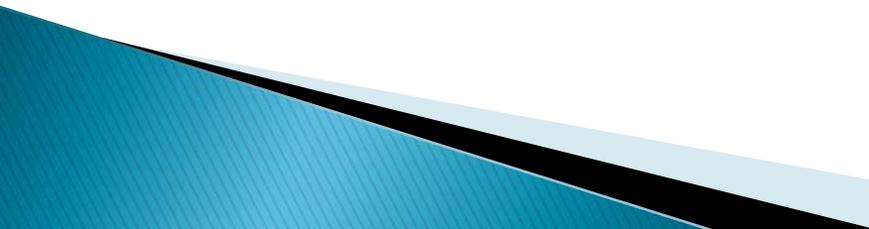
- ▶ All fitness standards must be a proportionate means of achieving the legitimate aim of ensuring patient safety, and must be targeted at functions which are intrinsic to the discipline. Section 60
- ▶ The application of a competence standard, to determine whether a person has a particular level of competence or ability, by a qualifications body is not discrimination. Section 53

Example of a fitness standard and mandatory competency

Literacy and Numeracy

- ▶ By graduation, students must have met **all** of the outcomes for registration with the GDC.¹ These outcomes include obtaining, recording and interpreting a comprehensive and contemporaneous patient history, communicating appropriately, effectively and sensitively with and about patients, their representatives, the public and colleagues, by spoken, written and electronic methods. Preparing for Practice - Dental Teams Learning Outcomes for Registration GDC
- ▶ This refers to the student's ability rather than educational attainment. The minimum for the PLAB test is level 7 of IELTS. All students must be able to prescribe drugs safely and effectively, calculate accurate drug doses, keep accurate, legible and complete clinical records. HEOPS fitness standards.

What adjustments can we make to the mandatory standards of literacy and numeracy?

- ▶ None. This would breach the Equality Act and put patients' safety at risk.
 - ▶ Students who enrol with a label of dyslexia or other learning disorders are fit to train if they can achieve the mandatory competencies, irrespective of the label or diagnosis.
 - ▶ The widespread tradition of offering 25% extra time in written examinations to students who request this is not relevant to fitness to train since timing of written examinations is not defined by regulators.
 - ▶ If a student needed a personal assistant to read or write for them, on objective medical grounds, they would not be fit to achieve the mandatory literacy standards.
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Common and minor adjustments to the student training environment:

- ▶ Extra time in written examinations – 25% by convention and tradition
- ▶ Use of a dictaphone
- ▶ Extra time to complete assignments
- ▶ Use of a laptop
- ▶ Text to voice and voice to text software
- ▶ Voice to text and text to voice telephone system
- ▶ Adjusted training course to avoid exposure prone procedures
- ▶ Adjusted training hours and course duration
- ▶ Equipment for clinical tasks with enhanced visual or sound features
- ▶ Absence from training for medical treatment
- ▶ Mind mapping techniques
- ▶ Less than full time training

Adjustments which are regularly requested which would be incompatible with patient safety:

- ▶ Extra time in clinical examinations which are a real-time assessments of clinical skills and knowledge relevant to patient safety
 - ▶ Provision of a personal assistant to read or write on behalf of the student
 - ▶ Provision of a personal assistant to undertake numerical calculations on behalf of the student
 - ▶ Provision of a personal assistant, qualified to practise in the relevant discipline, to undertake mandatory practical procedures listed by the regulatory body as mandatory competencies for the discipline
 - ▶ Permission to be absent permanently from training placements
 - ▶ Exemption from any mandatory competencies published by the statutory regulatory body
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- ▶ Would joint guidance from ANHOPS and HEOPS be helpful in this area?

HEOPS

Higher Education Occupational Physicians / Practitioners

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<http://www.heops.org.uk/guide.php>