

## Access Arrangements: Reasonable Adjustments related to a disability Policy

Version	Document Owner	Changes	Issue Date
V1.3	RICS Education and Qualification Policy	Replaces RICS' "Special Considerations" policy	April 2023

### Introduction

This document sets out RICS' policy and procedure for reasonable adjustments related to a disability.

The policy applies to all grades of RICS membership, and all regulated qualifications offered by RICS.

It is important members, candidates, and learners ("The Applicant") are aware of this document and that they are part of the decision-making process.

RICS makes every effort to protect applicants from discrimination in accordance with the UK Equality Act 2010 (the Act) and is committed to equality of opportunity.

Whilst this document is based on RICS' obligations under the Act, applicants outside the UK are advised to refer to any "local" legislation as part of any application. RICS will take this into consideration.

RICS must consider requests for a reasonable adjustment where an applicant, who is disabled as defined by the Act, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled.

Disability is defined as "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day- to-day activities." By way of guidance, a "substantial effect" should be interpreted as anything that is more than minor or trivial and a long-term effect is one that has lasted or is likely to last 12 months or is likely to last for the rest of a person's life.

A reasonable adjustment must be based on the individual needs of the applicant and their ability to access a RICS assessment.

Consideration should be given to their "normal" way of working and applicants are encouraged to identify what they consider would help them access the assessment.

This may include, but is not limited to:

- Changing usual assessment arrangements
- Additional support during assessment, such as extra time
- Re-organising the assessment space
- RICS providing an adjustment (or auxiliary aid) and/or permitting an applicant an adjustment (e.g., permitting them to use their own auxiliary aid)
- Consideration to alternative assessment methods

An adjustment must not:

- Alter the RICS competency standards being assessed
- Affect the integrity of the assessment
- Compensate for a lack of knowledge and/or skills required
- Give the applicant an unfair advantage or disadvantage over other applicants
- Be considered unreasonable

## **Procedure**

Applications are made by completing a reasonable adjustments application form.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to disclose their disability to RICS as early as possible in the, so that appropriate support arrangements can be put in place, however, RICS welcomes disclosure at any point, recognising that health conditions may fluctuate, and needs may change. It is likely that RICS will require different timescales to implement different adjustments.

Requests must include details of the condition and supporting evidence to establish 'need', particularly where an adjustment has a cost or other resource implication. It is through this information that RICS will be in a good position to consider what adjustments would most effectively overcome the disadvantage experienced by the applicant.

There is no definition of acceptable documentation for this purpose as RICS understands the difficulties and expense involved in gaining medical/other evidence as to a disability.

Evidence could be in the form of a:

- supporting letter from a doctor/medical professional
- copy of psychological assessment report
- supporting letter from education provider/employer

In cases where it is not possible to provide the above, RICS will consider a detailed statement from the applicant outlining their condition and the difficulties they encounter. The statement should be signed and dated by the applicant and attached as an appendix to their application for an adjustment.

An adjustment may not be offered if sufficient supporting evidence is not provided.

RICS will ensure that it complies with the UK GDPR (and confidentiality) in respect of how it processes this information and the evidence provided.

Each request will be considered on an individual basis by RICS' Education and Qualifications team using a triage system. To support the team in deciding, RICS may seek expert external advice about a request and the types of adjustments possible.

## **Outcome**

RICS will consider what adjustments it can reasonably make to support the applicant to overcome the substantial disadvantage that they experience.

If RICS comes to the decision that an adjustment is not reasonable, the applicant will be informed why.

To appeal a decision or a proposed adjustment, the applicant must respond within 7 days from the point they are notified of the outcome.

If an adjustment is approved prior to the assessment but is not implemented by RICS in line with the stated guidance, this would be considered a procedural issue and grounds for an appeal if the applicant is referred at their assessment.