Top tips for colleagues with a disability
At work guidance

A Royal Holloway Equality and Diversity Guide
Top tips for colleagues with a disability

- When you join the College as a new member of staff, your line manager will set up a meeting with you (before your start date if possible) to discuss your requirements and develop an action plan with you. This is an opportunity for you and your line manager to clarify the following:
  - Would you like other members of the team to be made aware of your disability? If so, would you like to be present for this/take the lead?
  - Would you like access to a disability buddy (provided by the Disability Forum)? If yes, then you or your line manager can contact equality@royalholloway.ac.uk to ask for this to be set up.
  - Would you like access to a Coach who has a disability? To set this up, you or your line manager can contact the Organisation Development and Diversity Office.
  - Do you have access requirements which mean that you may need reasonable adjustments? (Further information on reasonable adjustments can be found below.)
  - Will you require specific assistive technologies (available for the Disability and Dyslexia Services, disability-dyslexia@royalholloway.ac.uk) in order to be able to carry out your work? Does the College already have access to these, or do you have access to them?
  - Do you require specific adaptive equipment? Your line manager can discuss the availability and trial of equipment with the HR Business Partner and the Health and Safety Officer.
  - Are you likely to require significant periods of time away from work? If so, will this be spontaneous or scheduled, such as for a series of medical treatments?
  - Will you require a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)? (Relevant to staff with a disability linked to mobility, or some form of visual, auditory or cognitive impairment.)
  - Your line manager might be able to get a sense of the varying support you might need on a regular basis, and how this might fluctuate, by discussing with you how your disability impacts you on a good day, and what symptoms/issues/reactions suggest that you may not be doing so well and might need some time away from work.

If you are an existing member of staff disclosing a disability, you should have the same discussions with your line manager. Following an open and supportive discussion, line managers and staff can jointly complete a Royal Holloway Disability and Adjustment Passport: a document that details the reasonable adjustments a staff member with disability or health issues needs in the workplace. This document provides a solid record of what was discussed and agreed, in the case of a change in line manager or starting a new role. Contact equality@royalholloway.ac.uk to obtain the disability passport template.

- Staff from the Disability Forum have produced a short video where they reflect on experiences of working at the College. This may help you gain insight into the types of accommodations the College can make.
• If your line manager is unsure about processes or steps following your initial consultation, they will contact their HR Business Partner for advice and guidance.

• Your line manager is advised to schedule annual/biannual catch-up/contact meetings with you. These should be separate to any performance review meetings.

• Your line manager is not a mental health professional. If you have a mental health-related disability issue, you can explore with your line manager the following sources of support:
  – HealthandWellbeing-HR@royalholloway.ac.uk will be able to provide information on initiatives and schemes to promote health and wellbeing at the College. See also the Health and Wellbeing webpages
  – The Employee Assistance Programme
  – The staff Mental Health Support Network
  – Staff Disability Forum, coordinated by the E&D Officer (susan.lee@royalholloway.ac.uk)

• Information you give to your line manager will be treated as completely confidential.

• The College Disability & Dyslexia Services have a dedicated Disability & Dyslexia Adviser (Accessibility) whose role is to procure and update a suite of accessible technologies for use by students and colleagues at the College.

• The Health and Safety Officer has adaptive equipment available for staff to trial.

• If you would like to discuss your experience of working at the College with someone other than your line manager, you can contact the Equality and Diversity team (equality@royalholloway.ac.uk), a member of the Staff Disability Forum (ashok.jashapara@royalholloway.ac.uk), or your department/service HR Business Partner.

• The College has a Dignity At Work – Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy for colleagues, that includes guidance on submitting a complaint.

• The Government-funded Access to Work scheme provides grants to help pay for the extra employment cost of working with a disability. This can include funding for:
  – Special aids or equipment to use in the workplace such as specialist software or computer access equipment including speech recognition software.
  – A support worker to provide one to one support in the workplace such as a British Sign Language Interpreter or personal reader for dyslexic, blind or visually impaired individuals.
  – Travel to work if public transport cannot be used due to health or disability and help with adaptations to vehicles.
  – Travel in work to pay for the extra cost of travel while at work.
  – Communication support at job interviews for an interpreter or other one-to-one support for someone who has difficulties in communicating with others.
  – Adaptations to existing (but not new) buildings.

The responsibility to apply for Access to Work lies with you. However, your line manager is expected to support you when making this application, which should be made as soon as possible after securing employment. The Access to Work grant can pay up to 100% of the approved costs if you are unemployed and starting a new job; or if you have been working for the College less than six weeks. The grant will pay a proportion of the costs of support if you have been in the job for six weeks or more.