

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS IN EDUCATION

Educational providers, such as schools and higher educational institutions, have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled students are not at a substantial disadvantage to their peers who are not disabled. As it is an anticipatory duty, educational providers are required to anticipate issues and make adjustments to allow disabled students to participate in the whole life of their education.

What would be an appropriate reasonable adjustment **will depend on the specific circumstances**. For practical examples of appropriate adjustments, have a look at the three DVDs published by the Department for Education, "*Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in Schools and Early Years Settings*." And look at the list below compiled by a teacher who stammers himself. These are suggestions only, the important word is 'reasonable', given the circumstances of yourself or your child and the establishment. Find more information at www.stamma.org or contact us at help@stamma.org.

Education setting concern	Agreed reasonable adjustment
Fear of being heard stammering makes me anxious to answer my name during the register	Being able to raise my hand instead or teacher acknowledging that I am here before register is taken. Or allowing me to say something simple e.g. "yes" or a word of my choice.
My stammer can fluctuate and I sometimes need to top up my speech therapy or related techniques, requiring time out of the lesson	Allowing me to leave the lesson to attend my speech and language therapy session.
Taking part in group work makes me feel anxious due to fear of others laughing at my stammer.	Allowing me to work with friends or people I am comfortable with. Also, ensuring that there's someone in the group who makes sure everyone has something to say.
Doing a group presentation to the class	It would help if one person introduced everyone's name (as I may struggle to say my name). Also, allowing me extra time will help me feel less anxious about running out of time as it takes me longer to speak.
Doing a single presentation to the class	Allowing me to write my name on the introduction slide rather than verbally introducing myself, or, allowing me to present to just the teacher will help with anxiety. Extra time to compensate for the time lost when stammering. If questions are asked, allowing me time to think about my answer before answering will help.
Taking part in icebreaker activities especially at the beginning of the new academic year.	Allowing all students to take part in ice breakers without talking, for example, giving students a post-it note instead, to write down information about themselves. The teacher can then read it out without having the students to stand up and introduce themselves. This can also be done through the use of mini whiteboards.
Being a messenger in a big school.	It would be easier if messages were written down for me to pass on to other students, teachers etc
Speaking exams (Languages)	Allowing me extra time to do language speaking exam. I tend to stammer more in a different foreign language as I need to think more. Doing this in a quiet room will also help calm nerves.
Being chosen to answer a question on the spot	Being asked questions on the spot by teachers can be daunting, especially when I don't know the answer. Would be better if teachers stopped doing this and encouraged students to answer rather than picking a student at random. Another option would be if all students were given mini whiteboards to write down their answers.
Asking for help	When raising my hand for help, teachers do not always see it. It is then daunting to speak loudly to get their attention. It would help if teachers circulated the class and went round and asked students if they need help as some students simply will never ask.
The teachers and my class mates don't understand what it means to have a stammer.	Give a short talk to your class –your Speech and Language Therapist could help you with this, or come and do it with you.