Examples of Adjustments

**Example Adjustments**

There are over 30 symptoms of the menopause and these can manifest both physically and psychologically. However, the menopause affects people in different ways and not everyone experiences all of the symptoms, or to the same degree.

Consideration should be given to how each individual can be supported according to their symptoms. This includes assessing whether reasonable adjustments can be accommodated within their job role to minimise the impact of symptoms at work.

For many, **working in a more agile way from home** has meant they have been **better able to manage the impact of many of their symptoms** and it may be that in some roles this way of working can continue to be accommodated on an ad-hoc or longer term basis, or can be blended with time spent on campus.

The list below provides examples of the types of adjustments that might help to overcome the issues associated with common symptoms:

**Sleep disruption and/or night sweats:**

**May increase fatigue at work**

* Consider a change to shift patterns or the ability to swap shifts on a temporary basis.
* Offer a flexible working arrangement, for example a later start and finish time.
* Enabling someone to work from home if they’ve had a rough night.
* Review tasks and deadlines and consider adjustments to workloads

**Hot flushes and/or daytime sweats:**

**Can be debilitating, may affect concentration and train of thought, and can cause the individual to feel self conscious as physical symptoms may be noticeable**

* Look at ways to cool the working environment, for example provide access to fans, move a desk close to a window or adjust the air conditioning.
* Provide easy access to cold drinking water and staff washrooms.
* Adapt uniforms to improve comfort.
* Limit the time wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) such as face masks.
* Allow breaks to access fresh air
* Make a quiet room / private space available
* Provide easy access to staff washroom and toilet facilities.

**Urinary Problems:**

**For example increased frequency or urgency, and increased risk of urinary infections**

* Provide easy access to staff washroom and toilet facilities.
* Allow for more frequent breaks to go to the toilet.
* Ensure easy access to cold drinking water
* Ensure tasks accommodate the potential need to use toilet facilities

**Heavy or irregular periods:**

**Can be painful, and a lack of available toilet facilities can cause distress, embarrassment and increase stress levels**

* Provide easy access to staff washroom and toilet facilities.
* Allow for more frequent breaks to go to the toilet.
* Allow someone to temporarily work from home if they have very heavy bleeding.
* Make sanitary products available in washrooms.
* Have extra uniforms readily available if needed.
* Ensure cover is available to enable frontline staff to access facilities when they need to

**Skin irritation, dryness or itching:**

**Can cause discomfort and an increased risk of infections**

* Check materials used uniforms and PPE do not contribute
* Ensure comfortable working temperatures and humidity

**Headaches and fatigue:**

**Can be triggered or worsened by artificial lighting, chemicals, screen work, stress, posture, temperature**

* Ensure comfortable working temperatures
* Access to adequate natural lighting and ability to control artificial lighting
* Consider a temporary adjustment to someone’s work duties.
* Provide a quiet area to work.
* Provide access to a rest room.
* Ensure easy access to drinking water.
* Allow regular breaks and opportunities to take medication.
* Undertake a stress risk assessment.

**Dry Eyes:**

**Can cause discomfort and eye strain**

* Ensure comfortable working temperatures and humidity
* Carry out DSE risk assessment

**Muscular aches, and bone and joint pain:**

**Lifting, moving, manual handling and repetitive movements or static postures can make this worse**

* Make any necessary temporary adjustments through review of risk assessments and work schedules.
* Allow someone to move around or stay mobile, if that helps.

**Psychological issues (for example loss of confidence, poor concentration, anxiety, forgetfulness, mood changes etc):**

**Certain tasks may become more difficult to carry out and this can be compounded by excessive workloads, unsupportive colleagues, perceived stigma and stress which can all have a negative effect on psychological health**

* Encourage staff to discuss concerns at one-to-one meetings with you
* Discuss possible adjustments to tasks and duties that are proving a challenge.
* Consider reviewing workloads, tasks, deadlines and duties.
* Reduce demands or provide additional time or resources to support
* Have agreed protected time to catch up with work.
* Provide noise reducing headphones for open plan offices.
* Look at methods of planning work to assist memory, and discuss use of lists, action boards or other memory assisting equipment
* Address work-related stress by carrying out a stress risk assessment.
* Allow time out from others when needed, to have some quiet time or undertake relaxation or mindfulness activities.
* Provide access to a quiet space to work or the opportunity to work from home.
* Agree whether, and if so what, the individual would like colleagues to know
* Identify a ‘buddy’ outside of work area.
* Signpost to the [Employee Assistance Programme](https://www.stir.ac.uk/about/professional-services/human-resources-and-organisation-development/working-at-stirling/staff-mental-health-and-wellbeing/employee-assistance-programme-eap/).
* Discuss whether it would be helpful for the employee to visit their GP, if they haven’t already.

You can also seek advice from Occupational Health about reasonable adjustments.