

Guaranteed Interview Scheme November 2024

STRATEGY AND CHANGE



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Introduction

This guide details how Ealing Council implements the Guaranteed Interview Scheme, GIS, to support inclusivity for all disabled job applicants and implement the principles that underpin the Disability Confident Scheme.

The Disability Confident Scheme recognises the commitment the council has made to the employment of disabled people and the promotion of disability equality. The Scheme's five commitments are:

- to offer an interview to all disabled applicants who meet the advertised essential criteria for any advertised post and consider them on their abilities
- to ensure that disabled employees can develop and use their abilities
- to make every possible effort to see that disabled people stay in employment
- to take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness
- to review the commitments and to plan ways to improve

This guide provides hiring managers and human resources with the steps to ensure disabled candidates are fairly considered for interviews and aligned with our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for all job applicants with disabilities.

This scheme does not apply to job applicants for vacancies in Ealing schools. A copy of this guidance will be sent to all schools.

What is the guaranteed interview scheme?

The Guaranteed Interview Scheme, GIS, is an initiative designed to promote equal employment opportunities for disabled job applicants. Under this scheme, any disabled job applicant who meets the essential criteria for a job vacancy is guaranteed an interview.

This approach ensures that candidates are assessed based on their abilities and potential to perform in the role. It supports a more inclusive and diverse workplace by actively addressing barriers that disabled individuals may face in the recruitment process.

The guaranteed interview scheme process

The guaranteed interview scheme has four stages:

1. Pre-interview
2. Interview
3. Post-Interview
4. Ongoing

Stage 1: Pre-interview

The pre-interview stage covers application and shortlisting procedures and offering interviews to candidates who meet the necessary criteria.

Ensuring job roles are compatible with the GIS process

Considerations when designing job descriptions

Risk assess the role to identify what actions and duties are needed for the job. Consider which of these are a fundamental part of the role, versus the aspects that can be altered as part of a reasonable adjustment.

Person specification - essential criteria

Reviewing the job criteria to identify which parts of the role are essential criteria and a must under the person specification part of the role profile.

The essential criteria covers the core aspects of the role. To remove them would fundamentally change the nature of the role and removing them would **not** be classed as a reasonable adjustment.

Application submission

Applicants will submit their application forms, indicating if they wish to be considered under the GIS.

The candidate will be able to state the reasonable adjustments that would be required for the recruitment process and interview within the disability and reasonable adjustments section of the application form.

GIS application identification

Once all the applications have been received, a recruitment officer will send the hiring manager the shortlisting score sheet which will be used to evaluate each application. The shortlisting score sheet indicates which applicants have declared a disability on their application form. Managers will also be able to see the disability and reasonable adjustments information the candidate included on their application form.

Shortlisting scoring criteria

The shortlisting scoring criteria is as follows: -

Score	Definition
M	the information provided comprehensively meets minimum criteria
PM	the information provided partially meets the minimum criteria
U	the information provided is unclear
F	the information provided fails to meet the minimum criteria

Under the GIS, a disabled applicant must be invited to an interview if they meet, score M or partially meet, score PM, the essential criteria. Please note that occasional unclear, score U, means that the applicant can still be shortlisted, and any clarification will be sought at the interview. Applicants must not fail any criteria, score F, in order to be shortlisted.

If a disabled applicant does not meet the minimum criteria and is not selected for interview, adequate feedback should be recorded on the shortlisting score sheet. This will allow the shortlisting manager to provide feedback if it is later requested.

Details relating to the nature of an applicant's disability will not be revealed to the panel but they must be aware of any reasonable adjustments requested.

Stage 2: Interview

The interview stage addresses how interviews are conducted, including any reasonable adjustments needed for candidates.

Interview process

The application form advises candidates to provide information on the [reasonable adjustments](#) they may require for the interview.

Selection for posts will continue to be made solely on merit and, at the interview itself, candidates with disabilities applying under the scheme will compete without advantage against other candidates.

The line manager must liaise with the candidate in advance of the interview regarding the level of reasonable adjustments required, taking advice from a human resources business partner and corporate health and safety if needed.

Stage 3: Post-interview

The post-interview stage deals with providing feedback and making job offers, and ensuring successful candidates have the adjustments they need to start.

Onboarding

Once an offer of employment has been made, the candidate will complete an occupational health medical onboarding form which is then assessed by occupational health.

Identifying necessary workplace adjustments for GIS hires

Candidates are not required to disclose all the details of their disability unless they want to. The reasonable adjustments requested at the interview stage may only cover what was required to attend the interview, rather than what will be required for them to perform the role¹.

Managers must use the council's [reasonable adjustments guide](#) to ensure that any reasonable adjustments to the job or working environment have been discussed and are in place prior to the employee commencing their post.

It is the responsibility of the line manager to liaise with the candidate regarding the reasonable adjustments required, taking advice from a human resources business partner and corporate health and safety as necessary.

Managers can use [the checklist](#) at the end of this document to ensure they gather all the information they need.

Stage 4: Ongoing

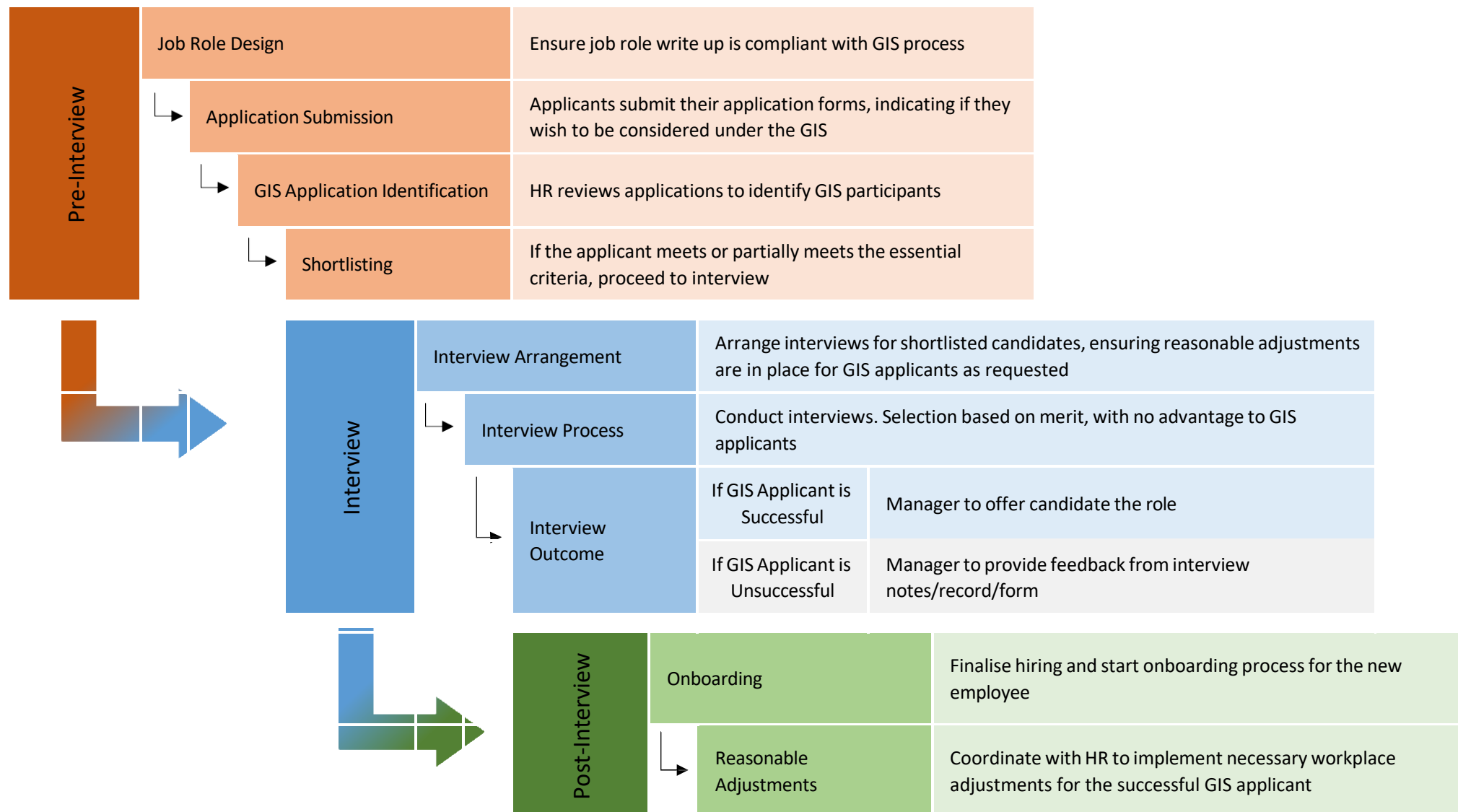
The ongoing stage looks at the long-term support and development opportunities for disabled employees, aiming to maintain an inclusive and supportive work environment.

Managers will be responsible for implementing and reviewing reasonable adjustments in line with the reasonable adjustments guide, which could include advising the employee to contact Access to Work if appropriate.

[Access to Work](#) is a government scheme which supports people with a health condition or disability. It provides individual practical support and advice to help to overcome barriers at work.

¹ www.scope.org.uk/advice-and-support/disclosing-disability-to-an-employer

Ealing council's guaranteed interview scheme process flowchart



Checklist for identifying workplace adjustments

When a line manager is preparing to discuss necessary workplace adjustments, structuring the conversation is key to ensuring all necessary topics are covered effectively and sensitively. You can use this checklist to guide the structure of your conversation:

Introduction

- begin with a warm welcome and express enthusiasm about working together
- reiterate the council's commitment to inclusivity and support for all employees and explain the reasonable adjustments process

Explain the purpose of the conversation

- clearly state the goal is to identify and implement any necessary workplace adjustments
- emphasise that the discussion is confidential and aimed at enabling their best performance and comfort

Invite the candidate to share

- encourage the candidate to describe their work-related needs
- ask open-ended questions to understand their perspective and requirements
- ask the candidate if they have an Access to Work assessment

Discuss specific adjustment areas

- physical workspace needs - talk about desk, seating, and office layout preferences, alternative working environments
- technology support - explore any specialised software or hardware that could facilitate their work
- flexible scheduling - consider options for altered work hours or remote work arrangements

- communication preferences - identify comfortable communication methods and meeting formats
- emergency and safety - cover any specific emergency procedures or supports needed

Professional development and training

- discuss access to, and modifications for, training programs to ensure they are fully inclusive

Review and feedback mechanism

- outline how and when the adjustments will be reviewed for effectiveness
- establish a process for the candidate to provide ongoing feedback about the adjustments

Next steps

- summarise the adjustments discussed, confirm next steps for implementation and complete the reasonable adjustments plan
- provide a timeline for when adjustments will be made and who to contact with questions

Closing

- thank the candidate for their openness and reassure them of your support
- encourage them to communicate any future needs as they arise

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