



Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

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Definition

The Equality Act 2010 requires Awarding Organisations to make reasonable adjustments to ensure a learner who is disabled as defined in the Act are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to learners who are not disabled.

In their publication 'The General Conditions of Recognition May 2011', Ofqual makes a number of references to Equalities Law and states a number of requirements for awarding organisations; D2, E4, G2, G6 and G7 and another for centres (Condition C2.3 (h)). Further detail of the conditions this policy relates to can be found on the Ofqual website.

Assessment should be a fair test of learners' knowledge and what they are able to do, however, for some learners the usual format of assessment may not be suitable. We ensure that our qualifications and assessments do not prevent learners from taking our qualifications.

The provision for reasonable adjustments and special consideration arrangements is made to ensure that learners receive recognition of their achievement so long as the equity, validity and reliability of the assessments can be assured. Such arrangements are not concessions to make assessments easier for learners, nor advantages to give learners a head start.

There are two ways in which access to fair assessment can be maintained, these are through:

- reasonable adjustments – agreed before the assessment takes place
- special considerations – applied post assessment.

Definition of Reasonable Adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation.

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the integrity of what is being assessed.

Reasonable adjustments are approved or set in place before the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the learner access to the assessment activity. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the assessment of a learner's work.

Awarding Organisations and centres are only required by law to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors, such as the need to maintain competence standards and health and safety, will also be taken into consideration.

Definition of Special Considerations

Special considerations can be applied after an assessment if there is a reason the learner may have been disadvantaged during the assessment. Reasons for special consideration could be temporary illness, injury or adverse circumstances at the time of the assessment.

Learners cannot enter a plea for special considerations for assessment solely on the grounds of disability or learning difficulty. Learners must declare their needs prior to the assessment period and all necessary reasonable adjustments arrangements must have been implemented before the time of their assessment.

Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage. The learner's result must reflect his or her achievement in the assessment and not necessarily his or her potential ability.

Special consideration may result in a small post-assessment adjustment to the mark of the learner. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances during the assessment and will reflect the difficulty faced by the learner but will always be a minor adjustment as to do more may jeopardise the standard.

Where an assessment requires a competence, criterion or standard to be met fully, or in the case of qualifications that confer a Licence to Practise, it may not be possible to apply special consideration. It may be more appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to retake the assessment at a later date or to extend the registration period so that the learner has more time to complete the assessment activity.

All learners regardless of their special consideration must still meet our minimum requirement for the award of a certificate.

Requesting a reasonable adjustment or special consideration

This policy document must be used in conjunction with the Guidance on Accessing Reasonable Adjustments. You must refer to the relevant permission tables when accessing reasonable adjustments.

Delegated Adjustments

Arrangements may be implemented by you for both the internal and external assessment components without prior application to us. See the relevant permission tables for qualification specific information.

Please note any arrangements put in place must reflect the learner's normal way of working.

How to submit a request

To request a reasonable adjustment that is not delegated, you should complete the appropriate reasonable adjustment request form, on the relevant website.

Timescale for submitting a reasonable adjustment request

In order to ensure that requests can be honoured before an assessment takes place, you are required to submit reasonable adjustment requests within the following timescales:

Reasonable Adjustment	Minimum number of working days' notice required prior to the external assessment date or start of an assessment window
Application required (non-modified)	10 working days' notice
Application required (modified) e.g. Enlarged Papers, Coloured Papers, Computer Reader / Speech Recognition Technology enabled	15 working days' notice
Application required (modified) e.g. Braille Papers, Tactile Diagrams, Modified Language Papers	30 working days' notice

Timescales for submitting a special consideration request

In regard to external assessment please submit your application as soon as possible after the assessment and no later than 7 working days after the assessment has taken place or the assessment window has closed.

We can only accept requests for special consideration after the results of the assessment have been released in the following circumstances:

- the application has been overlooked at the centre and the oversight is confirmed by the Head of Centre
- medical evidence comes to light about a learner's condition, which demonstrates that the learner must have been affected by the condition at the time of the assessment, even though the problem revealed itself only after the assessment
- for on-screen assessments where results are immediately available.

Outcomes regarding reasonable adjustments and special considerations

The outcome of a reasonable adjustment request could be:

- approval with a relevant code
- rejection of your request based on insufficient evidence of need
- rejection of your request based on the reasonableness of the request.

The outcome of a special consideration request could be:

- agreement to review the learner's performance in light of available evidence
- rejection of your request based on investigation of the circumstances detailed in your request.

Please note that a successful application of special consideration would not necessarily change a learner's result.

If you or your learners remain dissatisfied following the outcome of the request that you have submitted, you may submit a complaint in line with our Complaints Policy.