



# **Reasonable Adjustments & Special Considerations Policy**

**Document Version Control**

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## Scope

This policy is aimed at Learners and helping them to achieve formal recognition of their achievements, without compromising the assessment process or the assessment objectives.

Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that Learners who are disabled are not disadvantaged in any way. Learners must declare their needs prior to the assessment period and all necessary reasonable adjustment arrangements must have been implemented before the time of their assessment.

Special considerations are made to ensure that Learners are not disadvantaged by any exceptional circumstances that may arise prior to, or during the assessment.

## Definitions

### 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 compromise the assessment process or the assessment objectives and may involve:

- Changing standard assessment arrangements, for example, allowing Learners extra time to complete the assessment activity
- Adapting assessment materials
- Providing access facilitators during assessment, for example a sign language interpreter or a reader.

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.

## **Making Reasonable Adjustments**

All Awarding Organisations and Centres have a responsibility to ensure that the assessment process is robust and fair and allows the Learner to demonstrate his or her full potential. Adjustments to assessments should:

- Not invalidate the assessment requirements of the qualification
- Not give Learners an unfair advantage
- Reflect the Learner's normal way of working
- Be based on the individual need of the Learner.

## **Applications for Reasonable Adjustments**

Requests for making reasonable adjustments should be made using the Reasonable Adjustments Request Form which is available on the website.

The form should be completed and returned to Bluestone College as soon as possible, to allow sufficient time for the reasonable adjustments to be made. The minimum amount of notice required is 15 working days.

Reasonable adjustments can be requested by anyone who has a disability or a difficulty that places them at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation and a reasonable adjustment would reduce the effect of this and provide a fair assessment. Examples of reasonable adjustments include:

- Allowing extra time, e.g. assignment extensions
- Using a different assessment location
- Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids
- Use of assistive software
- Assessment material in large format or Braille
- Readers/scribes
- Assessment material on coloured paper or audio format
- British Sign Language
- Irish Sign Language
- Use of ICT/responses using electronic devices.

## Recruitment

Centres should use their integrity when recruiting and registering Learners. Centres must ensure that Learners have sufficient information and advice on their chosen qualification and that the qualification will meet their needs.

Centres must assess each Learner's potential to successfully complete the assessment and achieve the qualification. Such assessment must identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the Learner to facilitate access to assessment. Where the initial assessment identifies that the Learner may not be able to achieve the full qualification, this should be communicated clearly to the Learner.

## Special Considerations

Special considerations can be applied after an assessment if there was a reason the Learner may have been disadvantaged during the assessment. The following is a list of examples which might be eligible for special considerations (the list is not exhaustive):

- Serious illness of the Learner
- Serious illness of a parent
- Bereavement of an immediate family member
- Incapacitating illness of the Learner
- Recent domestic crises
- Accident and injury to the Learner
- Trauma caused by a recent event or experience.

Learners cannot enter a plea for special considerations for assessment solely on the grounds of disability or learning difficulty.

Special consideration should not give the Learner an unfair advantage. The Learner's results 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 to be met fully, it may not be possible to apply any special consideration. In some circumstances 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.

## **Applications for Special Consideration**

Learners who believe that they have been disadvantaged through circumstances beyond their control can request that special consideration is made regarding the outcomes of their assessment.

The Learner must inform the assessor/invigilator at the time. The Centre must then complete the Special Consideration Request Form and send it to Bluestone College as soon as possible and no later than seven working days after the assessment.

Applications must be accompanied by supporting evidence, e.g. in the case of an illness, a doctor's letter or a statement of events from the Centre.

Bluestone College will confirm receipt of the request within two working days and provide written feedback on the decision to both the Centre and the Learner within seven working days of receipt of the request.

## **Appeals**

Appeals against the decision to provide reasonable adjustments can be submitted by following the Enquiries and Appeals Policy and procedure.