



Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy

Key Information	
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ELT Post Responsible for Update and Monitoring	Vice Principal – Innovation, Curriculum and Quality
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of reasonable adjustments and special consideration requests is to enhance access to qualifications for learners with disabilities and other difficulties, without compromising the assessment of the skills, knowledge understanding, or competence being assessed.
- 1.2 This policy outlines:
 - 2.1.1 arrangements for making reasonable adjustments and special considerations in relation to qualifications (access arrangements);
 - 2.1.2 how learners qualify for reasonable adjustments/access arrangements and special considerations;
 - 2.1.3 the reasonable adjustments/access arrangements permitted and those where permission is required in advance before they are applied; and
 - 2.1.4 what special considerations may be given to learners.

2. Centre Responsibility

- 2.1 It is important that centre staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of qualifications are fully aware of the contents of the policy.
- 2.2 Centres should also ensure access to *JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Guidelines and Special Consideration Guidelines* and are appropriately aware of its contents.

3. Policy Overview

- 3.1 The College is committed to complying with all current and relevant legislation, which at the time of writing includes, but is not limited to the Equality Act 2010. The College seeks to provide reasonable adjustments and special considerations for all learners registered on qualifications.
- 3.2 This policy will not discriminate either directly or indirectly against any individual on the grounds of gender, race, ethnicity or nationality, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, age, disability, socio-economic status or any other personal characteristic.
- 3.3 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 recognise that reasonable adjustments/access arrangements or special considerations may be required at the time of assessment where:
 - 3.3.1 learners have evidence of a disability or specific learning needs;
 - 3.3.2 learners have a temporary disability, medical condition or learning needs; and
 - 3.3.3 learners are indisposed at the time of the assessment.
- 3.4 There are 2 ways in which access to fair assessment can be maintained:
 - 3.4.1 through reasonable adjustments (access arrangements); and
 - 3.4.2 through special considerations
- 3.5 **Reasonable adjustments** are available for learners who present particular requirements prior to assessment.
- 3.6 **Access Arrangements** are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQ awarding body approval.
- 3.7 **Special consideration** can be applied after an assessment, in circumstances where a learner was affected by temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of the assessment.

4. Reasonable Adjustments: All Qualifications

- 4.1 Learners likely to need reasonable adjustments/access arrangements can be identified by the Learner Support Team from enrolment information, their EHCP or medical evidence or a request identified by learner or tutor referral.

5. Definition of Reasonable Adjustments/Access Arrangements: Coursework and Assessments

- 5.1 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 are made to an assessment for a qualification to enable a disabled learner to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding of the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification.
- 5.2 Reasonable adjustments/access arrangements must not affect the integrity of what needs to be assessed, but may involve:
- 5.2.1 changing usual assessment arrangements, for example allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment activity having supervised rest breaks during the examination;
 - 5.2.2 adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in Braille;
 - 5.2.3 providing assistance during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter, scribe, prompter or a reader/shared reader;
 - 5.2.4 re-organising the assessment room, such as removing visual stimuli for an autistic learner;
 - 5.2.5 changing the assessment method, for example from a written assessment to a spoken assessment;
 - 5.2.6 using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice activated software;
 - 5.2.7 providing the mechanism to have different colour backgrounds to screens for onscreen assessments or asking for permission for copying to different coloured paper for paper-based assessments;
 - 5.2.8 providing and allowing different coloured transparencies with which to view assessment papers;
 - 5.2.9 alternative rooming arrangements e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs; and
 - 5.2.10 use of a word processor. (*see word processing policy*)
- 5.3 A separate room (learner and invigilator in a room entirely separate from other learners) may be recommended where it can be evidenced that a small group provision would put them at a 'substantial disadvantage' to other learners, where this is their normal way of working and where the Exam Assess Assessment (EAA) indicates that:
- 5.3.1 learners' exam access arrangements which would disturb other candidates e.g. reading aloud;
 - 5.3.2 learner has a medical condition needing privacy – with supporting evidence from a specialist;
 - 5.3.3 learner has a mental health condition needing privacy – with supporting evidence from a specialist; or
 - 5.3.4 learner has a physical condition – either temporary or permanent needing privacy.
- 5.4 In order to provide a separate room, evidence is required from the learner. Evidence can be in the form of:
- 5.4.1 history of provision at a previous examination centre e.g. school;
 - 5.4.2 medical recommendation from a consultant or specialist;
 - 5.4.3 mental health recommendation from a specialist; or
 - 5.4.4 EHCP recommendation.
- 5.5 Alternative rooming arrangements and reasonable adjustments must reflect the candidate's normal and current way of working in internal tests and mock examinations. Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre.
- 5.6 Reasonable adjustments/access arrangements are approved or set in place before the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the learner access to the programme. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the assessment of a learner's work.
- 5.7 The centre is 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.

6. Internal Process for making Applications:

- 6.1 The process for making an application for reasonable adjustments is as follows:
- 6.1.1 learner is identified to Learning Support department;
 - 6.1.2 Learning Support will request evidence of need and/or evidence of prior assessment arrangements from the learner, conduct assessments as appropriate and request Normal Way of Working (NWoW) from curriculum staff, with supporting evidence e.g. progress assessment, timed assessment or in class work (further information is available in the ALS Procedure document and the JCQ Regulations);
 - 6.1.3 As per JCQ regulations, evidence of assessments, detailing the reasonable adjustments must be provided to Learning Support to enable any applications to be processed.
 - 6.1.4 Once the exam access assessment is complete, Form 8 or Form 9 (*if applicable*) completed and NWoW returned ~~form~~ from curriculum staff, an exam pack is saved to a secure area on SharePoint and the exams team are emailed;
 - 6.1.5 Examination department process applications via JCQ Access Arrangements Online for JCQ qualifications or for other Awarding Bodies as per their guidelines and record on College MIS system including expiry date; and
 - 6.1.6 The outcome of the access arrangements is updated on sharepoint.
- 6.2 Any reasonable adjustment must reflect the normal learning and working practice of a learner in a centre or working within the vocational area (prior to assessment). The reasonable adjustment in the assessment must reflect the learner's normal way of learning, e.g., reader in class therefore reader in assessment.
- 6.3 The evidence of need will vary depending on the disability and the access arrangement(s) being applied for. If, after the special consideration process has been applied, the learner does not meet the criteria, centre-based arrangements and reasonable adjustments will be revisited.
- 6.4 The Examinations Department then ensure required and approved arrangements are in place for all applicable exams.
- 6.5 Both the Learning Support team and Examinations Department work to the deadlines for submitting applications for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments and orders for modified papers as outlined in the *JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Guidelines*, which are published annually.
- 6.6 The College may not be able to process referrals for access arrangements for learners who are referred after these deadlines.
- 6.7 Colleges are regularly inspected to ensure they have followed JCQ Regulations therefore the College is required to hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. For this reason, the College will keep copies of evidence of need, *Form 8*, *Form 9*, evidence from outside agencies, record of access arrangements used, together with a data protection form signed by the learner.
- 6.8 All information and data, whether electronic or paper based, will be stored in accordance with the College's GDPR Policy.

7. Definition of Special Considerations: All Qualifications

- 7.1 Special consideration can be applied after an assessment if there was a reason the learner may have been disadvantaged during the assessment, and as a consequence their performance in the assessment.
- 7.2 All applications must be made to the Examinations Office by completing the special consideration and reasonable adjustment form for that season. The form can be found on the JCQ website. This will be processed by exams within the timeframe outlined in regulations.
- 7.3 The Examinations Manager will make applications for special consideration on a case-by-case basis. The head of centre must authorise all applications for special consideration.
- 7.4 Students cannot enter a request for special considerations for assessment solely on the grounds of disability or learning difficulty.

- 7.5 Special consideration, if successful, may result in a small post-assessment adjustment to the mark of the learner. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances and reflect the difficulty faced by the learner.

8. Appeals

- 8.1 If you wish to appeal against the decision to decline requests for reasonable adjustments or special consideration arrangements, please do so in writing to the Vice Principal Innovation, Curriculum & Quality within 10 working days of notification of decision.