



The Qualification Hub

Policy, Procedures and Documents

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy



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Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 mandates that Centres and TQH must make reasonable adjustments where a disabled learner would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment compared to a non-disabled learner.

The aim of reasonable adjustments and special consideration is to allow learners to receive recognition for their achievements while ensuring that the comparability, validity, and reliability of the assessment are maintained. These measures are not intended to make assessments easier but to support learners with special educational needs, disabilities, temporary illnesses, extenuating circumstances, or injuries without compromising the integrity of the assessment.

The Qualification Hub (TQH) supports the provision of reasonable adjustments and special consideration as part of its commitment to equal access to assessment arrangements in compliance with equalities law. These provisions are designed to support learners without altering the assessment's integrity or demand.

Purpose

This Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy outlines:

- TQH's commitment to providing arrangements for making reasonable adjustments and special considerations.
- The responsibilities for ensuring that these arrangements are considered and applied according to established guidance and procedures.

It is important to note that approaches may vary for different qualifications, and specific qualification specifications must be referenced to confirm applicable arrangements. In accordance with equality law, the cost of a reasonable adjustment or special consideration must not be passed onto the learner or their parent/carer.

Scope

This policy applies to all stakeholders involved in the development, delivery, and awarding of all TQH qualifications, including:



- Centres and providers
- Learners and apprentices
- TQH staff and wider workforce responsible for processing all reasonable adjustment and special consideration requests consistently.

Definition of Reasonable Adjustment

Reasonable adjustment is defined as:

"An adjustment made to an assessment for a qualification to enable a disabled learner to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and understanding to the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification." (From Ofqual, General Conditions of Recognition)

A learner does not necessarily have to be disabled as defined by the Equality Act 2010 to be entitled to reasonable adjustments under this policy. Conversely, not every disabled learner will require an adjustment if they have developed coping mechanisms that mitigate the need for one.

A reasonable adjustment is any action that reduces the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. These adjustments are made to an assessment to allow the learner to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and understanding of the required levels of attainment.

Reasonable adjustments must be approved and set in place before the assessment activity takes place, providing the learner access to the programme. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be considered during the assessment of a learner's work.

Definition of Special Consideration

Special consideration is defined as:

"Consideration to be given to a learner who has temporarily experienced an illness or injury, or some other event outside of his or her control, which has, or is reasonably likely to have, materially affected the learner's ability to: (a) take an assessment, or (b) demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment." (From Ofqual, General Conditions of Recognition)



Special consideration acknowledges that learners may face unforeseen circumstances that can impact their performance. This provision ensures that such learners are not unfairly disadvantaged due to temporary issues beyond their control.

Special consideration adjustments are made to reflect the learner's potential ability rather than their performance during the affected assessment period. Each case is individually assessed to determine the appropriate level of consideration, ensuring fairness and maintaining the integrity of the assessment process.

Recognised Centre Responsibility

The Qualification Hub (TQH) expects its centres to have a Fair Access to Assessment Policy that includes the following principles:

- Assessments should fairly test learners' knowledge and skills.
- Recognise that the usual assessment format may not suit all learners and support reasonable adjustments or special considerations where applicable.
- Support learners where qualifications and assessments might otherwise unreasonably prevent participation.

Centres must retain requests or decisions for reasonable adjustments and special considerations, including supporting evidence, for three years in electronic or paper format. These records must be available for TQH, its representatives, or regulators upon request and may be reviewed as part of ongoing monitoring and quality assurance activities.

Centre staff involved in management, delivery, assessment, and quality assurance must be fully aware of the policy and able to inform and advise learners of their entitlements to reasonable adjustments or special considerations. During centre visits, TQH's External Quality Assurers may verify that relevant colleagues and learners understand the policy and its purpose.

Centres must read and understand TQH's guidance for reasonable adjustments and special considerations and check the relevant qualification specifications for any more specific guidance.

Application of Reasonable Adjustments



TQH and its centres are legally required to implement reasonable adjustments to mitigate disadvantages for learners with disabilities. What is deemed reasonable will depend on individual circumstances, including cost implications, and the practicality and effectiveness of the proposed adjustment. Additionally, maintaining competence standards and health and safety will be considered.

An adjustment to an assessment should only be implemented if the learner's disability or difficulty places them at a significant disadvantage. For minor difficulties, centres should provide support with study and assessment skills.

Recognised Centres should also consider the following:

- Learners may not require or be allowed the same adjustment for all qualifications.
- Learners might need a single adjustment or a combination of adjustments.
- Adjustments are primarily needed for assessments under constrained/examination conditions.
- Adjustments must not invalidate the assessment requirements or strategy.
- Adjustments must not give learners an unfair advantage or disadvantage.
- Adjustments should reflect the learner's normal way of working.
- Adjustments must be based on the learner's individual needs.
- Adjustments must not compensate for lack of knowledge, skills, or understanding.
- Adjustments must not alter competency standards.
- Adjustments must not compromise health and safety.
- Adjustments should not place other learners at a significant disadvantage.

A reasonable adjustment is tailored to the individual learner. For an adjustment to be deemed reasonable, several factors must be considered, including but not limited to:

- The specific assessment requirements of the qualification.
- The type of assessment.
- The particular needs and circumstances of the disabled learner.
- The effectiveness of the adjustment.
- The cost of the adjustment.



- The likely impact of the adjustment on the learner and other learners.

An adjustment may not be approved if it:

- Involves unreasonable costs to the centre or TQH.
- Involves unreasonable timeframes.
- Compromises the security and integrity of the assessment and the qualification.

Such adjustments are not considered 'reasonable'. Reasonable adjustments must be approved or established before the assessment activity. Centres should contact TQH to discuss individual cases when necessary.

Process for Requesting Reasonable Adjustments

Declaring Centre-Permitted Reasonable Adjustments:

Recognised Centres can authorise reasonable adjustments to assessments as specified in the relevant qualification specification. These centre-approved adjustments must be recorded against the learner's registration record.

Applying for TQH-Permitted Reasonable Adjustments:

When qualifications require approval from TQH, centres must apply for adjustments on behalf of the learner by completing the Reasonable Adjustments Request Form. A separate application is needed for each learner.

- **Reasonable adjustment should be** submitted a minimum of 25 days before the assessment.

Application of Special Considerations

Recognised Centres should prioritise rescheduling assessments for learners before considering special considerations, which should be a last resort. Special considerations must not compromise the assessment's integrity, reliability, or validity.



If a learner cannot attend alternative sessions due to specific circumstances, special consideration may be applied. Each request is unique and should adhere to broad principles while seeking guidance from TQH when necessary.

Special considerations should not provide unfair advantages or mislead certificate users regarding a learner's achievements. The learner's result should reflect their performance, not potential ability. If approved, the learner's performance will be reviewed based on available evidence, and the effect will reflect the learner's difficulty. A successful application does not necessarily change the learner's result.

Special Considerations

Special considerations may be applied in the following ways:

- **Allowance of Marks:** For mark-based assessments, an allowance may be given. The size of the allowance is determined by the timing, nature, and extent of the illness or other circumstances.
- **Adjustment to Access Arrangements:** Applied where a learner's ability to access an assessment is affected by injury or illness, though they are not disabled.

Special considerations may be applied either at the time of the assessment or afterward for mark-based adjustments.

Recognised Centres should note:

- Special considerations may not be possible for assessments requiring skill demonstration, competency, or qualifications that confer a Licence to Practice.
- For on-demand assessments, it might be more appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date.

Process application

For more information, please consult TQH Guidance for Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration - Guidance



Malpractice

Recognised Centres should be aware that failing to comply with the guidance on adjustments to assessments set out by TQH may constitute malpractice and can result in withholding the learner's result or revoking their certification. Non-compliance includes, but is not limited to:

- Implementing TQH-approved reasonable adjustments without prior approval.
- Implementing unsupported reasonable adjustments.
- Failing to declare approved adjustments to TQH.
- Failing to retain records of adjustments and considerations as required.

Instances of malpractice will be addressed according to the Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure.

TQH's Responsibility

The Qualification Hub (TQH) is responsible for making reasonable adjustments for learners defined as disabled under the Equality Act 2010. Additionally, TQH ensures that the process of approving reasonable adjustments and special considerations is applied fairly and consistently across all centres and assessments.

Review Arrangements and Monitoring

As part of the recognised centre monitoring activity, External Quality Assurers will review the centre's procedures for advising on, applying, managing, and recording reasonable adjustments and special considerations. The aim is to ensure that centres comply with equality legislation and qualification specifications.

TQH will review this policy annually and as part of its self-evaluation. Revisions will be made as necessary in response to feedback, monitoring findings, changes in practices, regulatory actions, or legislative changes.

Summary reports will be submitted for monitoring and ratification by the Board of Trustees.



If you wish to provide any views on this policy, please contact us via the details provided at the end of this document.

Appeals

If you wish to appeal against a decision regarding a reasonable adjustment or special consideration arrangement that was applied, please refer to the TQH Appeals Policy and Procedure. For more information on how to submit an appeal, consult the relevant section of the TQH policy documentation or contact TQH directly using the provided contact details.

Statement

The Qualification Hub (TQH) is committed to complying with all current and relevant legislation related to the development, delivery, assessment, and awarding of its regulated qualifications, units, or courses. This includes, but is not limited to, the Equality Act 2010. TQH seeks to uphold human rights related to race relations, disability discrimination, and special educational needs. TQH is dedicated to providing equal reasonable adjustments and special consideration for all learners registered on its regulated qualifications or units.

Review Arrangements and Monitoring

TQH will review this policy and its associated procedures annually as part of its self-evaluation process. Revisions will be made when necessary in response to customer feedback, findings from internal and external monitoring, changes in internal practices, actions from regulatory authorities or other external agencies, or legislative changes.

The effectiveness of this policy's application will be monitored regularly to ensure its alignment with current standards and practices.