

Policy for Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration (Internal Assessments)

This policy applies to:

- (a) Internally assessed programmes only,
- (b) Unit assessors for internally assessed programmes,
- (c) Internally assessed learners, and
- (d) Centre staff involved in internally assessed programme administration.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to identify opportunities to make reasonable adjustments and apply special consideration in line with awarding body requirements, using their documentation, where necessary;
- to apply reasonable adjustments in order to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage during assessment;
- to apply special consideration as a post-assessment allowance in order to reflect illness, injury or indisposition that occurred at the time of assessment;
- to meet legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 relating to the protected characteristic of disability.

In order to achieve this, Excel Education will:

- comply with legal requirements under the Equality Act 2010;
- ensure that this policy remains aligned with awarding body requirements (e.g. *Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations for Edexcel Vocational Qualifications* (Edexcel; 2010); *FAQ Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy and Procedures* (Future Awards and Qualifications; 2011); *Reasonable adjustments and special consideration for ATHE QCF qualifications and centre devised programmes* (ATHE; 2012)). Failure to comply with the said policy could lead to assessment malpractice;
- ensure that any requests for reasonable adjustments and special consideration are submitted by the Principal or a Director of Excel Education to the awarding body, where required.

Definitions

- *Reasonable adjustment*: This is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in an assessment situation, without prejudicing or compromising the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes or giving the learner an assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments. Reasonable adjustment is agreed at the pre-assessment stage.
- *Special consideration*: This takes account of temporary illness, injury or indisposition that occurred at the time of assessment. Special consideration cannot remove the difficulty that a learner faced at the time of assessment and can only be a relatively small adjustment to ensure that the integrity of the assessment is not compromised. Special consideration is a post-assessment allowance and cannot apply to “licence to practice” units or qualifications.

Reasonable adjustment

Reasonable adjustments may involve:

- changing usual assessment arrangements
- adapting assessment materials
- providing assistance during assessment
- re-organising the assessment physical environment
- changing or adapting the assessment method
- using assistive technology

Reasonable adjustments permitted by awarding bodies may fall into the following categories:

- changes to assessment conditions
- the use of mechanical and electronic aids
- modification to the presentation of assessment material
- alternative ways of presenting responses
- use of access facilitators

Examples of reasonable adjustments as defined by the above categories are listed below.

- allowing extra time, e.g. assignment extensions
- using different assessment location
- use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, CCTV
- use of assistive software
- assessment material in large format or Braille
- readers/scribes
- practical assistants/transcribers/promoters
- assessment material on coloured paper or in audio format
- language-modified assessment material
- British Sign Language (BSL)
- Use of ICT/responses using electronic devices

Student recruitment

The minimum entry criteria will apply to all applicants. Where the learner discloses a disability, impairment and/or learning difficulty, programme teams will be consulted for their opinion as to the reasonable adjustments that can be made to their programmes and whether the said disability, impairment and/or learning difficulty is likely to adversely impact on learner achievement and performance across one or more programme units. If this is the case, prospective learners will be advised accordingly before enrolment onto the programme.

Applying reasonable adjustment

Approach

A learner does not have to be disabled (as defined by legislation) to qualify for reasonable adjustment, nor will every learner who is disabled be entitled to reasonable adjustment. Permitting reasonable adjustment is dependent upon how it will facilitate access for the learner. A reasonable adjustment is intended to allow access to assessment but can only be granted where the adjustment does not:

- affect the validity or reliability of the assessment
- give the learner(s) in question an unfair advantage over other learners taking the same or similar assessment
- influence the final outcome of the assessment decision

A statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) does not automatically qualify the learner for reasonable adjustment to assessment, as:

- the SEN statement may not contain a recent assessment of the needs; and
- the reasonable adjustment may compromise assessment.

Students will be expected to:

- disclose in confidence to their lecturer and/or the academic office any disability, impairment or learning difficulty they are aware of which could adversely impact on their performance during internal unit assessment(s);
- notify their lecturer and/or the academic office about any temporary illness, injury or indisposition that occurred during an internal assessment and which has or is likely to have adversely impacted on the same and warrants special consideration.

Lecturers will be expected to:

- inform the academic office as soon as possible of any disclosure or notification or apparent condition that could warrant reasonable adjustment and/or special consideration for their student;
- ensure that there is sufficient recording of any such reasonable adjustment and/or special consideration applied;
- liaise and co-operate with the academic office and/or the Director & Principal in relation to the above.

Academic office will be expected to:

- record and follow-up any reported requests for reasonable adjustments and special consideration and communicate the same to the Director & Principal, who will make the appropriate request for the same to the awarding body concerned, where particular units or qualifications are not internally assessed.

Recording:

For BTEC qualifications that are internally assessed the centre will not need to apply to Edexcel to implement a reasonable adjustment, but it must:

- only make reasonable adjustments that are in line with this policy
- record all reasonable adjustments made on form RA1
- keep all RA1 forms on the appropriate learner's record
- make RA1 forms available to Edexcel as required.

For Future Awards and Qualifications that are internally assessed the centre will follow the guidance in Table 1 below, use the awarding body's forms for reasonable adjustments and special consideration and adhere to the latest reporting timeframes, referring to Future Awards and Qualifications' related publications.

Key:

Centre - Reasonable adjustment permitted at the discretion of the centre

SV - Consult Standards Verifier for permission

FUTURE - Apply to Future for Permission

| Reasonable adjustment | Assessments NOT taken under examination conditions | Assessments taken under examination conditions |
|---|--|--|
| Extra time up to 25% | Centre | SV |
| Extra time in excess of 25% | Centre | FUTURE |
| Supervised rest breaks | Centre | FUTURE |
| Change in the organisation of assessment room | Centre | Centre |
| Separate accommodation within the centre | Centre | FUTURE |
| Taking the assessment at an alternative venue | Centre | FUTURE |
| Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, tinted spectacles, CCTV and OCR scanners | SV | FUTURE |
| Use of assistive software | FUTURE | FUTURE |
| Use of bilingual and bilingual translation dictionaries | Centre | Centre |
| Assessment Material in enlarged format | Centre | FUTURE |
| Assessment material in Braille | FUTURE | FUTURE |
| Language modified assessment material | SV | FUTURE |
| Assessment material in BSL | FUTURE | FUTURE |
| Assessment material on coloured paper | Centre | Centre |
| Assessment material in audio format | Centre | SV |
| Use of ICT | SV | SV |
| Responses using electronic devices | SV | SV |
| Responses in BSL | FUTURE | FUTURE |
| Responses in Braille | FUTURE | FUTURE |
| Reader | SV | SV |
| Scribe | SV | FUTURE |
| BSL/English interpreter | SV | FUTURE |
| Prompter | SV | FUTURE |
| Practical assistant | SV | FUTURE |
| Transcriber | SV | FUTURE |
| Other | FUTURE | FUTURE |

Table 1: Reasonable adjustments permissions table

Special Consideration

Approach:

There are no circumstances whereby Excel Education can apply its own special consideration. Applications must be made to the awarding body via the Director & Principal on a learner-by-learner basis. Before applying to the awarding body, Excel Education must check that alternative assessment dates are not possible.

A special consideration is given following a period of assessment for a learner who:

- was prepared for and present at an assessment but who may have been disadvantaged by temporary illness, injury or adverse circumstances that have arisen at or near to the time of assessment
- misses part of the assessment due to circumstances outside their control

It may not be possible to apply special consideration in instances where:

- assessment requires the demonstration of practical competence
- criteria have to be met fully (i.e. there is no 'compensation')
- units/qualifications confer licence to practice

Where it is possible to do so, learners who can demonstrate special consideration can be offered another opportunity to complete the assessment at a later date by mutual agreement (e.g. individual presentation at a future date). This is the most likely approach to be adopted for internally assessed programmes.

A special consideration cannot give the learner an unfair advantage. The learner's results must reflect real achievement in assessment and not potential ability.

Awarding bodies' decisions will be based on various factors, including the severity of the circumstances, the date of the assessment, the nature of the assessment (e.g. practical, oral presentation, etc.)

A learner who is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment may be eligible for special consideration if:

- performance in an assessment is affected by circumstances beyond the control of the learner
- alternative assessment arrangements which were agreed in advance of the assessment proved inappropriate or inadequate
- part of an assessment has been missed due to circumstances beyond the learner's control

A learner will **not** be eligible for special consideration if:

- no evidence is supplied by the centre that the learner has been affected at the time of the assessment by a particular condition
- any part of the assessment is missed due to personal arrangements including holidays or unauthorised absence
- preparation for a component is affected by difficulties during the course, e.g. disturbances through building work, lack of proper facilities, changes in or shortages of staff, or industrial disputes

The following are examples of circumstances which might be eligible for special consideration (this is not an exhaustive list):

- terminal illness of the learner

- terminal illness of a parent
- recent bereavement of a member of the immediate family
- serious and disruptive domestic crises leading to acute anxiety about the family
- incapacitating illness of the learner
- severe car accident
- recent traumatic experience such as death of a close friend or distant relative
- flare-up of severe congenital conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, severe asthmatic attack
- recent domestic crisis
- recent physical assault trauma
- broken limb on the mend

Application for special consideration (Edexcel BTEC)

Applications for special consideration should be submitted to the BTEC Quality Standards Team by submitting:

- form SC1
- the learner's Student Report Form (SRF)
- evidence to support the application, such as a medical certificate, a doctor's letter, or any other appropriate information.

Application for special consideration (Future Awards and Qualifications)

Applications for special considerations should be submitted using the latest forms published by Future Awards and Qualifications.

The Director & Principal must authorise all applications for special consideration.

For Edexcel BTEC, applications must be submitted to the BTEC Quality Standards Team within seven days of the assessment taking place.

For Future Awards and Qualifications and ATHE refer to the latest related publications (e.g. *FAQ Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy and Procedures* (Future Awards and Qualifications; 2011); *Reasonable adjustments and special consideration for ATHE QCF qualifications and centre devised programmes* (ATHE; 2012))

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