

# Reasonable Adjustments & Special Considerations Policy

# REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS & SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS POLICY

## INTRODUCTION

This policy is primarily aimed at centres who are delivering/registered on or have taken an EAL approved qualification or unit. It sets out the steps you follow when submitting requests for reasonable adjustments and special considerations to us and the steps we will follow when reviewing the requests. It is also for use by our staff to ensure they deal with all requests in a consistent manner.

It is based upon the good practice guide developed by the Federation of Awarding Bodies and the Joint Council for Qualifications<sup>CIC</sup>: JCQ<sup>CIC</sup> Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration – General and Vocational Qualifications and requirements specified in Ofqual's General Condition of Recognition published by Ofqual in November 2014 (Conditions G6 & G7).

## POLICY OVERVIEW

EAL is committed to complying with all current and relevant legislation in relation to the development and delivery of our qualifications and, which at the time of writing includes, but is not limited to the Equality Act 2010. We seek to uphold human rights relating to race relations, disability discrimination and special educational needs of our learners and to provide equal reasonable adjustments and special considerations for all learners registered on our qualifications.

As an approved centre, we expect you to have a fair access to assessment policy in operation, which reflects the following principles and guidelines.

Assessment should be a fair test of learners' knowledge and what they're 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 bar learners from taking our qualifications.

We recognise that reasonable adjustments or special considerations may be required at the time of assessment where:

- Learners have a permanent disability or specific learning needs
- Learners have a temporary disability, medical condition or learning needs
- Learners are indisposed at the time of the assessment.

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 assessment easier for learners, nor advantages to give learners a head start.

The normal ways in which access to fair assessment can be maintained is through reasonable adjustments and special considerations.

## 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. Adjustments are made to an assessment for a qualification to enable a disabled learner to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding of the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification.

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the integrity of what needs to be assessed, but may involve:

- changing usual assessment arrangements, for example allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment activity
- adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in Braille
- providing assistance during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or a reader
- re-organising the assessment room, such as removing visual stimuli for an autistic learner
- changing the assessment method, for example from a written assessment to a spoken assessment
- using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice activated software
- 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
- providing and allowing different coloured transparencies with which to view examination papers

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 programme. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the assessment of a learner's work.

EAL 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 consideration can be applied after an assessment if there was 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
- a learner who misses part of the assessment due to circumstances outside their control.

and are made where this has had, or is likely to have had, a material effect on that learner's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment.

Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage; neither should its use cause the user of the certificate to be misled regarding a learner's achievements. The learner's result must reflect his / her achievement in the assessment and not necessarily his / her potential ability.

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.

Centres should note that

- where an assessment requires the learner to demonstrate practical competence or where criteria have to be met fully, or in the case of qualifications that confer a License to Practice, it may not be possible to apply special consideration.
- in some circumstances, for example for on-demand assessments, it may be more appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date.

Special consideration will not normally be available for EAL externally set multiple-choice tests. Learners will normally be offered an opportunity to take the test at a later date.

## ARRANGEMENTS NOT COVERED BY THIS POLICY

Circumstances for both internal and external assessment not covered in this policy should be discussed with EAL before assessment takes place. Please contact us via the details provided at the end of this policy.

## CENTRES RESPONSIBILITY

It's important that your staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of our qualifications and your learners are fully aware of the contents of the policy.

On their centre visits, our External Verifiers and/or Exams team may check that your relevant colleagues and learners are aware of its contents and purpose.

## APPEALS

If you wish to appeal against our decision to decline requests for reasonable adjustments or special consideration arrangements, please refer to our Appeals Policy.

## REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

We'll review the policy annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as and when necessary in response to customer and learner feedback, changes in our practices, actions from the regulatory authorities or external agencies, or changes in legislation.

If you would like to feedback any views please contact us via the details provided at the end of this policy.

## PROCESS FOR REQUESTING REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND/ OR SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

If a centre is making a request on behalf of its learners it should complete a reasonable adjustments and special consideration request form in the Smarter Touch online system and in doing so supply relevant supporting information.

This information should include:

- learner's name and EAL registration number
- nature of, and rationale for, the request
- supporting information/evidence signed by the relevant person (e.g. medical evidence signed by a medical doctor)

Centres can, in exceptional circumstances, make requests direct to EAL by phoning or emailing our Exams Team on 01923 652400 or emailing them at [exams@eal.org.uk](mailto:exams@eal.org.uk).

Requests for reasonable adjustments should be submitted no later than 30 days before the assessment, or not later than 10 weeks before the assessment for modified papers. Requests for special consideration should be submitted as soon as possible after the assessment and not later than 7 working days after the assessment.

Requests for special consideration may only be accepted after the results of the examination have been released in the following circumstances:

- application has been overlooked at the centre and the oversight is confirmed by the Centre Coordinator
- 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 examination, even though the problem revealed itself only after the assessment
- for onscreen assessments where results are immediately available.

If the application for special consideration is successful, the learner's performance will be reviewed in the light of available evidence. It should be noted that a successful application of special consideration will not necessarily change a learner's result.

### HOW WILL EAL DEAL WITH REQUESTS?

We will aim to respond to all requests within 48 hours of receipt. If we are unable to respond on the same day we will provide you with an estimated response date

### CONTACT US

If you have any queries about the contents of this policy please contact our Exams Team on 01923 652400, email them at [exams@eal.org.uk](mailto:exams@eal.org.uk) or submit in writing to EAL, Exams Team, at Unit 2, The Orient Centre, Greycaine Road, Watford, Herts, WD24 7GP .