**SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS & REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS POLICY**

**Reasonable Adjustments**

**Explanation of Reasonable Adjustment**

A reasonable adjustment 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 affect the validity or reliability of assessment outcomes, but 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 must be approved (internally or externally) and set in place prior to assessment commencing. It is an arrangement to give a Learner access to a qualification.

The work produced following a reasonable adjustment must be assessed in the same way as the work from other Learners.

Below are examples of reasonable adjustment. It is important to note that not all adjustments described below will be reasonable, permissible or practical in particular situations. The Learner may not need, nor be allowed the same adjustment for all assessments.

Reasonable adjustments 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

Please note that a reasonable adjustment must never affect the validity or reliability of assessment, influence the outcome of assessment or give the Learner(s) in question an unfair assessment advantage.

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

* allowing extra time, e.g. assignment extensions
* using a 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/prompters
* assessment material on coloured paper or in audio format
* language-modified assessment material
* British Sign Language (BSL)

**Recruitment**

Learners will be provided with the correct information and advice on the their selected qualifications to ensure that the qualifications will meet their needs. The recruitment process includes assessment of each potential Learner and making justifiable and professional judgments about the 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 the assessment.

Where the recruitment process identifies that the Learner may not be able to demonstrate attainment and thus gain achievement in all parts of assessment for the selected qualification, this must be communicated clearly to the Learner. A Learner may still decide to proceed with studying a particular qualification and not be entered for all or part of the assessment.

Learners must be made aware of:

* the range of options available, including any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary, to enable the demonstration of attainment across all required assessment
* any restrictions on progression routes to the Learner as a result of not achieving certain outcomes

**Applying Reasonable Adjustment**

Reasonable adjustments are approved before an assessment and are intended to allow attainment to be demonstrated. A Learner does not have to be disabled (as defined by the DDA) to qualify for reasonable adjustment; nor will every Learner who is disabled be entitled to reasonable adjustment.

Allowing 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
* Use of ICT/responses using electronic devices

Reasonable adjustment must be applied in a transparent and unbiased manner. All reasonable adjustments made must be recorded using the relevant documentation from the Awarding Body. Once completed, these must be held by Reynolds Training Academy in the Learner’s file and should be available at all times for scrutiny if so requested.

All reasonable adjustments implemented by Reynolds Training Academy are subject to meeting the requirements of the appropriate assessment strategy/criteria for the qualification specification.

It is the responsibility of the Principal, Director of Quality & Training, or designated nominee, to ensure that any access arrangement implemented by Reynolds Training Academy on behalf of the Learner, is based on firm evidence of a barrier to assessment.

**Assessing Achievement**

Reynolds Training Academy must ensure that for all internal assessment, achievement is given only for the skills demonstrated by the Learner and that reasonable adjustments do not compromise the outcomes of assessment.

**Special Educational Needs**

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
* the reasonable adjustment may compromise assessment

**Inappropriate use of Reasonable Adjustment**

It should be noted that where the Reasonable Adjustment Policy is misused, then Awarding Bodies will take appropriate action. Such action will range from advice and action for Reynolds Training Academy through to the implementation of steps to manage assessment malpractice; this could ultimately lead to the recall of certificates, removal of qualification approval or removal of centre approval.

**SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**What is a special consideration?**

A special consideration is consideration 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 is important to note that 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
* units/qualifications confer licence to practice

Where assessment is in the form of on demand assessment, such as electronic tests set and marked by computer, then it is probably more appropriate to offer the Learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date.

A special consideration cannot give the Learner an unfair advantage, nor must its use cause the user of a certificate to be misled regarding a Learner’s achievement. The Learner’s results must reflect real achievement in assessment and not potential ability. To this end, special considerations can only be a small post-assessment adjustment to the mark or outcome.

The Awarding Body's decision will be based on various factors, which may vary from Learner to Learner, and from one subject to another. These factors may include the severity of the circumstances, the date of the assessment, the nature of the assessment (e.g. practical, oral presentation).

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, e.g. recent personal illness, accident, bereavement, serious disturbance during the assessment;
* 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 control of the Learner

A Learner will not be eligible for special consideration if:

* no evidence is supplied by Reynolds Training Academy 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, eg 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 list is not exhaustive):

* 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

Unlike reasonable adjustment, there are no circumstances whereby a Centre can apply its own special consideration. Applications must be made to the relevant Awarding Body.

**Lost or Damaged Work**

When a Learner’s work has been lost or damaged, the Awarding Body in question may consider accepting a grade for which there is no available evidence. In all cases, Reynolds Training Academy must be able to verify that the work was done and that it was monitored whilst it was in progress.

RTA Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments Policy – reviewed 4-3-2024