

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

Version v22.1



Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations	
Policy Ref	QA.P.3 v22.1
Date of Issue	01/10/2022
Next Scheduled Review	01/10/2023
Policy Owner	Quality Manager
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Approved By	Leadership Team
Policy Relates to:	Awarding Provision, End-Point Assessment Provision
Policy is for the use of:	Learners, Apprentices, Recognised Centres, TQUK Employees, Third Parties, Training Providers
Should be read in conjunction with:	Appeals Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy
Relevant GCoR	G6, G7

Introduction

Training Qualifications UK is committed to ensuring that all Learners and Apprentices are granted equal opportunity, in line with the Equality Act 2010, to receive recognition of their achievement, while maintaining the equity, validity and reliability of assessments through the application of reasonable adjustments and special considerations where appropriate.

As such, TQUK offers the below reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy in order to provide external parties with the process of requesting a reasonable adjustment or special consideration and to offer Recognised Centres clear guidance for implementing these.

TQUK Internal Responsibility

The Qualifications and Assessment Department is responsible for the maintenance and compliance of this policy. If the Senior Manager of Qualifications and Assessment is absent, the Responsible Officer will appoint another member of the Leadership Team to ensure all of TQUK's actions and activities are in line with the content of this policy.

Review Arrangements

We will review the policy annually as part of our self-evaluation process and revise it as and when necessary, in response to feedback, trends from our internal monitoring arrangements, changes in our practices, actions from the regulatory authorities or external agencies or changes in legislation.

The annual review of this policy will be undertaken by the Qualifications and Assessment Department approximately four weeks prior to the submission of TQUK's Statement of Compliance to our regulators. Any amendments or updates to this policy will be approved by TQUK's Leadership Team.

Where the regulators notify TQUK of failures that have been discovered in the reasonable adjustments and special consideration processes of another awarding organisation, TQUK will review whether or not a similar failure could affect our reasonable adjustments and special considerations processes and arrangements and take action to amend this policy where necessary.

Training Provider / Recognised Centre Responsibility

TQUK suggests that all Training Provider or Recognised Centre staff involved in the delivery, management, assessment and quality assurance of TQUK regulated qualifications, including End-Point Assessments, and their Learners or Apprentices, are fully aware of the contents of this policy.

A Recognised Centre or Training Provider should identify as early as possible any difficulties a Learner or Apprentice may have in accessing assessment, select an appropriate adjustment to make the assessment accessible and follow TQUK's process for requesting adjustments. Recognised Centres should follow TQUK's guidance for implementing adjustments to assessments while maintaining records of these adjustments and ensuring a quality appeals procedure is in place for Learners wishing to query any decisions made regarding adjustments by the Recognised Centre.

Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Definitions

1. Reasonable Adjustment

The following definition is given by Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition:

"Reasonable Adjustments are adjustments made to an assessment for a qualification so as to enable a disabled Learner to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding to the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification."

While the applicable definition of 'disabled' has been taken from the Equality Act 2010, a Learner or Apprentice seeking a reasonable adjustment does not necessarily have to fit within this definition of disabled to be entitled to one. A reasonable adjustment is any action that aids with reducing the effect of a long-term disability or difficulty which places the Learner or Apprentice at a disadvantage in an assessment situation.

TQUK and Recognised Centres are only required by law to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of allowing an adjustment, and what is considered reasonable will depend on the individual needs of the Learner or Apprentice, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. A reasonable adjustment is not a concession to make an assessment easier for a Learner or Apprentice, or to give a Learner or Apprentice an advantage over others.

2. Special Consideration

The following definition is given by Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition:

"Special Consideration is consideration to be given to a Learner who has temporarily experienced –

- a. an illness or injury, or*
- b. some other event outside of the Learner's control, which has had, or is reasonably 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 considerations can be a pre-assessment or post-assessment adjustment to cover a 'temporary' condition that may disadvantage, or may have disadvantaged, the Learner or Apprentice in an assessment situation (including, for example; a temporary illness, injury or some other event outside of their control including)social, emotional or mental health incident.

TQUK understand that examination and test anxiety and/or stress is prevalent, however, this would not be classified as a social, emotional or mental health incident. For support in relation to examination and test anxiety and/or stress please refer to the following blog published by Ofqual, [What can schools do about examination and test anxiety](#).

If approved, a pre-assessment special consideration may result in an access adjustment being made to the assessment, and post-assessment special consideration may result in either a small adjustment of a 1%-5% uplift made to the mark of the Learner or Apprentice, or another appropriate adjustment. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances and reflect the level of difficulty faced.

A special consideration should not give the Learner or Apprentice an unfair advantage. The result must reflect their achievement in the assessment and not necessarily their potential ability. It should be noted that a successful application of special consideration will not necessarily change a Learner or Apprentice's result. Training Providers and Recognised Centres should note that:

- where an assessment requires the Apprentice or Learner to demonstrate practical competence 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 Apprentice or Learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date.

TQUK will review a request for special consideration on a case by case basis and will take the particular need of each individual Apprentice or Learner into consideration when making a decision to grant the request.

Who can request a Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration?

1. A TQUK Recognised Centre

A TQUK Recognised Centre may wish to request reasonable adjustments or special considerations for a Learner completing an assessment as part of a regulated qualification that is not an End-Point Assessment. For some assessment types, a Recognised Centre may wish to review what reasonable adjustments or special considerations they are able to implement internally for a Learner. The different types of assessments are covered under the *Permissions Table* below.

2. A Training Provider

A Training Provider may wish to request reasonable adjustments or special considerations for an Apprentice completing an End-Point Assessment component.

3. A Learner undertaking a regulated qualification that is not an End-Point Assessment

A Learner undertaking an assessment as part of a regulated qualification that is not an End-Point Assessment with a Recognised Centre may wish to request reasonable adjustments or special considerations, in which case they should contact their Recognised Centre. Recognised Centres may request these on behalf of Learners, or they may apply these themselves where appropriate after reviewing this document.

4. A registered Apprentice undertaking End-Point Assessment with TQUK

A registered Apprentice undertaking End-Point Assessment with TQUK who believes they are eligible for reasonable adjustments or special considerations must first consult with their Training Provider regarding the relevant component(s). A Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request relating to End-Point Assessment provision must be submitted by the Training Provider.

Learners undertaking a TQUK endorsed course

Learners undertaking a TQUK endorsed course with a TQUK Recognised Centre will not require approval from TQUK to apply a reasonable adjustment or special consideration as TQUK is not involved in assessment decisions relating to endorsed courses, and should utilise the centre's own reasonable adjustment and special considerations process.

Eligibility Criteria

A reasonable adjustment to an assessment will only be considered where the permanent disability, difficulty, or individual learning need experienced by the Learner or Apprentice would place them at a disadvantage, in comparison with persons who are not disabled.

A special consideration to an assessment will only be considered where the 'temporary' condition would place the Learner or Apprentice at, or has placed them at, a disadvantage in an assessment situation.

A Learner or Apprentice who is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment may also be eligible for special considerations if:

- performance in an assessment is affected by circumstances beyond the control of the Learner or Apprentice (e.g. recent personal illness, accident, bereavement, serious disturbance during the assessment, or temporary or short-term social, emotional and/or emotional incident);
- 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 or Apprentice or;
- there is a sufficient difference between the part of the assessment to which special consideration is applied and other parts of the qualification that have been achieved to infer that the Learner or Apprentice could have performed more successfully in the assessment.

A Learner or Apprentice will not be eligible for special considerations if:

- no evidence is supplied by the Recognised Centre or Training Provider that the Learner or Apprentice 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 disadvantage is caused by disregard for the Recognised Centre, Training Provider or TQUK requirements, recreational drugs or misreading of exam instructions or;
- disruption in a controlled assessment environment is minor and momentary (e.g. a mobile phone ringing) and dealt with immediately by the assessment invigilator.

Health and Safety

There are no circumstances when the health and safety of a Learner or an Apprentice should be compromised during assessment. Where there is a concern that the effect of a person's disability or additional learning needs may have health and safety implications for them or others, a suitably qualified person should carry out a risk assessment, related to the Learner or Apprentice's particular circumstances.

The risk assessment should identify the risks associated with the particular activity, but should also take account of any reasonable adjustments put in place for the Learner or Apprentice which may remove or reduce the risk. For Learners undertaking a regulated qualification that is not an End-Point Assessment, the risk assessment may reveal that it is not possible for the Learner to fulfill all the requirements of the assessment. In this case it may be appropriate to substitute another task. Recognised Centres or Training Providers should contact TQUK to discuss individual cases where further clarification is necessary.

Assumptions should not be made about a Learner or Apprentice's disability or additional learning needs, posing a health and safety risk. The health and safety of all Learners, Apprentices and others must always be of paramount importance.

Types of Assessment

1. Regulated Qualifications which are not End-Point Assessments

Regulated qualifications which are not End-Point Assessments predominantly consist of two types of assessments; assessments taken under examination conditions (including, for example; externally-set and externally-assessed exams) and assessments not taken under examination conditions (including, for example; coursework, portfolios and set assignments).

Where reasonable adjustments and special considerations are required for assessments in regulated qualifications which are not End-Point Assessments, Recognised Centres must check whether permission needs to be obtained from TQUK using the *Permissions Table* below. Recognised Centres should ensure that they adhere to TQUK's requirements for record keeping and supporting evidence.

2. End-Point Assessments

End-Point Assessment activities cover a range of assessment types, including, for example; Multiple Choice Question examinations, Professional Discussions, Interviews, Portfolios of Evidence, Practical Observations and Synoptic or Written Projects.

As all of these assessment components are externally set and assessed by TQUK, any reasonable adjustment and special consideration requests must be submitted to TQUK for approval and cannot be applied by Training Providers themselves.

Many End-Point Assessments are also subject to assessment windows in which the entire End-Point Assessment must be completed within a certain timeframe. This timeframe is specific to each Apprenticeship Standard and is detailed within the respective Assessment Plan. Should an Apprentice have experienced an event outside their control which may cause this timeframe to be breached, a Training Provider may seek an extension with TQUK via the special considerations process.

Permissions Table

Note: The below information only applies to Recognised Centres seeking reasonable adjustments and special considerations with relation to regulated qualifications that are not End-Point Assessments. All reasonable adjustment and special considerations with relation to End-Point Assessments must be requested via an application to TQUK for permission.

The Permissions Table lists the most commonly requested adjustments (as a reasonable adjustment or a special consideration) to standard assessment arrangements; however, it is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Recognised Centres and External Quality Assurers have a duty to seek advice from TQUK in any case where they are in doubt if an adjustment is needed or how it should be applied. Please note that many of these adjustments are dependent on the content of the Qualification Specification and the knowledge and skills being assessed.

Key	
Permitted	Reasonable adjustment or special consideration permitted at the discretion of the Recognised Centre.
Apply	Reasonable adjustment or special consideration for which an application to TQUK must be submitted for permission.

Adjustment	Type of Assessment Please see the previous section for further detail.	
	Assessments taken under Examination Conditions	Assessments not taken under Examination Conditions
Assessment Conditions		
Extra time up to 25%*	Apply	Permitted
Extra time in excess of 25%*	Apply	Permitted
Supervised rest breaks	Apply	Permitted
Separate accommodation within the Recognised Centre	Permitted	Permitted
Conduct assessment at an alternative venue	Permitted	Permitted
Modified Assessment Materials The following adjustments require a greater period of notice to TQUK and partner organisations. Please contact TQUK as soon as the need is identified to agree timescales.		
Assessment material on coloured paper	Apply	Permitted
Assessment material in enlarged format	Apply	Permitted
Assessment material in audio format	Apply	Permitted
Assistive Aids and Technology		
Use of English dictionaries	Apply	Permitted
Facilitators		
Use of ICT	Apply	Permitted
Read aloud	Apply	Permitted
Reader or computer reader	Apply	Permitted
Prompter	Apply	Permitted
Scribe	Apply	Permitted
Transcriber	Apply	Permitted

* The amount of extra time allowed will vary according to length of examination and must be given in percentages

Definitions of the above terms can be found in the Glossary at the end of this policy. For any adjustments not specified in the Permissions Table above, Recognised Centres should contact TQUK for further clarification on 03333 583344 or assessment@tquk.org.

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

It is the responsibility of the Recognised Centre to maintain records of all adjustments made to internal assessments, and to hold these on file within the Recognised Centre for Internal Quality Assurer and External Quality Assurer audit purposes.

Requesting Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

Once the need for a reasonable adjustment or special consideration has been identified and the assessment type requires permission to be sought from TQUK, the Recognised Centre or Training Provider must complete and submit the appropriate form on behalf of the Learner or Apprentice.

The Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Forms are available on the following platforms: Verve Registration & Certification, Verve Quality, and Verve EPA. Separate forms will typically be completed for each Learner or Apprentice. However, in the event that a particular disturbance or situation has affected a cohort of Learners or Apprentices then a single form may be submitted, with a list of all the affected individuals attached. The forms will require the Learner or Apprentice's name, TQUK registration number (Recognised Centres only), the affected assessment(s), the nature of and rationale for the request, and additional supporting evidence.

For Recognised Centres, requests for reasonable adjustments on behalf of Learners must be submitted at least **10 working days** before the scheduled assessment. For Training Providers, requests for reasonable adjustments on behalf of Apprentices must be submitted prior to submission through Gateway. Approved reasonable adjustment requests will be submitted as a Gateway requirement to be discussed in the Assessment Planning Meeting.

Requests for special considerations must be submitted at least **10 working days** before the scheduled assessment. Requests for special considerations following the completion of an assessment should be submitted immediately and not after the confirmation of results by TQUK. For Multiple Choice Question assessments where results are immediately available, the Recognised Centre or Training Provider may submit requests for special considerations up to **5 working days** from the date of the assessment.

Should a Recognised Centre or Training Provider be made aware of the need for a special consideration within the **10 working days** prior to an assessment after the due date for requests has passed, TQUK advises that the assessment be delayed to a later date.

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

- The application has been overlooked by the Recognised Centre or Training Provider and the oversight is confirmed by the Recognised Centre or Training Provider Coordinator;
- Medical evidence has come to light about a Learner or Apprentice's condition, which demonstrates that the Learner or Apprentice must have been affected by the condition at the time of the assessment, even though the problem revealed itself only after the assessment.

TQUK will confirm receipt of the request within **2 working days**. The request review stage will typically take **5 working days** from the date all requested evidence was received. With more complex cases which require input from experts, TQUK may be unable to respond in this timescale and an estimated extended response date will be communicated.

We cannot guarantee a request will be approved or denied until it is fully reviewed. Therefore, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations should not be applied pre-emptively before an outcome is communicated by TQUK.

The review of the reasonable adjustment or special consideration request will be conducted by a suitably competent TQUK staff member.

Supporting Evidence

All reasonable adjustment or special consideration requests must be supported by evidence that is sufficient, valid and reliable alongside the relevant form. Requests may not be accepted without appropriate supporting evidence. It is the Recognised Centre or Training Provider's responsibility to provide this evidence and to ensure that all applications for reasonable adjustments are based on the individual needs of the Learner or Apprentice.

The Recognised Centre or Training Provider should decide which of the following types of additional supporting evidence will best assist understanding of the Learner or Apprentice's situation:

- An assessment of the Learner or Apprentice's needs in relation to the relevant assessment, made within the Recognised Centre or Training Provider by the relevant member of staff with competence and responsibility in this area; staff include learning support staff, teaching staff, trainers, assessors and other specialist staff;
- History of provision within the Recognised Centre or Training Provider;
- Written evidence produced by independent, authoritative specialists.

Appeals

If a Recognised Centre, Training Provider, Learner or Apprentice wishes to appeal against a TQUK decision regarding reasonable adjustments or special considerations, please refer to TQUK's [*Appeals Policy*](#).

If necessary, please also refer to TQUK's [*Appeals Policy*](#) for information on further avenues beyond the appeals process.

Glossary

Extra time up to 25%	Where an assessment is time-constrained, a candidate may be permitted up to 25% extra of the time allowed to complete the assessment.
Extra time in excess of 25%	Where an assessment is time-constrained, a candidate may be permitted up to over 25% extra of the time allowed to complete the assessment.
Supervised rest breaks	Supervised rest breaks , taken under assessment conditions, may be taken either in or outside the assessment room and the duration of the breaks will not be deducted from the overall assessment time.
Separate accommodation within the Recognised Centre	There may be a need to accommodate a candidate separately from others during an assessment, often to enable the candidate to utilise another approved adjustment while reducing distraction for others who are not requiring this adjustment.
Conduct assessment at an alternative venue	In certain circumstances, the candidate may be permitted to take an assessment at an alternative venue suited to the candidate's requirements. Assessment conditions must still be met and the security of the assessment material maintained.
Assessment material on coloured paper	Subject to the supporting evidence, candidates with a visual impairment or learning difficulties may benefit from having assessment material printed on coloured paper .
Assessment material in enlarged format	Subject to the supporting evidence, candidates with a visual impairment or learning difficulties may apply for assessment material to be enlarged to a format suitable.
Assessment material in audio format	Subject to the supporting evidence, TQUK may be able to provide Learners with assessment material in audio format .
Use of English dictionaries	Learners may use an English dictionary for the purpose of checking the spelling of words or finding the meaning of words and phrases.
Use of ICT	The use of ICT in this context is taken to include electronic word processor devices producing output in text during an assessment. Spelling and grammar checks must be disabled prior to the assessment taking place.
Read aloud	Learners are permitted to read aloud during assessments, if this reflects their normal way of working. Recognised Centres must ensure that these Learners are accommodated separately.
Reader or computer reader	A reader is a responsible adult who reads the instructions of the question paper and the questions directly to the candidate. This may involve reading the whole paper to the candidate or the candidate may request only some words to be read. A computer reader is computer software which accurately reads out text but does not decode or interpret the paper.
Prompter	A prompter is a responsible adult who can refocus a candidate with severe attention problems. A candidate may benefit from the use of a prompter in timed assessment situations to draw their attention back to the assessment task.
Scribe	A scribe is a responsible adult who may write, type or word process a candidate's dictated answers to the questions during an assessment. Where there is evidence of need, a scribe may be allowed in all assessments where writing or keyboarding is not the competency being assessed.

Transcriber	<p>A transcriber is a responsible adult who will produce a transcript to assist the examiner/assessor in the assessment of a candidate's work.</p> <p>The examiner/assessor will assess the work and will only refer to the transcript if it is impossible to decipher any part of the candidate's response. In some instances the examiner/assessor may refer solely to the transcript.</p>
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