



Special Consideration and Reasonable Adjustment Policy

East Birmingham Community Forum (EBCF)

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Purpose

East Birmingham Community Forum aims to facilitate open access to all qualifications for Learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustment and/or special consideration in assessments, without compromising the assessment of the skills, knowledge, understanding, or competence being measured. This will be achieved through: -

- Reasonable Adjustment – This is agreed at the pre-assessment planning stage and any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which places the Learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments must not, however, affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes nor must they give the Learner an assessment advantage over other Learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.
- Special Consideration – This is a post-assessment allowance to reflect temporary illness, injury or indisposition that occurred at the time of assessment. Any special consideration granted cannot remove the difficulty the 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 cannot apply to “license to practice” units within a qualification, or to “license to practice” qualifications.

Guidance on Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations 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

East Birmingham Community Forum understands that 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 permitted by the Awarding Organisations. 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, 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

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 of similar assessment
- Influence the final outcome of the assessment decision

East Birmingham Community Forum applies reasonable adjustment in a transparent and unbiased manner. All reasonable adjustments made must be recorded using a reasonable adjustment form. Once completed, these would be held by East Birmingham Community Forum in the Learner's file and shall be available at all times for scrutiny by the awarding body, if so requested.

All reasonable adjustments implemented by East Birmingham Community Forum are subject to meeting the requirements of the appropriate assessment strategy and assessment criteria for each qualification and awarding body.

It is the responsibility of the Training Manager to ensure that any access arrangement implemented by East Birmingham Community Forum on behalf of the Learner, is based on firm evidence of a barrier to assessment.

If further clarification is required in relation to the application of reasonable adjustment, jamie@ebcf.org.com would contact the applicant by e-mail.

For all qualifications that are internally assessed, the Centre Manager will apply to the awarding body to request 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 the appropriate forms
- Keep all forms on the appropriate Learner's record
- Make forms available to the awarding body as required

Assessing Achievement

The Centre Manager would 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

The Centre Manager should note that 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

Inappropriate use of Reasonable Adjustment

EBCF understands that if they misuse the reasonable adjustment policy, then the awarding body will take appropriate action. Such action will range from advice and action for the centre 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.

Applying for Reasonable Adjustment

An application for a reasonable adjustment must be made **5 days** prior to the course start date as the appropriate awarding organisation may have to consider the learners application.

If the learner needs to apply for a scribe or a reader for either internal or external assessment, approval from the appropriate awarding organisation would be required before the learner starts the course or takes the external assessment.

There are several reasons that will be considered in the application for a reasonable adjustment.

These may include:

- the needs of the learner
- documentary evidence
- the cost of the adjustment
- likely impact of the adjustment upon the learner and others attending the course.

The Learner may be required to provide documentary evidence which outlines the characteristics (nature and severity) of their condition. This information should be from an appropriate independent professional.

Evidence may include a witness statement, medical or professional assessment report. If this information is not available, the Head of Quality & Compliance will contact the awarding organisation for further advice.

The learner can appeal in writing to the Head of Quality & Compliance if they are unsuccessful in attaining a reasonable adjustment.

The Head of Quality & Compliance will send you a copy of appeals policy.

Special Considerations

What is 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 the assessment

- Misses part of the assessment due to circumstances out of 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 license 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, 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, 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 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 list is not exhaustive): -

- Terminal illness of the Learner or 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 the centre can apply its own special consideration. Applications must be made to the awarding body.

Applying for Special Consideration

East Birmingham Community Forum would put arrangements in place to enable a Learner, in extenuating circumstances, to complete assessment and thus achieve the qualification. Only when this is unsuccessful should an application for special consideration be made. All applications for special consideration can only be made on a case-by-case basis and thus separate applications must be made for each Learner. The only exception to this is where a group of Learners has been affected by a similar circumstance such as a fire alarm during an assessment; in this case a group application is permissible. In this situation, however, a list of Learners affected should be attached to the application.

Applications for special consideration should be submitted to the awarding body:

- Application Form
- Evidence to support the application such as a medical certificate, a doctor's letter, a statement from the invigilator (if relevant) or any other appropriate information. The Training Manager shall authorise all applications for special consideration. Applications must be submitted to the awarding body within seven days of the assessment having taken place. Following receipt, the awarding body will usually give a decision within a further ten working days. Where a case is complex, the awarding body will usually inform the centre if a decision cannot be made within the time scale specified.

During the processing of an application, the awarding body will only liaise with the centre that are considered to be acting on the Learner's behalf and not with the Learner or their designated third party. It is important to note that special consideration applications will not be considered where Learner achievement has been claimed and certificated.

Lost or Damaged Work

When a Learner's work has been lost or damaged, the awarding body may consider accepting a grade for which there is no available evidence. In all cases, the centre shall be able to verify that the work was done and that it was monitored whilst it was in progress.

Complying with Policy

The centre understands that failure to comply with the requirements contained within this policy document could lead to assessment malpractice, which will impact on the Learner's result.

Failure to comply is defined as any or all of the following: -

- Where applicable, putting in place arrangements without the awarding body's approval.
- Exceeding the allowance agreed
- Agreeing delegated adjustments that are not supported by evidence.
- Failing to maintain records.
- Failing to report delegated adjustments when requested to do so by the awarding body.
- Implementing delegated adjustments that affect the validity and reliability of assessment, compromise the outcomes of assessment, or gives the Learner in questions an unfair assessment advantage over other Learners undertaking the same or similar assessment.

Right to appeal Centre

If the Centre fails to agree with the awarding body a decision made in respect of this policy, then the centre has the right of appeal.



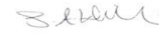
Upon receipt of an appeal, the awarding body will usually acknowledge receipt within two working days and adjudicate within a further ten working days.

Learners

If a Learner wishes to appeal against a decision on a reasonable adjustments or special consideration arrangement that was applied, please refer them to the EBCF's Appeals Policy & Procedure.

The retention of documentation related to reasonable adjustment and special consideration requests (this must be for 3 academic years).

Version Control

Version	Description of Change	Author	Date	Approved by
1.0	First version	S.Carragher	May 2022	S.Johnson
2.0	Version 2.0	S.Khan / Z.Sharif	July 2023	
3.0	Version 3.0	S.Khan / Z.Sharif	July 2024	
4.0	Version 4.0	S.Khan / J.Hall	January 2025	
5.0	Version 5.0	S.Khan (HR)	January 2026	S.Etheridge (Head of Quality)