

Section 5: Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

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5.1 Introduction and definitions

Awarding organisations have a duty to ensure that the integrity of their qualifications and assessment is maintained at all times. At the same time they and their centres have a duty to ensure that the rights of individual candidates to access qualifications and assessment in a way most appropriate for their individual needs are upheld. Equality legislation and the regulatory criteria give support and guidance to awarding organisations and their centres in creating an inclusive process.

(See The Equality Act 2010 and the Regulators' General Conditions of Recognition. See also Appendix 1 of this Centre Guidance for ASDAN's policy document, "Access Arrangements: Reasonable Adjustments & Special Consideration"

- **Access arrangements** are agreed before an assessment and allow candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment, for example, readers, scribes and test papers in Braille.
- The Equality Act 2010 requires awarding organisations to make **reasonable adjustments** where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled.
- A reasonable adjustment for a particular candidate may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements.
- An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.
- **Special consideration** is an adjustment to a candidate's mark to reflect temporary illness, injury or other disposition **at or near the time of the assessment**.

5.2 Access arrangements

Centres use the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations and guidance for access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration for their GCSE and GCE candidates. As ASDAN qualifications do not include an external test, and portfolios of evidence are not compiled under examination conditions, the JCQ regulations and guidance for access arrangements are not applicable (there is no need to request extra time, for example). For these qualifications ASDAN has produced guidance and application forms based on those developed by the Federation of Awarding Organisations (FAB) and centres are required to use these when applying for access arrangements. (See the FAB Guide on the application of reasonable adjustments and Special Consideration in vocational qualifications). Where ASDAN agrees to an access arrangement, a notification will be sent to the centre, which must be inserted at the front of the candidate's portfolio.

Arrangements that can be granted by the centre for portfolio-based qualifications

Not all access arrangements require the centre to apply to ASDAN. For example, a scribe may be required where a candidate is unable to produce legible evidence; although there is no requirement to apply for permission to use a scribe, the centre must annotate the candidate's portfolio accordingly, so that the External Moderator is aware that the work has been verified as the candidate's own work.

Other access arrangements for portfolio-based qualifications that a centre is able to grant without prior permission from ASDAN include the use of IT, a prompter or reader and

enlarged format recording documents. Centres need to notify ASDAN prior to moderation of any access arrangements permitted.

5.3 Special Consideration

Special Consideration is applied to candidates who have been disadvantaged during assessment/external moderation, and may be entitled to an adjustment to the outcome of that assessment/external moderation.

For portfolio-based qualifications, applications for special consideration must be made on a case by case basis.

Incidences of lost or damaged work are dealt with under a separate section – see Appendix 1 of this Centre Guidance, “Procedure for reporting lost/damaged work”

5.4 Summary of procedures and administration

For an overview of Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Permissions, the application forms and the procedures to be followed by centres, see the ASDAN website members pages, under Generic Centre Guidance Appendix 1 Policy Documents.