

Policy and Procedures for Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

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For the attention of Heads of: Centre / IQA / IM

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Policy and Procedures for Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

1. Introduction

As an approved awarding organisation, ASDAN has confirmed with the regulatory authorities that it has adopted the principles outlined in:

- General/Standard Conditions of Recognition
- Equality Act 2010

This document defines the terms Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration and identifies the context of particular assessment requirements and the procedures for making applications. ASDAN provides application forms and additional guidance on permitted adjustments for centres.

Further detail as to the application of reasonable adjustments and special consideration in vocational qualifications is provided by the Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB) and sets out to explain the range and requirements of centres requesting reasonable adjustments and special consideration. It is available on the ASDAN website: <https://members.asdan.org.uk/policies-and-regulations>

1.1 Definition of a Reasonable Adjustment

A reasonable adjustment is any action which helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the candidate at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. All adjustments will be consistent with the candidate's normal way of working and will not give the candidate an unfair advantage over other candidates. Reasonable adjustments are approved and put in place before the assessment activity takes place.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies to three separate requirements:

1. Adjusting the way things are done.

This refers to any provision, criterion or practice which may place a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. These cover all aspects of teaching and assessment, for example: recruitment and selection; training; including sickness absence policies.

2. Adjusting physical features of the school or centre.

It may be necessary to make adjustments to overcome barriers created by the physical features of the classroom. This includes any physical feature which puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with a non-disabled person.

3. Providing extra equipment.

The Equality Act 2010 refers to this as an auxiliary aid (for example a hearing-loop) or an auxiliary service (a person/service provider that gives assistance to the disabled person). This requirement means taking reasonable steps to provide an auxiliary aid where the absence of such an aid would place a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage when compared with persons who are not disabled.

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1.2 Examples of Reasonable Adjustments:

Examples of reasonable adjustments can include:

- Giving more one-to-one support to help prioritise the work of a learner suffering from anxiety
- Allowing more frequent breaks for someone with diabetes to get the right amount of food or drink throughout the day
- Giving more time for someone with dyslexia to do any written or reading tests that are part of the assessment process
- Modifying instructions or reference manuals, e.g. providing them in Braille or large print;
- Providing additional or tailored training, coaching or mentoring, for example for someone with severe dyslexia;
- Adjusting teaching hours, for example allowing someone whose medication's side effect is fatigue a later or flexible start time, or more frequent rest breaks;
- Changing the place of study, for example moving an individual with limited mobility to a ground-floor location or allowing home working for part of the working week;
- Providing special equipment, for example voice-activated software for someone with a visual impairment;
- Providing a reader or interpreter, e.g. for someone who is deaf;
- Changing the method of doing the assessment, e.g. allowing a learner who cannot drive due to epilepsy to use buses for travel;
- Modifying procedures for testing and / or assessments as part of a group exercise, this will need to be pre-approved by ASDAN before teaching and assessments start.

1.3 Definition of Special Consideration

The term **special consideration** applies post-assessment, and may be applied for candidates who suffer temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of assessment. It may not be considered at all if alternative assessment arrangements can be made.

Candidates cannot enter a plea for special considerations for assessment solely on the grounds of disability or learning difficulty, and must declare their needs prior to the assessment period. All necessary reasonable adjustments arrangements must have been implemented before the time of the assessment.

Special considerations are normally circumstances relating to the health and/or personal life of a student which are of a sufficiently serious and significant nature to result in them being unable to attend, complete or submit an assessment on time. They are also expected to be either:

- a) **unforeseeable**, in that the student could have no prior knowledge of the event concerned; and/or
- b) **unavoidable**, in that the student could have done nothing reasonably in their power to prevent or avoid such an event

If the assessment is marked, special consideration may result in a minor adjustment to a mark, but without affecting the overall standard required. Any adjustment made will be small (no more than 5% of the total marks available). The size of the adjustment will depend on circumstances and will reflect the difficulty faced by the candidate or the reason for the special consideration request.

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Special consideration should not give the candidate an unfair advantage. The candidate's result must reflect his or her achievement in the assessment and not necessarily his or her potential ability.

N.B. Where an assessment requires a criterion or standard to be met fully, **it may not be** possible to apply special consideration. It may be more appropriate to offer the candidate the opportunity to take the assessment at a later date. In all cases, where applicable, unit certification is available.

There may be other instances where centres may feel it appropriate to request special consideration. In all cases, centres are required to put that request in writing to compliance@asdan.org.uk. Each request will be judged on a case by case basis. All candidates, regardless of their special consideration must still meet the minimum requirement for the award of a certificate.

1.4 Examples of Special Consideration:

- An illness or injury,
- 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 for example:
 - Bereavement – death of close relative/friend/significant other (of a nature which, in a learning context, would have led to an absence)
 - Serious short-term illness or
 - Significant adverse personal/family circumstances
 - Significant disruption of an examination
 - Severe adverse weather conditions
 - A significant failure of due process by the centre
 - Other significant exceptional factors for which there is evidence of stress caused anxiety

A candidate 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 candidate 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 candidate;
- 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 candidate could have performed more successfully in the assessment.

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A candidate will not be eligible for special consideration if:

- No evidence is supplied by the centre that the candidate 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 an assessment is affected by difficulties during the course, for example, disturbances through building work, lack of proper facilities, changes in or shortages of staff, or industrial disputes.

2. Procedure for applying or reasonable adjustments

1. Particular assessment requirements are identified within a centre and reference is made to ASDAN's **Reasonable Adjustments Guidance**. Following internal consideration a decision is made **either** that an application is made to the awarding body **or** that the centre will allow access arrangements (depending on the nature of the adjustment required).
2. Applications are made in writing to compliance@asdan.org.uk using copies of the forms provided (downloadable from the ASDAN Website as appropriate), together with relevant supporting evidence. Applications must be sent as early as possible and no later than 10 working days prior to the external moderation.
3. Once received by ASDAN details are recorded on a pro forma and, if necessary, acknowledgement sent in writing within 5 working days. Where a formal notification is issued by ASDAN, this should be inserted at the front of the portfolio prior to moderation.
4. If necessary, the application is discussed with the Compliance Manager and appropriate other senior staff (e.g. Principal Moderators) and raised as a standing item on the QA Managers' meeting agenda.
5. Centres and/or other relevant persons are informed of the decision in writing within one week of the request.
6. If the decision is not straightforward and cannot be made without further consultation, advice is sought from other bodies e.g. Ofqual and/or other regulatory bodies. In the event of continued consultation acknowledgement is sent to relevant parties. Centres are informed of final decisions in writing as soon as possible.
7. The Compliance Manager ensures that relevant candidates are included in the moderation sample, and notifies the relevant External Quality Assurer of any reasonable adjustment, to ensure requirements have been met by the centre.
8. The whole process is monitored through pro forma, as a standing item on the QA Managers' meeting agenda, and reported as part of the annual self- evaluation process.

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9. ASDAN will provide reports on data and information on access arrangements to the regulatory bodies on request.
10. Details of access arrangements requested are saved and all information relating to this is recorded on the relevant pro forma and retained for monitoring purposes.

3. Procedure for applying for reasonable adjustments or special consideration

1. The need for special consideration is identified within a centre. Following internal consideration a decision is made that an application should be made to the awarding body.
2. Applications are made in writing to compliance@asdan.org.uk using copies of the forms provided on the ASDAN website, together with supporting evidence. Applications must be sent as early as possible following the event, and at the latest two weeks after the moderation.
3. Once received by ASDAN details are recorded on a pro forma and, if necessary, acknowledgement sent within 5 working days.
4. If necessary, the application is discussed with the Compliance Manager and appropriate other senior staff (e.g. Principal Moderators). Centres and/or other relevant persons are informed of the decision in writing within two weeks of the request. All information is recorded on pro forma.
5. If the decision is not straightforward and cannot be made without further consultation, advice is sought from other bodies e.g. Ofqual and/or other regulatory bodies. In the event of continued consultation acknowledgement is sent to relevant parties. Centres are informed of final decisions in writing as soon as possible.
6. ASDAN will provide reports on data and information on special consideration to the regulatory bodies on request.