

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION & ACCESS TO ASSESSMENT POLICY

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Policy statement

RM Training (UK) Limited, complies with the Equality Act 2010. This policy aims to meet the requirements of the Equality Act to allow fair access to courses and ensure learners are not disadvantaged.

Purpose of Policy

RM Training 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.

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.

RM Training 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 RM Training, 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

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)
- Use of ICT/Responses Using Electronic Devices

Student Recruitment

RM Training takes measures to ensure that learners have the correct information and advice on their selected qualifications and that the qualifications will meet their needs. The recruitment process shall include DV8 assessing 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.

RM Training, will ensure that learners are 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

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

RM Training will apply reasonable adjustment in a transparent and unbiased manner.

It is the responsibility of the Quality Manager (or designated nominee) to ensure that any access arrangement implemented by RM Training, on behalf of the learner, is based on firm evidence of a barrier to assessment.

For all qualifications that are internally assessed, DV8 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

RM Training will 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.

Inappropriate use of Reasonable Adjustment.

RM Training 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.

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 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.

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 usage 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.

RM Training, decision will be based on various factors, which may vary from learner to learner, and from one course 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 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.
- Terminal illness of a parent or carer.
- 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 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, etc.
- Recent domestic crisis.
- Recent physical assault trauma.
- Recently broken limb.

RM Training 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.

The Head of Teaching and Learning shall authorise all applications for special consideration.

Complying with the Policy

RM Training, 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.
- 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, compromises the outcomes of assessment or gives the learner in questions an unfair assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessment.