

# Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

Sept 2021

Version 1

## 1. Scope

---

This policy applies to all staff at Expanse Learning.

## 2. Reasonable Adjustment

---

A reasonable adjustment helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the student 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.

Reasonable adjustments must be approved (internally or externally) and set in place prior to assessment commencing. It is an arrangement to give a student access to a qualification. The work produced following a reasonable adjustment must be assessed in the same way as the work from other students.

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 student may not need, nor be allowed the same adjustment for all assessments.

Reasonable adjustments permitted by an accrediting body 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 student(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
- 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

## 3. Centre recruitment

---

It is vital that we recruit students with integrity onto our courses. We must ensure that students have the correct information and advice on their selected qualifications and that the qualifications will meet their needs. The recruitment process will include the centre assessing each potential student and making justifiable and professional judgments about the student's potential to successfully complete the assessment and achieve the qualification.

The assessment will identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the student to facilitate access to the assessment. Where the recruitment process identifies that the student 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 student. A student may still decide to proceed with studying a particular qualification and not be entered for all or part of the assessment.

We should ensure that students 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; and
- any restrictions on progression routes to the student as a result of not achieving certain outcomes.

#### **4. Applying reasonable adjustment**

Reasonable adjustments are approved before an assessment and are intended to allow attainment to be demonstrated. A student does not have to be disabled (as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)) to qualify for reasonable adjustment; nor will every student who is disabled be entitled to reasonable adjustment. Allowing reasonable adjustment is dependent upon how it will facilitate access for the student. 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 student(s) in question an unfair advantage over other students taking the same or similar assessment
- influence the outcome of the assessment decision.

Reasonable adjustment must be applied in a transparent and unbiased manner. All reasonable adjustments made must in accordance with the accrediting bodies policies and procedures. Copies of any forms completed, or requests made must be held in the student's file. All reasonable adjustments implemented are subject to meeting the requirements of the accrediting body.

It is the responsibility of leaders to ensure that any access arrangement implemented by Expanse Learning on behalf of the student, is based on firm evidence of a barrier to assessment.

[NOTE: For BTEC qualifications that are internally assessed the centre will not need to apply to Edexcel to implement a reasonable adjustment, but must:

- only make reasonable adjustments that are in line with this policy
- record all reasonable adjustments made on form RA1
- keep all RA1 forms on the appropriate student's record
- make RA1 forms available to Edexcel as required.

#### **5. Requesting reasonable adjustment from an Accrediting Body**

When making reasonable adjustments it is important to comply with the accrediting body's policies and procedures. If the accrediting body require us to make a formal request, this needs to be done in line with the accrediting body's procedures.

#### **6. Assessing achievement**

We must ensure that for all internal assessment, achievement is given only for the skills demonstrated by the student and that reasonable adjustments do not compromise the outcomes of assessment (as identified in 1.3 above).

#### **7. Special Educational Needs Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP)**

It should be note that a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN, LDA, EHC) does not automatically qualify the student for reasonable adjustment to assessment, as:

- the SEN, EHCP statement may not contain a recent assessment of the needs.
- the reasonable adjustment may compromise assessment (as identified in 1.3 above).

#### **8. Inappropriate use of reasonable adjustment**

If we misuse the reasonable adjustment policy, then the accrediting bodies may take 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.

#### **9. Special Considerations**

##### **What is special consideration**

A special consideration is consideration given following a period of assessment for a student 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.
- units/qualifications confer licence 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 student an opportunity to take the assessment later.

A special consideration cannot give the student an unfair advantage, nor must its use cause the user of a certificate to be misled regarding a student's achievement. The student'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 accrediting body's decision will be based on various factors, which may vary from student to student, 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 student 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 student, 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 student.

A student will not be eligible for special consideration if:

- no evidence is supplied by the centre that the student 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 student
- terminal illness of 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 student
- 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 a centre can apply its own special consideration. Applications must be made to the accrediting body.

## **10. Applying for special consideration**

Some of the accrediting bodies expect a centre to put arrangements in place to enable a student, 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 should be made on a case-

by-case basis and thus separate applications must be made for each student. The only exception may be where a group of students has been affected by a similar circumstance such as a fire alarm during an assessment; in this case a group application may be permissible. In this situation, however, a list of students affected should still be attached to the application. Applications for special consideration should be made in line with the accrediting body's policies and procedures.

NOTE: Edexcel request that applications be submitted to the BTEC Quality Standards Team and should include:

- Special Considerations Form (SCF)
- Student Report Form (SRF)
- 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 Quality nominee(s) must authorise all applications for special consideration. Students must be made aware that the accrediting bodies will only liaise with us and not with the student or their designated third party.

It is important to note that special consideration applications will not be considered where student achievement has been claimed and certificated.

### **11. Posthumous certification**

---

Applications for posthumous certification should be submitted in line with the accrediting body's policies and procedures.

### **12. Lost or damaged work**

---

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

Applications to accept grades, for which there is no available evidence, should be submitted in line with the accrediting body's policies and procedures.

### **13. Complying with policy**

---

It should be noted that failure to comply with the requirements contained within an accrediting body's policy could lead to assessment malpractice, which will impact on the student's result.

Examples of failure to comply are as follows:

- where applicable, putting in place arrangements without the accrediting body's approval.
- exceeding the allowance agreed by the accrediting body.
- agreeing delegated adjustments that are not supported by evidence.
- failing to maintain records.
- failing to report delegated adjustments when requested to do so by an accrediting body.
- implementing delegated adjustments that affect the validity and reliability of assessment, compromises the outcomes of assessment, or gives the student in questions an unfair assessment advantage over other students undertaking the same or similar assessment.

### **14. Right to appeal**

---

Where a centre fails to agree with an accrediting body's decision, then we may have the right of appeal. Any appeal should be made in line with the accrediting body's policies and procedures.

### **15. Monitoring arrangements**

---

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months but can be revised as needed.

**Impact of non-compliance for:**

<b>Staff:</b>	Support Plan
<b>Student:</b>	Poor Performance
<b>Legislation/organisational:</b>	Reputational damage, litigation, statutory and non-regulated compliance.
<b>Compliance lead:</b>	Safeguarding Lead/Governor
<b>Policy Reference:</b>	ELGR-POL-ORG-014
<b>Version:</b>	1
<b>Agreed policy location:</b>	DatabridgeMIS and Company Website
<b>Does the policy require Governor approval?</b>	No

**Approval**

<p><b>Prepared by</b> Karl Wane 01/09/2021</p>  <p>Director of Post 16 Education</p>	<p><b>Approved by</b> Tony Brown 01/09/2021</p>  <p>CEO</p>	<p><b>Counter Signatory</b> Richard King 01/09/2021</p>  <p>Director of Schools, Pre 16 Education</p>
---	--	--

**Version Control**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Revision</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
1	01/09/2021	Policy Review	31/08/2022
2			
3			
4			
5			