

Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedure

September 2022

1. Introduction

Qualifi has arrangements in place to develop qualifications and units that are accessible for Learners. However, we recognise that there may be occasions when we need to facilitate access to assessment for Learners with disabilities and other difficulties, without compromising the levels of attainment required by the specification for those qualifications and units.

We are able to facilitate access to assessment, where appropriate, by making:

- Reasonable Adjustments to assessment and,
- Special Consideration for a Learner.

This document sets out further information about access to assessment, including how a Learner qualifies for a Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration, what provision will be made and how a Centre should manage Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration.

2. Audience

The audience for this document is:

- Users of our qualifications and units,
- Qualifi Executive Board (Governing Body);
- Qualifi officers,
- Consultants working on behalf of Qualifi,
- Qualifications Regulators.

3. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all regulated qualifications and units we make available.

4. Definition of a Reasonable Adjustment

A Reasonable Adjustment is an adjustment made to an assessment for a Learner which aims to remove or mitigate substantial disadvantage arising from disability or difficulty thus enabling the Learner to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills or understanding to the levels of attainment required by the qualification and unit specifications. Reasonable Adjustments must not give the Learner an assessment advantage over other Learners taking the same qualification or units. The work generated by a Learner from a Reasonable Adjustment must be assessed and quality assured in the same way as the work from other Learners.

5. The Need for a Reasonable Adjustment

A Learner may need a Reasonable Adjustment because of a disability or difficulty in a wide range of areas. The list below is not exhaustive but a Learner may typically need a Reasonable Adjustment because of:

- communication and interaction needs, for example difficulties with reading or writing,

- cognition and learning needs, for example learning difficulties or difficulties with comprehension,
- sensory and physical needs, for example visual or hearing impairment
- physical needs,
- behavioural, emotional and social needs.

A Learner does not have to be disabled to qualify for a Reasonable Adjustment, nor will every Learner who is disabled need or be entitled to a Reasonable Adjustment.

6. Types of Reasonable Adjustment

The type of Reasonable Adjustment will depend on the assessment requirements for the qualification and units, the particular needs of an individual Learner and their normal way of working. They may include:

- changing usual assessment arrangements, such as allowing extra time to complete an assessment,
- adapting the assessment room such as removing certain visual stimuli for an autistic Learner,
- adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in large print or Braille,
- providing assistance during assessment, such as providing a sign language interpreter or reader,
- changing or adapting the assessment method, for example from written to oral evidence,
- using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice activated software.

Table 1 shows possible Reasonable Adjustments and a summary of the range of Reasonable Adjustments is attached as Appendix 1.

7. Qualifying for a Reasonable Adjustment

A Learner will qualify for a Reasonable Adjustment if there is a need for a Reasonable Adjustment, the appropriate type of Reasonable Adjustment has been identified to enable access to an assessment and a Centre has evidence of both.

Evidence may include the following:

- It may be self-evident through interaction with a Learner in a Centre that a Reasonable Adjustment is required for a physical disabilities or difficulty, such as hearing impairment or loss of vision, and that the implications are clear.
- In cases such as learning difficulties or emotional difficulties, other evidence is required depending on the particular case. The evidence may include an assessment of a Learner's needs by a member of Centre staff who is competent to make an assessment, such as learning support staff.
- Evidence may also arise from interaction with the Learner during teaching or formative assessments at a Centre or from previous Centres.
- Evidence may include reports from independent competent practitioners such as educational psychologists.

Some examples of eligibility and evidence are shown in Table 2.

The evidence must be retained by the Centre in line with our requirements for assessment records.

8. Planning for a Reasonable Adjustment

The need for a Reasonable Adjustment is usually foreseeable and should be identified and agreed with a Learner as part of the recruitment process. To achieve this, we expect Centres to provide all Learners with information and advice on their selected qualifications and units during recruitment, identify those Learners likely to require a Reasonable Adjustment and establish the nature of the Reasonable Adjustments with them. This means that a Reasonable Adjustment should always be in place prior to the assessment.

Where the recruitment process identifies that a Learner may not be able to demonstrate attainment this must be communicated clearly to the Learner, including the implications for progression. A Learner may still decide to proceed with studying a particular qualification or units and not be entered for all or part of the assessment.

9. Avoiding the Need for a Reasonable Adjustment

Where assessment requirements permit, Centres should devise assessments which enable Learners to demonstrate attainment through their normal ways of working without the need for Reasonable Adjustments, for example by allowing evidence to be presented on video or orally.

10. Making a Reasonable Adjustment

Before making a Reasonable Adjustment, a Centre must follow one of two processes depending on the type of the Reasonable Adjustment and the assessment arrangements.

- A Centre must apply to us for approval of the Reasonable Adjustment at least 15 working days prior to the assessment using Form RA1 Application for a Reasonable Adjustment. Supporting evidence must be included with the application. A copy of the form and evidence must be taken by the Centre and made available for monitoring. See Table 1 below.
- A Centre may make a Reasonable Adjustment at its discretion but the Reasonable Adjustment must be recorded on Form RA2 Reasonable Adjustments Made at the Discretion of the Centre and sent to us with supporting evidence at least 15 working days prior to the assessment. A copy of the form and evidence must be taken by the Centre and made available for monitoring.

The form and evidence must be retained by the Centre in line with our requirements for assessment records.

Table 1: Permissions Table

1 = Reasonable Adjustment that must be approved by Qualifi

2 = Reasonable Adjustment applied at the discretion of the Centre

Reasonable Adjustment	Assessment written and marked by Centre	Assessment written by Qualifi and marked by the Centre	Confidential assessment written and marked by Qualifi
Extra time for the assessment if time constrained up to 25%	2	2	1
Extra time for the assessment if time constrained in excess of 25%			
Supervised rest breaks	2	2	1
Changes to the organisation of the assessment room	2	2	1
Separate accommodation for the assessment	2	2	1
Taking the assessment at an alternative venue	2	2	1
Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, CCTV, OCR scanners	2	2	1
Use of assistive technology	2	1	1
Use of bilingual/translation dictionaries	2	2	1
Assessment in large format	2	1	1
Assessment in Braille	2	1	1
Language modified assessment	2	1	1

Assessment in BSL	2	1	1
Assessment on coloured paper	2	1	1
Assessment in audio format	2	1	1
Use of ICT	2	1	1
Responses using electronic devices	2	1	1
Responses in BSL	2	2	1
Responses in Braille	2	2	1
Use of Reader	2	2	1
Use of Scribe	2	2	1
Use of BSL/English interpreter	2	2	1
Use of Prompter	2	2	1
Use of Practical Assistant	2	2	1
Use of Transcriber	2	2	1

It is important to note that:

- A Reasonable Adjustment must not give the Learner an assessment advantage over other Learners taking the same qualification or units. A Centre must contact us to discuss a proposed Reasonable Adjustment if it is uncertain.
- We expect all Centres to make Reasonable Adjustments based on the particular needs of a Learner, and depending on how it will facilitate access for the Learner. Reasonable Adjustments must be made in a transparent and unbiased manner.
- Not all these adjustments will be reasonable, permissible or practical in particular situations. A Learner may not need, nor be allowed the same adjustment for all assessments.
- A Learner may not need or be allowed the same Reasonable Adjustment for all qualifications and units.
- A Learner may need a combination of Reasonable Adjustments.

Some examples of eligibility and evidence are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Examples of Eligibility and Evidence

Reasonable Adjustment	Eligibility / evidence
Extra time for the assessment if time constrained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of special educational needs • Psychological assessment • Specialist assessment carried out by a specialist teacher
Amplification equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners normal way of working
Read aloud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal way of working
CCTV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal way of working
Coloured overlays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal way of working
Low vision aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual impairment
OCR scanners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual impairment
Prompter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal way of working
Separate invigilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of reader/ scribe/WP/medical
Supervised rest breaks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical / psychological
Transcription	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwriting difficult to decipher

11. Definition of Special Consideration

Special Consideration is made for a Learner who has temporarily experienced (a) an illness or injury or (b) some other event outside his or her control which has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on his or her ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment. Any Special Consideration granted cannot remove the difficulty the Learner faced at the time of assessment and can only be a limited post-assessment adjustment to the mark to ensure that the integrity of the assessment is not compromised and that the Learner is not given an unfair advantage.

12. Qualifying for Special Consideration

A Learner may qualify for Special Consideration if the Learner was fully prepared for and present at a scheduled assessment and a Centre can provide evidence that:

- performance in the assessment was affected by circumstances beyond the control of the Learner, such as temporary illness, injury, bereavement or a disturbance during the assessment,
- alternative assessment arrangements agreed in advance proved to be inadequate,
- part of the assessment was missed due to circumstances beyond the control of the Learner,
- evidence from other assessments supports the claim that the Learner could have performed more successfully.

Each request for Special Consideration will be unique but the following are examples of circumstances which might make a Learner eligible for Special Consideration. The list is not exhaustive:

- terminal illness of the Learner,
- 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 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.

Any Special Consideration that is granted 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). The maximum allowance will normally be 5% of the mark.

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,

- assessment criteria have to be met fully,
- qualifications confer licence to practice.

Special Consideration will not be granted where:

- the Learner was in control of the circumstances, such as holidays or moving house,
- preparation for a component was affected by difficulties during the course,
- the Learner suffers from a long-term illness, unless it worsens at or just before the assessment,
- the disadvantage is a result of a criminal act.

13. Avoiding the Need for Special Consideration

Where it is feasible to do so, such as on demand assessment, the Learner should be given the opportunity to take or retake the assessment at a later date.

14. Applying for Special Consideration

A Centre must apply to us for Special Consideration in all cases within 10 working days of the end of the scheduled assessment using Form SC1: Application for Special Consideration. Supporting evidence must be included with the application, such as medical evidence or an invigilation report. A copy of the form and evidence must be retained by the Centre and made available for monitoring.

The form evidence must be retained by the Centre in line with our requirements for assessment records.

15. Monitoring and Reporting

An annual report on Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration will be made to the governing body to ensure that our procedures remain fit for purpose.

16. Review

We will review this policy and procedure every three years or more frequently if required, for example in response to User feedback, changes in practice, requirements of the Qualifications Regulators or other external agencies or changes in legislation.

Appendix 1

Summary of the Range of Reasonable Adjustments

The following Reasonable Adjustments are taken from 'Good Practice Guide: The Application of Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration in Vocational Qualifications, Federation of Awarding Bodies'. This information is provided for guidance only and does not replace any requirements set by Qualifi.

8.3.1 Extra Time

Extra time should not be allowed where its use will invalidate the assessment criteria. Extra time should not give the candidate an unfair advantage over others.

8.3.2 Supervised rest breaks

Centres should ensure that both the candidate and his/her work is supervised during the break. The duration of the break should not be deducted from the assessment time. Rest breaks should not be allowed where their use would invalidate the assessment criteria.

8.3.3 Changes in organisation of the assessment room

The centre should consider the needs of the individual candidate and, where possible, arrange the assessment room to suit the candidate.

8.3.4 Separate accommodation within the centre.

Centres should ensure that, where candidates are accommodated separately for assessments taken under examination conditions, usual examination conditions apply and separate invigilation is arranged.

8.3.5 Taking the assessment at an alternative venue

For assessments taken under examination conditions, standard examination conditions should be in place at the alternative venue and the standard procedures for security of assessment material and despatch of the candidate's work should be followed.

8.3.6 Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, tinted spectacles, cctv and ocr scanners

The candidate should be familiar with how the aid works. The use of aids should not give the candidate an unfair advantage over other candidates or invalidate the assessment criteria.

8.3.7 Use of assistive technology

The candidate should be familiar with how the assistive technology works. The assistive technology should not give the candidate an unfair advantage over other candidates or invalidate the assessment criteria.

8.3.8 Use of bilingual dictionaries and bilingual translation dictionaries

The use of a bilingual dictionary should not give the candidate an unfair advantage over other candidates or invalidate the assessment criteria.

8.3.9 Assessment material in enlarged format

Where appropriate, the centre should meet the awarding organisation deadlines for requesting enlarged assessment material. In cases where the centre is permitted by the awarding organisation to enlarge assessment material, the centre should take responsibility for the security of the material and for ensuring that the entire document is enlarged.

8.3.10 Assessment material in Braille

Where appropriate, the centre should meet the awarding organisation deadlines for requesting Braille assessment material. In cases where the centre is permitted by the awarding organisation to Braille assessment material, the centre should take responsibility for the security of the material and for ensuring that the entire document is Braille.

8.3.11 Language modified assessment material

Where appropriate, the centre should meet the awarding organisation deadlines for requesting language modified assessment material. In cases where the centre is permitted by the awarding organisation to modify assessment material, the centre should take responsibility for the security of the material and for the accuracy of the modification.

8.3.12 Assessment material in BSL

The centre should meet the awarding organisation deadlines for requesting assessment material in BSL. In cases where the centre is permitted to translate the assessment material into BSL, it should take responsibility for the security of the material and for the accuracy of the translation. The centre should provide sufficient playback equipment that is in full working order.

8.3.13 Assessment material on coloured paper

Where appropriate, the centre should meet the awarding organisation deadlines for requesting externally set assessment material on coloured paper. Where the centre is permitted to modify the assessment material, it should take responsibility for the security of the assessment material and for the accuracy of the modification.

8.3.14 Assessment material in audio format

Where appropriate, the centre should meet the awarding organisation deadlines for requesting assessment material in audio format. Where the centre is permitted to produce an audio version of the assessment material, they should take responsibility for the security of the material and for ensuring that the entire document is copied. The centre should ensure that sufficient playback equipment is provided in full working order.

8.3.15 Use of ICT to present responses

The centre should ensure that:

- the computer is used solely by the candidate and not by someone acting on the candidate's behalf unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe;
- the computer is working correctly at the time of an assessment. It is the centre's responsibility to arrange the ICT provision for the candidate;
- the candidate has access only to those facilities (for example spell/grammar checker, voice activated software, speech reading software,) which have been agreed in advance with the awarding organisation;
- the candidate is not able to gain access to existing files or documents. Where a system operates from floppy disk, the candidate must be supplied with a formatted disk containing only the software required for the assessment;
- the computer should be freestanding and not be connected to the Internet, unless this is required in the assessment;
- the candidate is accommodated separately if the use of a computer is likely to distract other candidates. In this case separate invigilation should be arranged;
- the candidate is present when his/her work is printed. It is normal practice for a printed version of the candidate's work to be submitted and authenticated for assessment;
- where a question/answer booklet is provided, the candidate might need to answer some questions in the booklet and type other answers. Answers should be clearly labelled and the printout must be attached to the question paper/answer booklet;
- the candidate should be proficient in the use of the computer and its software;
- the candidate's work is saved frequently and, if possible, using an auto-save facility.

8.3.16 Responses using electronic recording devices

The centre should check whether permission should be sought from the awarding organisation to record the candidate's responses electronically. Recording the candidate's responses electronically should not be allowed where it will invalidate the assessment requirements.

The centre should ensure that the appropriate recording equipment is provided in full working order. The candidate using recording equipment should be accommodated separately, with separate invigilation, where its use will disturb other candidates.

8.3.17 Responses in BSL

The centre should check whether permission should be sought from the awarding organisation to sign the candidate's responses on video. Signing of the candidate's responses on video should not be allowed where it will invalidate the assessment requirements.

8.3.18 Responses in Braille

The centre should select a transcriber with the required level of skill in Braille and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities. Presenting the candidate's responses in Braille should not be allowed where it will invalidate the assessment requirements.

8.3.19 Reader

The centre should check that the use of a reader is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the candidate to undertake the assessment. The centre should select a reader and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities. A separate invigilator should be present when a reader is used.

A reader should not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.

8.3.20 Scribe

The centre should check that the use of scribe is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the candidate to undertake the assessment. The centre should select a scribe and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities. A separate invigilator should be present when a scribe is used. A scribe should not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.

8.3.21 BSL/English interpreter

The centre should check that the use of BSL/English interpreter is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the candidate to undertake the assessment. The centre should select a BSL/English interpreter and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities. A separate invigilator should be present when a BSL/English interpreter is used. A BSL/English interpreter should not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements. The BSL/English interpreter should meet the person specification provided by the awarding organisation, or should have an appropriate qualification in the sign language so as not to disadvantage the candidate.

8.3.22 Prompter

The centre should check that the use of a prompter is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the candidate to undertake the assessment. The centre should select a prompter and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities. A separate invigilator should be present when a prompter is used. A prompter should not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.

8.3.23 Practical assistant

The centre should check that the use of a practical assistant is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the candidate to undertake the assessment. The centre should select a practical assistant and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities. A separate invigilator should be present when a practical assistant is used. A practical assistant should not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.

8.3.24 Transcriber

The centre should check that the use of a transcriber is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the candidate to undertake the assessment. The centre should select a transcriber and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities. A transcriber should not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.

ATTACHMENTS:

Form RA1: Application for a Reasonable Adjustment – Approval by Qualifi

The purpose of this form is to apply to Qualifi for a Reasonable Adjustment for a Learner. The form must be completed and returned to Qualifi with supporting evidence at least 15 working days before the assessment. A copy of the form and evidence must be retained by the Centre and made available on request as part of our monitoring activity. Please read our Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedure which lists Reasonable Adjustments that require Qualifi approval.

Centre Name					
Centre Number					
Qualification Title			Qualification Number		
Unit Title			Level		Credit Value
Centre Coordinator Name					
Date of Final Assessment					
Learner Name and Centre Reference Number					

<i>Reason for Application</i>	<i>Reasonable Adjustment to be Made</i>	<i>Supporting Evidence / Eligibility</i>
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As Centre Co-ordinator I confirm that the **Reasonable Adjustment has been applied for** in line with Qualifi’s Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedure **and that this form contains complete and accurate information.**

- The Reasonable Adjustment if granted will not give the Learner an assessment advantage over other Learners taking the same qualification or units.
- The Centre will not give a Reasonable Adjustment beyond the details in this application.
- The Centre has the necessary resources to implement the Reasonable Adjustment.

Signature		Date	
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Form RA2: Application for a Reasonable Adjustment – Discretion of the Centre

The purpose of this form is to record Reasonable Adjustments **made at the discretion of the Centre**. The form must be completed and returned to Qualifi with supporting evidence at least 15 working days before the assessment. A copy of the form and evidence must be retained by the Centre and made available on request as part of our monitoring activity. Please read our Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedure which lists Reasonable Adjustments that may be made at the discretion of the Centre.

Centre Name					
Centre Number					
Qualification Title			Qualification Number		
Unit Title			Level		Credit Value
Centre Coordinator Name					
Date of Final Assessment					
Learner Name and Centre Reference Number					

<i>Reason for Application</i>	<i>Reasonable Adjustment to be Made</i>	<i>Supporting Evidence / Eligibility</i>

As Centre Co-ordinator **I confirm that the Reasonable Adjustments have been made in line with Qualifi's Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedure and that this form contains complete and accurate information.**

- The Reasonable Adjustment if granted will not give the Learner an assessment advantage over other Learners taking the same qualification or units.
- The Centre will not give a Reasonable Adjustment beyond the details in this application.
- The Centre has the necessary resources to implement the Reasonable Adjustment.

Signature		Date	
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Form SC1: Application for Special Consideration

The purpose of this form is to apply to Qualifi for Special Consideration for a Learner. The form must be completed and returned to Qualifi with supporting evidence within 10 working days of the end of the scheduled assessment. A copy of the form and evidence must be retained by the Centre and made available on request as part of our monitoring activity.

Centre Name					
Centre Number					
Qualification Title			Qualification Number		
Unit Title			Level		Credit Value
Centre Coordinator Name					
Date of assessment					
Learner Name			Learner Number		

Please provide details of why the Centre is applying for Special Consideration for the named Learner and attach the supporting evidence.

Please provide names of Learners who completed the same assessment without disadvantage and are considered to be comparable standard to the named Learner

Learner Name	Learner Number

As Centre Co-ordinator **I confirm that the application for Special Consideration has been made in line with Qualifi's Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedure and that this form contains complete and accurate information.**

The Special Consideration will not give any Learner an assessment advantage over other Learners taking the same qualification or units.

The Centre will not give a Special Consideration beyond the details in this application.

Signature		Date	
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