

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy

Policy statement

North West Volunteer Centre is committed to giving all learners equal access and opportunity to demonstrate their achievements.

There may be circumstances whereby, to take account of particular learners' requirements, arrangements will need to be made, which ensure that this is achieved without conferring any unfair advantage over other learners.

Access arrangements

Access arrangements should be discussed and agreed before an assessment takes place. They allow candidates / learners with special educational needs, disabilities, or temporary injuries to access the assessment.

Access arrangements allow candidates / learners to show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. E.g. readers, scribes, word processors, and Braille question papers.

An Access arrangement that meets the needs of a disabled candidate/learner would be a "reasonable adjustment" for that learner.

Reasonable Adjustment

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places a learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation.

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the reliability or validity of the assessment outcomes but may involve:

- Changing the usual assessment arrangements e.g. allowing a learner extra time to complete an assessment activity
- Adapting assessment materials e.g. by providing large print materials.
- Providing/allowing assistance during an assessment e.g. a signer, interpreter or a reader
- Changing the assessment method e.g. from a written assessment to a spoken assessment
- Using assisted technology such as screen reading or a voice activated software.

Reasonable adjustments are approved and set in place before the assessment takes place. The work produced by the learner will be assessed in the same way as all other learners. Awarding organisations and centres are required by law only to do what is "reasonable" in terms of giving access. What is reasonable will depend on a number of factors including the impact of the disability on the learner, cost, practicalities and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors such as the need to maintain competence should be taken into consideration.

Types of Assessment - General Guidance

Different types of assessment make different demands on learners and will influence whether reasonable adjustments will be needed and the kind of reasonable adjustment which may be put in place.

The adjustments that are appropriate for a particular assessment will depend upon:

- The specific assessment requirements of the unit.
- The type of assessment
- The particular needs and circumstances of the individual learner.

Assessments which are not taken under examination conditions

This type of assessment may form the basis of the majority of North West Volunteer Centre assessment activity. These types of assessment allow the centre to have a greater flexibility, and to be responsive to an individual learners needs and to choose assessment activities and methods that will best allow the learner to demonstrate attainment. These may include for example:

- Coursework
- Set assessments which are researched in the learners own time
- Assessment activities which are devised by the centre
- Assessment activities which are devised by North West Volunteer Centre
- Assessments where the learner has to collect evidence in order to demonstrate competence.

In this type of assessment, the learner may meet the specified assessment criteria for a unit in any way that is valid.

To facilitate access where there is evidence of need, the centre may allow the learner to use any mechanical, electronic or other aids in order to demonstrate achievement as long as the aids;

- are generally commercially available
- reflect the learners normal way of working
- enable the learner to meet the specified criteria
- do not give the learner an unfair advantage

North West Volunteer Centre will:

- Adopt a flexible approach in identifying alternative ways of achieving the assessment criteria for a unit.
- Present assessment materials or documents in a way that reflects a learners normal way of working
- Allow learners to present their answers or evidence in any format as long as it enables them to demonstrate that they have met the assessment criteria
- Consider the benefits of being able to vary the assessment methods and choose the most appropriate way of obtaining evidence when a learner is first accepted onto a course.
- Contact North West Volunteer Centre to discuss alternative arrangements that may be appropriate for specific situations.

The outcomes produced by learners must at all times:

- Meet the requirements of the specifications regardless of the process or method used
- Be as rigorous as assessment methods used with other learners
- Be accessible
- Be subject to the same verification processes as all other evidence.

A learner with a Statement of Special Educational Need does not automatically qualify for reasonable adjustments. The demands of the unit should be taken into account. The reasons for the statement may have only limited effect on achievement in the assessment.

It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that all applications for reasonable adjustments are based on the individual need of the learner and that the evidence in support of the application is sufficient, reliable and valid. A centre should maintain records of all cases for audit purposes and to monitor the effectiveness of the reasonable adjustments which have been made.

Recording the use of Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments that can be made at the discretion of the centre through the use of

- Low vision aids/overlays
- Brailing of non-secure assessments
- Amplification, taped questions responses
- Supervised rest breaks
- Use of a Reader
- Use of an Amanuensis (Scribe)
- Use of a practical assistant
- Use of a practical assistant
- Use of a Communicator
- Bilingual dictionaries with an allowance of additional time
- Transcription of a learner's written responses
- Use of a word processor
- Use of a prompter
- Use of sign language interpreters
- Prior modification of an externally set task e.g. photocopying onto coloured paper, or change of font for ease of reading etc. can be carried out before the assessment takes place, as long as the modification is carried out under secure conditions.

Special Considerations

These are adjustments which may be applied post assessment.

A candidate will be eligible for special consideration if they have been fully prepared and have covered the whole unit or series of units but performance in an assessment is affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control.

It is important to note that it may not be possible to apply special consideration where:

- An assessment requires the demonstration of a practical competence
- The assessment criteria have to be fully met,

North West Volunteer Centre will ensure that any special arrangements claimed ;

- Do not confer an unfair advantage over other learners
- Do not mislead users about level and extent of attainment
- Do not compromise the integrity or credibility of the unit(s), for the learner concerned or for other learners,
- Are clearly tracked for audit purposes, with all supporting documentation where appropriate.

Eligibility

The adverse circumstances may include;

- Temporary illness or accident/injury at the time of the assessment
- Bereavement at the time of the assessment
- Domestic crisis arising at the time of the assessment
- Serious disturbance during the assessment
- Other accidental events, such as being given the wrong assessment

This policy was approved by: (Name) J. Garnon Date 15/12/22

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