

Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy for BTEC Qualifications

Centre staff must ensure they meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010: The Equality Act covers all the types of discrimination that are unlawful.

Edexcel aims to facilitate open access to BTEC and Edexcel NVQ 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 is 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. Special consideration cannot apply to “licence to practice” units within a qualification, or to “licence to practice” qualifications.

Edexcel will only consider requests for Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration submitted by the Head of Centre.

This policy:

- explains how the centre should manage/request reasonable adjustment and/or request special consideration
- identifies roles and responsibilities
- describes the practice for dealing with lost or damaged work
- replaces the previous Edexcel policy on Access Arrangements and Special Considerations for BTEC and Edexcel NVQ Qualifications issue code AA &SC 04-11.

*Information on reasonable adjustments in assessments of GCSE, AS, GCE, VCE, GNVQ, Entry Level and Key Skills qualifications can be found on the Joint Council for Qualifications website (see www.jcq.org.uk).

1. 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.

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 Edexcel 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 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
- 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

2. Centre Recruitment

It is vital that centres recruit with integrity onto BTEC and Edexcel NVQ qualifications. Centres must ensure that learners have the correct information and advice on their selected qualifications and that the qualifications will meet their needs. The recruitment process should include the centre 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.

The centre is advised to 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; and
- any restrictions on progression routes to the learner as a result of not achieving certain outcomes.

3. Applying Reasonable Adjustment

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.

Edexcel expects all centres to apply reasonable adjustment in a transparent and unbiased manner. **All reasonable adjustments made must be recorded using the Edexcel form RA1 (see website for forms www.edexcel.org.uk).**

Once completed, these must be held by the centre in the learner's file and should be available at all times for scrutiny by Edexcel if so requested.

All reasonable adjustments implemented by centres are subject to meeting the requirements of the appropriate assessment strategy for an NVQ and the qualification specification and assessment criteria for BTEC qualifications. It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre (or

designated nominee) to ensure that any access arrangement implemented by the centre on behalf of the learner, is based on firm evidence of a barrier to assessment.

For BTEC qualifications that are internally assessed the centre will not need to apply to Edexcel 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 form RA1
- keep all RA1 forms on the appropriate learner's record
- make RA1 forms available to Edexcel as required.

4. Requesting reasonable adjustment from Edexcel

For BTEC and Edexcel NVQ qualifications that contain externally assessed assessment such as Edexcel-set and Edexcel-marked tests, reasonable adjustment requests must be submitted to and authorised by Edexcel prior to implementation of the adjustment. Such requests must be submitted using form RA2 within twenty days of learner registration. Edexcel will respond to your request within two working weeks.

Where such external assessments are part of a short course of study, the reasonable adjustment request must be submitted at least three working weeks prior to the assessment(s) in question.

Where the centre is uncertain about the learner's ability to achieve the assessment criteria please email qualitystandards@edexcel.org.uk.

5. Assessing achievement

Centres must 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 (as identified in 3 above).

Appendix 1. Kingstone High School Reasonable Adjustment Procedure

- 1.1 Explanation of reasonable adjustment
- 1.2 Examples of reasonable adjustments deemed appropriate by this centre
- 1.3 Reasonable adjustment procedure
- 1.4 Reasonable adjustment for externally assessed work should the situation arise
- 1.5 Special Educational Needs
- 1.6 Inappropriate use of reasonable adjustment

1.1 Explanation of 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.

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.

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 Edexcel 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.

1.2 Examples of reasonable adjustments deemed appropriate by this centre include:

- 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

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

If further clarification is required in relation to the application of reasonable adjustment, then contact qualitystandards@edexcel.org.uk.

1.3 Reasonable adjustment procedure

For BTEC qualifications that are internally assessed we shall not need to apply to Edexcel to implement a reasonable adjustment, but assessors must contact the QN who will verify the evidence for the reasonable adjustment. This may involve a statement of need from the SENDCo or teacher assessment of learner material. All reasonable adjustments shall be recorded on form RA1, copies will be held in PL, QN and in learner's record file. All RA1 forms must be available to Edexcel as required. Reasonable adjustment can only be made in line with Edexcel policy and must not affect the validity or reliability of assessment, influence the outcome of assessment or give the learner(s) in question an unfair assessment advantage.

1.4 Reasonable adjustment for externally assessed work should the situation arise in the future

Requesting reasonable adjustment from Edexcel for BTEC and Edexcel NVQ qualifications that contain externally assessed assessment e.g. Edexcel-set and Edexcel-marked tests, reasonable adjustment requests must be submitted to and authorised by Edexcel prior to implementation of the adjustment. Such requests must be submitted using form RA2 within twenty days of learner registration. Edexcel should respond to your request within two working weeks.

1.5 Special Educational Needs

As stated by Edexcel policy, 'centres should note that a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) does not automatically qualify the learner for reasonable adjustment to Assessment', as:

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

1.6 Inappropriate use of reasonable adjustment

If a centre's misuses the reasonable adjustment policy, then Edexcel 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

Appendix 2. Kingstone High School Special Consideration Procedure

- 2.1 Explanation of special consideration
- 2.2 Eligibility for special consideration
- 2.3 Applying for special consideration
- 2.4 Posthumous certification
- 2.5 Lost or damaged work
- 2.6 Complying with Edexcel policy
- 2.7 KHS Procedure to instigate Special Consideration

2.1 Explanation of 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
 - 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 learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date.

A special consideration cannot give the learner an unfair advantage, nor must its use 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. Special consideration cannot apply to "licence to practice" units within a qualification, or to "licence to practice" qualifications.

2.2 Eligibility for Special consideration

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 by the centre 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, eg 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
- 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.

Unlike reasonable adjustment, there are no circumstances whereby a centre can apply its own special consideration. Applications must be made to Edexcel. **Edexcel will only consider requests for Special Consideration submitted by the Head of Centre.**

2.3 Applying for special consideration

Edexcel expects a centre to 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. Applications for special consideration should be submitted to the BTEC Quality Standards Team. To ensure effective processing of the application the centre should submit:

- form SC1
- the learner's 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 Head of Centre must authorise all applications for special consideration. Applications must be submitted to the BTEC Quality Standards Team within seven days of the assessment having taken place. Following receipt, Edexcel will confirm receipt within two working days and will usually give a decision within a further ten working days. Where a case is complex, Edexcel will inform the centre if a decision cannot be made within the time scale specified.

During the processing of an application, Edexcel will only liaise with the centre making the claim on the learner's behalf and not with the learner or their designated third party. It is important to note that special consideration applications will not be considered where learner achievement has been claimed and certificated.

2.4 Posthumous certification

Applications for posthumous certification should be submitted on form SC1 together with the learner's Student Report Form (SRF). The Head of Centre must authorise this form. Edexcel will liaise only with the centre making the claim for the learner. Edexcel reserves the right to see a copy of the death certificate prior to granting posthumous certification.

2.5 Lost or damaged work

When a learner's work has been lost or damaged, Edexcel 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 on SC1. With this completed form, the centre must also provide evidence of learner achievement (assessment/IV records) and include a signed Student Report Form (SRF).

2.6 Complying with policy

Centres should note 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 Edexcel's approval
- exceeding the allowance agreed by Edexcel
- agreeing delegated adjustments that are not supported by evidence
- failing to maintain records
- failing to report delegated adjustments when requested to do so by Edexcel
- 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.

2.7 KHS procedure to instigate Special Consideration

Should any parent, learner or member of staff wish to initiate Special Consideration they must present their written evidence e.g. doctor's note to the Quality Nominee in order for the remainder of the written evidence to be compiled and presented to the Head of Centre prior to submission to Edexcel.

Mr Lee Butler
Head of Centre

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