



# QA Reasonable Adjustments Policy

June 2026

## Version Control

**Review of policy** - The Reasonable Adjustments Policy will be reviewed annually by a member of the Learner Support Team.

**Access** - The policy will be published in the learner information packs and will also be displayed on the Learner Portal and QA intranet.

**Next Review Date:** June 2027

| Revision History |            |                |                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Version          | Issue Date | Author         | Description of Change                                                                                                                              |
| 29/06/23         | 1.1        | Naomi Lavender | Sentence added in section 2, regarding independent advice                                                                                          |
| 27/06/24         | 1.2        | Mark Soady     | Formatting of the first paragraph                                                                                                                  |
| 19/07/24         | 1.3        | Brett Cuming   | Policy reviewed by Mark Soady with no substantive changes to the content. Approved for 2023/2024                                                   |
| 27/06/24         | 1.4        | Mark Soady     | Updated to new branding template                                                                                                                   |
| 05/06/25         | 1.5        | Mark Soady     | Updated to include exam access arrangements in the terminology used.                                                                               |
| 28/05/26         | 1.6        | Alan Skelton   | Minor formatting amendments for consistency across QA policies. Policy reviewed with no substantive changes to the content. Approved for 2026/2027 |

| Document Approval |                  |                   |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Name              | Position         | Viewed / Comments |
| Brett Cuming      | Head of Quality  | 01/07/23 approved |
| Naomi Lavender    | Quality Director | 12/06/25 approved |
| Naomi Lavender    | Quality Director | 26/06/26 approved |

# 1. Contents

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## 2. Policy Statement

The Equality Act 2010 requires awarding bodies to make reasonable adjustments to ensure a learner who is disabled as defined in the Act is not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to learners who are not disabled.

Assessment should be a fair test of learners' knowledge and ability; however, for some learners, the usual format of assessment may not be suitable. We ensure that our teaching and assessments do not prevent learners from taking our qualifications.

The provision for reasonable adjustments and special consideration arrangements is made to ensure that learners receive recognition of their achievement so long as the equity, validity and reliability of the assessments can be assured. Such arrangements are not concessions to make assessments easier for learners or confer upon them an unfair advantage.

There are two ways in which access to fair assessment can be maintained, through:

- Reasonable adjustments/Exam access arrangements, which are agreed before the assessment takes place.
- Special considerations, which are applied post-assessment.

## 3. Reasonable Adjustments/Exam Access Arrangements

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

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the integrity of what is being assessed.

Reasonable adjustments must be approved by the awarding organisation or set in place before the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the learner access to the assessment activity. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the assessment of a learner's work.

Awarding Organisations and centres are required by law to do only what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors, such as the need to maintain competence standards and health and safety, will also be taken into consideration. QA reserves the right to seek independent advice to ensure any adjustment or arrangement is appropriate and in accordance with any applicable legislation.

## 4. Special Considerations

Special considerations can be applied after an assessment if there is a reason the learner may have been disadvantaged during the assessment. Reasons for special consideration could be temporary illness, injury, or adverse circumstances at the time of the assessment.

Learners cannot enter a plea for special considerations for assessment solely on the grounds of disability or learning difficulty. Learners must declare their needs prior to the assessment period and all necessary reasonable adjustments arrangements must have been implemented before the time of their assessment.

Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage. The learner's result must reflect his or her achievement in the assessment and not necessarily his or her potential ability.

Special consideration may result in a small post-assessment adjustment to the mark of the learner. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances during the assessment and will reflect the difficulty faced by the learner but will always be a minor adjustment as to do more may jeopardise the standard.

Where an assessment requires a competence, criterion or standard to be met fully, or in the case of qualifications that confer a Licence to Practise, it may not be possible to apply special consideration. It may be more appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to retake the assessment later or to extend the registration period so that the learner has more time to complete the assessment activity.

All learners, regardless of their special consideration, must still meet our minimum requirement for the award of a certificate.

## 5. Making Adjustments

Adjustments to assessments must:

- not invalidate the assessment requirements of the qualification
- not give the learner an unfair advantage
- reflect the learner's normal way of working
- be based on the individual needs of the learner
- meet with the requirements laid out by the awarding body, JCQ or both, where applicable

These principles should be followed when making decisions about a learner's need for adjustments to assessment.

