



Fair Assessments, Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy

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Introduction

The BloR aims to provide fair access to assessment for all learners on Apprenticeship Standards. This policy applies to all End Point Assessments offered by The BloR wherever delivered.

Principles of fair assessment

All assessment must be conducted rigorously and accurately and, where appropriate, in accordance with the regulator's published criteria within the End Point Assessment Plans. Formative assessment/coursework designed by The BloR staff must be conducted by reference to open and defined standards/marking/grading/assessment schemes, covering the required skills, knowledge and understanding.

Assessment evidence will be judged according to the principles of:

- **Sufficiency** – consistent performance to the required level over a period.
- **Currency** – evidence should prove that the student has met the assessment outcomes at either referral, pass, merit or distinction grades
- **Validity** – evidence should be appropriate and relevant to the Apprenticeship Standard and EPA it is addressing
- **Authenticity** – evidence must reflect the knowledge/skills/understanding of the candidate.

The work of another person must not be submitted as that of the candidate. Other sources may be used in certain circumstances if the student references these.

The chosen format and method of assessment must be appropriate to the End Point Assessment Plans. Assessment materials must be presented in clear and unambiguous language and must differentiate only based on a student's knowledge, skills and understanding. Such materials must be free from any overt or covert discrimination against an individual, either in wording or content. The BloR will appoint assessment staff whose knowledge, skills and understanding are appropriate for the EPA's they access.

Staff will maintain their competence by regular staff development organised internally or externally.

External Assessment

External assessment will be administered strictly in accordance with instructions issued by the EPA EQA on behalf of IFATE.

Overview of Reasonable Adjustments & Special Considerations

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

- **Reasonable adjustments** – agreed before the assessment takes place; or
- **Special considerations** – applied post assessment.

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

Reasonable adjustments and/or special considerations should not give the apprentice an unfair advantage. The apprentice's result must reflect his or her achievement in the assessment and not necessarily his or her potential ability. Adjustments must not affect the integrity of what is being assessed.

The provision for reasonable adjustments and/or special condition arrangements are made to ensure that apprentices 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 apprentices, nor are they to give apprentices a head start.

All apprentices, regardless of their reasonable adjustment or special consideration, must still meet the minimum requirements to achieve their apprenticeship.

EPAOs and partners are only required by law to do 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.

When should Adjustments & Special Considerations be Applied?

Reasonable adjustments are approved or set in place before the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the apprentice access to the assessment activity.

The reasonable adjustment will then be made to the assessment arrangements. The BloR must have approved all necessary reasonable adjustment arrangements before the time of the apprentice completing any assessments.

Only reasonable adjustments that have been approved by The BloR should be applied.

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

Special consideration may result in a post-assessment adjustment to the mark of the apprentice. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances during the assessment and will reflect the difficulty faced by the learner or the reason for the special consideration request.

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

Coronavirus (COVID-19) or Other Declared Illnesses

Special consideration will be applied to the assessment process should an apprentice be to be absent from work due to self isolation or a government requirement to be absent from work.

Reasonable adjustments will be made so as not to disadvantage the learner and allow equality of opportunity to the assessment and EPA process, whilst ensuring the robustness and integrity of the assessment is met and agreed by all Stakeholders e.g. The BloR, The Training Provider, The Employer & The Apprentice.

How to request a Reasonable Adjustments or Special Consideration

Requests must be made by completing the reasonable adjustment request form available on our website.

All requests for reasonable adjustments must be supported by valid, current evidence of learning need or medical condition.

You should provide details of:

- **The apprentice name(s) and ULN(s)**
- **The standard and method of assessment**
- **Organisation details**
- **Clear detail of what special consideration you are requesting and why.**

Timescales in Requesting Reasonable Adjustments or Special Considerations

In order to ensure that requests can be processed before an assessment takes place, you are required to submit reasonable adjustment requests 3 months prior to gateway. Any requests submitted outside of this timeframe may not be approved, or we may not be able to meet the requirements for planned assessment dates.

Once a request for a reasonable adjustment is received, we aim to review the request and evidence provided within 14 working days of it being received.

Reasonable adjustment(s) will not be approved until enough evidence is provided.

We can only accept requests for special considerations after the results of the assessment have been released. To request a special consideration, you should email EPA@ior.org within 7 working days of the assessment decision.

Once a request for a special consideration is received, we aim to review the request and evidence provided within 14 working days of it being received.

Special consideration(s) will not be approved until enough evidence is provided.

Outcomes of Requests

The outcome of a reasonable adjustment or special consideration request could be:

- Approval of requested adjustment/special considerations
- Rejection of your request based on insufficient evidence of need
- Rejection of your request based on the reasonableness of the request, such as a request for specialist equipment
- Suggested alternative adjustment/special considerations

If you remain dissatisfied following the outcome of the request that has been submitted, you may submit an appeal in line with our Appeals Policy. Please contact EPA@ior.org for further information.

Confidentiality

We may need to access confidential information. We will ensure that such information is kept secure and only used for the purposes of the investigation and in line with relevant data protection legislation. We will not normally disclose the information to third parties unless required to do so, e.g. to our regulators and/or the Police or other relevant and/or Statutory Bodies.

Our actions under this Policy and any sanctions imposed will be proportionate. Where possible, we will always try to work with partners in resolving issues. However, nothing within this policy precludes us from invoking our right under the Contract to terminate our relationship with partners.

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