



Institute of Animal Technology

Reasonable adjustment and special considerations

Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy

The IAT recognises the need to open access to its qualifications for learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustment and/or special consideration in assessments. The application of this policy should be considered along with the need to meet any specific needs of the learner covered in the IAT's Special Needs policy.

A reasonable adjustment occurs prior to assessment and is usually identified on enrolment of the learner. Reasonable adjustments are likely to arise following assessment of learners with special needs. Reasonable adjustment allows consideration of an individual's specific needs and support requirements and is to be considered throughout the assessment process.

Any adjustments or special consideration must not compromise the assessment of the skills, knowledge, understanding or competence being measured or give any undue advantage to the learner. The IAT also recognises the importance of maintaining high standards of health and safety and animal welfare throughout educational and work practices and these considerations must be taken into account.

Reasonable Adjustment

A Reasonable Adjustment is agreed on enrolment to the qualification. It refers to 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. A learner does not have to be disabled (as defined by the Disability Quality Act) to qualify for reasonable adjustment nor will every learner who is disabled be entitled to reasonable adjustment. Centres should note that a Statement of Special Educational Needs does not automatically qualify the learner for reasonable adjustment.

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the validity or reliability of assessments, and care must be taken to ensure that any adjustments are reasonable and proportionate. Advice should be sought from the IAT Board of Education before any agreements are confirmed with the learner. Adjustments are not given across all assessments. Each assessment must be considered on an individual basis. The outcome of the assessment should be assessed to the same standards as the work produced by other learners.

Adjustments that may be considered include, but are not restricted to:

- Changing the usual assessment conditions (allowing extra time in tests, assignment extensions)
- Using a different assessment location
- Adapting assessment materials (for example, using coloured overlays or low vision aids)
- Providing assistance during assessment (for example, readers, scribes or practical assistants)
- Re-organising the assessment physical environment
- Changing or adapting the assessment method
- Using assistive technology (for example, assistive software or audio support).

An adjustment must not give an unfair assessment advantage to the applicant.

Centres must recruit with integrity. Part of the recruitment process should be to identify that learners have the potential to succeed on the course and assess any learning issues the learner may have and identify strategies to limit the impact of any issues identified. 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 an assessment, 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 should 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 assessments and any restrictions on progression routes to the learner as a result of not achieving certain outcomes

Process

On enrolment learners notify the Centre of any specific needs they may have. Centres may test learners to identify specific needs if necessary. The Centre and the learner collect evidence (for example doctor's note or statement of educational need) that supports the learner's claim for reasonable adjustment. Centres meet with the IAT Moderator to agree the learner's entitlement to reasonable adjustment and to specify how it will be applied.



Special Consideration

A special consideration occurs post assessment. It refers to any allowance that is applied in the event of an unexpected or unavoidable event, which in probability caused a lowering of the learner's performance. Special considerations include, but are not restricted to:

- Illness, injury or indisposition that occurred at the time of assessment
- Significant disruption to the assessment (for example evacuation for fire or bomb scare)

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.

It is important to note that it may not be possible to apply special consideration in instances where an assessment requires the demonstration of practical competence.

A special consideration cannot give the learner an unfair advantage. 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.

To be eligible for special consideration a learner must be fully prepared and making a valid attempt to be present for a scheduled assessment. Special consideration will be given where:

- 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, e.g. 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):

- Recent bereavement of a member of the immediate family or close friend
- Serious and disruptive domestic crises leading to acute anxiety about the family
- Incapacitating illness of the learner
- Severe car accident
- Flare-up of severe congenital conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, severe asthmatic attack
- Recent physical assault trauma.

Centre Responsibility

Centres should bear in mind their responsibilities to treat all learners fairly and without prejudice. Any reasonable adjustments must be applied in a transparent and unbiased manner. All adjustments should be discussed with the Centre Moderator before the learner is notified of any decisions. A record of any adjustments must be kept by the Centre for a period of at least 5 years and a copy sent to the Chair of Board of Education.

When considering a case for special consideration the Centre will work with the IAT Moderator. The Centre should provide the IAT Moderator with such information they need to make an informed judgment on the special consideration application. The IAT Moderator will require:

- A detailed description, including any documented evidence (for example, a doctors certificate) of the reasons why special consideration is required, which learning outcomes were being assessed and how they were being assessed
- The extent to which the learner(s) were probably affected.

If adjustments are made to the assessment (for example, marks or pass/fail decisions altered) then those adjustments should apply to all candidates, not just those in the sample – to do otherwise would unfairly advantage or disadvantage some candidates by virtue of them being in the sample

The IAT Moderator's decision will be based on the information supplied by the Centre and any further investigation the Chair of the IAT Board of Education feel are required. Any consideration will take into account the personal circumstances of the individual learners. The final decision is made by the Chair of the IAT Board of Education.

All applications for special consideration can only be made on a case-by-case. A separate application is required for each learner, unless a group of learners have been affected by a similar circumstance (for example a fire alarm during an assessment). An application should be sent to the Moderator of that Centre within seven days of the assessment having taken place. The Moderator will then contact the Centre to discuss the application within seven days of receiving the application.

Reporting Responsibilities

As Centres have the most regular direct contact with learners and are actively involved in recruiting and registering learners, they have a responsibility to inform the IAT of any common issues or problems which appear to limit the access of learners to IAT units or qualifications.

The IAT Moderator will review and investigate any apparent barriers to learners either registering or successfully completing their units or qualifications and will report back to the Chair of the Board of Moderators. Where barriers are identified, and subject to maintaining appropriate professional standards and ensuring that all legal and animal welfare obligations are met, the Board of Educational Policy will act on the advice of the Chair of the Board of Education to make appropriate adjustments to their policies and procedures to ensure that any barriers are minimised, and where possible removed completely.

Learners have a responsibility to report issues of access or barriers to successful achievement of IAT units or qualifications to the Centre or the IAT Moderator.

Monitoring Access and Achievement

The IAT will evaluate registration details and learner achievements to ensure that barriers to learner participation and achievement are identified and can be acted upon effectively. The IAT will also consult on a regular basis with learners, employers and the wider industry to ensure that the qualifications meet the needs of the learner and the employer. These consultations are used alongside the registration data to ensure that access to IAT qualifications reflects the membership demographics. Annual comparison of learner and membership demographics allows trends to be monitored.

Learner participation and achievement is published at the Annual General Meeting and in the IAT Bulletin.

Lost or damaged work

When a learner's work has been lost or damaged at the Centre, the IAT 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. The Centre will be expected to take such action as is necessary to prevent future occurrences. Consideration cannot be given for work that has not reached the Centre. **Learners are strongly advised to keep copies of all their work submitted to Centres.**

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 the IAT's approval
- Exceeding the allowance agreed by the IAT
- Agreeing delegated adjustments that are not supported by evidence
- Failing to maintain records
- Failing to report delegated adjustments when requested to do so by the IAT
- Implementing delegated adjustments that affect the validity and reliability of assessment, compromises the outcomes of assessment or gives the learner in question an unfair assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessment.

The IAT will take appropriate action should a Centre misuse the reasonable adjustment policy. Appropriate action will range from advice and action for the Centre on how to manage assessment malpractice through to the removal of qualification approval, or removal of Centre approval.

The IAT will keep a record of all applications from a learner and any decisions made by the Moderators.

Right to appeal

Centres and learners have the right to appeal decisions following the standard complaints policy published by the IAT