



What I learn today, prepares me for tomorrow.

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

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Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

Purpose

Barndale is committed to ensuring access to fair assessment for all learners and to protecting the integrity of the award of credit and qualifications. There may be circumstances whereby arrangements need to be made to take account of particular learners' requirements in order to ensure that this is achieved without giving any unfair advantage over other learners.

The Policy sets out the principles which should be followed when making decisions about adjustments to assessment. It outlines Barndale's reasonable steps to ensure it avoids disadvantage (directly or indirectly) in line with the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010.

Scope

This document is applicable for the following accreditations:

NCFE regulated qualifications and units
ASDAN Lifeskills accreditation

Regulatory Authorities

The relevant regulatory authorities are NCFE/ASDAN. Every attempt has been made to ensure that the provisions of this document are consistent with the requirements of the regulatory authorities. Where the requirements of a regulatory authority change, or where inadvertently these procedures conflict with those of the regulatory authority, the latter shall apply. Where the requirements of the regulatory authority are amended and require changes to this document, such changes will be made as soon as practicable and Barndale will inform centres accordingly.

Audience

This document is for use by the following:

- users of these accreditations, including learners, those who are delivering or registered on Barndale approved qualifications

Definition[s]

Reasonable Adjustment

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 are adjustments made to an assessment for a qualification so as to enable a disabled learner to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding to the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification.

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 or providing materials in Braille • Providing assistance during an assessment e.g. by providing a trained 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 must be 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.

Special Considerations

Adjustments which may be applied after an assessment where the learner has encountered exceptional circumstances that have disadvantaged them during their assessment. A learner may be eligible for special consideration if their performance in an assessment has been, or is likely to have been, affected by mitigating or adverse circumstances beyond their control. e.g.

- an illness or injury, or
- some other event outside of the learner's control, which has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on that learner's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment.

Special consideration is not appropriate for a minor illness or a minor disturbance.

Responsibility of centres

Barndale must take all reasonable steps to ensure that all staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of accreditations are fully aware of the contents of this policy.

Barndale has a duty to ensure the rights of individual learners to access qualifications, units and assessments in a way most appropriate for their individual needs are upheld.

Barndale must ensure that it creates, at all times, an inclusive assessment process that adheres to disability and equal opportunity legislation and other regulatory criteria whilst ensure that standards of assessment are maintained.

When considering reasonable adjustments, Barndale should first check whether permission needs to be obtained from NCFE/ASDAN. Where reasonable adjustments have been agreed, centres should make the learner evidence available to NCFE/ASDAN Quality Reviewers, External Quality Assurers and Moderators to be included as part of their representative sample.

Reasonable Adjustments Policy Statement

Barndale is committed to ensuring the rights of individual learners to access qualifications, units and assessments in a way most appropriate for their individual needs and to enable them to demonstrate their achievements. At the same time, we are committed to ensuring

that the integrity of our qualifications, units and assessments are maintained at all times. Barndale adopts, at all times, inclusive assessment processes that adhere to disability and equal opportunity legislation and other regulatory criteria without compromising standards of assessment or giving any unfair advantage over other learners. We ensure that our staff consider a variety of suitable assessment methods as good practice, taking into consideration their learners. In cases where a qualification is inaccessible because of a learner's inability to demonstrate competence in all units of the qualification, credit will be awarded for all units for which competence has been demonstrated.

Different types of assessment make different demands on learners and will influence whether reasonable adjustments will be needed and the kind of suitable reasonable adjustment which may be put in place. The adjustments that are appropriate for a particular assessment will depend upon:

- the specific assessment demands of the qualification/unit
- the type of assessment
- the particular needs and circumstances of the individual learner.

Types of assessment

Assessments which are not taken under controlled examination conditions

These types of assessment form the basis of the majority of assessment activity at Barndale. This allows us to have greater flexibility, to be responsive to an individual learner's needs and to choose assessment strategies, activities and methods that will best allow the learner to demonstrate attainment. These may include for example:

- Coursework
- Assessment activities which are devised by us
- Observation
- Question and Answer
- 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 in a unit in any way that is valid.

To enable access where there is evidence of need, staff 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.

Barndale staff should

- 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 NCFE/ASDAN 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.

Assessments taken under Exam Conditions

In situations where the learner is given set assessment materials and must complete the task in a fixed amount of time, there may be a greater need for adjustments to standard assessment arrangements in order to give access. In such instances, centres must obtain approval from NCFE/Qualhub/ASDAN before the assessment is planned to take place.

Identification of Learners who are eligible for Reasonable Adjustments

Any adjustment to an assessment activity will be based on what the learner needs to access the assessment.

Examples of learner needs that may be adjustments to assessments.

- Communication and interaction needs
- Cognition and learning needs
- Sensory and physical needs
- Behavioural, emotional and social needs

The learner will be eligible for reasonable adjustments if their performance during an assessment is likely to be substantially affected by a particular impairment. Many of these learners will be defined as being disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and the Equality Act 2010. An adjustment to assessment should only be considered where the difficulty experienced places the learner at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with persons who are not disabled. Where the difficulty is minor, we should assist the learner by offering help with study and assessment skills. A learner does not necessarily have to be disabled (as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Equality Act 2010) to be entitled to reasonable adjustments to assessment. Every learner who is disabled will also not necessarily be entitled to or need an adjustment to assessment. The learner may have developed coping mechanisms which minimise or remove the need for assistance

Identifying and Obtaining Supporting Evidence

In order to ensure that any adjustment to assessment will only provide the learner with the necessary assistance without giving him or her an unfair advantage over others, we must be clear about the extent to which the learner is affected by the disability or difficulty. Where we can verify supporting evidence of the disability or difficulty and where the implications are clear, such as for a learner with physical difficulties, profound hearing impairment or who are registered as blind or partially sighted, Barndale does not need to provide further evidence of these physical difficulties. Where the implications of the difficulty are not obvious, such as for identified learning difficulties, or mental health difficulties, Barndale will need to provide additional evidence of the effect of the impairment on the learner's performance in the assessment. Barndale should decide which evidence will best assist understanding of the learner's circumstances:

- Evidence of assessment of the learner's needs in relation to the particular assessment, made within school by the relevant member of staff with competence and responsibility in this area; staff include learning support staff, teaching staff, trainers, assessors and other specialist staff.

If necessary, external experts may be called upon to assess the learner.

This evidence should include an indication of how we plan to meet the learner's needs and should show that the learner can cope with the level and content of the assessment. The evidence should be documented for audit purposes.

Information from previous settings attended by the learner may also be included

History of provision within school.

This should include information about the support received by the learner during the learning or training programme and during formative assessments.

Evidence of the way in which the learner's needs are being met during the learning programme should be documented for audit purposes

- Written evidence produced by independent, authoritative, specialists. This could take the form of medical, psychological or professional reports or assessments. These reports should state the name, title and professional credentials of the person who wrote the report. The report should set out the nature of the difficulty and extent to which the learner is affected by the difficulty, including the effects of any medication that the learner may be taking. In cases where it might be expected that there could be changes in the way the learner is affected by the difficulty, there will have to be recent and relevant evidence of assessments and consultations carried out by an independent expert. A learner with a Statement of Special Educational Need does not automatically qualify for reasonable adjustments.

Special Considerations Policy Statement

A request for Special Consideration must be unique to each learner or assessment.

A learner 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 outside of 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
- Unit(s) confer license to practice.
- Where an assessment has been missed or is in the form of an on-demand test, such as an electronic test set and marked by computer, the centre should offer the learner an opportunity to take the test at a later date/series. Open Awards will ensure that any special considerations 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.

Mitigating/adverse circumstance(s) that could result in the need for Special Considerations to be made 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
- failure to implement previously agreed access arrangements.

Learners will not be eligible for special consideration if preparation for or performance in the assessment is affected by:

- Long term illness or other difficulties during the course affecting revision time, unless the illness or circumstances manifest themselves also during the assessment
- Bereavement occurring more than six months before the assessment, unless an anniversary has been reached or there are ongoing implications such as inquests or court cases
- Domestic inconvenience such as moving house, lack of facilities or taking holidays at the time of the assessment
- • Minor disturbances during the assessment, eg a mobile phone ringing or a badly behaved learner.

Record keeping and monitoring

Barndale will keep records for audit purposes for all cases where they have allowed learners to have reasonable adjustments.

- Modified assessment materials
- Evidence of learner need
- Assessment evidence produced by the learner
- Internal verification records of the assessment decision
- Evidence that the outcomes of the adjusted assessment have been subject to rigorous internal verification and included in any standardisation activities undertaken for the unit

- These records are classed as assessment records and should be kept for at least 3 years from the end of the year to which they relate.
- The Class Teacher will include the work of learners for whom reasonable adjustments have been made as part of their representative sampling activity. This is to confirm that the adjustments to assessments have been made in accordance with the guidelines in this document, and that:
 - there is evidence of need on file
 - the modification to the task does not confer any unfair advantage on the learner
 - the modifications and assessment decisions have been subjected to a rigorous internal verification process including internal standardisation
 - all relevant documentation received from NCFE

These records are classed as assessment records and should be kept for at least 3 years from the end of the year to which they relate.