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Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

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Purpose

This policy is aimed at our centre and learners who are undertaking or have completed one of our qualifications. We are committed to complying with all current and relevant regulation and legislation to the development and delivery of our qualifications. Our aim is to facilitate open access for all learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustments or special considerations in assessments, whilst ensuring the assessment of understanding, knowledge, skills and competence is not compromised in any way for all of the protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010. Please refer to our Equal and Diversity Policy for more information.

This policy will also be used by our staff to ensure they are dealing with all reasonable adjustments and special considerations requests in a fair and consistent manner.

This policy outlines the following:

- Arrangements for making reasonable adjustments and special considerations in relation to the delivery and assessment of our qualifications
- How learners qualify for reasonable adjustments and special considerations
- Reasonable adjustments we will accept and requests that are required prior to them being applied
- What special considerations can be granted for learners.

Definition of a Reasonable Adjustment

A reasonable adjustment relates to any actions that help to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which may place the learner at a disadvantage during the delivery of a qualification or an assessment situation. They are applied to an assessment process for a qualification to enable a learner with a disability or difficulty to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding of the levels of attainment required in the qualification specification.

When a reasonable adjustment has been applied, the work produced by the learner will be marked to the same standards and assessment requirements as the work assessed of the other learners.

Definition of a Special Consideration

Special consideration is a post-assessment adjustment to the marks of a learner's assessment paper or rearrangement of an assessment time and/or date.

A special consideration can be granted after an assessment has taken place if a learner may have been disadvantaged.

Policy

We expect our staff to adhere to relevant requirements and legislation to promote fair access to assessment for all learners.

Assessment will be a fair test of learners' knowledge, skills and ability. The standard format of assessment may not be suitable for all learners, our aim is that our assessments and qualifications do not prevent any learners from attaining them.

At BDL, we recognise that reasonable adjustments or special considerations may be required at the time of assessment where the following applies:

- Learners have a permanent disability or specific learning needs
- Learners have a temporary disability, learning need or medical condition

- Learners are not available at the time of assessment

Reasonable adjustments and special consideration arrangements are available to ensure all learners receive recognition of their achievement providing there is evidence that the equity, validity and reliability of the assessments can be assured. These arrangements will not be used to make assessments easier for learners or give learners a head start and will not disadvantage other learners.

All requests for reasonable adjustments and special considerations will be reviewed on an individual basis and all the information received will be considered.

Principles of Granting Reasonable Adjustments

BDDL will support our staff making these reasonable adjustments by ensuring that the following applies:

- Reasonable adjustments granted provide learners with the opportunity to demonstrate their attainment
- The reasonable adjustment compensates for any disadvantage imposed by the disability or difficulty but do not disadvantage others
- Certificates issued do not mislead anyone regarding the learner's attainment
- The assessments were rigorous and fair
- The assessment activity is valid and is measurable against the assessment criteria
- Assessment results are reliable.

Reasonable adjustments that may be requested are as follows:

- Modified enlarged manuals or assessment papers for learners with a visual impairment where enlarged text would allow them access to fair delivery and assessment (pre-assessment notice is required).
- Assessment extension time. Extra time is not permitted in practical skills performance. An allowance of 25% extra time is permissible for assessment papers if the learner has learning difficulties, supported by an assessment report evidencing the need for the adjustment.
- Use of a reader. For learners with a visual impairment whose reading skills have been tested and defined as below average or where English is a learner's second language. The reader is a responsible adult who reads the questions to the learner but must not be the course tutor, assessor, relative, friend or peer to the learner. The reader must only read the question paper instructions and the questions, they must not explain or clarify. They may if requested repeat instructions, read back what has been written or give the spelling of a word on the paper.
- Use of a scribe. For learners who have learning difficulties and are unable to write legibly. The scribe is a responsible adult who writes down the learners dictated answers to the questions, they must not be the course tutor, assessor, relative, friend or peer to the learner. The use of computer software that produces a hard copy of the learners dictated speech is permissible.
- Use of a sign interpreter. For learners who communicate by using sign language. The interpreter is a responsible adult who is proficient in the use of sign language, they must not be the course tutor, assessor, relative, friend or peer to the learner. The interpreter must only sign the question paper instructions and the questions, they must not explain or clarify. They may if requested repeat instructions, learners are only permitted to sign their answers in coursework and exams where the answers required involve single words.

Centres may reject requests in situations as follows:

- Reasonable adjustments must not invalidate the assessment requirements set out in the qualification specification
- The content and delivery of the chosen course of study would prevent the learner from fulfilling a major section of the course affecting the assessment requirements
- Must not give the learner an unfair advantage compared to other learners for whom a reasonable adjustment has not been granted.

Procedure to Request a Reasonable Adjustment

The IQA and assessors must endeavour to identify learner needs as soon as possible to request the appropriate adjustments are reviewed by BDLD, once approved these can be implemented.

The process for requesting access arrangements and the evidence required may vary dependent upon the qualification specification, the learner's circumstances and any other factors that need to be taken into consideration.

Reasonable adjustments may cover all of the course content and not just the assessment. We ask that a request is submitted to BDLD prior to the course starting, if the adjustment is to an assessment paper a minimum of 14 days' notice is required. All arrangements for adjustments must be approved by BDLD before being implemented.

All requests for reasonable adjustments and special considerations will be reviewed on an individual basis and all the information received will be considered.

BDLD will not approve any adjustments that may compromise the assessment criteria and that may disadvantage other learners.

The IQA and assessors may assist learners in choosing an appropriate course of study, making them aware of the qualification specification requirements. Learners may still decide to undertake/complete a qualification knowing they are unable to fulfil the assessment requirements, in this situation a certificate of attendance may be issued.

Failure to comply with this policy may constitute malpractice and the resulting disqualification of the learner.

Principles of Granting Special Considerations

Learners must have attended the course for the appropriate amount of guided learning hours and have been fully prepared by the tutor to take the assessment. If their performance in the assessment or in the production of coursework is affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control, a special consideration may be granted for a learner if they have temporarily experienced any of the following:

Illness or injury - An event out of the learners control which has or is likely to have an impact on the learner's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate their levels of attainment during the assessment. Any special considerations granted must:

- Treat all learners fairly
- Require the learner to fully meet the assessment requirements
- Maintain the relevance, reliability and comparability of the assessment.
- They must not invalidate the assessment requirements set out in the qualification specification.

Special considerations should not give the learner an unfair advantage, neither should it mislead an employer/training provider regarding the learner's achievements for certification. The learner's results must reflect the achievement in assessment and not their potential ability.

If a special consideration is granted this may result in a post-assessment adjustment to the marks of the learner. The adjustment will depend on the circumstances and reflect the difficulty faced by the learner.

Procedure to Request a Special Consideration

Following an assessment, the IQA or assessor may wish to submit a reasonable adjustment and special consideration request, in recognition of the difficulty a learner has encountered. This should be submitted with all the paperwork at the end of the course within 7 working days of the assessment conclusion.

The request will include the exact nature of the adverse condition(s), along with copies of any appropriate evidence to support the request. All requests for special considerations will be reviewed on an individual basis and all the evidence received will be considered.

If the request for a special consideration is successful, the learner's performance will be reviewed based on the evidence that was submitted. A successful request of a special consideration will not necessarily change a learner's result.

BDLD will not approve any special considerations that may compromise the assessment criteria and that may disadvantage other learners.

Failure to comply with this policy may constitute malpractice and the resulting disqualification of the learner.

Centre Responsibility

It is important that all centre personnel involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of all BDLD qualifications are fully aware of the contents within this policy and ensure their learners are made aware of the policy when undertaking or completing any of our qualifications.

When an EQA visits a centre, they may ask personnel and learners some questions to identify if they are aware of the policy's contents and purpose.

Appeals

If a learner wishes to appeal against a decision to decline a request for a reasonable adjustment or special consideration they should refer to our Appeals Policy, available on our website.