

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy



Purpose

This policy is aimed at our Approved Training Centres (ATCs) and learners' who are undertaking or have completed a Safety Training Awards (STA) regulated qualification. We are committed to complying with all current and relevant regulation and legislation to the development, delivery, and award of our qualifications.

Our aim is to facilitate open access for all learners' who are eligible for reasonable adjustments or special considerations for 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 Opportunities Policy on our website 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 STA regulated qualifications
- How learners' qualify for reasonable adjustments and special considerations
- Reasonable adjustments STA will accept and actions that are required prior to them being applied by the ATC
- 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 their knowledge, skills, and understanding of the levels of attainment required in the qualification specification and assessment strategy.

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 learners' assessment result 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

As an ATC, we expect the operations to adhere to relevant requirements, regulations, and legislation to promote fair access to assessment for all learners'. The ATC should have policies and procedures in place which reflect the principles included within this policy.

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

At Safety Training Awards, 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
- A learner has a temporary disability, learning need or medical condition
- Learners' are not available at the time of assessment due to a disability, learning need or medical condition.

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 should not be used to make assessments easier for learners' or give them a head start and should not disadvantage other learners'.

An adjustment will not be approved if it:

- Involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body
- Involves unreasonable timeframes or
- Affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

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

Safety Training Awards will support ATCs applying reasonable adjustments by ensuring the following:

- 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 learners' attainment
- The assessments were rigorous and fair
- The assessment activity is valid and is measurable against the assessment criteria
- Assessment results are reliable

Please refer to the following table for Reasonable adjustments that ATCs are permitted to make without prior approval from STA:

Reasonable adjustment	Assessment NOT completed under exam conditions	Assessments completed under exam conditions
Extra time up to 25%	Adjustment by ATC permitted	Adjustment by ATC permitted
Extra time more than 25%	Adjustment by ATC permitted	Apply to STA via STA Online
Supervised rest breaks	Adjustment by ATC permitted	Apply to STA via STA Online
Taking the assessment at an alternative site / venue	Adjustment by ATC permitted	Adjustment by ATC permitted
Assessment material in enlarged format	Adjustment by ATC permitted	Apply to STA via STA Online
Assessment material on coloured paper	Adjustment by ATC permitted	Apply to STA via STA Online
Use of a reader	Adjustment by ATC permitted	Apply to STA via STA Online
Use of a scribe	Adjustment by ATC permitted	Apply to STA via STA Online
Use of a BSL / English interpreter	Adjustment by ATC permitted	Apply to STA via STA Online
Other	Apply to STA	Apply to STA via STA Online

**** For quality assurance purposes, when an adjustment has been made by an ATC evidence of this must be stored with the relevant course paperwork, in line with Safety Training Awards data retention requirements****

ATCs may reject requests in situations as follows:

- Reasonable adjustments must not invalidate the assessment requirements set out in the qualification specification and assessment strategy
- 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 criteria
- 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

ATC Co-ordinators, Tutors and Assessors must endeavour to identify learner needs as soon as possible to request the appropriate adjustments are reviewed by Safety Training Awards (where applicable), once approved these can be implemented.

The process for requesting access arrangements and the evidence required may vary dependent upon the qualification specification and assessment strategy, the learners' circumstances and any other factors that need to be taken into consideration to ensure a fair process.

Reasonable adjustments may cover all the course content and not just the assessment. We ask that a request is submitted to Safety Training Awards prior to the course starting (where applicable), if the adjustment is to the assessment materials a minimum of 14 days' notice is required. All reasonable adjustments that are not permitted to be made by the ATC must be approved by Safety Training Awards before being implemented.

The Safety Training Awards reasonable adjustments and special considerations form is available to complete and submit via the ATCs STA Online account.

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

Safety Training Awards will not approve any adjustments that may compromise the assessment criteria and that may disadvantage other learners'.

ATC Co-ordinators, Tutors and Assessors may assist learners' in choosing an appropriate course of study, making them aware of the qualification specification and assessment 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.

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.

ATCs should understand that:

- Learners may not need, nor be allowed, the same adjustment for all qualifications;
- Learners may need a single adjustment or a combination of adjustments;
- Adjustments to assessments will mostly be needed for assessments which are taken under constrained / examination conditions;
- Any adjustment must not invalidate the assessment requirements of the qualification or the requirements of the assessment strategy;
- Any adjustment must not give the learner an unfair advantage or disadvantage;
- Any adjustment must reflect the learner's normal way of working;
- Any adjustment must be based on the individual needs of the learner;
- Any adjustment must not compensate the learner for lack of knowledge, skills or understanding;
- Any adjustment must not alter competency standards;
- Any adjustment must not compromise health and safety; and
- No adjustment must place other learners at a significant disadvantage.

A reasonable adjustment is unique to an individual learner. For an adjustment to be considered reasonable, this will depend on a number of factors, which will include, but are not limited to:

- The specific assessment requirements of the qualification
- The type of assessment
- The particular needs and circumstances of the disabled learner
- The effectiveness of the adjustment
- The cost of the adjustment; and
- The likely impact of the adjustment upon the learner and other learners

Failure to comply with this policy may constitute as malpractice resulting in 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 learners' 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 criteria
- Maintain the relevance, reliability, and comparability of the assessment

They must not invalidate the assessment requirements set out in the qualification specification and assessment strategy.

Special considerations should not give the learner an unfair advantage, neither should it mislead an employer / training provider regarding the learners' achievements for certification. The learners' 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 learners' results. The adjustment will depend on the circumstances and reflect the difficulty faced by the learner.

A note to the ATC:

- It may not be possible to grant a special consideration where an assessment requires the learner to demonstrate practical competence or when assessment criteria must be fully met, or in a case the qualifications confer a license to practice.

Procedure to request a Special Consideration

Following an assessment, an ATC Co-ordinator, Tutor, or Assessor may wish to submit a reasonable adjustment and special consideration form, in recognition of the difficulty a learner has encountered. The Safety Training Awards reasonable adjustments and special considerations form is available to complete and submit via the ATCs STA Online account. This should be submitted with all the paperwork at the end of the course within 7 working days of the assessment decisions being made.

Please indicate on the form the exact nature of the adverse condition(s) that you consider make the learner eligible for a special consideration, supply copies of any appropriate evidence to support the request and securely upload to STA Online.

Please note that there will be occasions when learners' are too unwell or distressed to complete an assessment and occasionally they may under perform.

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 learners' performance will be reviewed based on the evidence that was submitted. A successful request of a special consideration will not necessarily change the assessment result.

Safety Training Awards will not approve any special considerations that may compromise the assessment criteria and that may disadvantage other learners'.

Special considerations may be applied any time during a course and assessment, if an extenuating circumstance affects the learner's ability.

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

Approved Training Centre (ATC) responsibility

It is important that all ATC personnel involved in the management, assessment, and quality assurance of STA regulated 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 an ATC, they may ask personnel and learners' some questions to identify if they are aware of the policies contents and purpose.

ATCs are required to retain any requests or decisions for reasonable adjustments and special considerations, including any supporting evidence and relevant documentation received from STA, for three years. Records must be made available to STA, or regulators on request. STA may request documentation for review as part of ongoing monitoring and quality assurance activities. ATC staff involved in the management, delivery, assessment, and quality assurance of qualifications must be fully aware of the contents of the Policy and able to inform and advise learners of any entitlements to Reasonable Adjustments or Special Considerations.

Arrangements not covered within this policy

If any circumstances arise relating to internal or external assessment not covered within this policy you should contact our Qualification Development Team at STA to discuss prior to the assessment taking place.

Appeals

If you wish to appeal against the decision to decline a request for a reasonable adjustment or special consideration, please refer to the enquiries and appeal policy, this is available on our website or you can request a copy by contacting us.

Monitoring and Review

This policy and its procedures will be reviewed regularly for improvements as part of our quality assurance requirements. This will ensure it is fit for purpose, reflects the services we deliver to our ATCs and we provide services which are relevant to the requirements of individual needs.

Safety Training Awards contact details:

Safety Training Awards (STA), Anchor House, Birch Street, Walsall, West Midlands, WS2 8HZ

Tel: 01922 645097

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 8.00-16.00

Website: www.safetytrainingawards.co.uk

Email: compliance@safetytrainingawards.co.uk