



Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration: Policy & Procedure

Reviewed – 06/07/2023

Next Review Date – 06/07/2024

Responsibility –Envisage Managers, Staff & Learners

Version 1

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration: Policy & Procedure

Envisage will where feasible, facilitate access for customers and learners who are able to demonstrate eligibility for reasonable adjustments and/or special consideration in assessments, whilst ensuring that the required quality standards for the assessment of skills, knowledge, understanding and competence are not compromised.

Policy overview

This policy outlines:

- definition of reasonable adjustments and how they are applied
- the role of alternative methods of assessment within internal assessment
- how Envisage works will work with customers and learners to apply reasonable adjustments to our qualification teaching, learning and assessment delivery
- definition of special consideration and how we respond to requests for special consideration
- how Envisage requests and applies for reasonable adjustments and special consideration from our qualification awarding bodies.

This policy also provides information on Appeals relating to requests for reasonable adjustments and special consideration.

Definition of reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment relates to an adjustment that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which may place the learner at a disadvantage during the assessment process.

It is important that reasonable adjustments do not affect the reliability or validity of assessment and they should not give the learner an advantage over other learners undertaking the same assessment.

Where reasonable adjustments have been applied (see the table included in this document for a list of examples of common adjustments), the work produced by the learner will be marked to the same standard as the work carried out by other learners. The application of any reasonable adjustments is not typically taken into consideration during the marking of a learner's work.

Envisage's policy and procedure on reasonable adjustments seeks to ensure that:

- any application of reasonable adjustments will provide learners with appropriate opportunities to demonstrate attainment
- reasonable adjustments are applied to compensate for any disadvantage imposed by a disability, learning need or difficulty, but it will not otherwise advantage learners
- any customer or learner using a qualification certificate to identify an individual's competence is not misled regarding the learner's attainments
- the examination and/or practical assessment is both rigorous and fair
- the examination and/or assessment activity will be valid and can be measured against appropriate and relevant national standards where these apply
- the examination and/or assessment result/outcome is reliable

- the examination and assessment is practically able to operate within available resources, facilities and during a manageable timeframe provided by Envisage

This policy sets out how Envisage fulfils its duty to make reasonable adjustments which can apply to all of the protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010, those being:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy or maternity

Envisage is required by law only to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of providing access for learners. A range of factors stemming from the manageability of the required practical arrangements, likely effectiveness and health and safety implications of the requested adjustments are taken into consideration when determining what may be considered reasonable.

Circumstances in which an application for a reasonable adjustment is likely to be rejected:

- the requested reasonable adjustment would prevent the learner from fulfilling a major part of the requirements of the learning or practical assessment and it proves impossible to overcome this difficulty
- the requested reasonable adjustment may constitute a serious safety hazard that cannot be reasonably overcome.

Neither Envisage nor the qualification awarding body can refuse to accept or register learners on the grounds that better facilities for application of a reasonable adjustment or support could be provided elsewhere, unless in particularly exceptional circumstances (for instance, reasonable adjustments requiring highly specialised equipment with limited availability or funding to make such an adjustment).

Responsibilities of centres in relation to reasonable adjustments

An approved qualification delivery centres must:

- have a Fair Access to Assessment policy that is available to customers and learners and in active use
- identify any required adjustments as soon as possible; at enquiry, interview or during the qualification enrolment process. This should be prior to the customer or learner being enrolled or registered to allow for disclosure of any difficulties (particularly in the case of external assessment). Envisage staff are trained in awareness of access-related issues. Early contact with the qualification awarding body will enable a decision by the awarding to be responsive to required timelines.
- involve the customer or learner in any decisions relating to a reasonable adjustment, and ensure the appropriate resources are available to fulfil required adjustments
- source and arrange any assistance for the learner, such as a reader, scribe, additional invigilation, or British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter

- follow the qualification awarding body procedures for requesting and implementing reasonable adjustments, keeping all records of agreed adjustments for auditing purposes
- ensure that the customer or learner is aware of the Envisage appeals procedure so that they can consider an appeal for any decision not to apply a reasonable adjustment, or if the learner finds that the reasonable adjustment provided was not appropriate to their needs. The Envisage appeals procedure is highlighted to all customers and learners during enrolment and the qualification induction process.

Envisage is required to comply with all our qualification awarding bodies Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration policies to ensure we do not compromise the validity and integrity of the regulated qualifications we are approved to deliver. This area is also covered in Envisage's Malpractice Maladministration & Assessment Malpractice Policy which ensures that no customer or learner has an undue or unfair advantage over other customers or learners.

Internal assessment and reasonable adjustments

Qualification components (units) which are assessed by Envisage using internal assessment (as outlined in the qualification specifications) provide flexibility in the range of assessment that can be used to demonstrate competence and do not require an application to the qualification awarding body.

For these internal assessments, customers and learners may present their evidence of competence in a range of formats, so long as the internal assessment used:

- has equal rigour to that used by other customers and learners (with accompanying evidence that the internal assessment has been through internal quality assurance (IQA) to demonstrate that it is sufficient, reliable and valid)
- that the customer/learner has a reasonable opportunity to meet the assessment criteria
- enables the customer/learner to demonstrate achievement of the assessment criteria
- does not give the customer/learner any unfair advantage over other customers/learners

Types of reasonable adjustment

The following table lists the most commonly requested reasonable adjustments to qualification awarding bodies for standard external assessment arrangements. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list and Envisage will discuss and seek advice with qualification awarding bodies for any required customer or learner adjustments when applying for an adjustment to an external examination or practical assessment.

The column labelled "decision making for reasonable adjustment" indicates Envisage is able to make that an adjustment decision without a formal request to the qualification awarding body prior to assessment. Envisage may need to contact qualification awarding bodies for assistance in permitting 25% extra time for online external examinations or assessments and, in some cases, for enlarging the format of external assessment papers.

Reasonable Adjustments for External Assessments	Reasonable Adjustment Decision Making
Extra time up to 25%	Envisage
Extra time in excess of 25%	Qualification Awarding Body
Supervised rest breaks	Envisage
Change in the layout of the assessment room	Envisage
Separate accommodation within the Centre	Envisage
Taking the assessment at an alternative venue	Qualification Awarding Body
Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, tinted spectacles, CCTV, OCR scanners and amplification equipment	Envisage
Use of a bilingual translation dictionary (see rules below)	Qualification Awarding Body
Use of assistive software	Qualification Awarding Body
Assessment material in enlarged format	Envisage
Language modified assessment material	Qualification Awarding Body
Assessment material in sign language recognised as an official language of the UK (e.g., BSL)	Qualification Awarding Body
Assessment material on coloured paper	Envisage
Assessment material in audio format	Qualification Awarding Body
Responses recorded in audio or audio-visual formats	Qualification Awarding Body
Responses in sign language recognised as an official language of the UK (e.g., BSL)	Qualification Awarding Body
Reader	Envisage
Scribe	Envisage
BSL interpreter	Envisage
Prompter	Envisage
Practical assistant	Qualification Awarding Body
Braille transcript	Qualification Awarding Body
Allowance for modification to equipment/resources where necessary	Qualification Awarding Body

Please Note: Permission to use a bilingual translation dictionary

Use of a bilingual translation dictionary is permitted only when this represents the customer or learner's normal way of working and the following rules are followed:

- only standard bilingual translation dictionaries are permitted (i.e., the bilingual translation dictionary must simply be the word in English and the equivalent word in the foreign language and vice-versa)
- any type of dictionary which provides definitions or explanations of words (in any language) is not permitted
- an electronic bilingual translation dictionary is permitted but must not provide definitions and must give information visually/on-screen only (unless an additional reasonable adjustment is required for learners with a visual disability or difficulty)
- Web-based translators such as google translate are not permitted
- the bilingual translation dictionary must not display pictures or diagrams

- bilingual translation dictionaries to be used in the external assessment must be thoroughly checked to ensure that no unauthorised information such as notes have been enclosed within or written on the pages of the dictionary or stored on the device used for the electronic bilingual translation dictionary. Any breach of this rule must be dealt with as potential learner malpractice and must immediately be reported to the qualification awarding body.

Records of centre applied reasonable adjustment

Envisage must record and retain all customer and learner reasonable adjustments permitted and applied with a copy of the details of the adjustment given to each learner must be supplied to the qualification awarding body immediately following external assessment.

Envisage will retain records relating to the implementation of and/or rejection of customer or learner reasonable adjustments. This will be made available to the EQ and/or the qualification awarding body upon request.

Definition of special consideration

Special consideration, is consideration given to a customer or a learner who has temporarily experienced:

- an illness or injury, or
- some other event outside of the customer or learner's control, which has had, or is reasonable 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 (this may include, but is not limited to, an accident, bereavement or serious disturbance during or prior to the assessment).

Special consideration **cannot be requested** in the following circumstances:

- part of the assessment was missed due to personal arrangements, including unauthorised absence and holidays
- no evidence was supplied by the centre indicating that a learner was affected by illness, injury, bereavement or other indisposition at the time of the assessment
- Envisage experiencing venue, facility or staffing difficulties during the delivery of the qualification, such as closure of the building, tutor absence, unable to access facility/venue due to legal closure.

How special consideration is applied

In each case where the qualification awarding body judge the application of special consideration to be appropriately warranted, the customer or learner's assessment performance is reviewed with regard to the specific situation that has arisen. This review may result in a proportionate adjustment to the learner's mark for an assessment, relative to the circumstances for special consideration and the customer or learner's performance. It should be noted, however, that the outcome of a special consideration review will not necessarily be a change in the customer or learner's result or overall achievement of an assessment.

Special consideration cannot be applied if this will provide a customer or a learner with an unreasonable advantage over other learners. Application of special consideration should not compromise the validity of assessment or misrepresent a customer or a learner's ability. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to offer the customer or a learner an opportunity to re-sit the assessment.

Assessments that lead to a Licence to Practice qualification may have restrictions on the extent to which special consideration can be applied; this may result in the rejection of an application for special consideration, even in instances where the evidence to support a request for special consideration would otherwise have been accepted. In these cases, it may be particularly appropriate for the learner to re-sit the assessment.

Submitting a request for Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

Reasonable Adjustment Applications and Special Consideration Application forms will be available from the qualification awarding body website. Evidence of the customer or learner’s learning need or reason for a special consideration request must be submitted with the application. This should be in the form of a customer/learner support report, medical report or other appropriate record. The qualification awarding body will respond with a decision regarding reasonable adjustments and special consideration within 10-15 working days of acknowledging the request.

Applications for reasonable adjustments must be submitted as soon as possible after customer or learner enrolment, qualification induction or upon registration of the customer or learner with the qualification awarding body. YMCA Awards, one of qualification awarding bodies require the application for reasonable adjustment no later than 21 days prior to the scheduled external assessment. This enables YMCA Awards to review the application and make the necessary arrangements to ensure that the reasonable adjustment is made in good time for the centre and learner.

With YMCA Awards applications for special consideration may be submitted any time up to 21 days after the learner has taken the external assessment.

Envisage will immediately contact the qualification awarding body if an event relating to special consideration occurs on the day of a scheduled external assessment or in the days leading up to the assessment, in case the assessment can be rescheduled or an appropriate reasonable adjustment applied to mitigate the impact of the event or the situation that has arisen.

Appeals

Envisage’s appeals procedure can be used by a customer or a learner in regard of an appeal relating to requests for reasonable adjustment that Envisage as an approved centre can approve. However, where Envisage is unable to accept an appeal due to the qualification awarding body procedures and guidelines, the customer or learner would have to appeal directly to the qualification awarding body on the decision to not allow an application for a reasonable adjustment or special consideration. The appeal procedure and process for the qualification awarding body can be found on their website.

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Version 1	Date this Issue: 07/06/2023	Review Due Date: 07/06/2024