

## Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations: Black Country Skills Factory Leadership & Management Programme

Open College Network West Midlands *Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy* can be found here <http://www.opencollnet.org.uk/centres/policies-and-procedures> and contains more detailed information.

### General Definition

‘Access to Fair Assessment’ are arrangements made to ensure that learners receive recognition of their achievement so long as the equity, validity and reliability of the assessments can be assured. Such arrangements are not concessions to make assessment easier for learners, nor advantages to give learners a head start.

There are 2 ways in which Access to Fair Assessment can be maintained:

- Reasonable adjustments;
- Special Considerations.

### Definition of reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. They are made to an assessment to enable a disabled learner to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding of the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification/unit.

Reasonable adjustments are approved or set in place before the assessment activity takes place.

**Examples - please also refer to the** Open College Network West Midlands *Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy* for further examples.

- changing usual assessment arrangements, for example allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment activity
- providing assistance during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or a reader
- changing the assessment method, for example from a written assessment to a spoken assessment

### Identifying learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustments

Learners will only be eligible for reasonable adjustments if their disability or difficulty places them at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation, in comparison to a person who is not disabled or affected.

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

## **Definition of special considerations**

Special consideration can be applied after an assessment if there was a reason the learner may have been disadvantaged during the assessment.

## **Examples**

A learner who had temporarily experienced:

- an illness or injury
- some other event outside of their control

which has had, or is 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.

## **Note:**

- where an assessment requires the learner to demonstrate practical competence or where criteria have to be met fully, or in the case of qualifications that confer a License to Practice, it may not be possible to apply special consideration.
- in some circumstances, for example for on-demand assessments, it may be more appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date.

## **Determination of Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations may take place through:**

- Identification of learner special needs before commencement on the course (through a recruitment process).
- Pre-course assessment planning.
- Internal monitoring of assessment practice and learner needs on course.
- The Awarding Organisation through its own external monitoring activities.

## **Centre's responsibility**

The relevant centre staff and learners will be made fully aware of the contents of this policy.

## **Process for requesting reasonable adjustments and/or special considerations**

### **Reasonable adjustment**

The process for implementing reasonable adjustments depends on the nature of the adjustment. Some adjustments may be used at the discretion of the centre, others require permission from OCNWMR.

### **Reasonable adjustments permitted at the discretion of the centre**

These are detailed in the Reasonable Adjustment Permissions Table (Appendix 1) found on page 41 of the Open College Network West Midlands *Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy*.

Where reasonable adjustment is permitted at the discretion of the centre records will be kept for inspection (including any declaration that are signed and dated by a member of the centre staff who has formally been given delegated authority for this by the Head of Centre).

### **Reasonable adjustments requiring OCNWMR permission**

Where Open College Network West Midlands permission is required a Reasonable Adjustment Request Form, on page 42 of the Open College Network West Midlands *Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy*, will be completed providing relevant details and, where appropriate, supporting evidence. Requests for reasonable adjustments should be submitted no later than **25** working days before the assessment.

### **Special Consideration**

Requests for special consideration will be submitted using the Special Consideration Request Form as soon as possible and not later than **5** working days after the assessment. Requests for special consideration will only be accepted after the results of assessment have been released in the following circumstances:

- the application has been overlooked at the centre and the oversight is confirmed by the centre co-coordinator;
- medical evidence comes to light about a learner's condition, which demonstrates that the learner must have been affected by the condition at the time of the assessment, even though the problem revealed itself only after the assessment;
- for onscreen assessments where results are immediately available.

If the application for special consideration is successful, the learner's performance will be reviewed in the light of available evidence. It should be noted that a successful application of special consideration will not necessarily change a learner's result.

Learners can, in exceptional circumstances, make requests directly to Open College Network West Midlands by contacting our Quality Manager on (01902 624241) or [wolverhampton@ocnwmr.org.uk](mailto:wolverhampton@ocnwmr.org.uk).

### **Checklist**

- Ensure that all tutors/learners are aware of the policy and also what is considered a 'Reasonable Adjustment/Special Consideration'.
- Identify if a learner requires a Reasonable Adjustment and/or Special Consideration.
- Identify whether the Reasonable Adjustment is permitted with or without the permission of the Open College Network West Midlands.
- Ensure that the appropriate application has been made to Open College Network West Midlands if required.
- Ensure records are kept of permitted Reasonable Adjustments.