

British Safety Council

Reasonable Adjustments Policy



What are reasonable adjustments?

Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that learners receive recognition of their achievement without compromising the equity, validity and reliability of the assessment. They are not concessions to make assessment easier for learners, nor advantages to give learners a head start.

Learners may require reasonable adjustments for a number of reasons including a permanent or temporary disability or medical condition.

The British Safety Council ensures that its reasonable adjustments:

- do not invalidate the assessment requirements set out in the specification for the relevant qualification;
- reflect the current needs of the individual learners as advised by the centre and, as far as is reasonably possible, their usual methods of working;
- do not give the learners an unfair advantage compared to learners for whom access arrangements are not being made;
- maintain the relevance, validity, reliability, comparability and integrity of the assessment;
- take account of all current legislation that has an impact on equality of access to assessment and qualifications.

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

Reasonable adjustments for qualifications at Entry Level and Level 1

The centre should consider what adjustments learners with disabilities or difficulties may need and make appropriate provision in advance.

The centre should identify as early as possible, preferably before registering a learner for a qualification, any difficulties the learner may have in accessing assessment. To assist with this the centre should ensure that all staff who recruit, advise or guide potential learners have had training to make them aware of access-related issues.

The centre should select an appropriate qualification for the learner, based upon his/her particular circumstances. The centre should explain to the learner the assessment requirements of the qualification and the planned programme of study. It should be made clear at the outset if the learner will not be able to meet all the assessment criteria. The learner may still decide to proceed with the qualification but enter only for part, or none, of the assessment. In this case the centre should explain to the learner any restriction on progression to other qualifications as a result of not achieving all the criteria.



What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, the impact of the disability, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment.

Centres should have policies and procedures in place to prevent discrimination against learners with access-related assessment needs.

Centres are permitted to implement the following reasonable adjustments without seeking the prior permission of the British Safety Council. Any adjustments required above and beyond this should be requested by the centre prior to the assessment taking place.

Additional time - Extra time of up to 25% of the assessment time may be granted to learners who have medical evidence to prove dyslexia or other medical conditions.

Reader - The assessment questions may be read to learners. This must be carried out in a separate room, or at a separate time, to the main assessment so as not to disturb other learners. A signer may be used for hearing-impaired learners.

Scribe - A scribe may be used if the learner is unable to record their own answers. This may be in addition to the use of a reader, who could be the same person. The learner will require extra time for this and alternative accommodation and supervision must be provided.

Bilingual dictionary - May be used if the learner's first language is not English. If a bilingual dictionary is used, it must not contain explanations of terms. Electronic dictionaries are not permitted.

When a centre implements a reasonable adjustment they must declare it at the time of the assessment.

If the centre does not consider that it has the necessary expertise to judge whether a reasonable adjustment is needed, and/or how it should be applied, it should contact the British Safety Council for advice.

The centre must keep records of their decisions permitting reasonable adjustments, along with any supporting evidence. These records should be kept for 12 months.

It is recommended that centres nominate a member of staff to take responsibility for demonstrating the implementation and recording of reasonable adjustments at the centre for monitoring by the British Safety Council or the qualifications regulators.

If the centre exceeds the level of assistance and type of assistance as set out in this policy it may lead to malpractice investigations.



Reasonable adjustments for qualifications at Level 2 and above

Learners requiring a reasonable adjustment for their assessment must submit a Reasonable Adjustment Application Form to the British Safety Council at the earliest possible opportunity and (except in the case of a sudden disability or medical condition) at least three weeks before the date of the assessment. The application should include the nature of the learner's disability or learning need, special arrangements requested and supporting evidence (e.g. a doctor's letter).

On receipt of a request for reasonable adjustments, the Head of Qualifications will decide whether or not to grant approval and, if appropriate, the provision required to meet the needs of the learner. Applications for reasonable adjustments may be dismissed by the Head of Qualifications if there is insufficient time to permit adequate arrangements to be made. If the request for reasonable adjustments is approved, the learner will be informed, in writing, of the arrangements that can be made. If the request for reasonable adjustments is not approved, the learner will be provided with a reasoned response.

The following are examples of the types of reasonable adjustments the British Safety Council can make, but it is not an exhaustive list. Reasonable adjustments are determined on a case-by-case basis.

Additional time - A learner may be allowed extra time if he/she has a condition which affects the speed of processing.

Supervised rest breaks - A learner may be allowed supervised rest breaks if there is a demonstrated need.

Change in the organisation of the examination room - Minor changes to the organisation of the examination room may benefit some learners with learning or physical difficulties. Visually-impaired learners may benefit from sitting near a window so that they have good lighting. Hearing-impaired learners may benefit from sitting near the front of the room.

Separate accommodation within the centre - There may be a need to accommodate the learner separately if they are using a reader, scribe or equipment which may disturb other learners.

Modifications to the presentation of the assessment material - Where a learner's normal way of working relies on modifications, a learner can apply for modified assessment materials, e.g. enlarged examination question paper.

Alternative ways of presenting learner responses - Where there is evidence of need, a learner may present their responses by a method most appropriate and familiar to them, e.g. use of computer, verbal response.



Use of access facilitators - Where there is evidence of need, a reader may read to a learner all or part of the assessment material. Where there is evidence of need, a scribe may write down or word process a learner's dictated response.

Use of bilingual dictionaries - If a learner's first language is not English a learner may apply to use a bilingual dictionary.

Appeals

Centre and learners may appeal against the British Safety Council's decisions regarding reasonable adjustments. Such an appeal will be considered by the independently chaired British Safety Council Appeals Committee. Further information can be found in the British Safety Council's Result Enquiries and Appeals Policy.

Contact details for this policy

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First published: June 2004
Last updated: July 2015