

Education and training policies and procedures:

Access to assessment policy and procedures

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Classification: **PUBLIC**



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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

The policy sets out our commitment to ensuring that assessments can be accessed fairly and without disadvantage by all learners. In particular, this document sets out the staff responsibilities, training requirements and processes to follow to submit requests for special consideration and reasonable adjustments.

1.2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff involved in the delivery of training, who must be aware of this policy and comply with it at all times. In particular, staff must be aware that some of the procedures within this document have strict timescales for us to action requests, so they must be recognised and actioned promptly.

Intentional breaches of this policy may have significant reputational impacts and are likely to affect partnership working or external accreditations and approvals. For these reasons, intentional breaches under this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken under the *Disciplinary policy and procedures* or *Managing volunteer performance policy and procedures* respectively.

1.3. Accessing this document

This policy is available on our website, the [DigitalStaffroom](#), Pulse and in uncontrolled hard or soft copy formats, if requested.

2. Responsibilities

2.1. Training staff

All staff and volunteers involved in the delivery of training must be aware of the processes outlined in this document and be alert to learners who may require either a reasonable adjustment or special consideration.

Staff and volunteers must also ensure that all learners are given access to this policy and made aware of their rights. Training staff should be on hand to assist learners with applying for reasonable adjustments / special considerations and providing general advice on the process and criteria.

2.2. Learners

Learners should make themselves aware of the content of this policy and their rights within it. Where required (and with appropriate support from training staff), learners should feel encouraged to submit requests for reasonable adjustments or special considerations where they feel they have been disadvantaged for some reason.

If a learner needs support with the submission of a request, or general advice on the process, they should speak to their training staff in the first instance.

3. Why do we need to consider access to assessment?

At our core, we believe that everyone accessing our service deserve to be treated fairly, in a way that enables them to achieve the best outcome that they can. This is also a legal requirement under the Equality Act 2010, which we adhere to in full.

Any learner assessment should be a fair test of their knowledge and the skills they have obtained however, for some learners, the usual format of assessment may not be entirely suitable.

LFAS is committed to making sure individuals with special educational needs, disabilities, temporary illness or injury or who are experiencing other adverse circumstances outside their control are not unfairly disadvantaged when undertaking qualifications or assessments.

With a view to removing barriers which prevent learners from undertaking assessments, reasonable adjustments may be made and special consideration may be given. These arrangements ensure that learners are able to undertake assessments on a fair and equitable basis and they allow learners to receive recognition of their achievements while ensuring the integrity, validity and reliability of the assessment process is maintained.

This policy sets out when staff should be considering reasonable adjustment or special considerations to support our learners.

4. Reasonable adjustments

4.1. Overview of reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The aim of a reasonable adjustment is to reduce the negative impact of a disability on a learner's ability to achieve a qualification. The objective is that a learner with a disability (as defined) experiences no discernible disadvantage through training delivery and assessment compared to a learner that does not.

Examples of reasonable adjustments we can make for a learner include:

- ✓ Allowing extra time, either by extending a deadline or giving extra time to complete a timed exam or assessment (25% is the standard for this)
- ✓ Using a different assessment location
- ✓ Use of coloured overlays, on written questions
- ✓ Low vision aids
- ✓ Use of assistive software
- ✓ Assessment material in large format or Braille
- ✓ Readers/scribes. Note: this must be carried out after all other learners have completed their assessments and these have been collected.
- ✓ Assessment material on coloured paper or audio format
- ✓ British Sign Language
- ✓ Irish Sign Language
- ✓ Use of ICT/responses using electronic devices.

This list is not exhaustive and training staff are encouraged to be as flexible as possible when considering potential reasonable adjustments.

These reasonable adjustments can be tailored depending on the delivery method. For example, questions could be read to a learner over audio-visual software for distance or remote courses.

In some cases, reasonable adjustments may not be permitted due to published legal criteria. For example, if a learner is unable to meet the requirements of a qualification that are outlined in health and safety legislation (which takes precedence over Equality legislation). In this scenario, we may issue learners with a certificate that details the learner's attendance and specific achievements on the course.

Adjustments that are not “reasonable” may also not be approved. For example, if the adjustment:

- ✓ Incurs an unreasonable cost.
- ✓ Cannot be achieved in a reasonable timescale.
- ✓ Negatively impacts the integrity or security of the assessment.

4.2. Procedure for requesting reasonable adjustments

Training staff must be able to identify when a reasonable adjustment is required for a learner and should take all reasonable steps to support learners to achieve any qualification. Therefore, training staff must be aware of the definition of disability as included in the Equality Act 2010 and ensure that reasonable adjustments are considered and requested (where appropriate) for learners who meet this definition.

In order to assess whether or not a reasonable adjustment should be made, IQAs should consider:

- ✓ Any minimum standard requirements Learners must meet when being assessed (detailed in the relevant qualification specification or assessment guidance). e.g. to achieve a first aid qualification a learner must be able to demonstrate competency performing CPR on a manikin on the floor.
- ✓ If the integrity of an assessment, and therefore the reliability and validity of the outcome, would be compromised or undermined.
- ✓ The individual needs of the learner.
- ✓ The impact on the learner and any other learners.
- ✓ The cost incurred of making an adjustment.

When a reasonable adjustment is required, training staff must complete the *Reasonable adjustment form* and send it to the course IQA with any relevant supporting evidence. The IQA will review the details of the proposed adjustment to ensure that it is appropriate and fit for purpose.

Training staff have a responsibility to identify any reasonable adjustments required prior to any course commencing and must request approval from the IQA at least 5 working days in advance. However, training staff are permitted to make the following straightforward adjustments without initial approval, with the required form being submitted retrospectively:

- ✓ Verbal Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) assessments.
- ✓ 25% additional time to complete an assessment.
- ✓ Use of coloured overlays and rulers (for Dyslexic learners).

5. Special considerations

A special consideration is a change to an assessment outcome, mark or grade made when the learner has been affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control at the time of the assessment.

learners will be eligible for special consideration if they have completed the training and covered the whole course but performance in the assessment/coursework is materially affected by adverse circumstances. Learners should provide evidence of their circumstances as appropriate.

Examples of when a learner may be eligible for special consideration:

- ✓ Temporary illness or accident/injury at the time of assessment.
- ✓ Bereavement at the time of assessment.
- ✓ Domestic crisis at the time of assessment.
- ✓ Disadvantage due to the training staff failing to provide adequate provisions.
- ✓ Serious disturbance during an examination.

Examples on the outcome of special consideration requests might include:

- ✓ An extended deadline to complete coursework.
- ✓ An allowance in marking, usually of no more than 10%.
- ✓ An opportunity to resit a different examination paper at a later date without penalty.

This list is not exhaustive.

5.1. Procedure for requesting special consideration

Training staff should aim to use special consideration as a last resort and, where it is used, it must not compromise the integrity of an assessment or the reliability or validity of the outcome.

To request special consideration, a *Special consideration request form* should be completed and submitted to the IQA for consideration. The form must be supported by appropriate evidence. Depending on the reason for the special consideration (e.g. a bereavement), training staff must be sensitive when requesting this evidence and only request the minimum amount of evidence needed to substantiate the request.

Completed forms should reach the IQA within 5 working days of the assessment taking place.

6. Learner appeals

Learners are entitled to appeal a decision to not grant a reasonable adjustment or special consideration.

This must be done in line with our Appeals policy and training staff should assist learners with these applications wherever possible.

7. Policy adoption and review

This policy is adopted on **13 May 2024** as **version 2.0**.

We will review this document as part of our continuous improvement activities and revise it when necessary. Any revisions will consider:

- ✓ Changes in legislation, case law, approved codes of practice or other similar authoritative sources of information.
- ✓ Staff, volunteer and customer feedback.
- ✓ Complaints, compliments and investigations undertaken.
- ✓ Changes to our business processes or practices.

Signed for, and on behalf of, Lifesaver First Aid Services,



Ben Robinson
Director of Training Services

Annexes: *Annex A – Reasonable adjustment request form*
 Annex B – Special consideration request form

Related policies: *Equality, diversity and inclusion policy and procedures*
 Internal quality assurance policy and procedures

Document version control

Version	Date	Author	Description
1.0		Ben Robinson	Initial issue.
2.0	13/05/2024	Ben Robinson	Rebrand and rewrite to make more accessible and focus on equality issues.

This record must show the last five revisions to this document.

Equality impact assessment screening tool

Protected characteristic group	Impact			Evidence and action plan
	↑	↔	↓	
Age		X		No impact on this group.
Disability	X			Potential for positive impact by identifying disabilities and applying reasonable adjustments.
Race		X		No impact on this group.
Gender re-assignment		X		No impact on this group.
Religion or belief		X		No impact on this group.
Sexual orientation		X		No impact on this group.
Sex		X		No impact on this group.
Marriage or civil partnership		X		No impact on this group.
Pregnancy or maternity	X			Potential for positive impact by identifying health issues or emergencies and applying reasonable adjustments / special considerations as needed.
Gender identity		X		No impact on this group.
Is this process new or being reviewed / updated?				<input type="checkbox"/> New process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review or update of existing process
Is a full EqIA required?				<input type="checkbox"/> EqIA required – attach as an Annex once complete <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EqIA not required
Other comments in support of this assessment?				None
Who completed this tool?				Ben Robinson (14001)