Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy and Procedure

Item	Details
Policy owner	Kirsty Noble
Position	Quality Director
Version	Version 2
Applies to	Learners and Staff
Effective from	August 2026
Review cycle	August 2027

1. Policy Statement and Scope

Skills-UK, Education & Training Limited will identify and address barriers to learning and assessment, make reasonable adjustments for disabled learners where required and seek special consideration where the applicable assessment rules permit it.

This policy applies from enquiry and initial assessment through learning, assessment and certification. It covers regulated and non-regulated provision, with awarding organisation rules applying to the qualifications they govern.

The policy reflects the Equality Act 2010 and relevant qualification requirements. Skills-UK must meet its own equality duties and the conditions set by its awarding organisations. Ofqual's General Conditions regulate awarding organisations; they do not make Skills-UK an awarding body.

2. Definitions and Principles

A reasonable adjustment removes or reduces substantial disadvantage experienced by a disabled learner because of a provision, criterion or practice, a physical feature or the lack of an auxiliary aid, within the applicable legal duty.

Other learning support may also be appropriate without a formal diagnosis or disability. Temporary conditions may require an access arrangement under awarding organisation rules even where they do not meet the legal definition of disability.

Special consideration is an adjustment or other permitted response to temporary illness, injury or another adverse event affecting assessment, usually considered at or after the assessment under the awarding organisation's rules. It is not a guarantee of additional marks, achievement or certification.

Genuine competence standards must be maintained. The method by which competence is assessed may nevertheless need adjustment; staff must not treat every customary assessment method as an unchangeable competence standard.

3. Identifying and Requesting Support

Learners may disclose needs or request an adjustment at any stage through their Tutor or another member of staff. Staff must also respond to observed barriers sensitively and consult the learner rather than make assumptions.

Requests should describe the barrier, its effect on learning or assessment and what may help. Evidence must be proportionate and meet relevant awarding organisation requirements. Do not insist on a medical diagnosis for ordinary support where it is not necessary.

Tutors must pass assessment requests promptly to the Quality Director or nominated assessment lead. The lead must check the qualification specification, permitted arrangements, evidence and application deadlines, identifying whether the centre can authorise the arrangement or must obtain external approval.

4. Decision and Implementation

Record the need, evidence, proposed adjustment, decision, authorising person, external approval where required, implementation and review arrangements. The learner must receive a clear explanation of the decision and any alternative.

Possible adjustments include accessible formats, assistive technology, rest breaks, adapted room arrangements, a reader or scribe, alternative presentation or additional time where permitted. An example in this policy does not authorise it for every assessment.

Arrangements must be in place before assessment where required, and relevant staff must know their responsibilities. Test technology and ensure the learner can use it. Do not apply an unauthorised arrangement or retrospectively change evidence to conceal an omission.

If a request cannot be agreed as proposed, explain the reason, consider reasonable alternatives and escalate unresolved legal or assessment questions. Funding availability does not by itself determine whether an equality duty exists.

5. Special Consideration Procedure

Staff must report relevant events promptly to the assessment lead, record dates and effects, and obtain only the evidence required. The lead will check eligibility and submit an application within the awarding organisation's deadline.

The awarding organisation decides outcomes where its rules require this. Staff must not promise a result or substitute an internal decision for external authority. A postponed assessment, permitted alternative or further assessment opportunity may be more appropriate in some circumstances.

Communicate the outcome and any next steps to the learner. Retain the application, evidence and decision securely.

6. Review Appeals and Confidentiality

Review support with the learner and adjust ineffective arrangements. Learners may challenge a decision through the Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure, including the awarding organisation's route where relevant. A manager not involved in the original decision should review an internal challenge wherever practicable.

Provide an accessible appeal route and help learners meet external deadlines. Complaints about service or treatment may also use the Complaints Policy.

Health and disability information must have an appropriate lawful basis and special category condition, be restricted to need and retained under the relevant schedule. Sharing necessary adjustment instructions does not require circulating a full medical history.

The Quality Director oversees implementation, standardisation and staff guidance. Review this policy annually and when legal or awarding organisation requirements change.

7. Related Policies and Procedures

- Access to Fair Assessment Policy;
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy;
- Learner Support Policy;
- Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure;
- Examination and Invigilation Policy;
- Internal Quality Assurance Strategy;
- Complaints Policy;
- Data Protection and GDPR Policy; and
- Document Retention and Secure Storage Policy.