



BCT Reasonable Adjustment, Access Arrangements and Special Considerations Policy

As an inclusive further education college, Big Creative Education supports learners with a diverse range of disabilities in order for them to have an equal opportunity to succeed.

BCE complies with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the amendments to the Act, and will not tolerate discrimination based on disability. We adhere to the principles of the Disability Discrimination Act to allow fair access for our learners, to curriculum courses or qualifications.

A **reasonable adjustment** is defined as an action that is intended to reduce the effect of a physical or learning disability/difficulty that places a learner at a substantial disadvantage during an assessment.

A **special consideration** is a post assessment adjustment which can be applied if there is reason a learner may have been disadvantaged during an assessment or examination, due to an unforeseen circumstance during or near to the time of that assessment or examination.

Some examples of this could be:

- Incapacitating or terminal illness
- Recent bereavement of a family member or close friend
- Serious domestic crisis

We aim to facilitate open access for learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustments and/or special consideration in assessments, without compromising the assessment of the skills, knowledge, understanding or competence being measured. This will be achieved in two ways:

1. Firstly, by reasonable adjustment; this is agreed at the pre-assessment planning stage and is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments will not affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes or give the learner an assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.
2. Secondly, through special consideration, this is a post-assessment allowance to reflect temporary illness, injury or indisposition that occurred at the time of assessment. Any special consideration granted can only be a relatively small adjustment to ensure that the integrity of the assessment is not compromised.

Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments may involve but are not limited to the following:

- Changing time allowance
- Adapting assessment materials – providing assessment material in large format, Braille, supplying coloured overlays, assessment material on coloured paper or in audio format
- Assisting accessibility during assessment - readers/scribes, practical assistants/transcribers or prompters
- Re-organising the physical environment in which the assessment takes place or providing an alternative assessment location

- Changing or adapting the assessment method
- Using assistive technology

Reasonable adjustments must be approved with the relevant awarding body and set in place prior to the assessment commencing. The work submitted following a reasonable adjustment will be assessed in the same way as the work from other learners.

Not all adjustments granted for specific examinations will be reasonable, permissible or practical situations. The learner may not need or be allowed the same adjustment for all assessments.

BCE will endeavour to put in place any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary to enable learners to achieve and will make clear any restrictions on progression routes that may occur as a result of not achieving certain outcomes.

Not every learner who is disabled or has a specific learning difficulty will be entitled to reasonable adjustment, as allowing reasonable adjustment is dependent upon how it will facilitate access for that learner.

All reasonable adjustments will be transparent and unbiased, recorded on relevant documentation and will be kept on record in compliance with JCQ and awarding body regulations. It is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer to ensure that any access arrangements implemented by the centre on behalf of a learner, are based on firm evidence that there is a barrier to assessment at the time of examination.

The recruitment process includes the lead tutors and SENCo, assessing each potential learner and making justifiable and professional judgments about the learner's potential to successfully complete the course and achieve the qualification. Such assessment will identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the learner to facilitate access to the assessment. Where the recruitment process identifies that the learner may not be able to achieve all parts of assessment for the selected qualification, this will be communicated clearly to the learner. The learner may still decide to proceed with studying a particular qualification and not be entered for all or part of the assessment.

Special Considerations

A special consideration is consideration given following an assessment for a learner who was prepared for and present at an assessment but who may have been disadvantaged by temporary illness, injury or adverse circumstances that have arisen at or near to the time of assessment. A special consideration cannot give the learner an unfair advantage but should be granted when their performance in an assessment is affected by circumstances beyond their control, e.g. recent personal illness, accident, bereavement or serious disturbance during the assessment.

In order to apply for special consideration, evidence must be supplied by a learner and then by BCE as a centre, to the awarding body, accompanied by the relevant paperwork.

All applications for special consideration will be made on a case-by-case basis and therefore separate applications will be made for each learner. The only exception to this is where a group of learners have been affected by a similar circumstance such as a fire alarm during an assessment; in this case a group application will be made with a list of affected learners attached to the application and a statement from the invigilator.

The process for applications for access arrangements is as follows:

- Prior to the academic year commencing the IQA dept updates the SEND team with a list of the courses and their respective qualifications and Awarding Bodies.
- The learner self identifies on the course application form during enrolment that they have received AA previously / that they believe they need them.
- This information is sent in a report to the SEND team
- During the Initial Assessment period tutors will notify the SEND team of any further learners they feel may qualify for AA
- The SEND team carries out the appropriate tests to ascertain which learners are eligible for AA and what the AA should be.
 - SEND team to priorities learners doing November resits
- The SEND team updates respective MIS with who qualifies for AA and what the AA need is
- The SEND team are responsible for the administration of Access Arrangements for all Maths and English GCSE and Functional Skills awarding bodies
- The IQA department are responsible for the administration of Access Arrangements for all vocational awarding bodies

Process of Application to the Awarding Body

For vocational qualifications the IQA Team will make both Access Arrangements &/or Special Consideration requests through the awarding body's online form wherein details of the learner, course and evidence of requiring an adjustment will be uploaded. This must be done at least two weeks prior to an exam date for access arrangements, in agreement with what has been discussed with the SEN Team.

To apply for special considerations, this is a decision made by the Lead IQA or Head of English & Math after consulting the relevant staff, to gauge if a student was significantly affected during an assessment period. This will be applied for by the IQA Team or Exams Officer after the assessment has taken place.

The awarding body will then contact the centre's Exams Officer to approve or reject the application. If an application is approved, the AA will be applied to the learner. Where it is rejected, the IQA Team will review the feedback from the awarding body and look to see where further evidence can be found to support the application. Without Awarding body approval no AA are to be given.

For English or Math (E&M) the SEND team will apply for AA and the head of E&M will complete any special consideration requests.

In order to ensure that any adjustment to assessment will only provide the learner with the necessary assistance without giving the learner an unfair advantage over other learners, the extent to which the learner is affected by the disability or difficulty will be determined by the SEN's Team validation. Evidence for validation could include:

- Evidence of assessment of the learner's needs made within the centre by the relevant member of staff with competence and responsibility in this area. Staff include learning support staff, teaching staff, trainers, assessors and other specialist staff. Information from previous centres attended by the learner may also be included.

- History of provision within the centre. This should include information about the support received by the learner during the learning or training programme and during formative assessments. Evidence of the way in which the learner's needs are being met during the learning programme should be documented for audit purposes.
- Written evidence produced by independent, authoritative, specialists. This could take the form of medical, psychological or professional reports or assessments.

By submitting an application for reasonable adjustments or special consideration, it is the centre's responsibility to ensure that the evidence provided is valid and will benefit the learner by reasonable means.

Appeals

An appeal can be made in regards to the outcome of an access arrangement or special consideration judgement. This should follow the procedure outlined in BCT's appeals policy (please refer to the document for more information).

Date Updated	To Review	Responsibility
Jun 2025	Jul 2027	JD