



Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Who is this policy for:

This policy is for centres and/or learners, who want to submit reasonable adjustments and special considerations which may be applied in relation to AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group approved qualifications or units/components.

Owner

Compliance Director

Date of next review:

June 2026

Version control

Version Number	Date	Description
1	March 2024	▪ Document created

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Section 1 – Scope

1.1 Scope

Who is this policy for?

This policy is for centres and/or learners, who want to submit reasonable adjustments which may be applied in relation to AIM Qualification and Assessment Group approved qualifications or units/components.

This policy and related procedures are intended for:

- centres and their staff delivering AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group (AIM) approved qualifications or units who wish to request and apply a reasonable adjustment for a learner
- learners registered on AIM approved qualifications or units, who require and/or have been granted a reasonable adjustment
- AIM staff to ensure that all reasonable adjustment requests are dealt with and applied in a consistent and fair manner and to meet the requirements of qualifications regulations

The purpose of this policy is to:

- define reasonable adjustments
- identify examples of reasonable adjustments and reasons why they may and may not be authorised by AIM
- detail the responsibilities that AIM, centres, centre staff and learners have
- provide key information relating to reasonable adjustments, including timescales, and variations for Access to HE qualifications
- provide information on evidence requirements for reasonable adjustments
- detail follow-up actions after reasonable adjustment decisions have been made by AIM
- provide the regulatory references which apply
- provide useful contacts of both AIM and the various regulators

1.2 About us

AIM is a leading **Awarding Organisation** and one of the UK's largest **Access Validating Agencies (AVA)**. We work in partnership with colleges, independent training providers, universities, employers and voluntary organisations to develop accredited and regulated vocational qualifications. Our qualifications cover a range of academic levels from Entry Level to Level 6 across a wide range of subject areas. As an AVA we are licensed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) to develop and award nationally recognised Access to Higher Education Diplomas. AIM is also an independent, government recognised, **End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO)** responsible for an apprentice's final assessment to ensure they can do the job for which they've trained.

Section 2 – Policy Detail

2.1 Definition

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

Reasonable adjustments are used for disabilities or long-term conditions. There is no reasonable adjustments requirement for translation into the English language. The Equality Act 2010 does not include people whose first language is not English. Centres may wish to use a translator for the teaching and learning; however, the assessment must be completed in English or Welsh where the qualification has been made available by AIM in the medium of Welsh

Reasonable adjustment examples

The items listed below are examples of reasonable adjustments and reasons why they may be authorised by AIM. These are not exhaustive, and the examples are only intended as indicative guidance.

Examples of reasonable adjustments

The following are examples of reasonable adjustments which may be authorised by AIM:

- Revising usual assessment arrangements, eg, allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment
- Adapting assessment materials, eg, providing materials in braille
- Providing assistance during assessment, eg, a sign language interpreter or a reader
- Reorganising the assessment room, eg, removing adverse visual stimuli for an autistic learner
- Changing the assessment method, eg, from a written assessment to a spoken assessment
- Using assistive technology, eg, screen reading, or voice activated software
- Providing different coloured backgrounds to screens for onscreen assessments or using different coloured paper for paper-based assessments

2.2 Responsibilities

The following represent the key responsibilities of AIM, centres, centre staff and learners.

2.2.1 AIM responsibilities

Overseen by the Compliance Director, AIM will ensure that all:

- reasonable adjustments fully comply with equality legislation and regulatory requirements
- reasonable adjustments ensure that the rights of individual learners, to access qualifications and assessments in a way most appropriate for their individual needs, are upheld
- reasonable steps are taken to remove any disadvantage to learners which is unjustifiable, and to maintain records of any disadvantage which it believes is justifiable, and the reasons why
- reasonable adjustments do not give the learner an unfair advantage
- reasonable adjustments are approved, and processes applied fairly and consistently
- reasonable adjustments are as rigorous as assessment methods used with other learners
- reasonable adjustments are able to be moderated or verified
- qualifications and assessments' integrity are always maintained

2.2.2 Centre responsibilities

All centres delivering AIM qualifications **must**:

- ensure that all staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of AIM qualifications and any learners undertaking one are fully aware of this policy and related procedures
- have a named person in place with designated responsibility
- have an assessment policy in place
- have a policy and related procedures in place for dealing with reasonable adjustments
- ensure that it has an effective Appeals Policy and Procedure in place so that a learner can query any decision taken by the centre not to allow a reasonable adjustment
- ensure that all staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of AIM qualifications and any learners undertaking one are fully aware of the centres Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Procedures and Appeals Policy and Procedures
- ensure that all staff who advise or guide potential learners have had training to make them aware of the impact of learning difficulty, disability or other concerns in relation to reasonable adjustment issues
- create an atmosphere which encourages learners to disclose needs which may require reasonable adjustments to be requested from AIM
- anticipate and make adequate provision for possible adjustments future learners might need
- ensure that it can resource any reasonable adjustment approved by AIM
- follow AIM procedures for requesting reasonable adjustment
- follow AIM guidance for implementing each reasonable adjustment
- ensure that either the head of centre or examinations officer support each application for a reasonable adjustment
- ensure that evidence is gathered, and records retained, for each reasonable adjustment requested and approved by AIM, for audit purposes

- ensure that buildings used for assessment are accessible to all learners, as far as is practicable
- ensure health and safety is not compromised

2.2.3 Centre staff responsibilities

All centre staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of AIM qualifications must:

- be fully aware of this policy and related procedures
- be fully aware of the centre's access to Assessment Policy, Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Procedures and Appeals Policy and Procedures
- select appropriate qualifications for learners depending on their particular circumstances
- identify and discuss with learners during initial diagnostic, any difficulties they may have in accessing assessment
- explain to learners the assessment requirements of the qualification
- make it clear to learners at the outset if it seems they will not be able to meet all of the assessment requirements and explain the restriction on achievement to them, as a result
- discuss with learners at the assessment point that they are ready to take the assessment using the methodology required
- design centre-set assessment activities or material in an inclusive way so that they are accessible to all learners, with language that is also clear, unambiguous and free from jargon
- select an appropriate reasonable adjustment to make assessment accessible without lowering the standard and involve the learner in making the decision
- follow AIM procedures for requesting each reasonable adjustment
- follow AIM guidance for implementing each reasonable adjustment
- gather evidence and retain records for each reasonable adjustment requested and approved by AIM, for audit purposes

2.2.4 Learner responsibilities

Any learner undertaking AIM qualifications must:

- be aware of this policy and related procedures
- be familiar with the centre's access to Assessment Policy, Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Procedures and Appeals Policy and Procedures
- declare any illnesses or conditions which require special needs when registering with the centre and prior to course commencement
- declare any illnesses or conditions, for the purposes of reasonable adjustments being made, prior to course commencement

- provide supporting evidence to the centre

2.3 Process

2.3.1 Reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires AIM to make reasonable adjustments where a learner, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. AIM is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage.

Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which include, but are not limited to the:

- needs of the disabled learner
- effectiveness of the adjustment
- cost of the adjustment
- likely impact of the adjustment upon the learner and other learners
- ability of the learner to demonstrate key competencies of the qualification

Reasonable adjustments to the assessment process must:

- not invalidate the assessment requirements of the qualification
- not give learners an unfair advantage
- reflect the learner's normal way of working
- be based on the individual need of the learner

An adjustment will not be approved if it:

- involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body
- involves unreasonable timeframes
- affects the security and integrity of the assessment

Reasonable adjustments must be agreed by AIM and set in place by the centre before the assessment takes place. The work produced by the learner must be assessed in the same way as all other learners.

The work produced by learners must at all times:

- meet the requirements of the specifications regardless of the process or method used
- be as rigorous as assessment methods used with other learners
- be accessible

- be subject to the same assessment processes as all other evidence
- be subject to the same internal and external quality assurance processes as all other evidence

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 AIM. These are detailed in the Reasonable Adjustment Permissions Table. [Please see Appendix 2.](#)

Where reasonable adjustment is permitted at the discretion of the centre, AIM requires centres to keep records for inspection, including any declarations 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.

Where AIM permission is required, centres must complete a reasonable adjustment request via QuartWeb providing relevant details and, where appropriate, supporting evidence.

Requests for reasonable adjustments for paper examinations must be submitted no later than **25 working days** before the assessment via QuartzWeb. For online exams, requests for reasonable adjustments must be submitted no later than **10 working days** before the assessment. Failure to submit a reasonable adjustment application within these timeframes could result in the application being rejected and sanctions applied to the centre for not following documented procedures. Reasonable adjustments cannot be applied and approved retrospectively.

Approved reasonable adjustments are valid for an academic year. All applications must be completed annually for each learner.

Centres must keep records of reasonable adjustments they have permitted and those they have requested from AIM. These records must normally be kept for three years following the assessment to which they apply.

2.3.3 Evidence

Any application for a modification to an assessment via a reasonable adjustment request, must be supported by evidence that is valid, sufficient and reliable. 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 centre must be clear about the extent to which the learner is affected by the disability or difficulty.

Where the centre can verify supporting evidence of the disability or difficulty and where the implications are clear, such as for a learner with physical difficulties, profound hearing impairment or who are registered as blind or partially sighted, the centre does not need to provide further evidence of these physical difficulties.

Where the implications of the difficulty are not obvious, such as for identified learning difficulties, or mental health difficulties, the centre will need to provide additional evidence of the effect of the impairment on the learner's performance in the assessment.

The centre must decide which evidence will best assist understanding of the learner's circumstances:

- 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 must 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 must 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.

A learner with a statement of special educational need does not automatically qualify for reasonable adjustments. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that all applications for reasonable adjustments are based on the individual need of the learner and that the evidence in support of the application is sufficient, reliable and valid.

A centre must maintain records of all cases for **three years** for audit purposes and to monitor the effectiveness of the reasonable adjustments that have been made.

2.3.4 Communication of decisions

AIM will acknowledge receipt of the reasonable adjustment within **two working days** of submission. The outcome of the decision to authorise a reasonable adjustment will be communicated directly to the centre **within 10 working days** of receipt of the application. Please note that the timeframe may be extended if AIM require further evidence or clarification.

2.3.5 Malpractice

A centre must note that failure to comply with the guidance regarding adjustments to assessments set out by AIM has the potential to constitute malpractice and may lead to AIM withholding the learner's result.

Failure to comply is defined as any or all of the following:

- Putting in place arrangements without seeking prior approval from AIM, where this is required
- Exceeding the allowances agreed with AIM
- Agreeing delegated adjustments that are not supported by evidence

- Failing to maintain records of reasonable adjustments for audit purposes
- Failing to report delegated adjustments to AIM, where this is required

Instances of malpractice will be dealt in accordance with the [AIM Malpractice and Maladministration policy](#).

2.3.6 Appeals against the reasonable adjustment decision

If a centre disagrees with a decision made by AIM about a reasonable adjustment, the centre can ask for the decision to be reviewed under the [AIM Enquiries and Appeals policy](#).

Section 3 – Regulatory references

3.1 Conditions, Principle and licencing criteria

This policy is intended to meet our regulatory requirements. In particular:

Section /Principle	Condition/Licensing criteria
Malpractice and maladministration	Condition A8
Accessibility of qualifications	Condition D2
Designing an assessment	Condition E4
Language of the assessment	Condition G2
Use of language and stimulus materials	Condition G3
Arrangements for reasonable adjustments	Condition G6
Completion of the assessment	Condition G8
Delivering the assessment	Condition G9
Marking the assessment	Condition H1
Results of a qualification based on sufficient evidence	Condition H5
Appeals process	Condition I1
Documented accessible procedures for appeals	Licensing Criteria 30a, c
Procedures for appeals	Licensing Criteria 31
Assessment practices on access to HE courses	Licensing Criteria 96
Consistent standards are applied in assessment	Licensing Criteria 99
The awarding body and its providers must provide clear information on their procedures, products and services and ensure that they are accurate and appropriate to accredited qualifications	Principle 5
The awarding body must ensure that its systems and processes for the identification, design, development, implementation and review of qualifications and assessments are fit for purpose	Principle 10
The awarding body and its providers must ensure that they have the necessary arrangements and resources required to manage and administer qualification delivery and assessment	Principle 12

The awarding body and its providers must ensure that its qualifications and their delivery and assessment are fair, inclusive and accessible to learners	Principle 14
The awarding body and its providers must ensure that it has safeguards to prevent and manage cases of malpractice and maladministration	Principle 18

Section 4 – Appendices and links

Appendix 1 - Useful contacts

The following provides contact details for AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group and its regulators.

AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group Contact details

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact us:

Telephone: [0333 034 8833](tel:03330348833)

Email: enquiries@aimgroup.org.uk

Regulators' contact details

CCEA

Telephone: [02890 261 200](tel:02890261200)

Email: info@ccea.org.uk

Ofqual

Telephone: [0300 303 3344](tel:03003033344)

Email: public.enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk

Qualifications Wales

Telephone: [0333 077 2701](tel:03330772701)

Email: enquiries@qualificationswales.org

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)

Telephone: [01452 557 000](tel:01452557000)

Email: enquiries@qaa.ac.uk

SQA Accreditation

Telephone: [0345 279 1000](tel:03452791000)

Email: accreditation@sqa.org.uk

Appendix 2 - Possible reasonable adjustments and authority to approve

The table below provides some possible reasonable adjustments that can be made and who is responsible for taking the decision. It must be noted however that if your centre is in doubt, they must contact AIM for advice.

Reasonable Adjustments	Assessments NOT taken under examination conditions	Assessments taken under examination conditions	AIM devised set Task
Extra time up to 25%	Centre	AIM	Centre
Extra Time beyond deadline window *	N/A	N/A	AIM
Extra time exceeding 25%	Centre	AIM	Centre
Supervised rest breaks	Centre	AIM	Centre
Changes in organisation of the assessment room	Centre	AIM	Centre
Separate accommodation within the centre	Centre	AIM	Centre
Taking the assessment at an alternative venue	Centre	AIM	Centre
Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, tinted spectacles, CCTV and OCR scanners	Centre	AIM	Centre
Use of assistive technology	Centre	AIM	Centre
Use of bilingual dictionaries and bilingual translation dictionaries	AIM	AIM	AIM
Assessment material in enlarged format	Centre	AIM	Centre
Assessment material in braille	AIM	AIM	AIM
Language modified assessment material	AIM	AIM	AIM
Assessment material in British Sign Language (BSL)	AIM	AIM	AIM
Assessment material on coloured paper	Centre	AIM	Centre

Assessment material in audio format	Centre	AIM	Centre
Use of ICT to present responses	Centre	AIM	Centre
Responses using electronic recording devices	Centre	AIM	AIM
Responses in BSL	AIM	AIM	AIM
Reader	Centre	AIM	AIM
Scribe	Centre	AIM	AIM
BSL interpreter	Centre	AIM	AIM
Reasonable Adjustments	Assessments NOT taken under examination conditions	Assessments taken under examination conditions	AIM devised set Task
Prompter	Centre	AIM	AIM
Practical assistant	Centre	AIM	AIM
Transcriber	Centre	AIM	AIM

Guidance on types of reasonable adjustments

- The learner has access only to those facilities (for example spelling/grammar checker, voice activated software, speech reading software) which have been agreed in advance with AIM.
- The learner is not able to gain access to existing files or documents. Where a system operates from flash drive, CD or floppy disk, the learner must be supplied with a flash drive or disk containing only the software required for the assessment.
- The computer must be free-standing and not be connected to the Internet, unless this is required in the assessment.
- The learner is accommodated separately if the use of a computer is likely to distract other learners. In this case separate invigilation must be arranged.

Reasonable Adjustments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The learner’s work is saved frequently and, if possible, using an auto-save facility. ▪ The learner is present when his/her work is printed. It is normal practice for a printed version of the learner’s work to be submitted and authenticated for assessment, and not the disk. ▪ Where a question/answer booklet is provided, the learner might need to answer some questions in the booklet and type other answers. Answers must be clearly labelled and the printout must be attached to the question paper/answer booklet. ▪ The learner must be proficient in the use of the computer and its software. ▪ The learner’s work is saved frequently and, if possible, using an auto-save facility.
Responses using electronic recording devices	Recording the learner’s responses electronically must not be allowed where it will invalidate the assessment requirements. The centre must ensure that the appropriate recording equipment is provided in full working order. The learner using recording equipment must be accommodated separately, with separate invigilation, where its use will disturb other learners.
Responses in BSL	Signing of the learner’s responses on video must not be allowed where it will invalidate the assessment requirements.
Reader	Your centre must check that the use of a reader is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the learner to undertake the assessment. Your centre must select a reader and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities. A separate invigilator must be present when a reader is used. A reader must not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.
Scribe	Your centre must check that the use of scribe is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the learner to undertake the assessment. Your centre must select a scribe and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities. A separate invigilator must be present when a scribe is used.
Guidance on types of reasonable adjustments	
BSL interpreter	Your centre must check that the use of BSL interpreter is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the learner to undertake the assessment. Your centre must select a BSL interpreter and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities. A separate invigilator must be present when a BSL interpreter is used. A BSL interpreter must not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.

Prompter	Your centre must check that the use of a prompter is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the learner to undertake the assessment. Your centre must select a prompter and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities. A separate invigilator must be present when a prompter is used. A prompter must not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.
Practical Assistant	Your centre must check that the use of a practical assistant is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the learner to undertake the assessment. Your centre must select a practical assistant and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities. A separate invigilator must be present when a practical assistant is used. A practical assistant must not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.
Transcriber	Your centre must check that the use of a transcriber is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the learner to undertake the assessment. Your centre must select a transcriber and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities. A transcriber must not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.

Appendix 3 - Examples of required evidence for reasonable adjustment

Evidence must be supplied with every request for reasonable adjustment. The nature of the documentary evidence will vary according to the circumstances. In all cases evidence must demonstrate how the learner’s circumstance has or will impact on their ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.

Circumstance	Required evidence
Disability	A current Statement of Special Educational Needs, or an Education, Health and Care Plan, or an Individual Development Plan, which confirms the candidate’s disability (supplemented by the required centre-based evidence); or a fully completed JCQ Form 8 with an assessment (Part 2 of Form 8) carried out no earlier than the start of school year 9 (aged 13-14yrs) by a specialist assessor, access arrangements assessor or an appropriately qualified psychologist confirming a learning difficulty relating to secondary/further education.
Illness	An original medical certificate or letter from an appropriate medical professional confirming the nature of the illness and the likely impact it is having on the learner's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.
Hospitalisation	A medical letter/certificate from the relevant hospital confirming the nature and severity of the learner's circumstances and the likely period of impact on the learner's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.

Family	A medical certificate/letter from an independent medical professional confirming the nature and severity of the family circumstances and the likely impact it is having on the learner's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.
Bereavement	A death certificate or a letter confirming the death from an independent person, eg doctor or counsellor (usually not a family member), with their contact details provided, including a view on the closeness of the relationship and the impact it is having on the learner's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.
Circumstance	Required evidence
Acute personal/emotional circumstances	An original medical certificate or letter from an appropriate medical professional confirming the nature of the illness and/or circumstances and the likely impact it is having on the learner's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.
Victim of crime	A written statement of events which is supported by written evidence from the Police (including a crime reference number). Where the impact of the crime has led to a medical or other professional consultation, an original medical certificate or letter from an appropriate medical professional confirming the likely impact the reported crime had/is having on the learner's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.
Domestic disruption	Where significant and unforeseen domestic disruption has occurred very close to a timetabled examination, a letter from an appropriate independent individual/authority detailing the relevant circumstances and an indication of the likely impact with their contact details provided.
Jury service (UK)	A letter from the court together with proof that a deferral has been requested and rejected, or proof that a previous request for deferral has been accepted.
Court attendance (UK)	Where a learner is required to attend a tribunal or court as a witness, defendant or plaintiff, the learner must provide official correspondence from the tribunal/court confirming attendance or a solicitor's letter detailing the nature and dates of the legal proceedings and the requirement for the learner to attend.
Other	The list of circumstances cannot be exhaustive, and it is possible that other circumstances will arise that must be considered as acceptable.

Disclaimer: Please note that any downloaded version of our policies may not be the most current iteration. For the latest updates and accurate information, kindly refer to the version available on our official website.