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AIM Assessment

Reasonable adjustments and special considerations

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Introduction

This document is intended for apprentices, training providers and employers and provides information about applying for reasonable adjustments and special consideration for end-point assessment.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain how appropriate adjustments can be made to assessments for apprentices who have difficulties or disabilities that effect their ability to complete the assessments
- explain how consideration can be given to apprentices who experience temporary events outside of their control that affect their performance in or ability to take an assessment
- ensure that the integrity of our assessment materials and the skills, knowledge, understanding or competence being measured is not compromised

The policy is also designed to explain:

- how and when you should apply for reasonable adjustments and special consideration for one or more apprentices and what evidence we require
- the process we will follow to make a decision on the application

About us

AIM Qualification and Assessment Group is an end-point assessment organisation approved on the register for a range of apprenticeship standards. AIM Group are also a regulated awarding organisation and Access Validating Agency.

Assessment schedules and dates

Section 1

Assessment schedules and dates

Dates for an apprentice's assessments are scheduled in advance of the gateway and confirmed and agreed with the apprentice, their employer and training provider.

Extensions for project/report-based assessments

Apprentices will receive a deadline for the submission of work for assessment for apprenticeships with a project or report-based assessment. If there are valid, evidenced reasons why an apprentice will not be able to submit work on the stated deadline, the apprentice or employer may use the **reasonable adjustment form** to request an extension. All applications for extensions require evidence to corroborate the application.

An application for an extension should be submitted **at least ten working days** before the submission deadline date.

Acceptable reasons for requests for extensions (*inc but not limited to*):

- Client have amended elements of the project and evidence now not available
- Illness
- Unexpected absence from work

Unacceptable reasons for requests for extensions:

- Workload
- Unawareness of the submission deadline
- Computer problems
- Annual leave

Rescheduling of assessments

There are additional charges for rescheduling an assessment once the date for assessment has been agreed. This is because we have to contract with specialists, more information on these charges can be found in our Pricing policy.

Reasonable adjustments

Section 2

These are adjustments made to an assessment for an end-point assessment to enable an apprentice to fairly demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding. Apprentices may be eligible for reasonable adjustments if their ability to access an assessment is likely to be substantially affected by a particular impairment, for example communication and interaction, cognition and learning, physical or behavioural, emotional and social needs.

The nature of any reasonable adjustment depends on the apprentice's particular requirements and the assessment method being considered.

Reasonable adjustment may not be appropriate if the apprentice's particular difficulty directly affects performance in the attributes being assessed. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes, nor must they give the apprentice an assessment advantage over other apprentices undertaking the same or similar assessments.

Reasonable adjustments requested must replicate the apprentice's normal working practices.

Recruitment and initial assessment of apprentices

Prior to registration, the training provider must ensure that apprentices are provided with the correct information and advice on their standard and check that the standard will meet their needs. Training providers should assess the suitability of each potential apprentice and make appropriate professional judgments about the apprentice's potential to successfully complete the end-point assessments and achieve the apprenticeship at the specified level. The training provider must also ensure that the apprentice is able to communicate effectively in English (this includes listening, speaking, reading and writing) and understand the requirements of the standard and the information within the assessment materials in English without assistance.

During this process it may be identified that the apprentice will require additional support or reasonable adjustments to be made to enable them to be assessed fairly. This should be discussed with the apprentice.

Apprentices should be able to achieve the end-point assessment requirements and any adjustments made should not compensate the apprentice for lack of understanding, knowledge or skills. The apprentice must be able to cope with the content of the assessment and be able to work at the level required for the assessment.

It is the training providers responsibility to communicate to the apprentice that they may not be able to demonstrate attainment if their particular difficulty directly affects performance in the attributes being assessed.

Making reasonable adjustments

The training provider, apprentice or employer must apply for reasonable adjustments where the need has been identified. Requests should be based on the reasonable adjustments made by the employer to enable the apprentice to undertake their work on a day to day basis.

The adjustments requested must:

- not give the apprentice an unfair advantage.
- not compromise or invalidate the assessment requirements of the standard.
- be based on the individual need of the apprentice.
- reflect the apprentice's normal way of working.

All apprentices' performance will be assessed against set standards set out in the standard's assessment plan and AIM's assessment materials and, although they cannot be altered, it may be possible to change the delivery or process of assessment so that each apprentice has an equal opportunity to demonstrate what they know and what they can do.

The adjustment must be based on the individual need of the apprentice, the assessment requirements of the standard and the nature and extent of the support given as part of the apprentice's role in the workplace.

For all reasonable adjustments we will ensure that the adjustments made:

- enable the apprentice to meet the specified criteria at the required level.
- do not give the apprentice an unfair advantage.
- meet the requirements set out in the assessment plan regardless of the process or method used.
- are as rigorous as assessment methods used with other apprentices.
- are able to be moderated or verified.
- are appropriate for the apprentices and their normal way of working.

It is recognised that during an apprenticeship some will have to cope with a range of illnesses and experiences which are part of the normal course of events in life. In many cases these circumstances will have little or no noticeable effect on assessment performance. However, there may be serious circumstances of a medical or personal nature, which affect apprentices for a significant period of time during the end-point assessment period, which are beyond their control, and which have a recognisable effect on their performance.

Special consideration can be given to an apprentice who has temporarily experienced an illness or injury, or some other event outside of their control which has had or is reasonably likely to have had an effect on their ability to take an assessment or on their level of attainment in an assessment.

If there are valid, evidenced reasons why an apprentice could not submit or attend for assessment then they may submit a request for special consideration.

Special consideration should not be granted solely on the grounds of disability and apprentices must declare their needs prior to assessment and any reasonable adjustments implemented before the assessment takes place.

Special consideration should not give an apprentice an unfair advantage. The apprentice's result must reflect their achievement in the assessment and not necessarily their potential ability. Special consideration, if successful, may lead to a small post-assessment adjustment to the apprentice's results, but not necessarily so. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances and reflect the difficulty faced by the apprentice.

We do not define those circumstances which are serious, and which are not. However, the following are examples of circumstances which will probably not be taken into account:

- circumstances over which an apprentice has some control through prior planning (e.g., moving house, getting married, computer problems, workload).
- circumstances experienced by all or most apprentices (e.g., financial difficulties) minor illnesses of a short-term nature.
- circumstances which have already been appropriately provided for by a reasonable adjustment.

All apprentices must meet the minimum requirements to achieve the apprenticeship as specified in the assessment plan regardless of any special consideration applied.

A list of examples of special consideration can be found at [appendix 2](#).

Applying for reasonable adjustments or special consideration

Section 4

Reasonable adjustments

To make an application for a reasonable adjustment on behalf of one or more apprentices a [reasonable adjustment form](#) must be completed. All applications must be accompanied by supporting evidence. Applications without evidence will usually be rejected. The form is available on the AIM Assessment pages of our website www.aim-group.org.uk.

The form asks for details of each apprentice's circumstances, evidence of any medical conditions and any other relevant information. Once completed the form with the required evidence (*see appendix 2*) should be emailed to assessment@aim-group.org.uk.

Requests for reasonable adjustments should be submitted at the gateway, and as a minimum no **less than 10 working days** before any assessment. AIM will acknowledge receipt within two working days and will aim to provide a decision **within 5 working days**. It may not be possible to respond within this timeframe if we need to call on specialist advice. In such cases, we will inform the applicant of the expected response time.

Special consideration

To make an application for a special consideration on behalf of one or more apprentices a special considerations form must be completed. All applications must be accompanied by supporting evidence. Applications without evidence will usually be rejected. The form is available on the AIM Assessment pages of our website www.aim-group.org.uk.

Requests for special consideration should be submitted no more than 48 hours after the planned or actual assessment date. AIM will acknowledge receipt and will provide a decision within five working days of application.

Examples of evidence that you should submit to support the application can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

Requests for special consideration may only be accepted after the results of assessment have been released in the following circumstances:

- Medical evidence comes to light about an apprentice's condition, which demonstrates that the apprentice must have been affected by the condition at the time of the assessment, even though the problem revealed itself only after the assessment.

How we will deal with requests

All requests for reasonable adjustments and special consideration are reviewed by AIM's Compliance team.

The Compliance team will review the information provided using precedents, guidance published by our EQA bodies and specialist advice from others where appropriate, before deciding to approve or decline the request.

The Compliance team will review requests bi-weekly and report to the End-Point Assessment Delivery Team.

The Compliance team will report to the End-Point Assessment Delivery Team one of the following decisions in each case:

- **Reject application**
- **Accept application** – effect not applicable
- **Accept application** – effect applicable

The Compliance team will take into account:

- Any evidence to support the case being made
- **Timing** – does the period affected by the application correspond with the date of the assessment?
- How long the apprentice has had to complete the assessment (i.e. date when assessment set and deadline for submission)? Did the apprentice have time to complete the assessment if the application is disregarded?
- Severity of circumstances
- **Nature of circumstances** – The Compliance team, therefore, may accept the validity of the application but consider that it is not applicable to the assessments in question because of timing, for example. The Compliance team will take great care to keep all information confidential.

Once a decision is made AIM will communicate the decision to applicant according to the timetable stated above. If this is not possible and the review will take a little longer, then AIM will contact the applicant. Please note once an application has been rejected you cannot resubmit, if you wish to appeal the decision, then please refer to our Results and Appeals policy.

Types of reasonable adjustment

Appendix 1

The list below provides some possible reasonable adjustments that can be made. These will be based on the reasonable adjustments made by the employer to enable the apprentice to undertake their work.

Please see the link to the Institute of Apprenticeships website, which will detail what assessment methods can be applied for and which adjustments these will link to. Please make sure you use this when applying for any reasonable adjustments, along with this form.

End-point Assessment Reasonable Adjustments Guidance / Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education

- Extra time up to 25%
- Extra time exceeding 25%
- Supervised rest breaks
- Changes in organisation of the assessment room
- Separate accommodation for assessment
- Taking the assessment at an alternative venue
- Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, tinted spectacles, CCTV and OCR scanners
- Use of assistive technology
- Use of bilingual dictionaries and bilingual translation dictionaries
- Assessment material in enlarged format
- Assessment material in braille
- Language modified assessment material
- Assessment material in British sign language (BSL)
- Assessment material on coloured paper
- Assessment material in audio format
- Use of ICT to present responses
- Responses using electronic recording devices
- Responses in BSL
- Reader
- Scribe
- BSL interpreter
- Prompter
- Practical assistant
- Transcriber
- Assessment to be complete remotely
- Extension to EPA period
- Project extensions

Guidance on types of reasonable adjustment

Extra time	Invariably applied to examination-based assessment. Extra time should not be allowed where its use will invalidate the assessment criteria. Extra time should not give the apprentice an unfair advantage over others.
25% extra time for the use of a bilingual dictionary	The use of a bilingual dictionary must reflect the apprentice's normal way of working. It is only to be used in assessments by apprentices whose first language is not English, Irish or Welsh. Extra time must not be awarded to an apprentice using a bilingual translation dictionary in order to compensate for difficulties in reading and writing in English. The translation of assessment materials or the apprentice's answers into or from the apprentice's first language is not allowed.
Supervised rest breaks	AIM will ensure that both the apprentice and their work is supervised during the break. The duration of the break should not be deducted from the assessment time. Rest breaks should not be allowed where their use would invalidate the assessment criteria.
Changes in organisation of the assessment room	AIM will consider the needs of each individual apprentice and, where possible, arrange the assessment room to suit the apprentice.
Separate accommodation for assessment	AIM will ensure that, where apprentices are accommodated separately for assessments taken under examination conditions, usual examination conditions apply, and separate invigilation is arranged.
Taking the assessment at an alternative venue	For assessments taken under examination conditions, standard examination conditions should be in place at the alternative venue and the standard procedures for security of assessment material and despatch of the apprentice's work should be followed.
Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, tinted spectacles, CCTV and OCR scanners	The apprentice should be familiar with how the aid works. The use of aids should not give the apprentice an unfair advantage over other apprentices or invalidate the assessment criteria.
Use of assistive technology	The apprentice should be familiar with how the assistive technology works. The assistive technology should not give the apprentice an unfair advantage over other apprentices or invalidate the assessment criteria.

<p>Use of bilingual dictionaries and bilingual translation dictionaries</p>	<p>The use of a bilingual dictionary should not give the apprentice an unfair advantage over other apprentices or invalidate the assessment criteria. These should not be permitted if proficiency in English, Welsh or Irish (as appropriate) is required for the role supported by the standard.</p>
<p>Language modified assessment material</p>	<p>Language and stimulus materials are only appropriate if they – (a) enable apprentices to demonstrate their level of attainment, (b) require knowledge, skills and understanding which are required for the qualification, (c) are clear and unambiguous (unless ambiguity forms part of the assessment), and (d) are not likely to cause unnecessary offence to apprentices.</p>
<p>Use of ICT to present responses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The computer is to be used solely by the apprentice and not by someone acting on the apprentice’s behalf unless the apprentice has permission to use a scribe. ▪ The apprentice has access only to those facilities (for example spell/grammar checker, voice activated software, speech reading software) which have been agreed in advance with AIM. ▪ The apprentice is not able to gain access to existing files or documents ▪ The computer should be free-standing and not be connected to the Internet, unless this is required in the assessment. ▪ The apprentice is accommodated separately if the use of a computer is likely to distract other apprentices. In this case separate invigilation should be arranged. ▪ The apprentice’s work is saved frequently and, if possible, using an auto-save facility. ▪ The apprentice should be proficient in the use of the computer and its software.
<p>Responses using electronic recording devices</p>	<p>Recording the apprentice’s responses electronically should not be allowed where it will invalidate the assessment requirements. The apprentice using recording equipment should be accommodated separately, with separate invigilation, where its use will disturb other apprentices.</p>
<p>Responses in BSL</p>	<p>Signing of the apprentice’s responses on video should not be allowed where it will invalidate the assessment requirements.</p>
<p>Reader</p>	<p>The Compliance team should check that the use of a reader is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the apprentice to undertake the assessment. A separate invigilator should be present when a reader is used. A reader should not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.</p>

Scribe	The Compliance team should check that the use of scribe is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the apprentice to undertake the assessment. A separate invigilator should be present when a scribe is used.
BSL Interpreter	The Compliance team should check that the use of BSL interpreter is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the apprentice to undertake the assessment. A separate invigilator should be present when a BSL interpreter is used. A BSL interpreter should not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.
Prompter	The Compliance team should check that the use of a prompter is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the apprentice to undertake the assessment. A separate invigilator should be present when a prompter is used. A prompter should not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.
Practical assistant	The Compliance team should check that the use of a practical assistant is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the apprentice to undertake the assessment. A separate invigilator should be present when a practical assistant is used. A practical assistant should not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.
Transcriber	The Compliance team should check that the use of a transcriber is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the apprentice to undertake the assessment. A transcriber should not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.
Assessment to be completed remotely	If the apprentice's workplace has been changed to be permanently from home. The employer will need to confirm that there is no workspace for the apprentice to attend.
Break in Learning	If the apprentice requires a break in learning, the training provider will need to inform AIM of dates the apprentice will be off, including dates they are expected to return. They will need to provide evidence of why the apprentice is off for the Compliance team to review.
Extension to EPA period	If an apprentice requires an extension due to extenuating circumstances outside of their control, then a request will need to be submitted with evidence on how the apprentice has been directly affected. Note: annual leave/workload are not considered as extenuating circumstances

Examples of required evidence for reasonable adjustment and special consideration

Evidence must be supplied with every request for reasonable adjustment or special consideration. The nature of the documentary evidence will vary according to the circumstances. In all cases evidence must demonstrate how the apprentice’s circumstance has or will impact on their ability to undertake the end-point assessment.

In the case of special consideration, it is important that the apprentice provide details of how any circumstances such as those listed below **affected them**, rather than confirmation of any actual event. For example, if the apprentice has been ill with the flu for a period of 10 days, we will expect a doctor’s note which says they were incapacitated between the two relevant dates. If, on the other hand, they have suffered the loss of a close relative and feel their work has been affected, we will need a death certificate or a letter confirming the death from an independent person confirming the relationship with the deceased **and how this affected their performance**, e.g., their emotional condition, their ability to work effectively, etc. It is important that they provide details of how any circumstances such as these affected them, rather than confirmation of any actual event.

Examples of special considerations applied:

- An adjustment to a grade for an apprentice whose performance in an assessment has been affected. This can be applied to an individual element or to an overall grade.
- An adjustment to the arrangements of an assessment i.e. location, injury or circumstances out of their control

Where an assessment required the full criteria to be fully met, it may not be possible to apply special considerations and apprentices will be required to meet the Standard requirements.

Circumstance	Required Evidence
Disability	<p>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 training provider-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.</p> <p>Where no medical condition has been diagnosed, and/or no clinical diagnosis, and there are identified learning difficulties, a Cognassist Report is acceptable evidence.</p>

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 apprentice's ability to undertake assessment.
Hospitalisation	A medical letter/certificate from the relevant hospital confirming the nature and severity of the apprentice's circumstances and the likely period of impact on the apprentice's ability to undertake assessment.

Circumstance	Required Evidence
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 apprentice's ability to undertake assessment.
Bereavement	A death certificate or a letter confirming the death from an independent person e.g., doctor or counsellor (usually not a family member) with their contact details provided and including a view on the closeness of the relationship and the impact it is having on the apprentice's ability to undertake assessment.
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 apprentice's ability to undertake assessment.
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 apprentice's ability to undertake assessment.
Domestic disruption	Where significant and unforeseen domestic disruption has occurred very close to a scheduled assessment 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 an apprentice is required to attend a tribunal or court as a witness, defendant or plaintiff the apprentice should 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 apprentice to attend.
Other	The list of circumstances cannot be exhaustive, and it is possible that other circumstances will arise that should be considered as acceptable.

Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition	
Arrangements for Reasonable Adjustments	G6
Arrangements for Special Consideration	G7

Useful contacts

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

AIM Contact details

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact our EPA Director

Telephone: **01332 224654**

Email:

Regulator contact details

Ofqual

Telephone: **0300 303 3344**

Email: public.enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk



AIM

Qualifications and Assessment Group



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