

GTG Fair Assessment & Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Introduction

Assessments should be a fair test of knowledge, skills and competence. However, for some learners, the format of usual assessment may not be suitable. GTG recognises that for all learners to access assessments fairly, the application of reasonable adjustments may be the appropriate route to take. This may be due to:

- A learner having a permanent disability, or specific learning need.
- A learner having a temporary disability, medical condition, or other such need.
- A learner being unable to access GTG premises at the time of assessment.

Scope

This policy applies to all learning programmes offered by GTG and to every individual involved including, but not limited to, practitioners, markers, invigilators, development coaches, assessors, quality assurers and learners. The scope of this policy extends to all relevant awarding bodies.

Purpose

This policy sets out the steps taken to understand a learners' requirement for reasonable adjustments and how we will consider meeting them. The policy will require approval for the dispensation of reasonable adjustments where an associated awarding body provides regulatory examination, testing or assessment.

Roles and responsibilities

The Group Head of Quality is accountable for the implementation of this policy. The specialist skills practitioner is responsible for monitoring the impact of the policy on learners. Training managers are responsible for ensuring that the policy is applied to each learner within their charge, accurately. As part of the quality cycle, quality assurers are responsible for liaising with recruiters, employers, and practitioners to measure the effectiveness of this policy. Quality assurers are also responsible for monitoring the safe use and application of the policy, specifically where an associated awarding body has approved dispensation. All stakeholders are responsible for adherence to this policy.

Reasonable adjustments

In meeting the definition of reasonable adjustments in the Equality Act 2010, we will take appropriate means to reduce any disadvantages faced by those due to disability. However, we also understand that to promote inclusivity in education then a reasonable adjustment can be further defined as an action that is flexible in approach to supporting those with: a long- or short-term disability, a barrier to learning or any societal disadvantages. Evidence of why a reasonable adjustment(s) should be dispensed must be made available to the associated awarding body, prior to booking a regulated assessment. Work produced by a learner who requires reasonable adjustments should be marked in the same way as the work produced by others. We are responsible for evaluating evidence provided, and to ensure that it will not confer an advantage on the learner in any aspect of the subject concerned. Reasonable adjustments are categorised, under the Equality Act 2010, as provisions, criteria and practice, physical features and provision of auxiliary aid.

Some examples of reasonable adjustments may include:

- Modifying assessment materials (providing materials in Braille or a larger font).
- Allowing a learner extra time to complete a time limited assessment activity.
- Providing access for facilitators such as a sign language interpreter, reader, or scribe.
- Removing excessive visual stimuli from assessment materials.
- Use of an electronic support device i.e., e-reader or a computer to assist with written work.

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Considerations before applying a reasonable adjustment include but are not limited to:

- Maintaining the integrity of assessment criteria.
- Individual circumstances.
- Cost implications.
- Practicality and effectiveness.
- Health and safety to the individual and others.
- The effects of any related medication, as prescribed.
- Approval by the associated awarding body

A reasonable adjustment should be evaluated and based on supporting evidence. The implications of a disability, learning barrier or other difficulty may not be obvious, so we may ask for supporting evidence of impairment, such as:

- Medical certificates.
- Cognitive assessments.
- Written evidence produced by an independent, authoritative specialist. This could take the form of medical or psychological report which has been checked for professional credentials.

During initial assessment, prior to joining a course, we will:

- Aim to identify any difficulties the learner may have in accessing learning and assessment.
- Assist in the selection of qualifications, or learning pathways for learners, depending on their circumstances.
- Explain all learning qualification, or pathway, and assessment requirements.
- Where it is unlikely that the learner would meet assessment requirements, explain clearly the concern around achievement i.e., learner is unable to demonstrate specific skills and, consequently, would be unable to gain achievement of the qualification, and or learning pathway.

In supporting learners, we will:

- Communicate this policy to all internal and external stakeholders.
- Ensure reasonable adjustments are handled sensitively, but effectively.
- Create an atmosphere in which learners are comfortable discussing requirements.
- Observe the rights of learners.
- Consider the diversity of learners and differentiate accordingly.
- Provide training and development for staff in supporting learners.
- Apply support and adjustments without lowering qualification/delivery standards.
- Design assessment activities that are accessible to learners.
- Ensure premises required for learning and assessment are accessible, and promote a culture of safety and effective learning.

Special considerations

Special consideration may be applied after an examination, where a learner has been disadvantaged during the exam. A request for special consideration will be unique to the learner and/or assessment and will depend on the circumstances at the time of the assessment, while reflecting the support for the difficulty faced by the learner. Special consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a learner's mark. In some cases, it may be necessary to address special considerations for an entire cohort, when an incident has occurred which has affected all learners (for example, a serious disturbance during the examination). In these circumstances, letters from learners must be verified by invigilator incident reports.

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Learners with a disability

It is unlawful for institutions to discriminate in the provision of goods, services, and facilities for those with a disability, including but not limited to:

- Equal access to teaching and assessment.
- Access to all regulated testing, assessment, or examination.
- Access to learning resources including libraries and IT technologies.
- Access/egress to the physical environment where teaching/learning takes place, including equipment.
- Access to welfare and other support services.
- Access to appropriate careers and learning guidance.

We are expected to take steps to:

- Know of and support those with barriers and/or disabilities for equal access to learning and assessment.
- Plan appropriate support packages and apply reasonable adjustments (non-regulatory) using evaluative resources i.e., medical / cognitive reports.
- Collaborate with regulatory partners i.e., awarding bodies, by providing evidence of barriers to learning and assessment prior to assessment/testing/examination.

Disclosure of additional requirements

To provide clear guidance, in so far that learners are encouraged to disclose if they have any disabilities, barriers, or other such requirements, meaning we could provide additional support. Learners, with support from practitioners, should complete and submit a request for reasonable adjustments (**as attached**). All requests will be reviewed individually, to ascertain the extent of support required.

Recruitment and selection of learners

Candidates are selected for apprenticeships, or other funded programmes, in line with the approved selection criteria, and requirements of the pathway. Where we provide a reasonable adjustment, we will review recruitment and selection practices to monitor equal opportunities and ensure that successful candidates are inducted onto a programme of learning which is most suitable to skills competency development.

Enquiries and requests – data security

It is important for us to log all requests and monitor the resulting action while storing this information for the period of retention necessary to meet legal/regulatory requirements. However, to comply with the UK Data Protection Act 2018, personal details will be anonymised where possible.

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Venues

We consider every aspect of our properties including ease of access and egress, parking, way-finder signage, communication in case of emergency, access to staff, queuing systems, workspaces, and welfare/ablution facilities. This includes ensuring:

- All venues comply with the Equality Act 2010.
- We have elevators/lifts, where there is more than one level.
- Where a lift is inaccessible, we will use the ground floor for those with mobility issues.
- Using an evacuation chair for those on an upper floor.
- We have disabled parking spaces, appropriate to the overall ratio of spaces.
- We have trained fire wardens and first aiders in ratio to venue capacity, at all times.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed biennially, or as is necessary.

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Examples of reasonable adjustments (this list is not exhaustive – learners may suggest their own tried and tested methods)

GTG learners may enrol with a diverse range of needs; these may be social, physical, intellectual, cultural or emotional. While learners are not obliged to divulge such needs, in doing so, GTG, in agreement with learners, is able to put in place the most appropriate support. Learners with learning difficulties are advised to seek assessment by an educational psychologist who can suggest the most suitable learning and assessment strategies. GTG will always consider the provision of reasonable adjustments.

Support needs	Reasonable adjustment	How they help
Asperger's syndrome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word processor Optimum seating position Copies of notes/overheads Electronic devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For those with persistent and significant difficulties with poor, illegible handwriting. Reduce sensory difficulties. Take notes and process verbal guidance. Further information on autism and Asperger's Syndrome can be found here: http://www.autism.org.uk/about/what-is/asperger.aspx
Attention deficit disorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest breaks Prompter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help those with a poor working memory to concentrate by showing where on a page they had been working. <p>More help and support for learners with Attention Deficit Disorder can be found here; www.aadduk.org</p>
Back pain / Arthritis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist equipment on request 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimise comfort at workshops.
Cultural need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observing cultural practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe religious, cultural and dietary needs.

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Support needs	Reasonable adjustment	How they help
Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Straightforward assignments • Avoid excessive visual stimuli (slides and materials) • Coloured overlay • Allow assistive technology • Course notes prior to course • Additional time for exams • Extra time to complete assignments • Provide written information in advance following BDA style guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid confusion. • Sharpen focus. • Improve reading accuracy. • Print notes on coloured paper of their choice and digest some information in advance if longer processing time needed. • Allows them to digest information in advance. • Longer processing time for those who need more time to research and compose assignments. <p>• More information on dyslexia can be found on the British Dyslexia Association's website http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/</p>
Hearing impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing dog* • British Sign Language (BSL) • Hearing loops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform tasks such as travelling to, from and around training venues by having tutorials interpreted and translated including emotion and intonation. • Receive audio signals to a hearing aid via a magnetic field (reducing background noise). <p>More information on hearing loss or impairment can be found at: www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk</p>
Mental health need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailored support • Provide materials in advance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid anxiety – personal tutors can break down steps. GTG is able to signpost learners to external support agencies. • There are numerous helpful websites providing advice and guidance on mental health, many are listed on the NHS website: http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxietydepression/Pages/mental-health-helplines.aspx

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Learner need	Reasonable adjustment	How they help
Mobility issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest breaks Word processor / scribe Mobility assistance Lifts/ramps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimise comfort by changing position and moving around. Support those who cannot write/type comfortably. Bring a carer to workshops. All GTG venues are checked in advance for accessibility.
Pregnant and nursing mothers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional comfort breaks Varied activities Room temperature Sealable sick bags Expressing breast milk Storage facility for breast milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help those who need to visit the lavatory more frequently. Avoid discomfort caused by prolonged sitting or standing – pregnant learners are advised to consult NHS guidance on backache and pregnancy. Help those who are more sensitive to heat than others. Help those who feel nauseous, such learners may also prefer to sit near an exit / window. Help those who are nursing, access a healthy and safe environment to express breast milk. Keep breast milk fresh and safely stored (4 degrees or lower). <p>Learners are also advised to check their immune status for any common diseases.</p>
Vision impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large font materials / exam papers Braille exam papers Guide dog* Reader / practical assistant Extra time (for timed examinations) Extra breaks Desk lamp / window seat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access workshop / exam materials. Access teaching and assessment materials in a suitable format with mobility. Locate information where complex layout and diagrams are used. Make up for time lost due to visual impairment. Alleviate tiredness caused by condition. Improve visibility of materials in a better lit area. <p>The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) offers practical and emotional support and manufactures specialist software to aid teaching and learning. See:</p> <p>http://www.rnib.org.uk</p>

* Religious grounds cannot be used to exclude guide dog/assistance dog owners and GTG will consult all attendees regarding possible allergies.

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GTG - Reasonable Adjustment Request

GTG recognises the diverse needs of learners. We have a duty to always ensure the integrity of our training courses and assessment practice. At the same time, we have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to protect the rights of individual learners. This includes providing any adjustments where reasonable, permissible or practicable. A reasonable adjustment is any appropriate means to reduce substantial disadvantages.

Learner name:	
1. What reasonable adjustment are you requesting?	
2. Please explain how this adjustment will help you?	
3. What evidence do you have (if any) to support your application? Please attach.	
4. Have you previously provided supporting evidence to GTG and if so, when?	
Reasonable adjustments must not affect the validity or reliability of assessment outcomes, nor give learners/delegates an unfair advantage. The below are examples and are not exhaustive;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes • Assessment material in an enlarged format or Braille • Assessment material on coloured paper or in audio format • Changing or adapting the assessment method • Changing usual assessment arrangements • Language modified assessment material • Practical assistant • Low vision aids • Use of a different assessment location • Use of ICT / responses using electronic devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British Sign Language (BSL) • Assignment extensions • Use of assistive software • Using assistive technology • Extra time • Practical assistant • Prompter • Reader • Scribe • Coloured overlays • Adapting assessment materials • Adaptation to equipment

Please note*: reasonable adjustments must be approved by GTG and set in place prior to teaching or assessment activities.

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Declaration

- I declare that the information given on this form is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.
- I understand that if I am claiming an adjustment and my circumstances change, I am required to inform GTG immediately I have submitted supporting evidence for a request due to either a temporary disability or an impairment with a substantial, long term adverse effect.
- I understand that provision of false information or failure to inform GTG of changes to my circumstances could result in further investigation under GTG Learner and Delegate Conduct Policy.

Learner name:	
Learner signature:	
Date:	

Please return to GTG at: help@gtg.co.uk

For GTG use only						
Name of staff member processing application:		Supporting evidence required	Yes		No	
		Supporting evidence received	Yes		No	
Signed:		Application approved	Yes		No	
		Learner / delegate informed	Yes		No	
		Course RQA informed	Yes		No	
Date:		Personal RSTA informed	Yes		No	
		Course RSTA informed	Yes		No	
		Venue informed	Yes		No	

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Document revision				
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