



# Westwood Training and Consultancy

## Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

### **Purpose**

This policy sets reasonable adjustments and special consideration procedures to support learners to achieve to the best of their potential.

### **Policy Statements**

This policy outlines:

- our arrangements for making reasonable adjustments and special considerations in relation to our qualifications
- how learners qualify for reasonable adjustments and special considerations
- the reasonable adjustments we will permit and those where permission is required in advance before they are applied
- what special considerations will be given to learners

### **Scope**

This policy is for Westwood Training and Consultancy (WTC) learners who are registered on or have taken a WTC/Crossfield's Institute approved qualification. It is also for use by staff, including Assessors, Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) and External Quality Assurers (EQAs), to ensure they deal with all reasonable adjustment and special consideration requests in a consistent manner.

### **WTC's responsibility**

It is important that all staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of our qualifications and all learners are fully aware of the contents of the policy.

To be open and transparent and to welcome Crossfield's Institute when they visit the training centre. During centre visits, Crossfield's staff may check that relevant staff and learners are aware of its contents and purpose.



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WTC is committed to complying with all current and relevant legislation in relation to the development and delivery of our qualifications. We seek to uphold human rights relating to race relations, disability discrimination and the special educational needs of our learners and to provide equal reasonable adjustments and special considerations for all learners registered on our qualifications.

Assessment should be a fair test of learners' knowledge and what they are able to do. However, for some learners, the usual format of assessment may not be suitable. We ensure that our qualifications and assessments do not exclude learners from taking our qualifications. Please see the WTC assessment policy.

We recognise that reasonable adjustments or special considerations may be required at the time of assessment where:

- learners have a permanent disability or specific learning needs
- learners have a temporary disability, medical condition or learning needs
- learners are indisposed at the time of the assessment.

The provision for reasonable adjustments and special consideration arrangements is made to ensure that learners receive recognition of their achievement so long as equity, validity and reliability of assessment can be assured. Such arrangements are not concessions to make assessment easier for learners, nor advantages to give learners a head start.

There are 2 ways in which access to fair assessment can be maintained:

- through reasonable adjustments
- through special considerations.

## **Process for requesting reasonable adjustments and/or special considerations**

There are two routes through which a learner may be granted reasonable adjustment, these are:

1. Reasonable adjustments permitted at the discretion of WTC



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## 2. Reasonable adjustments permitted by Crossfields Institute (See appendix 1)

If the WTC has any queries regarding the appropriateness of the reasonable adjustment, they will contact Crossfields Institute Quality Team.

If WTC is asked to make a reasonable adjustment by a learner, a Reasonable Adjustment request form should be completed. This will be stored securely and made available on request by Crossfields Institute Quality Team staff, or an EQA. Requests for reasonable adjustments should be submitted no later than 10 working days before the assessment.

If WTC is asked for Special Consideration, a Special Consideration Application Form should be completed by the Head of WTC or other designated staff. This will then be sent for approval to Crossfields Institute Quality Team. Requests for special consideration should be submitted as soon as possible after the assessment and not later than 7 working days after the assessment.

In both cases the following information will need to be included in the request:

- learner's names and qualification information
- nature of, and reason for, the request
- supporting information/evidence (eg medical evidence or a statement from the assessor or any other appropriate information)

Learners can, in exceptional circumstances, make requests direct to Crossfields Institute. Learners can contact the Quality Team at: [quality@crossfieldsinstitute.com](mailto:quality@crossfieldsinstitute.com).

Crossfield's reasonable adjustments and special consideration policy can be found on the [Resources](#) section of their website <https://crossfieldsinstitute.com>.

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

- application has been overlooked at WTC and the oversight is confirmed by the Principal
- medical evidence comes to light about a learner's condition, which demonstrates that the learner must have been affected by the condition at the



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time of the assessment, even though the problem revealed itself only after the assessment

If the application for special consideration is successful, the learner's performance will be reviewed in the light of available evidence. It should be noted that a successful application of special consideration will not necessarily change a learner's result.

## **How WTC will deal with requests**

A member of the Quality Team will aim to respond to all requests within 3 working days of receipt. If we are unable to respond in that timescale, we will provide you with an estimated response date.

## **Definition of reasonable adjustments**

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

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the integrity of what needs to be assessed, but may involve:

- changing usual assessment arrangements, for example allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment activity
- adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in large format, Braille or audio format
- providing assistance during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or a reader
- re-organising the assessment room, such as removing visual stimuli for a learner on the autistic spectrum, or using a different room that is more accessible
- changing the assessment method, for example from a written assessment to a spoken assessment



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- using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice activated software
- using different colour backgrounds to screens for onscreen assessments or using different coloured paper for paper-based assessments
- providing and allowing different coloured transparencies with which to view assessment papers

Reasonable adjustments are approved or set in place before the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the learner access to the programme or qualification. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the assessment of a learner's work.

WTC and Crossfields Institute are only required by law to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors, such as the need to maintain competence standards and health and safety, will also be taken into consideration.

## Definition of special considerations

Special consideration can be applied after an assessment if there was a reason the learner may have been disadvantaged during the assessment.

For example, special consideration could apply to a learner who had temporarily experienced:

- an illness or injury
- some other event outside of their control

and which has had, or is likely to have had, a material effect on that learner's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment.

Applications can also be made for extensions to assessment deadlines in the circumstances listed above.

Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage, neither should its use cause the user of the certificate to be misled regarding a learner's achievements. The learner's result must reflect his / her achievement in the assessment and not necessarily his / her potential ability.



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Special consideration, if successful, may result in a small post-assessment adjustment to the mark of the learner. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances and reflect the difficulty faced by the learner.

WTC notes that:

- where an assessment requires the learner to demonstrate practical competence or where criteria have to be met fully, or in the case of qualifications that confer a License to Practice, it may not be possible to apply special consideration.
- in some circumstances it may be more appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date.

## Further details

Please find more detailed information in Section 1 and 2 below.

## Appeals

If learners wish to appeal against our decision to decline requests for reasonable adjustments or special consideration arrangements, please refer to the WTC appeals policy.

If you are not satisfied with the response you get from WTC, or have reached the end of a process with us, please contact Crossfield's Institute directly. You can contact the Quality Team at: [quality@crossfieldsinstitute.com](mailto:quality@crossfieldsinstitute.com).

## Contact us

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact Liz Barclay or Michelle Wisbey on [liz@westwoodtrainingandconsultancy.org](mailto:liz@westwoodtrainingandconsultancy.org), [michelle@westwoodtrainingandconsultancy.org](mailto:michelle@westwoodtrainingandconsultancy.org).

## Associated policies

- Assessments policy
- Complaints policy
- Appeals policy
- Privacy notice



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## **Review**

The policy will be reviewed in September 2022

We will review this policy and its associated procedures annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements and/or in response to customer, or regulatory feedback and any trends that may emerge in the types of queries we may have received.



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## Section 1 - Making reasonable adjustments

### Principles of making reasonable adjustments

These principles should be followed when making decisions about a learner's need for adjustments to assessment. The adjustment:

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

WTC have a responsibility to ensure that the process of assessment is robust and fair and allows the learner to show what they know and can do without compromising the assessment criteria.

Whilst we will take all reasonable steps to ensure that a learner with a disability or difficulty is not placed at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with persons who are not disabled, in terms of access to assessment, there is no duty to make any adjustment to a provision, criterion or practice which is defined as a competence standard. All learners' performance must be assessed against set standards. These standards cannot be altered, but it may be possible to change the delivery or process of assessment so that each learner has an equal opportunity to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do.

When considering whether an adjustment to assessment is appropriate, WTC will bear in mind the following (where appropriate for the related qualification):

- Adjustments to assessment should not compensate the learner for lack of knowledge and skills. The learner must be able to cope with the content of the assessment and be able to work at the level required for the assessment.
- Any adjustment to assessment must not invalidate the assessment requirements of the qualification or the requirements of the assessment strategy. Competence standards should not be altered.
- Any adjustment to assessment must not give the learner an unfair advantage or disadvantage over other learners. The qualification of a learner who had an adjustment for assessment must have the same credibility as that of any other learner. As vocational





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qualifications may lead to employment, achievement of such qualifications must give a realistic indication to the potential employer of what the holder of the certificate can do.

- Any adjustment to assessment must be based on the individual need of the learner. Decisions about adjustments to assessment should be taken after careful consideration of the assessment needs of each individual learner, the assessment requirements qualification and the nature and extent of the support given as part of normal teaching practice. A Centre should not assume that the same adjustment will be required for all assessments. Different qualifications and different methods of assessments can make different demands on the learner. The learner should be consulted throughout the process.
- Any adjustment to assessment should reflect the learner's normal way of working providing this does not affect what is being assessed in any way. The learner should have experience of and practice in the use of the adjustment.
- Any adjustment to assessment must be supported by evidence which is sufficient, valid and reliable.
- All adjustments to assessment must be authorised by the WTC quality assurance lead or a member of staff with delegated authority.

## Section 2 - Qualification specific information

### *Health and safety considerations for practical assessments*

There are no circumstances when the health and safety of a learner should be compromised in delivering an assessment activity. In a practical activity, if there is a concern that the effects of a person's disability or difficulty may have health and safety implications for him/herself and for others, a suitably competent person at WTC will carry out a risk assessment related to the learner's particular circumstances. The risk assessment will identify the risks associated with the particular activity but should also take account of any reasonable adjustments put in place for the learner which may remove or reduce the risk. The risk assessment may reveal that it is not possible for the learner to fulfill all the requirements of the assessment. In this case it may be appropriate to substitute another task. WTC will contact Crossfields Institute Quality Team to discuss individual cases where further clarification is necessary.

Assumptions will not be made about a disability posing a health and safety risk, but the health and safety of all learners and others will always be of paramount importance.



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## ***WTC devised Assessments (quality assured)***

With these types of assessments WTC has some flexibility to be responsive to an individual learner's needs and choose an assessment activity and method that will allow the learner to demonstrate attainment.

These types of assessments may include, coursework, set assignments which are researched in the learner's own time, assessment activities devised by the Centre, assessments where the learner has to collect, present or describe evidence, information or opinion in order to demonstrate competence.

In these types of assessments the learner may meet the specified assessment criteria in any way that is valid. To facilitate access where there is evidence of need, WTC may:

- allow the learner to use any mechanical, electronic or other aids in order to demonstrate achievement as long as the aids:
  - are generally commercially available
  - reflect the learner's normal way of working
  - enable the learner to meet the specified criteria
  - do not give the learner an unfair advantage.
- present assessment materials or documents in a way that reflects the learner's normal way of working and enables him or her to meet the specified assessment criteria. For example, materials do not have to be exclusively in written or spoken format, unless specified by the assessment requirements.
- allow the learner to present their answers or evidence in any format as long as it enables them to demonstrate that they have met the assessment criteria. For example, answers or evidence do not have to be in exclusively written or spoken format unless specified by the assessment criteria.

WTC will endeavour to adopt a flexible approach in identifying alternative ways of achieving the assessment requirements. WTC will contact Crossfields Institute Quality Team to discuss alternative arrangements that may be appropriate for specific situations.

The outcome produced by the learner will at all times:



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- meet the requirements of the qualification specification regardless of the process or method used
- be assessable
- be able to be moderated or verified.

In the case of long-term illness of an individual learner or when a permanent health condition/disability means a learner's completion of assessment takes additional time it may be possible to permit an extension to the deadline for the submission of work for certification. It may not be possible to allow extensions for all types of assessments.

Where reasonable adjustments are put in place for these types of assessments, WTC will check whether permission needs to be obtained from the Quality Team at Crossfields Institute. WTC will ensure that they adhere to Crossfields Institute's requirements for record keeping and supporting evidence.

The benefits of being able to vary the assessment evidence and choose the most appropriate method of obtaining evidence should be considered when the learner is first accepted onto a programme.

Where there is an identified need, WTC will explore their evidence in any format as long as it enables them to demonstrate that they have met the specified assessment criteria. Alternatively, oral questioning or witness statements may replace written or signed responses.

Where the learner uses alternative means of providing evidence, the method must have equal rigour to those used for other learners.

The learner must fulfill the demands of the criteria consistently over a period of time, regardless of the method used to obtain evidence. The assessment criteria may not be amended, re-worded or omitted.

The learner may use any mechanical or electronic aids which are available in the workplace or which are commercially available in order to demonstrate competence. For example, these may include specially adapted equipment or assistive technology. WTC will ensure that a learner has the necessary and appropriate resources to enable the learner with access-related needs to produce evidence of developing the portfolio.

All adjustments should be consistent with the learner's normal way of working and must not give the learner an unfair advantage over others.



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While assessors, internal and external quality assurers normally prefer to see a portfolio made up of evidence which is varied, WTC will be prepared to accept a more restrictive variety of evidence as a means of enabling access. This, however, will be discussed with the internal and/or external quality assurer at an early stage.

Where reasonable adjustments are put in place for verified types of assessments, WTC will check whether permission needs to be obtained from Crossfields Institute Quality Team or the external quality assurer. WTC will adhere to Crossfields Institute's requirements for record keeping and supporting evidence.

## **Identifying learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustments**

Learners will only be eligible for reasonable adjustments if their disability or difficulty places them at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation, in comparison to a person who is not disabled or affected.

Any adjustment to assessment will be based on what the learner needs to access the assessment. Below are some examples of learner needs that may be eligible for adjustments to assessments. This list is not exhaustive and it should be noted that some learner needs will fall within more than one of the categories set out below.

### ***Communication and interaction needs***

A learner with communication and interaction difficulties may have problems with reading or writing, the effects of which could be reduced through the use of a reader, word processor, scribe, British Sign Language (BSL)/English interpreter, screen reading software or voice activated software. They may also benefit from extra time to complete assessments that are time-constrained to allow them to demonstrate their skills and knowledge.

### ***Cognition and learning needs***

A learner with learning difficulties and difficulties with comprehension may need assistance with reading and writing.

### ***Sensory and physical needs***

A learner may need to have assessment material modified for hearing impairment and visual impairment. They may also need to use a BSL/English interpreter, practical assistant, reader and scribe. In addition, they may benefit from the use of assistive technology and extra time to complete assessments.



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## ***Learners for whom English is an additional language***

A learner may benefit from extra time to complete assessments that are time constrained and may need access to a bilingual dictionary.

## **Identifying learners' needs**

Any adjustment to assessment should be based on the individual learner's needs to access the assessment.

WTC has a responsibility to ensure it has effective internal procedures for identifying learners' needs and that these procedures comply with the requirements of disability and equal opportunity legislation.

## **Identifying and obtaining supporting evidence**

In order to ensure that any adjustment to assessment will only provide the learner with the necessary assistance without giving him or her an unfair advantage over others, WTC will be clear about the extent to which the learner is affected by the disability or difficulty.

Where the implications of the difficulty are not obvious, such as for learning difficulties, or mental health difficulties, WTC will collect and record additional evidence of the effect of the impairment on the learner's performance in the planned assessment activities.

It is WTC'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. WTC will maintain records of all cases for audit purposes and to monitor the effectiveness of the reasonable adjustments that have been made.

## **Range of reasonable adjustments**

The Permissions Table (in Appendix 1) lists the most commonly requested adjustments to standard assessment arrangements. It is not intended to be a comprehensive list and WTC and EQAs will seek advice from Crossfields Institute Quality Team in any case where they do not consider that they have the necessary expertise to judge whether a reasonable adjustment is needed, and/or how it should be applied.

## **Making special considerations**



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We will review the circumstances and evidence surrounding each request for special consideration to ensure that the decision made maintains the equity, validity and reliability of the assessment for the learner and does not give the learner an unfair advantage.

A learner who is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment activity may be eligible for special consideration if:

- performance in an assessment activity is affected by circumstances beyond the control of the learner e.g. recent personal illness, accident, bereavement, serious disturbance during the assessment activity
- alternative assessment arrangements which were agreed in advance of the assessment proved inappropriate or inadequate
- part of an assessment activity has been missed due to circumstances beyond the control of the learner
- there is a sufficient difference between the part of the assessment activity to which special consideration is applied and other parts of the qualification that have been achieved to infer that the learner could have performed more successfully in the assessment activity

A learner will not be eligible for special consideration if:

- no evidence is supplied by WTC that the learner has been affected at the time of the assessment by a particular condition
- any part of the assessment activity is missed due to personal arrangements including holidays
- preparation for a component is affected by difficulties during the course, eg disturbances through building work, lack of proper facilities, changes in or shortages of staff, or industrial disputes.



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## Appendix 1 – Reasonable adjustments permissions table

This table outlines some of the decisions on reasonable adjustments that can be made. However, WTC will seek advice from Crossfields Institute in any case where they are in doubt if an adjustment is needed or how it should be applied.

Reasonable adjustment	Assessments NOT taken under examination
Use of bilingual and bilingual translation dictionaries	Permitted
Assessment Material in enlarged format	Permitted
Assessment activity material in Braille	Permitted
Language modified assessment activity material	Permitted
Assessment activity material in BSL	Permitted
Assessment activity material on coloured paper	Permitted
Assessment activity material in audio format	Permitted
Use of ICT	Permitted *
Responses using electronic devices	Permitted
Responses in BSL	Permitted
Responses in Braille	Permitted
Reader	Permitted
Scribe	Permitted
Transcriber	Permitted
Other	Apply

\*Permitted at the discretion of WTC unless ICT is implicitly or explicitly excluded in the qualification being assessed or in its associated Assessment Strategy or Qualification Manual

## Appendix 2 - Glossary

Term	Definition
Access to Assessment	The removal of artificial and unnecessary barriers to the process of judging an individual's competence.
Appeal	A process through which an awarding organisation or Centre may be challenged on the outcome of a decision
Assessment	The process of making judgements about the extent to which a learner's work meets the assessment criteria for a qualification or module or part of a module, unit or part of a unit.





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Assessment criteria	The requirements that a learner needs to meet in order to achieve success (or a given grade) in a qualification or module or part of a module, unit or part of a
Assessment method	The means by which an individual's competence is judged.
Assessment needs	The adjustments that some individuals require to the assessment strategy and/or assessment task in order to demonstrate that they can meet the
Assessment task	An activity undertaken by an individual learner to show that he or she can meet the required standard.
Assessor	The person who assesses a learner's work.
Assistive technology	Mechanical or electronic devices which help individuals with particular needs to overcome limitations.
BSL/English	An individual who interprets communication into and from British Sign Language
Centre	An organisation or consortium accountable to an awarding body for the assessment arrangements leading to a qualification.
Competence	The ability to perform to the required standard
Enabling	See assistive technology
Externally set	Examinations or assessment tasks or assignments which are determined by the awarding body (not currently used by Crossfields Institute)
External Quality	Person who checks that a Centre's assessment and quality assurance procedures comply with the requirements of the awarding organisation and
Internal Quality	Person who works within the Centre to ensure assessment complies with the requirements of the awarding organisation and the regulators
Invigilator	A person who supervises individuals taking an examination or assessment (not currently used for Crossfields Institute qualifications)
Learning programme	A course of study
Malpractice	Actions and practices which threaten the integrity of qualifications
Moderation	The process of checking that assessment standards have been applied correctly and consistently between assessors, between Centres and over time, and making adjustments to results where required to compensate for any differences in standard that are encountered.
Portfolio	A collection of work submitted for assessment.





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Reasonable adjustment	Any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Arrangements are approved in advance of an assessment activity.
Risk assessment	An estimation of the likelihood of something harmful happening as a result of a course of action.
Scribe	Person who writes down or word processes a learner's dictated responses
Qualification specification	A detailed statement or document which sets out the aims, purpose, content, structure, and assessment arrangements for a qualification.
Standards	The combination of knowledge, understanding and skills required to perform a job or task to the level of competence required in the workplace.
Sector body	A body (such as a Sector Skills Council) recognised by the regulatory authorities as responsible for formulating and reviewing standards of occupational competence for an employment sector.
Special consideration	Procedures implemented at the time of an assessment activity to allow attainment to be demonstrated by a learner who has been disadvantaged by temporary illness, injury, indisposition or adverse circumstances at the time
Speech software	A computer programme that reads text
Transcript	A full written or typewritten copy of information or material originally provided in writing, speech or sign language.
Voice activated software	A computer programme which responds to spoken instructions.



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