



Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration: policy and procedure.

YMCA Awards aims to facilitate access for learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustments and/or special consideration in assessments, whilst ensuring that the assessment of skills, knowledge, understanding and competence is not compromised.

Policy overview

This policy outlines:

- definition of reasonable adjustments and how they are applied;
- the role of alternative methods of assessment within internal assessment;
- our expectation of centres in relation to reasonable adjustments;
- definition of special consideration and how we respond to requests for special consideration;
- how centres apply for reasonable adjustments and special consideration.

This policy also provides information on Appeals relating to requests for reasonable adjustments and special consideration.

Definition of reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment relates to an adjustment that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which may place the learner at a disadvantage during the assessment process.

It is important that reasonable adjustments do not affect the reliability or validity of assessment and they should not give the learner an advantage over other learners undertaking the same assessment.

Where reasonable adjustments have been applied (see the table included in this document for a list of examples of common adjustments), the work produced by the learner will be marked to the same standard as the work carried out by other learners. The application of any reasonable adjustments is not typically taken into consideration during the marking of a learner's work.

YMCA Awards' policy and procedure on reasonable adjustments seeks to ensure that:

- the application of reasonable adjustments provide learners with appropriate opportunities to demonstrate attainment;
- reasonable adjustments are applied to compensate for any disadvantage imposed by a disability or difficulty but do not otherwise advantage learners;
- any person using the certificate to identify an individual's competence is not misled regarding the learner's attainments;

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- the assessment is both rigorous and fair;
- the assessment activity is valid and may be measured against appropriate and relevant national standards where these apply;
- the assessment result is reliable;
- the assessment is practically able to operate within available resources, facilities and during a manageable timeframe.

This policy sets out how YMCA Awards fulfils its duty to make reasonable adjustments which can apply to all of the protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010, those being:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy or maternity

YMCA Awards and centres are required by law only to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of providing access for learners. Factors including manageability of the required practical arrangements, likely effectiveness and health and safety implications of the requested adjustments are taken into consideration when determining what may be considered reasonable.

Circumstances in which an application for a reasonable adjustment is likely to be **rejected**:

- the requested reasonable adjustment would prevent the learner from fulfilling a major part of the requirements of the assessment and it proves impossible to overcome this difficulty;
- the requested reasonable adjustment may constitute a serious safety hazard that cannot be reasonably overcome.

Neither YMCA Awards nor an approved YMCA Awards centre can refuse to accept or register learners on the grounds that better facilities for application of a reasonable adjustment or support could be provided elsewhere, unless in particularly exceptional circumstances (for instance, reasonable adjustments requiring highly specialized equipment with limited availability).

Responsibilities of centres in relation to reasonable adjustments

Centres must:

- have a Fair Access to Assessment policy - available to learners and in operation;
- identify as early as possible, preferably before registering a learner, any difficulties the learner may have in accessing assessment (particularly external assessment). Centre

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staff should be trained in awareness of access-related issues. Early contact with YMCA Awards is advised to determine whether a reasonable adjustment may be appropriate;

- involve the learner in any decisions relating to a reasonable adjustment, and ensure the appropriate resources are available to fulfil required adjustments;
- source and arrange any assistance for the learner, such as a reader, scribe, additional invigilator, or British Sign Language interpreter;
- follow YMCA Awards' procedures for requesting and implementing reasonable adjustments, keeping all records of agreed adjustments for auditing purposes;
- ensure they have a robust internal appeals procedure so a learner can appeal any decision not to apply a reasonable adjustment, or if the learner finds that the reasonable adjustment provided was not appropriate to their needs. This procedure should be made available to all learners.

Centres are required to comply with YMCA Awards Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration policy in order that they do not compromise the validity of the qualifications they are approved to deliver. If a centre provides any learner with reasonable adjustments that are not in line with the terms of this policy and in so doing provides undue advantage to a learner over other learners, YMCA Awards will consider this in relation to its Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and take necessary action which may include appropriate centre sanctions.

Internal assessment and reasonable adjustments

Qualification components (units) which are assessed by internal assessment – as described in qualification specifications - provide flexibility in the type of assessment that can be completed to demonstrate competence and do not require application to YMCA Awards for a reasonable adjustment.

For internal assessments, learners may present their evidence in alternative formats provided that the assessment type:

- has equal rigour to that used by other learners (with accompanying evidence that the assessment is sufficient, reliable and valid)
- enables the learner to reasonably meet the assessment criteria
- enables the learner to demonstrate achievement of the assessment criteria
- does not give the learner any unfair advantage over other learners.

Types of reasonable adjustment

The following table lists the most commonly requested reasonable adjustments to standard external assessment arrangements. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list and centres are advised to contact YMCA Awards for further advice.

If the column labelled “decision making for reasonable adjustment” indicates “centre”, this

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means that the centre is able to make that decision without a formal request to YMCA Awards prior to assessment. Centres may need to contact YMCA Awards for assistance in permitting 25% extra time for online assessments and, in some cases, for enlarging the format of external assessment papers.

Reasonable Adjustments for External Assessments	Decision Making for Reasonable Adjustment
Extra time up to 25%	Centre
Extra time in excess of 25%	YMCA Awards
Supervised rest breaks	Centre
Change in the layout of the assessment room	Centre
Separate accommodation within the Centre	Centre
Taking the assessment at an alternative venue	YMCA Awards
Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, tinted spectacles, CCTV, OCR scanners and amplification equipment	Centre
Use of a bilingual translation dictionary (see rules below)	YMCA Awards
Use of assistive software	YMCA Awards
Assessment material in enlarged format	Centre
Language modified assessment material	YMCA Awards
Assessment material in sign language recognised as an official language of the UK (e.g. BSL)	YMCA Awards
Assessment material on coloured paper	Centre
Assessment material in audio format	YMCA Awards
Responses recorded in audio or audio-visual formats	YMCA Awards
Responses in sign language recognised as an official language of the UK (e.g. BSL)	YMCA Awards
Reader	Centre
Scribe	Centre
BSL interpreter	Centre
Prompter	Centre
Practical assistant	YMCA Awards
Braille transcript	YMCA Awards
Allowance for modification to equipment/resources where necessary	YMCA Awards

NOTE: Permission to use a bilingual translation dictionary

Use of a bilingual translation dictionary is permitted only when this represents the learner's normal way of working and the following rules are followed:

- only standard bilingual translation dictionaries are permitted (i.e. the bilingual

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translation dictionary must simply be the word in English and the equivalent word in the foreign language and vice-versa)

- any type of dictionary which provides definitions or explanations of words (in any language) is **not permitted**
- an electronic bilingual translation dictionary is permitted but must not provide definitions and must give information visually/on-screen only (unless an additional reasonable adjustment is required for learners with a visual disability or difficulty). Web-based translators such as google translate are not permitted
- the bilingual translation dictionary must not display pictures or diagrams
- bilingual translation dictionaries to be used in the external assessment must be thoroughly checked to ensure that no unauthorised information such as notes have been enclosed within or written on the pages of the dictionary or stored on the device used for the electronic bilingual translation dictionary. Any breach of this rule must be dealt with as potential learner malpractice and must immediately be reported to YMCA Awards.

Records of centre applied reasonable adjustment

All reasonable adjustments permitted and applied by the centre must be recorded and a copy of the details of the adjustment given to each learner must be supplied to YMCA Awards immediately following external assessment. This is so that YMCA Awards can accurately monitor the number and type of reasonable adjustments provided to learners for each of our qualifications.

Centres should, at all times, retain records pertaining to the implementation of and/or rejection of reasonable adjustments which should be available when requested by YMCA Awards.

Definition of special consideration

Special consideration is consideration given to a learner who has temporarily experienced

- an illness or injury, or
- some other event outside of the learner's control, which has had, or is reasonable 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 (this may include, but is not limited to, an accident, bereavement or serious disturbance during or prior to the assessment).

Special consideration **cannot** be requested in the following circumstances:

- part of the assessment was missed due to personal arrangements, including unauthorised absence and holidays
- no evidence was supplied by the centre indicating that a learner was affected by illness, injury, bereavement or other indisposition at the time of the assessment

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- centre difficulties experienced during the course – for example, building work, lack of facilities and staff shortages.

How special consideration is applied

In each case where YMCA Awards judge the application of special consideration to be appropriately warranted, the learner's assessment performance is reviewed with regard to the specific situation that has arisen. This review may result in a proportionate adjustment to the learner's mark for an assessment, relative to the circumstances for special consideration and the learner's performance. It should be noted, however, that the outcome of a special consideration review will not necessarily be a change in the learner's result or overall achievement of an assessment.

Special consideration cannot be applied if this will provide a learner with an unreasonable advantage over other learners.

Application of special consideration should not compromise the validity of assessment or misrepresent a learner's ability.

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to re-sit the assessment.

Assessments that lead to a Licence to Practice qualification may have restrictions on the extent to which special consideration can be applied; this may result in the rejection of an application for special consideration, even in instances where the evidence to support a request for special consideration would otherwise have been accepted. In these cases, it may be particularly appropriate for the learner to re-sit the assessment.

Submitting a request for Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

The *Reasonable Adjustment Applications* and *Special Consideration Application* forms may be downloaded from the YMCA Awards website. Evidence of the learner's learning need or reason for a special consideration request must be submitted with the application. This should be in the form of a student support report, medical report or other appropriate record. YMCA Awards aim to confirm a decision regarding reasonable adjustments and special consideration within 10 working days of acknowledging the request.

Applications for reasonable adjustments must be submitted as soon as possible after initial registration of the learner with YMCA Awards and no later than 21 days **prior** to the scheduled external assessment. This enables YMCA Awards to review the application and make the necessary arrangements to ensure that the reasonable adjustment is made in good time for the centre and learner.

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Applications for special consideration may be submitted any time up to 21 days **after** the learner has taken the external assessment.

Centres are encouraged to contact YMCA Awards without delay if an event relating to special consideration occurs on the day of a scheduled external assessment or in the days leading up to the assessment, in case the assessment can be rescheduled or an appropriate reasonable adjustment applied to mitigate the impact of the event or the situation that has arisen.

Appeals

YMCA Awards Appeals Policy enables centres to appeal a decision made by YMCA Awards regarding an application for a reasonable adjustment. More information regarding this type of appeal and the process for lodging an appeal is provided in the YMCA Awards Appeals Policy and Procedure, published on our [website](#).

Review arrangements

YMCA Awards review the policy and its associated procedures annually as part of self-evaluation arrangements and revise it when necessary in response to customer or regulatory feedback. If you would like to comment on anything in this document please contact us via the details provided below.

Understanding this policy

All enquiries relating to the Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration policy and procedure should be addressed to:

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