

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

Crossfields Learning is committed to enabling all learners to have their work assessed in a fair and equitable way. This policy describes the procedures which learners and staff should follow when personal circumstances may unfairly disadvantage people in completing their qualification and/or may require some special arrangements or adaptations to be made.

Explanation of Reasonable Adjustment

A reasonable adjustment helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the validity or reliability of assessment outcomes, but may involve:

- Changing usual assessment arrangements
- Adapting assessment materials
- Providing assistance during assessment
- Re-organising the assessment physical environment
- Changing or adapting the assessment method
- Using assistive technology

Reasonable adjustments are normally approved by the centre and set in place before the assessment process begins. In some circumstances the centre must seek approval from Crossfields Institute to implement a reasonable adjustment (see Crossfields Institute Reasonable Adjustment Policy and Procedure).

The work produced following a reasonable adjustment must be assessed against the same criteria as the work from other learners.

The learner may not need, nor be allowed, the same adjustment for all assessments.

Crossfields Learning's Responsibility

Crossfields Learning will take responsibility to be aware of and communicate the following to students:

- Up to date and correct information about the nature of the course, the type of award they can receive and whether it will meet their needs
- To be alert to their needs, offer clear information about requirements and identify any support that may be required
- If it becomes apparent they may not be able to achieve in all parts of the assessment, to communicate this clearly to them. They may still decide to proceed with the course and not be entered for all or part of the assessment
- Maintain an awareness about their potential to successfully complete the assessment and achieve the award and ensure they are aware of the routes to progress through the course and policies such as reasonable adjustment and RPL

Applying Reasonable Adjustment

Reasonable adjustments are normally the responsibility of the centre, although in some cases application must be made to Crossfields Institute (see above). They are approved by the Internal Quality Assurer before assessment begins and are intended to allow attainment to be demonstrated in a way that is fair to the learner affected and to all other learners on the qualification. A learner does not have to be disabled (as defined by the DDA) to qualify for reasonable adjustment; nor will everyone who is disabled be entitled to reasonable adjustment. Allowing reasonable adjustment is dependent upon how it will facilitate fair access to assessment for learners.

A reasonable adjustment must never -

- Affect the validity or reliability of assessment
- Influence the outcome of assessment
- Give the learner in question an unfair assessment advantage

Explanation of Special Considerations

Special considerations are different to reasonable adjustments as they apply to a disadvantage that occurs either just before or during the assessment. Reasons for special consideration could be:

- Temporary illness or injury
- Adverse circumstances at the time of the assessment

A learner may be eligible for special consideration if:

- Their performance in an assessment is affected by circumstances beyond the control of the learner, e.g. recent personal illness, accident, bereavement, serious disturbance during the assessment
- The alternative assessment arrangements which were agreed in advance of the assessment proved inappropriate or inadequate
- Any part of an assessment has been missed due to circumstances beyond the control of the learner

Special consideration requests will be referred to Crossfields Institute Quality Assurance Team for approval.

Applying for Special Considerations

All applications for special consideration are on a case-by-case basis and separate applications must be made for each learner and each situation.

Learners may apply for special consideration during or after an assessment, but may not apply for special consideration in the case of a permanent disability or learning difficulty.

Each application for special considerations will be reviewed separately to ensure that the learner is not given an unfair advantage.

Learners need to submit evidence to Crossfields Learning to support their request for special consideration. This may include medical evidence or any other appropriate information.

A designated member of Crossfields Learning staff will complete a Special Consideration Application Form which will be signed and dated by the person accountable for quality assurance at Crossfields Learning, declaring that the information is accurate. It should be submitted to Crossfields Learning as soon as possible, and not later than 7 working days after the assessment. Assessment decisions must not be communicated to the learner while the request for special consideration is still being processed.

Crossfields Institute can only accept requests for special consideration after the results of the assessment have been released in the following circumstances:

- The application has been overlooked at Crossfields Learning and the oversight is confirmed by the person at Crossfields Learning responsible for quality assurance
- Medical evidence comes to light about a learner's condition which demonstrates that the learner must have been affected by the condition at the time of the assessment, even though the problem revealed itself only after the assessment

On receipt of the Special Consideration application, the Quality Assurance Team will assess the evidence, consult the relevant IQA where necessary, and normally make a decision within 3 days of receipt using their professional judgement. If, for any reason, it takes longer to make a decision, Crossfields Institute will inform the centre and indicate a timescale for the decision.

A record of all Special Considerations Applications will be recorded by Crossfields Learning and Crossfields Institute and made available for external quality assurance scrutiny.

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months by Crossfields Learning's Director and/or Head of Centre.