



Notebook Assessment Services Ltd (NAS)
Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy

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Policy Statement

This policy is aimed at NAS Training Providers, Employers and Apprentices where NAS is providing the End-point Assessment (EPA). It is also for use by internal staff to ensure they deal with all reasonable adjustment and special consideration requests consistently.

This policy outlines NAS arrangements for making Reasonable Adjustments and giving Special Considerations in relation to our EPAs. It outlines how apprentices qualify for arrangements, the Reasonable Adjustments we permit (not exhaustive), how to submit a request for approval in advance of an EPA assessment and in what circumstances Special Consideration can be granted to an apprentice.

All staff involved in the management, assessment, administration and quality assurance of NAS EPA must be fully aware of the contents of this policy and able to advise apprentices appropriately.

NAS training providers have a duty to ensure the rights of apprentices to access EPA in a way most appropriate for their individual needs.

NAS is committed to providing an inclusive assessment experience for its Apprentices, regardless of any disabilities or special educational needs they may have and realises that, without reasonable adjustment, Apprentices may be prevented from demonstrating their true level of ability during an assessment activity. This policy is designed to ensure that NAS:

- provides an assessment delivery system that supports equality and fairness to Apprentices
- maintains the integrity and security of the assessment process

All records, including the appropriate evidence to support a Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration, must be retained by a training provider for at least three years from the date of assessment.

Providers must make the apprentice evidence available to NAS on request.

Reason for the Policy

The policy recognises but is not limited to, the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010. It also applies to those Apprentices who have a specific learning difficulty or disability that has been notified prior to the assessment.

NAS will, subject to approval, put into place reasonable adjustments to mitigate the impact of the identified disadvantage. In the case of EPA, the training provider must notify NAS at the earliest opportunity of the requirement of reasonable adjustment and provide evidence that this adjustment is required.

The objectives of the policy are to:

- To provide guidance on the management of reasonable adjustments

- To offer advice and guidance on how to apply for and implement reasonable adjustments
- To ensure all Apprentices who require reasonable adjustments have access to a supportive Assessment environment which promotes all Apprentices achieving their full potential.

Policy

NAS recognises, but is not limited to, two categories of need, which may lead to the provision of reasonable adjustments:

- Permanent or long-standing disability, illness, or special educational need, for example, blindness, diabetes or dyslexia
- Temporary disability, illness or indisposition, for example, a broken arm or acute pain

For requests based upon either permanent or long-standing disability, illness, or special educational needs the Apprentice, training provider or employer must complete a Reasonable Adjustment form and submit it prior to the apprentice reaching gateway.

For requests based on temporary disability, illness, or indisposition the apprentice, the training provider or the employer must complete a Reasonable Adjustment form and submit it to NAS at the earliest opportunity.

Each request must be supported by relevant independent evidence from a medical professional, educational psychologist, or other recognised educational expert.

NAS will assess each request on a case-by-case basis in accordance with IfATE EPA Reasonable Adjustment guidance

NAS is not responsible for obtaining evidence to support a request for reasonable adjustments but will provide advice on its requirements and the consequent suitability of any evidence.

NAS reserves the right not to put in place reasonable adjustments if appropriate evidence is not provided by the Apprentice, Training Provider or Employer.

NAS will:

- Only implement a reasonable adjustment that maintains the reliability and integrity of an assessment; and
- Not implement any reasonable adjustment that invalidates the assessment requirements for the apprenticeship standard being addressed and IfATE guidance

In cases where reasonable adjustments are implemented in response to a specific Apprentice request under this policy, NAS will not normally consider further compensation for the identified disadvantage.

Any information supplied by the Apprentice in respect of a claim for reasonable adjustments will be treated as confidential and will only be supplied to staff on a need-to-know basis. Information on the reasonable adjustment will only be shared in relation to EPA activity. The approval of reasonable adjustments will be communicated to the training provider and relevant End-Point Assessor.

If at any time NAS finds that a reasonable adjustment claim was fraudulent, NAS reserves the right to withdraw any results given from assessments undertaken with the reasonable adjustment.

Definitions

A reasonable adjustment is defined by Ofqual as:

“An adjustment made to an assessment for a qualification so as to enable a disabled Learner to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding to the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification”.

A special consideration is defined by Ofqual as:

“Consideration to be given to a Learner who has temporarily experienced an illness or injury, or some other event outside of his or her control, which has, or is reasonably likely to have, materially affected the Learner’s ability to –

- (a) take an assessment, or
- (b) demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment”

Reasonable Adjustments

NAS is to do what is ‘reasonable’ in terms of giving access to assessment. 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 when approving or putting an adjustment in place.

Reasonable Adjustments must not affect the integrity of what needs to be assessed and may involve:

- allowing an apprentice extra time to complete the assessment activity or supervised rest breaks
- adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in Braille
- providing assistance during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or a reader
- using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice-activated software, different colour backgrounds for on-screen assessments and different coloured paper for paper-based assessments
- adapting assessment methodology
- changing the location, timing or other assessment arrangements

The adjustments made for apprentices during their End-Point Assessment will likely be similar to those used as part of their training by their training provider and employer.

Reasonable Adjustments are required to be approved before an assessment activity takes place and will not be taken into consideration during or after the assessment of an apprentice. It is the responsibility of a training provider to ensure a Reasonable Adjustment request is submitted at an appropriate time before the assessment is to take place.

IfATE require that we support apprentices by ensuring that:

- The reasonable adjustments provide apprentices with the opportunity to demonstrate attainment against occupational competence;
- The assessment is reliable, and any person using the apprenticeship certificate to identify an individual's competence can have confidence in their skills and abilities;
- The assessment process is rigorous and fair, and the assessment activity is valid;
- The assessment is practically able to operate within available resources, following the application of any reasonable adjustments;
- Facilities and time allow apprentices to use any commercially available mechanical, electronic or other aids in order to demonstrate achievement so long as they reflect the apprentice's normal ways of working and do not give the apprentice an unfair advantage.

Submitting a Reasonable Adjustment Application

If a training provider is making a request to NAS on behalf of its apprentice, it should complete the Reasonable Adjustment form found on ACE 360 and submit it along with the relevant supporting evidence to admin@notebook-epa.co.uk

Requests for reasonable adjustments must be submitted prior to gateway.

Decision making for Reasonable Adjustments

To maintain the validity and comparability of assessment and meet our regulatory obligations, NAS will ensure that prior to approving a reasonable adjustment the outcome produced by the apprentice will:

- meet the requirements of the occupational standard regardless of the process or methods used;
- be as rigorously assessed as outcomes generated by other apprentices;
- be assessable;
- be a valid measure of occupational competence; and
- be able to be moderated or verified.

NAS use IfATE's Reasonable Adjustment Matrix as a guide to applying adjustments to individuals on a case-by-case basis.

Special Consideration

Special considerations may be applied after an assessment if there is a reason the apprentice may have been disadvantaged during an assessment. Reasons for special consideration could be temporary illness, temporary injury, indisposition or other adverse circumstances outside of their control such as a fire alarm during the assessment.

Special Consideration can be applied for before or after an assessment depending on the circumstance for the individual apprentice and cannot be applied to a cohort of apprentices.

Special consideration may result in a post-assessment adjustment to the mark of the apprentice. The size of the adjustment (up to a maximum of 5%) will depend on the circumstances during the assessment and will reflect the difficulty faced by the apprentice or the reason for the request.

Where special considerations have been applied, the work produced by the apprentice will be marked to the same standard as the work of other assessed apprentices.

Where an assessment requires a competence, criterion or standard to be fully met it may not be possible to apply special considerations to the assessment that has been undertaken. It may be more appropriate to offer the apprentice an opportunity to retake the assessment at a later date, or to extend the assessment period so that the apprentice has more time to complete the assessment activity.

Requests for special consideration should be submitted as soon as possible but no more than 5 working days after the assessment.

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

- if the application has been overlooked by an Employer/training provider and the oversight can be evidenced by the organisation
- if medical evidence comes to light about an apprentice's condition, which evidences an apprentice must have been affected at the time of the assessment, although the problem revealed itself only after the assessment

Submitting a Request for Special Consideration

To request special consideration, you should email admin@notebook-epa.co.uk

You should provide details of:

- The apprentice's name(s) and ULN(s)
- The standard and method of assessment
- Your organisation details
- Clear detail of what special consideration you are requesting and why

Decision-making for Special Considerations

NAS' decision-making approach for Special Considerations follows best practice. Where this adjustment is to marks, the maximum adjustment that will be made is 5%. The maximum

adjustment will only be applied in the most severe of circumstances and will also take into account the date of the circumstances compared to the assessment and the nature of the assessment.

Responding to reasonable adjustment and special consideration applications

All applications will be acknowledged via email within two working days of receipt. The request will then be reviewed by a member of the NAS Team with the aim of a decision being given within 5 working days. Some requests may take longer to review, particularly if we need to call on specialist advice.

If we are unable to respond within this timeframe, we will provide you with an estimated response date.

Appeals

If a training provider wishes to appeal against a decision taken by NAS regarding reasonable adjustments or special consideration, it can do so using the process set out in our published Enquiries about Results and Appeals Policy.

Policy Review

This policy is reviewed as part of our continuous improvement monitoring through its annual self-assessment arrangements. It may be reviewed earlier should any feedback or concern be brought to our attention to ensure it remains fit for purpose and the process and its outcomes are deliverable.

Document title	NAS Appeals Policy and Procedure
Document reference number	NASEPA004
Document owner	Head of NAS
Version number	3.0
Date approved	26/04/2023
Approved by whom	Head of NAS
Effective date	26/04/2023
Superseded version	2.0
Next review date	26/04/2024