

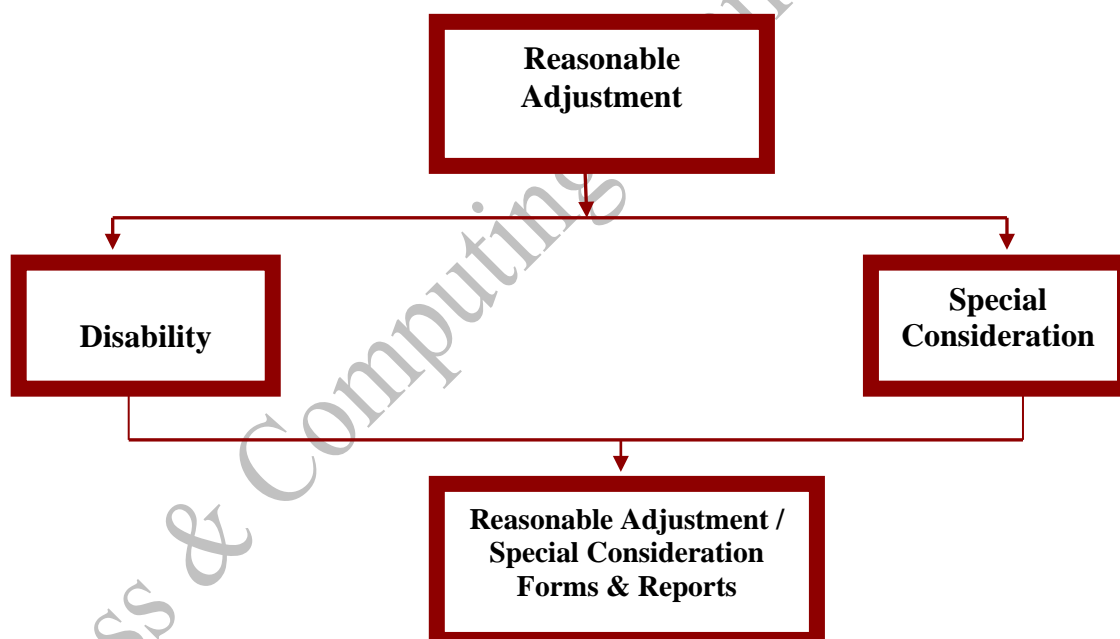


Business & Computing Examinations (BCE) LONDON (UK)

Reasonable Adjustment & Special Consideration Policy

Policy No.:	P002
Date of issue:	October 2011, revised September 2020
Status:	Approved
Responsibility for policy:	Administration
Responsibility for implementation:	Office Manager / Programme Development Manager

Policy Framework



Introduction

BCE recognise its responsibilities as an awarding body for individuals with learning difficulties or disabilities. In implementing this policy, the Awarding Body aims to ensure that no learner is treated less favourably than others on the grounds of such difficulties or disabilities.

In May 2001 the government passed the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act, which amended the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (1995) in several ways. From 1 October 2010, the Equality Act replaced most of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). However, the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA continues to apply. The Equality Act 2010 aims to protect disabled people and prevent disability discrimination. It provides legal rights for disabled people in the areas of:

- employment
- education
- access to goods, services and facilities

The Equality Act also provides rights for people not to be directly discriminated against or harassed because they have an association with a disabled person. There are two main requirements of law which affect institutions:

- “responsible bodies must not treat a disabled person ‘less favourably’ than a non-disabled person for reasons related to his/her disability, without ‘justification’”
- “responsible bodies are required by law to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ to ensure that a disabled learner is not placed at a ‘substantial disadvantage’.”

The new legislation is now incumbent on every educational establishment to make reasonable adjustments for learners with disabilities.

BCE wishes to adhere to all legislations that relates to race, gender, disability and special educational needs as well as providing equal access to assessment for all learners. This will include:

- The Race Relations Act Amendment
- The Equality Act
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA)
- The Human Rights Act

Assessment must be a fair test of a learner’s knowledge and what they are able to do; however, for some learners the usual assessment may not be suitable. BCE will aim to make reasonable adjustments when a learner is placed at a disadvantage to others with regard to assessment, due to a learning difficulty or disability.

Disability – Reasonable Adjustment

BCE is able to offer reasonable adjustments to those learners who are considered to have a physical or mental impairment that is likely to last for more than one year. Evidence must be provided, which should ideally include medical reports. **BCE must be notified at least eight weeks before the date of the examination, in order to be able to make any reasonable adjustments.** All applications from learners will be considered on an individual basis by BCE.

Special Consideration – Reasonable Adjustment

BCE is able to offer reasonable adjustments to those learners who are considered to have a physical or mental impairment that is likely to last for less than one year. Evidence must be provided, which should ideally include medical reports. Examples of temporary disability include broken limbs, mental impairment, long-term sickness, or recovery from a serious operation. **BCE must be notified at least eight weeks before the date of the examination, in order to be able to make any reasonable adjustments.**

Situations that cannot have been foreseen

Special consideration may be given to learners in situations that could not have been foreseen, such as temporary illness, indisposition or injury.

This information must be accompanied by a doctor's medical certificate or other relevant evidence for the claim to be accepted by BCE.

Even though BCE should be notified of all special consideration cases at least eight weeks prior to the examination, we acknowledge this is not always possible. Please inform us prior to the examination even if the *eight-week* deadline has passed. We will try to make reasonable adjustments but this cannot be guaranteed; BCE may have to advise the learner to defer their examination.

Study and Examination Centre Responsibility

Any Approved Centre acting as an Examination Centre or BCE Centres themselves, should have their own policy in place. These Centres will be required to meet the minimum standards laid down by BCE.

Expectations of Study and Examination Centres by BCE

Study and Examination Centres should ensure relevant staff members know about BCE's policy, and that learners have been made aware that Reasonable Adjustments / Special Considerations can be made to assist them in examinations and assignments.

Study and Examination Centres should ensure that all Reasonable Adjustments / Special Consideration made in examinations or in assignments are known by the relevant personnel within the institution, on an agreed confidential basis.

BCE recognises that Special Access Arrangements may be required at the time of the assessment where:

- Learners have a paramagnet disability or specific learning need
- Learners have a temporary disability or medical condition
- Learners are unable to conduct assessment due to illness or injury

Evidence Requirements

Learners who request Special Access Arrangements must provide suitable evidence of their learning needs or medical conditions.

The following Reasonable Adjustments / Special Considerations / Special Access Arrangements will be made:

1. **Learners with reading/writing or learning difficulties**
 - Use of reader and/or scribe.
 - Use of assistant.

- Use of modified print/paper colour.
 - Extra time can be allocated (up to 25% of original assessment time).
2. **Learners with hearing difficulties**
 - Use of interpreter.
 - Use of suitable aids (recommended for the hearing impaired).
 - Extra time can be allocated (up to 25% of original assessment time).
 3. **Learners whose first language is not English**
 - Use of dictionary
 4. **Learners with less body functionality disability or sight impairment**
 - Learners are given extra time (up to 30% of the original assessment time, depending on disability) with short breaks allowed.
 - Learners can sit for 1 or 2 unit(s) then postpone the remaining units to the following weeks (up to 4 weeks can be given to complete written assessments and another 4 weeks for coursework).
 - Learners can sit for 1 or 2 unit(s) per each BCE exam session (April, August and December) up to 1 year.
 - Learners are given the opportunity to sit for assessment when they are ready.
 5. **Learners who qualify for Special Consideration**
 - Learners are allowed to postpone assessments to the next or suitable exam date.
 - Learners can be given extra time up to 30 minutes (excluding time taken for medication if any).
 - Learners are allowed to take short breaks of 5 -10 minutes.

Mitigating Circumstances

Learners can not enter a plea for these circumstances solely on the grounds of learning difficulty or disability. These needs will have to be declared prior to the assessment.

Learners will be offered the opportunity to postpone their assessment to a next or suitable appropriate date.

What might be considered as *unreasonable* adjustment?

- The provision of unlimited time in examinations would generally be considered an unreasonable adjustment. The amount of additional time allowed must be justifiable based on the nature and degree of the individual's difficulties.
- Reduced workloads are unreasonable in that they could be seen as lowering standards.
- Extreme demands on invigilators' time would be viewed as unreasonable.

Learners need to complete either the **Application for Reasonable Adjustment Form** or **Application for Special Consideration Form** (which ever is applicable).

BCE Administration and Programme Development & Services Managers are responsible for deciding on Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration applications.