



1st for EPA

Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy

1. Policy Purpose

This document details 1st for EPA's policy for providing reasonable adjustments within end point assessment (EPA) for apprentices with additional support needs. Our aim is to support apprentices with disabilities or physical or mental health conditions through EPA while ensuring they aren't substantially disadvantaged. This policy will describe how we will maintain appropriate and consistent judgements and provide a valid, reliable and manageable approach to supporting apprentices.

2. Reasonable Adjustments

A reasonable adjustment relates to an adjustment that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or a physical or mental health condition, which may place the apprentice at a disadvantage compared to others.

During the end point assessment, the types of adjustments offered may include, but aren't limited to, changes to elements such as:

- the location and timing of the assessment.
- the format, wording or type of assessment activity.
- the availability of support personnel for additional needs.
- the availability of adaptive software or hardware, or specialist equipment.

These adjustments will mirror the types of reasonable adjustments and additional support that the apprentice has received from their employer and/or training provider during their apprenticeship programme.

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

In addition to this, 1st for EPA will 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.

3. Putting Reasonable Adjustments in Place

The matrix developed by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) will be used to support us in applying appropriate and consistent judgements (see appendix 1). This matrix is based around the Higher Education Statistical Authority's (HESA) disability grouping framework. Each of these difficulties/disabilities have then been overlaid with the listed assessment methods to ensure the most suitable adjustments are applied for each situation and for each assessment method determined in the end point assessment plan without changing the demands of the assessment.

These are recommendations only, and 1st for EPA will use the matrix from an apprentice centred perspective on a case-by-case basis. Each assessment will be subject to some variance due to job role, employment context and apprentice support needs, and will be adapted as necessary. The support need for a particular person will be unique to that individual, and may not be listed as a need in the relevant category in the disability grouping framework, so flexibility is required. It is also important to note that appropriate adjustments are likely to be a continuation of the additional support that the apprentice has received during their apprenticeship.

Employers and training providers should work collaboratively with the apprentice and 1st for EPA to determine the appropriate reasonable adjustment. They are advised to seek clarification from us in any case where they consider that they do not have the necessary expertise to judge whether a reasonable adjustment is required.

The outcome produced by the apprentice **must** at all times:

- 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.

It is not necessary to obtain approval from the ESFA prior to putting reasonable adjustments into place for an apprentice.

4. Special Considerations

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

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

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

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

Special consideration should not give the apprentice an unfair advantage. The apprentice's result must reflect their achievement in the assessment and not necessarily their potential ability.

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

1st for EPA will review a request for special consideration on a case by case basis and will take the particular need of each individual apprentice into consideration when making a decision to grant the request.

5. Process

5.1 Requesting a Reasonable Adjustment

This process should begin as soon as the training provider is aware that the apprentice is likely to need to access reasonable adjustments for the end point assessment.

In all cases, the training provider, with input from the employer and the apprentice, must apply to 1st for EPA for reasonable adjustments to be applied to the end point assessment. Evidence of the difficulty/disability will be required to support the application, along with evidence of any existing adjustments or additional support provided by the employer or training provider. These should also be kept for any future audit.

The training provider should highlight the reasonable adjustment either:

- When registering the apprentice on the ACE360 system;
- When completing the relevant gateway form (Declaration of Competence); or
- When scheduling EPA on ACE360.

The training provider should then complete 1st for EPA's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Request with full details, and return this to 1st for EPA.

5.2 Requesting a Special Consideration

Requests for special consideration should be submitted as soon as possible after the assessment and not later than 5 working days after the assessment, using the Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Request. 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 the Training Provider and the oversight is confirmed by the Training Provider.
- medical evidence comes to light about an Apprentice's condition, which demonstrates that the Apprentice must have been affected by the condition at the time of the assessment, even though the problem revealed itself only after the assessment.
- for onscreen assessments where results are immediately available.

If the application for special consideration is successful, the apprentice'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 an apprentice's result.

5.3 1st for EPA's response

We will acknowledge all requests within 2 working days of receipt. We will aim to provide an outcome within 10 working days, but in more complex cases which require input from experts, it may take longer. If we are unable to respond in this time, we will provide you with an estimated response date.

As it is a legal duty, 1st for EPA may only reject applications for a reasonable adjustment in circumstances where:

- Any adjustment may create a serious loss of validity or independence within the assessment process.
- Any adjustment may constitute a serious safety hazard.

1st for EPA will keep a record of any reasonable adjustment and special consideration applications, the decisions made regarding these applications, the reasons for making any changes and any appropriate evidence behind the decision. All requests granted will also be recorded on the apprentice's registration on the ACE360 platform to allow for future review and audit purposes.

Any records pertaining to the implementation of and/or rejection of reasonable adjustments records will be retained and be made available to our management and EQA Providers when requested. This will be kept for 6 years after completion, in accordance with ESFA policy.

6. Funding

During the apprenticeship, the employer and training provider must make reasonable adjustments to ensure any apprentice with a disability or physical or mental health condition is not at a disadvantage compared to their peers. To do this they may be eligible for additional support through DWP [Access to Work](#) funding, which provides support with everyday employment difficulties that are not directly associated with the apprenticeship programme, or the ESFA [Additional Learning Support](#) (ALS), which is available to fund apprentices who require extra support to meet the learning goals of their apprenticeship.

In many cases, reasonable adjustments will be put in place and funded by 1st for EPA, as they are classified as an eligible cost that should be reflected in the price negotiated. In some circumstances, there may be some substantial additional costs associated with providing reasonable adjustments during the end point assessment process. These should be agreed between the employer, training provider, apprentice and 1st for EPA in advance to ensure that they are appropriate and proportionate. These may be funded through ALS if they meet the criteria of additional support that enables the apprentice to demonstrate how the apprentice meets the occupational competency requirements.

The funding should be [claimed by the training provider through the ILR](#) using the standard ALS process and must be evidenced in the same way and to the same standard. These records must be kept for audit purposes. Funding found to be claimed for unnecessary or inadequately evidenced support may potentially need to be repaid to the ESFA.

7. Appeals

If an apprentice or an employer, for any reason, considers that they have been wrongly refused access to fair assessment and wishes to appeal, they should follow 1st for EPA's Complaints and Appeals Policy.

8. Responsibility

Responsibility for upholding this policy is held by the Managing Director.

9. Policy Review

This policy was last updated 28 October 2020. It will be monitored and reviewed at regular intervals and as legislation requires.

Appendix 1: The Reasonable Adjustment Matrix

Reasonable adjustment matrix

1. No known disability
2. Cognitive processing need such as dyslexia, dyspraxia; a need in executive function, visual processing speed, visual perception, literacy, numeracy, verbal reasoning, verbal memory, nonverbal memory
3. Social/ communication need such as autistic spectrum condition
4. Long standing illness such as cancer, epilepsy, Crohn's, IBS, Chronic Fatigue
5. A mental health condition
6. A physical need such as crutches or wheelchair user, arthritis, paraplegia, quadriplegia, cerebral palsy
7. Hearing need
8. Visual need

Assessment method	Observation	Practical Skills Test	Test	Project	Presentation	Professional Discussion
Reasonable adjustment						
Extra time allowance	2,3,4,5,6,7,8	2,3,4,5,6,7,8	2,3,4,5,6,7,8	2,3,4,5	2,3,4,5,7	2,3,5,6,7
Scribe			2,6,8			
Reader			2,8			
Personal support worker in attendance	2,5,6,8	2,5,6,8	2,5,8	2,5,8	2,5,6,8	2,5,8
Timed rest breaks	2,4,5,6,7,8	2,4,5,6,7,8	2,4,5,6,7,8	2,4,5,6,7,8	2,4,5,6,7,8	2,4,5,6,7,8
Bathroom breaks	4,6	4,6	4,6	4,6	4,6	4,6
Voice explanation	2,8	2,8				
BSL interpreter + extra time	7	7	7	7	7	7



Assessment method	Observation	Practical Skills Test	Test	Project	Presentation	Professional Discussion
Reasonable adjustment						
Assistive technology – voice recognition			2,4,6			
Assistive technology – screenreader			8			
Assistive technology – text to speech			2,4			
Flexibility with location				3,4,5,6	3,4,5,6	3,4,5,6
Flexibility of time of assessment	4	4	4	4	4	4
Flexibility within the method of assessment		6	3,4,5,6	3,4,5,6	3,4,5,6	3,4,5,6
Pre-recorded evidence / delivered by video link				2,3,4,5	2,3,4,5	
Permission to write notes						2,4,5
Permission to bring notes				2,4,5		2,4,5
Info presented in required format – size, font style, colour			2,8			



Assessment method	Observation	Practical Skills Test	Test	Project	Presentation	Professional Discussion
Reasonable adjustment						
Individual testing			3,4,5			
Paper-based option			2,4			
Supervised assessment taken at home			3,4,5,6			
Written questions to back up verbal					2,4,5,6	2,4,5,6
Rewording of questions / clarification if needed					2,3,7	2,3,7
Time allowance for processing verbal questions					2,4,5,7	2,4,5,7
Information presented in small chunks					2,4,7	2,4,7