

Arrangements for reasonable adjustments

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Purpose: | To ensure FDQ complies with Regulators criteria and adopts robust procedures for dealing with reasonable adjustments. The products include regulated qualifications, end point assessments or other FDQ product, developed in FDQ's role as a regulated Awarding Organisation (AO) and End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO). |
| Accountability: | FDQ Committees and sub-committees; personnel involved in the design, development and award of FDQ products: senior officers within FDQ, centres, learners, apprentices, examiners, moderators, EQACs |
| Responsibility: | FDQ CE/RO |
| Effective from: | 01/09/2018 |
| Review date: | 01/09/2019 |
| Links to GCR: | G6 |
| Related documents: | Policies and related documents for reasonable adjustments and the invigilation of examinations; guidance to centres |

Introduction

1. Reasonable adjustments are adjustments 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.
2. FDQ recognises the need to provide a range of flexible and responsive assessment strategies to learners with disabilities. FDQ aims to ensure that these learners have the same access to assessment as other learners. In doing so FDQ aims to remove any barriers which place disabled learners at a disadvantage without giving them an unfair advantage over other learners.
3. It is important that this removal of barriers does not affect the validity or reliability of the assessment process. Arrangements agreed depend upon each specific qualification and the methods of assessment. FDQ will not allow a reasonable

adjustment if it affects the direct attributes that are the focus of the assessment or challenges the integrity of the qualification.

4. In making a reasonable adjustment for learners the following principles must be taken into account:
 - a) the learner must not be given an unfair advantage, e.g. invalidating assessment requirements
 - b) any arrangements made will be determined according to the individual learner's particular requirements
 - c) any arrangements which have been made must not in any way mislead users of the certificate about what the learner has achieved
 - d) any reasonable adjustments made must not compromise the assessment's integrity and must maintain the relevance, validity, reliability and comparability of assessment
 - e) the learner's normal method of working must be taken into account.
5. Access to arrangements described here can be granted to:
 - a) learners with permanent or long-term disabilities, illness or learning difficulties (such as sight impairment, hearing impairment, dyslexia, diabetes)
 - b) learners with temporary medical conditions (such as a broken arm, or chronic pain).

Reasonable adjustments that can be made by centres

6. Centres must have policies and procedures in place for identifying and allowing relevant reasonable adjustments. This is confirmed at time of centre approval. The on-going effectiveness of the centre's procedures is monitored by FDQ's external quality assurance arrangements.
7. FDQ permits centres to make reasonable adjustments for learners for the following activities, without the need for application to or permission from FDQ:
 - a) questioning of learners for assessments other than externally set and marked tests
 - i. use of oral tests with the answers recorded by the assessor
 - ii. use of tape recorder/dictaphone/typescript and additional time (which would normally be an additional 15 minutes in every hour)
 - iii. reading of questions if other means cannot be used

- iv. adapting the visual presentation of questions, e.g. enlarging the print or use of coloured paper
- v. modification of the language used (not including technical terms) for learners where vocabulary and understanding has been limited by severe hearing impairment

b) Internal Independent Assessment

- i. use of a reader and/or scribe. A scribe is someone to whom learners dictate their answers during an assessment. The scribe may also read the questions to a learner, if necessary. The reader and/or scribe should have little or no knowledge of the subject being assessed and scribes must record the learner's answers exactly as dictated. The assessment documentation must state that a reader and/or scribe have been used. Extra time would also normally be granted when a scribe is used and learners must be accommodated in a separate room with an invigilator also present
- ii. examinations may be completed orally, for example using a tape recorder or Dictaphone - the assessment documentation must state the method that has been used and be signed by the invigilator. Again, learners must be accommodated in a separate room.

8. The centre must maintain a record of the reasons for granting reasonable adjustments, including any medical evidence that has been taken into account, which must be retained for monitoring at external quality assurance visits.

Reasonable adjustments requiring permission from FDQ

9. Reasonable adjustments for externally set and marked tests and any variation to assessment/examination arrangements, other than those permitted above, must be agreed by FDQ prior to the assessment/examination taking place. Centres should make a request on the FDQ centre management system and return it to FDQ at least 15 working days prior to the date of the assessment/examination for which the variation is requested. The application form should be emailed to fdq@fdq.org.uk.

10. FDQ will respond to applications, in writing, at least 5 working days prior to the assessment. If the reasonable adjustment is not granted, FDQ will set out its reasons for this decision.

11. Centres must record and retain the relevant evidence supporting the application, including relevant medical evidence, for monitoring during external quality assurance activity.

12. In the event that centres are dissatisfied with a decision concerning reasonable adjustments, they should refer to FDQ's enquiry procedure in the first instance. If, having exhausted these procedures, the centre remains dissatisfied with the outcome it has recourse to FDQ's appeals procedure.

Monitoring the use of reasonable adjustments

13. As part of FDQ's external quality assurance of centres, External Quality Assurance Consultants (EQACs) will be required to investigate:

- a) how learners are inducted and particular requirements identified
- b) how learners are made aware of the support available to them
- c) the nature of support provided to learners with particular requirements and any reasonable adjustments approval claimed
- d) evidence in support of reasonable adjustment applications.

14. FDQ will also ensure that:

- a) appropriate records are maintained of the numbers and types of reasonable adjustments made
- b) operation of the arrangements is reported to the S&QG as part of its remit for monitoring assessment practice.
- c) reports are made to the FDQ Governance Committee as part of the self-evaluation procedure
- d) guidance from the regulators is reviewed and the policy is updated to comply with best practice
- e) information from monitoring activities will be made available to Regulators as part of the awarding organisation's self-evaluation procedure and on request.