

# Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy and Procedure

## Introduction

Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply (CIPS) is an Awarding Body regulated by Ofqual, the qualification regulator for England and Northern Ireland. The Awarding Body is committed to high levels of quality assurance and policies that are open, transparent and free from bias.

The Awarding Body has a responsibility under relevant equalities legislation and the requirements of the qualifications regulator (Ofqual), to ensure that all candidates have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills or understanding to the level of attainment required within each qualification, and those barriers to entry are removed where possible. It is the responsibility of study centres to ensure that appropriate adjustments are made for candidates during the learning process, and the Awarding Body will ensure that candidates are given appropriate adjustments to the assessment process to give them an equal opportunity. This will include a requirement for study centres that provide examination facilities for their learners to apply reasonable adjustments that have been approved by the Awarding Body.

**NB: The Awarding Body will not make adjustments to standards or pass marks. All adjustments must be deemed reasonable and not give the candidate an unfair advantage.**

## Reasonable Adjustments

Adjustments to the assessment process will typically be made in the following circumstances:

**1. Candidates with a physical, sensory or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.**

Under equalities legislation, candidates are deemed to have such impairment if they can show that the condition:

- is more than minor or trivial
- has an effect that has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months
- affects everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

Supporting evidence will be required in all cases. Evidence could include medical reports from doctors, psychiatrists, educational psychologists, specialist teachers, or funding agencies.

Providing the adjustment required is the same for each assessment, candidates do not need to re-submit evidence with subsequent applications for reasonable adjustment; however they must complete a Reasonable Adjustment Request Form for each assessment series.

## 2. Candidates with temporary physical, sensory or mental impairment

Candidates are deemed to have a temporary physical, sensory or mental impairment if the condition is under one year's duration and is likely to improve. Examples of temporary disability could include broken limbs or injury to hands which could impair candidate's ability to write. Supporting evidence will be required in all cases.

If a candidate applies for an adjustment due to a temporary physical, sensory or mental disability, evidence must be re-submitted with a Reasonable Adjustment Request Form for each assessment series.

## 3. Types of Reasonable Adjustments available

- Extra time
- Supervised rest breaks
- Use of readers, scribes, transcribers, word processors, laptops or other micro processing devices
- Miscellaneous types of reasonable adjustments including brailing of non-secure assessment material, taped responses, modified question papers (e.g. enlarged, or printed on coloured paper).

## Procedure for applying for a Reasonable Adjustment

All candidates must submit a request for a reasonable adjustment prior to the closure date for entry to an assessment.

## 4. Candidates registered with a Study Centre.

All study centres (including distance and flexible learning) approved to offer assessment facilities have a duty to implement the Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy for all CIPS candidates who study with the centre. This responsibility includes assessment of needs, recommendation of reasonable adjustment, communication with CIPS and provision of the resources to facilitate the adjustment. Study centres will also be responsible for ensuring that appropriate facilities for work based assessment are available in conjunction with the employer.

Candidates who are registered with a study centre must complete a Candidate Reasonable Adjustment Request Form and submit this to the CIPS programme leader at the study centre, together with appropriate medical evidence.

The centre should assess the request and complete a Centre Reasonable Adjustment Request form; this must be submitted to CIPS **before the entry closure date of the assessment**. Supporting evidence should be attached to the form with a copy of the completed Candidate Reasonable Adjustment Request form. The centre should retain a copy of the candidate's application for review and audit purposes.

On receipt of the Centre Reasonable Adjustment Request form from the study centre, CIPS will confirm approval of the proposed adjustment to the centre in writing. The centre should ensure that a copy of this approval together with a copy of the Centre Reasonable Adjustment Request form is attached to the examination activity report prior to despatch for marking.

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**5. Candidates who are not registered with a study centre, or who are being assessed at a regional examination centre.**

The Awarding Body undertakes the assessment of needs, approval of reasonable adjustment and communication with the centre to facilitate the provision of resources required for candidates who are not registered with an approved study centre or who are undertaking assessments at a regional examination centre. Although every effort is made to accommodate all adjustments, some regional examination centres (venues used to host examinations that do not offer study facilities) will not be able to accommodate all candidates' needs. Other arrangements will be made wherever possible. Work based assessment is only available through a study centre.

Candidates who are not registered with a study centre (self-study learners) or who wish to take their assessment at a different centre, should complete a Candidate Reasonable Adjustment Request Form and submit this to the Assessment Services Team, together with appropriate medical evidence. This must be submitted to CIPS **before the entry closure date of the assessment.**

The Awarding Body will consider the request for reasonable adjustment and liaise directly with candidates and centres to facilitate the requirements at least **four weeks** prior to the assessment date.

Dependent on the type of additional assessment needs, the Awarding Body may need to allocate a candidate to the examination centre best equipped to support her/his needs, which may not be the centre most local or convenient to the candidate. Whilst every effort will be made to make provision for candidates locally, the Awarding Body reserves the right to allocate candidates to other centres. On application, assistance with reasonable travel costs associated with the travelling to the assessment or examination centre may be available.

**Please note that the Awarding Body must grant approval for all reasonable adjustments and reserves the right to refuse requests. If an adjustment is made without written approval from CIPS, this could constitute malpractice. Once a reasonable adjustment has been agreed and implemented, no further adjustment will be made to the assessment or marking process.**

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## Special Consideration

Special consideration may be given to candidates in instances that could not have been predicted, or were outside the candidate's control, which may have impacted on their performance. This ensures that candidates who have a temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of the assessment are treated fairly.

Examples include influenza, bereavement of a close family member, evacuation of the assessment venue, and disturbances during the assessment. Special consideration must be applied for no later than two weeks after the assessment, and supporting evidence must be provided, e.g. letter from doctor/hospital/authorised person, invigilator's report, etc.

Centres providing examination facilities should make every effort to accommodate reasonable requests for special consideration at short notice. Centres are authorised to allow extra time (for example due to a disturbance during the examination or assessment). In some cases this will not be possible, and centres and CIPS may advise candidates that it is in their best interest to postpone the assessment.

### 1. Types of special consideration that may be given

- up to 5 extra marks in any one examination
- CIPS account credited for a free re-sit
- exemption given from the examination in question.. This is only available in cases where evidence confirms that a completed answer booklet has been lost, destroyed or damaged beyond repair.

### 2. Procedure for applying for Special Consideration

Candidates must advise CIPS in writing, within **14 days** of the end of the assessment, of the circumstances which caused the request for special consideration.

For candidates who have taken an online assessment, they must advise CIPS in writing, within **7 days** of the end of the assessment, of the circumstances which caused the request for special consideration. The Awarding Body will take the incident into account prior to the release of results and will communicate the outcome directly to the candidate.

Centres are required to advise CIPS in writing if an incident occurs during the assessment, confirming the adjustments made and candidates affected. This information may be included in the invigilator's report or the record of examination activity on the back of the examination register.

### 3. Review and Appeal

Wherever possible, the Awarding Body will deal sympathetically with requests for reasonable adjustments or special consideration. In cases where a request is turned down the candidate has the right to request a review of the decision.

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### **Stage 1 – Review**

Candidates and centres may request a review of the decision made following the above process. The review is conducted by the Head of the Awarding Body, who will re-examine the initial decision. Requests for a review of a reasonable adjustment decision should be made as quickly as possible following the initial decision, and will be reviewed equally swiftly to allow the outcome to be notified before the assessment takes place.

### **Stage 2 – Appeal**

If the candidate or centre does not agree with the outcome of the review, they have the right to take the process to Stage 2 appeal, which would involve an independent review of the case. An appeal at Stage 2 will only be considered if the appellant can show that the Awarding Body did not apply procedures consistently during the original investigation, or that procedures were not followed properly and fairly. The original circumstances will not be re-investigated at the appeal stage. There is a fee of £125 for Stage 2 appeals, which would be refunded if the appeal were successful.

Appeals are heard by the Assessment Quality Board (AQB). The AQB includes members who have appropriate competence in relevant matters, but who have had no involvement with the assessment or the administration of assessments, and have no personal interest in the decisions under consideration. At least one member of the Board will be a person who is not an employee of CIPS, an assessor working for CIPS, or otherwise connected to CIPS.

**Kate Tomlinson**  
**Head of Awarding Body**