BWYQ Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Procedures
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Reasonable Adjustments – Introduction

Considering the Needs of all Learners

The BWYQ is fully committed to an unimpeded access to, and equal opportunities in, assessment and will consider, during the development process, the needs of all potential Learners, including those with a range of impairments (which in the case of a teaching qualification, would not prevent them from discharging their teaching duties competently on qualifying). To this end, the BWYQ will strive to make all its qualifications and associated assessment tasks accessible to all those Learners who are capable of demonstrating their competence, thereby also minimising any later need to make reasonable adjustments for them. If, however, it is felt that, despite the accessibility of the qualifications, a Learner with a particular assessment requirement should be offered extra assistance, this will be done. In such cases, the BWYQ will make, or allow its Centres to make, reasonable adjustments for Learners with particular assessment requirements to ensure that they can access assessment and demonstrate attainment.

Review arrangements

We will review the policy annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as and when necessary in response to customer and Learner feedback, changes in our practices, actions from the regulatory authorities or external agencies or changes in legislation.

Maintaining the Integrity of the Qualification

While the BWYQ will allow a range of reasonable adjustments to accommodate Learners’ special assessment requirements and will make every effort to accommodate individual requests, it will not authorise any adjustments which would prevent Learners on any BWYQ qualification from functioning effectively on qualifying and will ensure that any adjustments conform to all relevant regulatory requirements. The qualifications offered by the BWYQ are competence-based, and Learners will therefore be assessed on their ability to meet all the specified assessment criteria in order to attain the awards towards which they are working. This means that the reasonable adjustments allowed by BWYQ will not invalidate the assessment requirements set out in the specifications for the qualifications.

General Principles Underpinning Reasonable Adjustments

- Reasonable Adjustments are made to an assessment for a qualification to enable a disabled Learner to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding of the levels of attainment requirement by the specification for that qualification.
- Reasonable adjustments are available for Learners who have a range of difficulties. These may include the following: speech impairment, a physical impairment, a visual impairment, a hearing impairment or learning disabilities.
- Evidence of the requirement for a reasonable adjustment may be required
- The Learner’s individual needs will determine the nature of the adjustment decision
- Reasonable adjustments must not give the Learner an unfair advantage over other Learners
- Reasonable adjustments must not compromise the quality, integrity and validity of the qualification
• It is the Centre’s responsibility to provide adjustments to Centre-devised assessment material/resource or reference materials
• Where Centres modify material into alternative formats, they are responsible for the security of the material and for the accuracy of the modifications. A Learner may be penalised for any errors in his/her work that occur as a result of errors in the material
• There are no circumstances when the health and safety of a Learner should be compromised in the name of assessment. Assumptions should not be made about a disability posing a health and safety risk, but the health and safety of all Learners and others must always be of paramount importance
• The Learner has a responsibility to raise issues related to reasonable adjustments before a course commences or as soon in the course as the need for such adjustments are identified.
• Centres should ensure that initial assessment and pre-course Learner information encourages Learners to identify any known difficulties that may fall within the scope of this policy
• The BWYQ will be responsible for the costs of any reasonable adjustments required to complete external written or on-line assessments
• All costs related to the organisation and implementation of reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of Learners to complete practical or written assessments on-course will be the responsibility of the Centre
• Costs cannot be passed to the Learner
• The BWYQ and Centres are only required by law to do what is “reasonable” in terms of providing adjustments. What is reasonable will depend upon the individual circumstances, the cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment
• Failure to comply with the regulations outlined in this policy document may lead to a Learner’s results being invalidated and certification withheld, in line with the BWYQ External Quality Assurance / Sanctions Policy

The Process for Making Reasonable Adjustments

There are two routes through which a Learner may be granted adjustments to an assessment. These routes are to:

• Use reasonable adjustments permitted at the discretion of the Centre - see Permissions Table in Appendix 1. In some cases BWYQ may permit the Centre to implement reasonable adjustments without seeking prior permission. In these cases BWYQ requires Centres to keep records for inspection (including any declarations that are signed and dated by a member of the Centre staff who has formally been given delegated authority for this by the Head of Centre)
• Apply to BWYQ for permission via the Wheel on-line system

Centres should keep records of adjustments they have permitted and those they have requested from BWYQ. These records should be kept for 3 years following the assessment to which they apply for audit purposes and to monitor the effectiveness of the reasonable adjustments that have been made.

It is recommended that Centres nominate a named member of staff to take responsibility for demonstrating the implementation and recording of all adjustments to assessments for monitoring by BWYQ or regulatory authorities.
**Applying for Reasonable Adjustments**

Applications to BWYQ for Reasonable Adjustments must be made by Centres on their Learners’ behalf via the contact details at the end of this policy. Details to be submitted will include the following:

- Learner name & registration number
- Centre name & number
- Qualification
- Details of the reasonable adjustments requirements and rationale
- Supporting documentary evidence (of disability) where appropriate

Requests made to BWYQ should be submitted no later than 10 weeks before the assessment takes place.

We aim to respond to all requests within 3 working days of receipt.

Any supporting documentary evidence submitted concerning proof of a Learner’s disability must be valid, sufficient and reliable. Where the evidence of the disability or difficulty and its implications are clear, such as for a Learner with profound physical or sensory impairments, the Centre does not need to provide further evidence of these physical difficulties.

If necessary, external experts may be called upon to assess the Learner.

**Appeals**

If you wish to appeal against a decision by BWYQ to decline a request for reasonable adjustments, please refer to the BWYQ Appeals Policy.

**Identifying Learners who are eligible for Reasonable Adjustments**

Any adjustment to assessment will be based upon what the Learner needs to access the assessment. Below are some examples of Learner needs that may be eligible for adjustment to assessments. This list is not exhaustive and it should be noted that some Learner needs will fall within more than one of the categories set out below.

**Communication and interaction needs**

A Learner with communication and interaction difficulties may have problems with reading or writing, the effects of which could be reduced through the use of a Reader, word processor, Scribe, British Sign Language (BSL) or Irish Sign Language (ISL), screen reading software or voice activated software. They may also benefit from extra time during assessments that are time-constrained to allow them to demonstrate their skills and knowledge.

Where assignments or other assessment evidence are produced in Braille or signed onto video, it is the Centre’s responsibility to ensure that a person who is suitably qualified in Braille or sign language is available to translate the material for the internal and external verifier / assessor if this is required.
**Sensory and physical needs**

A Learner may need to have assessment material modified for hearing impairment and visual impairment. They may also need to use a BSL/ISL, Practical Assistant, Reader or Scribe. In addition they may benefit from the use of assistive technology and extra time to complete assessments.

**Range of Reasonable Adjustments**

The Permissions Table (in Appendix 1) lists the most commonly requested adjustments to standard assessment arrangements. Neither those listed in the table, nor the examples given below are intended to comprise a comprehensive list and Centres and External Verifiers have a duty to seek advice from BWYQ in any case where they do not consider that they have the necessary expertise to judge whether a reasonable adjustment is needed and/or how it should be applied.

Centres should note that:

- Not all the adjustments to assessments described below will be reasonable, permissible or practical in particular situations. If in doubt, the Centre is advised to contact BWYQ for advice.
- The Learner may not need, nor be allowed, the same adjustment for all qualifications. Some Learners may need a single adjustment; others may require a combination of several adjustments.

The list of reasonable adjustments is organised under the following headings:

1. Changes to assessment conditions
2. Use of mechanical and electronic aides
3. Modifications to presentation of assessment material
4. Alternative ways of presenting responses
5. Use of access facilitators

1. **Changes to assessment conditions**

**Extra time**

- Where assessment activities are time constrained a Learner may be allowed extra time during an assessment if s/he has a condition that affects the speed of processing
- The amount of extra time allowed should accurately reflect the extent to which the completion of the assessment will be affected by the Learner’s difficulty. Unlimited extra time will not be allowed. It is the Centre’s responsibility to specify the amount of extra time the Learner will need, using as a guide the extra time required during formative assessments in the Centre
- Extra time for onscreen assessments may have to be customised for each Learner. In these cases the Centre is advised to contact BWYQ to apply for a time extension to be set up
• Extra time will not be allowed in practical activities where timing is a crucial part of the assessment or in group activities where the Learner’s performance will be assessed in conjunction with others

**Supervised rest breaks**

• Where assessment activities are time constrained, a Learner may, if there is demonstrated need, be allowed supervised rest breaks during an assessment
• The duration of the break should not be deducted from the assessment time

**Changes in the organisation of the assessment room**

• Minor changes to the organisation of the assessment room may benefit some Learners with autistic spectrum disorder, with visual or hearing impairment or with physical difficulties
• Visually impaired Learners may benefit from sitting near a window so that they have good lighting
• Deaf Learners may benefit from sitting near the front of the room and in good light
• Some Learners may benefit from using chairs with arm rests or adjustable heights
• Autistic Learners may benefit from having visual / noise stimuli, such as a ticking clock, removed from the room
• The Centre should consider the needs of the individual Learner and, where possible, arrange the assessment room to suit the Learner

2. **Use of Mechanical and Electronic Aids**

**Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, tinted spectacles and Optical Character Recognition (OCR) scanners**

• The Centre should ensure that the Learner has had sufficient practice in the use of these aids and that any electronic aids are in good working order
• The Centre should contact BWYQ if it is unclear about whether any new technology will unfairly advantage the Learner or invalidate the assessment requirements
• The Learner should be familiar with how the aid works

**Use of assistive technology, for example speech / screen reading software and voice activated software**

• Some Learners may benefit from the use of software that reads the assessment material to them and records their spoken responses
• Due to the rapid development of such technology, Centres should seek advice from BWYQ if the implications of using certain kinds of assistive technology are unclear with regard to the risk of giving the Learner an unfair advantage or invalidation of the assessment requirements
• It should be noted that the use of such software may introduce a hidden assessment agenda, in that the Learner has to master the use of the software in addition to mastering the assessment criteria. Some Learners may need extra time if they use such software
• The Learner should be familiar with how the assistive technology works
3. Modifications to the presentation of the assessment material

Assessment material in enlarged format

For paper based assessments enlargements may be used. Examples of these include:

- Unmodified enlarged papers where the standard paper is photocopied from A4 to A3, thus enlarging the whole paper and retaining the original layout and visual presentation
- Modified enlarged paper where the paper is modified by simplifying the layout and where necessary reducing the content while still meeting the same objective as those tested in the original paper
- Where the Centre is permitted to make the enlargements to externally set assessment material, it should take responsibility for ensuring that the entire document is enlarged. The Learner may be penalised for any errors in his/her work which occur as a result of incomplete enlargement of the material
- Centres should note that assessment material containing scale diagrams cannot be enlarged

On screen assessments

- If the default font and text size used for an on-screen assessment is not suitable for the Learner, screen magnification software programmes may provide an option to magnify the text to a suitable size
- Learners should become familiar with the ways the screen may be adapted in on-line tests and assessments by using practice tests

Assessment material in Braille

- Assessment material may be provided in Braille for a blind or visually impaired Learner
- The material will be modified to remove any visual content prior to brailling
- Diagrams in the assessment material can be produced as tactile diagrams
- If Braille assessment material has been ordered for a BWYQ devised assessment, but is no longer required, the Centre should inform BWYQ immediately as any costs incurred in producing such material may be passed to the Centre
- Permission may be given to the Centre to Braille externally set assessment materials. BWYQ will advise when this can be permitted
- Where the Centre is permitted to Braille externally set assessment material, it is responsible for ensuring that the entire document is brailed. The Learner may be penalised for any errors in his/her work which occur as a result of errors in the brailed material
- Braille is not always an appropriate adjustment for the Learner, not all blind people are fluent in Braille
- It is the Centre’s responsibility to arrange for the brailling of Centre-devised assessment materials/resources or reference materials
Assessment material in BSL or ISL

- Assessment material may be modified for a deaf Learner whose first language is BSL or ISL
- Technical language may not be modified. The modified version of the assessment material should contain the same questions as the standard version and the same answers will be expected from the Learner
- Where the Centre cannot provide a BSL / ISL interpreter for the assessment, and if language modified assessment material does not provide sufficient assistance, a BSL / ISL version of assessment material may be provided on DVD instead of (or in addition to) the assessment material in written English
- Centres should note that translation of Centre-devised assessment material/resource or reference materials into BSL / ISL will not be suitable for all assessments and that they need to contact BWYQ for further advice if they are unclear whether this adjustment is appropriate

Assessment material on coloured paper

- Assessment material may be placed onto coloured paper to assist Learners with visual impairments
- Centres must ensure that the entire document is copied as Learners may be penalised for any errors made as a result of incomplete copying

On-screen assessments

- Learners may normally be able to select a screen background in a colour that is suited to their needs. It is advised that Learners explore the selection available using a practice test before they take an assessment

Assessment material in audio format

- Where there is evidence of need, assessment material may be provided in audio format
- It is the Centre’s responsibility to provide Centre-devised assessment material in the precise format suitable for the Learner

4. Alternative ways of presenting Learner responses

A Learner should be provided with the means to present their responses by a method most appropriate and familiar to them, as long as the use of that method will not invalidate the requirements of the assessment. The use of ICT is generally perceived to have a positive impact upon helping Learners with disabilities to access assessment. ICT can normally be used for Centre-devised and portfolio work unless the use of ICT is expressly prohibited by the qualification specification.
Spoken responses using electronic recording devices, for example CD Roms, memory sticks, audio cassettes

- Where there is evidence of need, the Learner may be permitted to record their responses electronically
- Spoken responses will only be available for assessments where there is no requirement for the Learner to produce visual material
- The Centre should check whether permission should be sought from BWYQ to record the Learner’s responses electronically

5. The Use of Access Facilitators

Reader

- A Reader is a person who, when requested, will read to the Learner all or part of the assessment material and the Learner’s written responses
- The Reader should not normally be the Learner’s own tutor or assessor, except in circumstances where it is necessary to do so. In such cases, BWYQ should be specifically consulted. On no account may a relative, friend or peer of the Learner to use as a Reader
- Where there is evidence of need a Reader may be allowed in all assessments where reading is not being assessed
- The Centre should, in consultation with the Learner, decide whether the use of a Reader will be an effective arrangement. The Learner may be more comfortable with using speech or screen reading software which reads out the material, accessing the material in electronic format, in Braille or through sign language
- The Centre is responsible for making the necessary arrangements for the provision of a Reader
- The Centre should select the Reader on the basis of their ability to work effectively with the Learner. The Reader should be able to read accurately and at a reasonable rate and should have sufficient knowledge of the subject to read technical terms accurately
- A Learner should, wherever possible, have had previous practice in working with the Reader and should have used this arrangement during any training programme leading up to the assessment
- The Centre should ensure that the Learner and Reader are clear about the limitations of the Reader’s role
- The Centre should give the Reader clear instructions regarding what they are required to do and what they may and may not do during the assessment
- For a Learner requiring a Reader and a Scribe, the same person may act as both as long as permission has been given for both arrangements
- The Learner using a Reader may need to be accommodated separately so as not to disturb other Learners
- The Reader is responsible to, and should be approved by, the Head of Centre or the Centre staff member with delegated responsibility
The Reader:

- Should read only as requested by the Learner. The Learner may choose to read some parts of the assessment him/herself.
- Should read accurately. If the Reader is working with a deaf or hearing impaired Learner, the Reader should articulate clearly.
- Should only read the exact working (instructions and questions) and not give meanings of words, rephrase or interpret anything.
- May consult a dictionary, where this is allowed, at the Learner’s request and read out entries.
- Should read, as often as requested, the answers already recorded but may not act as a proof Reader.
- Is permitted to help a visually impaired Learner using diagrams, graphs and tables to obtain the information that the print/amended print copy would give to a sighted Learner.
- Should, if requested, give a visually impaired Learner the spelling of a word which appears on the paper, but otherwise spellings must not be given.
- Should immediately report any problems in communication to the Centre.

Scribe (sometimes called amanuensis):

- A Scribe is a person who, in an assessment, writes down or word processes a Learner’s dictated responses. The most common need for a Scribe is where a Learner has injured their arm and is unable to write.
- A Scribe should not normally be the Learner’s own tutor or assessor, except when it is necessary to do so. In such cases, the awarding body should be specifically consulted. On no account may a relative, friend or peer of the Learner be used as a Scribe.
- The Centre should, in consultation with the Learner, decide whether the use of a Scribe is an appropriate adjustment. As the effective use of a Scribe requires high level communication skills from the Learner, the Centre is advised to consider whether the Learner would be more comfortable with the use of a computer, especially where the Learner is likely to use a word processor rather than a Scribe in the workplace.
- For a Learner requiring a Scribe and a Reader, the same person may act as both, provided permission has been given for both.
- The Centre should select a Scribe on the basis of their ability to work effectively with the Learner. A Scribe should be able to produce an accurate record of the Learner’s responses, write eligibly and/or word process at a reasonable speed and have sufficient knowledge of the subject to be able to record technical terms correctly.
- The Centre is responsible for making the necessary arrangements for the provision of a Scribe.
- The Scribe is responsible to and should be approved by the Head of Centre or the Centre staff member with delegated responsibility.
- A Learner should, wherever possible, have had previous practice in working with the Scribe.
• The Centre should ensure that the Learner and Scribe are clear about the limitations of the Scribe’s role
• The Centre should give the Scribe clear instructions regarding what s/he is required to do and what s/he is not allowed to do during the assessment

The Scribe:

• Must write down answers exactly as they are dictated
• May not take responsibility for spelling technical words
• Should not assist the Learner to produce any diagrammatical or graphical material. If assistance with this is needed, approval should be obtained from BWYQ in advance of the assessment
• May, at the Learner’s request, read back what has been written, but no comment must be made about any part of the Learner’s responses
• Should immediately refer any problems in communication to the Centre

Practical Assistant

• A Practical Assistant is a person who, during an assessment, carries out practical tasks at the instruction of the Learner. One example of the kinds of task with which the Practical Assistant may assist is demonstration of a yoga posture during a teaching activity
• The Practical Assistant should be familiar with the requirements of the assessment, but should not normally be the Learner’s own tutor or assessor except when it is necessary to do so. In such cases, BWYQ should be specifically consulted. On no account may a relative, or a friend of the Learner be used as a Practical Assistant
• The Centre should, in consultation with the Learner, decide whether the use of a Practical Assistant is an appropriate arrangement
• The Centre is responsible for making the necessary arrangements for the provision of a Practical Assistant
• A Practical Assistant should be a person who is able to ensure the safety of the Learner and carry out his/her instructions accurately
• The Centre should prepare clear written instructions for the Practical Assistant on the assistance they are able to give the Learner. A copy of these instructions should also be given to the Learner. The Centre should note that the Practical Assistant may not perform tasks for which the Learner will receive credit

The Practical Assistant

• Should follow the instructions prepared by the Centre on the level of kind of assistance that can be given
• Should ensure the safety of the Learner and those around him/her
• Should not give factual help to the Learner or offer any suggestions
• Should carry out instructions exactly as they are given unless to do so would cause a hazard. If the Practical Assistant does not understand the Learner’s instructions, s/he may ask for clarification but must not lead the Learner in any way or attempt
to interpret the Learner’s wishes; if incorrect or inadequate instructions are given by the Learner this must be reflected in the outcome of the assessment

- Should not expect to assist the Learner throughout the entire assessment – there may be parts of the assessment which the Learner can do without help and thus gain credit for demonstrating the required skills
- Should immediately refer any problems during an assessment to the Centre

For any further guidance or advice please contact:
BWYQ Central Office
25 Jermyn Street, Sleaford, Lincs, NG34 7RU
Telephone: 01529 419915

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>BWYQ Operations Coordinator and Responsible Officer Amanda Buchanan</td>
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<td>August 2016</td>
<td>BWYQ Operations Coordinator and Responsible Officer Amanda Buchanan</td>
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<td>August 2016</td>
<td>Lead Director for Quality Assurance and Process Mila Bogen</td>
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APPENDIX 1 – Reasonable Adjustments Permissions Table

This table outlines some of the decisions on reasonable adjustments that can be made. However, Centres and EQAs have a duty to seek advice from BWYQ in any case where they are in doubt if an adjustment is needed or how it should be applied.

- Permitted = reasonable adjustment permitted at the discretion of the Centre
- Apply = apply to BWYQ for permission

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APPENDIX 2 – General guidance on the use of British Sign Language (BSL) and Irish Sign Language (ISL)

- Although British Sign Language (BSL) and Irish Sign Language (ISL) are now recognised as official languages of the UK, it is not a statutory language, unlike English, Welsh and Irish (Gaelige)
- The regulatory criteria state: “A Learner taking a qualification may be assessed in British Sign Language or Irish Sign Language where it is permitted by an awarding organisation for the purpose of Reasonable Adjustment” (Ofqual’s General Conditions of Recognition 2011 – G2.2)
- Where BSL/ISL is the primary means of communication for a deaf learner, these Learners may have the support of a BSL/ISL /English interpreter to sign the questions (or part questions) where they are undertaking written assessments
- For assessments where reading or speaking and listening are the competences being assessed, BSL/ISL or any other sign language may only be used for the assessment material rubric and instructions
- The Centre should ensure that the BSL/ISL interpreter has an appropriate qualification in the sign language and a good working knowledge of the content of the assessment
- A Learner should, wherever possible, have had previous experience of working with a BSL/ISL /English interpreter and should have used this arrangement during the learning programme leading up to the assessment
- The Centre should ensure that the Learner and the person providing the interpretation is clear about the limitations of the latter’s role in the assessment situation
- The Centre should ensure that the person providing the interpretation has access to the assessment material in advance of the assessment, to prepare for the signing. This arrangement should be agreed with the awarding body
- The interpretation should not give the Learner an unfair advantage and care must be taken not to indicate the meaning of technical words, where the Learner’s understanding of these words is inherent in the purpose of the question. The interpretation should not explain or clarify. In some instances it may be more appropriate to finger-spell a word
- Any words or phrases interpreted for the Learner because a standard sign is not available or appropriate should be underlined on the assessment material, which, if separate from the answer book, should be attached to the Learner’s answer book. Amended versions of questions should be shown on the assessment material
- The learner using a BSL/ISL /English interpreter should be accommodated separately so as not to disturb other learners
The BSL/ISL interpreter:

- Should have access to the assessment material in advance of the assessment to prepare for the signing. BWYQ will advise how long before the assessment the BSL/ISL /English interpreter can have access to the assessment material
- Should not interpret technical language or give additional explanations
- May, at the Learner’s request, sign any labels or text connected with reference material such as maps, diagrams or graphs. The learner should, however, study the reference material independently

Summary:

- The Centre should check that the use of BSL/ISL interpreter is the most appropriate arrangement to enable the Learner to undertake the assessment
- The Centre should select a BSL/ISL interpreter and fully brief him/her on their responsibilities
- A BSL/ISL interpreter should not be allowed where such use would invalidate the assessment requirements.
- The BSL/ISL interpreter should have an appropriate qualification in the sign language so as not to disadvantage the Learner.