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National End-Point Assessment (NEPA) are committed to providing fair and reasonable adjustments for apprentices to help reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the apprentice at a disadvantage during an end-point assessment (EPA).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect apprentices who are registered with NEPA for end-point assessment and applies to all aspects of the delivery of end-point assessment including **support materials, as well as formal assessments, to ensure that learners are not disadvantaged during the assessment process.** This policy sets out and explains a range of mechanisms that we may offer to our apprentices that require support in completing their EPA journey.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of NEPA assessors, and representatives of NEPA, to make apprentices, employers and providers who are involved in the design, delivery, management, assessment, and quality assurance of EPA aware of and familiar with, the contents of this policy.

Policy Overview

The Equality Act 2010 requires End-Point Assessment Organisations (EPAOs) to make reasonable adjustments to ensure an apprentice who is disabled (as defined in the Act) are not placed at a disadvantage in comparison to apprentices who are not disabled.

Assessment should be a fair test of apprentices' knowledge and what they are able to do, however, for some apprentices, the usual format of assessment may not be suitable. NEPA ensure that assessment format is not a barrier for apprentices completing EPA with us.

The provision for reasonable adjustments and special condition arrangements are made to ensure that apprentices receive recognition of their achievement so long as the equity, validity and reliability of the assessments can be assured. Such arrangements are not concessions to make assessments easier for apprentices, nor advantages to give apprentices a head start.

There are two ways in which access to fair assessment can be maintained, which are through:

- Reasonable Adjustments – agreed before the assessment takes place; or
- Special Considerations – applied post assessment.

Definition of Reasonable Adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the apprentice at a disadvantage in the assessment situation.

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the integrity of what is being assessed.

Reasonable adjustments are approved or set-in place before the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the apprentice access to the assessment activity. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the assessment of an apprentice's work.

End-Point Assessment Organisations and partners are only required by law to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors, such as the need to maintain competence standards and health and safety, will also be taken into consideration.

Definition of Special Considerations

Reasons for special consideration could be temporary illness, injury, or adverse circumstances at the time of the assessment.

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

Special consideration may result in a small post-assessment adjustment to the mark of the apprentice. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances during the assessment and will reflect the difficulty faced by the learner but will always be a minor adjustment as to do more may jeopardise the standard.

Where an assessment requires a competence, criterion, or standard to be met fully, or in the case of standard that confer a Licence to Practise, it may not be possible to apply special consideration. It may be more appropriate to offer the apprentice an opportunity to retake the assessment at a later date or to extend the registration period so that the apprentice has more time to complete the assessment activity.

All apprentices, regardless of their special consideration, must still meet our minimum requirement to achieve their apprenticeship.

Apprentices cannot enter a plea for special considerations for assessment solely on the grounds of disability or learning difficulty. Apprentices, Providers or Employers must declare their disability or learning needs prior to the assessment period. Partners must declare any requirements at enrolment. This is a minimum of three months prior to expected Gateway and will then be considered by the quality team. Where these requirements cannot be fulfilled, the partner will be notified within 10 working days. Any required adjustments will be again checked at Gateway by the Independent End-Point Assessor (IEPA) with the completion of the Gateway Declaration. All necessary reasonable adjustment arrangements must have been implemented prior to the apprentice completing any assessments.

How to Submit a Reasonable Adjustment Request

Training provider and employers can request reasonable adjustments via ACE360 and this should be done a minimum of 3 months prior to expected Gateway.

EPA Request for Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations

If the apprentice requires arrangements for reasonable adjustments, they should provide NEPA with evidence of their learning needs or medical condition. This will be reviewed by a member of NEPA's quality team who will check that the reasonable adjustment is current and relevant to the apprentice.

How to Submit a Special Consideration Request

To request a special consideration, the apprentice, provider, or employer should complete the appropriate request form by emailing quality@nationalepa.co.uk.

Processes and Timescales Regarding Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable Adjustment Request – Timescales

Once a request for a reasonable adjustment is received, the quality team will complete a review of the request and evidence provided, following the IFATE Reasonable Adjustment Matrix. The quality team will aim to review your request within 10 working days of it being received. If this is not possible, it will be acknowledged in writing within 1 working day of receipt with notification provided of what action will be taken. The quality team aims to conclude reasonable adjustment requests within 10 working days upon receipt of a fully completed request. The quality team will inform apprentices and employers if these timescales cannot be adhered to for any reason.

Request for a Special Consideration

Once a request for a special consideration is received, we will complete a review of the request and evidence provided. The quality team will aim to review your request within 10 working days of it being received. If this is not possible, it will be acknowledged in writing within 1 working day of receipt with notification provided of what action will be taken.

The quality team aims to conclude special consideration requests within 10 working days upon receipt of a fully completed request.

The quality team will inform you if these timescales cannot be adhered to for any reason.

If partners or apprentices remain dissatisfied following the outcome of the request that you have submitted, you may submit a complaint or appeal in line with the NEPA Appeals or Complaints Policy.

Mandatory Disclosure and Confidentiality

Confidentiality

We may need to access confidential information. We will ensure that such information is kept secure and only used for the purposes of the investigation and in line with relevant data protection legislation. We will not normally disclose the information to third parties unless required to do so, e.g. to our regulators and / or the Police or other relevant and / or statutory bodies.

Termination for Convenience

Our actions under this policy and any sanctions imposed will be proportionate. Where possible, we will always try to work with partners in resolving issues. However, nothing within this policy precludes us from invoking our right under the agreement for provision of services relating to end-point assessment to terminate our relationship with partners.

*For the purpose of this policy, the quality team is in reference to Subject Quality Assurers (QAs) followed by an additional review by the Head of Quality if further guidance is needed.

IFATE Reasonable Adjustment Matrix

1. No known disability
2. Cognitive processing needs 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 autistic spectrum condition
4. Long standing illness such as cancer, epilepsy, Crohn’s, IBS, Chronic Fatigue
5. A mental health conditions
6. A physical need such as crutches or wheelchair user, arthritis, paraplegia, quadriplegia, cerebral palsy
7. Hearing need
8. Visual need

Reasonable Adjustment	Assessment Method					
	Observation	Practical Skills Test	Test	Project	Presentation	Professional Discussion
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 Inattendance	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				

Reasonable Adjustment	Assessment Method					
	Observation	Practical Skills Test	Test	Project	Presentation	Professional Discussion
BSL Interpreter & Extra Time	7	7	7	7	7	7
Assistive Technology – Voice Recognition			2,4,6			
Assistive Technology – Screen Reader			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			
Individual Testing			3,4,5			
Paper-Based Option			2,4			
Supervised Assessment Taken at Home			3,4,5,6			

Reasonable Adjustment	Assessment Method					
	Observation	Practical Skills Test	Test	Project	Presentation	Professional Discussion
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