



Inspiring Great British Manufacturing

Fair Access to Assessment Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose & scope

MTC Training is committed to ensuring all assessment is a fair test of learner's knowledge. Requests for reasonable adjustments and special consideration will be dealt with by MTC Training staff in a fair and consistent manner and presented to the awarding organisation where relevant.

The policy is based upon the good practice guide developed by the Joint Council for Qualifications: JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

The MTC Training Fair Access to Assessment Policy applies to all current apprentices and learners of MTC Training. Access Arrangements allow learners with special educational needs, disabilities, or temporary injuries to access the assessments without changing the assessment demands. In this way, MTC Training will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

The principles of this policy ensure assessment is a fair test of learner's knowledge and what they can do, however, for some learners, the usual format of assessment may not be suitable. This policy ensures that the delivery of qualifications and assessments does not exclude learners from achievement.

MTC Training recognises that reasonable adjustments or special considerations may be required at the time of assessment where:

- Learners have a permanent disability or specific learning needs
- Learners have a temporary disability, medical condition or learning needs
- Learners are indisposed at the time of the assessment

The provision for reasonable adjustments and special consideration arrangements is made to ensure that learners 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 assessment easier for learners, nor advantages to give learners a head start. A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements (see IfATE Reasonable Adjustment Matrix¹).

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

¹ <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/quality/end-point-assessment-reasonable-adjustments-guidance/>

1.2 Definitions

Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment based on evidence of need and normal ways of working. They allow candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs, disabilities, or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment (JCQ.org).

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. Adjustments are made to an assessment or examination to enable the learner to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding at the levels of attainment required by an awarding body. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage.

Reasonable adjustments within vocational qualifications must reflect the normal learning or working practice of a learner in a centre or working within the occupational area (JCQ.org).

Reasonable adjustments may involve (but are not limited to) one or more actions from the below list:

- Changing usual assessment arrangements, for example allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment activity
- Adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in Braille
- Providing assistance during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or a reader
- Re-organising the assessment room, such as removing visual stimuli for an autistic learner
- Changing the assessment method, for example, from a written assessment to a spoken assessment
- Using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice activated software

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- Providing the mechanism to have different colour backgrounds to screens for onscreen assessments or asking for permission for copying to different coloured paper for paper-based assessments
- Providing and allowing different coloured transparencies with which to view examination papers.

1.3 Assessments

Internal

MTC Training do not need to apply to the awarding bodies for internal assessments, however there must be reasonable adjustments that are in line with the awarding body's policies. All reasonable adjustments made in relation to internal assessments must be held within the centre for inspection by an awarding body.

External

In the event that MTC Training wish to apply for a reasonable adjustment, we must make an application to the relevant awarding body no later than six weeks before the date of the assessment. Form VQ/EA must be used for the application. Form VQ/EA is available electronically at: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/forms>. In the case of Functional Skills subjects, only exceptional adjustments will be applied for via the Pearson Access Arrangements Online service.

Each application will be considered individually. The response will relate primarily to the effect the requested adjustment might have on the competence and ability being tested in the qualification, as well as the reliability and validity of the assessment. Some adjustments may not be considered reasonable if they:

- Do not meet the published criteria
 - Involve unreasonable costs to the awarding body
 - Involve unreasonable timeframes or
 - Affect the security and integrity of the qualification itself.

1.3 Internal and external policies and legislation

Links to legislation:

- Equality Act 2010
- Children's and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice 2015

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Links to internal policies:

This policy should be read alongside all MTC Training policies, especially but not limited to:

- Equality and Diversity Policy (HR-006)
- Assessment Policy

Links to external policies:

- JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- IfATE Reasonable Adjustment Matrix
- EAL Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy
- Pearson Guide for Functional Skills Access Arrangements

2. Responsibilities

2.1 Centre

It is important that our staff are involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of our qualifications. Teaching staff and members of the Senior Leadership Team must support the Inclusive Co-Ordinator in identifying, determining, and implementing appropriate access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. They must work with trainers and support staff to ensure that approved access arrangements/reasonable adjustments are put in place for internal tests, mock examinations, and examinations.

2.2 Inclusive Co-Ordinator

Where appropriate, the Inclusive Co-Ordinator will need to work with specialist advisory teachers, educational psychologists and medical professionals. They will be the in-house designated assessor and will thus assess candidates, process applications online and hold the evidence for inspection purposes.

If we are making a request on behalf of a learner as a centre, the Inclusive Co-Ordinator should complete a Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Request Form and in doing so, supply relevant supporting information.

This information should include:

- Learner's name and Awarding Organisation registration number
- Nature of, and rationale for, the request
- Supporting information/evidence signed by the relevant person (e.g. medical evidence signed by a medical doctor)
- Evidence of the usual learning and working adjustments and the impact of these.

2.3 Learners

Learners should be fully involved in any decisions about adjustments and adaptations to ensure individual needs can be met. Evidence provided must be current and provided

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promptly and accurately when required. Learners should be fully aware of the contents of this policy.

3. Monitoring, Communication, Training, CPD

3.1 Monitoring

3.1.1 This policy is reviewed annually. Each review of the policy will be presented to the Education Committee for approval.

3.1.2. Regular monitoring by the MTC Training Senior Leadership Team of the policy and any associated processes will take place on a quarterly basis to ensure compliance with this policy.

3.2. Communication

3.2.1 All colleagues involved in learning/training delivery, quality assurance and assessment invigilation should familiarise themselves with the content of this policy.

3.2.2. All learners enrolled on any programme delivered by the MTC Training should be familiarise themselves with the context of this policy. Learners under 18 years of age should inform their parents/legal guardians about this policy.

3.2.3. The approved policy will be published on BMS and communicated to colleagues via internal channels (business briefs, emails, team meetings, etc.). New colleagues will be made aware of this policy by their manager during the induction process.

3.2.4. The learners will be informed of the whereabouts and contents of the policy during induction and reminded of this when accessing support. Learners will be asked to confirm they have read and understood the contents in the *documents I have read* section in Pro Portal. Learners who access support with the Inclusive Learning Co-ordinator will be advised of any access arrangements in place as part of their support plan.

3.3. Training

In case any training in relation to this policy is needed:

3.2.1. A colleague should contact directly or via line manager one of the relevant people listed below to arrange additional training:

- Training Quality and Compliance Leads, or
- Inclusive Learning Co-ordinator

3.2.2. A learner should contact their relevant Wellbeing and Pastor Mentor or Assessor for the training to be arranged. Colleague informed by a learner about training needs should then liaise with Training, Quality and Compliance Lead or Inclusive Learning Co-ordinator to make any necessary training arrangement for the learner.

3.4 CPD

3.4.1. All staff at the MTC Training are required to participate in regular CPD to update their knowledge, skills and professional standards. This policy will be regularly reviewed by the MTC Training and amended where necessary and disseminated to staff for them to read, acknowledge and sign.

3.4.2. The Inclusive Learning Co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring the Delivery Team have up-to-date awareness of relevant strategies and their applications to support those with additional needs in assessment. They will also work with the apprentices to ensure they have the most appropriate assessment strategies where eligibility can be confirmed. The Inclusive Learning Co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring adaptations in normal ways of working and learning are recorded to inform decisions relating to access arrangements.

3.4.3. During centre visits, External Quality Assurers may check that relevant colleagues and learners are aware of the contents and purpose of this policy.