



Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy

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Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy

Version Control

The following table presents the version control of this policy:

Version	Date	Reason for Change	Changes approved by:
POL017-V23-2	Aug 2023	Company policy review 2023 and adoption of new policy template. Removal of forms, addition of definition of disability for NI and rest of UK. Streamlining of content and change to timelines for centres submitting applications and processing by FutureQuals.	COO

1. Introduction

This document provides information for centres and Learners about how FutureQuals approach reasonable adjustments and special consideration. It should be referred to when completing the Reasonable Adjustments application and notification form, which can be found on the FutureQuals website or submitting a special consideration request by email.

FutureQuals is committed to achieving an environment that provides equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination of any kind. Our qualifications will be explicit about what is to be assessed and will allow for a variety of forms of evidence to be used where possible within fit for purpose assessments that are free from any unjustifiable barriers.

Assessment must be a fair test of Learner’s knowledge, skills and understanding, but for some Learners the usual form of assessment may not be suitable. FutureQuals must ensure that the qualifications and assessments that we develop do not prevent Learners from taking our qualifications.

To ensure that access to fair assessment can be maintained, FutureQuals puts provision in place for reasonable adjustments and special considerations so that Learners can receive the recognition they deserve if achievements are valid, reliable and can be assured.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to set out FutureQuals’ requirements on the use of reasonable adjustments and special considerations. It explains how and when a centre should apply for a reasonable adjustment or special consideration for Learners, the process by which FutureQuals will make decisions on any requests made and specifies how decisions will be communicated.

Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
- Sanctions Policy

3. Links to Ofqual Regulatory Criteria

Regulator	Regulatory rule or guidance document	Regulatory condition/principle
CCEA	General Conditions of Recognition	E4, G2, G7, H1
Ofqual	General Conditions of Recognition	E4, G2, G7, H1
Qualifications Wales	Standard Conditions of Recognition	E4, G2, G7, H1
SQA Accreditation	Regulatory Principles (2021)	RP12, RP13 and RP14

4. Definitions

Reasonable adjustment

An action which aims to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that would put a Learner at a disadvantage in terms of assessment. Reasonable adjustments must not affect or compromise the integrity of what is being assessed or give an unfair advantage over other Learners. Reasonable adjustments should be based on the individual needs of a Learner and reflect the Learner's normal way of working.

Disability

A disability under the Equality Act 2010 (Disability Discrimination Act 1995 on Northern Ireland) is a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

What 'substantial' and 'long-term' in terms of disability mean:

- 'substantial' is more than minor or trivial, e.g., it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed
- 'long-term' means 12 months or more, e.g., a breathing condition that develops because of a lung infection

Special considerations

An action which aims to reduce the effect of a temporary disability or incident that can be applied after an assessment where the Learner was disadvantaged. For example, special consideration could apply to a Learner who has temporarily experienced an illness, injury, or other event outside the Learner's control.

5. Responsibilities

Centres

Centres must:

- Provide information and advice about a Learner's chosen qualification and explain the assessment criteria and the requirements of the qualification. The centre should assess the suitability of a Learner's potential to complete the assessments and achieve the qualifications at the level chosen.
- Identify if a Learner has additional support needs and/or requires reasonable adjustments as part of the induction and initial assessment process to enable them to be assessed fairly and discuss this with them. Learners may believe there are reasons they might find it difficult to show competence through the methods proposed. They should discuss possible alternatives with their tutor/assessor.
- Apply for reasonable adjustments using the application form which can be found on the FutureQuals website. Centres must provide the appropriate supporting evidence.
- Review supporting evidence before making the application, to ensure it reflects the adjustments recommended in the evidence.
- Submit applications at least 7 working days before the date of the planned assessment.
- Refer to the table in this document to ensure approval is sought for adjustments that must be approved by FutureQuals and advise FutureQuals of any centre awarded adjustments, using the form provided.
- Submit special consideration requests by email no more than 5 working days after the planned or actual assessment date and before any certification claim for the particular Learner.

Learners

Learners must:

- Make the centre aware of any reasonable adjustment(s) they may require and provide evidence of their needs, during their induction or earlier to allow the centre to apply for the adjustments on their behalf in a timely manner.
- Provide supporting evidence to the centre to support reasonable adjustments applications or special consideration requests.

FutureQuals

FutureQuals must:

- Consider all applications for reasonable adjustments within 5 working days providing they are made in a timely manner and are supported by the appropriate supporting documentation.
- Consider all special consideration applications within 5 working days providing they are made within a timely manner and supported by the appropriate supporting documentation.

6. Procedure

Reasonable Adjustments

FutureQuals and centres are only required by law to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access to assessment. 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 standards and health and safety, will also be taken into consideration.

FutureQuals endeavours to ensure that the assessment requirements and methods used within its qualifications are sufficiently flexible to enable the widest range of Learners to demonstrate competence and meet the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the qualification fairly and reliably.

However, we must also ensure that the arrangements we allow will be valid and reliable, designed to accurately reflect Learner' competence to meet the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the qualification.

If a centre wishes to make an application for a reasonable adjustment(s) on behalf of a Learner or to notify, it is planning to offer a centre approved adjustment, it must complete the application form, which can be found on the FutureQuals website. Failure to follow the correct procedure may result in assessments being voided if a Learner is not entitled to a reasonable adjustment.

FutureQuals will provide a decision within 5 working days.

In some cases, it may not be possible to respond within this period if we need to call on specialist advice. In such cases, FutureQuals will inform the centre of the expected response time. A decision will be provided to the centre at the earliest opportunity and where an application or part of it is not approved FutureQuals will provide justification for the decision and where appropriate suggest alternatives.

Examples of evidence could be, but are not limited to:

- a Statement of Special Educational Needs relating to secondary education, or an Education, Health, and Care Plan, which confirms the Learner's disability
- a letter from a hospital consultant/Occupational Health Service etc.
- an assessment carried out no earlier than the start of Year 9 by a specialist assessor confirming a learning difficulty relating to secondary/further education, including standardised test scores.

In the absence of formal evidence, FutureQuals will consider a history of need within the Centre. This should include information about the support received by the Learner during the learning programme and during formative assessments. Evidence of the way in which the Learner's needs are being met during the learning programme should be documented for audit purposes.

Reasonable adjustments must be approved or set in place before the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the Learner access to the assessment.

Special Considerations

Special consideration can be applied after an assessment if there was a reason the Learner may have been disadvantaged during the assessment. For example, special consideration could apply to a Learner who has temporarily experienced an illness or injury, or other event outside of the Learner's control. For example, medical evidence becomes known about a Learner's condition, which demonstrates that the Learner must have been affected by the condition at the time of the assessment, even though the problem revealed itself only after the assessment.

Special consideration should not be granted solely on the grounds of disability and Learners must declare their needs prior to assessment so that any reasonable adjustments can be approved and implemented prior to the assessment.

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

Special consideration, if successful, may lead to a small post-assessment adjustment to the Learner's results, but not necessarily so. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances and reflect the difficulty faced by the Learner.

Requests for special consideration should be submitted in writing not more than 5 working days after the planned or actual assessment date.

FutureQuals will provide a decision within 5 working days.

Centres should note that where an assessment requires the Learner to demonstrate practical competence or where criteria must be met fully, or in the case of qualifications that confer a License to Practice, it may not be possible to apply special consideration.

If there was an instance where a Learner/s temporarily experienced an illness or injury, or other event outside of the Learner's control in the type of assessments described and it would be more appropriate to offer the opportunity to take that type of assessment at a later date, the centre would need to contact the FutureQuals Quality Assurance on the day of the scheduled assessment to ask for approval prior to rescheduling the assessments.

All Learners regardless of special consideration must meet the minimum requirements to achieve the award of a certificate.

Examples of the circumstances where a Learner that is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment may be eligible for special consideration are provided, although this list is not exhaustive:

Circumstance and Evidence

Illness

An original medical certificate or letter from an appropriate medical professional confirming the nature of the illness and the likely impact it is having on the Learner's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.

Hospitalisation A medical letter/certificate from the relevant hospital confirming the nature and severity of the Learner's circumstances and the likely period of impact on the Learner's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.

Family illness

A medical certificate/letter from an independent medical professional confirming the nature and severity of the family circumstances and the impact, or likely impact, it is having on the Learner's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.

Bereavement

A death certificate or a letter confirming the death from an independent person (not a family member) with their contact details provided and including a view on the closeness of the relationship.

Acute personal/ emotional circumstances

An original medical certificate or letter from an appropriate medical professional confirming the nature of the illness and/or circumstances and the likely impact it is having on the Learner's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.

Victim of crime

A written statement of events that is supported by written evidence from the Police (including a crime reference number). Where the impact of the crime has led to a medical or other professional consultation, an original medical certificate or letter from an appropriate medical professional confirming the likely impact the reported crime had/is having on the Learner's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.

Domestic disruption

Where significant and unforeseen domestic disruption has occurred close to a timetabled examination a letter from an appropriate independent individual/authority detailing the relevant circumstances and an indication of the likely impact on the Learner's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study, with their contact details provided.

Jury Service

A letter from the court together with proof that a deferral has been requested and rejected or proof that a previous request for deferral has been accepted.

Court attendance

Where a Learner is required to attend a tribunal or court as a witness, defendant, or plaintiff the Learner should provide official correspondence from the tribunal/court confirming attendance or a

solicitor's letter detailing the nature and dates of the legal proceedings and the requirement for the Learner to attend.

7. Monitoring and evaluation of the policy

(What we do, how we implement the policy, data collection, storage and sharing)

The tools we use for implementing and monitoring policies, procedures and processes include regular meetings at operational and senior level. Each policy, procedure or process is assigned to a manager who is responsible for its successful operation, addressing any issues arising from it and evaluating its effectiveness in meeting its purpose. This forms part of the controls that guide our business to ensure compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements.

Data required in support of a policy, procedure or process is held in line with the FutureQuals Data Protection Policy (Privacy Standard) based on GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) best practice. All policies are subject to document control to meet the ISO9001 standard.

Policies are stored on Share Point. Additionally, in line with our Business Continuity Plan, a hard copy of every policy is held in the Executive Office, should IT systems fail. It is the responsibility of the Executive Office Manager to ensure that the latest version of a policy (or procedure/process) is available in hard copy.

8. Review

This policy shall be reviewed by the Chief Operating Officer not less than annually and presented to the Executive Team (or Advisory Board) for approval. Additional reviews may be undertaken because of legislative, regulatory, including qualification regulators, or custom and practice changes.

Appendix 1 – Reasonable adjustments permissions table

Key:

- Centre – Reasonable adjustment permitted at the discretion of the centre and FutureQuals notified.
- FUTUREQUALS – Apply to FutureQuals for permission

Please refer to separate section for Functional Skills Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustment	Permission: Assessments NOT taken under examination conditions	Permission: Assessments taken under examination conditions
Assessment material on coloured paper	Centre	Centre
Change in the organisation of assessment room	Centre	Centre
Extra time up to 25%	Centre	Centre
Use of bilingual a dictionary (hard copy version)	Centre	Centre
Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, tinted spectacles, CCTV and OCR scanners	Centre	Centre
Assessment material in audio format	Centre	FUTUREQUALS
Assessment Material in enlarged format	Centre	FUTUREQUALS
Extra time more than 25%	Centre	FUTUREQUALS
Responses using electronic devices	Centre	FUTUREQUALS
Separate accommodation within the centre	Centre	FUTUREQUALS
Supervised rest breaks	Centre	FUTUREQUALS
Taking the assessment at an alternative venue	Centre	FUTUREQUALS
Use of assistive software	Centre	FUTUREQUALS
Use of ICT	Centre	FUTUREQUALS
Assessment material in Braille	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS
Assessment material in BSL (British Sign Language)	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS
BSL/English interpreter	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS
Extra time up to 10% for Learners using a bilingual dictionary*	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS
Language modified assessment material	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS
Other	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS
Practical assistant	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS
Prompter	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS
Reader	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS
Remote assessment	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS
Responses in Braille	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS
Responses in BSL	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS
Scribe	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS
Transcriber	FUTUREQUALS	FUTUREQUALS

Appendix 2 - Functional Skills Qualifications Reasonable Adjustments

The tables on the following pages outline the reasonable adjustments that can be made for Functional Skills Qualifications. The Centre may grant the following adjustments, providing it advises FutureQuals using the form provided:

- Extra time up to 25%
- Use of bilingual and bilingual translation dictionaries
- Assessment material on coloured paper
- Change in the organisation of assessment room

In all other examples, as shown in the tables below, Centres must apply to FutureQuals for permission, if an adjustment is permitted.

Functional Skills English (Reading)

Access Arrangement	Permitted -Yes/No	Type of assessment
Extra time	Yes	
Dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries	Yes	The use of a dictionary or a bilingual dictionary is permitted for all Learners .
Reader	No	
Computer reader	Yes	
Sign Language Interpreter	No	
Scribe	Yes	
Speech recognition technology	Yes	
Word processor	Yes	
Practical Assistant	Yes	
Modified question papers (including Braille)	Yes	
Models, visual/tactile aids, speaking scales	Yes	
External device to load personal settings	Yes	Permitted as a reasonable adjustment if this does not compromise the assessment or give the Learner any advantage not available to other Learners.

Functional Skills English - (Speaking, Listening and Communication)

Sign Language (i.e., BSL, SSE (Signed Supported English)) is permissible in the Speaking, Listening and Communication component, provided this is made accessible to all participants in the discussion.

It is recognised that BSL is a language and not a form of English. BSL is, however, permitted as an alternative to English for the assessment of Speaking, Listening and Communication where BSL is the Learner's normal way of communicating in the contexts described by the standards.

No other languages are permitted as alternatives to English. Similarly, access to augmentative speech equipment is permissible where it reflects the Learner's normal way of working.

As a last resort, Learners who are disabled under the terms of the Equality Legislation and have no accessible means of communication may request an exemption from the Speaking, Listening and Communication component.

Functional Skills English (Writing)

Access Arrangement	Permitted - Yes/No	Type of assessment
Extra time	Yes	
Dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries	Yes	The use of a dictionary or a bilingual dictionary is permitted for all Learners .
Reader	Yes	
Computer reader	Yes	
Sign Language Interpreter	Yes	
Scribe	No	
Speech recognition technology	Yes	
Word processor	Yes	
Practical Assistant	Yes	
Modified question papers (including Braille)	Yes	
Models, visual/tactile aids, speaking scales	Yes	
External device to load personal settings	Yes	Permitted as a reasonable adjustment if this does not compromise the assessment or give the Learner any advantage not available to other Learners.

In Functional Skills Mathematics and Functional Skills ICT qualifications Learners can have access to all forms of equipment, software, and practical assistance, such as a reader or a scribe that reflect their normal way of working within the centre.

However, such adjustments must not affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes or give the Learner an assessment advantage over other Learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

Functional Skills Mathematics

Access Arrangement	Permitted -Yes/No	Type of assessment
Extra time	Yes	
Dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries	Yes	The use of a dictionary or a bilingual dictionary is permitted for all Learners .
Reader	Yes	
Computer reader	Yes	
Sign Language Interpreter	Yes	
Scribe	Yes	
Word processor	Yes	
Practical Assistant	Yes	
Modified question papers (including Braille)	Yes	
Models, visual/tactile aids, speaking scales	Yes	

Learners sitting Functional Skills qualifications alongside GCSE/GCE qualifications

If a Learner has been approved for an access arrangement via the Access arrangements online system for a GCSE or GCE qualification, FutureQuals will honour this approval for the Functional Skills qualifications.

However, the access arrangement must also be permitted for the Functional Skills qualification as outlined above. Evidence of approval must be made available to FutureQuals.

Additional information about Functional Skills access arrangements can be found within the Functional Skills criteria issued by Ofqual, and in the current JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments document.



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