

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATION POLICY

VERSION 1.0

DATE: MARCH 2024



1. Overview

SIAS's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy outlines the procedures and criteria for implementing reasonable adjustments or special considerations for learners with disabilities, specific needs or other extenuating circumstances in assessments conducted by SIAS or a SIAS approved Centre. It is the aim of SIAS to ensure fair and equal opportunities for all learners, including those with disabilities or specific needs.

Centres are encouraged to support learners in identifying and requesting necessary reasonable adjustments or special considerations. They should assist learners in understanding the process and provide guidance on documentation requirements.

2. Definitions

Reasonable Adjustment: an alteration or modification made to the assessment process or environment to accommodate the needs of learners with disabilities or specific needs.

Special Consideration: allowances or adjustments made for learners who have experienced significant adverse circumstances that may have affected their performance in assessments. A Special Consideration can be applied before or after the assessment has taken place.

2.1 Scope

This policy applies to all assessments conducted by SIAS or a SIAS approved Centre (apart from End-Point Assessment). It covers learners who have disclosed disabilities or specific needs that may impact their ability to participate in assessments under standard conditions as well as learners experiencing adverse circumstances that may affect their performance during an assessment.

3. Reasonable Adjustments

3.1. General Principles

A Reasonable Adjustments must:

- Be based on the individual needs of the learner.
- Reflect the type of support that the learner has received during their training.
- Not provide an unfair advantage in comparison to others who will be completing the same assessment.
- Not create a situation in which malpractice or maladministration is more likely to take place.
- Be approved before the assessment takes place.
- Not invalidate the requirements of a SIAS assessment.
- Be practical in terms of implementation.

3.2. Types of Reasonable Adjustments

The following types of reasonable adjustments may be provided based on the identified needs of the learner.

Please note this not an exhaustive list:

- Providing additional time for completion of assessments.
- Allowing the use of assistive technologies such as screen readers or voice recognition software.
- Permitting the presence of a scribe or reader to assist with writing or reading tasks.
- Offering alternative formats for assessment materials, such as enlarged text or braille.
- Modifying the assessment venue or providing alternative arrangements for learners with mobility impairments.
- Allowing flexibility in the scheduling or format of assessments to accommodate medical appointments or other personal needs.
- Providing breaks during assessments for rest, medication, or other necessary purposes.
- Making adjustments to the wording or presentation of assessment questions to enhance accessibility for learners with specific learning difficulties or cognitive impairments.

3.3. Implementation Process

3.3.1. Supporting Evidence

An application for a Reasonable Adjustment must be supported by appropriate evidence. Examples of supporting evidence include the following:

- Information about any support the learner is currently receiving from the Centre as part of their training.
- Statement of Special Educational Needs (the Statement in itself would not automatically ensure that Reasonable Adjustments are applied but could be used to support an application).
- Evidence of a Centre's assessment of the learner's needs in relation to the assessment.
- Medical Certificate.
- Psychological Assessment.

3.3.2. Responsibility for Approval

The following table details the types of Reasonable Adjustments and whether they can be applied by the Centre or require SIAS approval

| Reasonable Adjustment: | Can be approved by: |
|---|----------------------------|
| | Internal Assessment |
| Extra time including rest breaks | Centre |
| Modified Assessment Materials e.g. different coloured paper, assessments in braille | Centre |
| Assistive Technology such as screen readers and voice recognition software | SIAS |
| Separate/Alternative Exam Venue | Centre |
| Practical Assistance such as reader, scribe, sign language interpreter | SIAS |
| Pre-recorded evidence/Permission to bring notes | SIAS |
| | External Assessment |
| Extra time including rest breaks | SIAS |
| Modified Assessment Materials e.g. different coloured paper, assessments in braille | SIAS |
| Assistive Technology such as screen readers and voice recognition software | SIAS |
| Separate/Alternative Exam Venue | SIAS |
| Pre-recorded evidence/Permission to bring notes | SIAS |
| Practical Assistance such as reader, scribe, sign language interpreter | SIAS |

3.3.3. Externally Assessed Assessments

Centre), learners seeking reasonable adjustments may need to apply to SIAS via their Centre (please see table above for further information of who has responsibility for approval) and provide relevant documentation supporting their request through the completion of a Reasonable Adjustment form. If a Reasonable Adjustment is being requested on behalf of a learner, the learner's written permission must be provided as part of the application.

A Reasonable Adjustment must be applied for at least 30 working days before the assessment is due to take place. Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

3.3.4. Internally Assessed Assessments

For most internally assessed assessments (assessed by a SIAS centre), learners seeking reasonable adjustments must formally disclose their needs to the Centre and provide relevant documentation supporting their request through the completion of the Centre's Reasonable Adjustment form.

The deadlines for applying Reasonable Adjustments for internally assessed assessments are as per the requirements of the Centre's Reasonable Adjustments Policy.

All completed Reasonable Adjustments must be held on file by the Centre for inspection by SIAS.

4. Special Considerations

4.1. General Principles of Special Considerations

A Special Consideration may be applicable if:

- Performance in an assessment was affected by circumstances out of the learner's control.
- Part of the assessment was missed due to circumstances

4.2. Criteria and Types of Special Considerations

Special considerations may be granted in situations where learners have experienced adverse circumstances that meet the following criteria:

- The adverse circumstances occurred close to the time of the assessment.
- The circumstances were exceptional, significant, and beyond the learner's control.
- The circumstances are likely to have had a demonstrable impact on the learner's performance in the assessment.

Examples of situations warranting special considerations include but are not limited to:

- Serious illness or injury suffered by the learner.
- Recent bereavement of a close family member or friend.
- Disruption or disturbance during the assessment due to unforeseen circumstances.
- Severe emotional distress or mental health issues affecting the learner's ability to perform.

Types of Special Considerations that can be applied to an assessment include:

- Mark/Grade adjustment (% mark adjustment will be based on the severity of circumstances).
- Short extension to deadline (if relevant to the assessment method).

4.3 Process for Applying for a Special Consideration

A Special Consideration request must be completed and submitted to SIAS no later than 5 working days after the assessment has taken place. A Special Consideration form must be submitted along with any supporting evidence.

Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and adjustments will be determined in consultation with the learner and any relevant stakeholders. The approval of a Special Consideration may not necessarily lead to an adjustment of a grade.

5. Appeals

Appeals against the outcome of a Reasonable Adjustment or Special Considerations application can be made if the applicant is dissatisfied with the initial outcome. They must be submitted within 10 working days of the initial outcome notification. Appeals must have the written permission of the learner. For further information please refer to SIAS's Appeals Policy..

6. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure compliance with legal requirements and to reflect best practices in inclusive assessment. During the review process, SIAS will conduct an analysis of previous Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations to ensure they are being applied fairly and consistently.

Feedback from learners and stakeholders will be taken on board to continually improve the effectiveness of how this policy is implemented.

For further information please contact us directly. We are here to support you every step of the way, ensuring you have all the tools and guidance you need:

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SIAS