

Policy or Procedure Title: QDM 03	<b>Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations</b>
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As an awarding organisation we have a duty to ensure the integrity of the qualifications/units and assessment is maintained at all times. At the same time we have a duty to ensure the rights of the individual learner(s) to access qualifications/units and assessment in the most appropriate way for their needs. LAMDA Examinations aims to facilitate open access to all its qualifications for learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustments and/or special considerations in assessments, without compromising the assessments of the skills, knowledge and understanding or competence being measured.

We are committed to achieving this by:

- Recognising the diverse needs of learners at the stage where qualifications/units and assessment are designed. We are committed to an inclusive design approach to ensure access is built into the qualification/unit and assessment for all learners at the early design stage through to the stage of completion.
- Making appropriate reasonable adjustments to standard assessment arrangement whenever this is required to enable fair access.

This policy complies with the requirements of the DDA 1995 and to any subsequent amendments to the act.

## **Definitions**

### **Reasonable adjustment**

A reasonable adjustment helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the validity or reliability of assessment outcomes or give the learner in question an unfair basement advantage, but they may involve:

Adjusting assessment materials  
 Providing assistance during assessment where appropriate  
 Re-organising the assessment physical environment or  
 Changing usual assessment arrangements

Reasonable adjustments must be approved by LAMDA Examinations and set in place prior to assessment commencing, as an arrangement to give the learner(s) access to a qualification/unit.

## **Requesting Reasonable Adjustments**

Reasonable adjustment requests must be submitted prior to implementation of the adjustment. Learners, Teachers and/or Centres on behalf of learners with particular needs may apply for reasonable adjustments to be made to examination requirements by marking the learner entry form and submitting with the entry an 'Application for Reasonable Adjustment Form' and the required supporting documentation within the specified timeframes.

Examination Entry forms provide space for teachers and/or learners to bring to LAMDA Examinations attention any special circumstances or needs which the learner wishes to be considered. The learner will still be examined against standard criteria, which will remain unchanged. The examination procedure or the environment may however be adjusted to accommodate the specified circumstances.

Learners, Teachers and/or Centres on behalf of learners may contact LAMDA Examinations directly if they wish to discuss specific reasonable adjustments for their learners, prior to submitting the entry and application form.

Entries from visually impaired learners who require access to sight-reading, as detailed in the specifications, must be accompanied by written evidence from a qualified optometrist or a medical declaration. Learners requiring access to a Braille text for examinations that require a sight-reading should submit their 'Application for Reasonable Adjustment' 8 weeks before the examination session to allow for a Braille document to be produced.

Entries from dyslexic learners who require special access to sight-reading, as detailed in the specifications, must be accompanied by written evidence from a fully qualified and chartered educational psychologist or qualified specialist teacher. The special needs teacher must state their qualification and the awarding body on any documentation that is submitted.

All public examination centres have wheelchair access.

Where an individual/ parent/guardian /teacher/Centre Coordinator has a request about the learner's ability to achieve the assessment criteria in relation to reasonable adjustments please contact the LAMDA Examinations department.

### **Examples of reasonable adjustments granted:**

- Allowance of additional time
- Assessment material in large format/font
- Assessment material in Braille
- Assessment material in coloured paper
- Practical assistance
- Others as agreed

## **Special Education Needs**

It should be noted that a Statement of Special educational needs does not automatically qualify the learner for reasonable adjustments. LAMDA Examinations may refuse on the grounds the statement is not current and does not contain a recent (in the past year) assessment of needs or if the reasonable adjustment requested would compromise the assessment.

## **Applying reasonable adjustments**

Reasonable adjustments must be approved by LAMDA Examinations prior to application. They are intended to enable learner(s) attainment to be demonstrated. A learner does not have to be disabled (as defined by the DDA Act 1995) to qualify for reasonable adjustments. Allowing reasonable adjustments is dependent on how it will facilitate the learner in assessment. A reasonable adjustment is intended to allow access to assessment but can only be granted where the adjustment does not:

- Give the learner in question an unfair advantage over other learners taking the same or similar assessment.
- Influence the final outcome of the assessment decision
- Affect the integrity of the qualification
- Affect the validity or reliability of the assessment.

LAMDA Examinations will notify centres of the reasonable adjustment granted 10 days in advance of the examination.

## **Special Considerations**

### **Definition**

A Special Consideration is a consideration given following a period of assessment for the learner who:

- Was prepared and present at an assessment but who may have been disadvantaged by temporary illness, injury or adverse circumstances that have arisen at or near the time of assessment.
- Misses part of the assessment due to circumstance out side of their control (i.e. Fire alarm)

### **Examples of Special Considerations**

- Terminal Illness
- Recent bereavement of member of immediate family
- Incapacity
- Recent traumatic experience
- Flare up of severe congenital illness such as epilepsy, diabetes or asthma.

## **Requesting Special Considerations**

LAMDA Examinations would expect provision and arrangements in place to enable the learner in extenuating circumstances to complete assessment and thereby achieve the qualification/unit. Only when this is unsuccessful should an application for special considerations be made. All applications for special considerations will be made on a case by case basis. The only exception to this is where a group of learners have been affected by the same circumstance during an assessment (group/duo examinations) in which case a group application is permissible. In this situation a list of learners affected should be attached to the application form.

Special Considerations requests must be submitted to LAMDA Examinations in writing, detailing the circumstances and enclosing the examination report form, within ten working days following the examination date.

The application will require the submission of evidence to support it. This may include a medical certificate or a supporting statement from the examiner/centre coordinator/learner/parent/guardian or teacher.

LAMDA Examinations decision will be based on various factors which may vary dependent on the application received. These factors may include the severity of the circumstance and the nature of the assessment (practical, oral presentation, performance -based assessment) and if the qualification/unit integrity would be compromised upon any decision made.

If the application is successful the learner's performance will be reviewed in the light of the available evidence.

It is important to note it will not be possible to apply special considerations in instances where assessment requires the demonstration of practical competence or where the criteria have to be fully met.

In these circumstance where the assessments are demand assessments (Practical, Oral presentations, Performance based) LAMDA Examinations will offer the learners affected the opportunity to take the assessment again at a later date. If this is decided by LAMDA Examinations as the most appropriate action it will be awarded as a full or part Transfer Credit Voucher (TCV) funding the fee to the learner(s) in question. A TCV is non-transferable and valid for one year only. For re-entry learners must complete an entry form, enclosing their vouchers and fee balance.

LAMDA Examinations does not offer Aegrotat awards. The minimum assessment requirements for each unit/qualification stated in each LAMDA Examinations syllabus specification is the required for the unit/qualification to be awarded.

## **Complying with the Policy**

Failure to comply with the arrangements and requirements as set in this policy document could result in assessment malpractice which may impact on a learner's result.

Failure to comply is defined as any or all of the following:

- Putting in place arrangements without LAMDA Examinations approval
- Exceeding any allowance granted by LAMDA Examinations

## **Appeals**

As a statutory awarding body in conjunction with the regulatory requirements we have in place a complaints/appeals process. If you would like to appeal against a decision made involving learners access related needs please refer to the appeal procedure on the website or in the Guide for Centres and Teachers.

\*As part of the requirements laid down in the Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland 2004, LAMDA Examinations will monitor and review the outcomes and processes of both Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations on an annual basis to ensure all outcomes are equitable to all learners and that as a awarding organisation we do not create barriers or access to achievement to all learners.