

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy and Procedure

Introduction

SSERC is committed to high-quality assurance and open, transparent, and bias-free policies.

Under relevant equalities legislation, SSERC has a responsibility to ensure that all learners have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, or understanding of the level of attainment required within each qualification and that barriers to entry are removed where possible.

It is the responsibility of SSERC to ensure that appropriate adjustments are made for learners during the learning process and that learners are given appropriate adjustments to the assessment process to give them equal opportunity.

NB: SSERC will not adjust standards or pass marks. All adjustments must be deemed reasonable, not giving a learner an unfair advantage.

This Reasonable adjustment and Special Consideration Policy and Procedure relate to all SSERC SCQF Certificated Professional Learning Courses. This document outlines the process that should be followed by learners undertaking SSERC SCQF credit and levelled programmes, which are undertaken at SSERC HQ in Dunfermline or at an external venue where the delivery and assessment are the responsibility of SSERC staff.

For Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy and Procedures linked to a SSERC Accredited Centre, initial contact should be with the SSERC Accredited Centre itself. If, on completion of the investigation undertaken by the SSERC Accredited Centre, you remain dissatisfied, follow the standard SSERC Complaints procedure, which can be found at [sserc-complaints-procedure-july-24.pdf](#)

Reasonable Adjustments

Adjustments to the assessment process will typically be made in the following circumstances:

Learners with a physical, sensory or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Under equalities legislation, learners are deemed to have such impairment if they can show that the condition:

- is more than minor or trivial
- has an effect that has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months
- affects everyday activities such as eating, washing, walking and shopping.

Supporting evidence will be required in all cases. Evidence could include medical reports from doctors, psychiatrists, educational psychologists, specialist teachers, or funding agencies.

Providing the adjustment required is the same for each assessment, learners do not need to re-reasonable submit evidence or a learner reasonable adjustment request form with subsequent applications when enrolling onto an assessment.

Learners with temporary physical, sensory or mental impairment

Learners are deemed to have a temporary physical, sensory or mental impairment if the condition is under one year and is likely to improve. Examples of temporary disability could include broken limbs or injury to hands, impairing a learner's ability to type or write. Supporting evidence will be required in all cases.

If a learner applies for an adjustment due to a temporary physical, sensory or mental disability, evidence must be re-submitted with a Reasonable Adjustment Request Form for each assessment series.

Types of Reasonable Adjustments available

- Extra time during assessment
- Supervised rest breaks
- Use of readers, scribes, transcribers
- Miscellaneous types of reasonable adjustments, including brailing of non-secure assessment material, taped responses, and modified question papers (e.g. enlarged or printed on coloured paper).

Procedure for applying for a new reasonable adjustment request

All learners must submit a request for a reasonable adjustment **before the closure date** for entry to an assessment.

Please note that SSERC must approve all reasonable adjustments and reserves the right to refuse requests. Making an adjustment without written approval from SSERC could constitute malpractice. Once a reasonable adjustment has been agreed upon and implemented, no further adjustments will be made to the assessment or marking process.

Special Consideration

Special consideration is a minor post-examination adjustment to an assessment mark.

This may be given to a learner for circumstances that could not have been predicted or were outside the learner's control and may have impacted their performance.

Special consideration ensures that learners with a temporary illness, injury or indisposition are treated fairly at the time of the assessment. Examples include influenza, bereavement of a close family member, evacuation of the assessment venue, and disturbances during the assessment, such as a fire alarm or severe noise disturbance.

SSERC will review and consider the special consideration application. Special consideration adjustments will usually be made, considering the total value of potential marks for the individual exam component. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances experienced in the time leading up to and during the assessment, but it will always be a minor adjustment as doing more may jeopardise the standard.

SSERC will not enter into discussions with learners as to how much special consideration should be applied.

Procedure for applying for Special Consideration

All learners must advise SSERC by email, enquiries@sserc.scot, within **7 days** of the end of the assessment of the circumstances which caused the request for special consideration. Please use the following in the email subject line: ***Special Consideration***

Where appropriate, supporting evidence must be provided, e.g., a letter from a doctor/hospital / authorised person/invigilator's report, etc.

Learners will receive confirmation of their Special Consideration application, and SSERC will consider the incident before releasing the results.

Contact details:

Email: enquiries@sserc.scot using ***Reasonable Adjustment Request*** or ***Special Consideration Request*** in the email subject line.

Post: Assessment Standards Manager

SSERC

2 Pitreavie Court

Dunfermline

KY11 8UU

Review and Appeal

SSERC will consider requests for reasonable adjustments or special consideration sympathetically. If a request is turned down, the learner has the right to request a review of the decision.

Stage 1 – Review

Learners may request a review of the decision made following the above process. The review is conducted by a named member of SMT who will re-examine the initial decision. Requests to review a reasonable adjustment decision should be made as quickly as possible following the initial decision. They will be reviewed equally swiftly to allow the outcome to be notified before the assessment takes place.

Stage 2 – Appeal

If the learner or centre does not agree with the review's outcome, they have the right to take the process to Stage 2 appeal, which would involve an independent review of the case. An appeal at Stage 2 will only be considered if the appellant can show that SSERC did not apply procedures consistently during the original investigation or that procedures were not followed correctly and fairly.

An appeal at Stage 2 will only consider whether SSERC applied its procedures consistently, correctly and fairly during the original investigation and/or the Stage 1 review. The original incident will not be re-investigated at the appeal stage.

For Stage 2 appeals, there is a fee of £125, which will be refunded if the appeal is successful.

Appeals are heard by a panel chaired by the Chief Executive Officer with at least one independent member, who is not an employee of SSERC, an assessor working for SSERC, or otherwise connected to SSERC. The appeal panel will have had no involvement with the assessment or the administration of assessments and have no personal interest in the decisions under consideration.

The appeal panel may uphold the original decision or overturn it on the grounds that procedures were not properly followed. The appeal panel will not review the original investigation.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring that all parties affected by decisions on malpractice or maladministration are informed of the outcome of the above processes.

Regulations for certain types of reasonable adjustments.

A relative or friend of the learner may not act as a reader, scribe or transcriber.

A. Readers

A reader may be required to read the instructions (rubric) associated with the exam, all or part of the exam questions and the candidate's answers. The reader must read accurately and at a reasonable rate and may be required to repeat the material if necessary. The reader may assist visually impaired candidates by using tactile diagrams, graphs, and tables to communicate the information the printed paper would give a sighted candidate. If required, the reader must spell out any word in the exam questions. The reader must be prepared for periods of inactivity.

B. Scribes (or amanuenses)

A scribe is required to type or write answers dictated by the candidate. The scribe must be able to write legibly, type or write at a reasonable speed, and be familiar with the terminology used in the assessed subject. The scribe must write down the answers exactly as dictated by the candidate. The scribe must draw or add to diagrams strictly following the candidate's instructions. The candidate will not be expected to dictate spellings. The scribe should work at the candidate's pace.

Scribes or readers must not assist with the content of the answers; this will invalidate the assessment. Support must not give the candidate an unfair advantage or disadvantage.

C. Transcribers

This may be requested by candidates whose handwriting is illegible, or where the responses are to be produced in Braille or British Sign Language, or where the candidate cannot use a word processor or dictate responses.

The transcriber will produce a transcript to assist with assessing a candidate's work. The transcript must be an exact copy of the text written by the candidate and will not include diagrammatical material. The assessor will only refer to the transcript when they cannot decipher the candidate's response. The transcript should be produced by a centre staff member familiar with the candidate's writing.

Where the transcript replaces responses produced in Braille or BSL, the transcriber must be appropriately qualified to provide it. Errors of translation, e.g. from BSL to English, must never be allowed to affect the candidate's marks.

Without the candidate's involvement, the transcript should be produced immediately after the assessment under secure conditions. It must be created in a separate document (it may be typed) and attached to the candidate's answer booklet. The candidate's assessment must not be annotated or marked in any way. If the candidate has produced a response in Braille or BSL, a copy of the original (on video in the case of BSL) must be returned with the transcript.