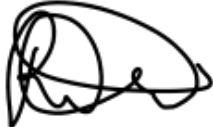




Multi Trades Training

Access to fair assessment, reasonable adjustments, and special considerations policy

Review date: July 2024

Approved by	RK Jones	Position	Director
		Date	15 th June 2023

Document Control

Date	Review & Revision	By
15/06/23	Inclusion of this policy being stored in the resource area of Qualls Direct.	Quality Lead

Access to Fair Assessment Policy

Scope

This statement outlines the general responsibilities and requirements Multi Trades Training (MTT) expect from members of staff, associates, consultants, learners, and employees in their day-to-day activities in this policy.

MTT has in place the necessary systems and procedures to allow the provision of access arrangements, including reasonable adjustments for learners who disclose their needs for reasonable adjustments in their assessment to ensure that assessment decisions are valid, reliable, and consistent judgements made regarding the achievement of all learning outcomes against the stated assessment criteria.

MTT will also arrange for special consideration to be given to learners that experience temporary illness, injury, or indisposition at the time of an assessment. This should allow them to demonstrate the achievement they are capable of for the units that are subject to special consideration.

This document is to inform:

- All MTT staff who have contact with learners
- The quality and assessment team;
- All assessment staff, coaches, tutors, assessors & internal verifiers
- External verifiers
- Qualifications Regulators and awarding organisations

This policy applies to

- Apprenticeship Standards
- Qualifications and units approved under QCF and RQF
- Non qualification units via the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS).

Introduction

This policy informs on:

- The principles which should be followed when making decisions about adjustments to assessment
- The procedures which should be followed when making adjustments to assessment requirements

MTT has a duty to ensure that the integrity of Apprenticeships, RQF qualifications (NVQ), units and assessment will be maintained at all times and also have a duty to ensure that the rights of individual learners to access qualifications, units and assessment in a way most appropriate for their individual needs are upheld.

Please also refer also to the MTT Equality & Diversity Policy and its commitment to follow legislation and regulatory criteria to give support and guidance to learners .

Definition of Reasonable Adjustments

‘A ‘reasonable adjustment’ is any action that 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 reliability and validity of the assessment outcomes, but may involve:

- Changing usual assessment arrangements, for example allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment activity such as a practical task or written assessment
- Adapting assessment materials, such as providing questions in a larger text , on coloured paper or materials in Braille
- Providing assistance during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or a reader
- Re-organising the area where the assessment will take place to accommodate equipment, such as wheelchairs , or removing visual stimuli which may distract a learner
- Converting the assessment method into one that meets the learner needs without compromising the integrity of the assessment – for example from a written assessment to a spoken assessment
- Using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice activated software for those visually impaired

Reasonable adjustments are approved or set in place **before** the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the learner access to the units and qualification. The work produced by the learner must be assessed in the same way as the work of other assessed learners.

Types of Assessment and Reasonable Adjustments

The adjustments that are appropriate for a particular assessment will depend upon:

- The specific assessment requirements of the units and/or qualification.
- The type of assessment.
- The particular needs and circumstances of the individual learner.

Assessments which are not taken under examination conditions

Most of the assessments which are carried out at MTT are not performed under exam conditions, therefore, advice regarding what is acceptable is made accessible to the learners.

These types of assessments may include,

- Set assignments
- Records of work
- Case studies
- Reflective practice
- Recordings of situations and practical competencies
- Contextual statements
- Mentor and witness statements

All of these methods are used where the learner has to collect evidence in order to demonstrate competence. The assessment requirements for the majority of vocationally related units and qualifications fall into this group.

The usual evidence requested may be adjusted and allow the learner to use any mechanical, electronic or other aids in order to demonstrate achievement as long as the aids:

- Are generally commercially available and so accessible to the learner
- Reflect the learner's normal way of working and do not hinder the demonstration of competence
- Enable the learner to meet the specified criteria
- Do not give the learner an unfair advantage over those submitting the prescribed assessment materials

MTT may allow a learner to present their answers or evidence in any format as long as it enables them to demonstrate that they have met the assessment criteria, for example, answers or evidence do not have to be in written format unless specified by the assessment criteria but may be delivered as an audio-visual piece.

MTT adopts a flexible approach in identifying alternative ways of achieving the assessment requirements.

Notifications

MTT has a responsibility to notify the appropriate Awarding Organisation (AO) to inform or discuss alternative arrangements that may be appropriate for specific situations.

The outcome produced by the learner must at all times:

- Meet the requirements of the specifications
- Be as rigorous as assessment methods used with other learners
- Be assessable to the learner (i.e. at no significant cost to themselves)
- Be able to be moderated or verified in line with the Internal Quality Assurance Plan (IQAP)

In the case of long-term illness of a learner or when a permanent health condition/disability means a learner's completion of assessment takes additional time, MTT will apply to the appropriate AO to request an extension to the deadline for the submission of work for certification.

Identifying learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustments

Any request for adjustment to assessment will be based on what the learner needs to access the assessment.

For example:

- Communication and interaction needs
- Cognition and learning needs
- Sensory and physical needs
- Behavioural, emotional and social needs

A learner will be regarded as eligible for reasonable adjustments if their performance during an assessment is likely to be substantially affected by a particular impairment. Many of these learners will be defined as being disabled under the Equalities Act 2010 and reference to this in the MTT Equality & Diversity Policy will underpin this.

An adjustment to assessment should only be considered where the difficulty experienced places the learner at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with persons who are not disabled. Where the difficulty is minor, the centre should assist the learner by offering help with study and assessment skills.

Note: A learner does not have to be disabled (as defined by the Equalities Act 2010) to be entitled to reasonable adjustments to assessment and in fact, not every learner who is disabled will necessarily be entitled to, or need, an adjustment to assessment. This should be reviewed on an individual basis.

Identifying learners' needs

MTT has a responsibility to ensure it has effective internal procedures for identifying learner's needs and that these procedures meet and comply with the requirements of Equalities legislation.

- MTT will do all it can to identify those learners who are having difficulties or are likely to have difficulties accessing assessment at enrolment
- MTT will identify whether reasonable adjustments may be needed and if so, what the appropriate adjustment should be
- Ensure that the adjustment is in accordance with the appropriate AO guidelines.

Supporting Evidence

MTT has a responsibility to ensure that any adjustment to assessment will only provide the learner with the necessary assist the assessment process without giving them an unfair advantage over other learners at the same stage.

Where MTT can verify evidence of the disability or difficulty and where the implications are clear, such as physical difficulties, profound hearing impairment or those who are registered as blind or partially sighted, MTT must still check with the appropriate AO regarding the necessity to provide further evidence of these physical difficulties.

Where the implications of the difficulty are not obvious, such as for learning difficulties, or mental health difficulties, MTT will need to check with the appropriate AO what evidence will need to be presented. Evidence may be, but not limited to:

- Initial assessment results from qualified members of staff
- Written evidence produced by independent, authoritative, specialists, e.g. medical, psychological or professional reports or assessments.
- Any report produced will need to identify the learner as well as the professional credentials of the person who wrote the report.
- The report should state the exact nature of the difficulty and extent to which the learner is affected by the difficulty.

The report should also include any effects of medication that the learner may be taking

Any learner with a ‘*Statement of Special Educational Need*’ does not automatically qualify for reasonable adjustments. The decision will need to consider the demands of the units and qualification.

The range of reasonable adjustments

Some learners may only need a single adjustment while others may require a combination of several adjustments, all adjustments need to be considered on an individual basis.

The following table represents the most common reasonable adjustments that MTT will endorse.

Extra Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invariably applied to examination based assessment. • Extra time should not be allowed where its use will invalidate the assessment criteria. • Extra time should not give the learner an unfair advantage over others. The amount of extra time must be realistic.
Changes in organisation of the assessment room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The centre should consider the needs of each individual learner and, where possible, arrange the assessment room to suit the learner.
Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, tinted spectacles, cctv and ocr scanners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learner should be familiar with how the aid works. • The use of aids should not give the learner an unfair advantage over other learners or invalidate the assessment criteria.
Use of assistive technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learner should be familiar with how the assistive technology works. • The assistive technology should not give the learner an unfair advantage over other learners or invalidate the assessment criteria.
Use of bilingual dictionaries and bilingual translation dictionaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of a bilingual dictionary should not give the learner an unfair advantage over other learners or invalidate the assessment criteria.
Assessment material in enlarged format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In cases where the centre is permitted by the appropriate AO to enlarge assessment material, the centre should take responsibility for the security of the material and for ensuring that the entire document is enlarged. (e.g. VTCT assessment papers)
Assessment material in Braille	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where appropriate, the centre should meet AO deadlines for requesting brailled assessment material if available and take responsibility for the security of the material and for ensuring that the entire document is brailled.
Assessment material on coloured paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where MTT is permitted to modify the assessment material, it should take responsibility for the security of the assessment material and for the accuracy of the modification.

Assessment material in audio format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where MTT is permitted to produce an audio version of the assessment material, they should take responsibility for the security of the material and for ensuring that the entire document is copied. MTT will ensure that sufficient playback equipment is provided in full working order.
Use of ICT to present responses	<p>MTT will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the computer is used solely by the learner and not by someone acting on the learner's behalf unless the learner has permission to use a scribe; the learner has access only to those facilities (for example spell/grammar checker, voice activated software, speech reading software,) which have been agreed in advance with OCN London; the learner should be proficient in the use of the computer and its software; the learner's work is saved frequently and, if possible, using an auto-save facility.
Responses using electronic recording devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTT will check with the appropriate AO whether permission should be sought to record the learner's responses electronically. MTT will ensure that the appropriate recording equipment is provided in full working order.

Records

MTT will keep records for audit purposes where they are permitted to agree reasonable adjustments, where they apply to various AO's for permission or where they agree adjustments to assessment and will retain a copy of the application form and supporting evidence sent to the appropriate AO, and relevant documentation in agreement with the process.

These records will be regarded as assessment records and will be kept in line with document retention procedures for a period of 3 years.

Special consideration

Requests for special consideration will be individual to every learner who applies for this and will be made on an individual basis.

Special considerations could be applied to any learner who is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment, but may be affected by circumstances beyond the control of the learner.

When performance in an assessment is affected by, for example,

- Recent personal illness
- Injury or accident
- Bereavement
- Serious disturbance during the assessment

- Alternative assessment arrangements which were agreed in advance of the assessment which prove inappropriate or inadequate
- Part of an assessment has been missed due to circumstances beyond the control of the learner

A learner will **not** be eligible for special consideration if, for example:

- No evidence is supplied to show that the learner has been affected at the time of the assessment by a particular condition
- Any part of the assessment is missed due to personal arrangements including holidays or unauthorised absence
- Preparation for part of an assessment is affected by difficulties during the course, for example disturbances through building work, lack of proper facilities, changes in or shortages of staff, or industrial disputes.

Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage. The result must reflect the learner's need in the actual assessment on that occasion and not a potential ability.

Applying for special considerations

MTT will apply to the appropriate AO for special consideration using the appropriate means, i.e., electronic, or hard copy forms. The records will be maintained as per the document retention policy and stored for 3 years.

Policy responsibility and review

This policy and its procedures will be reviewed annually and revised if necessary, in response to customer and stakeholder feedback, changes in practice or legislation, to ensure it continues to meet our needs and those of our Qualification Regulators i.e., Awarding Organisations (NOCN Cskills Awards) , ESFA (Education & Skills Funding Agency) and external agencies and stakeholders.

Appeals Procedure Summary

A full procedure is available separately.

All learners are informed that an appeals procedure relating to the internal assessment process exists within Multi Trades Training. A copy of this procedure sits in the resource area of Qualls Direct for Learners, employers and staff.

Learners may only appeal on the grounds that they do not agree with the assessment decision made by the Assessor or that the assessment procedures have not been carried out properly or that they have been refused a request for a reasonable adjustment or special consideration.

The Lead Internal Quality Assurer will manage any internal appeals, including the dissemination of information about the procedures.

A written record of all appeals is maintained by Multi Trades Training and written record includes the outcome of an appeal and reasons for that outcome. Full details of any appeal will be made available to the appropriate Awarding Organisation (NOCN) on request.

As per the Appeals Procedure Policy the process covers 3 Stages

- Stage 1 – Learner appeal against an assessment decision and requests review
- Stage 2 – Learner disagrees with appeal review decision – appeal is escalated to Head of Quality
- Stage 3 – External Awarding Organisation is notified.

The address for correspondence and contact point for further advice is:

Multi Trades Training Ltd
Shalford Dairy,
Wasing Estate,
Aldermaston,
Berkshire,
RG7 4NB

Tel: +44 (0) 2034 883801
E: info@mttraining.co.uk