

RTITB EPA REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE (V2.1021)

Introduction

At RTITB we recognise, support and comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 to allow fair access to assessments and to make reasonable adjustments for apprentices with disabilities or physical or mental health conditions to ensure that they are not disadvantaged during assessment.

Documents associated with this policy & procedure are shown in bold, italic, underline

With a view to removing barriers which prevent apprentices from undertaking assessments, **reasonable adjustments** may be made on a case-by-case basis. These arrangements ensure that apprentices are able to undertake assessments on a fair and unbiased basis, allowing them to receive recognition for their achievements while ensuring the integrity, validity and reliability of assessment is maintained.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide the RTITB workforce with guidance on the application of reasonable adjustments to ensure fair and unbiased assessment for apprentices with disabilities or a physical or mental health conditions.

Scope

This policy only applies to End-point Assessment reasonable adjustments. Other policies exist for RTITB assessments outside of EPA.

Responsibility/Accountability

- The Responsible Officer is accountable for the review and maintenance of this policy.
- The EPA Manager, Deputy EPA Manager, and Senior EPA Administrator are responsible for the correct implementation of this policy.

Definition - Reasonable Adjustments

[A reasonable adjustment is] An adjustment made to an assessment for a qualification so as to enable a disabled Learner to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding to the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification. (Ofqual)

Policy Statement

Reasonable adjustments **must not** negatively impact the integrity, validity, or reliability of the assessment. Depending on individual circumstances, appropriate reasonable adjustment might include:

- Allowing the apprentice more time to complete the assessment (standard practice is a 25% increase)

- The assessment being carried out in British Sign Language
- Relocating the assessment to a more suitable location
- Adapting assessment content to make it more accessible – for example, increasing font size and changing font style, adjusting background colouring
- Changing the format of the assessment – for example, from written to oral
- Reading questions to the apprentice so that they don't have to read them.

An adjustment is deemed 'reasonable' because it takes into account a number of considerations, such as:

- The apprentice's individual requirements
- Any costs associated with the adjustment
- The impact of the adjustment on the apprentice and any other apprentices taking the assessment
- The impact of the adjustment on the validity and reliability of the assessment – the adjustment must not give the apprentice an unfair advantage over other apprentices sitting the same assessment.

To ensure members of the RTITB workforce are aware of their responsibilities regarding reasonable adjustments and to maintain up-to-date knowledge of the Equality Act, they will undergo an annual briefing.

Reasonable adjustments put in place for assessment must reflect any adjustments made during the apprentice's training.

RTITB will base reasonable adjustments on the advice and guidance provided in the Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education (IfATE) 'Reasonable Adjustment Matrix', which in turn are based on the Higher Education Statistical Authority's (HESA) disability grouping framework. By following this guidance, RTITB can ensure a level of consistency when judging applications and when implementing reasonable adjustments. The matrix can be obtained here:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/media/5489/reasonable-adjustment-matrix.pdf>, and further advice on reasonable adjustments can be found here: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/quality/end-point-assessment-reasonable-adjustments-guidance/>

Adaptations and adjustments will be made on a case-by-case basis, in collaboration with the employer/training provider, apprentice, and with the aid of the matrix, to ensure a unique outcome that suits the individual's needs, but which doesn't infer an unfair advantage or call into question the integrity, validity and reliability of the assessment.

Applying for Reasonable Adjustments

When reasonable adjustment is required employers/training providers must initially reference the requirement on the **Gateway Declaration form** and on subsequent practical assessment bookings.

They should then complete a **Reasonable Adjustment Request form** and include details and evidence of the difficulty/disability and submit it to epa@rtitb.com with any relevant supporting evidence pertaining to the difficulty/disability as soon as possible but not later than 10 days before the assessment.

Employers/training providers must inform RTITB of any:

- Existing reasonable adjustment requirements that have been put in place during training
- Reasonable adjustment requirements before assessments are scheduled

Upon receipt of an application for reasonable adjustments, the Senior EPA Administrator will forward the form to the EPA Manager.

The EPA Manager will consider applications for reasonable adjustment and will notify the employer/training provider of their decision within 5 working days of the request being received.

If reasonable adjustments are to be made, RTITB will work with the employer/training provider and apprentice to formulate adjustments, based on their individual circumstances. Central to our decision will be ensuring that:

- The apprentice is not disadvantaged
- Other apprentices are not disadvantaged
- The integrity, validity and reliability of the assessment are upheld

Reasonable adjustment applications will only be denied in a limited number of scenarios, specifically where adjustments might seriously impact the validity of the assessment or in circumstances where adjustment creates a risk to safety.

Completed reasonable adjustment applications and associated evidence must be stored in the apprentice's folder on the secure file server. Additionally, the Senior EPA Administrator will add notes relating to the reasonable adjustment application in the apprentice's entry on the secure database (Hoge).

Once the EPA Manager has determined whether reasonable adjustments are applicable, the notes on the database will be updated to reflect the EPA Manager's determination for future review and for audit purposes. Reasonable adjustment records will be analysed on a twelve-monthly basis for patterns and trends that might indicate opportunities for improvement or potential misuse.

In the event that the employer/training provider, or apprentice wishes to appeal the EPA Manager's decision, please refer to the **Appeals process**.

All subsequent communications on the issue of reasonable adjustments will be recorded in the apprentice's database entry.

All records will be maintained and securely stored for 6 years.

Feedback and Further Advice

To provide feedback on this policy, or for further advice and guidance, please contact the Responsible Officer or email epa@rtitb.com.

Signed  Date: 1/11/2021

This policy must be reviewed by the Responsible Officer no later than end of December 2022. The policy and procedure will be revised as necessary, and in line with feedback from stakeholders or changes in legislation.