

## 1. Scope

1.1. This policy is aimed at students and helping them to achieve formal recognition of their achievements, without compromising the assessment process or the assessment objectives. Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that students who are disabled are not disadvantaged in any way. Students must declare their needs in full as part of their application process and Heartwood will endeavour to make reasonable adjustment arrangements before the course starts. Special considerations are made to ensure that students are not disadvantaged by any exceptional circumstances that may arise prior to, or during the course.

## 2. Reasonable Adjustments

2.1. A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the student at a substantial disadvantage on the course. Reasonable adjustments must not compromise the assessment process or the assessment objectives and may involve:

- Changing standard assessment arrangements, for example, allowing students extra time to complete the assessment activity
- Adapting assessment materials

2.2. Reasonable adjustments are approved or set in place before the course or assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the student access to the course or assessment activity. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the assessment of a student's work.

2.3. Organisations are only required by law to do what is reasonable in terms of giving access. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors, such as the need to maintain competence standards and health and safety, will also be taken into consideration.

## 3. Making Reasonable Adjustments

3.1. Heartwood has a responsibility to ensure that the assessment process is robust and fair and allows the student to demonstrate their full potential. Adjustments to assessments should:

- Not invalidate the assessment requirements of the qualification
- Not give students an unfair advantage
- Reflect the student's normal way of working
- Be based on the individual need of the student.

## 4. Applications for Reasonable Adjustments

4.1. Requests for making reasonable adjustments should be made at point of application if known. Subsequent requests should be made using the Reasonable Adjustments Request Form. The form should be completed and returned to the office as soon as possible, to allow sufficient time for the reasonable adjustments to be made. The minimum amount of notice required is 15 working days. Reasonable adjustments can be requested by anyone who has a disability or a difficulty that places them at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation, and a reasonable adjustment would reduce the effect of this and enable a fair assessment.

4.2. Examples of reasonable adjustments include (the list is not exhaustive):

- Allowing extra time e.g. assignment extensions
- Using a different assessment location
- Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids
- Use of students own assistive software
- Assessment material in large format
- Assessment material on coloured paper
- Use of sign language
- Use of ICT/ responses using electronic devices.

4.3. In the case of Placement requirements, individual circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and any reasonable adjustments will follow and comply with current guidance provided by Professional and Awarding Bodies.

## **5. Enrolment**

5.1. Heartwood will ensure that students have sufficient information and advice on their chosen qualification and that the qualification will meet their needs. Through the interview process Heartwood will review each student's potential to successfully complete the course and achieve the qualification. The review should identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the student to facilitate access to the course. Where the interview process identifies that the student may not be able to achieve the full qualification, this should be communicated clearly to the student.

## **6. Special Considerations**

6.1 Special considerations can be applied if there was a reason the student may have been disadvantaged during the course.

6.2. The following is a list of examples which might be eligible for special considerations (the list is not exhaustive):

- Serious illness of the student
- Serious illness of immediate family e.g. a parent or child
- Bereavement of an immediate family member
- Incapacitating illness of the student
- Accident and injury to the student
- Trauma caused by a recent event or experience.

6.3. Special consideration should not give the student an unfair advantage. The student's results must reflect their achievement in the course and not necessarily their potential ability. Special consideration may result in a small post-assessment adjustment to the mark of the student. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances during the assessment and will reflect the difficulty faced by the student but will always be a minor adjustment, as to do more may jeopardise the standard.

6.4. Where an assessment requires a competence to be met fully, it may not be possible to apply any special consideration. In some circumstances it may be more appropriate to offer the student an opportunity to retake the assessment or to extend the deadline so that the student has more time to complete the assessment activity.

## **7. Applications for Special Considerations**

7.1. Students who believe that they have been disadvantaged through circumstances beyond their control can apply for special consideration. The student must inform Heartwood at the time. Applications must be accompanied by supporting evidence e.g. in the case of an illness, a doctor's letter. Heartwood will confirm receipt of the request within three working days and provide written feedback on the decision within fifteen working days of receipt of the request.

## **8: Appeals**

8.1 Appeals against the decision to provide reasonable adjustments can be submitted to the Centre Director.

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