

**Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy and Procedure**

**Introduction**

SSERC is committed to high levels of quality assurance and policies that are open, transparent and free from bias.

SSERC has a responsibility under relevant equalities legislation 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, as well as ensure that learners are given appropriate adjustments to the assessment process to give them an equal opportunity.

**NB: SSERC will not make adjustments to standards or pass marks. All adjustments must be deemed reasonable and not give a learner an unfair advantage.**

This Reasonable adjustment and Special Consideration Policy and Procedure relates to all SSERC SCQF Certificated Professional Learning Courses (including the Young STEM Leader SCQF Awards). 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 still remain dissatisfied, follow the standard SSERC Complaints procedure which can be found at ………….**

**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 going 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’s duration and is likely to improve. Examples of temporary disability could include broken limbs or injury to hands which could impair 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, 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 prior to the closure date for entry to an assessment. This must be submitted to SSERC before **the course closure date.**

SSERC will consider the request for reasonable adjustment and liaise directly with learners and/or centres to facilitate the requirements at least **four weeks** prior to the assessment date.

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

**Special Consideration**

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

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

Special consideration ensures that learners who have a temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of the assessment are treated fairly. 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. The special consideration adjustment will normally be given, taking into consideration 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 will always be a minor adjustment as to do more may jeopardise the standard.

SSERC will not enter into discussion 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. letter from a doctor/hospital / authorised person/invigilator’s report etc.

Learners will receive confirmation of their Special Consideration application and SSERC will take the incident into account prior to the release of results.

**Contact details:**

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

Post: Assessment Standards Manager

SSERC

2 Pitreavie Court

Dunfermline

KY11 8UU

**Review and Appeal**

Wherever possible, SSERC will deal sympathetically with requests for reasonable adjustments or special consideration. In cases were 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 the Head of Professional Learning who will re-examine the initial decision. Requests for a review of a reasonable adjustment decision should be made as quickly as possible following the initial decision, and 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 outcome of the review, 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 properly and fairly.

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

There is a fee of £125 for Stage 2 appeals, 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 to 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 using tactile diagrams, graphs and tables to communicate the information that the printed paper would give to a sighted candidate. The reader must, if required, spell out any word that occurs 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 should be familiar with the terminology used in the subject being assessed. The scribe must write down the answers exactly as dictated by the candidate. The scribe must draw or add to diagrams strictly in accordance with 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 in British Sign Language, or where the candidate is unable to use a word processor or dictate responses.

The transcriber will produce a transcript to assist with the assessment of 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 where they cannot decipher the candidate's response. The transcript should be produced by a member of the centre's staff who is 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.

The transcript should be produced immediately after the assessment under secure conditions without the involvement of the candidate. It must be produced 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.