

## **Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy and Fair Access Commitments**

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
  - Conflict of Interest Policy
  - Whistleblowing Policy
  - Appeals Procedure
  - Complaints Policy

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to outline our policy and intentions in relation to reasonable adjustments and special consideration. We aim to make assessment fair for all apprentices who use our EPA service and those undertaking training courses with us.

The Equality Act 2010 requires EPAO's to make reasonable adjustments to ensure an apprentice who is disabled as defined in the Act is not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to apprentices who are not disabled. We aim to comply with this via this policy and will be supportive to all applicants regarding reasonable adjustment, giving fair consideration.

All our students, apprentices and potential apprentices should be able to enter and successfully participate in an apprenticeship programme, training course, NVQ, BTEC or end-point assessment in pursuit of their learning objectives.

A2A Training is committed to ensuring that we and our trainers and approved endpoint assessors and IV staff, and admin support teams provide students and apprentices with all relevant information about the course, or apprenticeship and end-point assessment as required and can support students and apprentices professionally.

The policy sets out our intention to deliver courses and end point assessment services that are fair, accessible and does not include any unnecessary barriers to entry.

## Introduction

The overriding aim of A2A Training is to provide quality training and end point assessment for students and apprentices, whilst offering a high standard of service delivery and upholding the integrity of the EPA process and that of awarding bodies.

The Equality Act protects people from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. The Equality Act protects people against discrimination because of the protected characteristics that we all have, there are nine protected characteristics; age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

We seek feedback from students, apprentices, employers, and training providers to enhance and improve our service. We analyse this when possible and when appropriate will take feedback to the Senior Management Team and Governors, so that we may, when needed change or improve our services, or we may share this (subject to GDPR).

## Examples of reasonable adjustments

Allowing an apprentice extra time to complete the EPA assessment activity (normally 25% but reviewed on an individual basis)

Different coloured paper for paper-based assessments, or similar for IT based assessments

The apprentice or student requiring a sign language interpreter or a reader

Adaption of assessment materials, such as providing materials in Braille or different coloured paper

Tests in braille or other similar support

## Responsibilities

It is important that staff involved in the delivery of end point assessment or training courses and assessment with us, are fully aware of the contents of this policy. All staff involved in end-point assessment/teaching and assessment must ensure that they adhere to the requirements of this policy. The lead IV and management team have a responsibility to ensure that all staff are aware of policies and procedures and encourage fair access.

A person has a disability 'if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'

'Substantial' is defined by the Act as 'more than minor or trivial'. An impairment is considered to have a long-term effect if:

- it has lasted for at least 12 months
- it is likely to last for at least 12 months, or
- it is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person

The Equality Act 2010 continues the existing duty upon education institutions to make reasonable adjustments for staff, students, and service users in relation to:

- provisions, criteria, or practices
- physical features
- auxiliary aids

These adjustments apply where a disabled person is placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to non-disabled people. It is important to note that regarding direct discrimination, an institution can treat a disabled person favourably compared to a non-disabled person, and this would not amount to unlawful discrimination against a non-disabled person.

We encourage training providers and/or employers to provide a supporting statement for all applications.

### Our Process for evaluation of reasonable adjustments:

- Each application is reviewed individually, considering robustness and fairness of testing, cost and availability, any impact on other apprentices, how effective the adjustment is likely to be and in line with the below Reasonable Adjustments Matrix as a guide
- Applications must be supported by evidence (SEN Report, Doctors note, Psychiatric report, care plan, examining board approval notice or other suitable evidence that can be authenticated if needed)
- Must be approved in advance of the EPA date or other assessment date
- Applications must be sent at least **20 working days prior to the EPA or other assessment date** for approval via email to [info@a2atraining.co.uk](mailto:info@a2atraining.co.uk)
- Applications will be reviewed by the compliance manager and/or director/QA as most appropriate
- All decisions will be recorded on a centre form and on systems such as Highfield Vault or ACE360 as appropriate
- We use the below matrix to support decisions
- <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/media/3403/reasonable-adjustment-matrix.pdf>
- We may seek advice when needed but will gain the apprentices/student written authority to do so if needed
- The result of the evaluation of a request for reasonable adjustment will be **sent within 10 working days** of the request, in writing and usually to the training provider and where a request is denied we will explain why. Appeals can be heard in relation to a rejected application (see our Appeals Procedure).
- We will always consider privacy, confidentiality and GDPR, seeking permission for information to be passed on, in writing, when applicable

## Evidence requirements for reasonable adjustment to be considered

We will consider the following types of evidence when approving reasonable adjustments, the list is not exhaustive, but an indicator of useful evidence

- SEN report
- A letter from a speech and language therapist
- Doctors Letter
- Psychiatrist or Psychologists report
- Care plan
- Educational Health Care Plan
- Evidence that another examination board have approved similar reasonable adjustments (such as GCSE examining boards)

All evidence must be dated, from when the apprentice/student was at least 12 years of age and contain relevant information for the evidence to be authenticated if required

We encourage training providers/employers or apprentices to give a supporting statement which may help us in consideration of requests

## Outcome of reasonable adjustment considerations

The result of a request for reasonable adjustment will be **sent within 10 working days** of the request, in writing and usually to the training provider or student/employer as appropriate.

Where a request is declined, the decision is final, unless additional evidence can be provided, and in time for the request to be processed prior to the EPA or other assessment.

If the apprentice or Training Provider does not agree with our decision, they may appeal. Appeals and complaints will be processed using our existing appeals and complaints processes.

## **Examples of Special Consideration**

This could be a one-off event, that could have negatively impacted an apprentices' / students' performance, such as IT issues or temporary illness, or an event such as a fire drill.

Applications must be made via email within 5 working days of the event for which consideration is applied for.

We will respond within 20 working days in writing. Results may be adjusted (normally to a maximum of 5% or one grade) if an application is approved. Appeals can be heard in relation to a rejected application (see our Appeals Procedure).

## Special consideration application process

- All applications will be reviewed by our director or compliance manager using the form at the end of this policy
- Applicants must detail the reason, the name of the apprentice, IEPA/assessor name if known, the date of the EPA/assessment and attach any suitable evidence if applicable
- Some complex requests may take some time to evaluate, and we will try to respond as soon as possible, **but within 20 working days**

Applications must be made in writing within 5 working days of the EPA event (or element of the EPA) to [info@a2atraining.co.uk](mailto:info@a2atraining.co.uk)

## Special consideration outcomes

- Our view is a consideration, in the case of marks, to maximise any additional marks awarded to a maximum of 5% increase if special consideration is approved
- Or we may suggest a re-assessment of part or all the EPA in line with the requirements of the assessment plan
- All applications must be considered on an individual basis

Where a request is declined, the decision is final, unless additional evidence can be provided, and in time for the request to be processed prior to the EPA.

If the apprentice, employer or Training Provider does not agree with our decision, they may appeal. Appeals and complaints will be processed using our existing appeals and complaints processes.

Where a request is declined, the decision is final, unless additional evidence can be provided.

If the apprentice or Training Provider does not agree with our decision, they may appeal. Appeals and complaints will be processed using our existing appeals and complaints processes.

## A2A Training Fair Access Commitments

A2A Training is committed to the development and support of apprentices including information provision and entry and access arrangements, irrespective of any protected characteristic they may have. We have a passion for fair access for all and will strive to ensure equality across all areas of the business.

A2A Training is committed to:

Our commitment	How we intend to meet this commitment
Ensuring fairness in our application of all access arrangements for assessments	Follow procedure and policy equally for all
Ensuring that every approved assessment location has and implements a fair access policy for the delivery and facilitation of end-point assessments, where appropriate	Discuss with training providers/employers the specific and individual requirements when needed on a case-by-case basis Most assessments will be remote and IT equipment is required by all apprentices when remote assessment takes place
Ensuring that all assessment/EPA staff are aware of this policy and adhere to its content	Staff induction requires all policies and procedures to be read
Ensuring that all assessments are developed to be representative of the apprentices registered with us, including ensuring that there are no features of endpoint assessments that could disadvantage any apprentices that have a particular protected characteristic or barriers to entry other than those directly related to the purpose of the end-point assessment or apprenticeship qualification. The nature of any such features or barriers will be stated and the inclusion of the requirements that create the barrier justified in terms why they are required for the end-point assessment	Questions developed using plain English whenever possible  Review of questions that people get consistently wrong to address if there is an issue with the question itself Analysis of questions for trends and anomalies If more than 50% incorrect answers to a particular question, we may look to re-write or rephrase on review of questions
Ensuring that adequate monitoring and review of equality and diversity is maintained, as appropriate	Keep E&D information and tracker Analyse against grades/scores Look to identify any trends Make amendments when needed



Ensuring that we consider all access requests relating to end-point assessments that are received, except where acceptance of the request is not logistically possible or where acceptance would undermine the reliability or integrity of end point assessment	All access requests will be considered and responded to and give reasons where this is not practical or appropriate and refer to the reasonable adjustments policy and matrix
Ensuring that apprentices with a protected characteristic are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged in end-point assessments in comparison to apprentices who do not share that characteristic, ensuring that all achievement in end-point assessments is comparable.	Keep E&D information and tracker Analyse against grades/scores Look to identify any trends Make amendments when needed
Monitoring appropriate data related to apprentice achievement to detect and mitigate against any accidental bias	Keep E&D information and tracker Analyse against grades/scores Look to identify any trends Make amendments when needed
Ensuring that standardisation activities occur to ensure that gradings are consistent and accurate, and verified by the Internal Verification staff as outlined in our Internal Quality Assurance Policy	Follow QA policy IEPA feedback and development Initial training and standardisation All IEPAs must attend standardisation or will not be re-contracted or receive work allocations
Ensuring that all approved end-point assessment staff are fulfilling their fair access responsibilities by adhering to equality legislation and company policy and procedure	Induction training includes training in policies and procedures Standardisation IQA of work
Provide equality and diversity training and guidance as appropriate to our staff	All staff must have certification to show they have E&D training, or will be sent a link to E&D training online to take prior to any EPA (at their cost)

## Application for reasonable adjustment or special consideration

Apprentice/Student name	
Applicant name and relationship to apprentice/student	
Provider name	
Date of application	
Date of assessment or EPA	
Request type: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reasonable adjustment or</li> <li>- Special consideration</li> </ul>	
What outcome would you like to see because of this application?	
Evidence submitted to support application	
Any other details in support of your application	
Assessment/EPA date	

## Review form for reasonable adjustment or special consideration

Student/Apprentice name	
Applicant name and relationship to student/apprentice	
Provider name	
Date of application	
Date of Assessment/EPA	
Request type: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reasonable adjustment or</li><li>- Special consideration</li></ul>	
Review of evidence submitted to support the application	
Notes and outcome	
Date and name of reviewer	