



Chartered Institute of Housing Awarding Organisation

Teaching and assessment guidelines relating to learners who have a disability or particular learning and assessment needs & special considerations

Guidance to Accredited Centres

Printed November 2009



The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) is the Professional Body for People who work in Housing.
The CIH is an accredited Awarding Organisation and a Registered Charity No. 244067/R

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Part A – Reasonable Adjustments

Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 had an impact on the activities of Awarding Organisations and learning providers. As providers of education and training, your organisation is required to meet the needs of learners who have rights under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the Statutory Code of Practice and any subsequent legislation. This includes the requirements of the impending Equalities Act 2010.

This guidance will assist accredited centres in relation to the teaching, delivery and assessment of learners who have particular assessment needs.



**Contacting the
CIH Awarding Organisation**

If you want to talk with Awarding Organisation staff about teaching and assessment for learners who have a disability or particular assessment needs, please contact:

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Statutory and Regulatory requirements

1 The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Disability Discrimination Code of Practice (Services, Public Functions, Private Clubs and Premises) (Appointed Day) Order 2006

The European Directive 2000 which covers disability influenced new Codes of Practice for the DDA. All trade organisations are required to adhere to these new provisions. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) covers any employment related activity which includes Awarding Organisations. They are required to make reasonable adjustments to assessment arrangements which place disabled learners at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to learners who are not disabled.

2. The Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework state:- “Diversity and equality

2.11 In the performance of the regulated functions it undertakes, the recognised organisation must comply with the requirements of equalities legislation in force from time to time, and in particular have systems in place to ensure that it does not discriminate on the grounds of race, disability and gender.

2.12 In the performance of the regulated functions it undertakes, the recognised organisation must have systems in place to give consideration to how it can ensure equality for all learners. Where it is reasonable and practical to do so, it should take steps to address identified inequalities or barriers that may arise: between people of different religions and beliefs, racial groups, ages, marital / civil partnership status and sexual orientations; between men and women generally; between disabled and non-disabled people; between persons of different political opinion; between those with dependants and those without; or on any other ground or status.

2.13 For the regulated functions it performs, the organisation must have processes in place to consult with relevant learners and/or their representatives to ensure that there are no barriers to entry to units and qualifications it develops and/or offers for disabled people, for women or men, or people from different racial groups, other than those directly related to the integrity of units or qualifications. The nature of any barriers must be stated and the inclusion of the requirements that create the barrier justified only and explicitly in terms of the integrity of unit or the qualification. Any details of how the effect of any barriers will be mitigated, including for awarding organisations by using access arrangements, including reasonable adjustments, must also be recorded.

2.14 The recognised organisation must have procedures in place to collect sufficient data to allow it to monitor and evaluate its compliance with the requirements set out in paragraphs 2.11 to 2.13. It must share information from this activity with the qualifications regulators on request”

In response to this, the CIH as a Professional Body and an Awarding Organisation is issuing the following guidance to accredited centres.

Reasonable Adjustments Guidance

1. Overview

Awarding Organisations and centres can demonstrate their commitment to ensuring that individual learners can access qualifications and assessment in two ways:

- ✚ by recognising the diverse needs of learners at the stage where qualifications and assessments are designed. An inclusive design approach will help to ensure that access is built in to the qualification and assessment for all learners;
- ✚ by making appropriate reasonable adjustments to standard assessment arrangements, wherever this is required to enable access.

If a learner is unable, through disability, to be assessed by conventional arrangements defined in the assessment strategy of an accredited centre, the accredited centre may vary assessment methods/tools where appropriate and according to the procedures established in this document.

Accredited centres are responsible for devising and implementing internal assessment for the housing programme which will be verified through the moderation process. The course leader has authority to devise an appropriate internal assessment method/tool. They must be satisfied that the essential requirements and academic rigour of the course is maintained in any variations in the task or methods of assessment agreed for disabled learners.

2. 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
- ✚ adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in Braille
- ✚ providing assistance during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or a reader
- ✚ re-organising the assessment room, such as removing visual stimuli for an autistic learner
- ✚ changing the assessment method, for example from a written assessment to a spoken assessment
- ✚ using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice activated software

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 qualification. The work produced by the learner will be marked in the same way as the work of other assessed learners.

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Awarding Organisations and centres are only required by law to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, the impact of the disability on the individual, 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 be taken into consideration.

3. Duties / responsibilities of centres

The centre will be required to implement the adjustments to assessment. To meet their responsibilities to individual learners, and in terms of current disability and equality legislation and regulatory requirements, a centre should, as far as is practicable:

- ✚ have an access to assessment policy and communicate this to all staff and learners
- ✚ cultivate an atmosphere in which the learner feels free to disclose their access-related needs. It should be noted that the duty to make reasonable adjustments has an 'anticipatory' aspect. This means that the centre should consider what adjustments future learners with disabilities or difficulties may need, and make appropriate provision in advance.
- ✚ identify as early as possible, preferably before registering a learner for a qualification, any difficulties the learner may have in accessing assessment. To assist with this the centre should ensure that all staff who recruit, advise, or guide potential learners have had training to make them aware of access-related issues. Early contact with the awarding organisation is advised, in order to determine whether reasonable adjustments to the assessment process are possible.
- ✚ select an appropriate qualification for the learner, based upon his/her particular circumstances. The centre should explain to the learner the assessment requirements of the qualification and the planned programme of study. It should be made clear at the outset if the learner will not be able to meet all of the assessment criteria. The learner may still decide to proceed with the qualification but enter only for part, or none, of the assessment. In this case the centre should explain to the learner any restriction on progression to other qualifications as a result of not achieving all the criteria.
- ✚ select an appropriate adjustment to make the assessment accessible to the learner. In order to decide whether an adjustment is appropriate, the centre should consider the nature of the skills that are being assessed and the implications for assessment of the learner's difficulties. The centre should involve the learner in making any decisions about appropriate adjustments to assessment. In cases of doubt, the centre should contact the CIH Awarding Organisation for advice on suitable and appropriate adjustments.
- ✚ ensure that they can resource the selected adjustment to assessment. It is the centre's responsibility to arrange any assistance for the candidate, such as a reader, scribe, additional invigilator, British Sign Language (bsl)/English interpreter, etc.
- ✚ If the centre exceeds the level of assistance and type of assistance as set out in these sections it may lead to malpractice investigations.

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- ✚ The centre should ensure that they have effective internal appeals procedures so that the learner can query any decision taken by the centre not to allow an adjustment to assessment. These procedures should be made available to the learner and should include details of the grounds for appeal and the timescales associated with investigations of appeals.
- ✚ The centre should design centre-set assessment activities or material in an inclusive way so that they are accessible to learners with access related needs. The centre should ensure that the language of the assessment is clear, unambiguous and free from jargon.
- ✚ The centre should ensure that buildings used for assessment are accessible to all learners, as far as is practicable.
- ✚ The centre must keep accurate records of any adjustments for audit purposes. Records must be kept for three years.

The CIH Awarding Organisation requires the centre to report back when they have permitted reasonable adjustments. The centre should declare that the information provided is accurate and that the adjustments to assessment have been made in accordance with the guidance of the CIH Awarding Organisation. The declaration should be signed and dated by a member of the centre staff who has formally been given delegated authority for this by the Head of Centre.

The CIH external moderator should be advised of any adjustments when reviewing the moderation sample.

This guidance is not intended to be exhaustive and centres must take all possible practical steps to apply reasonable adjustments, so as to promote equality of access for learners who are placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to a person without disability or difficulty.

4. Types of assessments and reasonable adjustments

Different types of assessment make different demands on the learners and will influence whether reasonable adjustments will be needed and the kind of reasonable adjustment which may be put in place. The adjustments that are appropriate for a particular assessment will depend upon:

- ✚ the specific assessment requirements of the qualification
- ✚ the type of assessment
- ✚ the particular needs and circumstances of the individual learner

Where assessments are not taken under examination conditions, the centre has greater flexibility to be responsive to an individual learner's needs and choose an assessment activity and method that will allow the learner to demonstrate attainment. These types of assessments may include, for example, coursework, set assignments which are researched in the learner's own time, assessment activities devised by the centre or the CIH Awarding Organisation assessments where the learner has to collect evidence in order to demonstrate competence.

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In these types of assessments the learner may meet the specified assessment criteria in any way that is valid. To facilitate access where there is evidence of need, the centre may allow the candidate to use any mechanical, electronic or other aids in order to demonstrate achievement as long as:

- ✚ the aids are generally commercially available
- ✚ they reflect the learner's normal way of working
- ✚ they enable the learner to meet the specified criteria
- ✚ they do not give the learner an unfair advantage
- ✚ they present assessment materials or documents in a way that reflects the learner's normal way of working and enables him or her to meet the specified assessment criteria, for example, materials do not have to be in written format, unless specified by the assessment requirements.

The centre is advised to adopt a flexible approach in identifying alternative ways of achieving the assessment requirements. The centre is advised to contact the CIH Awarding Organisation to discuss alternative arrangements that may be appropriate for specific situations.

The outcome produced by the learners must at all times:

- ✚ meet the requirements of the specifications regardless of the process or method used
- ✚ be assessable
- ✚ be able to be moderated or verified

In the case of long-term illness of an individual learner or when a permanent health condition/disability means a learner's completion of assessment takes additional time it may be possible to permit an extension to the deadline for the submission of work for certification.

Where reasonable adjustments are made, the centre must adhere to the CIH Awarding Organisation requirements for record keeping and supporting evidence.

5. About the learner

Identifying learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustments

Any adjustment to assessment will be based on what the learner needs to access the assessment. Below are some examples of learner needs that may be eligible for adjustments to assessments. This list is not exhaustive and it should be noted that some learner needs will fall within more than one of the categories set out below.

a) Communication and interaction needs

A learner with communication and interaction difficulties may have problems with reading or writing, the effects of which could be reduced through the use of a reader, word processor, scribe, bsl/English interpreter, screen reading software or voice activated software. They may also benefit from extra time during assessments that are time-constrained to allow them to demonstrate their skills and knowledge.

b) Cognition and learning needs

A learner with learning difficulties and difficulties with comprehension may benefit from extra time in time-constrained assessments. They may also need assistance with reading

and writing.

c) Sensory and physical needs

A learner may need to have assessment material modified for hearing impairment and visual impairment. They may also need to use a bsl/English interpreter, practical assistant, reader and scribe. In addition they may benefit from the use of assistive technology and extra time to complete assessments.

The learner will be 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 Disability Discrimination Act.

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.

A learner does not necessarily have to be disabled (as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act) to be entitled to reasonable adjustments to assessment. Every learner who is disabled will also not necessarily be entitled to or need an adjustment to assessment. The learner may have developed coping mechanisms which minimise or remove the need for assistance.

6. Identifying learner needs

The centre has a responsibility to ensure it has effective internal procedures for identifying learners' needs and that these procedures comply with the requirements of Disability and Equal Opportunity legislation. A centre may choose to use the following guide:

- a) Identify those learners who are having difficulties or are likely to have difficulties accessing assessment. A learner should be encouraged to make any access-related assessment needs known to the centre at the earliest opportunity, and preferably before they are registered or entered for a qualification. To assist with the early identification of learners with access-related assessment needs, the centre should ensure that all staff who recruit, advise or guide potential learners have had training to make them aware of access-related issues. Once the learner's need has been identified, it should be documented for audit purposes.
- b) Identify whether reasonable adjustments may be needed. Relevant centre staff should decide, in conjunction with the learner whether he or she will be able to meet the requirements of the assessment or whether adjustments will be required. It is important that the learner is involved in this discussion as he or she knows best what the effect of their particular disability or difficulty is on how they do things. Where the implications of a particular difficulty are unclear, the centre should make use of specialist advice in order to determine how the difficulty will affect the learners' performance in the assessment. The centre should avoid making assumptions, on the basis of previous experience, about whether adjustments may be necessary. Judgments should be made on the basis of individual need. If an adjustment will be needed, it should be documented for audit purposes.

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- c) Identify the appropriate adjustment. When identifying which adjustments the learner will need in the assessment, centre staff should take into consideration the candidate's normal way of working, history of provision during teaching and during informal assessments and the assessment requirements of the qualification. Certain simple adjustments may be all that is required, for example adjusting seat height or providing an arm rest, etc. The same learner may not require the same adjustment for all types of assessment. Different qualifications make different demands. For example, a dyslexic candidate may need extra time to complete a written test, but may not need extra time for a purely practical activity. Once the adjustment has been identified, it should be documented for audit purposes.
- d) Ensure that the adjustment is in accordance with the CIH Awarding Organisation guidelines. The centre must ensure that the adjustment will not impair the ability to assess the learner's performance, skill or knowledge fairly in each assessment.
- e) Identifying and obtaining supporting evidence. In order to ensure that any adjustment to assessment will only provide the learner with the necessary assistance without giving him or her an unfair advantage over others, the centre must be clear about the extent to which the learner is affected by the disability or difficulty.
- f) Where the centre can verify evidence of the disability or difficulty and where the implications are clear, such as for a learner with physical difficulties, profound hearing impairment or who are registered as blind or partially sighted, the centre does not need to provide further evidence of these physical difficulties.
- g) Where the implications of the difficulty are not obvious, such as for learning difficulties, or mental health difficulties, the centre will have to provide additional evidence of the effect of the impairment on the learner's performance in the assessment. Any of the following types of evidence would be acceptable. The centre should decide which of these will best assist understanding of the learner's situation.
- ✚ evidence of assessment of the learner's needs in relation to the particular assessment, made within the centre by the relevant member of staff with competence and responsibility in this area; staff include learning support staff, teaching staff, trainers, assessors and other specialist staff. If necessary, external experts may be called upon to assess the learner. This evidence should include an indication of how the centre plans to meet the learner's needs and should show that the learner can cope with the level and content of the assessment. The evidence should be documented for audit purposes. Information from previous centres attended by the learner may also be included.
 - ✚ history of provision within the centre. This should include information about the support received by the learner during the learning or training programme and during formative assessments. Evidence of the way in which the candidate's needs are being met during the learning programme should be documented for audit purposes.

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✚ written evidence produced by independent, authoritative, specialists. This could take the form of medical, psychological or professional reports or assessments. These reports should state the name, title and professional credentials of the person who carried out the assessments and wrote the report. The report should set out the nature of the difficulty and extent to which the learner is affected by the difficulty, including the effects of any medication that the learner may be taking. In cases where it might be expected that there could be changes in the way the learner is affected by the difficulty, there will have to be recent and relevant evidence of assessments and consultations carried out by an independent expert.

- h) A candidate with a Statement of Special Educational Need does not automatically qualify for reasonable adjustments. The demands of the qualification should be taken into account. The reasons for the statement may have only limited effect on achievement in the assessment.
- i) It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that all applications for reasonable adjustments are based on the individual need of the learner and that the evidence in support of the application is sufficient, reliable and valid. A centre should maintain records of all cases for audit purposes and to monitor the effectiveness of the reasonable adjustments which have been made.

7. Making Reasonable Adjustments

These principles should be followed when making decisions about a learner's need for adjustments to assessment. Awarding Organisations and centres have a responsibility to ensure that the process of assessment is robust and fair and allows the learner to show what they know and can do without circumventing the assessment criteria. When considering whether an adjustment to assessment is appropriate, Awarding Organisations and centres need to bear in mind the following:

- ✚ Adjustments to assessment should not compensate the learner for lack of knowledge and skills. The learner must be able to cope with the content of the assessment and be able to work at the level required for the assessment.
- ✚ Any adjustment to assessment must not invalidate the assessment requirements of the qualification or the requirements of the assessment strategy. Competence standards should not be altered. While the CIH Awarding Organisation will take all reasonable steps to ensure that a learner with a disability or difficulty is not placed at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with persons who are not disabled, in terms of access to assessment, there is no duty to make any adjustment to a provision, criterion or practice which is defined as a competence standard. All learners' performance will be assessed against set standards. These standards cannot be altered, but it may be possible to change the delivery or process of assessment so that each learner has an equal opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do.
- ✚ Any adjustment to assessment must not give the learner an unfair advantage or disadvantage the learner. The qualification of a learner who had an adjustment to assessment must have the same credibility as that of any other learner. As vocational

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qualifications may lead to employment, achievement of such qualifications must give a realistic indication to the potential employer of what the holder of the certificate can do.

- ✚ Any adjustment to assessment must be based on the individual need of the learner. Decisions about adjustments to assessment should be taken after careful consideration of the assessment needs of each individual learner, the assessment requirements of the qualification and the nature and extent of the support given as part of normal teaching practice. A centre should not assume that the same adjustment will be required for all assessments. Different qualifications and different methods of assessments can make different demands on the learner. The learner should be consulted throughout the process.
- ✚ Any adjustment to assessment should reflect the learner's normal way of working providing this does not affect what is being assessed in any way. The learner should have experience of and practice in the use of the adjustment.
- ✚ Any adjustment to assessment must be supported by evidence which is sufficient, valid and reliable.
- ✚ All adjustments to assessment must be authorised by the Head of Centre or a member of staff with delegated authority.
- ✚ All adjustments to assessment must be implemented in accordance with the guidance given by the CIH Awarding Organisation.

8. Range of reasonable adjustments

Below is a list of the most commonly requested adjustments to standard assessment arrangements. It is not intended to be a comprehensive list and a centre is advised to contact the CIH Awarding Organisations for advice on alternative ways of accessing assessment for particular situations. Centres have a duty to seek advice from the CIH Awarding Organisation in any case where they do not consider that they have the necessary expertise to judge whether a reasonable adjustment is needed, and/or how it should be applied.

The following provides guidance for centres on how various types of reasonable adjustments should be implemented.

Centres should note that:

- ✚ not all the adjustments to assessments described below will be reasonable, permissible or practical in particular situations. If in doubt, the centre is advised to contact the CIH Awarding Organisation for advice
- ✚ in some circumstances it may be more appropriate to select an alternative assessment task for the learner
- ✚ the learner may not need, nor be allowed, the same adjustment for all qualifications. Some learners may need a single adjustment; others may require a combination of several adjustments

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- ✚ adjustments to assessments will mostly be needed for assessments which are taken under constrained/examination conditions.

Adjustment categories:

✚ **Learners with Dyslexia**

Learners seeking alternative assessment arrangements on the grounds of dyslexia should provide the course leader with a diagnostic assessment and recommendation completed by a chartered psychologist, clinical or educational psychologist or other qualified specialist.

For timed assessment tasks, additional time should be permitted where appropriate. Exceptionally the use of an amanuensis is permitted. Exceptionally, a written assessment task may be replaced in part or whole by an oral assessment. Exceptionally, a learner may record their answers to assessment tasks on audio equipment.

✚ **Marking Assessments of Learners with Dyslexia**

Accredited centres must make suitable arrangements for all assessments produced by learners with dyslexia to be assessed appropriately.

Housing is a non linguistic subject and so unfair weighting in favour of grammar, punctuation or spelling should account for no more than a notional 5% of marks awarded.

In respect of the correct use of specialist or technical vocabulary, assessment shall be the same as for non-dyslexic learners.

Accredited centres are required to have a clearly defined policy in relation to the internal assessment of work submitted by learners with dyslexia.

✚ **Extra time**

Where assessment activities are time constrained a candidate may be allowed extra time during an assessment if he/she has a condition which affects the speed of processing.

The amount of extra time allowed should accurately reflect the extent to which the completion of the assessment will be affected by the learner's difficulty. 'Unlimited' extra time will not be allowed. It's the centre's responsibility to specify the amount of extra time the learner will need, using as a guide the extra time required during formative assessments in the centre.

Before the centre allows extra time for the learners, the centre should be satisfied that the learner can cope with the content of the qualification and that the learner is medically fit to undertake the extended assessment.

Extra time will not be allowed in practical activities where the timing is a crucial part of the assessment or in group activities where the learner's performance will be assessed in conjunction with others.

✚ **Use of mechanical, electronic and technological aids:**

a. Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, tinted spectacles, cctv & ocr scanners

The centre should ensure that the candidate has had sufficient practice in the use of

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these aids and that any electronic aids are in good working order. The centre should contact the CIH Awarding Organisation if they are unclear about whether any new technology will unfairly advantage the learner or invalidate the assessment requirements.

Use of assistive technology (for example speech/screen reading software and voice activated software)

Some learners may benefit from the use of software that reads the assessment material to them and records their spoken responses. In vocational areas, such software may be used to allow learners to have access to assessments that are appropriate for them and enable them to show their proficiency.

The centre should ensure that the use of assistive technology will not invalidate the assessment requirements or give the learner an unfair advantage. Due to the rapid development of such technology, the centre should seek advice from the CIH Awarding Organisation if the implications of using certain kinds of assistive technology are unclear. It should be noted that the use of such software may introduce a hidden assessment agenda, in that the candidate has to master the use of the software in addition to mastering the assessment criteria.

Modifications to the presentation of the assessment material: Assessment material in enlarged format for paper-based assessments

Enlargements for paper-based assessments may be used. Examples of these include:

- unmodified enlarged papers where the standard paper is photocopied from a4 to a3, thus enlarging the whole paper and retaining the original layout and visual presentation.
- modified enlarged paper where the paper is modified by simplifying the layout and where necessary reducing the content while still meeting the same objectives as those tested in the original paper.

It is the centre's responsibility to provide centre-devised assessment material/resource or reference material in a suitable format for the candidate.

Assessment material in Braille

Assessment material may be provided in Braille for a blind or visually impaired candidate. The material will be modified to remove any visual content prior to brailing. Diagrams in the assessment material can be produced as tactile diagrams.

The centre may Braille externally set assessment materials. It should take responsibility for the security of the material and for ensuring that the entire document is brailled.

Braille is not always an appropriate adjustment for the candidate, not all blind people are fluent in Braille. It is the centre's responsibility to arrange for the brailing of centre-devised assessment material/resource or reference materials.

Language modified assessment material

The carrier language in assessment material may be modified for a deaf candidate whose first language is either English or British Sign Language (BSL). In either case, the learner's English may be limited and modified assessment material may be necessary. BSL is a language in its own right and has its own grammar, syntax and vocabulary and written assessment material will have to be modified for most deaf learners for whom BSL

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is their first language.

Technical language may not be modified. The modified version of the assessment material should contain the same questions as the standard version and the same answers will be expected from the candidate.

Assessment material in bsl (British Sign Language)

Where the centre cannot provide a bsl/English interpreter for the assessment, and if language modified assessment material does not provide sufficient assistance, a bsl version of assessment material may be provided on videotape instead of (or in addition to) the assessment material in written English.

Where the centre is permitted to translate externally set assessment material into bsl, they should take responsibility for the security of the material and for the accuracy of the translation. The candidate may be penalised for any errors in his/her work which occur as a result of errors in the material.

Assessment material on coloured paper

The centre may provide assessment material/resource or reference material on coloured paper, if required.

Assessment material in audio format

Where there is evidence of need, assessment material may be provided in audio format.

Alternative ways of presenting learner responses - ICT

A learner should be provided with the means to present their responses by the method most appropriate and familiar to them, as long as the use of methods will not invalidate the requirements of the assessment. The use of ICT is generally perceived to have a positive impact on helping learners to access assessment.

The guidance given below relates to the use of ICT in written assessments. ICT can normally be used for centre-devised and portfolio work unless the use of ict is expressly prohibited by the qualification specification.

Use of ICT to present responses

The use of ICT in this context should be taken to include word processors, personal computers (pcs) and other microprocessor controlled devices producing output in text or other forms such as graphics and diagrams.

For many learners with additional support needs, computers provide an effective means of independent communication. Consideration should be given to whether the learner can meet the assessment criteria using a computer.

A computer should only be used if it is appropriate to the learners needs and if the learner is confident in its use, can use it effectively and if it reflects his/her normal way of working. The learner should be consulted before a decision is taken whether the use of ICT is an appropriate adjustment.

When a computer is used, other than as a basic word processor, the centre needs to consider the effect and appropriateness of facilities like spell-checkers, electronic

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dictionaries, thesauri, calculators, predictive software, etc that are available.

The use of the computer should not create a misleading impression of the learner's attainment or confer an unfair advantage over other learners.

The centre should ensure that workstations are adapted for the needs of the learner and that enabling technologies, (for example screen reading software, coloured background, adapted keyboard, large tracker ball mouse, sticky keys) are available.

Where it is apparent that assessment objectives cannot be met fully if a computer is used, the centre should suggest alternative arrangements.

Spoken responses using electronic recording devices, for example cd Roms, memory sticks, audio cassettes

Where there is evidence of need, the learner may be permitted to record their responses electronically. This arrangement will only be available for assessments where there is no requirement for the learner to produce visual material.

Where the learner's responses are recorded electronically, the centre should provide an authenticated transcript of the learner's responses.

Responses in bsl

Where there is evidence of need, the learner may be allowed to sign their responses to questions. The centre will provide a translation of the responses for assessment. The centre should ensure that the person doing the translation is appropriately qualified. The centre should ensure that sufficient recording equipment is available and that it is in good working order.

Where the centre provides a transcript of the candidate's response, the centre should ensure that the transcript is authenticated and an accurate reflection of the learner's responses. The centre should keep this as a record of the assessment.

Responses in Braille

Where there is evidence of need, a learner may be permitted to present their responses in Braille. In these cases an authenticated transcript of the learner's responses should be provided by the centre. It will be the centre's responsibility to ensure that the transcript is an accurate reflection of the learner's responses and to keep the transcript for their records.

9. Requirements for record keeping within the centre

The centre should keep records of their decisions to permit adjustments to assessments. These records should include any supporting evidence.

Records must be maintained for three years after the completion of the qualification.

10. The process for reporting the adjustment

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The CIH Awarding Organisation requires the centre to report back when they have made an adjustment. The centre should declare that the information provided is accurate and that the adjustments to assessment have been made in accordance with the guidance of the CIH Awarding Organisation. The declaration should be signed and dated by a member of the centre staff who has formally been given delegated authority for this by the Head of Centre.

The CIH external moderator should be advised of any adjustments at the quality assurance visit and when assessing the moderation sample.

A centre should keep records for audit purposes where they agree reasonable adjustments. These should be kept for 3 years after the completion of the qualification.




11. CIH Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and review of alternative assessment arrangements will be undertaken by CIH Awarding Organisation staff on an annual basis and will be reviewed by CIH centre moderators as part of their quality control checks.

CIH Awarding Organisation staff will report on the use of specialist arrangements to the CIH Independent Audit Committee and the regulators upon request.

12. Centre Malpractice

The centre should note that failure to comply with the guidance regarding adjustments to assessments set out by the CIH Awarding Organisation has the potential to constitute malpractice and may lead the Awarding Organisation to withhold the learner's result. Failure to comply is defined as any or all of the following:

-  exceeding the allowances agreed with the CIH Awarding Organisation
-  agreeing delegated adjustments that are not supported by evidence
-  failing to maintain records of reasonable adjustments for audit.

The centre should read this guidance in conjunction with the CIH Awarding Organisation malpractice policy.

13. Supplementary Guidance for Centres

The Chartered Institute of Housing Awarding Organisation actively promotes the inclusion of disabled learners and learners with particular learning and assessment needs as part of its commitment to the promotion and diversity. The CIH is “*closed to prejudice, open to diversity*”.

General Recommendations for Teaching and Assessment

In the teaching, delivery and assessment of CIH housing programmes, all accredited centres should ensure that the following course of action is taken in relation to working with learners who have a disability or particular learning and assessment requirements:

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1. Using positive language in teaching and assessment

- ✚ Learners are individuals: making generalisations about 'the disabled' or any other group can deny individuality and set individuals and groups aside from other areas of society.
- ✚ Use language to empower: 'wheelchair user' or 'braille reader' highlights a positive skill rather than the negative 'confined to a wheelchair'.
- ✚ Place the learner first where possible: 'a learner with a disability' is firstly a learner, and the disability comes second. Do not use the phrase 'handicapped learner' or terms that are dismissive or convey inequality.

2. Promoting Equality in a teaching and learning environment

Ensure that learners with a disability or particular learning and assessment needs are not needlessly excluded from or disadvantaged from particular learning environment conventions or practices.

- ✚ Ask the learner what would be helpful: don't assume.
- ✚ Where appropriate consider room layout and/or lighting arrangements so learners can see you and face students when you talk.
- ✚ Check the picture and sound quality of video and audio equipment before you make use of it.
- ✚ Allow learners to record your teaching sessions if this is helpful for them.
- ✚ Consider providing teaching or lecture notes beforehand for learners who would find this useful.
- ✚ Check the clarity and legibility of OHPs or PowerPoint presentations from the back of the room (pitch 18 minimum) if using these for presentation purposes.
- ✚ Avoid using Times New Roman or similar 'ornate' fonts to ensure legibility. Plain fonts such as Arial are easier to distinguish.

3. Facilitating group work

- ✚ When you become aware that a learner has a disability, ask them discreetly what they would find helpful in a group situation. Be aware of 'hidden' disabilities such as epilepsy, diabetes, dyslexia, ME, mental health conditions. In any group there may be one or two learners who have hidden disabilities.
- ✚ Organise the learning space so everyone can be seen and heard.
- ✚ Make sure people speak one at a time and that people can hear and understand what is going on.
- ✚ If you think people are experiencing difficulty understanding you, rephrase rather than repeat or speak loudly.

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- ✚ Aim to use visual backup to a discussion session such as a flipchart or an OHP

4. Getting learners to work together

- ✚ Encourage learners to set ground rules about how a group will run and what is and is not acceptable behaviour.
- ✚ Ask the group to consider practical arrangements for meeting where this may disadvantage a person who has a disability or particular learning needs.
- ✚ Require that the group engage in reflection of the group process as this will facilitate a greater understanding of difference.

5. Assessment Opportunities

Accredited centres are required to allow disabled learners or learners with particular assessment needs a range of assessment arrangements.

Key principles for accredited centres must be:

- ✚ The objective of alternative assessment provisions is to assess the learners on equal terms with other learners.
- ✚ The CIH Equal Opportunities policy requires that no learner is unfairly disadvantaged in that assessment because of a disability.
- ✚ Learners who have notified accredited centres that they have dyslexia must have their work assessed in accordance with the attached guidelines for assessment and dyslexia.

Part B – Special Considerations

1. What is Special Consideration?

Special consideration is given following a scheduled assessment to a learner:

- ✚ Who is present for the assessment but who may have been disadvantaged by temporary illness, injury or adverse circumstances which arose at or near the time of assessment
- ✚ Who misses part of the assessment due to circumstances beyond their control

A request for special consideration will be unique to that learner or assessment. In some circumstances, for example for on-demand assessments, it may be more appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date.

The learners result must reflect his/her achievement in the assessment.

A special consideration application, if successful, may result in a small post-assessment adjustment to the mark of the learner. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances and reflect the difficulty faced by the learner.

The learner's result must reflect his/her achievement in the assessment and not necessarily his/her potential ability. Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage; neither should its use cause the user of a CIH certificate to be misled regarding the learner's achievements.

These guidelines offer some broad principles for the centre to follow. Further information should be sought in each case from the CIH Awarding Organisation.

2. Eligibility Criteria

A learner who is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment may be eligible for special consideration if:

- ✚ Performance in assessment is affected by circumstances beyond the control of the learner, for example: recent personal illness, accident, bereavement or serious disturbance during the assessment.
- ✚ Alternative assessment arrangements which were agreed in advance of the assessment were inappropriate or inadequate.
- ✚ Part of an assessment has been missed due to circumstances beyond the control of the learner.
- ✚ There is a sufficient difference between the part of the assessment to which special consideration is applied and other parts of the qualification that have been achieved to infer that the candidate could have performed more successfully in the assessment.

3. Ineligibility

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A learner will not be eligible for special consideration if:

- ✚ No evidence has been supplied by the centre 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 a component is affected by difficulties during the course, for example disturbances through building work or changes or shortages in staff.


4. Applying for Special Consideration

Application for special consideration must be submitted in writing to the Head of Education at CIH. The written application must contain the following information:

- ✚ Name of learner(s) making the application for special consideration.
- ✚ CIH course being studied by learner(s).
- ✚ Year in which learner(s) registered for the course.
- ✚ Clearly specify the grounds for the application for special consideration.
- ✚ Submit evidence to support the application for special consideration. This may include medical evidence or a statement from an invigilator if an examination or timed/supervised task has been undertaken.
- ✚ The application must be signed and dated by the course tutor.

The application for special consideration will be acknowledged. At each stage of the process the learner and the centre will be kept fully informed.

The application for special assessment will be considered by the **CIH Head of Education and an officer from the Awarding Organisation**. If the application for special consideration is successful, the learner's performance will be reviewed in the light of available evidence. It should be noted that a successful application of special consideration will not necessarily change a learner's result.

	<p>You should address your application for special consideration to: Head of Education CIH Awarding Organisation Octavia House Westwood Way Coventry CV4 8JP Tel: 024 7685 1776 Email: accreditation@cih.org www.cih.org</p>
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Glossary of terms

Access to assessment

The removal of artificial and unnecessary barriers to the process of judging an individual's competence.

Appeal

A process through which an Awarding Organisation or centre may be challenged on the outcome of a decision.

Assessment

The process of making judgements about the extent to which a learner's work meets the assessment criteria for a qualification or unit, or part of a unit.

Assessment criteria

The requirements that a learner needs to meet in order to achieve success (or a given grade) in a qualification or unit, or part of a unit.

Assessment method

The method by which an individual's competence is judged.

Assessment needs

The adjustments that some individuals require to the assessment strategy and/or assessment task in order to demonstrate that they can meet the required standard.

Assessment task

An activity undertaken by an individual learner to show that he or she can meet the required standard.

Assessor

The person who assesses a learner's work.

Assistive technology

Mechanical or electronic devices which help individuals with particular needs to overcome these limitations.

BSL/English interpreter

An individual who interprets communication into and from British Sign Language.

Carrier language

The language used by the Awarding Organisation to set an assessment task or test (which may not be the first/preferred language of the learner).

Centre

An organisation or consortium accountable to an Awarding Organisation for the assessment arrangements leading to a qualification or units.

Competence

The ability to perform to the required standard.

Enabling technologies

See assistive technology

Externally set assessment

Tasks or assignments which are determined by the Awarding Organisation.

Learning programme

A programme or course of study.

Oral language modifier

Person who can modify/rephrase the carrier language of an assessment for a learner whose first/preferred language is English, but who has specific difficulties with written language.

Malpractice

Actions and practices which threaten the integrity of public qualifications.

Moderation

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The process of checking that assessment standards have been applied correctly and consistently between assessors, between centres and over time, and making adjustments to results where required to compensate for any differences in standard that are encountered.

Portfolio

A collection of work submitted for assessment.

Reasonable Adjustment

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. Arrangements are approved in advance of an assessment.

Risk assessment

An estimation of the likelihood of something unfortunate happening as a result of a course of action.

Scribe

Person who writes down or word processes a candidate's dictated responses.

Qualification specification

A detailed statement or document which sets out the aims, purpose, content, structure and assessment arrangements for a qualification.

Standards

The combination of knowledge, understanding and skills required to perform a job or task to the level of competence required in the workplace.

Sector body

A body (such as a Sector Skills Council) recognised by the regulatory authorities as responsible for formulating and reviewing standards of occupational competence demonstrated by a learner who has been disadvantaged by temporary illness, injury, indisposition or adverse circumstances at the time of the assessment.

Speech software

A computer programme that reads text.

Transcript

A full written or typewritten copy of information or material originally provided in writing, speech or sign language.

External moderator

Person who checks that a centre's assessment and quality assurance procedures comply with the requirements of the CIH Awarding Organisation and the regulators.

Voice activated software

A computer programme which responds to spoken instructions.