



**Metron College**

**Access Arrangements, Reasonable  
Adjustments and Special  
Considerations Policy**

**May 2023**

## 1. Introduction

Metron College recognises that some learners require special arrangements when it comes to our examinations. The term “examination” is used to cover all types of assessments including coursework, presentations, etc.

This policy aims to explain what you are entitled to request in line with the relevant legislation. We seek to provide equal access to examinations for all learners, ensuring there are no unnecessary barriers, and to accommodate the needs of learners according to individual requirements but within the confines of the law.

We have a duty to make a reasonable adjustment where the examination assessment arrangements would put a disabled learner at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a learner who is not disabled. In these circumstances, we are required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.

It is important to note that reasonable adjustments must not affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes, nor must they give the learner an unfair assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments. Any reasonable adjustment must reflect the usual learning or working practice of a learner.

## 2. An Overview

### a) Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before the examination upon registration. They allow learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment, and show what they know, and can do, without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the needs of an individual learner, without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty, under the Equality Act 2010, to make ‘reasonable adjustments’.

### b) Reasonable Adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is unique to you and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements outlined in Section 4. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors, which may include:

- the needs of the disabled candidate
- the effectiveness of the adjustment
- the cost of the adjustment
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the learner and other learners.

### An adjustment may not be approved if it:

- involves unreasonable costs to the college
- involves unreasonable timeframes; or
- affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

This is because the adjustment is not “reasonable”. In most cases it will not be reasonable for adjustments to be made to examination/assessment objectives within a qualification. To do so would likely undermine the effectiveness of the qualification in providing a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of the learner.

### c. Special Consideration

Special Consideration is a request by the learner, post examination, to adjust the mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or an event outside of your control (such as a family emergency or bereavement), that occurred just before, or at the time of the examination/assessment.

You may also ask for special consideration if the reasonable adjustments requested, and agreed in advance of the examination / assessment, proved inadequate. We will not review your mark or grades if there are instances of noises, lack of proper facilities or industrial disputes that occurred during the examination, as these are outside of Metron Colleges’ control. Please note that, in most circumstances, we would expect you to delay your examination / assessment in the event of a temporary illness or bereavement. However, if this is not possible then Metron College will review your application for special consideration.

## 3. Am I entitled to a Reasonable Adjustment?

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to perform normal day to day activities.

The following individuals will be considered for reasonable adjustments:

- a permanent physical impairment, e.g. cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis
- a recurring or fluctuating effect, e.g. rheumatoid arthritis
- a progressive condition such as an HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis
- behavioural, emotional, social needs, e.g. chronic depression or autism
- a sensory impairment, e.g. hearing impairment or visual impairment
- specific cognitive difficulties, e.g. dyslexia or memory loss
- motor difficulties, e.g. hand and or eye co-ordination, difficulty moving hands and or arms

**If there is not an option for you to take the examination/assessment in your native language you will be entitled to an extra 25% of time.**

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## What is not a disability?

Some conditions aren't covered by the disability definition. These include addiction to non-prescribed drugs or alcohol. If you need more information, then please refer to the 'Equality Act Guidance'.

## 4. What Reasonable Adjustments are considered acceptable and what assistance may I be entitled to?

Applications for reasonable adjustments will be individually considered and decisions may vary according to the exact nature of your everyday needs and usual method of working.

The following are examples of what may be considered:

- **Allocation of extra time**

- **Bilingual paper dictionary whose purpose is translation between the examination or assessment language and another national language** (not available for on-line examination or assessment)

- **Adapting assessment materials** e.g. large format, different font, coloured paper or offered in Braille

- **Rest or Time Breaks:**

You can request rest breaks if you suffer from fatigue, physical or mental disabilities or for religious obligations. The rest break will be part of your extra time request and you can take it any time during the examination/assessment.,

- **Support of a Sign Language interpreter:**

You can request a sign language interpreter if you are hard of hearing to undertake the role of conversing with others on your behalf. The interpreter can say a phrase or word as well as re-phrasing using sign language or by writing it down for you. They must not give factual help, offer any suggestions or advice which could give you an unfair advantage. The learner can source their own interpreter and if this is not possible, Metron College will source a suitable interpreter for you.

- **Support of a scribe or amanuensis** (only in written examinations/assessments):

You can request a scribe if you have limitations with writing down the answers such as a physical or visual impairment or a specific learning difficulty. The scribe's role will be someone who will write down your dictated answers to the questions. They must write down the answers exactly as they are dictated. They must not give factual help nor offer any suggestions or advice which could be seen as giving you an unfair advantage.

▪ **Use of assistive technology:** You can request the use of adaptive, assistive or access technology which enables you to access computer systems if you have particular needs. Where possible, we would expect you to use your own laptop and software. You will only be able to have access to the relevant programme or programmes and all equipment will be checked by the invigilator prior to the start of the examination/assessment. If you cannot use your own equipment, Metron College will make reasonable efforts to source the same or similar equipment. If Metron College is unable to source suitable equipment, then we will advise you accordingly and you will be responsible for either sourcing suitable equipment or using what can be made available to you by Metron College.

The list below is indicative of the most common assistive technologies available but should be used as a guideline only:

**Hardware:**

- Alternative keyboards and mice including: Braille labelled keyboards or home-row key indicators;
- Joysticks / trackballs / mouse keys on the keyboard; Mouth Stick
- Braille Display
- Switches (alternative input to keyboard and mouse, used by learners with physical disabilities)
- Large monitors
- Headphones and volume adjustment for use with voice output/input software packages

**Software:**

- Operating System Accessibility features such as sticky keys, filter keys, mouse speed adjustments
- Screen magnification software e.g. Dragon Software
- Screen reading software (supporting both users with visual impairment and dyslexic users) e.g. browsealoud.com, JAWS software or NVDA
- Input devices – eye/head operated pointing devices or on-screen keyboards

▪ **Use of appropriate examination or assessment locations:**

Our assessments are all online. However for any physical learning or assessment we will make appropriate arrangements where possible.

▪ **Re-sits, in the case of temporary illness or injury:**

Although a temporary illness or injury or indisposition would not be covered by the Equality Act (or local equivalent), we may still be able to accommodate learners affected in such a way. You need to complete the **Reasonable Adjustments Form** and provide supporting evidence of the circumstances and we will try to accommodate your request.

▪ **Pregnancy:**

You are entitled to go to the toilet if you are pregnant, but you are not entitled to extra time unless there are other medical conditions that would allow you to request extra time. It is

important that you do not discuss the examination/assessment with any third party during any break period.

▪ **Religious Obligations:**

You can request a break or different time to start the examination/assessment if you need to do so for religious reasons. We will require a written request for this and the contact details for the appropriate religious authority (e.g. imam, minister, rabbi or priest).

▪ **Candidates with substantial needs:**

There may be candidates who suffer from particular disabilities who may require other adjustments which are not listed in this document. The list of access arrangements is not exhaustive. Where a candidate has substantial needs then Metron College may allow further adjustments such as up to 100% of the examination/assessment time. We would require a clinical practitioner to provide compelling evidence for the extra time so that we do not unfairly advantage the candidate. Each application will be considered individually in light of your needs. The response will relate primarily to the effect the requested adjustment may have on the assessment objective being tested in the qualification.

## 5. How much does it cost for a reasonable adjustment?

In accordance with the Equality Act, we do not charge for a reasonable adjustment. However, we charge for any adjustments that are considered **unreasonable**. Please contact Metron College for guidance on what is considered a reasonable adjustment.

## 6. How do I apply for extra time due to a disability?

You must complete the **Application for Reasonable Adjustments Form** which is available on the Metron College Student Portal. If for any reason you struggle to find this form please email [admin@metroncollege.com](mailto:admin@metroncollege.com) for a link/copy.

Please ensure that you complete the form fully and provide as much evidence to support your request as appropriate. The form outlines what we need, if you don't provide enough evidence then we have the right to reject the application and ask you to resubmit it.

If you require reasonable adjustments you must **submit** the application **at least 10 days in advance** of the examination for Professional Certifications.

## 7. How do I apply for Special Consideration?

You must complete the **Special Consideration Form** which is available on the Metron College Student Portal.

## 8. What documentary evidence is required?

You should provide Metron College with documentary evidence which outlines the nature and severity of your disability. It should be from an appropriate independent professional.

## 9. Disclosure and Confidentiality

Information about your disability is deemed 'sensitive personal data' and will be processed in line with the General Data Protection Regulations. Your information will only be made available to those on a 'need to know' basis based on the Equality Act 2010. This will include Metron College administrative staff and the invigilator/tutor of your examination/assessment as well as people who may be required to assist you during the examination/assessment such as a scribe or sign language interpreter.

If you take another examination/assessment with us at a later date and have no changes to your disability, you will not need to resubmit the evidence. All you need to do is quote your Reasonable Adjustments reference number and we will be able to authorise the extra time based on your previous application. However, if circumstances have changed, then you will need to resubmit a new request form. If you prefer, you can request that we destroy all information once you have passed the examination/assessment.

Metron College will keep on record all Reasonable Adjustment Request forms and evidence for a period of 30 days after the release of the examination/assessment results to allow for potential appeals or investigations to take place.

## 10. Examples of Reasonable Adjustments

### **Dyslexia:**

You can request different coloured paper; font adjustments, the use of your laptop and get 25% extra time.

### **Attention Deficit Disorder:**

You can have a rest break and the use of a prompter, who can show you on a page where you had been working.

### **Autism Spectrum:**

You can use a laptop and get 25% extra time.

**Visual Impairment:**

You can use your own laptop, enlarged text and paper, a reader and 50% extra time if you have a statement from an appropriate professional or a certificate of registration as partially sighted or blind.

**Hearing Impairment:**

You can use a BSL signer and an additional 25% extra time.

**Speech Impediment:** (only for oral assessments/examinations)

You can have up to 50% extra time.

## 11. Appeals

You have the right to appeal any decision made by Metron College. If you wish to appeal against the decision to decline a request for reasonable adjustments or special consideration arrangements, please refer to the Appeals Policy.

## 12. Review Arrangements

We will review the policy annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as and when necessary in response to customer and learner feedback, changes in our practices, actions from the regulatory authorities or external agencies or changes in legislation.

**END**