



Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Pace Educators Ltd

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Document Control

Policy title	Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments Policy	Organisation	Pace Educators Ltd
Trading/centre name	Pace Educators Student Centre	Location	United Kingdom
Version	1.0	Effective from	July 2026
Owner	Centre Manager / Quality Lead	Approved by	Director / Senior Management
Review cycle	Annually, or sooner after legal, awarding-body, or operational changes	Next review	July 2027
Applies to	Learners, applicants, staff, tutors, assessors, invigilators, contractors, visitors and partners	Status	Internal policy

1. Policy Statement

Pace Educators Ltd is committed to providing fair, inclusive and accessible education, training, assessment and student support. We will take reasonable steps to remove barriers that could place learners at a substantial disadvantage because of disability, learning difficulty, health condition, temporary injury, pregnancy, caring responsibility, language need or exceptional personal circumstance.

This policy sets out how Pace Educators will consider, approve, implement and monitor reasonable adjustments and special considerations while protecting the integrity, validity and fairness of learning and assessment.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ensure learners can access teaching, learning, support, examinations and assessments as fairly as possible;
- define reasonable adjustments and special considerations in a clear and practical way;
- provide a consistent process for requesting, approving, recording and reviewing support arrangements;
- ensure decisions comply with the Equality Act 2010, relevant UK guidance, awarding organisation rules and centre procedures;
- protect assessment standards while supporting learners who experience disadvantage or exceptional circumstances;
- ensure staff understand their responsibilities in relation to inclusive practice, confidentiality and evidence handling.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Pace Educators programmes and activities, including ESOL, Functional Skills, vocational training, employability support, apprenticeships, short courses, internal assessments, external assessments, online learning, work-based learning and student support services.

It applies to:

- prospective learners and enrolled learners;
- staff, tutors, assessors, invigilators and administrators;
- contractors, volunteers and placement partners;
- parents, carers or advocates where the learner has consented or where safeguarding/legal duties require involvement.

4. Key Definitions

Term	Meaning
Reasonable adjustment	A change made before or during teaching, learning or assessment to reduce or remove a disadvantage experienced by a disabled learner or a learner with an identified need. Examples may include additional time, rest breaks, accessible materials, assistive technology, alternative rooming, modified equipment, reader/scribe support where permitted, or adapted delivery methods.
Access arrangement	A pre-agreed arrangement that allows a learner to access an assessment without changing the skills, knowledge or understanding being assessed. Access arrangements must follow awarding organisation and assessment-body rules.
Special consideration	A post-assessment adjustment or consideration applied when a learner has been temporarily affected by illness, injury, bereavement, serious domestic crisis or another exceptional circumstance at or near the time of assessment. It cannot compensate for long-term absence from learning or lack of evidence of competence.
Substantial disadvantage	A disadvantage that is more than minor or trivial and affects a learner's ability to access learning, support or assessment fairly.
Normal way of working	The support or arrangement normally used by the learner during teaching, learning and practice, where applicable. For examinations and regulated assessments, evidence of normal way of working may be required.
Evidence of need	Relevant information used to make a fair decision. This may include learner disclosure, tutor observations, support plans, professional reports, medical evidence, diagnostic assessment, previous access arrangements or awarding-body forms.

5. Policy Principles

- Fairness: learners should not be unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged.
- Accessibility: reasonable steps will be taken to remove barriers to learning and assessment.
- Integrity: adjustments must not change the competence, knowledge, skill or standard being assessed.
- Consistency: decisions will be made using clear criteria and recorded appropriately.
- Confidentiality: personal, medical and disability-related information will be handled sensitively and securely.
- Timeliness: requests should be made as early as possible so that support can be planned properly.
- Learner voice: learners will be involved in discussions about their support needs wherever appropriate.

6. Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are considered before or during learning and assessment. Pace Educators will consider each request individually, taking account of the learner's needs, course requirements, assessment criteria, awarding organisation rules, available evidence, cost, practicality, health and safety, and impact on other learners.

Examples of reasonable adjustments may include:

- extra time in assessments where permitted by awarding body rules;

- supervised rest breaks;
- a separate or smaller assessment room;
- reader, scribe, prompt or practical assistant support where allowed;
- use of a computer, assistive software, coloured overlays or adapted equipment;
- modified learning materials such as large print, accessible digital formats or simplified layout;
- adapted teaching methods, flexible learning approaches or additional tutor check-ins;
- adjusted seating, lighting, room access or mobility arrangements;
- reasonable timetable flexibility for disability-related appointments or support needs;
- support planning for learners with disabilities, learning difficulties, health conditions or mental health needs.

Reasonable adjustments must not lower assessment standards, provide unfair advantage, compromise health and safety, invalidate awarding organisation rules, or prevent the learner from demonstrating the required competence.

7. Special Considerations

Special consideration may be requested where a learner has been temporarily affected at or near the time of an assessment by circumstances beyond their control. Examples may include sudden illness, temporary injury, bereavement, serious family crisis, significant disruption, or other exceptional circumstances.

Special consideration is not normally appropriate for:

- long-term learning gaps that have not been addressed through support planning;
- poor attendance or lack of preparation without valid exceptional circumstances;
- minor inconvenience or ordinary pressure associated with study;
- circumstances already addressed by a reasonable adjustment or access arrangement;
- claims made after published deadlines without good reason.

Where regulated or external assessments are involved, special consideration requests must follow the relevant awarding organisation or assessment body's rules, evidence requirements and deadlines.

8. Request and Approval Process

1. Learner or staff member identifies a potential need for adjustment or special consideration.
2. Learner completes the relevant request form or speaks with the Tutor, Student Support Lead, Centre Manager or Quality Lead.
3. Evidence is gathered and reviewed. The learner may be invited to a support discussion.
4. The Centre Manager, Quality Lead or nominated staff member decides whether the request is reasonable and permitted.
5. For external or regulated assessments, the centre submits applications to the awarding organisation where required and waits for approval before implementation.
6. The agreed adjustment or outcome is recorded on the learner file and communicated to relevant staff on a need-to-know basis.
7. The arrangement is implemented and reviewed for effectiveness.
8. If a request is refused, the learner is informed of the reason and the review/appeal route.

9. Evidence Requirements

Evidence should be proportionate to the request and may include one or more of the following:

- learner self-disclosure and support discussion notes;
- tutor or assessor observations;
- existing support plan, EHCP, learning support record or previous access arrangement evidence;
- diagnostic assessment or specialist report;
- medical note, hospital letter, appointment record or other relevant professional evidence;
- incident record or statement relating to exceptional circumstances;
- awarding organisation forms or online approvals where required.

Pace Educators will not request more personal information than is reasonably necessary. Evidence will be handled in line with data protection requirements and retained only for an appropriate period.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Director / Senior Management	Ensure the policy is approved, implemented, resourced and reviewed.
Centre Manager / Quality Lead	Oversee requests, evidence review, awarding-body compliance, record keeping and consistency of decisions.
Student Support Lead	Coordinate learner support discussions, support plans and communication with tutors or assessors.
Tutors / Assessors	Identify possible support needs, apply agreed arrangements, maintain confidentiality and ensure assessment standards are protected.
Exams / Administration Staff	Submit and record approved access arrangements, special consideration requests and assessment documentation where applicable.
Learners	Declare support needs as early as possible, provide evidence when requested, use agreed arrangements responsibly and submit authentic work.
Parents / Carers / Advocates	Support learners where appropriate, with learner consent or where legal/safeguarding duties require involvement.

11. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Information about a learner's disability, health condition, learning need, personal circumstances or support arrangements will be treated as confidential. It will only be shared with staff or external bodies where there is a legitimate educational, assessment, legal, safeguarding or awarding-body reason.

Records will be stored securely, and learners will be informed why information is collected and how it may be used. Pace Educators will handle personal information in line with UK data protection law and its internal data protection procedures.

12. Safeguarding, Wellbeing and Health and Safety

Where a request or disclosure raises safeguarding, wellbeing or immediate safety concerns, staff must follow the Pace Educators safeguarding policy. Reasonable adjustments will be considered alongside health and safety duties, but health and safety should not be used as a blanket reason to refuse support. Decisions must be evidence-based, proportionate and documented.

13. Appeals and Review

A learner who is dissatisfied with a decision may request a review. The review should be submitted in writing within 10 working days of receiving the decision, unless there is a valid reason for delay. The review will normally be considered by a staff member who was not the original decision-maker.

Where the matter relates to an awarding organisation decision, the learner will be advised of the relevant awarding organisation appeal process and deadlines.

14. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

Pace Educators will monitor the use of reasonable adjustments and special considerations to ensure fairness, consistency and compliance. Monitoring may include reviewing request volumes, approval/refusal reasons, learner feedback, assessment outcomes, awarding-body queries, complaints and any equality or safeguarding concerns.

The policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if there are changes to legislation, awarding organisation rules, assessment requirements, centre operations or identified areas for improvement.

15. Practical Examples

Situation	Possible response	Notes
Learner has dyslexia and uses extra time during mock assessments.	Consider extra time and/or assistive technology if permitted and supported by evidence.	Must reflect need and normal way of working where required.
Learner breaks writing hand shortly before an exam.	Consider scribe, word processor, rest breaks or alternative arrangements if permitted.	Temporary injury may require urgent evidence and awarding-body approval.
Learner is bereaved on the day before assessment.	Consider special consideration or deferral/rescheduling depending on assessment rules.	Evidence and deadlines may apply.
Learner is anxious in large exam rooms.	Consider smaller room, supervised rest breaks or support planning where appropriate.	Should be based on need and assessment regulations.
Learner submits work late due to poor time management only.	Normally not special consideration.	May need study skills support, but not assessment adjustment.

16. References and Guidance

- Equality Act 2010 and relevant UK equality guidance.
- JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments guidance, where applicable to assessments.
- JCQ special consideration guidance, where applicable to examinations and regulated qualifications.
- Relevant awarding organisation rules and centre approval requirements.
- Pace Educators policies on safeguarding, complaints, data protection, assessment, malpractice and plagiarism, health and safety, and student support.

Appendix A: Request Form

Learner name	
Course/programme	
Tutor/assessor	
Type of request	Reasonable adjustment / Access arrangement / Special consideration
Reason for request	
Evidence provided	
Requested support or consideration	
Date requested	
Learner signature	

Appendix B: Decision Record

Decision	Approved / Partially approved / Not approved
Reason for decision	
Approved arrangement or action	
Conditions or limitations	
Awarding organisation approval required?	Yes / No / Not applicable
Staff responsible for implementation	
Review date	
Decision-maker signature and date	