


Guidance on the application of Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration in AAT assessments



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Associated regulations and policies

ATLAS Cloud scheduling and invigilation guide for Q2022

Instructions for conducting AAT computer-based assessments (CBAs)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The guidance contained within this document and associated webpage is applicable to all AAT qualifications and End Point Assessments (EPA) that AAT deliver. Where required, specific reference has been given to each qualification given the different assessment software that is used to deliver each one.
 - AAT computer-based assessments are administered via ATLAS Cloud TCA and delivered via the PSI Bridge Secure Browser.
 - The professional discussions components of the EPA qualifications are administered and delivered via SEPA.
- 1.2. This document has been created in line with AAT's obligations on equality of access to qualifications and assessments, as required by relevant legislation, including the *Equality Act 2010*.

2. Scope and applicability

- 2.1. This user guide applies to all assessment centres involved in the administration of AAT's assessments. A failure to follow the guidance contained within this document, when required, may result in investigation and action being taken in line with AAT's *Malpractice / Maladministration policy* which can be found on the [Quality Assurance resources webpage \(aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/quality-assurance\)](https://aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/quality-assurance).

3. Purpose and objectives

- 3.1. The purpose of this document is to give AAT approved assessment centre staff guidance and knowledge regarding the types of reasonable adjustments and special consideration that can be applied to AAT's assessments, and how to notify AAT of them and / or request them.

4. Terms and definitions

- 4.1. **Reasonable Adjustments** are arrangements that can be put in place prior to an assessment to help students with a long-term disability such as dyslexia, or who are temporarily impaired, such as a student who has broken their arm, to do their best. For example, applying extra time for dyslexic students, or the use of a Scribe for a student with a broken arm.
- 4.2. **Special Consideration** is a process which considers the student's circumstances, for example, a temporary illness or injury, or some other event outside of the student's control, at or shortly before the time of assessment, which has or is reasonably likely to have had an effect on the student's ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their predicted level of attainment in an assessment.

- 4.3. **Assessment Centre** is used to describe any location where an assessment is taking place. This includes Training Providers, Distance Learning Providers, Assessment Venues and EPA Centres as well as remote locations where EPA and remotely invigilated assessments can take place.
- 4.4. **Student** is used throughout the document to mean both conventional students and apprentices (when referring to EPAs).
- 4.5. **Remote Invigilation** is the term used to define a method of assessment delivery where the student sits the assessment outside of an assessment centre whilst being recorded by a camera on the device used to sit the assessment, which is then invigilated.

5. Overview of reasonable adjustments and special consideration

- 5.1. AAT, as an Awarding Organisation (AO) and End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO), has a responsibility to ensure that the integrity of our qualifications and assessments is always maintained. At the same time, AAT and AAT approved Assessment Centres have a duty to ensure that individual students can access qualifications and assessments in a way that is most appropriate for their individual needs.
- 5.2. It is the responsibility of the student to inform their Assessment Centre of any:
- existing Reasonable Adjustment requirements upon enrolment to their course of study (where the Assessment Centre provides training for students to help them prepare for AAT assessments)
 - Reasonable Adjustment requirements in advance of their assessment being scheduled, and in line with the timescales required by the Assessment Centre to submit the necessary form (see sections 9.4 and 9.6)
 - personal circumstances, or some other event outside of the student's control, that may affect or has affected their performance within the assessment before, during or immediately after the assessment.
- 5.3. It is the responsibility of the Assessment Centre to:
- have processes in place to establish any Reasonable Adjustment and/or Special Consideration requirements for the student.
 - notify AAT of any Reasonable Adjustments that have been applied (see section 9.3) or that are being requested to be approved by AAT (see section 9.5), in line with the timescales in this document (see sections 9.4 and 9.6)
 - make a request for Special Consideration to be applied to the student's assessment (see section 10) in line with the timescales in this document (see section 10.4).
 - request the supporting evidence for the student as this is a requirement at centre level, unless specifically requested by AAT (for example, for non-standard adjustment requests).

Providing reasonable adjustments is a legal obligation on the part of assessment centres. Students must not be charged for any requests.

All Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration requests must be supported by evidence that is valid, current, and sufficient (see section 11).

- 5.4. This document is designed to help students and Assessment Centre staff understand Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration requirements. In particular, the document will:
- assist Assessment Centre staff with the administration and application of Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration requirements.
 - provide guidance on good practice to assist Assessment Centres in the consistent application of Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration, to enable equal access to qualifications.
 - cover the main requirements for understanding when and how Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration can be applied.
 - detail the responsibilities of the student to notify the Assessment Centre of any Reasonable Adjustment and/or Special Consideration
 - detail the responsibilities of the Assessment Centre staff to identify, apply and/or request Reasonable Adjustment and/or Special Consideration before, during and after an assessment sitting.
 - focus on the application of Reasonable Adjustments against practice and live assessments.
 - include, but is not limited to, important information pertaining to:
 - identifying Reasonable Adjustment and/or Special Consideration requirements of students
 - using the assessment platform or administration of the assessment to support these requirements.
 - notifying AAT of all applications of Reasonable Adjustment, or requesting the application of Reasonable Adjustment and/or Special Consideration by AAT where this cannot be applied by the Assessment Centre
 - cover malpractice around the mismanagement of a student's Reasonable Adjustment and/or Special Consideration needs, along with the standard forms to support this procedure.
- 5.5. AAT strongly recommends that Assessment Centres that also offer training to students to help them prepare for AAT assessments have processes in place to assist any student that requires the application of Reasonable Adjustments in their learning and assessment preparation.

5.6. The guidance within this document is not exhaustive. It is for Assessment Centres to:

- help their students understand what Reasonable Adjustment and/or Special Consideration they may be eligible for
- determine on a case-by-case basis, with guidance where necessary from AAT, whether Reasonable Adjustments and/or Special Consideration is necessary.
- identify where the supporting evidence is valid, sufficient, and reliable.
- identify what actions are realistic and effective.

5.7. This guidance is applicable to all assessments that form part of any AAT qualification or EPA.

The information within this guidance document must be read, understood, and adhered to by all staff who are involved with the application of Reasonable Adjustments and/or Special Consideration in AAT's assessments.

6. Who is affected?

6.1. The *Equality Act 2010* (legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents) legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society when providing goods, facilities and services, when exercising public functions, in the disposal and management of premises, in education and by associations (such as private clubs).

It protects people from being discriminated against because they are perceived to have, or are associated with, someone who has a protected characteristic.

It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone including, but not limited to, direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, and failing to make a Reasonable Adjustment for a disabled person.

7. Responsibilities of Assessment Centres

7.1. The guidance in this section is applicable to all Assessment Centres. However, some guidance related to registering and teaching students is only applicable to Assessment Centres that also provide training for students to help them prepare for AAT assessments. This may include Training Providers, Distance Learning Providers and, for EPAs, EPA Centres and Employers as appropriate.

To meet their responsibilities to individual students, and in terms of current disability and equal opportunity legislation and regulatory requirements, an Assessment Centre must, as far as is practicable meet the following requirements:

7.1.1 Have an access-to-assessment policy and communicate this to all staff and students. The Assessment Centre must cultivate an atmosphere in which students feel free to disclose their access-related needs without fear of discrimination. It should be noted that the duty to make Reasonable Adjustments has an 'anticipatory' aspect. This means that the Assessment Centre must consider what adjustments future students with disabilities or difficulties may need and make appropriate provision in advance.

The access-to-assessment policy must include:

- clear instructions for students on how to notify and request any Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration requirements, along with valid supporting evidence (see section 11)
- clear arrangements as to how the Assessment Centre applies Reasonable Adjustments and for these arrangements to be notified to students in relation to assessments offered by AAT in sufficient time ahead of assessment sittings, to allow for requests to be made to AAT in line with the timescales in this document.
- published details of its own arrangements for applying Reasonable Adjustments and requesting Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration from AAT, which includes details as to:
 - how a student qualifies for a Reasonable Adjustment or a Special Consideration; and
 - what Reasonable Adjustments shall be made.
- clear instructions and internal arrangements for students wishing to appeal any Reasonable Adjustment and/or Special Consideration decision made by the Assessment Centre.

7.1.2 Identify as early as possible, and preferably before registering a student for a qualification or EPA, any difficulties the student may have in accessing assessment. To assist with this the Assessment Centre must ensure that all staff who recruit, advise, or guide potential students have had training to make them aware of access-related issues. Early contact with AAT is advised, to determine whether Reasonable Adjustments to the assessment process is possible.

7.1.3 The Assessment Centre must explain to the student the assessment requirements of the selected qualification or EPA and, as applicable, the planned programme of study prior to registration. It should be made clear at the outset if the student will not be able to meet all the assessment criteria or if there are any potential access issues based on known Reasonable Adjustment requirements. It is the Assessment Centre's responsibility to ensure that they can provide appropriate Reasonable Adjustment support for tuition and assessment to students enrolled on a course with them. A student may decide to proceed with a qualification but not enter for all assessments. In this case the Assessment Centre must explain to the student any restriction on progression to other qualifications as a result of not achieving all the criteria.

7.1.4.2 Where appropriate to do so, and in accordance with this document, select an appropriate adjustment to make the assessment accessible to the student. In order to decide whether an adjustment is appropriate, the Assessment Centre must consider the nature of the skills that are being assessed and the implications for assessment of the student's difficulties. The Assessment Centre must involve the student in making any decisions about appropriate adjustments to assessment and take into consideration any professional guidance included in the student's supporting evidence. In cases of doubt, the Assessment Centre must contact the AAT for advice on suitable and appropriate adjustments.

7.1.4.2 A centre must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their student. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they cannot make the decision for the centre as they will not have a working knowledge of an individual student's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. Any adjustment should constitute the student's normal way of working. The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place due to a temporary injury or impairment.

7.1.4.2 Where an approved adjustment is not being utilised by a student, the centre may consider withdrawing the arrangement, provided the student agrees and will not be placed at a substantial disadvantage.

7.1.5 Ensure that it can resource the selected adjustment to assessment. It is the Assessment Centre's responsibility to arrange any assistance for the student, such as the use of a Reader, Scribe, additional Invigilator, Qualified Communications Professional (for example a sign language interpreter for a student with a hearing impairment), etc.

7.1.6 Follow AAT's procedures for approving and/or requesting Reasonable Adjustments or Special Consideration to an assessment. The Assessment Centre must notify AAT of any Reasonable Adjustments applied, in line with this document and notify AAT of any Reasonable Adjustments or Special Consideration requests on behalf of the student.

All notification of and applications for adjustments to assessments must be submitted on the correct forms and to the timescales confirmed in this document. They must be supported by the Head of Centre or other member of staff with designated responsibility and include valid supporting evidence (see section 11).

7.1.7 Follow the AAT's procedures for implementing adjustments to assessment, as set out in this document. It is the Assessment Centre's responsibility to ensure that the student only uses those adjustments approved internally, or agreed with AAT, and that it keeps records of Reasonable Adjustments and the supporting evidence for up to two years for audit purposes. If the Assessment Centre exceeds the level of assistance and type of assistance as set out in these sections, this will be considered as maladministration and appropriate sanctions may be applied.

7.1.8 Ensure that it has effective internal appeals procedures so that the student can query and appeal any decision taken by the Assessment Centre not to approve or request a Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request for an assessment. These procedures must be easily accessible and be made available to the student and must include details of the grounds for appeal, the appeals process, and the timescales associated with investigations of appeals.

- 7.1.9 Where appropriate, design locally set assessment activities or material in an inclusive way so that they are accessible to students with access-related needs. The Assessment Centre must ensure that the language of the activities and material is clear, unambiguous, and free from jargon.
- 7.1.10 Ensure that buildings used for assessments are accessible to all students, as far as is practicable.
- 7.2. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, and Assessment Centres must take all possible practical steps to apply Reasonable Adjustments, to promote equality of access for students who are placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to a person without disability or difficulty.

8. Identifying a student's needs

- 8.1. A student will only be eligible for Reasonable Adjustments if their disability or difficulty places them at a substantial disadvantage in AAT assessments, in comparison to a person who is not disabled.

A student does not necessarily have to be disabled (as defined by the *Equality Act*) to be entitled to a Reasonable Adjustment. Additionally, every student who is disabled is not necessarily entitled to, or in need of a Reasonable Adjustment to be applied to the assessment. For example, a student may have developed coping mechanisms that minimise or remove the need for any Reasonable Adjustment.

- 8.2. A student will only be eligible for Special Consideration if their performance during an assessment is likely to be substantially affected by a particular impairment.
- 8.3. The Assessment Centre has a responsibility to ensure it has effective internal procedures for identifying students' needs and that these procedures comply with the requirements of equality legislation and this document.
- 8.4. An Assessment Centre must ensure that it can:
- 8.4.1 Identify students with permanent, long-term, or temporary disabilities or difficulties.

A student must be encouraged to make any access-related assessment needs known to the Assessment Centre at the earliest opportunity. For those offering training courses, this should preferably be before students are registered or entered for a qualification or EPA, otherwise it should be at the point of first contact to request to sit an assessment. To assist with the early identification of students with access-related assessment needs, the Assessment Centre must ensure that all staff that recruit, advise, or guide potential students have had training to make them aware of access-related issues. Once the student's need has been identified, it should be documented for audit purposes, in line with data protection regulations.

For students who are registered with Training Providers, or for distance learners, identifying accessibility requirements for:

- long-term/permanent conditions, should ideally be made at the point of registration and, where applicable, submitted to AAT as soon as possible and before the published deadlines.

- Short-term/temporary conditions, should ideally be made as soon as they are required and, where applicable, submitted to AAT as soon as possible and before the published deadlines.

For students who are self-studiers or who regularly sit assessments at assessment venues or via remote invigilation:

- Identifying any accessibility requirements should be made at the point of contacting the assessment venue, ahead of scheduling.
- It remains the responsibility of the assessment venue to submit any requests/notifications on behalf of the student to AAT within the published timescales.
- Requests only need to be submitted once, per student; not per sitting or per qualification. Any changes to the requested reasonable adjustment should be submitted on a new form, as and when required.
- Should a student change assessment venue, they can request confirmation of the approved reasonable adjustment from AAT (or AAT will send it to the new venue) so that a new request/notification does not have to be submitted to AAT on their behalf. In this scenario, venues should ask prospective students if a request has been submitted on their behalf by another assessment centre.

8.4.2 Be approachable.

Assessment Centres must have a process in place to allow students to discretely notify of any permanent, long-term, or temporary disabilities or difficulties that may influence, or may have influenced, their assessment performance. A student must be able to make this request prior to, during or immediately after the assessment without fear of discrimination.

It is both the Assessment Centre's responsibility to ask the student and the student's responsibility to notify the Assessment Centre, of any Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration requirements. Opportunity must be given for this at the point of enrolment, at any point during the tuition and before, during and immediately after the assessment sitting.

8.4.3 Identify whether Reasonable Adjustments may be needed.

Relevant Assessment Centre staff must decide, in conjunction with the student, whether they would be able to meet the requirements of the assessment or whether any adjustments will be required. It is important that the student is involved in this discussion as they will know best what the effect of their disability or difficulty is on how they do things. Where the implications of a particular impairment are unclear, the Assessment Centre must make use of specialist advice to determine how the difficulty will affect the student's performance in the assessment. The Assessment Centre must avoid making assumptions, based on previous experience, about whether adjustments may be necessary. Judgements must be based on the individual's needs. If any Reasonable Adjustments are needed, it must be documented for audit purposes.

8.4.4 Identify the appropriate adjustment.

When identifying any Reasonable Adjustment requirements, the Assessment Centre staff must take into consideration the student'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 armrest. Once the adjustment has been identified, it must be documented for audit purposes.

8.4.5 Ensure that the adjustment is in accordance with AAT guidelines.

The Assessment Centre must ensure that any Reasonable Adjustment that is applied or requested will not impair the student's performance, unfairly advantage the student, is in line with the guidance contained within this document and is not misused.

9. Reasonable Adjustments

9.1. Reasonable Adjustments are actions that help to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the student at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation in comparison to someone who is not disabled.

9.1.1 To ensure that any Reasonable Adjustment that is applied to an assessment will only provide the student with the necessary assistance without giving him or her an unfair advantage over others, the Assessment Centre must be clear about the extent to which the student is affected by the disability or difficulty.

9.1.2 Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which will include, but are not limited to the:

- needs of the disabled student
- effectiveness of the adjustment
- cost of the adjustment; and
- impact of the adjustment upon the student and other students.

9.1.3 The application of a Reasonable Adjustment must:

- reflect the student's normal way of working.
- be based on the individual needs of the student.
- not invalidate the assessment requirements of the qualification.
- not give the student an unfair advantage.

9.1.4 An adjustment will not be approved if the request:

- involves unreasonable costs; or
- involves unreasonable timeframes; or
- affects the security and integrity of the assessment; or
- deviates from the published assessment plan and specifications; or
- is not supported by appropriate and valid evidence (see section 11).

9.1.5 In some cases, particularly for temporary disabilities or difficulties, it may be best for the student to wait until they are no longer affected by the condition or difficulty before sitting the assessment, rather than having a Reasonable Adjustment applied.

9.1.6 Any Reasonable Adjustment applied to an assessment must not compensate the student for lack of knowledge and skills. The student must be able to cope with the content of the assessment and be able to work at the level required for the assessment.

9.1.7 Decisions about adjustments to an assessment should be taken after careful consideration of the:

- particular needs and circumstances of the individual student.
- demands of the assessment.
- nature and extent of the support given as part of normal teaching practice.
- type of assessment.

The student must be consulted throughout the process.

9.1.8 The following sections provide lists of typical Reasonable Adjustments that can be applied by the student, by the Assessment Centre, or requested for in advance of the assessment being scheduled, along with examples of the types of conditions that they can be used for. These are not exhaustive lists of all types of Reasonable Adjustments or conditions that require Reasonable Adjustments.

The adjustments can be used, where applicable and where possible, for assisting a student in their practice and live assessments.

Assessment Centres must not assume that the same adjustment will be required for all assessments. Different qualifications and different methods of assessment can make different demands on the student.

9.1.9 Where Reasonable Adjustments are applied, the work produced by the student will be marked to the same standard as the work of other assessed students.

9.2 Reasonable Adjustments that can be applied by the Student

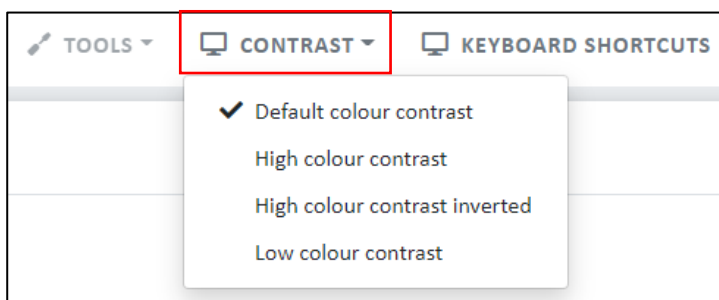
9.2.1 Colour preferences

AAT's assessment platform has a built-in accessibility feature to address the needs of students with different visual requirements, such as dyslexia. This setting can be amended at any time immediately before and/or during the assessment.

They meet [WCAG Web Accessibility](https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/understanding-wcag) compliance (<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/understanding-wcag>), the UK standard for online content.

AAT recommends that Assessment Centres advise students of this feature and that students who require the use this tries it on practice assessments via MyAAT and the PSI Bridge Secure Browser in preparation for live assessments.

To amend the colour preferences of the assessment, once your assessment has been unlocked by the invigilator, click on the Contrast at the top of the page and select one of the options:



9.3 Reasonable Adjustments that can be applied by the Assessment Centre

Any reasonable costs associated to the implementation of any of the Reasonable Adjustments detailed in this section must be covered by the Assessment Centre.

9.3.1 Changes to the lay-out of the assessment environment

Minor changes to the lay-out of the assessment environment may benefit some students with autistic spectrum disorder, with visual or hearing impairment, or with physical difficulties. For example, a student:

- who is visually impaired may benefit from sitting near a window so that they have good lighting.
- with a hearing impairment may benefit from sitting near the front of the room.
- with a back problem may benefit from using chairs with armrests or adjustable heights.
- with autism may benefit from having visual / noise stimuli, such as a ticking clock, removed from the room.
- who requires regular breaks should sit closer to the door to avoid distracting other students.

9.3.2 Use of a Reader, Scribe, Prompter and/or Qualified Communications Professional

A student with dyslexia, or with profound Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) may benefit from the use of a Reader and / or a Scribe. A student with severe attention disorder may require the use of a Prompter. A student may also benefit from the use of a Qualified Communications Professional, such as a sign language interpreter, if they have a hearing impairment.

Any assessments that require the use of any person(s) in these roles must be invigilated in a separate assessment room.

9.3.2.1 Reader

A Reader is a person who, when requested, will read to the student all or part of the assessment material and the student's written responses.

Where a student is not eligible for the use of a Reader, it may be helpful for the student to read the questions aloud. In these circumstances, the student must be accommodated in a separate room so that other students are not disturbed, and in a room with sufficient sound insulation to prevent anyone from overhearing. See section 9.3.2.8 for further guidance.

The Reader must:

- read only as requested by the student. The student may choose to read some parts of the assessment by themselves.
- read accurately. If the reader is working with a student with a hearing impairment, the reader must articulate clearly. Additionally, the use of an appropriately Qualified Communications Professional may be required.
- read the exact wording (instructions and questions), and not give meanings of words, rephrase, or interpret anything.
- repeat instructions and questions on the paper only when specifically requested to do so by the student.
- read, as often as requested, the answers already recorded, but may not act as proof-reader.
- help a visually impaired student to identify which piece of visual material relates to which question but should neither give factual help to the student nor offer any suggestion.
- help a visually impaired student using diagrams, graphs, and tables to obtain the information that the data would give to a sighted student.
- if requested, give a visually impaired student the spelling of a word which appears in the assessment, but otherwise spellings must not be given.

- refer any problems during the assessment to the Invigilator.

The Reader must not:

- advise the student regarding which questions to do, when to move on to the next question, or the order in which the questions should be answered.
- have any conflict of interest – see section 9.3.2.8.

9.3.2.2 Scribe

A Scribe is a person who, in an assessment, writes, by hand or keyboard, a student's dictated responses.

The Assessment Centre must, in consultation with the student, decide whether the use of a Scribe is an appropriate adjustment, given that the effective use of a Scribe requires high level communication skills from the student. The Assessment Centre must ensure that the student and Scribe are clear about the limitations of the Scribe's role.

The Scribe must:

- check with the student for which parts of the assessment they wish to have their responses scribed. The student may choose to write some responses themselves.
- write down answers exactly as they are dictated. Where spelling accuracy and punctuation is being tested, the Scribe must follow explicit instructions from the student.
- at the student's request, read back what has been written but no comment must be made about any part of the student's response.
- immediately refer any problems in communication during the assessment to the Invigilator.

The Scribe must not:

- give factual or technical help to the student nor offer any suggestions.
- make any attempt to assist the student, for example with spelling.
- advise the student regarding which questions to do, when to move on to the next question or the order in which the questions should be answered.
- assist the student to produce any diagrammatical or graphical material. If assistance with this is needed, approval should be obtained from AAT in advance of the assessment.
- have any conflict of interest – see section 9.3.2.8.

9.3.2.3 Prompter

A Prompter is a person who, in an assessment, can draw the student's attention back to the assessment task.

The Assessment Centre must, in consultation with the student, decide whether the use of a Prompter is an appropriate adjustment, and consider any other forms of Reasonable Adjustment that may be used instead of a Prompter, or that may additionally support the student, such as allowing supervised rest breaks or extra time.

If the student has emotional and behavioural sensitivity / vulnerability and / or mental health conditions, they may not be comfortable with a 'light tap' prompt. A form of verbal prompting should be considered and agreed for these students, with a separate assessment room used, where necessary.

The Prompter must:

- sit near enough to the student to draw their attention back to the assessment.
- be sufficiently familiar with the student to recognise when their attention is no longer on the assessment task and that they are not, for example, looking away from the assessment whilst thinking.
- draw the student's attention back to the task in hand.
- be prepared for periods of inactivity during the assessment but should remain vigilant.
- immediately refer any problems during the assessment to the Invigilator.
- use a non-obtrusive method of prompting, agreed with the student and Assessment Centre.

The Prompter must not:

- draw the attention of the student to part of the question or the student's answer.
- give factual or technical help to the student or offer any suggestions.
- advise the student regarding which questions to do, when to move on to the next question or the order in which the questions should be done.
- use a verbal form of prompting if there are other students in the assessment room.
- have any conflict of interest – see section 9.3.2.8.

9.3.2.4 Qualified Communications Professional

For the purpose of this document, a Qualified Communications Professional is a person who is qualified as a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter or another form of sign language, such as Sign Supported English (SSE), to provide sign language interpretation that supports or differs to BSL. Where sign language is the primary means of communication for a student with a hearing impairment, they may require the support of a Qualified Communications Professional to sign the questions (or part questions) where they are undertaking written assessments.

The Assessment Centre must ensure that the Qualified Communications Professional has an appropriate qualification in the sign language that they are providing and, ideally, have a good working knowledge of the requirements of the assessment to recognise subject-specific vocabulary.

Where possible, the Assessment Centre should ensure that the Qualified Communications Professional has access to any relevant pre-released assessment material in advance of the assessment, to prepare for the signing or interpreting. This arrangement must be agreed in advance with AAT. For most AAT assessments, no assessment material is available in advance. Where material is not available in advance, Assessment Centres should ensure that extra time applied as part of the Reasonable Adjustment is sufficient to accommodate any signing requirement.

The Qualified Communications Professional should make a record of any words or phrases they interpret for the student because a standard sign is not available or appropriate. This record should be given to the Invigilator at the end of the assessment.

The Qualified Communications Professional must:

- where practicable, have access to the assessment material in advance of the assessment to prepare for the signing. AAT will advise how long before the assessment the Qualified Communications Professional can have access to the assessment material.
- at the student's request, sign any labels or text connected with reference material such as maps, diagrams, or graphs. The student should, however, study the reference material independently.
- ensure that the method of communication used reflects normal classroom practice. This may include saying the word or phrase, manually coded English, i.e., finger spelling or Sign Supported English (SSE), the use of Cued Speech, the use of BSL or the use of writing to explain the meaning of a word or phrase.

The Qualified Communications Professional must not:

- interpret technical or subject specific language or give additional explanations.
- have any conflict of interest – see section 9.3.2.8.

- The use of a Qualified Communications Professional may be best suited, where required, to a Professional Discussion that forms part of an EPA.

9.3.2.5 Additional information regarding the use of a person(s) in one of the above roles

The Assessment Centre must, in consultation with the student, decide whether the use of a person(s) in any of the above roles mentioned in section 9.3.2 will be an effective arrangement.

The Assessment Centre is responsible for making the necessary arrangements for the provision of a person(s) in any of these roles.

9.3.2.6 A suitably qualified person acting in any of these capacities must:

- be able to work effectively with the student.
- be able to read / scribe / sign / translate accurately and at a reasonable rate.
- have sufficient knowledge of the subject to read technical terms accurately.
- not unfairly advantage the student by using or imparting their subject knowledge.

The Assessment Centre must ensure that the student and any person(s) acting within the context of one of these roles are clear about the limits of their role. The Assessment Centre must also give the person(s) clear instructions regarding what they are required to do and what they may and may not do during the assessment. These instructions must also be given to the Invigilator.

9.3.2.7 A combination of these support roles may be required, and may be the same or multiple people, to support a student sitting an assessment.

A student should, wherever possible, have had previous practice in working with a person(s) in one or more of these roles and should have used this arrangement during the training programme leading up to the assessment, including during any practice assessments.

9.3.2.8 Conflict of Interest

Although the Assessment Centre does have discretion to decide who is appropriate to undertake any of these roles, anyone with a potential conflict of interest, or who is required to act under any other capacity during the assessment, must not be allowed to perform any of these roles.

People with a conflict of interest, or who are required to act under any other capacity include, but are not limited to:

- students and relatives / family members of any AAT student.
- tutors who have been involved in preparing students for any of the units that are being assessed. For synoptic assessments, this includes any unit at the level being assessed.
- any person invigilating the assessment.

- CBA Administrators.
- CBA Technical Contacts.
- for EPAs, any individual who has been involved in any element of the apprenticeship learning, including employer personnel.

Invigilators may not perform any other responsibilities whilst invigilating an assessment sitting, such as acting as a Reader or a Scribe for an assessment, as part of a student's Reasonable Adjustment.

The Assessment Centre is expected to make a judgement as to whether a potential Invigilator or Scribe / Reader / Prompter / Qualified Communications Professional has a conflict of interest for any other scenario not listed above.

The Assessment Centre must maintain a record of any conflicts that have been identified and reported, including details as to how these have been managed. These records must be retained for audit purposes for up to two years.

9.3.3 Extra time up to 100% for short term conditions

A student may be allowed extra time if they have a condition which affects the speed of processing information or typing responses. This Reasonable Adjustment may also be required in addition to section 9.3.2.

The amount of extra time allowed should accurately reflect the extent to which the completion of the assessment will be affected by the student's difficulty. 'Unlimited' extra time must not be allowed. It is the Assessment Centre's responsibility to specify the amount of extra time that the student requires, based on the student's impairment.

Before the Assessment Centre allows extra time for the student, the Assessment Centre must be satisfied that the student can cope with the content of the qualification, the student is medically fit to undertake the extended assessment duration (via the student's confirmation of this) and that the extra time does not unfairly advantage the student.

9.3.3.1 AAT assessments sat via the PSI Bridge Secure Browser – up to 100%

Extra time for AAT assessments can be applied in one of two ways:

1. For short term conditions, or to account for any lost time due to a technical or non-technical issue that prevented the student from continuing with their assessment whilst the timer was running down, the invigilator can apply extra time of up to 100% to an assessment from within the test session in TCA, once the student has accessed their assessment.

All extra time requests for short term conditions, including but not limited to pregnancy, broken arm etc., must be submitted to AAT via the Reasonable Adjustments notification form before the assessment is scheduled and must state when the additional time is no longer required. Extra-time added to in-progress assessments to account for an issue must be notified to AAT via an incident report.

2. **For long term / permanent conditions, assessment centres can request AAT to apply an extra time profile to the student's ATLAS Cloud account. Once applied, any assessment that has been scheduled but not sat, or is scheduled from that point onwards, will automatically have the extra time applied until the profile is removed.**

All extra time requests for long term / permanent conditions, including but not limited to dyslexia, dyspraxia, vision impairment etc., must be submitted to AAT via the Reasonable Adjustments request form. Only one needs to be submitted per candidate and must be submitted at least 4 weeks prior to the assessment being scheduled.

9.3.4 Supervised rest breaks

Rest breaks are permitted for all students in assessments that are longer than 1.5 hours. For further guidance on this, see section 7.4 of the *Instructions for conducting AAT computer-based assessments* guidance document. This can be found on the [ATLAS Cloud CBA support page \(aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/delivering\)](http://aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/delivering).

Students with conditions such as, but not limited to, Dyspraxia or attention deficit disorder (ADD) may require more regular breaks during the assessment. Similarly, a student who is, for example pregnant or suffers from a chronic condition such as IBS, may also require more regular rest breaks or toilet breaks.

Supervised rest breaks may be taken either in or outside the assessment room. The duration of the breaks will not be deducted from the assessment time. The centre should be aware that, during the supervised rest breaks, the student is still under assessment conditions and that the usual regulations governing conduct of assessments will apply during this time.

Assessments can be paused within the test session of ATLAS Cloud TCA. Any Assessment Centre staff supervising the student during the rest break must comply with the conflict of interest details in section 9.3.2.8.

9.3.5 Colour preferences

A student with a visual impairment may benefit from a Reasonable Adjustment that changes the colour scheme of the assessment.

For changes to the colour preferences of the assessment platform, see section 9.2.

Additionally, coloured overlays on the PC screen or tinted glasses may be used by the student.

Colour changes to the user interface of third-party software used for AAT assessments may be possible and should be investigated by the Assessment Centre.

Any pre-released assessment material that is permitted for use during the live assessment may be printed on different coloured paper, where required.

9.3.6 Use of electronic and technological aids

This section of the document details the use of widely available technical aids that may assist a student during their assessment. The use of any of these must be checked by the Assessment Centre to ensure that they do not give the student an unfair advantage over other students.

The Assessment Centre must contact AAT if it is unclear about whether any permitted technology will unfairly advantage the student or invalidate the assessment requirements.

9.3.6.1 Screen magnifier software

A student with a visual impairment may benefit from the use of magnifying tools or a projector during their computer-based assessments.

Where magnifying tools are used, the Assessment Centre must ensure that the assessment material and student's responses are not visible to any other students sitting assessments at the same time.

Where a projector is used, the Assessment Centre must ensure that the student is in a separate assessment room, with a separate Invigilator and that the assessment material and student's responses are not visible to anyone else outside of the assessment room.

The PSI Bridge Secure Browser contains zoom in and zoom out functionality to allow students to increase or decrease the size of the on-screen text.

The Windows Magnifier tool **is not** supported with the PSI secure browser.

9.3.6.2 Speech / Screen reading software and Speech recognition software

The use of assistive technology with third-party software used for AAT assessments may be possible and should be investigated by the Assessment Centre to see what is compatible without unfairly advantaging the student.

Any usage of screen reading technology must ensure that other students sitting assessments at the same time are not disrupted.

The following screen reading technology is **compatible with the PSI Bridge Secure Browser: Windows Narrator (which is a Windows native screen reader), JAWS and NVDA.**

These applications should be opened prior to launching the assessment.

Any usage of this application will normally require the use of assessment centre provided headphones, or a separate assessment room to be used by the student, so that other students are not distracted.

9.3.6.3 Assessment reading pen / scanning pen

Assessment reading pens / scanning pens may be useful for students with conditions such as dyslexia. They might benefit students who wish to work independently of a Reader, or who do not qualify for a Reader.

Assessment reading pens / scanning pens with an in-built dictionary or thesaurus, or data storage facility, are not permitted.

The use of an assessment reading pen / scanning pen is only permitted, where required, if it is provided by the Assessment Centre.

Any use will normally require a separate assessment room to be used by the student, so that other students are not distracted.

AAT are unable to test the compatibility of reading / scanning pens against our assessment platform and assessment material given that variety of products that are available. Where required, this should be tested by the assessment centre first to ensure compatibility.

9.3.7 Braille keyboard

A Braille keyboard, or Braille keyboard cover, may be used by visually impaired students to type their responses to the assessment platform, as an alternative to a Scribe. However, the student may still require guidance to type their response in the correct area.

Braille keyboards may only be used if they translate the student's response into English.

The Assessment Centre must ensure that the student has had sufficient practice in the use of any of the permitted aids covered in this section and is comfortable using these, if possible and where applicable, during AAT assessments. Any electronic aids that are permitted for use must be checked to ensure that they are in good working order, and that they are compatible with the required assessment platform software, prior to use by the student.

Any other assistive technology other than those listed must be checked with AAT first.

9.3.8 Separate assessment room at the Assessment Centre

It may be necessary to accommodate any student using Readers, Scribes, Prompters, a Qualified Communications Professional, or other equipment that may disturb other students, separately to other students.

For assessments taken under examination conditions, the student must be accommodated separately with a separate Invigilator if the use of any of these aids will disturb other students. In these cases, the Invigilator should be fully informed of the student's support and ensure that the support does not breach assessment conditions.

The separate assessment room must meet assessment condition requirements and must not allow other students to be unfairly advantaged, for example other students sitting assessments at the same time must not be allowed to overhear assessment content being read out or see any enlarged material.

9.3.9 Use of bilingual dictionaries or bilingual translation dictionaries

The use of hard copy bilingual dictionaries and bilingual translation dictionaries can be allowed in AAT assessments by students whose first language is not English. The below principles **must** be always adhered to:

- Bilingual dictionaries **must** only be used in assessments by a candidate whose first language is not English.
- The use of a bilingual dictionary must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the training provider.
- Monolingual dictionaries (which define words and phrases), translators (including web-based translators), wordlists or glossaries **must not** be used.
- Online dictionaries are **not** permitted and will not be compatible with the assessment platform software.

- Bilingual dictionaries **must** be supplied and securely held by the assessment centre.
- Bilingual dictionaries **must** be thoroughly checked for any notes or markings prior to being handed to students, and again when collected at the end of the assessment.
- All instances of the use of dictionaries **must** be recorded by the assessment centre. The records may be reviewed as part of centre compliance activities.

Extra time is not permitted solely to support for the use of a bilingual dictionary during an assessment.

If the student and/or assessment centre fails to comply with these principles, the assessment sitting will be investigated in line with *AAT's Malpractice / maladministration policy and guidance*.

9.3.10 Print outs of reference materials for tax assessments

Students can be provided with a printed copy of the reference material for tax units (Tax Processes for Business (including the localised Botswana version), Business Tax and Personal Tax) for use during a live assessment.

They are available as a printout for these units only due to the amount of tax reference material available to candidates throughout the whole of these assessments, and the same reference material being available on every task.

Once approved in advance of the sitting, assessment centre staff need to download and print the reference material from the relevant practice assessments section of the Lifelong Learning Portal via [MyAAT](#).

All printed copies must be collected by the invigilator at the end of the assessment, along with any used rough paper.

For all other assessments, reference material is linked to specific tasks and is normally a copy of task data provided to reduce on-screen scrolling. Because of the confidential and randomised nature of our assessment content, this isn't available to review in advance.

9.3.11 The use of fidget toys/stress balls

The use of fidget spinners or stress balls, or similar, can provide a number of benefits to neurodiverse students, including improving focus and concentration, managing sensory stimulation, and providing calming movement. For students with conditions such as anxiety and ADHD, these tools can provide an outlet for tension which can help reduce symptoms.

Assessment centres should ensure that their use do not disrupt other students taking their assessment, so this could be used in conjunction with other reasonable adjustments such as a separate assessment room.

9.3.12 Mobile phones for medical purposes

As standard, mobile phones are prohibited from assessment rooms, however a student may require the use of one for medical purposes, such as the continual monitoring of blood sugar levels.

Where this is required, invigilators must ensure that the mobile phone or device is not used for any other purposes during the assessment and does not disrupt other students taking their assessment. Therefore, this could be used in conjunction with other reasonable adjustments such as a separate assessment room.

9.4 Notifying AAT of Reasonable Adjustments applied by the Assessment Centre

- 9.4.1 To notify AAT of any Reasonable Adjustments that have been approved by the Assessment Centre listed in section 9.3, the Assessment Centre will need to complete and submit the Reasonable Adjustment notification form to AAT prior to the assessment being scheduled. Please bear in mind the information detailed within section 9.4.4 when planning the assessment date.
- 9.4.2 All forms and, where applicable, supporting evidence must be emailed to assessment.operations@aat.org.uk.
- 9.4.3 The Reasonable Adjustment notification form can be found on the dedicated [Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration webpage](https://aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/delivering/reasonable-adjustments-special-consideration) for assessment centres (aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/delivering/reasonable-adjustments-special-consideration).
- 9.4.4 Upon receipt of the form, the Assessment Operations team will acknowledge receipt by email within 5 business days, and either confirm that it is acceptable or contact the requester if any further information is required, or if the Reasonable Adjustment being notified is not reasonable. If further contact is required by the Assessment Operations team, this will be done until all required information has been provided and the notification has been confirmed as acceptable, or until an agreement has been reached that the Reasonable Adjustment is reasonable.
- 9.4.5 Only an Assessment Centre may submit a Reasonable Adjustment notification form and must be authorised by the Head of Centre and/or a member of staff with delegated authority, such as the CBA Administrator. The form must either be signed, by hand or electronically. Forms will be accepted with a typed name in the signature box if the name and email address that it is sent from exactly matches a corresponding name and email address for the Head of Centre and/or a member of staff with delegated authority that is registered with AAT for the centre that is submitting the form.
- 9.4.6 AAT will only acknowledge the receipt of a Reasonable Adjustment notification form back to the person who has made the request. It is the Assessment Centre's responsibility to ensure that the student is kept up to date.
- 9.4.7 **Supporting evidence**
- For supporting evidence requirements when submitting a Reasonable Adjustment notification form, see section 11 of this document.
- 9.4.8 **Appeals**
- If a student has made a Reasonable Adjustment request which has been rejected by the Assessment Centre, the student has the right to appeal this decision. For further information, see section 14.

9.5 Reasonable Adjustments that must be requested by the Assessment Centre and approved by AAT

9.5.1 Taking the assessment at an alternative site

In exceptional circumstances the student may be permitted to take an assessment at an alternative site, for example at home or in hospital. Where this has been permitted by AAT, the alternative site, assessment conditions and invigilation at the site must meet the requirements set out in the *Instructions for conducting AAT computer based assessments* guidance on the [ATLAS Cloud CBA support page \(aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/delivering\)](http://aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/delivering).

Any reasonable cost related to hosting an assessment at an alternative site must be covered by the Assessment Centre.

The Assessment Centre is responsible for ensuring that the student is medically fit to take the assessment at the alternative site.

9.5.2 Extra time profiles for long term conditions

9.5.2.1 Assessments sat via the PSI Bridge Secure Browser – extra time profiles for long term conditions

As per the details given in section 9.3.3.1, the invigilator can apply up to 100% extra time once the student has started their assessment. This is to support short term conditions, including but not limited to pregnancy, broken arm etc., and must be submitted to AAT via the Reasonable Adjustments notification form per sitting before the assessment is scheduled.

For long term / permanent conditions, assessment centres can request AAT to apply an extra time profile to the student's ATLAS Cloud account. Once applied, any assessment that has been scheduled but not sat, or is scheduled from that point onwards, will automatically have the extra time applied until the profile is removed.

All extra time requests for long term / permanent conditions, including but not limited to dyslexia, dyspraxia, vision impairment etc., must be submitted to AAT via the Reasonable Adjustments request form. Only one needs to be submitted per candidate and must be submitted at least 4 weeks prior to the assessment being scheduled.

9.5.3 Submitting portfolio evidence

9.5.3.1 Some assessments, such as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPLs) or EPAs require the student to submit a portfolio of evidence, often in specific formats.

For these types of assessments, if the student is unable to submit the required evidence in the required format, a request should be submitted to AAT with a suggested alternative file type / format. AAT will consider the request against the requirements of the assessment, the need to demonstrate that the student has met the required assessment criteria, and the feasibility of accessing and marking the evidence. The Chief Examiner and/or Chief Independent Assessor may be consulted and a decision, along with any additional guidance, will be communicated to the requester.

Once approved, any cost incurred with producing and submitting evidence in alternative and acceptable formats must be borne by the Assessment Centre. This includes access for marking internally marked assessments, such as RPLs.

The benefits of being able to vary the assessment evidence and choose the most appropriate method of obtaining evidence should be considered when the student is first accepted onto a programme. A request to AAT should be submitted at that point.

For internally marked assessments, any methods being requested should be made in agreement with the assigned Internal Assessor and Internal Verifier.

9.5.3.2 Where the student uses alternative means of providing evidence, the method must have equal rigour to those used for other students.

The student must fulfil the demands of the criteria consistently over a period of time, regardless of method used to obtain the evidence. The assessment criteria may not be amended, re-worded or omitted.

9.5.3.3 The student may use any mechanical or electronic aids which are available in the workplace, or which are commercially available to demonstrate competence, providing that they do not provide an unfair advantage to that student. For example, these may include specially adapted equipment or assistive technology. The Assessment Centre is required to provide the necessary resources to enable a student with access-related needs to produce evidence of developing the portfolio. Any technology that requires compatibility with the assessment platform must be tested first.

9.5.3.4 AAT, and the relevant marking team for the assessment type, normally prefer to see a portfolio made up of different types of evidence. However, the Assessment Centre should be prepared to accept a more restricted selection of evidence types as a means of enabling access. It is sensible to discuss this with AAT, and where applicable, the Assessment Centre's internal assessment team, at an early stage.

9.5.4 **Any other Reasonable Adjustment requests**

This document does not contain an exhaustive list of all Reasonable Adjustments that can be approved by the Assessment Centre or applied for to AAT to approve. A student may require another form of Reasonable Adjustment to be applied that has not been requested before or is unique to that student.

AAT will review this request, and where appropriate consult with the Chief Examiner for the qualification, and/or an independent advisor (as appropriate), or for EPAs the Chief Independent Assessor, before deciding, which will be fed back to the requester. This will include confirmation of who will be responsible for covering the costs, if applicable, to apply the Reasonable Adjustment.

Where an independent advisor is required, this will be from appropriate and relevant authorities and experts, which may include but is not limited to any organisations that represent the student's disability or difficulty. Authorisation from the student must be provided as part of the Reasonable Adjustment request for AAT to seek further advice from the author of the student's medical evidence, for example, doctor, hospital, educational psychologist.

If new Reasonable Adjustments emerge, this will be added within the appropriate section of this document in future versions.

9.6 Requesting Reasonable Adjustments for AAT to approve

9.6.1 To request the approval and/or application of any of the Reasonable Adjustments detailed in section 9.5 the Assessment Centre will need to complete and submit the Reasonable Adjustment request form, to AAT 4 weeks prior to the assessment being sat.

This is to allow sufficient time for AAT to review the request, and if necessary, investigate it further before the assessment is due to take place. The requested Reasonable Adjustment must not be applied to the assessment until AAT have confirmed that it is OK to use.

9.6.2 All forms and, where applicable, supporting evidence must be emailed to assessment.operations@aat.org.uk.

9.6.3 The Reasonable Adjustment request form can be found on the dedicated [Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration webpage](https://aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/delivering/reasonable-adjustments-special-consideration) for assessment centres (aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/delivering/reasonable-adjustments-special-consideration).

9.6.4 Important information regarding reasonable adjustments for EPA apprentices:

1. Apprentices must be registered on SEPA before a reasonable adjustment can be requested and/or approved, otherwise there is a risk that it is not applied to the assessment in either SEPA or ATLAS Cloud.
2. Where a reasonable adjustment is requested for an EPA structured interview/professional discussion only, then should it later be required for an ATLAS Cloud-sat assessment you will need to contact AAT again with either an updated reasonable adjustment form or via a request to apply the previously submitted request to the ATLAS Cloud assessment(s).
3. Reasonable adjustments for permanent conditions only need to be requested once unless they meet the above EPA criteria show in point 1.

9.6.5 Upon receipt of the form, the Assessment Operations team will review and respond to all applications for Reasonable Adjustments by email, along with an approval or rejection decision within 5 business days. The requester may be contacted for further information, if required, before a decision can be made.

Any Reasonable Adjustment request form submitted outside of timescale may affect the planned date of assessment.

9.6.6 Only an Assessment Centre may submit a Reasonable Adjustment request form and must be authorised by the Head of Centre and/or a member of staff with delegated authority, such as the CBA Administrator. The form must either be signed, by hand or electronically. Forms will be accepted with a typed name in the signature box if the name and email address that it is sent from exactly matches a corresponding name and email address for the Head of Centre and/or a member of staff with delegated authority that is registered with AAT for the centre that is submitting the form.

9.6.7 AAT will only feedback any decision made around the Reasonable Adjustment request back to the person who has made the request. It is the Assessment Centre's responsibility to ensure that the student is kept up to date.

9.6.8 Supporting evidence

For supporting evidence requirements when submitting a Reasonable Adjustment request form, see section 11.

9.6.9 Appeals

If a student has made a Reasonable Adjustment request which has been rejected by the Assessment Centre, or if the submitted request has been rejected by AAT, the student has the right to appeal this decision. For further information, see section 14.

9.7 Reasonable Adjustments that cannot be applied to AAT assessments

9.7.1 Translating assessments and/or assessment material into another language

All assessments offered by AAT will be presented in English and may not be translated into another language (except for the use of a Qualified Communications Professional to translate via sign language for students with a hearing impairment).

All student responses must also be provided in English. Although no Reasonable Adjustments or Special Consideration is granted on the grounds of English being a second language, students will not be penalised for poor spelling or grammar unless it is specifically stated as a requirement of the assessment within the Qualification Specification for that assessment.

9.7.2 Interpreters

In line with section 9.7.1, the use of an Interpreter into another spoken language is not permitted as a valid Reasonable Adjustment for live assessments.

9.7.3 Assessments and responses in Braille

In line with section 9.7.1, all assessments and responses must be submitted in English. AAT are not able to provide a copy of an assessment paper printed in Braille.

For students with a visual impairment, the use of a Braille keyboard, or Braille keyboard cover, a Reader and/or a Scribe, along with additional time, may provide a suitable alternative.

9.7.4 Converting computer-based assessments onto paper

Due to the complexity of many question types used in AAT assessments, as well as some of the rules that are applied to questions such as own-figure rules and follow-on marking, it is not possible to convert our assessment questions onto paper without severely reducing the integrity and security of the assessment and assessment content.

This includes converting live assessment content:

- onto coloured paper.
- in enlarged print on paper.
- into another language on paper.

10 Special Consideration

10.1 Background

10.1.1 Each request for Special Consideration will be unique to each student. These guidelines offer some broad principles for the Assessment Centre to follow. Further information should be sought in each case from AAT.

10.1.2 This document does not contain an exhaustive list of all circumstances that are eligible for Special Consideration.

10.1.3 Following an assessment, Special Consideration may be requested for a student who may have been unfairly disadvantaged by temporary illness or injury, or some other event outside of the student's control, at or shortly before the time of assessment, which influenced the student's ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their predicted level of attainment in an assessment.

10.1.4 AAT understands that it may be difficult for the student to notify their Assessment Centre of any adverse personal conditions that may impact their assessment performance, particularly where it has very recently happened. However, AAT must be consistent in approving and applying Special Consideration. To ensure that all students are treated fairly and consistently, for Special Consideration, all applications must be made to AAT by the end of the next business day following the assessment.

Retrospective requests for Special Consideration will not be considered.

10.1.5 Special consideration can go some way to assist a student affected by a potentially wide range of difficulties, emotional, physical, or technical, which may influence performance in their assessments. It cannot remove the difficulty faced by the student. Special Consideration does not compensate the student for lack of knowledge and skills, and it should not be used for this purpose. The student must be able to cope with the content and duration of the assessment and be able to work at the level required for the assessment.

Special Consideration must not give the student an unfair advantage and its application must not be misleading regarding a student's achievements. The student's result must reflect their achievement in the assessment and not necessarily their potential ability.

- 10.1.6 As most AAT assessments are on-demand, it will, in most cases, particularly where the student has notified the Assessment Centre of an issue prior to an assessment starting, be more appropriate to offer the student an opportunity to take the assessment later rather than to proceed with the assessment and apply for Special Consideration afterwards.

This means that there will be some situations where students should not be entered for an assessment. This is because only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded. To make larger adjustments would jeopardize the standard of the assessment.

There are minimum requirements for an estimated result in cases with exceptional circumstances (see section 10.3.4).

10.2 Eligibility criteria

- 10.2.1 A student who is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment may be eligible for Special Consideration if one or more of the following criteria are met:
- The student's performance in an assessment is affected by personal circumstances beyond their control, e.g., recent personal illness, bereavement, traumatic accident, or major and unpredictable life event at or shortly before the time of assessment and the request is supported by evidence that is valid, reliable, and sufficient (see section 11).
 - Some other event outside of the student's control that has affected their performance within the assessment, e.g., severe prolonged noise disruption or severe technical issues during the assessment. These instances must be supported by an incident report which the Assessment Centre has submitted by the end of the next business day following the assessment.
 - Any alternative assessment arrangements which were agreed in advance of the assessment proved inappropriate or inadequate.
 - Any alternative assessment arrangements at the time of notifying the Assessment Centre are inappropriate or inadequate.
 - Receiving the result for the assessment is time-dependent, for example proof of the result may be required for a job opportunity. In this example, postponing the assessment may not be a viable option, however AAT strongly advises that the student speaks to the Employer first to notify them of any situation that may affect the assessment sitting.

10.2.2 A student will **not** be eligible for Special Consideration if:

- they do not notify their Assessment Centre or AAT (for remotely invigilated assessments), before, during or at the end of their assessment.
- a Special Consideration request form (or an incident report form) has not been submitted to AAT by the end of the next business day following the assessment; as this must be submitted by the Assessment Centre, or student (for remotely invigilated assessments). The student may be eligible to appeal their ineligibility if the Assessment Centre deliberately or accidentally did not submit the Special Consideration request form.
- no, or insufficient, evidence detailing how and why the student has been affected at the time of the assessment by a particular condition is supplied by the Assessment Centre or student (for remotely invigilated assessments); including reference to an incident report which the Assessment Centre or student (for remotely invigilated assessments) has submitted where relevant. Students must provide the Assessment Centre with any objective evidence, such as a doctor's note, to support their application for Special Consideration.
- any part of the assessment, or preparation for the assessment, is missed due to personal arrangements including, but not limited to, holidays, moving house or unauthorised absence.
- preparation for an assessment is affected by difficulties during the course, e.g., disturbances through building work, lack of proper facilities, quality of teaching, changes in or shortages of staff, industrial disputes, or failure by Assessment Centre to prepare students properly for the assessment for whatever reason.
- misreading the timetable and/or failing to attend at the right time and in the right place, misreading the instructions of the assessment or taking the wrong assessment.
- minor disturbance in the examination room caused by another student, such as momentary bad behaviour or a mobile phone ringing, or student being disturbed by expected exam noise, e.g., other students writing or typing.
- The invigilator applied enough extra time to counter the amount of time lost whilst the incident occurred and trying to resolve the incident.

10.2.3 AAT will review all Special Consideration requests, and where appropriate seek professional advice, before deciding. If the result has already been released, AAT will confirm back to the requester if Special Consideration has been applied to the result. If the result has not yet been released, AAT will confirm back to the requester that any decision concerning the application of Special Consideration will be applied prior to the result being released.

10.2.4 Where independent external advice is required, this will be from appropriate and relevant authorities and experts, which may include, but is not limited to, any organisations that represent the student's disability or difficulty. Authorisation from the student must be provided as part of the Reasonable Adjustment request for AAT to seek further advice from the author of the student's medical evidence, for example, doctor, hospital, educational psychologist.

10.2.5 If the application for Special Consideration is successful, the student'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 student's result, nor will the amount of any additional marks which may be applied be fed back to the requester.

10.3 Special Consideration adjustments

10.3.1 Special Consideration requests may result, if successful, in a small post-assessment adjustment to the mark of the student. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances and reflect the difficulty faced by the student.

Only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded because to do more than this would jeopardise the integrity of the assessment.

Where long-term circumstances or significant events have prevented the student from reaching the competence standards it may not be possible to make an adjustment.

The decision made by AAT will be based on various factors, which may vary from one assessment to another. These may include, but are not limited to:

- the severity of the circumstances.
- the provision of supporting evidence that is sufficient, valid, and reliable.
- the date of the assessment in relation to the circumstances.
- the nature of the assessment, e.g., a controlled assessment, or whether any practical work is involved.

Special Consideration will not be applied for multiple circumstances in a cumulative fashion, e.g., based on a personal health and a domestic crisis at the time of the assessment.

10.3.2 Level of adjustments

For eligible special consideration requests and incident reports, one of the following levels of adjustment will be applied by AAT, at our discretion.

Where an issue that delays or disrupts the assessment is reported, but the assessment centre applied the relevant amount of extra time to the assessment to minimise the impact, no mark adjustment will be made.

If the duration of the issue has not been confirmed to AAT, the lowest applicable mark adjustment will be applied.

Adjustments can only be applied where they are sat on the original scheduled date. Where an assessment which has been impacted by an issue is rescheduled to another day, a mark adjustment will not be applied.

- **Disallowed:** No mark adjustments will be applied where the Special Consideration request does not include sufficient, valid, or reliable supporting evidence (see section 11), or does not meet the eligibility criteria (see section 10.3.4), or the request was sent in outside of the timescales provided in this document (see section 10.4).

- **1%:** An additional 1% will be added to the final percentage score for minor or common issues such as, but not limited to, technical or non-technical issues that delay or disrupt the assessment by **up to 30 minutes**, or on-going noise during an examination, or conditions which are being treated with prescribed medication, or temporary illnesses, such as hay fever or a migraine on the day of the assessment.
- **3%:** An additional 3% will be added to the final percentage score for serious issues such as, but not limited to, technical or non-technical issues that delay or disrupt the assessment by **between 31-90 minutes**, non-life threatening but serious emotional or physical issues, such as a recent illness or injury of more serious nature (e.g. flare up of a medical condition or a psychological condition, broken limbs), or the non-application of an eligible and approved Reasonable Adjustment for the assessment, or for instances of confirmed data loss where the student is not eligible for an estimated result.
- **5%:** An additional 5% will be added to the final percentage score for exceptional circumstances, such as, but not limited to, technical or non-technical issues that delay or disrupt the assessment by **more than 90 minutes**, or a very serious emotional or physical crisis or incident having occurred within 60 days prior to the assessment date.

10.3.3 Special consideration is not applied for any issues that happen at the point of submission, unless it leads to data loss occurring. In this scenario, the above applicable adjustment is applied, unless the student is eligible for an estimated result.

10.3.4 **Estimated result in exceptional circumstances**

There may be scenarios when a student has experienced significant technical disruption beyond their control with the same assessment on more than one occasion. Though AAT's policy regarding the issuing of a credit note and the need to re-sit would generally be applicable, where an assessment has been impacted for a second time, the Training Provider can apply for Special Consideration. This may enable an estimated result to be issued.

Similarly, if a student has been unable to complete a qualification through the sitting of a final assessment due to serious illness, technical issues outside their control or other acceptable personal circumstances, the Training Provider can apply for Special Consideration. This may enable an estimated result to be issued in exceptional circumstances.

AAT cannot give advice as to whether a student is fit to take an assessment. Assessment Centre staff must follow their internal procedures for dealing with students who feel unwell, or otherwise incapacitated, on the day of an assessment.

However, with the AAT assessments being available on-demand, every effort must be made for students to re-enter for any missed assessments at the next opportunity.

This policy is applicable for Qualifications 2022 assessments taken from the point of this updated policy being published on 10 November 2023, onwards. All applications for Special Consideration and specifically regarding an estimated result will be considered on a case-by-case basis in relation to the minimum criteria.

10.3.4.1 Minimum requirements for estimated result in exceptional circumstances

The minimum requirements for estimated results in exceptional circumstances such as severe data loss in relation to the assessment or being unable to access a task(s), leading to zero marks being awarded for a task(s), or missing a scheduled assessment for a component for acceptable reasons are detailed below.

The data loss must have occurred, or the scheduled assessment must have been missed within the final assessment that would allow achievement of the qualification, or the data loss must have impacted the same assessment more than once. Students must have been fully prepared and covered the whole course.

Those students not certificating in the academic term where the assessment has been missed or severe data loss occurred must take the assessment in the next available opportunity unless the same assessment has been impacted more than once. Unless there are severe difficulties arising in arranging the assessment, Special Consideration will not be awarded. This principle also applies where entire cohorts miss assessments due to adverse weather conditions or for any other reason, or where individual students miss an assessment because of a change of Assessment Centre.

10.3.4.2 Minimum requirements for an estimated result:

| Exceptional circumstances | Minimum requirements |
|---|--|
| All units – Occurrence of data loss/unable to access assessment or task(s) | <p>For assessment access issues – Must have had a scheduled assessment record or the assessment centre can validate that there was a planned sitting that could not be scheduled/accessed on the day due to a technical issue.</p> <p>For data loss/task access issues – Must have completed tasks that contribute a minimum 60% of the total available marks for the assessment,</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Access/data loss impacted the same assessment more than once, OR</p> <p>Impacted assessment is for the final component to achieve the qualification.</p> |
| All units – Non-technical issue such as missing a scheduled assessment for a component for acceptable reasons | Missed assessment is for the final component to achieve the qualification. |
| Level 3 Management Accounting Techniques (MATS) | AAT will continue to proactively issue estimated MATS results where technical issues on tasks 5 and/or 6 either caused data loss or prevented access to the Excel elements leading to zero marks being awarded on either of these tasks. |

| |
|---|
| Must have completed a minimum of tasks 1 - 4 |
|---|

10.3.4.3. Please note that:

- Estimated results are not applicable for a single unit qualification.
- For End Point Assessments in apprenticeships, estimated results can only be issued for the computer-based assessments components (ITAF, ADSY & PDSY) where the sitting took place but there were data loss or task access issues.
- Where achievements for the qualification include exemptions, a minimum of one component for the qualification must have been sat and achieved, i.e., a qualification cannot be awarded solely on exemptions and estimated results.
- Where the reason for the estimated result is due to a planned sitting that could not be attended, AAT will charge the standard assessment fee to the Training Provider. If the student is not attached to a Training Provider, the student will be invoiced directly.
- Where a planned assessment could not be accessed on the day due to a technical issue, and the student has now been impacted twice for the same assessment in line with the above criteria, it will not be possible to immediately issue an estimated result. In this scenario, AAT will offer the choice of a free re-sit or an estimated result once the remaining units on the qualification have been achieved (the estimated result for the impacted unit would then be based on the awarded marks across the other units on the qualification).

10.3.4.4 There are several methods applied by awarding organisations to determine an estimated result for students. The approach by AAT to estimating a result in exceptional cases as per the table in 10.3.4.2 is to consider all completed tasks within the impacted assessment and/or the outcomes of the achieved component(s) at the point of the date of the missed sitting within the impacted qualification. AAT will then estimate the outcome for missing task(s) and/or a component based on the actual performance by a student. It is therefore important that sufficient information is available to complete the estimation as detailed in the minimum requirements. Where sufficient information is not available, an estimated result cannot be applied.

Note that an estimated result does not guarantee an achieved outcome. As it is based on the student's performance across other tasks and/or components, there is the possibility of a Not Yet Achieved (NYA) result being issued.

10.4 Submitting Special Consideration requests to AAT

10.4.1 To request Special Consideration to be applied to a student's assessment, the Assessment Centre or student (for remotely invigilated assessments) will need to complete and submit the Special Consideration request form to AAT by no later than the end of the next business day following the assessment taking place (for standard requests) or within 10 working days of receiving the result (for estimated result requests).

10.4.2 All forms and, where applicable, supporting evidence must be emailed to assessment.operations@aat.org.uk.

- 10.4.3 The Special Consideration request form can be found on the dedicated [Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration webpage](https://aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/delivering/reasonable-adjustments-special-consideration) for assessment centres (aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/delivering/reasonable-adjustments-special-consideration).
- 10.4.4 Upon receipt of the form, the Assessment Operations team will acknowledge receipt by email within 5 business days and contact the requester if any further information is required.

Any Special Consideration request forms submitted outside of this timescale will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and if evidence is submitted by the Assessment Centre to support the late application.

- 10.4.5 An Assessment Centre may submit a Special Consideration request form and must be authorised by the Head of Centre and/or a member of staff with delegated authority, such as the CBA Administrator. The form must either be signed, by hand or electronically. Forms will be accepted with a typed name in the signature box if the name and email address that it is sent from exactly matches a corresponding name and email address for the Head of Centre and/or a member of staff with delegated authority that is registered with AAT for the centre that is submitting the form. For remotely invigilated assessments, students are required to submit the Special Consideration request form directly to AAT with supporting evidence. The form must either be signed, by hand or electronically. Forms will be accepted with a typed name in the signature box if the name and email address that it is sent from exactly matches a corresponding name and email address of the student.
- 10.4.6 AAT will only feedback any decision made around the approval of the Special Consideration back to the requester. It is the Assessment Centre's responsibility to ensure that the student is kept up to date.

10.4.7 **Supporting evidence**

For supporting evidence requirements when submitting a Special Consideration request form, see section 11 of this document.

10.4.8 **Appeals**

If a student has made a Special Consideration request which has been rejected by the Assessment Centre, or if the submitted request has been rejected by AAT, the student has the right to appeal this decision. For further information, see section 14.

11 Supporting evidence for Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

- 11.1 Any application for Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration across either of the three following forms, must not compromise assessment validity or reliability of the assessment or give the learners in question an unfair advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessment. Any request must be made in line with AAT's published policy:
- Reasonable Adjustment notification form
 - Reasonable Adjustment request form
 - Special Consideration request form.
- 11.2 The student must provide suitable objective evidence for the Assessment Centre to review, in line with the request being made.
- 11.3 Where the implications of the difficulty are not obvious, such as for learning difficulties or mental health difficulties, the Assessment Centre are expected to have witnessed additional evidence of the effect of the impairment on the student's performance in the assessment. Any of the following types of evidence detailed in sections 11.3.1 – 11.3.3 would be acceptable. The Assessment Centre should decide which of these would best assist understanding of the student's situation.
- 11.3.1 An assessment of the student's needs in relation to the unit assessment, should be evidenced within the Assessment Centre by the relevant member of staff with competence and responsibility in this area; staff include, but are not limited to, learning support staff, teaching staff, trainers, assessors, and other specialist staff. If necessary, external experts may be called upon to assess the student. This evidence should include an indication of how the Assessment Centre plans to meet the student's needs and should show that the student can cope with the level and content of the assessment. The evidence should be documented for audit purposes. Information from previous Assessment Centres attended by the student may also be included.
- 11.3.2 Where applicable, there is history of the provision being made for the student by Assessment Centre as part of any learning programme. This should include information about the support received by the student during the learning programme and during formative assessments. Evidence of the way in which the student's needs are being met during the learning programme should be documented for audit purposes.

- 11.3.3 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 assessment(s) on the student. The report should set out the nature of the difficulty and extent to which the student is affected by the difficulty, including the effects of any medication that the student may be taking. In cases where it might be expected that there could be changes in the way the student is affected by the difficulty, there will have to be recent and relevant evidence of assessments and consultations carried out by an independent expert.
- 11.4 At the point of submitting the relevant form to AAT, the head of centre (or designated nominee/requestor) must ensure that a notified or requested adjustment for the learner is based on firm evidence of a barrier to assessment and is in line with this guidance. Failure to do so may result in an investigation by AAT in line with AAT's malpractice policy.
- 11.5 The supporting evidence provided to and retained by the centre must be no more than three months old and show that the temporary disabilities or difficulties will still be present, or were present, on the date of the assessment. Assessment centres may apply discretion if presented with evidence that is older than three months, providing they are able to satisfy themselves that it is still valid, i.e., supported by the tutor's own experience of the student's learning needs/situation, and any other relevant factors.
- 11.6 A student with a Statement of Special Educational Need does not automatically qualify for Reasonable Adjustments. AAT assessments demand that students should be able to apply what they have learned. The reasons for the Statement may have only limited effect on the student's ability to sit the assessment without being disadvantaged.
- 11.7 Evidence to support the request for an estimated result must cover:
- For a missed sitting – the reason why the original planned date could not be attended, and the reason why a re-sit is not possible, along with any relevant supporting evidence to verify this. AAT will also check to ensure that the unit being requested for an estimated result is the last required unit to achieve the qualification, and that at least one unit has been sat and achieved.
 - For data loss/an issue preventing access to a task(s) – where more than one sitting has been affected, the associated incident report references for both affected sittings must be provided; an estimated result cannot be issued if incident reports related to the sittings were not submitted. AAT will also check, where applicable, to ensure that the unit being requested for an estimated result is the last required unit to achieve the qualification, and that at least one unit has been sat and achieved.

12 Requirements for record keeping by the Assessment Centre

- 12.1 Assessment Centres must maintain records of all Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration cases, and supporting evidence, for audit purposes and to monitor the effectiveness of the Reasonable Adjustments that have been made. This includes, for each affected student:
- all Reasonable Adjustment and / or Special Consideration requests submitted.
 - the Assessment Centre's decision against each Reasonable Adjustment and / or Special Consideration request, along with evidence of it being communicated to the student.
 - all Reasonable Adjustment notification and/or request forms submitted to AAT
 - all Special Consideration request forms submitted to AAT
 - all supporting evidence
 - evidence of the outcome of Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration request forms being communicated to the student.
- 12.2 Assessment Centres must keep these documents for a minimum of two years. However, if the student is still studying with Assessment Centre and actively taking assessments beyond the two-year period, the details of their Reasonable Adjustment may still be valid and should be kept for future assessments.
- 12.3 Assessment Centres must prepare a digest of decisions to apply Reasonable Adjustments or submit Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration requests to AAT to ensure a consistent approach.
- 12.4 AAT may request the inspection of any Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration records during any scheduled or unannounced site visits by AAT staff or an External Quality Assurer (EQA). Failure to adequately provide these will be investigated in line with AAT's *Malpractice / Maladministration policy and guidance* on the [Quality Assurance resources webpage \(aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/quality-assurance\)](https://aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/quality-assurance).

13 Malpractice and maladministration

- 13.1 AAT's *Malpractice / Maladministration policy and guidance* can be found on the [Quality Assurance resources webpage \(aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/quality-assurance\)](https://aat.org.uk/assessments/training-providers/quality-assurance).
- 13.2 Assessment Centres must note that failure to comply with the guidance regarding Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration for assessments, set out in this document, may constitute malpractice or maladministration. Failure to comply includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:
- Putting in place arrangements without seeking prior approval from AAT, where this is required.
 - Exceeding the allowances required for the student or agreed with AAT.
 - Agreeing delegated adjustments that are not supported by evidence.
 - Failing to maintain records of Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations for audit.
 - Failing to report delegated adjustments to AAT, where this is required.
 - A student using non-permitted equipment or materials during a live assessment.
 - Discriminating against students with a disability or difficulty.
 - Refusing to give students information on the Assessment Centre's Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration policy, process, or guidance.
 - Any behaviour that is inappropriate towards students requiring Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration.
 - Applying Reasonable Adjustments that deliberately and unfairly advantage the student.
 - Any instances of malpractice or maladministration in line with AAT's *Malpractice / Maladministration policy and guidance* and / or the Assessment Centre's internal policy.
- 13.3 Malpractice or maladministration around the request, application and approval of Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration will not be tolerated in any circumstances. Following the report of any instances of malpractice, the Assessment Centre must take immediate steps to remove the students and / or staff committing malpractice from the assessment room and inform the CBA Administrator and AAT.
- 13.4 AAT will investigate all incidents of malpractice or maladministration. Any proven cases of malpractice or maladministration could lead to sanctions, withdrawal of approval status, results being declared null and void or expulsion from AAT. Any Assessment Centre staff who identify malpractice or maladministration being committed must note the time and nature of any incidents and email full details to aatquality.assurance@aat.org.uk on the same day.

14 Appealing decisions

14.1 AAT does not recommend that an assessment takes place if the student is uncomfortable with the Reasonable Adjustment, or lack of, being applied. Similarly, if the student notifies the Assessment Centre of a Special Consideration requirement immediately before the assessment has started, it may be more appropriate for the student to take the assessment later.

14.2 **Appealing a decision by the Assessment Centre to reject a Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request**

14.2.1 A student has the right to appeal a decision by the Assessment Centre who has:

- rejected or not applied a Reasonable Adjustment request that can be applied by the Assessment Centre; or
- rejected or not submitted a Reasonable Adjustment request that requires approval from AAT; or
- rejected or not submitted a Special Consideration request that requires approval from AAT.

14.2.1.1 For assessments that **have not** yet taken place:

- The student must follow the Assessment Centre's internal complaints / appeals procedure.
- If the internal complaint / appeal cannot be resolved between the student and the Assessment Centre, and the Assessment Centre's internal complaints / appeals procedure has been fully exhausted, the complaint / appeal can be escalated to AAT.
- To escalate a complaint / appeal to AAT, the student must email:
 - the details of the original Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request made to the Assessment Centre, including any relevant and valid supporting evidence.
 - the nature of their appeal, including the way in which the student believes the decision conflicts with this document.
 - a full audit trail of contact with the Assessment Centre, showing each stage of the Assessment Centre's internal complaints / appeals procedure.
- This information must be sent to the following within 10 business days of receiving the outcome from the Assessment Centre, and preferably before the assessment has taken place.
- AAT will review all the details provided, and where appropriate consult with the Chief Examiner for the qualification, and/or an independent external advisor (as appropriate), or for EPAs the Chief Independent Assessor, before deciding.
- Where independent external advice is required, this will be from appropriate and relevant authorities and experts, which may include but is not limited to any organisations that represent the student's disability or difficulty. Authorisation from the student must be provided as part of the escalation for AAT to seek further advice from the author of the student's medical evidence, for example, doctor, hospital, educational psychologist.

- The review process by AAT will include the following:
 - a check that the decision was arrived at in the correct manner, in line with this policy.
 - a consideration of the reasons why the student feels the decision is wrong, and a review of the evidence provided.
 - any further consultation in line with the above two bullet points.

14.2.1.2 A decision by AAT will be fed back to the requester and the Assessment Centre within 10 business days.

14.2.1.3 If the appeal is in reference to a Reasonable Adjustment request and AAT's decision is found in favour of the student, the approved Reasonable Adjustment must be applied for the student's attempt.

If the student no longer wishes to take their assessment at the Assessment Centre, they may use the correspondence from AAT to show the new Assessment Centre that the Reasonable Adjustment has been approved for that specific assessment.

14.2.2 For assessments that have taken place:

- A request can be submitted to AAT to review the original Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request along with the Assessment Centres reasons for rejecting it.
- The steps detailed in bullet points 4 – 7 in section 14.2.1.1 will be followed and a decision by AAT will be fed back to the requester and the Assessment Centre within 10 business days.

14.2.2.1 If AAT find that the Assessment Centre has either unfairly rejected the Reasonable Adjustment request from the student against the guidance within this document or has accidentally not submitted the Reasonable Adjustment notification form and sufficient evidence to AAT in time for it to be reviewed prior to the assessment, the student will be eligible to have their assessment voided, if required. If this happens, the Assessment Centre will be required to issue a full refund or credit note to the value of any fees paid by the student for the voided assessment(s).

If the appeal is in reference to a Special Consideration request and AAT's decision is found in favour of the student, the student's assessment script will be reviewed by AAT in line with the standard process for applying Special Consideration – see section 10.

14.3 **Appealing a Reasonable Adjustment request that has been approved and / or applied by the Assessment Centre**

14.3.1 A student has the right to appeal a decision by the Assessment Centre who has:

- approved a Reasonable Adjustment request from the student; or
- applied a Reasonable Adjustment to the student's assessment; or
- submitted a Reasonable Adjustment request to AAT.

if the student believes that the Reasonable Adjustment that has been approved / applied / requested is insufficient and leaves them disadvantaged compared to other students.

14.3.2 For assessments that have not yet taken place:

- The student must follow the Assessment Centre's internal complaints / appeals procedure.
- In this scenario, the student must follow the steps detailed in sections 14.2.1.1 to 14.2.1.3.

14.3.3 For assessments that have taken place:

- The student must follow the Stage 1: Enquiry process as detailed in the *AAT Enquiries and Appeals procedure* on the [Enquiries and Appeals webpage \(aat.org.uk/assessments/students/results/enquiries-appeals\)](http://aat.org.uk/assessments/students/results/enquiries-appeals).
- If the outcome of the Stage 1: Enquiry is not satisfactory, the Stage 2: Appeal process can be followed.

14.3.4 For further information on fees, forms, process, and timescales related to an Enquiry or Appeal described in section 14.3.3, please refer to the *AAT Enquiries and Appeals procedure*.

14.3.5 An Appeal against a decision by AAT can only go ahead if:

- the original Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request was received by AAT; and
- the Enquiries and Appeals process, as detailed in section 14.3.3, has been exhausted.

For example, a student is not able to Appeal the outcome of their result based on a Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration not being applied, if the Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request was never sent to AAT in the first place.

14.4 **Appealing a decision by AAT to reject a Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request**

14.4.1 A student (or their Training Provider or Employer acting on their behalf), has the right to appeal a decision by AAT to reject a Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request that has been applied for by the Assessment Centre.

14.4.2 For assessments that **have not** yet taken place:

- Once AAT's decision to reject the Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request has been notified to the Assessment Centre, the student (or their Training Provider or Employer acting on their behalf) must email the nature of their appeal, including the way in which they believe the decision conflicts with this document, along with any reference number given for the original Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request.
- In this scenario, the steps detailed in section 14.2.2 will be followed.

14.4.3 For assessments that have taken place, the student must follow the steps detailed in section 14.3.3.

14.5 **Appealing a Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request that has been approved by AAT**

- 14.5.1 A student (or their Training Provider or Employer acting on their behalf), has the right to appeal a Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration decision that has been applied for by the Assessment Centre, and which AAT has approved, if they believe that the Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration that has been approved is insufficient and leaves them disadvantaged compared to other students.
- 14.5.2 For assessments that have not yet taken place:
- Once AAT's decision to approve the Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request has been notified to the Assessment Centre, the student (or their Training Provider or Employer acting on their behalf) must email the nature of their appeal, including the way in which they believe the decision conflicts with this document, along with any reference number given for the original Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration request.
 - In this scenario, the steps detailed in section 14.2.2 will be followed.
- 14.5.3 For assessments that have taken place, the student must follow the steps detailed in sections 14.3.3.
- 14.5.4 Where an estimated result has been issued, an enquiry can only be submitted if there is a disagreement with the awarded task scores, or achieved component scores, being used to calculate the estimated result. Enquiries and appeals cannot be submitted against AAT's method of calculating estimated results.
- 14.6 If the original decision from sections 14.2 to 14.5 is upheld or if you are unsatisfied with the outcome of the process described within sections 14.2 to 14.5, an appeal may be requested against the outcome under certain circumstances. See section 15 for further information.

15 If you are not satisfied with the outcome

- 15.1 If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration appeal to AAT and the assessment has not yet taken place, the student (or their Training Provider or Employer acting on their behalf) may request for the decision to be reviewed by a member of the Executive team, via AAT's complaints process.
- 15.2 If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration appeal to AAT, the assessment has taken place, AAT's Enquiries and Appeals process has been exhausted, and the assessment forms part of a regulated qualification, you can refer your complaint to the relevant regulatory authority:
- Ofqual (England)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual/about/complaints-procedure>
 - Qualification Wales
<http://qualificationswales.org/regulation/complaints/?lang=en>

- Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment (CCEA) (Northern Ireland)
http://ccea.org.uk/about_us/contact_us/complaints
- Scottish Qualification Authority Accreditation Division (SQA Accreditation)
<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/25071.html>

15.3 If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration appeal to AAT, the assessment has taken place, AAT's Enquiries and Appeals process has been exhausted, and the assessment forms part of a non-regulated qualification, the Appeal Panel decision is final and there is no further escalation route.

16 Contact address and further information

16.1 If you have any queries related to Reasonable Adjustments and / or Special Consideration, please email the Assessments Operations team at assessment.operations@aat.org.uk. Alternatively, telephone on +44 (0)20 3735 2468 and ask for the Assessments Operations team.

Appendix A – Permissions table

The following table identifies where the decision is to be made on granting a range of common Reasonable Adjustments.

Assessment Centres should seek advice from AAT if 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.

| Section ref | Reasonable Adjustment | Permission granted by: |
|--------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 9.2.1 | Colour preferences on the assessment platform | Student |
| 9.3.1 | Changes to layout of the assessment environment | Assessment Centre |
| 9.3.2 | Use of a Reader, Scribe, Prompter and/or a Qualified Communications Professional | Assessment Centre |
| 9.3.3 | Extra time up to 100% for short term conditions or to account for live assessment issues | Assessment Centre |
| 9.3.4 | Supervised rest breaks | Assessment Centre |
| 9.3.5 | Colour preferences | Assessment Centre |
| 9.3.6 – 9.3.7 | Use of assistive technology: Speech / Screen reading software and Speech recognition software Assessment reading pen / scanning pen Braille keyboards | Assessment Centre |
| 9.3.8 | Separate assessment room at the Assessment Centre | Assessment Centre |
| 9.3.9 | Use of bilingual dictionaries or bilingual translation dictionaries | Assessment Centre |
| 9.3.10 | Print outs of reference materials for tax units | Assessment Centre |
| 9.3.11 | Use of fidget toys/stress balls | Assessment Centre |
| 9.3.12 | Use of mobile phone for medical purposes | Assessment Centre |
| 9.5.1 | Taking the assessment at an alternative site | AAT |
| 9.5.2 | Extra time via extra time profiles for long term conditions | AAT |
| 9.5.5 | Submitting evidence for externally marked assessments and End Point Assessments (EPAs) | AAT |
| 9.5.6 | Any other Reasonable Adjustment requests | AAT |
| 9.7.1 | Translating assessments and/or assessment material into another language | Not permitted |
| 9.7.2 | Interpreters | Not permitted |
| 9.7.3 | Assessment responses in Braille | Not permitted |
| 9.7.4 | Converting computer-based assessments onto paper | Not permitted |

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