

## Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning

### Access to Assessment

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Date(s) of review(s)	Reviewed by	Date of next review
June 2007	HEI & SCITT Management SCIL SMT	June 2008
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**Process for monitoring and evaluation.** Monitoring by Management Team with outcomes recorded in notes of meetings and periodic evaluation and review by Management Board.

This Policy has been developed by Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning (SCIL), the training arm for Support Services for Education (SSE) part of Somerset County Council. All training programmes have a commitment to providing a supportive learning environment which enables all trainees who have chosen to study with SCIL to achieve their full potential.

## Access to Assessment Policy

To keep in line with the Equality Act 2010, this policy has been put into place at SCIL to remove barriers that would otherwise disadvantage learners with special needs or other special considerations. The policy is not to place any unfair advantage on these learners but to enable them the same support and understanding as everyone else.

It is the aim of SCIL to provide the same access to assessment for all learners, including those who need reasonable adjustments or special considerations. So, although SCIL does not change the standards or criteria for a learner's assessment, the organisation will take a positive approach to flexible and responsive assessment strategies and methods.

There is no list that defines what merits reasonable adjustments or special consideration. Some learners may need help because, for example, they are hearing or visually impaired, or in hospital and in need of special arrangements for their assessment. Some may merit extra time on an assessment because of learning difficulties. All these are protected under the SCC Equal Opportunities Policy that SCIL adheres to.

### **Getting approval for learners:**

Requests for adjustments should be raised at the time of application, where learners should state if they have an additional need or require extra support.

It is the learner's responsibility to inform SCIL of their circumstances before the course/programme commences. If a learner requires reasonable adjustment or special consideration, approval must be obtained before any adjustments are made or agreed to.

SCIL have a responsibility, wherever possible, to make the necessary arrangements in order to meet the learner's needs.

### **Assessment:**

If a learner requires special consideration or reasonable adjustments for an assessment, SCIL must get approval to adjust the assessment situation, before the event. The centre Quality Assurance coordinator or Internal Verifier can agree minor adjustments and considerations. All agreements must be recorded in writing. For more significant reasonable adjustments or special considerations you must obtain specific agreement from the assessment centre/awarding organisation. An application form must be completed and sent to the assessment centre/awarding organisation in order to obtain the necessary permission.

Awarding Organisations are regulated by four regulators across the UK who set requirements for reasonable adjustments and special consideration. The requirements are:

- Ofqual – General Conditions of Recognition (2018), Conditions G6 and G7
- Qualifications Wales – Standard Conditions of Recognition (2017), Conditions G6 and G7
- SQA Accreditation – Regulatory Principles (2014) Principle 11
- CCEA Regulation – General Conditions of Recognition (2016) Conditions g6 and G7

### **Examples and situations**

Below are examples of situations that may require the implementation of the Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy:

#### **Hearing impairment**

Arrangements may include:

- communicators / interpreters (including lip speakers)
- extra time allowance
- mechanical and electronic aids
- induction loops.

Learners whose hearing loss causes a linguistic disability may have assessments with modified wording, as recommended by a specialist teacher of the deaf.

#### **Visual impairment**

Arrangements may include:

- an amanuensis (who takes dictation)
- a reader
- tapes
- question papers with large print, Braille or Moon
- a keyboard to produce typescript answers or raised type responses
- extra time allowance in a written, time-constrained assessment
- mechanical/electronic aids

### **Physical impairment – permanent or temporary**

Learners may be allowed

- an amanuensis and/or reader and/or interpreter
- extra time allowance
- appropriate mechanical/electronic aids.

### **Learning difficulties**

In the case of learners with specific learning difficulties/dyslexia we may allow:

- extra time allowance
- tapes
- use of a keyboard to produce typescripts of answers
- an amanuensis and/or a reader
- other audio/visual aids appropriate to the individual's needs

### **Medical conditions**

For learners with medical conditions such as diabetes, epilepsy and respiratory disorders SCIL will consider every case on its merits. For instance, extra time may be allowed for the assessment, if it's medically justified.

### **Learners with a poor grasp of English**

If a learner has good oral communication but their written language is poor, it may be possible to run an identical assessment orally rather than in writing. By recording the assessment (video or audio) the assessor can then make detailed notes of the questions and answers.

If a learner has both poor oral and written communication skills it may be possible to enlist a fellow learner who has a good grasp of both languages, as a translator and/or interpreter. Translating the assessment vehicle before the assessment is especially important and could be done in a small group context. The assessor could then assess the written work with the learner and interpreter present and include additional notes for clarification with the translator signing the assessment to

confirm that these extra notes are a true reflection of the additional information the learner supplied.

As with all different assessment methods, SCIL and relevant awarding organisations will need to be informed of this requirement and have received a completed application/request form in advance. Approval must be given of the proposed arrangements before the assessment takes place.

**Application forms for requesting reasonable adjustments or special considerations can be acquired from SCIL.**

## **Appendix 2 – HEI**

### **DSA assessments, students registered on University of Worcester courses**

If a student on a Higher Education course feels that they may have a specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia they can request an assessment. Tutors may also suggest to a student that they may find it helpful to complete an assessment.

Students should contact the SCIL office, who will make a referral to the approved assessor – Assignum. An assessor from Assignum will then contact the student directly to arrange a suitable time for an appointment. There is a cost associated with the assessment, please contact the SCIL office for further information.

Once the assessment has been completed, Assignum will send a report to the SCIL administrator within 10 days.

Students will be asked to complete a consent to share form, once consent is given the report will be shared with the appropriate academic staff and with the University of Worcester.

Once a diagnosis has been made, students should apply for Disabled Students Allowance.

### **What is the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)?**

- A non-means tested government allowance available to disabled students in Higher Education (including mental health difficulties and specific learning difficulties like dyslexia or dyspraxia).
- It is there to cover the cost of disability related study support that might be necessary to enable a student to study more effectively.

When students have been approved for DSA funding, they are eligible for a Study Needs Assessment. SCIL will refer the student to Contact Associates who specialises

in Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) needs assessments. They will arrange an assessment date.

This needs assessment outlines all of the recommendations and explains how they will support the trainee. A copy of the report is sent to the student, the funding body and (with student's permission) to the college or university.

After processing a report, the funding body will get in touch to confirm which recommendations they agree to fund (usually all of them), and what to do next in terms of ordering equipment and arranging any one-to-one support.

SCIL will also ensure that buildings/ facilities can be accessed by all. This includes ensuring access to lifts, wide doors and ramps. Staff will be trained to know how to access this equipment or will have contacts if there are any faults with certain equipment to ensure they all can be adequately used.