

Document Title	Supports for Reasonable Accommodation
Policy Area	Area 7: Supports for Learners
Document Code (version #)	QAP7-2 (V3.0)
Applies to	<input type="checkbox"/> All <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific (<i>QQI and SQT accredited programmes involving Assessment</i>)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and learners

Document Owner	Director of Quality and Academic Affairs
Approved by	Academic Council

Approval date	7/6/19
Effective date	

Related legislation, policies, procedures, guidelines and local protocols	<p>This policy has been designed with due regard to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016), QQI - Sector Specific Independent/Private Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016), QQI - Assessment and Standards (2013 - Revised), QQI - Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers (2013), QQI - Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners, (2015 - Revised), QQI - Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012
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1. PURPOSE

This policy sets out the principles and procedure for the support of learners with disabilities or long-term illness in undertaking their programme and assessment. It also assists SQT in fulfilling its legal responsibilities regarding the needs of these learners.

2. SCOPE/APPLICATION

This document is specific to QQI accredited programmes and SQT's own programmes which involve an element of assessment.

Policies and procedures relating to reasonable accommodation for other awarding bodies are addressed by the awarding body in question and information is available through the Accreditation and Systems Manager.

3. DEFINITIONS

- **Reasonable accommodations** are defined as those actions that enable learners to demonstrate their true knowledge and ability to complete assessment tasks without changing the demands of the assessment task. The intention behind the provision of such accommodations is to alleviate a disadvantage without affecting the integrity of the assessment.
- **Disability:** The legal definition of disability, which is outlined in the Equal Status Acts (2000-2011), defines disability as follows:
 1. the total or partial absence of a person's bodily or mental functions, including the absence of a part of a person's body,
 2. the presence in the body of organisms causing or likely to cause, chronic disease or illness,
 3. the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of a person's body,
 4. a condition or malfunction which results in a person learning differently from a person without the condition or malfunction, or
 5. a condition, illness or disease which affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement or which results in disturbed behaviour."

4. RESPONSIBILITY

The Director of Quality and Academic Affairs is responsible for implementing this policy, with the support of the Accreditation and Systems Manager and in consultation with the relevant Programme Director and/or Tutors.

5. POLICY

In so far as is practicable, SQT provides reasonable accommodation to meet the needs of learners with disabilities or specific learning difficulties. In considering reasonable accommodation requests, granting such requests should not put the integrity or status of the assessment task at risk, and will ensure fairness to all learners. This policy applies to learners with a disability or specific learning difficulty. The policy does not apply to learners with a temporary illness or injury, in such cases, QAP7-3 Personal Mitigating Circumstances applies.

SQT has adopted the Dawn guidance document “Everything you wanted to know about reasonable accommodations...”¹ to inform our approach to providing reasonable accommodation and developing policy and procedure to support provision.

Reasonable accommodations utilised by SQT include the following:

- Modified presentation of assignments/examination papers e.g. enlargements, colour print
- Scribes/readers
- Rest period
- Extra time
- Spelling and/or grammar waiver

6. PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING A REASONABLE ACCOMODATION

Below is the procedure to be implemented for learners requesting a reasonable accommodation.

1. Learner Application

All applicants are requested to disclose details of any learning or medical support requirements they have when applying for a programme. In cases where a learner develops or discovers a support requirement during the course of their studies, the learner is advised to contact the Accreditation and Systems Manager as soon as possible and the same procedure (steps 2 and 3) is followed.

2. Verification by Health Professional

Following disclosure / discovery by the learner, verification of the indicated support requirements must be provided by an appropriate health professional as set out in Appendix 1 - Verification of Disability or Specific Learning Difficulty.

3. Support Arrangements

Following verification of a support requirement, a support meeting or telephone call is arranged with the potential or registered learner and relevant member(s)² of SQT. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the learner requirements in more detail and possible reasonable accommodations. It concludes with the preparation of a Needs Assessment Report.

¹ DAWN: Everything you wanted to know about Reasonable Accommodations and supporting students with disabilities but nobody bothered to tell you... (2013)

² Generally the Programme Tutor and/or Course Administration Manager or Accreditation and Systems Manager, depending on the circumstances and accommodation sought.

4. Decision of SQT

The Director of Quality and Academic Affairs considers the recommendations identified within the Needs Assessment Report and determines the feasibility of making the accommodations required.

5. Communication with Learners and Staff

The outcome of the needs assessment is communicated to the learner in writing by the Director of Quality and Academic Affairs and the learner is required to confirm acceptance of the accommodations proposed. Upon receipt of the learner's acceptance, the Director of Quality and Academic Affairs notifies the relevant Course Administration Manager, Accreditation and Systems Manager and Tutor.

6. Learner Appeal

Learners who are refused Reasonable Accommodations can appeal the decision by writing to the Director of Quality and Academic Affairs within 5 working days from receipt of the decision, in accordance with QAP7-6: Academic Appeals.

7. POLICY MONITORING

Responsibility	Frequency	Methods
Director of Quality and Academic Affairs – Document Update	Per QA audit schedule	- Review of documentation as set out in QAP2-1: Ongoing Review and Update of QA Documents.
Programme Board	Each meeting	- Review of reasonable accommodation requests. - Feedback from learners who have been granted reasonable accommodation.

8. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version No	Approval Date	Description of Revision	Originator	Approved By
2.0	1/3/19	Complete revision and new document format.	Director of Quality and Academic Affairs	Academic Council
3.0	7/6/19	Amended the definition of 'Disability'.	Director of Quality and Academic Affairs	Academic Council

APPENDIX 1 - VERIFICATION OF DISABILITY OR SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTY

DISABILITY	MEDICAL CONSULTANT/SPECIALIST	EVIDENCE OF DISABILITY REQUIRED
Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	Appropriately qualified Psychiatrist or Psychologist or Neurologist or Paediatrician	CAO Evidence of Disability Form or a report with the same level of detail completed by the appropriate professional.
Asperger's Syndrome/Autism	Appropriately qualified Psychiatrist or Psychologist or Neurologist or Paediatrician	CAO Evidence of Disability Form or a report with the same level of detail completed by the appropriate professional.
Blind/Vision Impaired	Ophthalmologist or Ophthalmic Surgeon	CAO Evidence of Disability Form or a report with the same level of detail completed by the appropriate professional.
Deaf/Hearing Impaired	Professionally qualified Audiologist	CAO Evidence of Disability Form or a report with the same level of detail completed by the appropriate professional. A Bilateral Audiogram from a qualified Audiologist is also required.
Developmental Co-ordination Disorder/Dyspraxia/Dysgraphia	Appropriately qualified Psychologist and an Occupational Therapist or Neurologist	A full psycho-educational assessment from an appropriately Psychologist and a report that assesses motor skills and functioning from an Occupational Therapist or Neurologist.
Mental Health Condition	Psychiatrist	CAO Evidence of Disability Form or a report with the same level of detail completed by the appropriate professional.

The following has been adapted from the Disability Advisors Working Network (DAWN) www.dawn.ie.