

ACCESS TO ASSESSMENT & REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS POLICY

1. Introduction

Assessment should be a fair test of a candidate's knowledge, skills and experience; however, for some candidates the usual format of assessment may not be suitable.

HGVC recognises that for all candidates to access assessment fairly, reasonable adjustments may be appropriate. This could be because at the time of assessment;

- **candidates have a permanent disability, or specific learning need**
- **candidates have a temporary disability, medical condition or learning need**
- **candidates are indisposed at the time of assessment**

2. Scope

This policy applies to all qualifications offered by HGVC and to every individual involved in HGVC programmes including, but not limited to, practitioners, markers, invigilators, development coaches, assessors, quality assurers and candidates.

3. Purpose

This policy sets out the steps HGVC will take to understand candidates' requirements for reasonable adjustments, and how it will consider meeting them.

4. Policy Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of this policy lies with the Contract and Procurement Manager.

4.2 All staff & associates including but not limited to; staff, practitioners, development coaches, assessors, markers, invigilators, verifiers and candidates are accountable for ensuring full adherence to all items set out in this policy

5. Reasonable Adjustments

In meeting the definition of 'reasonable adjustments' under the Equality Act 2010, we will take appropriate means to reduce substantial disadvantages, faced by those due to disability. However we also understand that to promote inclusivity in education then a reasonable adjustment can be further defined as an action that is flexible in approach to supporting those with; a long or short term disability, a barrier to learning or societal disadvantages. Reasonable adjustment should be discussed and approved by all parties involved, and are in place prior to learning activities. Work produced by the candidate should be marked in the same way as the work of other assessed candidates. HGVC has a responsibility to ensure that any requests made will be evaluated based on evidence provided, and that it will not confer an advantage on the candidate in any aspect of the subject concerned. Reasonable adjustments are categorised, under the Equality Act 2010, as; Provisions, criteria and practice, Physical features and Provision of auxiliary aid.

5.1 Some examples of reasonable adjustments might include;

- **modifying assessment materials (providing materials in Braille or a larger font)**
- **allowing a candidate extra time to complete a time limited assessment activity**

- providing access for facilitators such as a sign language interpreter, reader or scribe
- removing excessive visual stimuli from assessment materials
- use of a word processor or mobile electronic device

5.2 Considerations when assessing the reasonableness of an adjustment include;

- maintaining the integrity of assessment criteria
- individual circumstances
- cost implications
- practicality
- effectiveness
- health and safety to individual and others

HGVC has a responsibility to ensure that any request for a reasonable adjustment is evaluated based on evidence provided, so where the implications of a disability, learning barrier or difficulty are not obvious, we may ask for supporting evidence of impairment, such as;

- **Medical certificates**
- **Written evidence produced by an independent, authoritative specialist. This could take the form of medical, psychological or professional reports or assessments stating the name, title and professional credentials of the person carrying out the assessment and/or report. Such reports should set out the nature of the difficulty and extent to which the candidate may be impaired, including the effects of any related medication that the candidate has been prescribed. In cases where it might be expected that there could be changes in the way the candidate is impaired, there will have to be recent and relevant evidence of assessment and/or consultations carried out by an independent expert.**

5.3 During initial assessment, prior to joining a course, HGVC will;

- aim to identify any difficulties the candidate may have in accessing learning and assessment
- assist in the selection of qualifications for candidates, depending on circumstances
- explain to the candidate any qualification and assessment requirements
- be clear if it seems unlikely that the candidate would meet all qualification requirements and explain the restriction on achievement as a result (for example, if a candidate is unable to demonstrate specific skills they may be unable to gain achievement of the qualification). Suggest unit certification where this is possible.

5.4 In supporting candidates, HGVC will;

- communicate HGVC Access to Assessment & Reasonable Adjustments policy to staff, associates and candidates
- ensure staff and associates deal with reasonable adjustments sensitively
- create an atmosphere in which candidates are comfortable discussing requirements
- observe the right of candidates who do not wish to disclose additional needs

- **not presume solutions for individual candidates but discuss and agree support**
- **anticipate general future needs for all and make adequate provision**
- **take into account the diversity of candidates/cohorts and differentiate accordingly**
- **provide 'candidate support' training for staff involved in recruiting/supporting candidates**
- **apply to Awarding Bodies to support and apply reasonable adjustments under examination**
- **select and apply appropriate adjustments without lowering qualification standards**
- **keep records of reasonable adjustment requests, and outcomes, for audit purposes**
- **design assessment activities that are accessible to candidates**
- **ensure buildings are accessible, as is practicable**
- **ensure health and safety is not compromised – conduct risk assessments and communicate/implement all control measures**

6.0 Special considerations

Special consideration can be applied after an examination when a candidate is disadvantaged during the exam. Each request for special consideration will be unique to the candidate and/or assessment, will depend on the circumstances at the time of the assessment and will reflect the difficulty faced by the candidate. Special consideration is a post examination adjustment to a candidate's mark. In some cases, it may be necessary to address special considerations for an entire cohort, when an incident has occurred which has affected all candidates (for example, a serious disturbance during the examination). In these circumstances, letters from candidates must be verified by invigilator incident reports.

7.0 Candidates and delegates with a disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

It is unlawful for institutions such as HGVC to discriminate in the provision of goods, services and facilities for those faced with

a disability, including;

- **all aspects of teaching and assessment**
- **assessments and examinations**
- **e-learning and distance learning including virtual learning environments**
- **HGVC website**
- **learning resources including libraries and computer facilities**
- **aspects of the physical environment where teaching/learning takes place, including buildings and equipment**
- **welfare, counselling and other support services**

- **catering, residential and leisure facilities**
- **careers services**

Under the Act we are expected to take reasonable steps to;

- **find out about people's disabilities**
- **consider what adjustments may be required**
- **make adjustments where reasonable, including by alternative means**

8.0 Disclosure of additional requirements

In order to provide support and guidance from the outset, candidates are encouraged to disclose any additional requirements so that, where possible, arrangements can be put in place. Candidates should complete and submit a request for reasonable adjustments (available on this policy). Candidates' requirements may be reviewed individually to ascertain the extent of condition and requirements. During the course QA staff may liaise with practitioners and candidates to measure the effectiveness of any such adjustments.

9. Recruitment and selection of candidates and delegates

Potential candidates of HGVC will be selected for courses or programmes strictly in line with the selection criteria and the requirements of the course. Selection criteria will apply to all qualifying candidates irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. HGVC will make reasonable adjustments and will routinely review recruitment and selection practices, in order to monitor equal opportunities and to ensure that candidates are enrolled on the qualification/training course which is most suitable to their learning and development requirements.

10. Monitoring enquiries and requests

For information purposes, it is important for us to log all requests and monitor the resulting action. However to comply with the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR 2016/679, all personal details will be removed so that no individual can be identified.

11. Venues

When sourcing venues HGVC consider every aspect of the building including: how people enter and exit, how they find their way around, clear signage, how people communicate with staff, information we provide, queuing systems, work space, and accessible ablution facilities.

- **all venues comply with the Equality Act 2010**
- **we do not use venues without lifts, unless venues are on ground level**
- **where a lift breaks down, exit is via an evacuation chair or alternative means**

In making reasonable adjustments HGVC must think in advance about a range of impairments that candidates may face and what they might reasonably require. If there is a particular situation we have not anticipated and a candidate wishes to use our services, then we must make a reasonable adjustment as quickly as possible.

12. Complaints

If a candidate believes that they have been discriminated against on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, they should speak to their HGVC representative. If, following discussions, the candidate is not satisfied then they should follow the HGVC complaints procedure found on our website under 'Key Policies'.

13. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually via the Quality Improvement Team and updated as necessary.

14. Breach of the Policy

HGVC will take seriously any instances of non-adherence to the policy by any of its employees or candidates. Any breach of policy will be investigated and if necessary action will be taken.

15. Access to the Policy

The policy will be published on the HGVC website and on the QMS; HGVC back-up, HGVC Quality Policies, and on our website under 'Key Policies'.

16. Examples of reasonable adjustments (this list is not exhaustive – candidates may suggest their own tried and tested methods)

HGVC candidates may enrol with a diverse range of needs, these may be social, physical, intellectual, cultural or emotional. Whilst candidates are not obliged to divulge such needs, in doing so,

HGVC, in agreement with candidates, is able to put in place the most appropriate support. Candidates with learning difficulties are advised to seek assessment by an educational psychologist who is able to suggest the most suitable learning and assessment strategies. HGVC will always consider the provision of reasonable adjustments.

* Religious grounds cannot be used to exclude guide dog/assistance dog owners and HGVC will consult all attendees regarding possible allergies.

HGVC - Reasonable Adjustment Request

HGVC recognises the diverse needs of candidates. We have a duty to ensure the integrity of our training courses and assessment practice at all times. At the same time, we have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to protect the rights of individual candidates. This includes providing any adjustments where reasonable, permissible or practicable.

A reasonable adjustment is any appropriate means to reduce substantial disadvantages, faced by those due to disability. Please see

HGVC Access to Assessment Policy for full details. HGVC policies can be found on the HGVC website under 'Key Policies'.