

Reasonable Adjustments and Extenuating Circumstances Policy

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Purpose

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) is the global professional body for public finance professionals and recognises practitioners at every level, from those starting out in their career to those innovating and leading the profession.

CIPFA organises, sets and runs professional examinations and students to enable our members to attain high levels of competence in the field of public finance.

CIPFA is committed to equal opportunities, as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act/>) and we work to accommodate the needs of students who may require Reasonable Adjustments to undertake their assessments to help them overcome any disadvantage that another student may not have. Additionally, CIPFA is committed to support students who have extenuating circumstances where such circumstances require additional consideration in order to determine their assessment.

Scope

This document sets out the regulations pertaining to Reasonable Adjustments and Extenuating Circumstances procedures for CIPFA students and as a point of reference for colleagues and stakeholders.

Definition of Reasonable Adjustments and Extenuating Circumstances

CIPFA's assessment adjustments can be broken down into two sections;

Reasonable Adjustments: CIPFA recognises that there are some students who can cope with the learning demands of a qualification and can demonstrate attainment in the skills and knowledge being assessed, but for whom the standard assessment arrangements may present unnecessary barriers due to a permanent disability or specific learning need (s). Any Reasonable Adjustment must reflect the normal learning or working practices of a student.

Extenuating Circumstances: CIPFA recognises that there are students who find exams challenging or have access requirements which require them to have different assessment needs. If this circumstance affects the students ability to take an assessment and demonstrate their ability, an assessment adjustment may be considered. Extenuating Circumstances may be required where a student has a temporary illness, injury, medical condition or learning needs at time of the assessment.

Guiding principles

CIPFA take due regard to the Joint Council for Qualifications guidance document – https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/AA_regs_20-21_FINAL.pdf to support our policy and internal decision making in terms of agreeing assessment adjustments.

Additionally, CIPFA take due regard and are committed to equal opportunities, as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act/>).

Assessment Adjustment Criteria

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

- the needs of the candidate;
- the effectiveness of the adjustment;
- the cost of the adjustment; and
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.

An assessment adjustment may not be approved if it:

- involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body
- involves unreasonable timeframes or
- affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

CIPFA will not remove barriers that could affect the validity and integrity of the assessment such as making adjustments to the content of the assessment or the assessment criteria but where it is possible to make adjustments that are reasonable and that minimise the extent to which students are disadvantaged in attaining the qualification because of their learning needs, we will endeavour to do so for those students that meet the criteria.

Students can *“use mechanical, electronic and other aids in order to demonstrate competence. The aids must either be generally commercially available, or available from specialist suppliers, and can feasibly be used in the centre or on the employers’ premises.”*

As a general rule, the following are examples of what may be considered as facilitating access if they do not impact on any competence standards being tested:

- adapting assessment materials
- adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes
- adaptation to equipment
- assessment material in an enlarged format or Braille
- assessment material on coloured paper or in audio format
- British Sign Language (BSL)
- changing or adapting the assessment method
- changing usual assessment arrangements
- extra time, e.g. assignment extensions
- modified language assessment material
- practical assistant
- prompter
- providing assistance during assessment
- reader
- scribe
- use of assistive software/technology
- use of CCTV, coloured overlays, low vision aids
- use of a different assessment location
- use of ICT/responses using electronic devices.

It is important to note that not all the adjustments (as above) will be reasonable, permissible or practical in some situations. The learner may not need, nor be allowed, the same adjustment for all assessments. Each assessment adjustment application will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Applying for Reasonable Adjustments and Extenuating Circumstances

Students should apply for reasonable adjustments and extenuating circumstances direct to CIPFA by completing the relevant online application form, which is available from our website;

<https://www.cipfa.org/qualifications/exams>

The appropriate supporting evidence such as medical reports, police reports or death certificates must be provided to support the application

Evidence submitted must be relevant and significant. Evidence should relate to facts and not opinion.

Evidence should include:

- Date that document was written
- Signature of person evidencing or preparing the document and including their professional capacity
- Evidence that it is verifiable, relevant and personalised to the student's specific learning need
- Arrangements by which the candidate may benefit

In exceptional circumstances CIPFA may accept notification from the student's employer as evidence to support the application. Applications without evidence will not be accepted. All evidence should be supplied on letterhead paper – either original or an authenticated copy of the original – and include the full printed name and contact details of the signatory. If a student has multiple needs, then CIPFA will, wherever possible, take all these needs into account.

Timeline

Please note that applications for assessment adjustments should be submitted by the deadline to be considered. Only those arrangements considered and approved by CIPFA in advance of the assessment will be honoured.

Reasonable adjustments and extenuating circumstances applications are open at least one month before the registration deadline on the CIPFA website:

<https://www.cipfa.org/qualifications/student-policies-procedures-and-forms>

Each submission must be accompanied by appropriate and relevant evidence. Applications will be considered only on the merit of the evidence supplied. CIPFA's decision thereon is final.

Applications are reviewed before the students sit their assessment and confirmation of the adjustments approved will be communicated to the student usually two weeks prior to their assessment.

Categories of Reasonable Adjustment and Extenuating Circumstances

Please note that the examples given in the table below are purely illustrative and are not exhaustive. Each assessment adjustment application is assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Category of Learning Need	Learning Need Example	Example arrangements
Cognition and learning needs	General and/or Specific Learning Difficulties such as; Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, a need in executive function, visual processing speed, visual perception, literacy, numeracy, verbal reasoning, verbal memory, nonverbal memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervised rest breaks • extra time • a computer reader or a reader • read aloud or an examination • reading pen • a scribe • a word processor • a prompter • a practical assistant • coloured overlays • coloured/enlarged papers • modified language papers.
Communication and interaction needs	Social/ communication need such as; Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervised rest breaks • extra time • a computer reader or a reader • read aloud or an examination • reading pen • a scribe • a word processor • modified language papers.
Sensory and physical needs	E.g. Hearing Impairment, Visual Impairment, Multi-Sensory Impairment, Crutches, Wheelchair user, arthritis, paraplegia, quadriplegia, cerebral palsy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervised rest breaks • extra time • a computer reader or a reader • read aloud or an examination • reading pen • a scribe • a word processor • a live speaker • a Communication Professional • a practical assistant • Braille papers, modified • enlarged and/or modified • language papers.
Social, mental and emotional needs	E.g. Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Mental Health Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervised rest breaks • extra time • a computer reader or a reader • read aloud or an examination • reading pen • a scribe • a word processor • a prompter • alternative site arrangement • separate invigilation within the centre. • Local invigilation
<u>Assessment accessibility issues</u>	E.g. the student lives in a location with severely limited internet access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local invigilation

Policy version and owner

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Regulatory references

Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition
Condition G6: Arrangements for Reasonable Adjustments