

Reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy

Introduction

News Associates is committed to ensuring that all trainees are fully supported in learning and assessment, in line with current legislation. News Associates will seek to provide 'Reasonable Adjustment' to learning and assessment for a student whose disability meets the definition in the Equality Act 2010 (at the time of writing), if it is likely to impact on their learning and assessment. Reasonable adjustments will endeavour to support the student to take the planned mode of assessment in order to provide a fair and equal opportunity to succeed.

News Associates seek to uphold human rights relating to race relations, disability discrimination and special educational needs and to provide equal reasonable adjustments and special considerations for all candidates.

In line with NCTJ policies, News Associates will inform the NCTJ of a candidate's needs concerning reasonable adjustments within one month of registering them on a course and no later than two weeks before the candidate's examination date/end-point assessment submissions. Special considering/deferral request must be made no later than two days following the date of the examination or end-point assessment.

Any circumstances not covered in this, or the NCTJ's policy, will be discussed with the NCTJ before an assessment takes place.

The course director in London and the head of journalism in Manchester are the nominated members of staff with responsibility for demonstrating the implementation and recording of reasonable adjustments and special considerations to assessments. News Associates will keep records of any reasonable adjustments or special considerations requested from the NCTJ which will be kept for three years following the assessment, in line with data regulations.

Fair access to assessments

Assessments should be a fair test of a trainee's knowledge and what they are able to do, but must not affect the integrity of what needs to be assessed. News Associates recognises that for some candidates the usual format of assessment may not be suitable. In line with the NCTJ policy, we ensure that our qualifications and assessments (including the admissions process) do not bar trainees from taking qualifications.

Reasonable adjustments or special considerations may be required at the time of assessment where:

- Trainees have specific learning needs or a permanent disability
- Trainees have a temporary disability, medical condition or learning needs
- Trainees are indisposed at the time of assessment

Reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is any action which helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty which places the candidate at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation.

Reasonable adjustments are approved and set in place before an assessment takes place – this arrangement will have been made in accordance with the NCTJ and their timeframe above, and candidates will be made aware the use of a reasonable adjustments will not be taken into consideration during the assessment.

Reasonable adjustments will be reviewed depending on the individual circumstances, taking into account the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors, such as health and safety and the need to maintain competence standards will be taken into consideration.

Reasonable adjustments may involve, but are not limited to:

- Use of extra time to allow a trainee to complete the assessment
- Adapting assessment materials
- Providing assistance during the assessment, for example using a sign language interpreter, reader or scribe
- Adapting the assessment room, or providing a space for the candidate to sit the examination on their own – with confirmation from the NCTJ
- Using assistive technology, such as voice-activated software, screen reading software or software to enlarge text on a screen
- Using different colour backgrounds for online screens or using different colour paper for paper-assessments
- Using different coloured transparencies to view assessments

For further detail on the above adjustments, News Associates will refer to the relevant NCTJ policy.

Reasonable adjustment requests should go through the course director in London and head of journalism in Manchester in the first instance. On behalf of the candidate he will complete the NCTJ reasonable adjustment or special consideration request form, and work with the candidate to supply appropriate supporting evidence. This may include:

- Medical certificate (preferred option)
- Psychological or other professional assessment report (preferred option)
- News Associates' assessment of the candidate's needs
- History of provision for the candidate within News Associates

At enrolment candidates will be encouraged to make any access-related assessment needs known to News Associates. All staff involved with the recruitment process will keep up to date with access-related issues, and document anything for audit purposes.

Any discussions on whether reasonable adjustments may be needed should be held between the course director in London and head of journalism in Manchester and candidate to discuss whether they will be able to meet the requirements of the assessment or whether adjustments are required. Where the implications of a disability are unclear, News Associates will make use of specialist advice

in order to determine how assessments may be impacted. All applications will be made on an individual basis and documented as necessary.

News Associates will ensure the adjustment is in accordance with the NCTJ policy guidelines, and seek clarification from relevant NCTJ staff if unclear.

Special considerations

Special considerations can be applied after an assessment if there was a reason the candidate may have been disadvantaged during the assessment. For example, if the candidate had experienced an illness or event outside their control which had, or is likely to have had, an effect on their ability to take an assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment in the assessment.

Special considerations should not give a trainee an unfair advantage. In line with the NCTJ policy, News Associates acknowledges it may be more appropriate to offer the candidate an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date – which we aim to do.

In line with NCTJ timeframes, requests for special considerations must be submitted to the NCTJ before the exam starts/submission deadline, or no later than two days after the date of the examination/end-point assessment. Where supporting evidence is required, this must be submitted no later than 10 days after the examination/submissions date.

Requesting reasonable adjustments/special considerations

All considerations should go through the course director in London and head of journalism in Manchester who will advise on the supporting documentation required. On behalf of the candidate, News Associates will complete an NCTJ reasonable adjustment or special consideration request form to be considered.

Requests for reasonable adjustments must be submitted to the NCTJ within one month of the course start date or a minimum of two weeks before the date of the candidate's examination/end-point submission. Requests for special considerations must be submitted to the NCTJ before the exam/submission or no later than two days after the date of the examination/end-point assessment submission, with supporting evidence submitted no later than 10 days.

All changes to assessment conditions will be in accordance with the NCTJ Reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy.

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