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|  ICB ACCREDITED BUSINESS QUALIFICATIONS | Policy Name: | Assessment Policy for Students with Disabilities |
| | Policy Number: | 8007.2020.V2 |
| | Approved date: | May 2020 |
| | Review date | May 2021 |

Purpose:

To provide an equitable opportunity for assessment for students with special needs or disabilities. The policy serves to safeguard students with disabilities from discrimination of any kind and to provide for reasonable accommodation and/or modification in order to be fairly assessed.

Policy:

The ICB will allow reasonable accommodations to qualified students with a diagnosed and documented disability who have identified themselves to the Provider or ICB in a timely manner as individuals with a disability so that such qualified students will be capable of completing assessment of required courses. Reasonable accommodations shall be provided on an individualized and flexible basis and shall serve to alleviate an impairment created by a functional limitation.

Furthermore, it is the policy of the ICB to require qualified students with disabilities to meet the same academic standards as nondisabled students.

Responsibility:

This policy applies to all students and Colleges and adherence to this policy remains the domain of the Academic Department.

General:

1. The term "disabled student" is used throughout this document to describe students who may have a wide range of physical, sensory and cognitive impairments and/or other additional needs.
2. The ICB programs are modular by nature and are examined in various ways. Some of these forms of examinations or assignments may pose particular problems for disabled students.
3. The ICB recognises that in accepting a disabled student onto a program of study some adjustments may need to be made with respect to examinations and other assignments in order to accommodate the particular support need of the individual
4. Such adjustments must not compromise the academic credibility of the assessment, nor put the disabled student at a disadvantage compared with abled students by preventing him/her from adequately demonstrating his/her achievement of learning outcomes. Similarly, any adjustments that are put in

place must not give the disabled student an unfair advantage over his/her abled peers.

5. Students requesting alternative exams arrangements should first discuss their individual needs with their providers who will then submit a request to the ICB together with any additional motivational documentation. Documentary evidence (medical or psychological) of the student's disability must be produced. This evidence should be no more than 12 months old at the time of the student making his/her initial application for alternative exam arrangements.
6. Students should apply for alternative exam procedures at least six weeks before the date of the exam. Late applications may not be accommodated due to the logistical complexities in making the necessary arrangements at short notice.
7. The ICB will advise the Provider concerned as well as the learner of the outcome of the application as well as what alternative exam arrangements can/should be made to accommodate the student's needs.
8. Where an allocation of extra time for ICB examinations has been detailed, this will normally be 15 minutes per hour (or 25%) unless a different amount is deemed necessary on the basis of independent evidence in individual circumstances.
9. In cases where an allocation of extra time for ICB examinations is the only requirement, the necessary arrangements will be made with the examination venue or College in accordance with the guidelines.
10. In other cases, the student's provider will make the necessary arrangements taking guidance from the ICB as appropriate. The Provider will make arrangements for the invigilation of the ICB examinations involving the learner and supply the names of the invigilators to the ICB's Quality Assurance Manager. A disabled student's helper may not act as an invigilator.
11. It will be the responsibility of the invigilators to ensure that the ICB examinations involving disabled students are conducted in accordance with agreed alternative arrangements, including the allocation of extra time and that as far as possible in other respects the usual rules for the conduct of examinations is observed.
12. Any variations in the above procedures should be approved in advance by the ICB.
13. If a student feels that in the event his/her individual needs have not been satisfactorily accommodated in the examination process, he/she is advised to submit a second request for examination arrangements to be considered. The decision of this appeal will be final and no further requests will be considered.
14. Where students have received academic support due to disability (including in the examination process) this will not be indicated on the academic transcript or qualification certificate.
15. The student is responsible for the arrangement of any additional support that is required in terms of this policy relating to venue hire, invigilators and scribes. In addition, any cost related to the implementation of this policy for students, will be carried by the student.
16. If a student has a disability and does not disclose this to the ICB prior to the conduct of the assessment, the student cannot request special arrangements post assessment in so far as marking and conduct of examinations is concerned.

Possible Special Examination Arrangements and associated processes:

Special Examination sitting arrangements

1. Where additional time is indicated in the student's Educational Psychology report, 25 % additional time is the standard allocation.
2. Exceptionally, more time, in addition to the 25 % may be recommended and arranged for individuals.
3. Students requiring extra time should ordinarily sit their examinations in a separate room to the main body of students.
4. Where more than 25 % additional time is recommended for a student, the College will make arrangements for the examination room.
5. Students who have 25 % additional time will sit their examinations in the central extra-time venue.
6. It is important that Providers remember that where extra time is a recommendation for students this should be allocated for class tests as well as more formal examinations. A separate room may be allocated in these circumstances.
7. Where the recommendation is that students be permitted to use a scribe, or a reader, the standard allocation of extra time should still apply.
8. Students who are identified as having a specific learning difficulty should be permitted to use coloured overlays in examinations where this is recommended in their assessment of support needs.

Assignment content and completion

The use of subheadings and bullet points should be permissible for all learners, and this fact should be brought to the attention of the students. Where the ability to structure an essay or reports is part of the assignment and the use of bullet points would be acceptable then this should be clearly detailed in the information given to learners when the work is set.

Students who have been identified by the ICB as having a specific learning difficulty should have the option of using a sticker, or some other way of identifying themselves on the examination papers. It is accepted that such learners would have to waive their right to anonymity.

For learners who have specific learning difficulty, spelling and grammar that does not affect the clarity of the writing should not be penalised, however the ICB will deduct a 5% maximum from any students result for poor spelling and grammar that affects the clarity of the writing. Students who have dyslexia should have the work marked out of 95 % (i.e. 100 minus the 5 %) and then their mark scaled up to produce a mark out 100%.

Where students have a scribe in the examination, allowances for poor spelling and grammar do not apply. Spelling and grammar that affects the clarity of the writing should be treated in the same way for all students.

Coursework

All students should meet specified deadlines. However, exceptionally, the College may allow an extension to a deadline. This should be done in conjunction with the ICB and approved by the Head of the Provider concerned.

Early identification of students who are experiencing difficulties that may be dyslexia – related is desirable and providers should endeavour to refer learners to the ICB at the earliest opportunity. All students should be made aware of the demands of work required in subsequent years of the program (e.g. dissertation; final year project) so that any student who has difficulty with the written/organisational element of their studies has ample time to seek support.

Specific Learning Difficulties

It is not possible to detail all the arrangements that may be required by students with every disability. This policy focuses on the most common disabilities encountered but all students who have a disability are given due consideration to having their examination needs accommodated. Each student is considered on an individual basis.

Visually impaired Students

Not all students who have loss of sight require the same adjustments to the examination process. Not all students are braille users and many will prefer to have the material presented in large print. Students may be permitted to present or request material in large print. They may be permitted to undergo formal examination: -

- a. In a separate room
- b. Using an amanuensis (scribe) or reader
- c. With the addition of extra time

Hearing impaired Students

Students who have a hearing loss, written and spoken language can cause significant problems due to a delay in acquiring language in early childhood. This can manifest itself in the learner having a limited vocabulary, poor grammar and syntax, and a general inadequate language comprehension. Care must be taken to ensure that learners are not penalised in the examination process by the use of overly complicated language and some adaptation of the “carrier” or non-technical language may be required.

Students may be permitted: -

1. To have the examination paper overwritten to modify the carrier language (this must be undertaken by a suitably qualified person i.e. teacher of a hearing-impaired student)
2. To have questions communicated in sign language
3. To have questions communicated by oral rephrasing
4. To have questions communicated by lip speaking
5. To sit the examination in a separate room

6. To have extra time

Students with physical disabilities

Students with physical disabilities will have difficulties in accessing examination venues or have difficulties in using traditional (pen/paper) methods of sitting the examination. The students may be permitted to:-

1. Use a reader or amanuensis
2. Sit the exam in a separate room
3. To have extra time

Students with dyslexia

Students with dyslexia may experience difficulties in auditory and/or visual processing of information, or they may have weaknesses in memory skills and difficulties in organising information. They may also experience difficulties affecting handwriting (which may be slow or illegible) and difficulties in spelling; reading and sequencing information. These difficulties may result in them having significant difficulties in expressing themselves in writing. Exam papers for students with dyslexia are written in Arial 12 pt. font with 1.5 line spacing and a ragged right-hand margin. These students may be permitted: -

1. To use electronic spellcheckers or dictionaries
2. To use coloured overlays
3. The use of an amanuensis or reader
4. To mark the answers to multiple choice questions on the question paper rather than the answer sheet
5. To have extra time

Students with disabilities not listed

Students with disabilities will be offered flexibility in the examination process. Many of the alternative examination procedures already detailed are beneficial to students with other disabilities. Each application for alternative examination procedures will be considered on an individual basis to ensure that the student is not disadvantaged in the examination process. For many students the effects of stress will be a key factor to consider, whilst for others the effects of medication may need to be taken into account. The allocation of extra time or the use of a separate venue in which to undergo the assessment, will be key to resolving the examination needs of students with a wide range of disabilities. For certain individuals rest breaks during formal examinations will be beneficial and considered if required by the student.

Online Exams

The provisions of this policy are applicable to both physical and online based exams.

1. The ICB recognises that in accepting a disabled student onto a program of study some adjustments may need to be made with respect to examinations and other assignments in order to accommodate the particular support need of the individual
2. Such adjustments must not compromise the academic credibility of the assessment, nor put the disabled student at a disadvantage compared with abled students by preventing him/her from adequately demonstrating his/her achievement of learning outcomes. Similarly, any adjustments that are put in place must not give the disabled student an unfair advantage over his/her abled peers.
3. Students requesting alternative exams arrangements should first discuss their individual needs with their providers who will then submit a request to the ICB together with any additional motivational documentation. Documentary evidence (medical or psychological) of the student's disability must be produced. This evidence should be no more than 12 months old at the time of the student making his/her initial application for alternative exam arrangements.
4. Students should apply for alternative exam procedures at least six weeks before the date of the exam. Late applications may not be accommodated due to the logistical complexities in making the necessary arrangements at short notice.
5. The ICB will advise the Provider concerned as well as the learner of the outcome of the application as well as what alternative exam arrangements can/should be made to accommodate the student's needs.
6. Students will have an opportunity to take a practice test prior to the day of their exam

Online Exam Methodology

In deciding whether an adjustment for a student with disability is reasonable, all relevant circumstances and information should be taken into account, including the:

1. Impact of the disability on the student's learning, participation and independence;
2. Views of the student with disability, or their associate, about their preferred adjustment
3. Impact of the adjustment on relevant parties, such as other students, staff members, the student's family and the provider;
4. Costs and benefits of making the adjustment; and
5. Need to maintain the essential requirements or academic integrity of the course or program.

Considering reasonable adjustments in the online learning environment cannot occur without first examining the content and usability of online learning environments for all students and disability types. In determining whether the online content is accessible to all students, our Academic team looked at the three principles of Universal Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. The three Principles are:

1. **Perceivable:** Students can take the information in a way that works for them, whether that is sight, sound or touch
2. **Operable:** How students navigate their way through the content, or how they interact with the content
3. **Understandable:** The content is structured in a logical, predictable way

Policy review:

All policies are reviewed yearly to ensure that the content is relevant and processes current.

Associated Documentation:

Examination Policy