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# Access to Fair Assessment, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy for BHS Assessments

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## Access to Fair Assessment, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy for BHS Assessments

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4.3	6	Update examples given in section 8	19.09.2023
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## 1. Introduction

The British Horse Society (BHS) is committed to making sure all its activities are conducted fairly, transparently, objectively and free from bias.

The BHS aims to promote equality, diversity and inclusivity within assessment. Adjustments to assessment may be needed to support candidates to succeed. However health and safety and the integrity of the qualification must not be compromised.

This document has been created in line with the approach taken by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and the Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB). *JCQ's Guidance for Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration* and *FAB's The Application of Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations in Vocational Qualifications*.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Assessments delivered by the BHS Education Team. This includes qualifications awarded by BHS and BHSQ
- BHS recreational awards

This policy is for:

- Candidates
- Assessors and Internal Verifiers
- Assessment centres
- Trainers
- BHS employees
- Others as relevant

## 3. Purpose and objectives

The purpose of this policy is to detail access arrangements for assessments delivered by the BHS Education Team. It also includes the types of access arrangements that can be applied for, how to do this and what happens with the application.

This document will:

- Define access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration
- Detail the BHS's approach to special consideration at BHS assessments
- Detail the BHS's approach for the application of access arrangements including reasonable adjustments within BHS assessments
- Detail the responsibility of the candidate and, if applicable, their trainer when applying for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments within assessments

- Detail the responsibility of the BHS Education Team, BHS approved assessment centres and BHS assessors when managing access arrangements and reasonable adjustments
- Detail the approach to access arrangements for BHS recreational products and awards
- Detail how to complain or appeal against access arrangements and reasonable adjustment outcomes.

It is useful to refer to the following documents and policies when reading this:

- Complaints Policy (Raising a Concern)
- Appeals Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Terms and conditions for BHS Assessments
- Equality and Diversity Policy

#### 4. Terms and definitions

**Access arrangements** include **reasonable adjustments** and **access to fair assessment**.

**Reasonable adjustments** are adjustments made to an assessment. They are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs, a disability or temporary injury to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.

**Access to fair assessment** is where a candidate does not require any adjustments to assessment because their disability, condition or injury does not require it. However, it may be useful for the assessor or others to understand the situation prior to assessment.

A **special consideration** is where the candidate's circumstances, for example, a temporary illness, or some other event outside of the candidate's control, impacts the candidate's ability to take the assessment. For example, an emotional shock or trauma.

**Approved assessment centre** or **assessment centre** is any location where an assessment delivered by the BHS Education Team takes place.

**Candidate** is used throughout the document referring to anyone training towards BHS/BHSQ qualifications and BHS recreational awards, including when they take their assessment. This also includes learners, students, participants and trainees.

**Trainer** is used to describe any professional supporting the candidate to train for BHS/BHSQ qualifications and prepare for their assessment. This could be, but is not limited to, a BHS Accredited Professional Coach or employees within a BHS Approved Riding School.

## 5. BHS's approach to special consideration at BHS assessments

Safety is paramount in equine and as a consequence we are not able to offer special consideration. However candidates may transfer to another assessment or receive a partial refund in line with our booking terms and conditions (see medical transfer or refund).

## 6. BHS's approach for the application of access to fair assessment at BHS assessments

Access to fair assessment would be applied for if the candidate wants to make the assessor/s and/or assessment centre aware of their disability, injury, condition, or other aspect. However, the candidate does not require any adjustments to assessment. This ensures candidates are supported effectively.

An access to fair assessment arrangement is required to be applied for before the assessment takes place and for each assessment the candidate will be taking. Refer to section 10 for further details.

## 7. BHS's approach for the application of reasonable adjustments at BHS assessments

Reasonable adjustments cannot be made to the assessment criteria. To achieve a unit or qualification, a candidate must pass all the assessment criteria within the qualification specification.

Adjustments to assessments:

- must not affect the reliability and validity of the assessment outcomes
- must not give the candidate an unfair advantage
- must be based on the individual needs of the candidate
- must be supported by appropriate and valid evidence.

Reasonable adjustments must be approved before assessment.

The BHS is required by law to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, the impact of the disability on the individual, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors, such as the need to maintain competence standards and health, safety and welfare (for candidates, horses and others), will be taken into consideration.

As the knowledge, skills and understanding required for each qualification is different, the candidate may not need, nor be allowed, the same adjustment for all assessments. For this reason, we cannot transfer a reasonable adjustment between assessments or resits. The candidate is required to submit a reasonable adjustment application with supporting evidence for each assessment they will be taking where they wish to request an adjustment. This is to ensure that we have the specific reasonable adjustment in place to support the candidate.

In some cases, particularly for temporary disabilities or difficulties, (for example an injury), it may be best for the candidate to wait until they are no longer affected by the condition or difficulty before taking their assessment, rather than having a reasonable adjustment applied.

## 8. Reasonable adjustments that can be applied to BHS assessments

During BHS assessments, the types of adjustments offered may include, but not be limited to:

1. The location of the assessment, for example a candidate with a hearing impairment requires a quiet room for oral questioning. Due to BHS assessments taking place on working yards, it may not be possible to implement reasonable adjustment requests of this nature at all assessment centres.
2. Minor changes to the organisation or layout of the assessment area may benefit some candidates with autistic spectrum disorder, a visual or hearing impairment or with physical difficulties. Due to BHS assessments taking place on working yards, it may not be possible to implement reasonable adjustment requests of this nature at all assessment centres.
3. The timing of the assessment. In each qualification specification there is a time allowance for a unit. If you consider you require additional time because of a disability, long term health condition or injury this may be considered via a reasonable adjustment application. Any extra time allowed should accurately reflect the extent to which the completion of the assessment will be affected by the candidate's difficulty. It must not compromise the standards.
4. Changes to the usual assessment arrangements or assessment method. For example, a specific request regarding when, where or how an assessment is delivered. The evidence must fully support the reasons for this type of request, particularly what it is about the disability or condition that requires this change to the assessment.
5. The availability or use of specialist equipment or tack is allowed as long as this is generally commercially available, reflects the candidate's normal way of working and does not put them at an unfair advantage. The equipment must not compromise horse welfare or horse and/or rider/handler safety. The BHS Education Team may provisionally confirm the use of specialist equipment prior to assessment. The Lead Assessor will then inspect this equipment on the day of assessment. They will confirm whether it is suitable to use.
6. The size or type of horse used. For example, for a candidate with a physical disability it may be more suitable to work with a smaller horse or pony within a Care assessment.
7. Support personnel such as British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters.

## 9. Reasonable adjustments that cannot be applied to BHS assessments

To reiterate, where a candidate would like to inform assessors or others of a situation but where no adjustment is required to assessment, the candidate should apply for Access to Fair Assessment. Examples of Access to Fair Assessment, and not reasonable adjustment, may include:

- A candidate has injured their shoulder which limits movement. They want the assessor to be aware of this for the riding unit.

- A candidate has colour blindness and requests the assessors do not identify the show jumps by colour but by number.
- A candidate has diabetes making assessors aware that they may need to take a break to administer medication.
- A candidate requires a helper to move poles.
- Rephrasing or repeating questions during a discussion.

In neither of these cases is assessment affected.

Examples of reasonable adjustments that cannot be applied to BHS Assessments:

- Requests for a reader or scribe are not required for an assessment of a practical nature as reading or writing is not a requirement
- Support personnel such as a chaperone can support a candidate getting to and from the assessment centre and be with the candidate in between tasks. However support personnel (other than BSL interpreters) are not allowed to be with the candidate whilst the assessment is taking place
- Requests to use specialist equipment that puts the candidate at an advantage over others.
- Supervised rest breaks during the completion of a task are usually not allowed; as speed or time is generally a component of the assessment. However, during an assessment, natural breaks in between tasks do occur.

## 10. Process for applying for access arrangements

### 10.1 Application

Applications are managed by the BHS Education Team.

The candidate must have a confirmed assessment booking in place before applying for access arrangements.

Application is via the online form [Access Arrangements Application Form](#). The application must include detailed information regarding the arrangement being requested.

### 10.2 Supporting evidence

Any application for a reasonable adjustment must be supported by evidence which is valid, sufficient and reliable. It should be relevant to the demands of the qualification and the types of activities the learner will be assessed against. This may include, but is not limited to, a signed letter from a medical practitioner or learning support provider, a medical report or psychological assessment report, or a formal letter from the relevant or disability/support group.

To ensure that any adjustment will only provide the candidate with the necessary assistance required without giving them an unfair advantage over others, the application and supporting evidence must clearly explain the extent to which the candidate is affected by the disability or difficulty. The application and supporting evidence must clearly identify the nature of the adjustment being requested. For example, if extra time is being requested, the application must identify how much extra time the candidate may need based on the candidate's normal way of working and informal assessments during learning and training. It is not for the BHS to decide this. The candidate should have experience of and practice in the use or application of the adjustment.

Supporting evidence is not required if applying for access to fair assessment. However, a candidate can submit evidence if they wish.

### 10.3 Application timeframes

Provisions for access arrangements are agreed prior to the assessment day.

**The BHS Education Team cannot accept requests for access arrangements within 15 working days of an assessment.** This ensures there is sufficient time for any adjustment to be arranged. If a candidate requires access arrangements, we recommend they book their assessment at least six weeks in advance and submit an access arrangement application as soon as possible thereafter. The BHS Education Team will aim to accommodate any access arrangements but cannot guarantee this without 15 working days notice.

### 10.4 Application processing

Each application is considered on an individual basis. If we consider that there is insufficient evidence to approve an application, we may request further evidence. For example, we may contact the candidate or a member of their support network (for example a parent or guardian if the candidate is under 18 years of age), their trainer, a professional disability organisation or their medical practitioner. This is so we can gather information about the candidate's requirements, their training, and how we may be able to support them.

If there is a concern the reasonable adjustment requested or the effects of a person's disability or difficulty may have health, safety and/or welfare implications for themselves, for others, or for horses, the BHS Education Team will complete a risk assessment. This will identify risk associated with activities required within the assessment and will take into account any reasonable adjustments.

We will inform the candidate of the outcome of their application. If we cannot confirm an outcome before the assessment, we may cancel or defer the assessment. The candidate will not incur a fee for this if the application was made within the accepted timeframe. The BHS Education Team will not allow the candidate to continue with the assessment without access arrangements in place if this affects health and safety.

### 10.5 Assessment transfers and cancellations

If a candidate that has a confirmed reasonable adjustment wants to transfer their assessment, they can do so following with our [booking terms and conditions](#) for BHS Assessments.

If an assessment is transferred, the candidate should notify the BHS Education Team their Access Arrangement application at the time of transfer. If the transferred date of assessment is within one month of the original assessment date, the access arrangement application will be transferred. If the transferred date of assessment is over one month from the original assessment date, the BHS Education Team will consult with the candidate to confirm if the access arrangement application is still relevant and required.

If an assessment is cancelled and the candidate withdrawn, should the candidate rebook the assessment, a new access arrangement application must be applied for.



## 10.6 Learner checklist and summary for access arrangement applications

**This is guidance only and does not reflect the full scope of the policy. Ensure you refer to this and related policies for further details.**

Guidance checklist for access arrangement applications

1. Identify if a reasonable adjustment or access to fair assessment request is required for your training and BHS assessment. Your trainer should be able to support you with this. Use the definitions within this Policy to help you.
2. With the support of your trainer, decide on what the reasonable adjustment or access to fair assessment request/s will be.
3. Book your BHS assessment. We recommend to book at least six weeks in advance as this gives you time to organise and submit your access arrangement application.
4. If you are requesting a reasonable adjustment, you must have supporting evidence to submit with your application. Make arrangements for this if this is something you need to organise.
5. Submit your access arrangement application as soon as possible after your assessment booking, and no later than 15 working days before the assessment date. If you have booked more than one assessment you will need to submit an access arrangement application for each assessment you have booked.
6. Apply for your access arrangement via our [online form](#). A member of your support network can apply on your behalf. Provide as much information as possible regarding your circumstances and what arrangements you are applying for. If applying for a reasonable adjustment you will need to include supporting evidence with your application at this point. You will also need to tell us:
  - a. Your BHS membership number
  - b. Your date of birth
  - c. Contact details for us to update you on your application
  - d. Trainer or training centre details
  - e. The type of assessment, date and assessment centre you are applying access arrangements for
7. Once the online form is submitted the BHS Education Team will consider your application. During this time, yourself, a member of your support network or your trainer may be contacted to provide further information.
8. The BHS Education Team will inform you on the outcome of your application by email.
9. If you wish to transfer your assessment, you should inform the BHS Education Team of your access arrangement application at the point of transfer.

## 11. Responsibility of the BHS Education Team when managing access arrangements

The BHS Education Team will support candidates by ensuring that:

- The reasonable adjustment provides the candidate with the opportunity to demonstrate competence against the assessment criteria where practicable.
- The assessment is reliable, fair and valid.

The BHS Education Team will support assessment centres and assessors by ensuring that:

- Appropriate guidance is provided on the application of access arrangements and their implementation.

- The BHS Education Team consult with the assessment centre and/or the assessor/s if required.
- Information on confirmed applications is provided, if relevant.
- There is a point of contact to discuss reasonable adjustments with.

The BHS Education Team will monitor the management of access arrangements by:

- Internal quality assurance (IQA) activities may be carried out according to the BHS Education Team IQA policy.
- Maintain, review and analyse a register to ensure that the applications granted are consistent and appropriate.
- Ensuring BHS Education Team employees understand the approach to managing access arrangements.
- Ensuring BHS appointed Internal Quality Assurance assessors understand BHS's approach to managing access arrangements and are able to offer guidance and support.
- Work with BHSQ to resolve any actions regarding access arrangements.

## 12. Requirements for record keeping by the BHS Education Team

The BHS Education Team must maintain records of all applications for audit and monitoring purposes. This includes, for each candidate:

- All submitted access arrangement requests.
- The decision for each application along with evidence of it being communicated to the candidate (or the person who applied if the candidate is under 18 years of age or a vulnerable adult).
- Evidence of the application outcome being communicated to the assessor/s and, if required, the assessment centre.
- Supporting evidence including additional information gathered by the BHS Education Team will be kept for up to three months after the candidate's assessment date. This is in case of complaint or appeal. If a complaint or appeal is lodged, the application and supporting evidence will be kept until the complaint or appeal is resolved. After this, this evidence will be disposed securely.

Records will be maintained securely. Please refer to the BHS Privacy Policy for further information.

## 13. Complaints and Appeals regarding access arrangements

A candidate has the right to complain or appeal a decision by The BHS Education Team regarding their application. The candidate must follow the BHS's complaints and appeals procedure.

## 14. Access arrangements for awards within the BHS Education Team's recreational offer/pathway

This includes:

- Pony Stars
- Horse Explorers
- Challenge Awards.

The training and delivery of these products is organised by the BHS Approved Centre or Accredited Professional Coach. For candidates taking these awards there is no requirement to apply for access arrangements to the BHS Education Team. In these instances, the candidate should discuss with their coach or others their requirements before they begin.

If a candidate is not satisfied with the Approved Centre or Accredited Professional Coach's management of their access arrangements they should follow the complaints procedure for the Approved Centre or Accredited Professional Coach in question.

If the complaint between the candidate and the Approved Centre or Accredited Professional Coach cannot be resolved, the candidate can make a formal complaint to the BHS regarding the Approved Centre or Accredited Professional Coach's conduct. The candidate should follow the BHS's complaints procedure.