

Equalities in Pearson qualifications and related services policy

Document summary

This policy is for centres and learners accessing Pearson qualifications and related services. From design to delivery, we create inclusive, accessible learning that respects everyone's right to participate. This policy sets out those commitments and how we meet them. If you have any queries on this policy, please contact regulation@pearson.com

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Pearson Education Ltd – our mission and values

Our purpose is simple: to help people realize the life they imagine through learning. We believe that every learning opportunity is a chance for a personal breakthrough. That's why our c. 18,000 Pearson employees are committed to creating vibrant and enriching learning experiences designed for real-life impact. We are the world's lifelong learning company, serving customers in nearly 200 countries with digital content, assessments, qualifications, and data. For us, learning isn't just what we do. It's who we are. Visit us at [pearsonplc.com](https://www.pearsonplc.com).

We are regulated by the UK qualifications regulators Ofqual (England), CCEA Regulation (Northern Ireland) and Qualifications Wales (Wales). Our regulatory policies are integral to our approach and articulate how we meet regulatory requirements. These policies are designed to support centres and students and set out clearly our approach to the design, delivery, and award of Pearson qualifications and services.

1. Policy scope

- 1.1 We are committed to ensuring that equity, diversity, and inclusion are embedded into everything we do. We promote a work environment that is equitable, diverse, and inclusive – and where our people can be themselves – so we can reflect the customers and learners we serve. To find out about **Our Employee Experience** and **How we support Learners and Educators** please follow this [link](#). Our **Corporate Policies** can be read [here](#).
- 1.2 This is a policy for **UK-managed qualifications**¹ and related services offered by Pearson Education Limited including Apprenticeship Assessment. In addition, countries outside the UK may need to check with specific national requirements.

2. Policy statement

- 2.1 All learners should have equitable opportunities to access our qualifications, assessments, related products and services. We are committed to ensuring that the content of our qualifications and assessments minimises bias, provides fair opportunities, and does not disadvantage learners who share a particular characteristic. As an awarding organisation, in accordance with Equalities Law, Pearson has clear arrangements for making **Reasonable Adjustments** and for giving **Special Consideration** outlined [here](#). Ofqual's General Requirements for Regulated Qualifications can be found [here](#).

Design and development of our qualifications

- 2.2 We are committed to:
- Developing qualifications, and associated services, that are accessible to, and representative of, the learners taking them, where these are not restricted by government determined conditions.
 - Developing qualifications and assessments which minimise bias and do not disadvantage learners who share a protected characteristic.

¹ 'UK managed qualifications' refers to qualifications and assessments that are offered domestically and/or internationally but are within the scope of UK equalities legislation.

- Making sure our qualifications and related products are of the appropriate demand and quality, and that our learners are empowered by them.
 - Designing qualifications that support the development of skills and abilities so that they enable progression and do not place a cap on learners' aspirations.
 - Developing qualifications and assessments that refer to provision at levels above, alongside, and below, to enable the progression of learning in line with relevant government design factors.
 - Reviewing the additional support provided to learners to improve our knowledge or the impact of our qualifications on learners with additional needs, and to build this into the continuous improvement of our qualifications and assessments.
- 2.3 By doing these things we ensure that learners with a protected characteristic, when they are undertaking one of our qualifications, are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged in comparison to learners who do not share that characteristic.
- 2.4 We continually monitor and review our qualifications, and related products and services, throughout their development and lifecycle to minimise bias and ensure they are inclusive, accessible, and non-discriminatory. We make improvements where necessary and monitor any complaints. Complaints we receive related to inclusivity, accessibility, discrimination, or bias are managed by our complaints manager in line with our complaint procedure. All concerns and feedback are actioned and resolved promptly where possible. We monitor these complaints on a yearly basis to allow us to make improvements to qualifications and/or products from this customer interaction.

Centre approval processes

- 2.5 We work with UK and international centres to ensure that we fulfil our duties under relevant legislation and regulations. In the UK these duties include those within the [Equality Act](#) and associated legislation.
- 2.6 We support this through our approval processes, checking that centres:
- Review whether assessment processes can be carried out in a fair and objective manner.
 - Comply with equal opportunities legislation.
 - Meets the government policy requirements of equality and accessibility regulations.
 - Have an effective and inclusive complaints and appeals procedure.
 - Have arrangements in place for assessing candidates who may require Access Arrangements, i.e. a specialist assessor approved by the head of centre.
- 2.7 We are always striving to improve the accessibility of our customer-facing IT systems, and to introduce new systems that are accessible for our customers.

Delivery and assessment of our qualifications

- 2.8 We strive to provide assessments that can be accessed, used and understood by the widest possible audiences through inclusive design and reasonable adjustment, where necessary.
- 2.9 We are committed to designing assessment that is inclusive, accessible, non-discriminatory, minimises bias and does not disadvantage learners who share a protected characteristic.

Reasonable adjustments and special consideration

- 2.10 In accordance with the Equality Act (2010) and other relevant equalities legislation, to remove or reduce a disadvantage that a disabled learner faces because of their disability compared with a learner who is not disabled, we will consider and make (when appropriate) 'reasonable adjustments' to an assessment. A reasonable adjustment can be unique to an individual learner, although certain types of reasonable adjustment are more commonly made. Some of the most frequently made reasonable adjustments include:
- Extra time to complete an assessment, for example because of a specific learning difficulty that affects the speed at which a learner can process information, or a sensory or physical impairment.
 - A scribe to write down a learner's dictated responses, for example where an impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the learner's ability to write.
 - Providing an examination paper in an enlarged font, usually for a visually impaired learner.
- 2.11 Other examples of reasonable adjustments which are commonly made include:
- Supervised rest breaks.
 - Use of readers or computer readers.
 - Speech recognition technology; or the use of a word processor.
- 2.12 There are many other types of adjustment that are made, depending on the needs of the individual learner.
- 2.13 For those adjustments that are more commonly made, we will follow the [JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments document](#). These set out the types of reasonable adjustment available, and the criteria used to assess whether a learner should be given a particular adjustment. They also set out how a centre should apply for a reasonable adjustment for a disabled learner, the evidence they should provide to support an application, and how the adjustment will be applied. Pearson will consider each request and whether it is reasonable, taking into account factors such as:

- the needs of the disabled learner;
- the impact of the adjustment on the knowledge, skills and understanding being assessed;
- the cost and effectiveness of the adjustment; and
- the likely impact of the adjustment on the learner and other learners.

2.14 For requests about internal assessment in vocational qualifications, please read our [Guidance for reasonable adjustments and special consideration in vocational internally assessed units](#).

Registrations and Certificates

2.15 We believe that all learners should achieve the recognition they deserve from completing a qualification and that this achievement can be fairly compared to the achievement of other learners.

2.16 For more information about how we support all learners in our registrations and certificates please read our [policies for centres, learners, and employees](#).

3. Regulatory references

3.1 UK regulators require all awarding organisations to establish and maintain their compliance with regulatory conditions and criteria. As part of this process, policies and guides that relate to Pearson's status as an awarding organisation will reference any conditions and criteria that they address.

3.2 This policy addresses the following regulatory criteria and conditions:

Qualification regulator or relevant governing body	Regulatory rule or guidance document	Regulatory condition or criteria
Ofqual	General Conditions of Recognition	A1; B1; C2; D2; E4; G2; G6; G7
Ofqual	General Conditions of Recognition	D – Guidance for designing and developing accessible assessments

Qualification regulator or relevant governing body	Regulatory rule or guidance document	Regulatory condition or criteria
Qualifications Wales	Standard Conditions of Recognition	A1; B1; C2; D2; E4; G2; G6; G7
CCEA Regulation	General Conditions of Recognition	A1; B1; C2; D2; E4; G2; G6; G7
Joint Council for Qualifications	General regulations for approved centres	5.6

4. Policy review date

4.1 This policy will be reviewed in April 2027.

5. Version control

Version	Changes	Date
2.8	New Pearson branding Applied throughout	April 2026
2.8	Updated hyperlinks Sections: 1.1; 2.1; 2.6; 2.16	April 2026
2.8	Related documents Section removed	April 2026