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1. Purpose

This policy outlines the principles and procedures for ensuring that all learners are provided with fair access to qualifications and assessments offered by the IRM. It ensures compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and reflects our commitment to inclusivity, fairness, and transparency. The IRM abides by JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) guidelines when making decisions on access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All learners undertaking qualifications awarded by the IRM.
- Staff involved in delivering and assessing qualifications.
- External and internal stakeholders supporting learners.

3. Definitions

Access Arrangements:

Pre-agreed adjustments made to ensure that learners with specific needs can demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities without being disadvantaged. Examples include extra time, the use of assistive technology, or modified question papers. According to JCQ (2024), “Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010* to make ‘reasonable adjustments’”.

Reasonable Adjustments:

Adjustments made to remove or reduce barriers for learners with disabilities or additional needs, in compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

Special Consideration:

Post-assessment measures taken to ensure that learners whose performance has been affected by exceptional circumstances (e.g., illness or bereavement) are not unfairly disadvantaged.

4. Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

Wherever possible, IRM will provide exam arrangements that take account of the candidate's special requirements and specific needs.

Requests for access arrangements must be submitted by the dates shown below:

Session	Qualification	Deadline
March	ICORM	10th February (Only for March 2025 cohort) Otherwise 29th November going forward
June	ERM Module 1 & 2	28th Feb
	FSRM Module 1 & 2	
	Diploma Modules 3 - 6	
	ICORM	
September	ICORM	28th June
December	ERM Module 1 & 2	31st July
	FSRM Module 1 & 2	
	Diploma Modules 3 - 6	
	ICORM	

Special arrangement applications must include:

- details of the circumstances surrounding the special requirements or specific need
- details of the required adjustment to the exam arrangements
- independent documentary evidence of the condition/circumstances upon which the application is based upon.

All applications must be made using the Access Arrangements application form (which can be found in Moodle). All applications must be made using the Access Arrangements application form (which can be found in Moodle – Exam information). Documentary evidence will usually take the form of a doctor's letter. The documentary evidence will be dependent on the disability and the access arrangement being requested. It must:

- confirm that the candidate is suffering from a particular condition
- give specific details of the length of time for which the candidate will need special arrangements

- make a recommendation as to the reasonable adjustment to be made, e.g. the proportion of additional time required, changes to the venue, supervised breaks, computer reader, etc.

Failure to submit the relevant evidence with the application may result in IRM rejecting a special arrangement request.

In the event of continuing conditions, case details will be held on file and appropriate adjustments will be made at each exam diet wherever a candidate submits an exam entry application form and within it alerts the Institute that such arrangements are needed.

Every effort will be made by IRM to make reasonable adjustments for candidates, and they will be advised in writing of any special arrangements or adjustments made.

Access arrangements or reasonable adjustments not reported to IRM before the assessments take place will not be considered later under special considerations (section 5 of this policy).

Reasonable costs arising through special arrangements will normally be absorbed by IRM. However, IRM will reject an adjustment if it involves unreasonable costs, time frames to make the necessary arrangements or affects the security or integrity of the assessment. This will be due to the adjustment not being 'reasonable'.

4.1. Examples of Reasonable Adjustments

4.1.1. Candidates with dyslexia

IRM will make reasonable adjustments taking into account the needs of the candidate with dyslexia. This is to ensure that candidates are not disadvantaged in their assessment. Candidates with dyslexia must supply an adult assessment report undertaken by a chartered psychologist. This assessment should have been conducted after the candidate's eighteenth birthday. This report is used as evidence of a candidate's condition and to identify specific ways in which IRM can help the candidate, for example, provision of a word processor or extra time. The adult assessment report can only be used to allocate additional examination time outside the norm if it specifically states how much additional time should be awarded. Where the adult assessment report does not fulfil these criteria, the candidate will be required to support their application with independent documentary evidence. This

evidence must be supplied by a specialist teacher, an educational psychologist or other appropriately qualified professional.

A maximum of 25% additional time may be given for candidates with dyslexia. Certain circumstances may require further consideration of other allowances, e.g. rest breaks in the exam.

4.1.2. Candidates with writing problems

Writing problems resulting from arthritis, RSI, tendonitis and back/neck pain may require supervised rest breaks in the exam.

4.1.3. Candidates with vision problems

IRM is also able to offer enlarged font size on screen to candidates with sight problems. Students who request enlarged font size on screen are advised to make their requirements clear regarding format and size. A candidate with a severe, substantial and long-term vision impairment may require 50% extra time to effectively access the modified enlarged onscreen exam.

4.1.4. Use of a Scribe

A scribe may be made available to candidates where an application is made with appropriate supporting medical documentation.

On receipt of such an application the Institute will consider the evidence supplied and decide on whether a scribe may be appointed. This appointment will be discussed with the candidate.

Where the use of a scribe is permitted, the candidates will be required to sit the exam in a separate room from other candidates. IRM will discuss the adjustment with the candidate, for each individual application. The scribe will be made aware of the exam regulations. Reasonable costs arising through the need for use of an alternative exam venue will normally be met by IRM. If the costs are unreasonable, the application for access arrangements will be rejected. Where a candidate is working with a scribe, 25% additional time may be made available to the candidate.

4.1.5. Guidance on the use of a scribe

The role of the scribe includes transcribing / selecting the candidate's choice from the on-screen answer options provided. The scribe must not offer any advice on the question, although he/she may read back to the candidate any notes they have written on the wipe clean whiteboard provided by Test Centre's. The candidate may know the scribe, but he/she should not be a close personal or professional colleague. It is also advisable that the scribe is familiar with the language used in risk management. The candidate may wish to practice with the scribe before the exam date.

5. Special consideration

According to the Joint Council of Qualifications (JCQ), *“Special consideration is given to a candidate who has temporarily experienced illness, injury or some other event outside of their control at the time of the assessment. It is applied when the issue or event has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a candidate’s ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her normal level of attainment in an assessment”*.

Special consideration (also referred to as extenuating circumstances) may be given, at IRM’s discretion, to a candidate whose performance in an assessment is felt to have been affected by circumstances beyond the candidate’s control (e.g. a personal trauma shortly before, or at the time of, the assessment, such as bereavement or family crisis; a minor injury immediately before, or illness occurring during, the assessment).

All assessments measure whether the candidate has met the learning aims and outcomes of the module. The overall mark and grade awarded must reflect the level of attainment demonstrated in the assessment. Therefore, only minor adjustments can be made to the candidate’s mark. Making larger adjustments would jeopardise the standard and integrity of the assessment. Where long-term circumstances have prevented the candidate from reaching the agreed standard, it may not be possible to make an adjustment.

Where appropriate, the IRM will consider an application for special consideration cited by individual candidates, provided that such circumstances are supported by appropriate documentation and evidence.

Candidates should advise the Institute in writing of any extenuating circumstances that they feel might have affected their performance at the time of or just prior to an assessment,

using the Special Consideration form (provided on Moodle - Exam information). This must be done as soon as possible and no later than five working days after the date of the assessment. This application must be accompanied by documentary evidence. Evidence for a medical condition must include a medical certificate or doctor's letter. A letter of verification from a candidate's employer will be accepted in cases of a personal nature that do not involve a candidate directly, for example serious illness of an immediate family member or a bereavement of a close family member.

On no account will an application for special consideration be accepted if the five working days timeframe has passed or if the supporting documentation does not accompany the candidate's application.

Examples of circumstances that will not be considered under this policy include late arrival at the test centre due to travel problems, attending the wrong test centre or a sleepless night prior to the assessment. This is not an exhaustive list.

All applications for special consideration will be reviewed by the Institute to ensure that they meet the approved criteria. If the claim does not meet the policy criteria, the candidate will be advised in writing.

If the claim meets the criteria, the Institute will forward full details to the appropriate individual and will confirm this to the candidate.

IRM follows JCQ's guide for special consideration when applying an allowance of additional marks for the assessment affected. The size of the allowance depends on the timing, nature and extent of the illness or event. The maximum allowance given will be 5% of the total raw marks available. The outcome of special consideration applications will be communicated to students along with their results.

IRM will monitor the level of correspondence relating to extenuating circumstances, including the numbers of those accepted and rejected, and report these to the Quality Review and Qualification Development Committee (QRQD).

6. Confidentiality

All applications will be dealt with on a confidential basis. Candidates must mark any such correspondence as 'Private and Confidential – To be opened by addressee only'. Only those Institute personnel directly involved in the processing of special consideration/extenuating circumstances claims will have access to such correspondence.

7. Test Centre Irregularities

Any instances (such as on-going and persistent disturbance or administrative problems) that occurs at test centres at the time of an exam, which may have an impact on the performance of candidates, will be reported to the Institute by Pearson Vue by means of a test centre report. All irregularities will be logged and the IRM will review the nature of the event and decide if special consideration should be given to the affected candidate(s) for that assessment.

Candidates who feel that their performance has been impacted by any test centre irregularity must also report any incidents to the IRM by email, **within 24 hours** of when the incident occurred.

8. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to any updates in line with JCQ guidelines or legislative changes. Feedback from learners and stakeholders will be considered to ensure continuous improvement.