Reasonable adjustments and Special considerations

1. Introduction

This policy is aimed at exam venues, teachers and candidates who are involved with Rockschool qualifications undertaken in Australia and New Zealand. AMEB Rockschool staff (including AMEB State Office staff), examiners and moderators should also refer to this policy. This policy covers all qualifications offered in the Rockschool and PAA syllabuses.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the procedures that candidates, teachers, examiners and centres should follow when implementing reasonable adjustments and special considerations.

This policy is available on our websites at rockschool.ameb.edu.au and rockschoolnz.co.nz.

This policy will be subject to review and monitoring by AMEB Ltd and if necessary will be amended and updated following any feedback from candidates and exam venues. All future versions of this policy will be flagged and will be posted on our websites.

Please note that we treat all records of reasonable adjustments and special consideration arrangements in confidence and will not make details available to any other parties.

If candidates wish to appeal against the decision to decline requests for reasonable adjustments or special consideration arrangements, please refer to our *Appeals Policy,* available to download from our websites at rockschool.ameb.edu.au or rockschoolnz.co.nz.

2. Issue and review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

3. What are reasonable adjustments and special considerations?

AMEB Rockschool is committed to fair and equal assessment of its qualifications. We expect all candidates to have equal and fair access to all the assessments we provide.

We recognise that in some cases there will be a need for some candidates to have access to a range of arrangements which meet their individual needs and provide fair access.

The provision for reasonable adjustments and special consideration arrangements is made to ensure that candidates receive fair recognition of their achievement whilst maintaining the equity, validity and reliability of the assessment. In this way, these arrangements make valid provision for candidates without making assessment easier for candidates.

Candidates requiring access to fair assessment can gain these in the following ways:

- Through reasonable adjustments
- Through special considerations.

Reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is defined as an action that will reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the candidate at a substantial disadvantage during assessment.

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the integrity of the assessment, but may involve:

- Making changes for individuals to the standard assessment arrangements, for example allowing candidates extra time to complete the assessment
- Adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in Braille for those with visual impairments
- Providing access to facilitators during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or a reader
- Re-organising the assessment room, such as removing visual stimuli for an autistic candidate.

Reasonable adjustments are requested and approved before the assessment takes place. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the assessment of a candidate's work.

Every request for a reasonable adjustment will be considered on a case-by-case basis by AMEB Ltd. What is reasonable in terms of an adjustment to the assessment will depend on the individual circumstances, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment.

Candidates may also visit their State Office website for further details on state policies.

Special considerations

Special considerations are different to reasonable adjustments as they apply to a temporary illness or adverse circumstance that could affect the candidate's performance. This could be taken into account before, during or after the assessment. AMEB will consider applications for special consideration based on the information provided on a case-by-case basis.

4. Submitting applications

Candidates and centres in Australia should send requests for reasonable adjustments and special considerations to their state office.

Candidates and centres in New Zealand should send requests for reasonable adjustments and special considerations to AMEB Federal Office.

Before the assessment

A candidate may apply for special consideration prior to the assessment (for example if they have broken their arm a few weeks beforehand), although it would normally be more appropriate to apply for a reasonable adjustment where the condition is understood to be permanent rather than temporary.

Exam venues, teachers and/or candidates need to provide sufficient information about the disability, illness, injury or other circumstance and whether they feel that this is permanent or temporary. AMEB would then make a decision about how to process the application. In the case of a permanent disability this would be processed as a reasonable adjustment and for a temporary illness or indisposition this would be processed as a special consideration.

Examples of special consideration could be:

- deferring the examination to a later date
- allowing an adjustment to the examination process - these could be similar in nature to those granted for reasonable adjustments.

During an assessment

In some cases, a candidate can be affected by an event which happens on the day of the examination or in the examination itself. In these cases, an examiner, invigilator or assessor would make a decision about how the performance was affected and record a special consideration.

Examples of considerations which may be given could include:

- An assessment taking place later in the examination session
- The examination being deferred to a later date.

After the assessment

Exam venues, teachers or candidates may in some cases apply for a special consideration after an assessment if there was a circumstance that affected the candidate's performance. Examples of special considerations which would be considered include:

- serious disturbance or disruption during the examination such as a fire alarm or power failure
- temporary illness, injury or indisposition either prior to, or during, the examination (but assuming that the candidate attempted to, or did, complete the examination, and did not elect to withdraw)
- illness during the examination of the examiner, pianist or music operator
- recent bereavement or terminal illness of a member of the candidate's family, close friend or pet
- serious and disruptive domestic crisis leading to acute anxiety.

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A candidate will not be eligible for special consideration due to:

- very minor disturbances during an examination which did not materially impact on their ability to demonstrate the requirements of the examination
- a permanent disability or difficulty which is known about at the time of entry to the examination (in these cases candidates should apply for reasonable adjustments).

For Australian candidates, the first point of reference should be their state office. Please see applicable policies on the relevant state office website.

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