

**ACCESS TO ASSESSMENT
POLICY FOR CANDIDATES
REQUIRING REASONABLE
ADJUSTMENTS**

**The Information Systems
Examinations Board (ISEB)**

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1 Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 aims to end discrimination which many disabled people face and it is now unlawful for Examination Institutes and Training Providers (among others) to discriminate against disabled people.

Examinations should be a fair test of an individual's knowledge and what they are able to do. If someone has a disability or learning difficulty, the usual format of the examinations may not be suitable. Adjustments may need to be made for them and should not be seen as concessions to make the examination easier. They just allow an individual to show their ability and knowledge without being disadvantaged by the assessment format itself.

This document defines the Information Systems Examinations Board (ISEB) policy in assisting candidates taking our examinations and we also hope that this document will increase a Training Provider's knowledge and understanding about the Disability Discrimination Act, associated legislation such as the Data Protection Act and the opportunities that are available to accommodate disabled candidates who wish to gain any of the ISEB qualifications.

The information in this document forms can be used by our Training Providers and candidates for guidance and we have tried to ensure that the information is correct. However, we would strongly recommend that you read the relevant primary and secondary sources or take legal advice if you wish to get clarification on any of the issues raised in this document.

2 ISEB Reasonable Adjustments Policy Statement

ISEB seeks to provide equal access to the ISEB examinations for all candidates, ensuring that there are no unnecessary barriers and that any reasonable adjustments for candidates preserve the validity, reliability and integrity of the qualification.

ISEB will endeavour to accommodate the needs of candidates with a particular examination requirement, according to individual circumstances, ensuring such candidates are not disadvantaged or advantaged in relation to other candidates and that certificates accurately reflect candidate attainment.

ISEB will give every consideration to requested additional time, ensuring that there are no unnecessary barriers to the examination and candidate attainment. However, all requests will be considered on the information received. Requests for additional time which do not meet the ISEB special needs examination arrangements policy will be declined.

3 Candidates who may require reasonable adjustments

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines disability as a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term adverse affect on a person's ability to perform normal day to day activities. The following individuals will be considered for reasonable adjustments:-

- Candidates who have a permanent physical impairment;
- Candidates who have a permanent medical condition;
- Candidates who have a hearing impairment;
- Candidates who have a visual impairment;
- Candidates who have specific learning difficulties;
- Candidates who suffer temporary illness, injury, indisposition.

4 Overview of reasonable adjustment arrangements which may be permitted by ISEB include: -

- Allocation of additional time;
- Support of a Personal Assistant
- Rest / Time Breaks;
- Use of a communicator / the support of a signer ;
- Amanuenses support/ reader;
- Use of special disability aids / assistive technology;
- Support of a reader;
- Re-sits, in the case of temporary illness / injury ;
- Use of appropriate examination locations.

ISEB will consider all requests in line with the ISEB 'Reasonable Adjustment Policy statement'.

5 Allocation of additional time

Additional time may be permitted, as appropriate to the individual candidate, in line with this document ensuring such candidates are not disadvantaged or advantaged in relation to other candidates.

Applications for additional time will be individually considered and decisions may vary according to the exact nature of the candidate's everyday needs and usual method of working.

All requests for additional time will be considered on the information supplied, (see *procedures for requesting reasonable adjustments*) however; in consideration of the amount of additional time requested ISEB must ensure:-

- the credibility of the qualification is maintained
- the validity, reliability and integrity of the examination is preserved
- candidates are not given, or do not appear to be given an unfair advantage.

6 Detailed reasonable adjustment arrangements

6.1 Support of Personal Assistant

Some candidates may require someone to help with personal care / assistance during the examination. Such help should maintain the effectiveness of the examination giving no unfair advantage.

6.2 Rest / Time Breaks

ISEB recognises that reasonable adjustments may be required by some candidates who suffer fatigue, physical or mental disabilities. These candidates may be disadvantaged by specific set times, to this end ISEB will consider requests for rest and time breaks, which may be consolidated into the decision of the amount of extra time permitted.

Breaks during the examination must be supervised by the ISEB appointed invigilator and the duration of the break agreed at the time that the request is approved. The candidate must not discuss the examination with any third party during any break period.

6.3 Communication Support / Support of a Signer

ISEB recognises that candidates who have a hearing impairment may or may not be disadvantaged without communication support / signer. ISEB will consider requests to meet a candidate's preferred support during the examination. The role of the communicator / signer is to converse when requested to do so by the candidate. This role may include saying the word or phrase, re-phrasing, using sign language, or the use of writing.

Similarly, consideration will be given to support candidates with visual impairment which may include amanuenses support and / or a reader, additional time, time breaks, modified equipment and a support minder.

6.4 Amanuenses

An amanuensis is defined as a scribe or writer who, in an examination, writes down the candidate's dictated answers to the questions. The amanuensis must write down the answers exactly as they are dictated. They must not give factual help nor offer any suggestions or advice which could be seen as giving the candidate an unfair advantage. Amanuensis support may be required by candidates who have a physical impairment, a visual impairment or a specific learning difficulty.

6.5 Use of special disability aids / assistive technology

Where possible, the candidate should use their own equipment. Such equipment should be verified in order to ensure there is no hidden information or access to information which would give an unfair advantage to the candidate. If their own equipment cannot be used, assistive technology which mirrors that of the candidate may be provided. The list below is indicative of the most common assistive technologies available, but should be used as a guideline only.

Hardware

- Alternative keyboards and mice including:-
Braille labelled keyboards or home-row key indicators
Joysticks / trackerballs / mouse keys on the keyboard
Mouth Stick
- Braille Display
- Switches (alternative input to keyboard and mouse, used by candidates with physical disabilities)
- Large monitors
- Headphones and volume adjustment for use with voice output/input software packages

Software

- Operating System Accessibility features such as sticky keys, filter keys, mouse speed adjustments
- Screen magnification software
- Screen reading software (supporting both users with visual impairment and dyslexic users)
- Voice Recognition software

ISEB recognises that it may be necessary for a candidate to use of PC in certain circumstances. The candidate must only have access to the relevant programmes and the PC must be checked by the invigilator prior to the commencement of the examination. Training Providers must notify the relevant examinations officer that a PC is necessary so that we can ask the invigilator to arrive early to check that the PC is 'clean' - access to relevant applications only (e.g. word).

6.6 Support of a reader

ISEB recognises that candidates with a physical impairment or specific learning difficulties may require the support of a reader. A reader is defined as a person who will read to a candidate all or any part of the examination or candidate's answers. The reader must not give factual help nor offer any suggestions or advice which could be seen as giving the candidate an unfair advantage.

6.7 Use of Appropriate Examination locations

ISEB recognises that examinations may be carried out in various locations i.e. Training Provider's premises, ISEB's premises, hotels. Every location used must allow for access by a disabled person and provide adequate disabled facilities. Locations must conform to the requirements for Parts 3 and 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Training Providers are responsible to ensure that the venue for courses / examination meet the relevant criteria. ISEB will only have responsibility for access for on-site / public examinations venues.

6.8 Temporary illness / injury

Should candidates suffer temporary illness or indisposition at the time of examination, reasonable adjustments may be considered. It is the candidate's responsibility to notify the ISEB appointed invigilator or other appropriate member of staff that there is a problem immediately. ISEB will not consider any appeals from the candidate or Training Provider if this procedure is not followed prior to the candidate leaving the examination venue.

6.9 Other reasonable adjustment arrangements

The reasonable adjustment arrangements listed are not intended to be comprehensive. Other reasonable adjustments will be considered by ISEB in line with the reasonable adjustments policy.

7 Procedures

Details of requesting reasonable adjustments for candidates with a particular examination requirement:-

Requests for reasonable adjustments must be made in writing to the Examinations Manager at ISEB, completing the 'Reasonable Adjustment' form a minimum of four weeks before the examination date.

Completed forms with supporting documentary evidence, should be sent to the Examinations Manager, Stef Venn at ISEB, The British Computer Society, 4th Floor, Minton Place, Station Road, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN1 1AB.

8 Documentary Evidence

Documentary evidence, relating to the nature and severity of the disability, from an appropriate independent professional expert must be obtained by the Training Provider (or ISEB in the event of a direct entry examination or public sitting). Sources of appropriate documentary evidence are shown below. Where appropriate, the information should be recent evidence (within two years of the request).

Disability	Examples	Source of Evidence
Physical	Cerebral palsy, spina bifida	Appropriate professional
Mental	Schizophrenia, chronic depression	Appropriate professional
Visual	Blindness	Appropriate professional of Certificate of Registration as blind or partially sighted
Hearing	Hearing Impairment	Appropriate professional
Specific Learning Difficulties	Dyslexia	Report form a Learning Support professional or educational psychologist

Information about the physical or mental health of condition of a person is 'sensitive personal data' and therefore the Training Provider and ISEB is required by law (Data Protection Act) to take additional precautions when dealing with personal sensitive data because of the nature of the information.

ISEB will accept three types of documentary evidence:

- A copy of the original medical / psychological evidence
- A letter from the professional expert which summarises the medical / psychological evidence
- A letter from another awarding body

In all cases, the evidence should only be sent to ISEB if the candidate has provided written consent.

9 Details of authorising specific reasonable adjustments

The Examinations Manager will consider each request in line with the ISEB reasonable adjustments policy. Candidates will be informed in writing of the decision and should ISEB require further clarification this may be requested by telephone or e-mail.

10 Disclosure and Confidentiality

There is a duty on Training Providers and ISEB (for direct entry candidates only) to take steps to find out if a candidate is disabled in order to make adjustments. However, Training Providers are advised not to ask for or disclose any information about a candidate's disability unless they need to. Candidates should be encouraged to advise the appropriate person of his/her disability at the point of registration for the course / examination.

Once the information has been obtained, the Training Provider/Examination Institute is required by law to process the data 'fairly and lawfully'. This means that the candidate must know what information the relevant organisation holds about them, what they will do with it and who this information may be disclosed to. Information about whether or not someone is disabled should only be available to those people who need to know in order to discharge the Provider's/Examination Institutes' responsibilities towards the candidate under the DDA.

ISEB will not pass on in written form any sensitive information without the candidate's expressed consent.

10.1 Summary of Steps to take before passing on information

- Obtain details of the candidate's needs
- Keep a record of the details
- Advise him who the information will be passed to and what the information will be used for
- Obtain his written consent to pass on the information to the relevant parties

ISEB will keep in confidence all correspondence and documentation received in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The Disability Discrimination Act identifies 'sensitive personal data' as a sub set of 'personal data' and this includes any information relating to a candidate's disability.

11 ISEB Record Keeping / Monitoring and Reporting

The Examinations Manager will record and evaluate all candidate requests, outcomes and feedback. This data will ensure consistency over time and support a BCS annual report on the use of reasonable adjustments, which will be available to the Regulatory Authorities on request.

The Disability Discrimination Act requires that the information held be accurate, relevant and up-to-date and should not be deemed 'excessive'. Information will be kept secure (either in a locked filing cabinet or for electronic information with associated passwords). Information will be destroyed five years after the candidate has finished his course / examination. This information will be available to the candidate if requested.

12. Guidance on the use of ISEB approved reasonable adjustment arrangements

Arrangements for the use of a third party / communicator / reader during the examination will normally be the responsibility of ISEB, which will include the responsibility to supervise competent appointments relevant to the candidate's individual need. However, the candidate may recommend the use of a particular person or provide their own equipment subject to the approval of ISEB.

Strict guidelines during the examination must be maintained, for example:

1. The support of a reader should be solely to read text and not to perceive interpretation or advise the candidate. The reader should not offer suggestions or any other support, which could be seen as giving the candidate an unfair advantage. The reader should be a person independent of the candidate; however, in fairness to the candidate, a candidate should have had practice working with a reader in preparation for the examination.
2. A candidate with a visual impairment may have been approved to have the support of a minder during the examination. It is the responsibility of the invigilator to ensure the remit of involvement does not give the candidate an unfair advantage or indeed disadvantage the candidate.
3. Modification to equipment/disability aids and input display devices including adapted keyboard, large monitor, synthesisers must be approved by ISEB for the individual candidate's need. The computer must be used solely during the examination by the candidate only and not by a third party supporting the candidate in a further capacity.
4. Rest / Time Breaks during the examination must be supervised and the duration of the break agreed with ISEB. The candidate must not discuss the examination with any third party during the break period.
5. ISEB will ensure that all public examination's location and facilities for candidates with particular needs meet the requirements of the candidate. It is the responsibility of the Training Provider to ensure that examinations held at their premises meet the requirements of the candidates. Should the location need to accommodate a third party support, a room separate from the other candidates must be provided.
6. ISEB will ensure that the invigilator has prior information of each candidate's reasonable adjustments and names and remits of any third party support that has been approved by ISEB.

Reasonable Adjustments Form

Candidates who require reasonable adjustment arrangements must advise ISEB at least four weeks before the date of the examination. The information on this form is used internally within ISEB only and will not be shown on the candidate's certificate.

ISEB Examination	
Examination Date	
Candidate's Name	
Candidate's Address	
Candidate's email address	
Candidate's phone number	

Training Provider's Name	
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Special Needs (Delete as Appropriate)	
Visually Impaired	Hard of Hearing
Physical Impairment	Dyslexia
Speech Impediments (Oral Examination Only)	Other (Please Specify)

Special Requirements (Delete as Appropriate)	
Reader / Scribe	Interpreter
Element of Hardware/Software (Please specify)	Lip Speaker
Large Print	Braille
Coloured Paper	Other (Please Specify)

I require		minutes additional time.
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The basic allowance for ISEB is additional time in order to complete the examination. Up to 50% additional time may be allocated to a candidate dependent on the special needs of the candidate. If there are additional requirements they should be documented and will be approved on a case by case basis.

All applications must be supported by relevant documentary evidence (<i>for example, a doctor's note or medical certificate.</i>) Please tick the box to confirm that you have enclosed the relevant form(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Special Needs Examinations Arrangements Policy

Signed:Candidate

Signed:.....Course Director

Date:.....

Forms should be returned to:

Post	Stef Venn, Examinations Manager (Reasonable Adjustments) , ISEB, 4 th Floor, Minton, Place, Station Road, Swindon, SN1 1AB
Fax	01793 434 624
Email	svenn@hq.bcs.org.uk

ISEB Use Only	
Amount of Additional Time Approved	
Approved By	
Training Provider Contacted (Date)	
Information Recorded	

