CIBSE Fair Access Policy

Overview and Scope of this policy

This policy relates to End Point Assessments (EPA) provided by the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE).

The principle purpose of this policy is to ensure that no apprentice registered to undertake their End Point Assessment with CIBSE is advantaged or disadvantaged by any process instigated by the Institution. The Equality Act 2010 requires End-Point Assessment Organisations (EPAO) to make reasonable adjustments to ensure an apprentice who is disabled as defined in the Act are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to apprentices who are not disabled.

Assessment should be a fair test of apprentices’ knowledge and what they are able to do, however, for some apprentices the usual format of assessment may not be suitable. CIBSE will ensure that any assessment does not prevent an apprentice from completing their EPA with us. The provision for reasonable adjustments and special condition arrangements are made to ensure that apprentices receive recognition of their achievement so long as the equity, validity and reliability of the assessments can be assured. Such arrangements are not concessions to make assessments easier for apprentices, nor advantages to give apprentices a head start.

There are two ways in which access to fair assessment can be maintained, which are through:

• Reasonable adjustments – agreed before the assessment takes place; or
• Special considerations – applied post assessment.

CIBSE is committed to fair access to its products and services. The Institutions’ membership department will be responsible for ensuring that all within the scope of this policy are aware of the requirements of the policy.

This policy applies to all:

• Apprentices that register with the institution for their apprenticeship end point assessment
• Individuals engaged by CIBSE to carry out or be part of its End Point Assessment provision
• CIBSE staff that may be involved in the development or delivery of the end point assessment provision.

Definition of reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the apprentice at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the integrity of what is being assessed. Reasonable adjustments are approved or set in place before the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the apprentice access to the assessment activity. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the
assessment of an apprentice’s work. End-Point Assessment Organisations and partners are only required by law to do what is ‘reasonable’ in terms of giving access. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors, such as the need to maintain competence standards and health and safety, will also be taken into consideration.

If an apprentice requires arrangements for reasonable adjustments they should provide CIBSE with evidence of their learning needs or medical condition. CIBSE will ensure that suitably qualified personnel check that the evidence is current and relevant to the apprentice.

**Definition of special considerations**

Special considerations can be applied after an assessment if there is a reason the apprentice may have been disadvantaged during the assessment. Reasons for special consideration could be temporary illness, injury or adverse circumstances at the time of the assessment. Apprentices cannot enter a plea for special considerations for assessment solely on the grounds of disability or learning difficulty. Special consideration should not give the apprentice an unfair advantage. In some cases it may not be possible to apply special consideration. It may be more appropriate to offer the apprentice an opportunity to retake the assessment at a later date or to extend the registration period so that the apprentice has more time to complete the assessment activity. All apprentices regardless of their special consideration must still meet our minimum requirement to achieve their apprenticeship. Any special consideration requests must be submitted as soon as possible after the assessment and no later than 10 working days after the assessment has taken place.

**Management of Fair Access**

Apprentices will be asked, through the application process, to request any access arrangements or reasonable adjustments, providing evidence as appropriate.

Apprentices will be encouraged to request access adjustments if they become apparent post-application to the End point Assessment.

CIBSE will consider all access requests relating to end-point assessments that are received, except where acceptance of the request is not logistically possible or where acceptance would undermine the reliability or integrity of the assessment.

CIBSE will provide training and guidance as appropriate to staff and assessors carrying out and undertaking end point assessments.

**Reviewing the policy**

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.