

# Guidelines for Reasonable Adjustments

## Introduction

ART is committed to the principles of equality of opportunity. ART accepts that any assessments under its schemes are an assessment of individual competence and we need to ensure that all ringers are given access to fair assessment. If a teacher or new ringer is unable to show competence in the ways recommended by the scheme we will be flexible and will allow reasonable adjustments to adapt the assessment where appropriate. Throughout the document 'ringer' refers to either a ringer completing a Learning the Ropes Level or a teacher undertaking an M course assessment.

## Reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the ringer at a substantial disadvantage in the practical assessment situation.

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the reliability or validity of what needs to be assessed. All adjustments should be consistent with the ringer's normal way of working and must not give the ringer an unfair advantage over others.

Reasonable adjustments must be approved by the ART Equality Panel before the assessment takes place and cannot be applied retrospectively. They constitute an arrangement to give the ringer access to a specific assessment of a particular Learning the Ropes (LtR) Level or a specific M course assessment. It should not be assumed that previous reasonable adjustments can be automatically be carried forwards to later assessments.

We will only do what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access to the assessment. 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.

## Health and safety considerations for assessments

There are no circumstances when the health and safety of any ringer should be compromised in the name of an assessment. In a practical activity, if there is a concern that the effects of a person's disability or difficulty may have health and safety implications for him/herself and for others, a suitably qualified person should carry out a risk assessment related to the ringer's particular circumstances. The risk assessment should identify the risks associated with the particular activity, but should also take account of any reasonable adjustments put in place for the ringer which may remove or reduce the risk. The risk assessment may reveal that it is not possible for the ringer to fulfil all the requirements of the assessment.

## About the Ringer

Ringers will be eligible for reasonable adjustments if their performance during an assessment is likely to be substantially affected by a particular impairment. Many of these ringers will be defined as being disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act and the Equality Act 2010.

An adjustment to the assessment should only be considered where the difficulty experienced places the ringer at a substantial disadvantage.

A ringer does not necessarily have to be disabled (as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act/ Equality Act 2010) to be entitled to reasonable adjustments to the assessment. Every ringer who is disabled will also not necessarily be entitled to or need an adjustment to the assessment.

Ringers should first look to develop their skills and coping mechanisms which would minimise, or remove the need for any adjustment.

Other solutions should always be sought where possible, before a reasonable adjustment can be considered by the Equality Panel. For example if the ringer is too slight to be able to ring their home tower tenor bell to a quarter peal, they could either ring at another local tower with lighter bells, or the treble bell could be called into sixth place and would enable them to cover for the quarter peal on a lighter bell. With a simulator, it is also possible to make the treble the tenor so a slight person can ring a quarter peal covering. Another example is working on improving bell handling technique so that the ringer's ringing style is more efficient, which would enable a ringer to ring for longer periods and with sufficient practice they could build up to ringing a Quarter Peal.

The Learning the Ropes assessments are not time limited, some ringers take longer than others to develop the technique and stamina to ring Quarter Peals, so length of elapsed time since starting learning to ring or comparison with other local learners who have made faster progress would not be a reason to consider an adjustment.

## Supporting evidence

In order to ensure that any adjustment to the assessment will only provide the ringer with the necessary assistance without giving him or her an unfair advantage over others, we need clear information about the extent to which the ringer is affected by the disability, or difficulty. Where the implications of the difficulty are not obvious, such as for learning difficulties, the ringer (or their teacher) will have to provide additional evidence of the effect of the impairment on the ringer's performance in the assessment.

The supporting evidence should include written reports of assessments of the ringer's needs, including copies of current medical or specialist evidence. Information about a ringer's disability should only be sent to ART with the ringer's consent and it will be held in strictest confidence and securely destroyed after the Equality Panel have met.

## Making Reasonable Adjustments

These principles should be followed when making decisions about a ringer's need for adjustments to the assessment:

- Ringers should potentially be able to achieve all the assessment requirements.
- Adjustments to the assessment should not compensate the ringer for lack of knowledge and skills.
- The ringer must be able to cope with the content of the assessment and be able to work at the level required for the assessment.
- Any adjustment to the assessment must not invalidate the requirements of the assessment.
- Any adjustment to the assessment must neither give the ringer an unfair advantage nor should it disadvantage the ringer.
- The qualification of a ringer who had an adjustment to the assessment must have the same credibility as that of any other ringer.
- Any adjustment to the assessment must be based on the individual need of the ringer.
- Any adjustment to the assessment should reflect the ringer's normal way of working providing this does not affect what is being assessed in any way.
- Any adjustment to the assessment must be supported by evidence which is sufficient, valid and reliable.
- All adjustments to the assessment must be approved by the Equality Panel in advance.

## Range of reasonable adjustments

Examples of reasonable adjustments are:

- Allowing a modified assessment to take account of a ringer's physical disability. For example a ringer with only one hand would need a modified LtR L1 & L2 handling assessment.
- Allowing 'breaks' during the assessment may be considered in certain circumstances. For example this may include allowing a ringer to ring a number of shorter touches which together add up to at least the length of a Quarter Peal, eg ringing 2 touches of 720 changes within a short time period. Quarter Peals 'test' a range of skills such as good bell handling technique, stamina, concentration over a long period, solid knowledge of the method being rung, ability to count place, ropesight, etc, so it is important that any reasonable adjustment made still tests all these skills to a sufficient degree. It must always be borne in mind that a ringer who had an adjustment to the assessment must have the same credibility as that of any other ringer completing that assessment.
- Changes in the organisation of the assessment room. For example to ensure any sensory stimuli are removed/reduced for a ringer on the autism spectrum.
- Allowing a practical assistant to help with communication during the assessment, for example a signer. A practical assistant will not be allowed to assist with those specific skills that are the focus of the assessment. For example, they cannot undertake any part of the bell handling when assessing a Learning the Ropes Level.

## Applying for a reasonable adjustment

Ringers (or their teachers) have to apply to request that reasonable adjustments can be made to the assessment to the ART Equality Panel. Initial enquiries should be submitted to the [ART Administrator](#). Ringers (or their teachers) will need to provide the ART Equality Panel with the following information:

- Ringer's name
- Ringer's experience to date and what has been done so far to help them overcome the difficulties they are experiencing
- Assessment and level (For example Learning the Ropes Level 3, M1 Assessment)
- Reason for the adjustment. We need clear details of the effect of the disability on the ringer's performance in the assessment.
- Supporting evidence as outlined above
- For LtR Level 3-5 a short video of the ringer ringing, so that bell handling technique can be considered.

The ART Equality Panel meet periodically and will discuss the ringer's situation at the next available meeting of the panel and come to a decision about whether a suitable reasonable adjustment can be identified.

The underlying principle is always that the qualification of a ringer who had an adjustment to the assessment must have the same credibility as that of any other ringer completing the same assessment.

The ringer (or their teacher) will then be notified about the decision of the ART Equality Panel.