

Equal Opportunities Policy

PLASA is committed to providing equal opportunities for all candidates seeking to gain its awards. We will ensure all our centres and candidates know how to gain access to this policy.

Commitment to Equality and Fairness

PLASA is committed to fully meeting the requirements of all current legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act; Employment Equality Regulations; Equal Pay Act; Human Rights Act; Race Relations Act; Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and Sex Discrimination Act.

Our policy is to ensure that no candidate receives less favorable treatment than any other on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, religion, sexuality, political belief or disability. We are determined to ensure that no candidate is disadvantaged by any conditions or procedures, which cannot be justified as relevant to the assessment process.

PLASA will ensure that it fully meets its legal obligations and that all clients centres and candidates receive the highest possible standards of service at all times and that its actions do not discriminate directly or indirectly against any individual or group.

To meet this commitment we will ensure:

- Assessments are fair for all candidates and based on the awards requirements only and do not discriminate.
- Promotional material, systems and written documents meet the diversity of our candidates and support equality of opportunity.
- Continue to meet and implement current legislation on Equal Opportunity and continually develop all of our staff, anyone involved in the qualification delivery to maintain and implement this awareness.
- Ensure that assessment procedures do not create barriers to achievement for candidates.
- Our quality procedures apply fair processes.
- We monitor equality of opportunity, reasonable adjustments and special considerations.

Candidates with Particular Assessment Requirements.

In the case of candidates with particular assessment requirements, every effort is made to provide facilities to enable the candidate to benefit fully from our services, provided they are able to satisfy the stated requirements and in the case of the medical reasons, provide the centre with a certificate from a medical doctor to say that they are safe to carry out the assessment.

Centres will have personnel or access to specialist external support to ensure assistance is provided to candidates.

Reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the candidate at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. They must not affect the reliability and validity of the assessment outcome.

PLASA will ensure that all reasonable arrangements and adjustments will be made to ensure no-one is disadvantaged by PLASA's registration and assessment process. We will work to minimise the need to make reasonable adjustments when we develop qualifications and assessment to ensure we maintain the integrity of the qualification.

PLASA will also ensure that any reasonable adjustments:

- Do not invalidate the assessment requirements set out in the specification for any of our qualifications.
- Reflect the current needs of the individual candidates and as far as possible reflect current working practices.
- Do not give unfair advantages to candidates compared to those where no reasonable adjustment is made.
- Maintain the relevance, reliability and comparability of the assessment.

Reasonable adjustments are approved or set into place before the assessment takes place. The work produced by the candidate is assessed exactly the same as for any other candidate on the same programme.

PLASA meets the requirements of the law in terms of what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access to assessment, however the need to meet competence standards and health and safety will not be compromised and will be taken into consideration.

Each reasonable adjustment will be reviewed on an individual basis and practicality, cost implications and effectiveness of any adjustment will be taken into account.

Examples of types of Reasonable Adjustment that could be given:

1. Request for Additional Time

Changing usual assessment arrangements, so allowing a candidate extra time to complete the assessment activity, or requests for supervised rest breaks.

2. Adaptation of Assessment Material

Adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials with the font enlarged, Braille etc.

3. Use of Assistance

Providing assistance during assessment, such as; sign language, interpreter, or a reader.

4. Environment

Re-organising the assessment room, or location for the assessment.

5. Change of Assessment method

Changing the assessment method, for example from a written assessment to a spoken assessment

6. Assistive technology

Using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice activated software

Centre's have guidelines on eligibility and procedures for reasonable adjustments variations, which are dependent on the qualification and the individual candidates circumstances.

Special Considerations

A special consideration is an action taken after the assessment date that allows candidates who have been disadvantaged by temporary illness, injury, indisposition or adverse circumstances at the time of the assessment.

Special Considerations are given following a booked scheduled assessment to a candidate:

- Who is present for the assessment but for whom may be disadvantaged by a temporary illness, injury or adverse circumstances that arose at or near the time of assessment.
- Who misses part of the assessment or cannot complete within the required registration expiry date due to circumstances beyond their control. For example has to work abroad for a period of time; in this case the assessment or registration timeline will be frozen for that period, the remaining time left to complete the qualification will be calculated using the original date that PLASA were informed i.e. departure date to the date in which the original registration would have expired.

The opportunity for re-assessment will be presented to the candidate at no extra fee incurred unless:

PLASA | QUALIFICATIONS

Equal Opportunities Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy (master) updated 11.03.2010.doc

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- No evidence has been supplied to the centre for the reasons for the lack of attendance if the reason is medical then a certificate from a medical doctor may be requested.
- Any part of the assessment is missed due to personal arrangements including holidays or unauthorized absence.

Special Consideration should not give the candidate an unfair advantage over another candidate. The centre should keep records of any special considerations for External Verification records.

The qualifications currently delivered allow opportunities for re-assessment, therefore PLASA qualifications does not issue aegrotats at this stage. This policy will be reviewed by the requirements of the type of qualifications that are delivered.

Candidates seeking reasonable adjustment or special considerations should contact the centre for the procedure and application forms. Alternatively, please contact the Centre Coordinator at PLASA Qualifications - contact details are at the bottom of this document.