



## **Equal Opportunities Policy**

PLASA is committed to providing equal opportunities for all candidates/trainees seeking to gain its awards.

We will ensure all our centres and candidates/trainees know how to gain access to this policy.

### **1.0 Commitment to Equality and Diversity**

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/trainee 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 aim to recognise, respect and value people's differences to contribute and realise their full potential by promoting an inclusive culture for all assessment/training staff and candidates/trainees. We are determined to ensure that no candidate/trainee is disadvantaged by any conditions or procedures, which cannot be justified as relevant to the assessment/training process.

PLASA will ensure that it fully meets its legal obligations and that all clients, centres and candidates/trainees 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:**

1. Assessment/training is fair for all candidates/trainees and based on the awards requirements only and do not discriminate.
2. Promotional material, systems and written documents meet the diversity of our candidates/trainees and support equality of opportunity.
3. Continue to meet and implement current legislation on Equality and Diversity and continually develop all of our staff and anyone involved in the qualification delivery to maintain and implement this awareness.
4. We monitor equality of opportunity, reasonable adjustments and special considerations through our own internal systems and procedures and those of the centres that deliver our qualifications and the learners.
5. That equality of opportunity and any potential barriers to entry are fully monitored through the process of developing and reviewing our units, ROC and Qualifications and any assessment/training procedures. This is carried out with industry advisory groups and learners to ensure it is based on current industry practice.
6. Our quality procedures apply fair processes.

## **2.0 Candidate/trainees with Particular Assessment/training Requirements.**

In the case of candidates/trainees with particular assessment/training requirements, every effort is made to provide facilities to enable the candidate/trainee 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/training.

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

### **2.1 Reasonable adjustments**

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the candidate/trainee at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment/training situation. They must not affect the reliability and validity of the assessment/training 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/training process. We will work to minimise the need to make reasonable adjustments when we develop Units, Rules of Combination and qualifications and their assessment/training to ensure that we remove barriers to entry through consultation with industry advisory groups and learners without compromising on the integrity of the unit, ROC or certification.

PLASA will also ensure that any reasonable adjustments:

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

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

PLASA meets the requirements of the law in terms of what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access to assessment/training, 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/training arrangements, so allowing a candidate/trainee extra time to complete the assessment/training activity, or requests for supervised rest breaks.

**2. Adaptation of Assessment/training Material**

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

**3. Use of Assistance**

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

**4. Environment**

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

**5. Change of Assessment/training method**

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

**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/trainees circumstances.

## **2.2 Special Considerations**

A special consideration is an action taken after the assessment/training date that allows candidates/trainees who have been disadvantaged by temporary illness, injury or adverse circumstances either at the time of the assessment/training or during the registration period before booking assessment/training.

- 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/training or registration timeline maybe 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.
- Misses part of the practical assessment/training for circumstances out of their control
- Is present for the assessment/training but for whom may be disadvantaged by a temporary illness, injury or adverse circumstances that arose at or near the time of assessment/training.

Note: Normal Work demands are not considered special considerations.



The opportunity for registration extension or re-assessment/training will be presented to the candidate/trainee at no extra fee incurred unless:

- The candidate/trainee registration period has expired prior to notification to PLASA
- 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/training is missed due to personal arrangements including holidays or unauthorized absence.

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

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

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

If, due to Assessor/trainer availability issues, the Centre is unable to provide an Assessor/trainer to validate candidate/trainee evidence within the registration period, the Centre may use the Special Consideration Policy to extend the registration period. PLASA must be informed of the new expiry date via the CAF/TAF as soon as possible. For External Verification purposes, the Centre must complete a Special Considerations form and place it in the candidate/trainee file.