



# **EQUAL ACCESS TO ASSESSMENT POLICY**

Candidates who have any additional learning needs, require additional support or assessment arrangements will be accommodated for in line with SQA requirements.

See supporting document 'Assessment Arrangements Explained' from which page 1: 'Introduction' has been sampled.

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## **Appendix 1**

## 1. Introduction

SQA's policy on access to assessment and qualifications allows for adjustments to be made to the published assessment arrangements for candidates who are disabled and/or who have been identified as having particular difficulties in accessing an SQA assessment by the standard arrangements. The reason for this might be a physical difficulty (including medical or sensory difficulty), a behavioural or mental health difficulty or a learning difficulty.

This document details the principles that apply when determining a candidate's need for an assessment arrangement and how and when to request an assessment arrangement. It also describes some examples of assessment arrangements which can be provided in SQA assessments.

The purpose of assessment arrangements is to provide candidates with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their attainment without compromising the integrity of the assessment. Candidates are individuals with a diverse range of needs and it is important that you consider the individual assessment needs of your candidates when considering the most appropriate assessment arrangements. For example:

- a candidate experiencing mental health difficulties, who is very lethargic first thing in the morning due to medication, may need the start time of an assessment adjusted
- a candidate with dyslexia, who experiences difficulties with reading, may need to use a coloured overlay and may also need extra time to complete an assessment
- a candidate with ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), who has persistent difficulties with concentrating, may need to undertake an examination in a separate room, or in a room with only a small number of candidates.

For candidates who are disabled, as defined under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, assessment arrangements such as those listed above might be the 'reasonable adjustments' required to compensate for a substantial disadvantage, but there may be other unique adjustments that need to be made to meet their individual needs. However, it is important to recognise that some adjustments may not be possible for some qualifications. It is not possible to make an adjustment to the standard of the qualification where to do so would mean that it did not provide a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of the candidate.

Some candidates, defined as having additional support needs under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009†, may also need an assessment arrangement to meet their identified physical (including medical or sensory), behavioural, mental health or learning difficulty.

Not all candidates with assessment needs will be disabled and, conversely, not all disabled candidates will necessarily require assessment arrangements to enable them to access an assessment and demonstrate their attainment. In all cases, it is the individual assessment needs of candidates that must be the basis for the provision of an assessment arrangement. Deaf Action have a critical role in ensuring that the process of providing assessment arrangements is fair and operates with integrity. To this end, SQA requires that all centres have effective internal quality assurance systems and procedures in place to identify and verify candidates' need for assessment arrangements.

\* The Equality Act 2010 requires that SQA make reasonable adjustments where a candidate who is disabled within the meaning of the Act would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to a candidate who is not disabled.

†The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009 provides the legal framework underpinning the system for supporting children and young people in their school education. It is important to remember that the Act automatically deems that all looked after children and young people have additional support needs unless it is determined that they do not. It is therefore important that you consider whether a candidate who is looked after and has been identified as having additional support needs also has an identified physical (including medical or sensory), behavioural, mental health or learning difficulty and requires an assessment arrangement.

## **2. Procedure for assessment arrangements**

Deaf Action will strive to ensure that every candidate has equal access to assessments.

Procedure as follows:

1. On course application forms, candidates will be asked if they have any learning requirements or additional support needs that they would like the tutor to be aware of.
2. If a candidate indicates that they do have any learning or support requirements, the Training Co-ordinator will contact the candidate to assess what or if they require any reasonable adjustments for assessments and fill out the form in Appendix 1.
3. The Training Co-ordinator will inform the tutor prior to the start of the course of any required actions and will keep a secure copy of the assessment arrangement form with the candidate's other paperwork.
4. If the candidate progresses to the next level of course(s), this process will be repeated each time in case the needs of the candidate have changed.

## APPENDIX 1

### Assessment arrangement form

This form should be completed for any candidate requiring an assessment arrangement to support them in achieving equal access to assessment materials.

An example form has been created below

Candidate name	John Smith
SCN	000000099
Course	BSL level 2
Course code	H3PA 11
Start / end date	01 January – 01 November 2018
Tutor	Joe Bloggs
Reason for assessment arrangement	Candidate is dyslexic and struggles with spelling and grammar. Candidate also finds it easier to read text printed on coloured paper.
Actions required	Any handouts to be printed on pink paper with black ink  Candidate will be given 2 more viewings of receptive videos to help them pick up fingerspelling  Candidate will receive extra time to write the transcript of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> receptive clip and allowances will be made for English spelling and grammar mistakes