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Written/reviewed by:	Andrew Moughtin (Director of Services)	
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Scope

Fair assessment is the process by which assessments within Qualifications/courses/units can be designed to give all candidates the best and fairest possible opportunities to show attainment. It includes the need for transparency, implemented through effective communication of expectations, arrangements, and feedback. It considers the diversity of individual needs and special circumstances, recognising that some learners will require reasonable adjustments and special considerations in order that equality of opportunity can be achieved.

This policy applies to all qualifications offered by Acorn AP.

General principles for learner support, including fair access and assessment

Learners can expect:

- To be fully inducted into a new course and given information that can be shared with parents and carers.
- To be given an opportunity during induction to declare any conflicts of interest that could give them an unfair advantage/disadvantage (e.g. family or prior relationship with any member of staff involved in the assessment process).
- To receive appropriate information, advice and support, taking into consideration their individual learning needs and the expectations of the course and/or level of study.
- To be given appropriate assessment opportunities during the course with feedback provided on the quality of the work. Prior learning and initial and on-going teacher assessments will inform decisions on level of entry.
- To receive a copy of the unit assessment criteria, guidance and evidence required at the outset of the unit, where the submission is portfolio-based assessments. Progress is mapped against this throughout the unit.

- To be made aware of the timescales available to complete the unit or assessment.
- Reasonable adjustments, exemptions, and special considerations to be pursued with the relevant awarding body, where applicable and used appropriately with learner.
- That all assessment work be carried out fairly and in keeping with the awarding body's requirements.
- That all portfolio-based work will be assessed fairly against the qualification standards.
- That all internal assessments will be carried out fairly and according to awarding body instructions.
- That all externally marked tests and exams will be according to the requirements of the awarding body.

Tutors/assessors will ensure:

- That they declare any conflicts of interests with learners that could lead to them being intentionally or unintentionally advantaged or disadvantaged during the process of assessment.
- That internally devised assessment activities give learners the opportunity to demonstrate meeting the full criteria.
- The individual needs of learners are recognised when deciding on types of assessment activities. Where 'reasonable adjustments' need to be made, guidance should be followed, including obtaining prior approval of an adjustment.
- They give learners on-going formative assessment, appropriate to their learning needs, that provides constructive feedback on progress and indicates how improvements can be made.
- Learners are given opportunities to act on the feedback from formative assessments and to make changes or additions to their work.
- They use summative assessments to make final judgements about the evidence presented to meet the assessment criteria and subsequently whether a unit has been passed.
- That all work is marked within a reasonable time. i.e. within 2 weeks of submission by the learner.

Internal verifiers/moderators will ensure:

- That they declare any conflicts of interests with learners that could lead to them being intentionally or unintentionally advantaged or disadvantaged during the process of assessment.
- That any internally devised assessment activities for Units, are quality assured to ensure suitability and fitness for purpose before use with learners.
- All standardisation and internal verification of completed units of work/tests are carried out in line with awarding body procedures.
- Applications for reasonable adjustments are submitted on the appropriate forms and clearly show what these are.
- The evidence demonstrating the learner has met the assessment criteria in its entirety is presented in their portfolio.

Reasonable Adjustments (RA)

A reasonable adjustment is an action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. RAs must not affect the reliability and validity of the assessment outcomes but may involve: changing usual assessment arrangements; adapting assessment materials or the assessment room; providing assistance during assessment; changing the assessment method; or using assistive technology. See guidance documents on Staff SharePoint for further information.

Special Considerations

These can be applied for in some cases where a learner or group of learners have not been able to complete an assessment or perform to their ability because of certain circumstances that have been out

of their control. See guidance documents on Staff SharePoint for further information.

Full details on applying for either RAs or special considerations are available on Staff SharePoint.