



**ACADEMY**  
Online Learning Ltd

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# Access to Fair Assessment Policy

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Academy Online Learning Ltd

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# 1.0 Introduction

Academy Online Learning Ltd. (AOLL) aims to ensure that all students achieve their full academic potential and that no student is disadvantaged because of a disability in their admission to, and participation in, the learning environment of AOLL and in demonstrating that they have achieved the learning outcomes of their programme of study. This policy establishes guidelines to ensure that all learners have equal and fair access to assessment and accreditation. This policy provides a framework for the implementation of reasonable adjustments to support students with a disability.

## 2.0 Persons Affected

2.1 All learners

2.2 All AOLL staff, tutors and assessors

## 3.0 Definitions

3.1 QAA - The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is an independent agency in the United Kingdom established to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education.

3.2 Reasonable adjustment: a reasonable adjustment is a reasonable variation or alteration made to AOLL processes so that a disabled student can access, without disadvantage, the educational opportunities of AOLL without compromising the expected academic standards.

Such reasonable adjustments could apply to:

(i) the process of admission to AOLL

- (ii) the delivery of teaching, consistent with the learning outcomes of a programme or module
- (iii) the assessment process.

## 4.0 Responsibilities

- 4.1 AOLL, as an institution, accepts overall responsibility for implementation of this policy; however individual learners and members of staff are required to abide by the principles set out under this policy and to assist AOLL in complying with it. As far as possible, any likely barriers to disabled students should be anticipated and removed. Where that is not possible, reasonable adjustments will be made to overcome those barriers as far as reasonably practicable.
- 5.2 All staff involved in teaching and assessment of online provision, including any such persons not actually employed by AOLL, work closely together to ensure that all reasonable adjustments are made, and any necessary support is in place.
- 5.3 Learners - in order for reasonable adjustments under this policy to be put in place, learners need to disclose their disability at the point of enrolment, and comply with AOLL procedures (as defined under this policy) for determining and implementing their support and adjustments. Reasonable adjustments cannot be delivered unless a disability is disclosed and supported by evidence.

## 5.0 Policy

- 5.1 The policy of Academy Online Learning Ltd. (AOLL) addresses the strategies applied in the assessment process. AOLL's delivery and

assessments take into account equality and diversity by ensuring that no individual or group of learners are disadvantaged or excluded.

- 3.2 AOLL tutors are highly experienced in delivering Access to HE programmes via distance learning and are committed to the ethos of widening participation through online Access provision.
- 3.3 AOLL takes guidance from the awarding bodies when considering any reasonable adjustment in order to not give unfair advantage or disadvantage over other learners.

## 6.0 Procedures

AOLL will ensure that:

### *6.1 Tutors/Assessors:*

- 6.11 Undertake an entry induction which includes principles of assessment laid down by awarding bodies, and understand assessment and QAA grading criteria.
- 6.12 Maintain accurate records of assessment outcomes, and manage the timing of assessments effectively for the benefit of the learners.
- 6.13 Provide clear and constructive assessment feedback which maps achievement against learning outcomes and assessment criteria and refer any borderline and non-achievement to the Quality Team.
- 6.14 Ensure individual progression routes match the learner's needs and identify and draw management attention to any possible barriers to learning.

- 6.15 Request, via the Director of Student Services, any reasonable adjustments or special considerations that may be required in assessing learners with particular needs.

## *6.2 The Writers of Assessment Material:*

- 6.21 Develop assessment tasks that take into account learner equality and diversity and are varied in order to enable achievement in diverse ways.
- 6.22 Ensure suitable use of language relevant to the level of a unit
- 6.23 Provide effective assessment strategies which evidences achievement against assessment criteria
- 6.24 Take part in the biannual review of assessment tasks (through the process of internal moderation).

## *6.3 Internal Moderators*

The role of the internal moderators is clear in guaranteeing assessments are valid and fit for purpose, this includes robust procedures to: -

- 6.31 Pre-verify the suitability of the assessment strategy for each unit offered.
- 6.32 Confirm validity of sampled assessments as part of AOLL'S internal moderation process. Support all processes associated with claims for accreditation.
- 6.33 Ensure that issues raised in external moderation reports are addressed. Maintain action logs and distribute all actions arising from reviews of the assessment process.

- 6.34 Confirm that tutor/assessor records are accurate, clear and up to date and that tutor feedback on learner assignments is standardised across all assessors.

## *6.4 Learners*

- 6.41 Pre-enrolment, learners have access to a wide selection of electronic information relevant to AOLL, Skills and Education Group, Open Awards, QAA, Access to HE and Functional Skills.
- 6.42 Pre-enrolment, learners have an opportunity to complete a diagnostic assessment to assess their suitability for Level 2/3 study.
- 6.43 Pre-enrolment, learners are given an opportunity to discuss with admissions staff (verbally or via email) any course requirements and their ability to succeed. This assists learners in gaining a broader understanding of the level of study in order to make an informed choice.
- 6.44 Enrolled learners have access to technical support. The web site and resources have been purposely designed to support learner accessibility across a range of platforms including, large screens, tablet devices and smart phones.
- 6.45 Learners are allocated a personal tutor and undergo a programme of induction that further explains how the course is assessed. What learners can expect from the programme of study is addressed fully in the Student Learning Agreement.

## *6.5 Internal Quality Systems and Procedures*

All learners receive feedback which maps individual learner achievement in relation to learning outcomes. These sheets are accessible via the individual learner's VLE profile. Writers of learning materials and assessments take into

account the use of appropriate language and assessment strategies that reflect the diversity of learners without discriminating against any individual or particular group.

Learners:

- 6.51 Are made aware of any time constraints on assessments and complete a declaration to confirm each submission is the learner's own work and is not plagiarised.
- 6.52 Are made aware of the extenuating circumstance policy and must notify tutors of any extenuating circumstances (where possible) prior to a deadline being missed.
- 6.53 Are provided with clearly written assignment briefs and are able to appeal academic decisions (See Appeals Policy).
- 6.54 Receive clear and constructive feedback on assessments within 10 working days (this time scale does not apply during AOLLE closure times), and are able to monitor their progress via their VLE profile.
- 6.55 Monitor their progress through regular tutor reviews and are encouraged to reflect on their own development through at the end of each assessment.
- 6.56 With Access to HE assignment, learners are able to resubmit in cases of non-achievement and receive targeted tutor feedback. Time constraints on resubmissions apply, to a maximum of 5 working days.
- 6.57 Are able to request both temporary and secondary academic references.

- 6.58 Complete a course evaluation questionnaire on completion of studies as part of ongoing quality reviews and AOLL annual self-assessment process.

All Learners must generate outcomes that always:

- 6.511 Produce the specific level of assessment requirements and be as rigorous as assessment strategies faced by other learners

- 6.512 Are measurable and meet the standard set for moderation and verification.

## *6.6 Learners with a Disability – Reasonable Adjustment*

AOLL is subject to the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) which consolidates the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The Act requires that AOLL pays due regard to the need to:

“advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it” (Equality Act, 2010).

AOLL ensures that learners with disabilities are not placed at a disadvantage during the assessment process through:

- 6.61 Allowing a learner extra time to complete assessment activities, allowing rest breaks during an online assessment activity if required and setting assessment activities with due regard to equality and diversity.
- 6.62 Advising the learner how to use their personal computer to maximise their potential through using assistive technology. For example advising that <https://www.dyslexia.uk.net/services/assistive-technology/> gives details of free assistive technology to download to devices.

In the event of a learner needing physical support whilst taking an assessment, it is the learner's responsibility to arrange this themselves and through negotiation with their tutor/assessor. Specific instructions will be confirmed with the support person prior to the assessment taking place. All learners who claim support or reasonable adjustment must provide proof of their medical condition.

## *6.7 Reasonable Adjustment*

- 6.71 Any reasonable adjustment will only be considered after taking into account any substantial disadvantage a learner may experience in comparison to other learners who are not disabled and can only be made when and where learners supply evidence of their disability.
- 6.72 Where the difficulty is inconsiderable AOLL will offer further support in the development of study and assessment skills.
- 6.73 Assessors and learners will ensure that all computers and IT equipment are in good working order at the time of the assessment in their individual locations. The learner is responsible for the security of their computer and should ensure that their computer is in good working order.

AOLL will remain compliant with Skills and Education Group and Open Awards by adhering to the permissions for reasonable adjustment set out in their policies, and will seek written clarification on an individual basis for all cases where reasonable adjustment measures are sought.

AOLL will provide Skills and Education Group/Open Awards Representatives access to all relevant documentation and evidence of assessment to support the award of credit/qualifications as and when requested

AOLL will validate, monitor and analyse its access to fair assessment procedures through learner feedback and the end of course survey.

# Bibliography

Equality Act 2010. [online] Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15> [Accessed on 22/8/17].