



Defence Awarding  
Organisation



# DAO Special Considerations Policy

Version 8.0 Aug 24

*Recognising Quality and Competence:*

*Supporting Defence with accreditation and specialist bespoke qualification opportunities*

# Contents

|                                              |   |
|----------------------------------------------|---|
| Introduction.....                            | 2 |
| Scope .....                                  | 2 |
| Awarding Centre’s Responsibility .....       | 2 |
| Review Arrangements .....                    | 2 |
| Access to Fair Assessment .....              | 2 |
| Applications for Special Consideration ..... | 3 |
| Registering Learners .....                   | 3 |
| Centre Support.....                          | 4 |

## Introduction

1. This document sets out the DAO Special Considerations policy and procedure and is aimed at our Awarding Centres, DAO Learners and all interested parties who encounter a direct or indirect service from the DAO.

## Scope

2. This policy is aimed at helping DAO Learners to achieve formal recognition of their achievements, without compromising the Assessment Process or the assessment objectives of a qualification. Special Considerations are made to ensure that Learners are not disadvantaged by any exceptional circumstances that may arise prior to, or during the assessment process.

## Awarding Centre's Responsibility

3. Awarding Centres should take all responsible steps to ensure that Awarding Centre staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of DAO qualifications, and DAO Learners, are aware of the contents of this policy and that the Awarding Centre has a Special Considerations handling procedure and process in place to deal with DAO Learners.

## Review Arrangements

4. The DAO will review the policy and its associated procedures annually as part of the DAO self-evaluation arrangements, and revise it as and when necessary in response to customer, DAO Learner or Regulatory feedback (e.g. to align with any appeals and complaints process established by the Regulator(s)) and any trends that may emerge in the subject matter of Special Considerations received.
5. If you would like to provide feedback about the policy, please contact us using the details provided at the end of this policy.

## Access to Fair Assessment

6. The Equality Act 2010<sup>1</sup> requires Awarding Organisations to make Reasonable Adjustments to ensure a learner who has a disability as defined in the Act are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to learners with no disabilities<sup>2</sup>.
7. There are two ways in which access to fair assessment can be achieved:
  - a. **Special Considerations** – These can be applied after an assessment if there was a reason the Learner may have been disadvantaged during the assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> Equality Act 2010

<sup>2</sup> This meets the requirement for [Ofqual GCoR Condition: G7.1](#)

- b. **Reasonable Adjustments** – where a Learner, who has a disability would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to other Learners who do not have a disability. Further information on Reasonable Adjusts can be found in the DAO Reasonable Adjusts Policy.

## Special Considerations

8. Special Considerations can be applied after an assessment if there was a reason the Learner may have been disadvantaged during the assessment<sup>3</sup>. The following is a list of examples which might be eligible for special consideration (the list is not exhaustive):
  - a. Serious illness of the Learner
  - b. Serious illness of a parent/child/close family member
  - c. Bereavement of an immediate family member
  - d. Incapacitating illness of the Learner
  - e. Recent domestic crises
  - f. Accident and/or injury to the Learner
  - g. Trauma caused by a recent event or experience
9. Learners cannot enter a request for Special Consideration for assessment solely on the grounds of disability or SpLD. Special Consideration should not give the Learner an unfair advantage. The Learner's results must reflect their achievement in the assessment and not necessarily their potential ability<sup>4</sup>.
10. Special consideration may result in a small post-assessment adjustment (**up to a maximum of 5%**) of the mark for the Learner. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances during the assessment and will reflect the difficulty faced by the Learner but will always be a minor adjustment, as to do more may jeopardise the assessment standard. For example, 5% is the maximum allowance and will be reserved for the most exceptional cases, such as terminal illness of the candidate or parent/carer.
11. Where an assessment requires a competence to be met fully, it may not be possible to apply any Special Consideration<sup>5</sup>. In some circumstances it may be more appropriate to offer the Learner an opportunity to re-take the assessment at a later date or to extend the registration period so that the Learner has more time to complete the assessment activity.

## Applications for Special Consideration

12. Learners who believe that they have been disadvantaged through circumstances beyond their control can request that Special Consideration is made regarding the outcomes of their assessment. The Learner must inform the Assessor at the time.

## Registering Learners

13. Awarding Centres should use their integrity when identifying and registering Learners for Special Considerations.

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<sup>3</sup> This meets the requirement for [Ofqual GCoR Condition: G8.1\(b\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> This meets the requirement for [Ofqual GCoR Condition: G9.2\(b\)&\(d\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> This meets the requirement for [Ofqual GCoR Condition: H5.3\(d\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> This meets the requirement for [Ofqual GCoR Condition: H5.4\(b\)](#)

14. Requests for Special Considerations should be made using the Reasonable Adjustment Request and Special Considerations Form located in the DAO Qualification Management System (QMS). DAO will confirm receipt of the Form on the DAO QMS within **7 working days** and provide feedback on the decision to the Awarding Centre within another **7 working days** via the DAO QMS. The DAO QMS will hold this information against the relevant Learners Profile for External Quality Assurance (EQA) visits.

### Appeals

15. Appeals against the decision to provide Special Considerations can be submitted by following the DAO Awarding Centre and DAO Appeals Policy.

### Centre Support

16. Policies for handling Enquiries, Appeals, Reasonable Adjustments, Special Considerations, Malpractice and Maladministration are available on the DAO website and the DAO Qualification Management System (QMS).
17. The DAO will work with Awarding Centres to deliver a customer-focused and professional service to DAO Learners. DAO policies are reviewed annually. Any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact the DAO Compliance Team via:

### DAO website

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/defence-awarding-organisation>,

### Post

Defence Awarding Organisation (DAO)  
Defence Academy Headquarters  
Room 15, Slim Building  
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SN6 8LA

### By email

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