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# Equality Policy

## The APM Group Limited QMS

### **Related Documents**

Equality Policy on the websites

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## **Equality Policy**

### **1. Equality Act 2010**

APMG make every reasonable effort to comply with the United Kingdom Equality Act 2010, the US Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Canadian federal and provincial law regarding disabilities, the Australian Disability Discrimination Act and other similar laws in all countries in which we operate. These laws or the context involving these laws are used as a basis for APMG's international policy. This aims to make appropriate accommodations for less able candidates and to avoid discrimination with APMG employees or by them in the process of accreditation of trainers, consultants and IA professionals. Each applicant is taken on merit and no prejudice is shown in relation to gender, age, race, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or disability, or any other factor protected by law outside of the APMG assessment criteria. We have restrictions on how candidates under the age of 16 can sit our exams but this is based on data protection laws and the additional safeguards required to protect the personal data of minors.

All APMG examinations and assessments are open to adults who meet the eligibility criteria, which may be experience in the relevant field and/or pre-requisite qualification(s), regardless of gender, age, race, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or disability. APMG asks candidates for their age range when registering for an exam, but this question is optional and the responses are used for marketing analysis only. APMG will only ask for information regarding a disability if accommodations are required. APMG examinations and assessments are offered internationally, and the only restrictions are those applied by the UK government, in which we have a legal obligation to comply with. APMG does not place its own restrictions on any country.

Please note that where the disability as to which additional requirements are being sought is evident, and as such can be visually verified by the trainer who has met the candidate, written confirmation of the condition does not need to be provided.

Where the disability for which adjustments/accommodations are being sought is not evident, or the candidate is sitting a public examination, and as such cannot be observed by the trainer, written confirmation should be provided.

Ideally where appropriate and to the extent permitted by law, written confirmation will be in the form of a medical or employer assessment report, with recommendations as to the adjustments/accommodations which would be suitable for the candidate. Please note, that circumstances where the disability is uncertain or not clear, the information APMG requests is simply the recommendation for the adjustment/accommodation and why this is considered appropriate or reasonable. The applicant may redact any other detail (including medical detail) unrelated to the disability or the accommodation/adjustment he or she does not wish to share. APMG takes data protection seriously and processes special category data i.e. medical data under article 6 (1) (C) legal obligation and article 9 (2) (e) substantial public interest in accordance with Schedule 1, Part 2 (6) statutory etc and government purposes, i.e. to comply with the Equality Act, of the Data Protection Act 2018. Medical data is stored securely, with access control, and is only retained for 7 months from the certification date, to align with our appeals period. Access to sensitive data is limited only to those that require access to fulfil their job role.

Where the candidate is unable to obtain a medical assessment report, or has concerns about sharing sensitive data, other appropriate data will also be considered.

## **2. Candidates with access or support requirements**

APMG makes every reasonable effort to ensure that candidates with access and/or support requirements can sit the examination within reasonable limits to ensure they have as equal a chance as any other candidate to pass the examination. This means providing reasonable adjustments/accommodations where appropriate.

APMG believe that each candidate is different and that individuals will have differing access and/or support needs and as such we will make every effort to provide reasonable adjustments/accommodations suited to individual access or support requirements. Adjustments/accommodations vary in accordance with the underlying disability and involve possibilities as broad as the use of braille to extended time on the examination to varying arrangements for the actual testing. Providing a list of all potential disabilities, adjustments or accommodations is not practical as each disability and related need for adjustment/accommodation is analysed based on the individual's particular circumstances. Individuals are encouraged to raise and discuss their situations as well as to suggest their own ideas for reasonable adjustments/accommodations.

If a candidate is thinking of taking the examination and that candidate requires additional time or specific adjustments/accommodations, the candidate should contact their training organisation who will liaise with APMG and make the appropriate arrangements for the candidate. If a medical report is required as evidence, in accordance with section 1 above, this should be provided to the training company, who can securely upload the report to the exam booking portal when booking the exam.

If a candidate has concerns about sharing sensitive data with their training organisation, they can contact APMG directly to discuss this.

A public candidate can raise and discuss the situation with APMG directly if taking a public examination via APMG's online proctoring services.

Please note that where APMG uses 3rd party personnel for public examinations, APMG will need to liaise with them regarding possible adjustments/accommodations and will not be able to commit to the request for adjustment/accommodation until confirmation has been received from the 3rd party. No medical reports provided or sensitive data from those reports is shared with any third party.

No matter the testing context, APMG encourages an interactive discussion with a candidate who has a disability and needs a reasonable adjustment/accommodation. Such candidates are encouraged to ask about such matters in advance to allow for planning and coordination of adjustments/accommodations. However, where reasonable, a discussion regarding adjustments/accommodations can occur at any time, although some requests may not be able to be responded to if raised for the first time at the actual time of the examination.

As suggested above, adjustments/accommodations also apply to the venue or location of an examination, where applicable. If a candidate is aware of or concerned about potential access issues or there is a need for special examination logistics or procedures, the candidate should raise such concerns on a timely basis.

Local law will be applied regarding adjustments, accommodations and access issues as applicable law may vary in different countries.

### **3. Candidates with Writing Difficulties**

Where a candidate has an adjustment, which requires a computer to be used that is not connected to the APMG online exam delivery system, the Scheme Committee has approved the following guidelines.

#### **3.1 Guidelines**

The candidate is allowed to type their answers rather than write them, with the Invigilator / Proctor / Supervisor following the guidelines below:

#### **3.2 Computer/Laptop Use**

The computer to be used should ideally be supplied by the ATO/Invigilator/Proctor/Supervisor, not by the candidate, unless the candidate can confirm to the ATO/APMG that they need to supply their own. This may be the case for visually impaired candidates.

If delegates are authorised to use their own computer, they must be advised that it must be cleaned of all relevant material (e.g. templates, copies of core guidance, mock/sample papers or practice answers etc) and a technically competent member of the ATO will check that the systems have been wiped prior to the examination, from which time the computer will not be returned to the candidate until the examination starts.

APMG recommend that while invigilating the examination the invigilator/proctor/supervisor sit at the rear of the room so that the screens are visible so they can more easily police any copy and paste activity or possible wireless connections to websites.

Where an essay examination is being returned, each candidate's document must be saved onto an electronic storage device clearly showing their candidate number and date of examination, immediately after the examination and given to the Invigilator/Proctor/Supervisor. The file name of the document should be <candidate number and examination date>. The invigilator/proctor/supervisor should check the device and make a printed copy, or email the file to the relevant APMG office, and return to APMG with the rest of the Examination papers, in the usual manner. The examination will not be marked if a proper copy of the script is not provided.

The Invigilator/Proctor/Supervisor must delete the electronic copy of the answers from the computer/laptop used for the examination after a copy has been created on storage media and a hard copy printed. Once the examination results have been issued, the back up copy held should also be deleted from the invigilator/proctor machine and/or storage device. This must include final deletion from the 'recycle bin' or any other computer drive copy or image of the document.

Candidates may not copy any information into their answer papers but must type all their answers. However, despite the above precautions, it is possible that candidates may attempt to "paste" in text from reference documents, e.g. the Reference Manual for the product. Any such text detected during or after the examination by the ATO/Invigilator/Proctor/Supervisor is to be highlighted on the document. Marks will not be awarded for pasted text.

### **3.3 Examinations**

The candidate should take the examination in a separate room to other candidates, as a clicking keyboard could be a distraction to the other candidates. Ideally, an invigilator should be provided for each room. However, if necessary, a single Invigilator/Proctor/Supervisor can be used to monitor examinations in immediately adjacent rooms. If under exceptional circumstances this is not viable and the candidate needs to remain in the same room, all candidates must agree they will not be distracted and enter an appeal unless required otherwise by applicable law.

Additionally, APMG may offer extra time to candidates with writing difficulties on a discretionary basis if such extra time legitimately constitutes a reasonable adjustment/accommodation. Requests should be made to APMG.

Only in very exceptional circumstances will APMG be able to offer oral examinations, in the event of a candidate being unable to write or type. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis.

## **4. Assessments**

Candidates, who for security reasons require a face-to-face assessment interview and who have mobility issues, may request for the interview to be conducted at premises which meet their accessibility needs, and they should contact APMG directly to discuss their requirements further.