



## Equal Opportunities

### General

The ABD is committed to promoting an environment where all individuals are encouraged to achieve their full potential and develop their skills, encouraging its teachers to maintain an open approach towards the different talents and abilities offered by all their students.

It undertakes to comply with the requirements of equalities legislation in force from time to time and to ensure that it has systems in place to ensure that it does not discriminate against any candidate either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, mental or physical disability, marital status or sexuality. It therefore requires of all ABD teaching members including its Approved Dance Centres, that they do not discriminate in any of these respects, as additionally noted in the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers of Dance published by the Board of Dance Qualifications & Training, to which all ABD members must comply.

In order for the ABD to prove itself as unprejudiced, candidates' personal details are requested upon registration. The ABD would hope this does not offend, but the ABD is required to ask these questions in order to prove itself to be an equal opportunities organisation. Please note the ABD will observe the guidelines of the Data Protection Act. Personal information will be held on file and will not be disclosed to any party outside of the ABD.

Action by teachers to exclude any particular individual from a class, or deny access to an examination for any reason, must be taken only after careful consideration of all the circumstances, consultation with the individual concerned (or their parent where relevant), and only if there is a general and reasonable belief that there is no alternative to the action proposed.

### ABD Qualifications

The ABD qualifications are developed to be open to all, and achievement is measured against assessment criteria according to their ability. As part of its process of new unit and qualification development, and feedback on credit, the ABD undertakes to consult with its members particularly in regard to:

- those who teach candidates with disabilities
- those who have particular ethnic groupings within their schools, and
- those who teach males

This is to ensure that there are no barriers to entry to the units or qualifications for any candidate and particularly for disabled people, for males/females or for those with different racial groups. It will ensure that the "Programmes of Study" and assessments proposed do not disadvantage such candidates, or give those with disabilities an advantage over normal candidates, whilst maintaining the competence standard for the level of the examinations.

### **There are three further circumstances of which teachers must be aware:**

- Minimum age limits apply for entry to some examinations. This is to protect the health and safety of young children where physical development may be insufficient to meet the demands of certain Programmes of Study.
- Maximum age limits apply to certain non vocational examinations where the material involved is designed specifically for groups of very young children.

- Certain sections of some performance examinations are designed particularly for either male or female dancers. This reflects the realities and requirements of the dance profession and should in no way be construed as sex discrimination.

### **Candidates with disabilities**

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 which extended the Act of 1995, 'A body directly discriminates against a disabled person if, on the ground of the disabled person's disability, it treats the disabled person less favourably than it treats or would treat a person not having that particular disability whose relevant circumstances, including his abilities, are the same as, or not materially different from, those of the disabled person'.

In the Act of 1995, an adult or child is "disabled" if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has an effect that is:

- Substantial
  - adverse
  - long term (lasting or expected to last for at least a year)
- on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

The term "physical impairment" includes sensory impairment, e.g. loss of hearing, visual impairment. It includes disfigurement and people with a history of disability.

The term "mental impairment" covers impairments relating to mental functioning, including clinically recognised mental illness and learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia.

A substantial impairment may now include candidates with diagnosed severe illness, such as cancer or leukaemia.

The ABD reminds its teaching members that it should not treat pupils with disabilities less or more favourably than able-bodied pupils simply because of their disability. The overriding approach taken by teachers is that so far as possible all pupils should be afforded the same treatment, and that where they have a disabled student, adjustments should be made to their normal teaching conditions as far as reasonable.

It may be the case that the individual would endanger his/her personal safety or that of the other students in the class so should be precluded from undertaking that activity on health and safety grounds. If teachers have any concerns on the ability and safety of a student they must seek the appropriate medical and legal advice.

### **Candidates with requiring reasonable adjustments to assessment conditions**

The ABD recognises that there are some candidates who can cope with the demands of the examinations on offer by ABD and can demonstrate attainment in the skills being assessed, but for whom the standard arrangements for the examination may present a barrier that could be removed without affecting the validity of the examination. In such circumstances the teacher can apply for a variation in the conditions, as suitable for the candidate. This may include candidates with physical limitations in certain elements of the examination only, who must demonstrate to the best of their physical capability, and who can additionally convey their intentions orally.

Assessment conditions may be varied for example in the following ways, on an individual candidate basis, by means of advance permission from the ABD only:

- Extra time may be granted in performance examinations for recovery between dance exercises, or for repetition of instructions by the examiner
- Candidates on groups in examinations may be rotated so that the particular candidate may not be required to lead the group
- Additional medical equipment may be used within the examination, such as special microphones and hearing equipment for deaf candidates
- Candidates taking written examinations may be allowed extra time, a scribe, word processing equipment, coloured examination papers, translators etc

Guidance should be taken from the BDQT "Reasonable Adjustment Form" - The candidate cannot be marked on different criteria because of the restrictions the disability may cause them. If a teacher wishes to enter a pupil with disabilities for an examination, the quality of the performance in an examination is to be equal to that of an able-bodied candidate. This is mandatory in order to achieve a true and fair dance award.

Reasonable adjustments are generally not appropriate therefore where the examination is focussing on assessing the area which is the candidate's particular difficulty. Additionally, any reasonable adjustment arrangements made will not be such as to give the candidate an unfair advantage over an able-bodied candidate.

If a candidate with a disability is to be submitted for examination, for any Theatre and Dancesport Faculty, the teacher must complete the "Application for Reasonable Adjustments" form which can be downloaded from the ABD website: <https://abd.dance/legal-policies> and return it to ABD HQ with the examination application form a minimum of three weeks prior to the official examination entry, together with a doctor's letter and other supporting evidence as seen relevant.

### **Candidates requiring special consideration**

ABD dance examinations below professional level are single performances at one moment in time. It is therefore important that the examination is fully completed.

If a candidate is unable to take any examination due to illness, either by withdrawing beforehand, or on the day, the ABD will refund 100% of the examination fee on receipt of a doctor's certificate. A refund will not be given once a candidate had commenced an examination. If a candidate has a minor injury prior to the examination, the examination may only be taken on production of a medical certificate. The ABD reserves the right to refuse entry to the candidate on the day if the examiner judges that the injury is such that it would be damaging to the health and safety of the candidate. It should be noted that there is no liability on the part of the ABD or the examiner if an injury occurs during any ABD examination.

During the course of an examination, if a candidate suffers an injury or becomes unwell, the examiner will stop the examination and determine the severity of the problem. The candidate will be given the opportunity of a short break before recommencing if they so wish. If the candidate cannot complete the examination, the examiner will confirm the details in writing to the ABD HQ and include the candidate's result sheet.