Statements and Policies on Accredited Courses

September 2026

At the time of booking, learners are sent the Accredited training terms and conditions to which they must consent. These set out the requirements relating to attendance, deadlines, extensions, special considerations, behavior, Health and safety, complaints and appeals and assessment and outlines commitments on the part of the learner and the tutor. This information is also on Moodle and must be acknowledged as read prior to any coursework submissions.

Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedures

Suffolk Wildlife Trust (SWT) will ensure that all AIM Qualifications accredited courses and units are designed and assessed in a way that gives all candidates the fairest possible opportunities to show their attainment.

- Learning needs will be identified and addressed prior to the start of the course and where necessary adapted to ensure that information is accessible and tasks are appropriate.
- Tuition will be to a high standard and will be internally assessed.
- Assessment tasks will be relevant, clearly defined and supported by tutors.
- Assessment by tutors and internal quality assurers will be transparent and respect equality and diversity.
- Candidates will be kept informed in a timely manner of progress after submission of evidence, including validation and results.

All accredited courses, assessment and verification will comply with AIM Qualifications guidelines and procedures.

In designing an assessment strategy and/or individual assessment tasks the following principles will need to be included:

- Reliability
- Validity
- Fitness for purpose
- Transparency
- Recognition of and respect for equality and diversity

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments are made for individual learners, based on each learner's individual needs. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the reliability and validity of the assessment outcomes, but may involve:

- Changing usual assessment arrangements, for example allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment activity.
- Adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in a variety of formats.
- Providing specific assistance for the learner to access the assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or a reader.
- Re-organising the assessment space, such as removing visual stimuli for a learner with autism.
- Changing the assessment method, for example from a written assessment to a spoken assessment.
- Using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice activated software.

Identifying Learners' Needs

The Centre has a responsibility to ensure it has effective internal procedures for identifying learners' needs, and that these procedures comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Reasonable adjustments must be requested, approved and set in place **before the assessment takes place**, to enable the learner to access the assessment. The work produced by the learner must be marked in the same way as the work of other assessed learners; 'allowances' cannot be made once the assessment is complete, and ad hoc, unapproved adjustments may not be put in place. SWT is required by law to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, the impact of the disability on the individual, cost implications, and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors, such as the need to maintain competence, must also be taken into consideration. Different types of assessment make different demands on the learner and will influence whether reasonable adjustments will be needed and the kind of reasonable adjustment which may be put in place.

The adjustments that may be appropriate for a particular assessment will depend upon:

- The specific assessment requirements of the units and/or qualification.
- The type of assessment.
- The particular needs and circumstances of the individual learner

Any adjustments made must:

- Meet the requirements of the specifications regardless of the process or method used.
- Enable the assessment criteria to be assessed, moderated or verified.
- Ensure the assessment methods are as rigorous as those used with other learners.
- Be consistent with the learner's normal way of working.

• Not change the level of the achievement required.
• Not give the learner an unfair advantage.

Assessment criteria may not be amended, re-worded or omitted.

When any reasonable adjustments are requested prior to assessment which require approval from AIM, it is the responsibility of the SWT tutors to do this within AIM's stated time frame, detailed in their Reasonable Adjustments policy.

Special Consideration
Special consideration may be requested when a one-off, unexpected, temporary event has taken place during an assessment event, which has or potentially could have affected the performance of one or more learners at the time of assessment. Special consideration may be given to whole groups of learners where an event affects the whole group (such as a first aid emergency during an assessment) or may be given to one individual learner (e.g. because of a bereavement). Further information and advice should be sought from AIM Qualifications where necessary.

A learner who is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment may be eligible for special consideration if:

• Performance in an assessment is affected by circumstances beyond the control of the learner, for example recent personal serious illness, accident, bereavement, or serious disturbance during the assessment.
• Part of an assessment has been missed due to circumstances genuinely beyond the control of the learner.

A learner will not be eligible for special consideration if:

• No evidence that the learner has been affected at the time of the assessment by a particular condition.
• Any part of the assessment is missed due to personal arrangements including holidays or unauthorised absence.
• Preparation for a component is affected by difficulties during the course, such as disturbances through building work, lack of proper facilities, changes in or shortages of staff, or industrial disputes.

In some circumstances, for example for on-demand assessments, it may be more appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date.

Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage nor should its use cause the user of the certificate to be misled regarding a learner's achievements. The learner's result must reflect their achievement in the assessment, and not necessarily their potential ability.

When a reasonable adjustment and/or special consideration is requested by the learner, and AIM permission is required, the SWT tutor will interview the learner to assess their needs and make the decision as to whether it is appropriate to request special consideration or reasonable adjustment, before

completing the request via QuartzWeb. All relevant details and supporting evidence will be provided and this process will be completed within the timeframe stated in the AIM policy.

All documentation relevant to any special consideration or reasonable adjustment applied for and granted to a learner is stored securely for three academic years.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Suffolk Wildlife Trust is totally committed to an inclusive approach in the provision of appropriate learning opportunities and, to this end, emphases its responsibility to recognise prior learning and / or achievement. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment that considers whether learners can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and so do not need to develop through a course of learning. It is used sparingly and can be applicable to adult learners returning to education. RPL provides a route for the recognition of the achievements resulting from continuous learning.

RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any valid assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met (through evidence that the relevant unit learning outcomes have been met by a learners' prior learning), the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting specific assessment criteria or a whole unit. Evidence of learning must be valid and reliable. The process of assessment for RPL applies the same quality assurance and quality monitoring standards as is any other form of assessment offered by SWT.

Assessment of RPL evidence

Assessment methods for RPL must be as rigorous as those used for other methods of assessment in that they must be fit for purpose and relate to the evidence of learning provided. It is possible to claim credit for any unit through RPL unless the assessment methods proscribed for that unit do not allow this. It is the responsibility of tutors and IQA to ensure that the evidence presented and accepted is:

- Valid: The evidence provided by the learner or potential learner must be a clear demonstration of conformity with the demands of the specified learning outcome.
- Current: It is essential that the evidence should be current i.e. that it should meet up-to-date demands and not be demonstrative of a practice which has significantly changed. The exact form of the evidence required will vary from programme to programme and will depend on the extent of the experience and the nature of the outcomes claimed. If there is any doubt about the currency of any evidence supplied, then tutors will be allowed to use questions to check for understanding and for competence.
- Sufficient: evidence must be sufficient fully to meet the requirements of the learning outcome/s. if the evidence offered is deemed to be insufficient then that RPL evidence must be supplemented by evidence generated through other appropriate assessment method/s before the learning outcome can be said to have been met.
- Authentic: The evidence provided must have been produced only by the individual who presents it. As with any other form of assessment, it is important that the learner understands the meaning and implication of plagiarism and that a declaration of authenticity is provided.

• Reliable: Evidence provided in support of any RPL claim should be such that the individual assessing it would make the same decision if the assessment was to be repeated.

The process of RPL

If the request for RPL rests on previous study, then the process set out immediately below will apply:

• The first part of the process will involve checking the prior award's learning outcomes and unit content against the corresponding elements from which the learner is seeking exemption.

• The second part involves checking that any materials offered by the learner have, in fact, been produced by them. It should be noted that it is the learner, not SWT, who bears the responsibility for assembling appropriate evidence. The responsibility of SWT is to check the evidence presented, not to seek evidence on behalf of the learner

• Once a file of evidence has been submitted then the tutor will be asked to map the evidence from the prior award, unit by unit, against the required level of the programme to ensure that they are covered by the evidence presented. If the tutor is satisfied that the academic requirements are met, then a report will be prepared for the IQA. The final decision will rest with the IQA

• If the RPL rests on practical experience and skills, then the method set out below may be used:

• The methods of assessment chosen will depend on the assessment strategy for the programme unit being assessed and may include: examination of documents/ witness testimony/ reflective accounts or portfolios/ professional discussion

• Assessment should: be planned with the learner/ be the subject of formal decision making/ be the focus of feedback and advice/ be recorded on Moodle in the same way as any other type of assessment/ be verified in the same way as for other forms of assessment/ be considered via the SWT appeals procedure if this is required/ be subject to the normal certification process/ be subject to the same quality assurance requirements as any other assessment method.

Appeals

These will be recorded and handled according to AIM Qualifications guidelines and Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Appeals Procedure for Learners. Details of this (along with all Accredited training policies) are made available to every learner registering on a course.

Malpractice and Maladministration

Malpractice

Malpractice is essentially any deliberate activity or practice which contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the internal or external assessment process and/or the validity of certificates.

Examples of **Centre** Malpractice include failure to adhere to AIM's learner registration and certification procedures; permitting collusion in examinations/assessments; failure to provide appropriate facilities for the security of assessment/examination materials.

Examples of **Centre staff** Malpractice include unauthorised amendment, copying or distributing of examination/assessment papers/materials; providing improper assistance to learners during assessments; falsifying learner records, assessment/examination records, internal quality assurance records and/or authentication statements.

Every attempt is made to minimise the likelihood of staff and learner malpractice. Learners are made aware of the Trust's policies and procedures prior to confirming booking on SWT courses via our website. Trust staff are trained to use plagiarism software and are familiar with procedures used to detect the use of AI.

Maladministration

Maladministration is essentially any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements. Examples include: the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration within a Centre, misuse of the AIM's logo or giving inaccurate advice to learners.

The Centre Manager is responsible for the qualification and/or units of the qualification and will supervise all investigations resulting from an allegation of malpractice or maladministration.

If malpractice is discovered by the Centre, an interview and full investigation will take place and full details of the case will be submitted to AIM at the earliest opportunity. In the event of a staff member being investigated for malpractice, their line manager and SWT's Head of People & Culture would be consulted and involved in the process.

Contingency Procedures

If SWT is unable to continue delivery of courses with registered learners alternative providers will be contacted to enable learners to complete. All transfer details will be arranged between SWT and the other providers. Learners will be given the option of transferring provider or a full refund.
Providers with which arrangements are in place include Essex Wildlife Trust, Sussex Wildlife Trust and Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.

Plagiarism and AI

Plagiarism is defined as "Presenting someone else's work, in whole or in part, as your own" **[1]**. Work means any intellectual output, and typically includes text, data, images, sound or performance. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is not acceptable and can prevent you from gaining a qualification. Learners should ensure they use appropriate referencing, including website addresses used during research. AI-generated content submitted as your own is classed as plagiarism.

Working collaboratively: There are some assignments that we would be expect to be the same if more than one learner from one setting attends a course e.g. FS handbook, Policies and Procedures and site management/action plans. Please ensure you state all names of those contributing to the work at the top of the document before submission.

Coursework submitted for assessment must be the learner's own work and must provide authentic evidence of their knowledge, skills and understanding. Learners must not submit AI-generated content as their own or use AI in a way that prevents the assessor from confirming that the evidence is their own. Inappropriate use of AI may be treated as learner malpractice. **[2]**

AI may be used only where this is permitted by the tutor or assessment requirements. Any permitted use must be clearly acknowledged and referenced, including the name of the tool, the date used, the prompt entered, the response produced and an explanation of how it contributed to the learner's work. Learners remain responsible for checking the accuracy and suitability of any AI-generated information. **[2] [3]**

Learners must not enter personal, confidential or commercially sensitive information into an AI tool. Translation or assistive tools may be used to support understanding, but the final evidence must remain the learner's own. If a learner is unsure whether a use of AI is permitted, they must ask their tutor before submitting their work. Suspected misuse will be considered under SWT's malpractice procedure and may be reported to AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group. **[3] [4]**

Sources

[1] University of Oxford, *Plagiarism*, Academic Support: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism (accessed 5 October 2026).

[2] AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group, *Assessment Handbook*, April 2025: www.aim-group.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/AIM-Assessment-Handbook.pdf

[3] AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group, *Centre Guide: Artificial Intelligence Policy Guidance*, October 2025: www.aim-group.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Centre-Guide-AI-Policy-guidance.pdf

[4] AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group, *Malpractice and Maladministration Policy*, August 2026: www.aim-group.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/Malpractice-and-Maladministration-Policy.pdf

Version history

VERSION	DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGE	Person Responsible
1.0	January 2024	Original document	Beveryly Rogers – Accredited Training Manager
2.0	29 January 2025	Reviewed.	Catharine Harrison – Centre Manager
3.0	September 2026	Reviewed. Updated staff titles. Added in reference to Learner agreement. Updated AI statement from Learner agreement. Added logo.	Emma Keeble, Centre Manager/ Wilder Training Manager