



BWHS EQUALITIES POLICY (EXAMS) 2023-24

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Contents

Purpose of the policy	3
The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability	3
Identifying the need for access arrangements	4
Roles and responsibilities	4
Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams	3
Requesting access arrangements	4
Roles and responsibilities	4
Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams	4
Roles and responsibilities	4
External assessments	4
Internal assessments.....	6
Internal exams	6
Facilitating access - examples.....	7
Access Arrangements Assessment Procedure.....	9

Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the *centre-wide accessibility policy/plan* which details how Bentley Wood:

“recognises its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010†, particularly Section 20 (7). This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre must not charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid;

for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect”

[Quote taken directly from chapter 5.4 of the current JCQ publication [General regulations for approved centres](#)]

This publication is further referred to in this policy as GR.

This policy details how the centre facilitates access to exams and assessments for disabled candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010, by outlining staff roles and responsibilities in relation to

- identifying the need for appropriate arrangements, reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations (referred to in this policy as ‘access arrangements’)
- requesting access arrangements
- implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

Definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010

A definition is provided in the JCQ publication **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2023-2024** (Definitions section). (‘AA’)

You are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

What ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ mean

- ‘substantial’ is more than minor or trivial, e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed
- ‘long-term’ means 12 months or more, e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection

There are special rules about recurring or fluctuating conditions, e.g. arthritis.

Progressive conditions

A progressive condition is one that gets worse over time. People with progressive conditions can be classed as disabled.

However, you automatically meet the disability definition under the Equality Act 2010 from the day you’re diagnosed with HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis.

A definition is provided on page 4 of the current JCQ publication *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#)

This publication is further referred to in this policy as AA.

Identifying the need for access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

- Is familiar with the entire contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publications including GR and AA

Senior leaders

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including [GR](#)

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication [AA](#)

Teaching staff

- Inform the SENCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate

Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties

(An assessor of candidates with learning difficulties will be an appropriately qualified access arrangements assessor/psychologist/specialist assessor)

- Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication [AA](#)

Requesting access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Determines if the arrangements identified for a candidate require prior approval from the awarding body before the arrangements are put in place or if approval is centre-delegated

Exams Officer

- Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication [GR](#) and is aware of information contained in [AA](#) where this may be relevant to the EO role

Use of Word Processors:

A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a word processor policy, specific to the centre, which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments. This policy must be available for inspection. (AA, section 5.8)

Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams

Roles and responsibilities

External assessments

These are assessments which are normally set and marked/examined by an awarding body which must be conducted according to awarding body instructions and/or the JCQ publication [Instructions for conducting examinations](#) (ICE).

Head of centre

- Supports the SENCo, the Exams Officer and other relevant centre staff in ensuring appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Ensures appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for candidates where they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act (unless a temporary emergency arrangement is required at the time of an exam)
- Follows guidance in AA (chapter 8) to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications included
- Ensures that where approval is required the application is processed on time and no later than the awarding body's published deadline
- Ensures that the full supporting evidence is in place before an online application is processed
- Reviews the evidence before an online application is processed, ensuring that the candidate does meet the published criteria for the respective arrangement
- Holds all supporting evidence and presents such evidence to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request
- Ensures that the agreed adjustment has been put in place before the candidate's first

examination, e.g. internal tests and mock examinations

- Ensures appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in AAO including (where required) the completion of the relevant JCQ form such as Form 8 (*Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties*), Form 9 (*Profile of need*), Form 8RF, Form BD25, etc. supplemented by written statements, where required, etc. and/or centre based evidence including concise file note(s) on centre headed paper, signed and dated, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within the centre
- Ensures where JCQ forms are required to be completed, the forms are signed (a handwritten, electronic or typed signature is acceptable) and dated as required prior to approval being sought and that the form is provided for processing and inspection purposes (This may be a hard copy paper version or an electronic version)
- Maintains a file/e-folder for each candidate (the required documentation for a candidate will be in hard copy within the candidate's file/each of the required documents held electronically within the candidate's e-folder) that will include:
 - completed JCQ/awarding body application forms and evidence forms
 - appropriate evidence to support the need for the arrangement where required
 - appropriate evidence to support normal way of working within the centre
 - in addition, for those qualifications covered by AAO (where approval is required), a printout/PDF of the AAO approval, and signed candidate personal data consent form (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared)
 - (where applicable) 'Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo' acknowledged before an application is processed online
- Presents the files/e-folders when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised

Exams Officer

- Is familiar with and follows the *Checklist for heads of centre and Examination Managers – The Equality Act 2010 and conduct of examinations* provided in the current [ICE](#) (page 44)
- Applies for access arrangement approval where this is required, through Access arrangements online (AAO), or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- Provide the SENCo with external exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

Other relevant centre staff

- Support the SENCo and the Exams Manager to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams

Internal assessments

These are non-examination assessments (NEA) which are normally set by a centre/awarding body, marked and internally verified by the centre and moderated by the awarding body.

“Externally marked and/or externally set practical examinations taken at different times across centres are classified as ‘NEA’.”

[Quote taken from the JCQ publication [Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments – Foreword, page 3](#)]

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Internal exams

These are exams or tests which are set and marked within the centre; a pre-cursor to external assessments.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Exams Officer

- Provide the SENCo with internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Facilitating access - examples

The following information confirms the centre's good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and the conduct of examinations.

On a candidate by candidate basis, consideration is given to

- adapting assessment arrangements
- adapting assessment materials
- the provision of specialist equipment or adaptation of standard equipment
- adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes

The table provides example arrangements, adjustments and adaptations that are considered to meet the need(s) of a candidate and the actions considered/taken by the centre for the purposes of facilitating access.

Example of candidate need(s)	Arrangements explored	Centre actions
<p>A medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking exams in the centre</p>	<p>Alternative site for the conduct of examinations</p> <p>Supervised rest breaks</p>	<p><i>SENCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head provides written statement for file to confirm the need</i></p> <p><i>Approval confirmed by SENCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i></p> <p><i>EO submits appropriate 'Alternative site for the conduct of exams form'</i></p> <p><i>EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head confirms with candidate the information is understood</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head agrees with candidate that prior to each exam will call to confirm fitness to take exam</i></p> <p><i>EO allocates invigilator(s) to candidate's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials</i></p> <p><i>Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for each exam and records any issues on incident log</i></p> <p><i>Invigilator records supervised rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms full time given for exam</i></p> <p><i>Invigilator briefs EO after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition</i></p> <p><i>EO discusses with pastoral head if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged)</i></p> <p><i>EO processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence, supported by appropriate evidence signed by a member of the senior leadership team (Evidence retained until after the publication of results)</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</i></p>
<p>Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text</p>	<p>Reader/computer reader</p> <p>25% Extra time</p>	<p><i>Confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010</i></p> <p><i>Papers checked for those testing reading</i></p>

	Alternative rooming arrangements	<p><i>Computer reader sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded</i></p> <p><i>SENCo produces a statement, confirming the nature of the candidate's impairment and that the use of a computer reader and/or a reader reflects his/her normal and current way of working within the centre and completes appropriate form/documentation for evidence of need</i></p> <p><i>AAO application for approval processed</i></p> <p><i>Supporting evidence, AAO approval, signed candidate personal data consent form and completed Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo form kept on file</i></p>
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Alternative rooming arrangements	<p><i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</i></p> <p><i>Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted</i></p> <p><i>Briefs invigilator to monitor candidate and the method of prompting (call out his name to bring his attention back to the paper - confirms requirement for separate room)</i></p>
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant	<p><i>Applies for practical assistant to help candidate set up wheelchair and other equipment in a practical assessment; approval automatically fails so awarding body referral lists the tasks that will be performed</i></p> <p><i>Provides height adjustable desk in exam room</i></p> <p><i>Allocates exam room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities</i></p> <p><i>Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access</i></p> <p><i>Seats candidate near exam room door</i></p> <p><i>Confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room</i></p> <p><i>Practical assistant cover sheet printed from AAO; to be completed by facilitator and inserted inside the candidate's work where this may be applicable to the assessment</i></p>

Access Arrangement Assessment Procedure:

Process to check the qualifications of the centre's specialist assessor and that the assessment process is administered correctly:

The SENCO will ensure that the correct certificates of qualification are in place and available for inspection purposes, and in the case of any external assessor being used, are given to the school by the assessor and a copy stored in the main school office.

If a student is identified by a teacher as possibly having special educational needs then:

- A meeting or phone call is made to the parent or legal guardian to inform them of the decision to test and the reasons why.
- If a full EP report is required, then lesson observations and individual testing will take place over a number of weeks. The EP will complete a detailed report including any identified disabilities and possible strategies to support. This could include exam access arrangements and support both in and out of lessons). The report is then shared with staff and parents.
- If the testing is purely for exam arrangements for external exams, then these can be carried out by a different assessor and this would include tests for example in reading skills, comprehension, writing speed, etc.
If the scores for these recognised tests fall below 84 in at least one area, then the student would qualify for exam access arrangements.
- The student will have an agreed way of working for all internal exams, which is shared with all teaching staff. This could include extra time, reader and or scribe, dependant on the disability. This is kept as evidence, which is attached to the documents for JCQ.

In preparation for GCSE final exams, the following steps will take place:

- Students will be identified for assessment for special exam arrangements for the Year 10 internal exams, based on Year 9 assessments and end of year exams.
- Students assessed by assessor
- Copies of assessor recommendation form to be filed with SENCO, attached to Arbor and copy given to Exam Officer.
- Students with specific medical needs assessed by GP. Outcome record to be filed with SENCO, attached to Arbor and copy given to Exams Officer.
- Inclusion Administrator to complete the paperwork, (Inclusion administrator to have completed training)
- Meeting to take place in October with SENCO, Exam Officer, SLG Exam Lead, and, if possible, the link Year 11 SLG and HOY 11, to share details of Special Exam Arrangements for Year 11 GCSE Mocks and Final examinations.
- Based on Year 11 GCSE exam arrangements. Year 12 to be confirmed by SENCO with Head of Sixth Form.
- SENCO to organise assessments where appropriate.
- Meeting to take place in October with SENCO, Exam Officer, SLG Exam Lead and , if possible, the Head of 6th to finalise arrangements for 6th Form students.