



## BWHS EQUALITIES POLICY (EXAMS) 2025-26

### **GB Committee Responsible:**

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### **Curriculum and Achievement**

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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
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
Appendix: Access Arrangements Assessment Procedure.....	9

## Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the centre-wide equalities and accessibility 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"*

[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 2025-2026** (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

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 documents including GR and AA

#### Senior leaders

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ documents 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 document [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 document [AA](#)

## Support staff (for example, Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants)

- (where appropriate) Provide comments and observations to support the SENCo to 'paint a holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working for a candidate

## Requesting access arrangements

- Please also see the 'Appendix: Access Arrangement Assessment Procedure'

## 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
- To comply with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, ensures relevant candidates are informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online

### 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:

We have a dedicated Word Processor policy. A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a word processor policy which details the criteria Bentley Wood 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, 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
  - (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 document
- 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

- Liaises with the SENCo and other relevant centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates

#### **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.

However, 'NEA' is not limited to internal assessment as externally marked and/or externally set practical examinations taken at different times across centres are also classified as 'NEA'.

#### **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
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time Alternative rooming arrangements
A wheelchair user	Change desk and room, and other facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant

## **Appendix: Access Arrangement Assessment Procedure**

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.

Students may come to be assessed for Access Arrangements in a number of ways, including the following:

- They may be brought to the attention of the SENCo or Exams Officer by a Teacher, a Teaching Assistant, or some other member of staff
- They may be highlighted by analysis of assessment outcomes
- A parent may complete the *Consideration for Access Arrangements Form (CAAF)*. Before a parental request for access arrangements will be considered, this form must be completed and submitted four weeks before the published JCQ access arrangements deadline, typically the end of March. *A parental request which does not follow this route, such as simply contacting the school by email or phone-call, will not be considered a formal request and so will not be considered.*

For details on the access arrangements available to centres and candidates, and the criteria necessary for approval, see the following JCQ document:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/>