



BEECHEN CLIFF

# Examination Access Arrangements Policy 2020/21

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
TDM/KJD/JLB - JUNE 2020	
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Examination Access Arrangements (2020/21)

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**Key staff involved in the policy**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
SENDCo	<b>JOANNA BLAIR</b>
SENDCo and Exams Officer line managers	<b>JAMES OLDHAM, DEPUTY HEAD</b> <b>TIMOTHY MARKALL, DEPUTY HEAD</b>
Head of centre	<b>ANDREW DAVIES</b>
Assessor(s)	<b>KATHERINE DAVISON</b>
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	<b>FIONA WIGHT</b>

## Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the *school's disability/accessibility policy/plan* which details how the centre will

*“recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. 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...*

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

[Quote taken directly from section 5.4 (c) of the JCQ publication General regulations for approved centres (GR) 2019/20

This policy details how Beechen Cliff School 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
- ▶ good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010

### **Definitions of terms included in the policy**

- **The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability**

**Section 6** of the Equality Act 2010 defines **disability** as a ‘physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on someone’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities’.

- **Special Educational Needs**

A candidate has ‘special educational needs’ as defined in the SEND code of practice: 0-25 years.

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability includes substantial and long-term sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, mental health difficulties and long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

- **Long Term**

Means the impairment has existed for at least 12 months, or is likely to do so.

Examination Access Arrangements (2020/21)

## 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 and AA

#### Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCo)

- ▶ Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication AA
- ▶ Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- ▶ Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements for candidates (including private candidates) are clearly defined and documented
- ▶ Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed, evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained before she assesses candidates and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file
- ▶ Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations and that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of AA
- ▶ Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- ▶ Provides a policy on the use of word processors in exams and assessments
- ▶ If not the appropriately qualified assessor, works with the person/persons appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and the administration of the assessment process
- ▶ Ensures the qualified assessor(s) has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s) a candidate is undertaking
- ▶ Ensure a statement is provided which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams
- ▶ Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- ▶ Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- ▶ Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's *normal way of working* within the centre
- ▶ Ensures the need for access arrangements for a candidate will be considered on a subject by subject basis
- ▶ Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- ▶ Works with teaching staff, relevant support staff and the exams officer to ensure centre-delegated and awarding body approved access arrangements are put in place for candidates taking internal and external exams/assessments
- ▶ Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate
- ▶ Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- ▶ Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate
- ▶ Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

## Teaching staff

- ▶ Inform the SENDCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate by completing teacher evidence form which is used to gather information about the learner's needs and 'normal way of working ahead of any assessments for EAA.
- ▶ Support the SENDCo in implementing access arrangements

**Support staff** (for example, Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Communication Support Workers)

- ▶ (where appropriate) Provide comments/observations to support the SENDCo in *painting a holistic picture of need* confirming *normal way of working* for a candidate

## Parents/Carers

Access arrangements may only be requested by the examination centre. The JCQ does not deal with requests from parents or carers. Parents may communicate with the school's SENDCo if they feel their child's needs may need investigation and support.

## Privately Commissioned Assessors (commissioned by parents/carers)

Beechen Cliff School will not accept private reports. These may be used to contribute to identification of a child's needs but the school will only use assessments undertaken by the SENDCo/Exams Officer to apply for Exams Access Arrangements.

## 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 JCQ publication AA
- ▶ Is registered with school as an assessor.

At Beechen Cliff School our assessors are:

- ▶ Joanna Blair, SENDCo
- ▶ Katherine Davison, Exams Officer

## Use of word processors

Word Processor Policy available.

## Requesting access arrangements

### **Referral Procedure for Exam Access Assessment**

Candidates who have EAA at KS2 are screened for EAA at KS3 and KS4. Although they may have received EAA at KS2, it does not necessarily mean that they automatically receive it at KS3 or KS4 because their needs may have changed. For example, a candidate who had a Reader for KS2 may not qualify for a Reader at KS4 because their reading has improved to the extent it does not meet the exam board criteria of a standardised score of 84 or below. Formal assessments for Exam Access Arrangements take place in Year 9, during the Spring and Summer term.

All students in Year 7, who are on the Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) register are assessed during the transition period using the Access Reading Test and the Single Word Spelling Test (SWST). These tests can help identify learning difficulties and possible Dyslexic tendencies. The Learning Support Team will contact parents where this is the case, complete further testing, and if necessary put an appropriate intervention into place for them to access exam access arrangements as needed.

Parents can contact the school to ask for advice about testing if they have concerns with the progress and learning of their child regardless of which year group they are in. Once contact has been made, the Exams Officer and Learning Support Team will investigate their concerns through feedback from the student's teachers to gain information. Following this, a decision will be made as to whether it is appropriate to test a student.

As with Parent Referrals, teachers can refer a candidate to Learning Support where they have concerns about the learning and progress of a candidate in their class. All of the candidate's current teachers will be asked to give feedback to gain information, and following this, a decision will be made as to whether to test a candidate for EAA. The Exams Officer and Learning Support Team will then contact the parents if it is appropriate to test the student.

Candidates who are on the SEND register will be automatically assessed at the end of Year 9 or start of Year 10, ready to process any Exams Access Application during Year 10. Staff will be reminded to use formal assessments in Year 9 and 10 as a means of identifying any non-SEN pupils who may require testing. All students must be tested by 1st February in the same year for which they will sit public examinations..

A flow chart explaining the assessment procedure can be found in the appendix of this policy.

## Roles and responsibilities

### Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCo)

- ▶ SENDCo keeps accurate records of learner's needs over time and, with support from class teachers and, on occasion parents, identifies those who may require access arrangements
- ▶ Determines which access arrangements are needed through use of psychometric tests and/or advice from suitably qualified professions such as a CAMHs psychiatrist or pediatrician.
- ▶ 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
- ▶ Confirms by ticking the 'Confirmation' box prior to submitting the application for approval that the 'malpractice consequence statement' has been read and accepted
- ▶ Makes an *awarding body referral* through AAO where the initial application for approval may not be approved by AAO, where it is deemed by the centre that the candidate does meet the criteria for the arrangement(s)
- ▶ Ensures that arrangements, and approval where required, are in place before a candidate takes his/her first exam or assessment (which is externally assessed or internally assessed/externally moderated)
- ▶ Ensures that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline
- ▶ Maintains a hard copy file for each candidate 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 listed on page 2/92 of AA (where approval is required), a print out of the AAO approval and a signed data protection notice (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared) are held in hard copy and available for inspection when required
- ▶ Presents the files when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised
- ▶ Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates
- ▶ Liaises with the Exams Officer to ensure arrangements are in place to either order a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper or to open question paper packets in the secure room within 90 minutes of the published starting time for the exam where the centre is permitted to modify a timetabled written component exam paper (copy on coloured paper, enlarge to A3 or copy to single sided print)
  - Following the appropriate process (AAO for those qualifications listed on page 74 of AA; *Form VQ/EA*), orders published modified papers, by the awarding body's deadline for the exam series, where these may be required for a candidate

### 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
- ▶ If the SENDCo is unavailable, presents the files/e-folders of access arrangements candidates when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised



### 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 SENDCo, 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 and Disability Coordinator (SENDCo)**

- ▶ 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)
- ▶ Is familiar with the instructions for *Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements* in Instructions for Conducting Exams (ICE 2020-2021)
- ▶ Ensures a candidate is involved in any decisions about arrangements, adjustments and/or adaptations that may be put in place for him/her and ensures the candidate understands what will happen at exam time
- ▶ Ensures exam information (JCQ information for candidates documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it
- ▶ Ensures that prior to any arrangements being put in place checks are made that arrangements do not impact on any assessment criteria/competence standards being tested
- ▶ Ensures that any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled candidates
- ▶ Monitors, in internal tests/mock exams, the use of arrangements granted to a candidate and where a candidate has never made use of the arrangement, may consider withdrawing the arrangement, provided the candidate will not be placed at a substantial disadvantage
- ▶ Liaises with the exams officer (EO) regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams
- ▶ Liaises with other relevant centre staff regarding the provision of appropriate rooming and equipment that may be required to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- ▶ Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Oral Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Communication Professional)
- ▶ Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- ▶ Ensures a record of the content of training given to those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions is kept and retained on file until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
- ▶ Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate

- ▶ Liaises with the EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- ▶ Liaises with the EO where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams
- ▶ Liaises with relevant centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- ▶ Liaises with relevant staff to ensure exam information (JCQ information for candidates documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it
- ▶ Liaises with relevant staff regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- ▶ Liaises with relevant staff regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates
- ▶ Liaises with relevant staff to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- ▶ Ensures appropriate seating arrangements are in place where different arrangements may need to be made for a candidate to facilitate access to his/her exams

### **Exams officer**

- ▶ Understands and follows instructions for *Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements* and *Access arrangements* in Instructions for Conducting Exams (ICE 2020-2021)
- ▶ Ensures invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates are trained in their role and understand the invigilation arrangements required for access arrangement candidates and the role of any facilitator
- ▶ Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- ▶ Ensures candidates with access arrangements are identified on exam room seating plans
- ▶ Ensures invigilators are briefed prior to each exam session of the arrangements in place for a disabled candidate in their exam room
- ▶ Checks in advance of dated exams/assessments that modified paper orders have arrived (and if not, will contact the awarding body to ensure that papers are available when required)
- ▶ Makes modifications that are permitted by the centre (a question paper copied onto coloured paper, an A4 to A3 enlarged paper or a paper printed on single sheets or where a question paper may need to be scanned into PDF format where a candidate is approved the use of a computer reader) that may be required and either accesses a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper or opens the exam question paper packet in the secure room no earlier than 90 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time of the exam
- ▶ Understands that where permitted/approved, secure exam question paper packets may need to be opened early so the facilitator (Oral Language Modifier, Live Speaker, Communication Professional **only**) may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published starting time for the exam in order to prepare
- ▶ Provides cover sheets prior to the start of an exam where required for particular access arrangements and ensures that these have been fully completed before candidates' scripts are dispatched to examiners/markers
  - prints pre-populated cover sheets from AAO where this is required for those qualifications listed on page 2/92 of AA
- ▶ Has a process in place to deal with emergency (temporary) access arrangements as they arise at the time of exams in terms of rooming and invigilation

- ▶ Liaises with the SENDCo where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams
- ▶ Where required for emergency (temporary) access arrangements, applies for approval through AAO or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO

#### **Other relevant centre staff**

- ▶ Support the SENDCo and the exams officer 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 moderated by the centre and externally 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]

#### **Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCo)**

- ▶ Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- ▶ Ensures centre-delegated and awarding body approved arrangements are in place prior to a candidate taking his/her first formal supervised assessment
- ▶ Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments
- ▶ Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- ▶ Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators
- ▶ Liaises with the teacher where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of his/her formal supervised assessment

#### **Teaching staff**

- ▶ Support the SENDCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- ▶ Liaise with the SENDCo regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a candidate
- ▶ Provide the SENDCo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

#### **Internal exams**

These are exams or tests which are set and marked within the centre; normally a precursor to external assessments.

#### **Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCo)**

- ▶ Liaises with teaching staff and learners to implement appropriate access arrangements

#### **Teaching staff**

- ▶ Support the SENDCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- ▶ Provide exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate
- ▶ Provide the SENDCo with internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

## 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
A medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking exams in the centre	Alternative site for the conduct of examinations  Supervised rest breaks	<p><i>SENDCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home (sufficient evidence from suitably qualified professionals such as a CAMHS psychiatrist, medical consultant or a paediatrician is required here. A GP letter alone is not sufficient evidence for approval). The use of the Small Exams Centre will be explored first.</i></p> <p><i>Approval confirmed by SENDCo; 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 'Alternative site form' for timetabled written exams to awarding body/bodies online through CAP</i></p> <p><i>An on-line submission must only be made for timetabled written examinations in the following qualifications:</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 rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms set 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 processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</i></p>
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	<p>Reader/computer reader</p> <p>25%+ extra time</p> <p>Separate invigilation within the centre (at Beechen Cliff our Small Exams Centre is usually housed in the library).</p>	<p><i>Confirms the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 by gathering evidence to support <u>substantial and long term</u> adverse impairment followed by testing to show a standardised assessment score of 84 or below in a suitable psychometric test.</i></p> <p><i>Papers checked for those testing reading</i></p> <p><i>Reader or computer reader/examination reading pen in place for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded</i></p> <p><i>Original Form 8v signed and dated, with Sections A, B and C completed; kept on file with body of supporting evidence, printed approval from AAO and signed data protection notice</i></p>
Significant difficulty in concentrating	<p>Prompter</p> <p>Separate invigilation within the centre (at Beechen Cliff our Small Exams Centre is usually housed in the library).</p>	<p><i>Gathers evidence to support <u>substantial and long term</u> 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	<p>Desk</p> <p>Rooms</p> <p>Facilities</p> <p>Seating arrangements</p> <p>Practical assistant</p>	<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>

## **Private Educational Psychologist Reports**

Whilst a privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the SENDCo at Beechen Cliff School and without the assessor having obtained Form 8 Part 1 before the assessment cannot be used as evidence for access arrangements and cannot be used to process an application through Access Arrangements Online, such a report may contain useful information for the assessors in the school.

Therefore, the JCQ recommends that SENDCos and assessors working within the centre should always carefully consider any privately commissioned assessment to see whether the process of gathering a picture of need, demonstrating normal way of working within the centre and ultimately assessing the candidate themselves should be instigated (JCQ p78). At Beechen Cliff School, it is our practice to use any privately commissioned assessments to inform our own evidence gathering and assessments.

## Appendix

### Identifying Examination Access Arrangement Needs

Teacher/parent/pupil notes concerns regarding reading fluency or speed, processing or other difficulty that may necessitate special considerations for examinations for a pupil who is not already on the SEND register\*.

Request is sent to teachers of core subjects and humanities asking for information on how the difficulty manifests itself in the classroom and what adaptations are already in place as a normal way of working.

Concerns are raised and it is evident the difficulty is 'long term' and 'severe'.

Parent/carer email/call to request parent and pupil permission to undertake psychometric testing.

With permission, the SENDCo or Exams Officer undertakes psychometric testing with the pupil.

Results of the tests are used to determine access arrangements.

Access Arrangements spreadsheet and Support Plans are updated to

Letter sent to parents and pupil giving information of access arrangements awarded.

There is no evidence of this being a concern that requires special considerations.

Response provided to the person making the request that there is not sufficient evidence for AA testing.

Alternative support explored

Request and subsequent evidence gathering exercise is archived for future reference.

\*All pupils on the SEND register are automatically assessed for exam access arrangements at the end of Year 9/start of Year 10.

All students must be tested by 1st February in the same year for which they will sit public examinations.