Bowbrook School

BOWBROOK HOUSE SCHOOL

Access Arrangement & Reasonable Adjustment Allocation Policy (Exams)

2026/27

THIS POLICY IS REVIEWED AND UPDATED ANNUALLY TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH CURRENT REQUIREMENTS AND REGULATIONS

KEY STAFF INVOLVED IN THE POLICY

Role	Name(s)
SENDCo/AAA Specialist Teacher Access Arrangement Assessor **(AAA)**	**L Kimberlee**
Specialist Teacher / **(AAA)**	**Y Rutherford**
Exams Officer	**J Ironside**
Senior Leader(s)	**C Allen, R Mills, and A Farr**
IT Manager	**D Bell - ICT in Examinations**
Teaching Staff	**All staff are responsible for communicating concern for pupils presenting with need. Be this in accessing classroom teaching, internal tests and or exams. Evidence should be banked and forwarded to the SENDCo/AAA.**

This policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations and guidance on access arrangements and instructions for conducting exams.

References in this policy to are directly taken from the "Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments" JCQ policy document (and refers to Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE))

INTRODUCTION AND JCQ REGULATIONS

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are applied to create a level playing field for all candidates in examinations and implemented in such a way as to not create advantage over other candidates.

The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate. The SENCo… **must** ensure that the proposed access arrangement / reasonable adjustment does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

Although access arrangements / adjustments are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

Candidates may not require the same access arrangements/reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. SENCos must consider the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis.

The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre, for example:

- in the classroom (where appropriate);
- working in small groups for reading and/or writing;
- support lessons;
- intervention strategies;
- in internal school tests/examinations;
- mock examinations.

This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working'.

The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/ reasonable adjustment(s) before their first examination.

Word Processing – when using a word processor in an examination context the following will apply:

- spelling and grammar check disabled where required;
- no internet access;
- no predictive text;
- secure printing arrangements;
- retention of logs/evidence.

Bowbrook House School will retain evidence supporting all centre-delegated access arrangements. Decisions will be made by the SENDCo/AAA in consultation with teaching staff and the Exams Officer and will be available for inspection by JCQ Centre Inspectors.

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This policy details how Bowbrook House School complies with JCQ General Regulations JCQ ICE procedures for awarding and implementing access arrangements.

Teaching staff concerns about a pupil, your responsibility:

- Teaching staff have a responsibility to raise concerns with the SENDCo or specialist teacher; to discuss concerns regarding any pupil who appears to be disadvantaged in any way during class teaching, tests, assessments and examinations.
- Quality First Teaching as first port of call: Teachers prepare candidates, over the duration of the course, with regards to: examination content and expectation, format of questions and layout, mark allocations and time management, including a range of revision techniques as well as revision guides and notes.
    - NB: Some pupils will need time to practice exam style questions, executed in a timely manner, it does not necessarily mean that a pupil has a need of an access arrangement if they don't finish exams in allotted time.
- A written record will be kept of conversations and emails so that a detailed picture of pupils' needs can be built over time. (Emailing is a relatively quick and efficient way to document concerns).

PROCESS FOR IDENTIFYING AND IMPLEMENTING ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

Examples of Teaching Staff Concerns

- Consistently failing to complete classwork, tests, assessments and examinations in the "normal" time frame. Subject staff may also have comments from parent/carers about pupils spending over and above amounts of time on homework – but producing something that was roughly in-line with expectations of the teacher.
- Difficulty settling into the test, assessment or exam due to high levels of anxiety / Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) issues.
- Wandering off task frequently, needs to be queued back to the task or given a learning break frequently.
- Consistently producing work that is difficult to read, or struggling to write for a sustained period or whereby a person who is unfamiliar with the handwriting would find it very difficult to read.
- Known issues with reading, reading accuracy, fluency and or speed or reading comprehension. Or, needing to read aloud to aid understanding or thought processes.
- Known issues with spelling – where the spelling is so poor it cannot be deciphered
- Physical issues such as a visual impairment – Irlen syndrome, nystagmus and or being partially sighted which will significantly impact on the ability to access a conventional examination paper and staff are having to ensure pupils have overlays, coloured paper, larger papers and modified papers. Pupils with a hearing impairment may also struggle with processing difficulties.
- This is not an exhaustive list of concerns; any member of staff who has concerns about a pupil not being able to reach their full potential because of a barrier to learning / accessibility should discuss and document concerns to the SENDCo or specialist teacher.

Teaching Staff, Dos and Don'ts:

- Teachers are NOT to discuss the possible need for an arrangement with a pupil or parent. This is to avoid awkward conversations with pupils and parents who could potentially believe that they are entitled to an access arrangement that they are not entitled to.
- There has to be a comprehensive picture of need for the individual pupil, based on substantial evidence and testing (where appropriate).
- Teachers MUST document concerns and put into writing for all pupils in their classes who they believe may require an access arrangement and send these to the SENDCo or specialist teacher.
- Teachers MUST respond to emails requesting feedback/information regarding pupils' presentation /eligibility for arrangements following assessment. Non-communication will be taken as agreement for the specified arrangement in their subject.

The SENDCo / Specialist Teacher role is to:

- Keep all evidence/correspondence for individual pupils from teachers
- Review evidences regularly
- Gather sufficient and substantial evidence to build a picture of need to make a case for an arrangement for a pupil
- Discuss as to the best way forward to support that pupil, what type of arrangement will be most suitable, based on individual need with SENDCo/Specialist teacher.
- Collaborate and discuss with parents and pupils
- Collaborate with outside agencies as appropriate
- Conduct psychometric tests (where required) to ascertain as to whether a pupil is entitled to an arrangement or reasonable adjustment.
- Inform parents and pupils as to the outcome of testing
- Applications are made through JCQ Access Arrangements Online (AAO) where approval is required.
- Continue to gather evidences to prove that the access arrangement is still needed.

The Exams Officer will:

- Ensure any approved arrangements are implemented for examinations.
- Liaise with awarding bodies where notification or approval is required.
- Brief invigilators and examination staff regarding any temporary arrangements.
- Retain relevant evidence and records for inspection purposes.

Exceptions – in the award of access arrangement(s)

- In exceptional circumstances, a candidate may require a temporary access arrangement or reasonable adjustment due to an injury, illness, medical condition, sensory impairment or other unforeseen circumstance arising during the course or immediately prior to an examination. Such arrangements will be considered in accordance with JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA) and Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE).
- The SENDCo/Access Arrangements Assessor (AAA), Exams Officer and relevant members of the Senior Leadership Team will work together to determine the most appropriate support for the candidate.
- Appropriate medical or professional evidence will be obtained wherever possible to support the centre's decision-making process.

Possible Temporary Arrangements

Depending on the nature of the candidate's needs, the following may be considered:

- Supervised rest breaks.
- Use of a word processor.
- Use of a scribe.
- Use of a reader or reading pen where permitted.
- Extra time where the criteria are met.
- Separate room accommodation.
- Adapted examination materials.
- Practical assistance or other reasonable adjustments as permitted by JCQ regulations.

Emergency Situations Immediately Before an Examination

Where a temporary injury, illness or impairment occurs shortly before or on the day of an examination, the Head of Centre, SENDCo/AAA and Exams Officer will make every effort to identify and implement an appropriate arrangement in line with JCQ regulations.

Where advance approval is not possible, the centre will:

- Implement only those arrangements permitted under JCQ regulations.
- Maintain detailed records of the circumstances, evidence and decisions made.
- Notify the awarding body where required.
- Retain documentation for inspection and audit purposes.

Where a candidate is affected by injury, illness or other adverse circumstances and an access arrangement or reasonable adjustment is insufficient to address the impact on performance, the Head of Centre and Exams Officer will consider whether an application for Special Consideration should be made in accordance with current JCQ regulations.

Recording and Evidence

All decisions relating to emergency or temporary access arrangements will be documented and retained securely. Records will include:

- Medical or professional evidence where available.
- Details of the arrangement implemented.
- The rationale for the decision.
- Correspondence with awarding bodies.
- Confirmation of implementation during examinations.

The centre will ensure that all emergency arrangements are proportionate, evidence-based, reflect the candidate's needs and maintain the integrity of the assessment process.

Please note: from "JCQ Access Arrangement and Reasonable Adjustment" document

- "Failure to comply with the regulations contained in this document have the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on the candidate's result(s).
- Examples of failure to comply include:
- putting in place access arrangements/adjustments that are not approved;
- failing to consider putting in place access arrangements (which may be a failure to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments);

- permitting access arrangements/adjustments within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence
- Whilst this document addresses the duty upon awarding bodies to make reasonable adjustments and avoid unfavourable treatment towards disabled candidates, it cannot cover every scenario. Each case will turn on its own facts as to what is reasonable."

All access arrangement evidence will be retained in accordance with JCQ requirements and made available for inspection upon request. Evidence will be securely stored and retained for the period specified by JCQ regulations.

Equalities Act 2010

Bowbrook House School recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will ensure that disabled candidates are not substantially disadvantaged when undertaking qualifications.

Annual Process Review

Existing arrangements will be reviewed annually to ensure that they remain appropriate, continue to reflect normal way of working and remain supported by current evidence.

Candidate Data Protection

All information gathered as part of the access arrangements process will be processed in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

JCQ CROSS-REFERENCES

This policy aligns with the following current JCQ documents:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- Instructions for Conducting Examinations