

Access Arrangements Policy
BRADFIELD COLLEGE

Access Arrangements Policy

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| Centre name | BRADFIELD COLLEGE |
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| Current policy approved by | Jamie Emmett |
| Current policy reviewed by | Jessica Dickens, Kahlen Spaulding |
| Date of review | 1/9/2025 |
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Key staff involved in the policy

| Role | Name |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Head of centre | Mr Jeremy Quartermain |
| Senior leader(s) | Jamie Emmett (Deputy Head Academic) Rachel Maclellan (Director of Teaching and Learning) |
| Exams officer | Jessica Dickens (Head of Exams) |
| SENCo (or equivalent role) | Kahlen Spaulding |
| Other staff (if applicable) | Natasha Bell (Deputy SENCo) |

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that access arrangements process at BRADFIELD COLLEGE is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.

References in this policy to GR, ICE and AA refer to the JCQ documents General Regulations for Approved Centres, Instructions for conducting examinations and Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010. Separate legislation is in place for Northern Ireland (see AA 1.8). The definitions and procedures in AA relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will also apply in Northern Ireland.

Introduction (AA Definitions)

Access arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. An example would be a Braille paper which would be a reasonable adjustment for a vision impaired candidate who could read Braille. A reasonable adjustment may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements.

Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which will include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of the disabled candidate;
- the effectiveness of the adjustment;
- the cost of the adjustment; and
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.

An adjustment will not be approved if it:

- involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body;
- involves unreasonable timeframes; or
- affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'.

The centre must ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that BRADFIELD COLLEGE has a written record which clearly shows the centre is leading on the access arrangements process and:

- is complying with its obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements (GR 5.4)
- has a written process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of its assessor(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* (GR 5.4)

1. General principles

The head of centre/senior leadership team will appoint a SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, who will coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, candidates for whom English is an additional language, as

well as those with a temporary illness or temporary injury. (GR 5.4)

A centre must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they cannot make the decision for the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations. (AA 4.2)

The principles for BRADFIELD COLLEGE to consider include:

- The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate (AA 4.2)
- Although access arrangements are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AA 4.2)
- 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.

The need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments must be considered on a subject-by-subject basis (AA 4.2)

- Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of the course (AA 4.2)
- Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment (AA 4.2)
- The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre (AA 4.2)
- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before their first examination (AA 4.2)

The main elements of the process detailing staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements/reasonable adjustments and the conduct of examinations are covered in:

- the exam arrangement policy

2. The assessment process

At BRADFIELD COLLEGE, assessments are carried out by:

- an appropriately qualified assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre in accordance with the JCQ requirements (AA 7.3)

Details and qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)

The credentials on the assessors are held on file in the Support and Study Skills Department.

The SENCo holds a certificate of completion for the Patoss AAA: Assessing for Access Arrangements obtained 12th September 2018, which is updated annually. See file of assessors and credentials.

The College does not employ the psychologist directly. Rather, Bradfield College has an established relationship with the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre. Susan Bull is the educational psychologist who conducts the full cognitive diagnostic assessments while Rachael McMullen and Beth McLaren (specialist assessors) carry out exam access arrangements assessments as required by the JCQ to ascertain if a pupil who has had historic exam concessions meets the thresholds set forth by the exam board. In addition, the College also has an established relationship with Caro Strover as well as her team of graduate assistants who conduct full

cognitive assessments for pupils in the lower school (up to 15 years 11 months). Upon selection of a psychologist(s) or specialist assessors we request the credentials. Natasha Bella and Kahlen Spaulding are involved in this process

Appointment of assessors

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed at BRADFIELD COLLEGE:

- Evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements (AA 7.3)

This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate (AA 7.3)

- Evidence of successful completion of a post-graduate course in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7 or a printout of a screenshot of HCPC or SASC registration is held on file for inspection purposes to evidence that the assessor(s) is/ are suitably qualified (AA 7.3, 7.4)

Additional information:

Reporting the appointment of assessors

- Evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified is held on file for inspection purposes (AA 7.4)

When requested, the evidence will be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by:

- the SENCo
- In the case of appropriately qualified psychologists (registered with the Health & Care Professions Council), or specialist teacher assessors holding a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, who are directly employed within the centre, there is no need to record the names of these individuals within *Access arrangements online*. (AA 7.4)
- The names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as covered by the *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* document must be entered into *Access arrangements online* to confirm their status (AA 7.4)

Process for the assessment of a candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor

BRADFIELD COLLEGE confirms:

- Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor will be followed and Form 8 (JCQ/AA/LD - Profile of Learning Difficulties) will be completed (AA 7.5, 7.6)
- Arrangements must be made for the candidate to be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor (AA 7.5)
- Assessors must personally conduct the assessments. They must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional (AA 7.5)
- The assessor must carry out tests which are relevant to support the application (AA 7.5)
- A privately commissioned assessment, where the centre has not been involved, cannot be used to award access arrangements and cannot be used to process an application using *Access arrangements online* (AA 7.3)
- Relevant staff 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 (AA 7.3)

Additional information:

Given evidence of need, should a full educational assessment be required, it must be carried out by an assessor with whom the College has an established relationship with. In addition, appropriately qualified assessors carry out cognitive assessments for exam access arrangements. All assessors are appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations and attend yearly update courses. The qualifications are held in the Support and Study Skills Department. Classroom teachers, pastoral tutors and Housemasters monitor pupil attainment given a variety of methods. Any concerns regarding a pupil's performance and attainment are passed on to the SENCo or Deputy SENCo for review as well as further monitoring and data collection.

Pupils are then invited to the Support and Study Skills Department where an initial interview is conducted and next steps are discussed.

A full cognitive assessment conducted by our visiting educational psychologist may be offered to families who wish to explore the pupil's learning profile further (the cost of all assessments are covered by the family). The learning profile does not just drive the assessment process but is important for the young person to develop their own learning style as they work to manage and navigate their independent learning. The assessments which are administered vary depending on the young person, their age, previous assessments, and the purpose of the assessment.

Picture of need/normal way of working

BRADFIELD COLLEGE confirms:

- Before the candidate's assessment, the person appointed in the centre must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as required in Part 1 of Form 8. The centre and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process. (AA 7.5)

Additional information:

3. Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangements online (AAO) is used to apply for approval of arrangements/adjustments for the qualifications listed within the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*.

AAO is accessed through the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by using any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

Deadlines apply for each examination series for submitting applications for approval using AAO.

Online applications **must** only be processed where they are supported by the centre and the candidate meets the published criteria for the arrangement(s) with the full supporting evidence in place.

Centre delegated arrangements/adjustments.

Decisions relating to the approval of centre delegated arrangements/adjustments are made by:

- the SENCo

Appropriate evidence, where required by the arrangement, is held on file by:

- The Support and Study Skills Department

The use of a word processor

The Word Processor policy details the criteria BRADFIELD COLLEGE specifically uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments which is located on the school website.

Alternative rooming arrangements

The exam access arrangement policy details the criteria BRADFIELD COLLEGE uses to award alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs or 1:1 invigilation.

The decision to award separate invigilation is a centre decision.

Additional needs alone do not entitle a student to alternative rooming. The exam board is clear in stating that a centre must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. While professionals from other organisations may give advice, they cannot make the decision for the centre as they will not have a working knowledge of a pupil's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom.

General anxiety or nervousness about sitting examinations are not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation. Separate invigilation and the use of an alternative room would apply where the candidate has a serious medical condition such as frequent seizures, Tourette's or significant behavioural issues which would disturb other candidates in the examination room. Pupils who are unable to manage distraction via strategic seating within the exam hall will be offered the option to sit in a booth located in the exam hall which eliminates any visual stimuli. Pupils will also be offered ear defenders to eliminate any potential sound.

Modified papers

Modified papers are ordered using AAO.

- Modified papers must be ordered in advance of a specific examination series, no later than the published deadline for the series concerned (AA 6.1)
- Modified papers are prepared for candidates for whom other adjustments are unsuitable. The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore centres must provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper. (AA 6.1)
- Modified papers must not be ordered for candidates unless the centre intends to enter them for the relevant examination series (AA 6.1)
- For the adjustment to be effective, the candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using an awarding body's past modified papers before their first examination (AA 6.1)

Roles and responsibilities

When an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment has been processed on-line and approved, the evidence of need (where required) must be made available to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request. An awarding body may also request evidence of need when considered necessary. This can either be in hard copy paper format or electronically. (AA 4.2)

Where documentation is stored electronically an e-folder for each individual candidate must be created. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. (AA 4.2)

It is the responsibility of:

- the SENCo and Deputy SENCo to inform the candidate that their personal information has been shared with the relevant exam board online.
- SENCo and Deputy SENCo to submit applications for approval using AAO
- SENCo and Deputy SENCo to keep detailed records for inspection purposes, whether electronically or in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file. This includes confirmation that the pupil has been made aware that their data has been shared online with AAO, a copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need from the corresponding classroom teacher and exam papers demonstration need from the corresponding classes, and evidence of the assessor's qualification (where required) (AA 8.6)
- SENCo to submit applications for approval directly to an awarding body for any qualification that does not fall within the scope of AAO
- Exams Office to order modified papers

Additional responsibilities:

The head of centre/senior leadership team will appoint a SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, who will coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, candidates for whom English is an additional language, as well as those with a temporary illness or temporary injury. (GR 5.4)

A centre must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they cannot make the decision for the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations (AA 4.2)

Modified papers must be ordered in advance of a specific examination series, no later than the published deadline for the series concerned (AA 6.1)

Centre-specific changes

Bradfield College has appointed a Deputy SENCo who will assist the SENCo in taking on responsibility in overseeing the access arrangements process at the Centre.