



Exams Access to Fair Assessment Policy

School Name: Birch Wood School

Policy owner: Philip Leaney

Date Ratified by Chair of Governors: 2016

Reviewed: September 2025

Statement of Assessment

We aim to provide a variety of qualifications which provide all students with the opportunity to achieve their full potential by the most appropriate and direct route.

Our Assessment Policy is based on the concepts of equality, diversity, clarity, consistency and openness.

We will endeavour to ensure that the assessment processes are implemented in a way which is fair and non-discriminatory.

Access

Students are made aware of the existence of this policy and have open access to it. It can be found in school and also online on the Birch Wood School website.

All tutors are made aware of the contents and purpose of this policy.

This policy is reviewed annually and may be revised in response to feedback from students, tutors and external organisations.

Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments may be granted in certain circumstances, in accordance with the Awarding Body and JCQ Policy, to prevent any learners with a disability or difficulty be substantially disadvantaged during an examination or assessment process.

Special Consideration

A special consideration may be granted by the Awarding Body in instances where, following a scheduled assessment, a learner may have been disadvantaged by temporary illness, bereavement, injury or other adverse circumstances arising at or near the time of assessment.

A Special Consideration may also be granted when a learner misses part of the assessment owing to unforeseen circumstances beyond the learner's control, e.g. excessive noise, a fire alarm or power cut, etc. Evidence must be provided by the learner or the Centre to support any request for Special Consideration.

Qualifications with External Assessment

Birch Wood School ensures that all assessments and activities for assessment undertaken by students are -

- Reliable
- Valid
- Fit for purpose
- Transparent
- Recognise and respect equality and diversity

Where an approved qualification includes a requirement for external assessment, the regulations surrounding the use of external assessment, including the security arrangements that must be in place must be complied with.

What students can expect from us

We aim to ensure that all assessment of work is carried out fairly and in keeping with the awarding body's requirements.

All portfolio-based work will be assessed fairly against the qualification standards and teachers involved will be fully trained.

Internal assessments will be carried out fairly and according to awarding body instructions.

Externally marked tests and exams will be according to the requirements of the awarding body.

Students can also expect:

To be fully inducted onto a new course and given information that can be shared with parents and carers.

Learning outcomes, performance criteria and other significant elements of learning and assessment to be made clear at the outset of the course and when assignments are set.

To be given appropriate assessment opportunities during the course with feedback provided on the quality of the work.

All work to be marked within two weeks of submission by the student.

Where equivalents and exemptions can be applied, we will ensure this is pursued with the relevant awarding body.

Cheating, Plagiarism and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

A fair assessment of student's work can only be made if that work is entirely the student's own. Students must ensure that the final product is in their own words and isn't copied or paraphrased from another source such as an AI tool, and that the content reflects their own independent work.

Therefore, students can expect an awarding body to be informed if:

They are found guilty of copying, giving or sharing information or answers, unless part of a joint project

They use an unauthorised aid during a test or examination

They cause disruption in a test, assessment or examination or fail to comply with examination conditions

There is clear evidence that AI has been used to generate responses to any work, assignments or examinations to the extent which deems this work not attributable to the student

They copy another student's answers during a test or examination

They talk during a test or examination.

The JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures and Procedures define plagiarism as: "unacknowledged copying from, or reproduction of, third party sources or incomplete referencing (including the internet and AI tools. (AI use refers to the use of AI tools to obtain information and content which might be used in work produced for assessments which lead towards qualifications).

Students are expected to demonstrate their own knowledge, skills and understanding as required for the qualification in question and set out in the qualification specification. This includes

demonstrating their performance in relation to the assessment objectives for the subject relevant to the question/s or other tasks students have been set.

All allegations of cheating, plagiarism and/or the use of AI will lead to a full investigation which will follow the guidance of the relevant awarding body.

If a student feels they have been wrongly accused of cheating or plagiarism, they should be referred to the Appeals Policy.