



Braidwood School

BSL Assessment Policy

2024/2025

Approved/reviewed by	
<i>C.Nock</i>	
Date of next review	October 2025

Introduction

Braidwood School endeavours to develop and maintain good practice in all areas of its work, including the administration of all BSL assessments.

Where a problem may occur, Braidwood School has standard procedures for dealing with complaints, investigation requests and appeals.

BSL Tutors will be responsible for deciding which BSL specification a candidate will be entered for.

Braidwood currently uses the Signature awarding body for BSL qualifications and offers Level 1,2 and 3 courses.

Internal Policies (for the benefit of teaching and non-teaching staff and invigilators)

1. Choice of Specification

- It is the professional discretion of the BSL Tutor to choose the most appropriate specification designed to meet overall curriculum requirements.
- Any changes in specifications must be notified to the Exams Officer by the BSL tutor as soon as they are known.
- The course specifications are generally available online and may be downloaded via PDF for inspection.

2. BSL Assessments

- For Braidwood students, British Sign Language assessments will take place periodically throughout the year.
- For external students, British Sign Language assessments will take place periodically throughout the year.

3. Entries

- It is essential that all entries are made accurately and passed to the Exams Officer within one month of the actual assessment.
- In all cases, the online Google Signature BSL assessment entry form must be completed and returned within the time frame to the Exams officer.
- Entry forms returned to the Exams Officer will be used to enter candidates electronically via Signature's online portal no later than 14 days prior to an assessment. Confirmation of entries will be circulated to the BSL Tutor for final checking.
- Where students request individual entries (for example resits), this must be agreed by the Head of Centre and BSL Tutor. The online Google Signature BSL assessment entry form must be completed for individual entries.
- Entry and resits fees for internal pupils will be paid by Braidwood Trust School for the Deaf. External candidates will pay a course fee. In addition to this, individual entry and re-sit entry fees will be paid for by external candidates.

4. Amendments

- As a rule, amendments to entries should be avoided.
- Amendments may incur a fee. Amendment fees for internal pupils will be paid by Braidwood School. Amendment fees for external candidates, will be paid by the candidate.
- Any amendments should be notified to the Exams Officer as soon as possible.

5. Withdrawals

- Withdrawal request must be made in writing to the Exams Officer as soon as possible.
- Depending upon the date of withdrawal, fees may be incurred. External candidates will be responsible for any withdrawal fees.

6. Reasonable Adjustments and Access Arrangements

- The SENCO must identify and facilitate where reasonable adjustments and access arrangements are required.
- The BSL tutor must ensure these reasonable adjustments and access arrangement are fulfilled in teaching and assessments.
- The Exams Officer, with the support of the SENCO, must submit applications for reasonable adjustments and access arrangements to Signature prior to an assessment.
- Late applications will be considered on an individual basis according to the circumstances. These must be indicated as soon as possible to the Exams Officer.
- The Exams Officer will keep all reasonable adjustment and access arrangement applications on file. The Exam Officer will also support the administration of reasonable adjustments and access arrangements in assessments.

8. Candidate Briefing

- A document containing relevant information regarding the BSL qualification and arrangements (including fees, appeals and contacts) will be given to external candidates at the time of enrolment.
- At the start of the course, students will receive the course specification along with information explaining the course content and the expectations of both candidates and centre.

9. Storage of Papers

- On arrival/printing, all assessment papers and other materials will be stored securely in the exams secure room.
- Papers will be sorted and stored in a double locked filing cabinet in the exams secure room. The Exams Officer will check pre-recorded material is working correctly before an assessment.
- Security of all assessment material is the responsibility of the Exams Officer at all times whilst on the school site. Any breach of security will be reported to the Head Teacher and directly to Signature
- Assessment papers and other required material will be distributed directly from the exam secure room to the assessments lead invigilator / BSL tutor immediately before an assessment. On completion of the assessment, material will be returned to the exams secure room. The Exams Officer will ensure that assessment videos, results or portfolios will be uploaded to the Signature Portal within 48 hours.
- Assessment videos are recorded on a designated exams iPad and stored in a secure Google folder, to which only the Exams Officer and IT Manager have access.

10. Assessment / Preparation Venues

- The Exams Officer will confirm in which room the assessment can take place. This information will be detailed and posted on the Braidwood and Exams calendars in advance of an upcoming assessment.
- Rooms for assessments are set out with tables and chairs by the Site supervisor.
- The Exams Officer is responsible for ensuring that all venues have the required signage including notices and warning to candidates, silence notices, mobile 'phone warnings etc. All done in accordance with Signature and JCQ regulations.
- All other materials that might affect performance in the assessment will be removed.
- Clocks and assessment times etc., will be provided by the Exams Officer.

11. Invigilation

- All Invigilators will be experienced BSL (British Sign Language) Invigilators in order that all candidates are not advantaged or disadvantaged during the assessment.
- All invigilators will receive relevant training provided by The Exams Office. This training will be updated every 12 months.
- The start and finish of BSL assessment will be conducted by the Invigilators.

12. Malpractice

Malpractice, including maladministration, is a breach of regulations which can affect a candidate's result unfairly and compromise the validity of results of both this and other centres, therefore:

- All staff are fully trained to ensure the regulations are adhered to and malpractice is prevented.
- Both staff or candidates can be involved in malpractice.
- All staff must be aware of acts that constitute malpractice and report it to the Exams Officer if it is suspected.
- Any incidents of suspected malpractice must be reported to Signature. Failure to do so is malpractice.
- Example of staff malpractice can include, but not exclusive to;
 - Assisting pupils with answers
 - Allowing prior access to assessment papers
 - Failing to act on candidate malpractice
 - Allowing un-agreed extra time
 - Not following assessment procedure
- Example of candidate malpractice can include, but not exclusive to;
 - Talking/signing to others in an assessment
 - Using support material or devices
 - Disruption
 - False identity
 - Not following assessment rules
- Signature will investigate any reported suspected malpractice in line with their malpractice policy.
- Malpractice can result in sanctions against the centre, candidate, staff, and may prevent qualification being issued.

13. Results

- All results are downloaded to the Exams Officer from the Signature website.
- This information is kept secure and seen only by the Exams Officer and the BSL Tutor until official release.
- The BSL Tutor will keep a record of the candidate's progress.
- The Exams Officer will keep a record of all assessments taken and results.
- Paper statements of results are issued to students in sealed envelopes by the Exams Officer.

14. Certificates

- Certificates will be received by the Exams Officer and are recorded against the candidate's name.
- Certificates will be awarded on Presentation Evening in October, or posted directly to the student.
- The BSL Tutor will ask the external candidate to sign an acceptance sheet which will be passed back to the Exams Officer and kept on record.

15. Retention of information

- Assessment material will be kept on file until results have been confirmed and verified.
- Entry and result information will be kept on file for 6 years.
- Candidate assessment videos will be destroyed after 3 years.

Footnote

It is the aim of the Exams Officer, and all others involved in the processes outlined herein, to ensure the smooth running of all aspects of BSL assessments. In doing so we will provide students with an environment in which they will feel confident and secure enabling them to perform to the best of their ability.

Policies for candidates and parents

1. Entries

- Students will be entered for assessments when the BSL Tutor feels that they have made satisfactory progress within the specification.
- Parents and students are required to check and sign all statements of entry.
- Where amendments to entry or personal details are needed, they must be made by direct contact with the Exams Officer in advance of the date of the assessment.
- The costs of making amendments must be met by the external student.

2. Fees

- External candidates will be expected to pay for all course fees and assessments.
- Course fees and assessment fees for internal pupils will be paid by Braidwood School for the Deaf.
- Students must pay any fees incurred when a student has been entered for an assessment but failed to attend for any reason other than certified illness, bereavement or other exceptional circumstances.

3. Timetable

- A letter will be addressed to external candidates advising of dates and session times. They will also be advised of any additional workshops that they can attend, which will be charged at a nominal fee.
- All candidates will receive confirmation of upcoming assessment dates and times via letter or Groupcall text.
- The BSL Tutor will remind the candidates, at least a week before any assessment dates.
- Starting times should strictly be adhered to.
- It is the responsibility of all candidates to arrive at the centre no less than fifteen minutes before the advertised starting time.

4. Results

- Candidates will be notified of their results as soon as they are known by the centre.
- Results slips will be handed to the candidates by the BSL Tutor when they are received.

5. An Appeals request

- If the candidate is not happy with their result they must contact the Exams Officer.
- Initially, Braidwood will look at the assessment again using the copy of the assessment media.
- If Braidwood agrees an appeals, the Exams Officer will complete an appeals form on behalf of the candidate and will contact Signature direct. Appeals will not be accepted direct from the candidate.
- There will be a charge for appeals procedures.
- If the result changes from 'fail' to 'pass' a refund will be made by Signature.
- The following appeals are available

Appeal type	Purpose	Deadline for appeal	Cost	Signature deadline
Stage 1 Administration check	Check of administration of marks and handling	8 weeks from results issue date	£10 per candidate	3 weeks
Stage 1 Re-mark of practical assessment	Re-mark of assessment if centre agree with possible errors.	8 weeks from results issue date	Same as the registration fee for each unit.	4 weeks
Stage 1 Re-mark of assessment paper	Re-mark of assessment if centre agree with possible errors.	8 weeks from results issue date	Same as the registration fee for each unit.	4 weeks
Stage 2 Internal review	If you happy with outcome of a stage 1 appeal and believe that the correct procedures were not followed.	8 weeks from the issue of the re-mark	£55 per assessment	3 weeks
Stage 3 External review	If you are still dissatisfied and have valid reason to continue the appeal.	2 weeks from the outcome of the internal review	£150	10 weeks

6. Contingency and Closure plans

To ensure all candidates can successfully undertake a BSL qualification, all eventualities are considered in the school's contingency plan for Exams. In the event of permanent school closure, candidates would continue and complete their BSL qualification at the school trust partner; The Deaf Cultural Centre, Ladywood Road, Birmingham, B16 8SZ.