



“ It allows students to demonstrate what they know, rather than decode the question ”

At Bromsgrove School, accessibility is about helping every student demonstrate their knowledge and understanding without unnecessary barriers. For Johnny Palmer, Director of Innovation and Computer Science teacher, clear language, consistent structures and responsive support all play an important role in creating a fair assessment experience for a diverse student community, including many neurodiverse learners and students with specific learning needs.



Removing unnecessary barriers

For Johnny Palmer, accessibility begins with clarity.

“Accessibility is about clear language, clear layouts, predictability in structure and consistency,” he explains.

The aim is simple: assessments should allow students to focus on demonstrating what they know, rather than spending time interpreting what a question is asking.

At Bromsgrove School, this principle underpins their approach to assessment. By reducing unnecessary complexity, students can engage more confidently with the task itself and focus on demonstrating their knowledge and understanding.



Assessment designed with accessibility in mind

“It allows students to demonstrate what they know rather than having to decode what the question is asking.”

Having taught Cambridge OCR Computer Science qualifications for several years, Johnny has seen noticeable improvements in accessibility.

“We feel that Cambridge OCR has tried really hard in recent years to improve accessibility,” he says. “Questions are much more straightforward, the English is clearer, and there’s much less clutter.”

He also highlights the value of varied question formats, including box-fill tasks and tick-box questions, which give students different ways to demonstrate their understanding.

“It makes the assessment as accessible as it possibly could be.”



Building confidence through consistency

“Consistency of structure and language gives our students real confidence.”

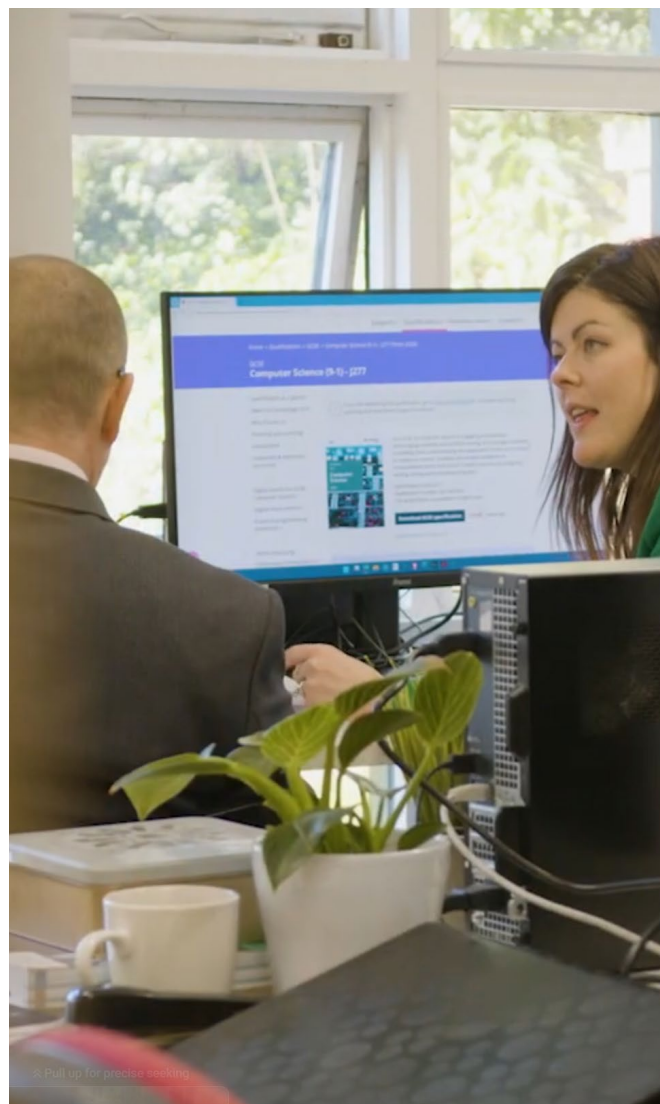
As a large international school, Bromsgrove School teaches students from a wide range of backgrounds, including many who are neurodiverse or have specific learning needs.

For these students, consistency can make a significant difference.

“The value for us with Cambridge OCR is the consistency of structure and written English,” Johnny explains. “Students become familiar with the structure and layout, and that gives them confidence.”

Rather than spending valuable time working through complicated language or unfamiliar formats, students can focus on applying their knowledge.

“We’ve seen many of our students perform very well,” he adds. “Some who may have previously struggled are now more confident, more comfortable, and able to clearly demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.”



Supporting teachers to support students

Accessibility is not only about assessment design. It is also about ensuring teachers have the support they need to deliver learning with confidence.

“We really value the expert support and advice that we get from Cambridge OCR,” says Johnny. “The subject support team is absolutely brilliant.”

Quick access to specialist guidance helps teachers feel confident that they can meet the needs of all students and deliver an engaging curriculum.

“It really helps me deliver the qualification knowing I can meet the needs of my learners and deliver an accessible, interesting, relevant curriculum with confidence.”

Accessibility without compromising rigour

“Accessible assessment reduces cognitive load without diminishing academic rigour.”

For Johnny, one of the greatest strengths of accessible assessment is that it removes unnecessary barriers without lowering expectations.

“Our assessments reduce cognitive load,” he explains. “The clarity of layout and structure makes them accessible for all learners, regardless of background.”

Importantly, accessibility does not make assessment easier. Instead, it helps ensure that students are being assessed on their knowledge and understanding, rather than their ability to navigate complex language or formats.

“It enables students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding without diminishing the academic rigour of what is being assessed.”



Why Cambridge OCR is the right fit

For Bromsgrove School, accessibility is central to creating an inclusive learning environment.

“I’d be quite happy to recommend Cambridge OCR to any centre,” says Johnny. “The support from the subject team is amazing, and the structure and format of the assessments are really encouraging for all learners.”

He also recognises the work that has gone into improving assessment design and creating resources that support a wide range of students.

“The quality of the resources to support all learners is really strong.”

Making assessment straightforward, for every student

Johnny’s experience highlights what accessible assessment looks like in practice:

- clear, consistent language
- familiar assessment structures and layouts
- reduced cognitive load
- expert support for teachers
- fair opportunities for every student to demonstrate what they know.

At Cambridge OCR, this is what **making assessment straightforward** means.

Accessibility is not about lowering standards. It is about removing unnecessary barriers so more students can engage confidently with assessment, demonstrate their knowledge and achieve their potential.

Find out more

If you want to make assessment more accessible for your students:

[Explore our accessibility approach](#)

[Speak to the team](#)

Because when assessment is straightforward, every student has the opportunity to succeed.