

Access Arrangements Policy

Our Mission Statement – the reason our College exists

“Learning & Growing in the Light of the Gospel”

With Christ at the centre of our learning, we:

- *Help young people to achieve their greatest potential*
- *Guide their intellectual growth, nurture their God-given talents, and inspire them to live in service to others*
- *Aim to develop honest, confident, responsible and compassionate members of society, based on the educational values of Blessed Antonio Rosmini*

Our Vision Statement – the long-term change resulting from our work

‘Begin Here, Go Anywhere.’

Ratcliffe’s unique educational offering based on our College motto, “Legis Plenitudo Charitas”, Love is the fulfilment of the Law, provides a perfect context within which young people may acquire the emotional knowledge and interpersonal skills necessary to live happy and purposeful lives. The College’s inclusive Catholic ethos is complemented by the outstanding quality of our College community through which our Mission, “Learning and Growing in the Light of the Gospel”, serves to nurture resilience and develop maturity. Young people leave Ratcliffe with a strong sense of who they are and their purpose in the world, equipped socially, emotionally, morally and spiritually to go forth and make a difference to the communities in which they live and work.

Access Arrangements Policy

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Ratcliffe College's Policy for Access Arrangements is written in line with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Regulations document: 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.' These are the regulations the school must adhere to, and this policy explains how the School complies with JCQ regulations.

Rationale for Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements are actions taken to remove the disadvantages to a student accessing an examination caused by physical, learning, sensory or psychological difficulties, without creating any unfair advantage or compromising the integrity of an assessment. These arrangements are agreed before an assessment and must reflect a student's normal way of working within the school.

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. A candidate with a disability or difficulty which has a **substantial and long-term effect** on performance in examinations may qualify for Access Arrangements. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

All exam Access Arrangements are provided based on individual needs and must comply with JCQ regulations. Exam Access Arrangements will not be implemented due to a preference from the student, parent, or teacher. The SENCo will decide on the most appropriate access arrangement for the student's needs.

Available Exam Access Arrangements include (but not limited too):

Access Arrangement	Description
Reader (or Computer Reader as the technological equivalent)	A trained adult reads the question and any relevant text for the student (except where the skill of reading is being assessed e.g. the reading section of the English papers)
Scribe (or Speech Recognition Technology, or word Processor with the spell check on, as the technological equivalents)	A trained adult writes for the student. The student dictates their answers. The scribe writes exactly as the student dictates. In MFL, the student must dictate spellings letter by letter in the relevant language
Prompter	A trained adult can prompt the student with permitted phrases to help the student refocus and indicate how much time is left
Read Aloud or use of an Exam Reading Pen	When a student is reading difficult text, they may work more effectively if they can hear themselves read. A reading pen helps students to read more independently during exams. No formal application is needed to use a reading pen, and

	students are responsible for providing their own. If a student uses a reading pen, the SENCo must be notified to ensure it is documented as part of their normal working practice and to make the necessary exam arrangements. Students with a reading pen who have not informed the SENCo will not be allowed to use it during the exam.
Alternative Rooming Arrangements	The student takes the examination in a smaller environment outside of the main examination hall/room, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates. Evidence must exist as to why this is required. This is on a need basis and not a “want” or “preference”
Modified Papers	Specially prepared papers, e.g. enlarged to a specific font size.
Supervised Rest Breaks	Students are permitted to stop for short break/s during the exam and the time taken is added to the finish time. Students are not permitted to have exam materials with them during rest breaks; the break is intended to be a break from the exam, it is not for ‘thinking time.’ Please see appendix 1 for supervised rest break guidance.
Extra Time	The school must demonstrate that rest breaks have been thoroughly trialled and found insufficient before even considering the use of extra time, regardless of any recommendations made in an external report Students may be entitled to an allowance of 25%. Extra time between 26% and 50% may be granted in extraordinary circumstances.
Live Speaker	A student with a hearing impairment may need a live speaker for pre-recorded examination components, e.g. MFL listening examinations. The live speaker will speak or read aloud the contents of the CD or tape in a Listening examination.
Language Modifier	An adult who has successfully completed accredited training may clarify the carrier language used in the examination paper when requested to do so by a student. The Language Modifier must not explain technical or subject specific terms.
Practical Assistant	Help with practical tasks such as turning the pages in music or holding a ruler in maths.
Laptop/Word Processor	Access to a laptop for an exam so the student could word process their answers. Spelling and grammar check to be disabled.

Identifying the need for Access Arrangements

Students will be identified for **consideration** for Access Arrangements in one of the following ways:

- Subject Teacher referral
- They are known to the Learning Support department
- Information from previous school reports
- Baseline testing in Year 7
- Parent referral

Stage 1: Early Screening

It is preferred that students who may be eligible for formal Access Arrangements are identified early in Year 7. However, they can also be identified in Years 8, 9, and 10 and in very rare cases Year 11, 12 and 13. Additional information and evidence will be requested from all relevant teaching staff to create a comprehensive 'picture of need.' If sufficient evidence of a potential need is gathered, the student will be screened, rather than formally assessed. The Access Arrangements recommended by the SENCo will then be trialled and monitored to ensure their effectiveness and establish them as a 'normal way of working.'

Stage 2: Ensuring Access Arrangements are the student's 'normal way of working'.

The SENCo, in collaboration with colleagues and students, will monitor and ensure that they continue to be normal working practice for the student. This means that appropriate Access Arrangements should be taken into consideration in everyday teaching and formally applied in any internal or external assessments.

If a student chooses continually not to use the agreed Access Arrangements, either because their needs change, or they do not feel it aids their learning or achievement, then Access Arrangements can be removed.

It is the responsibility of the SENCo to ensure that all required information is collated and accessible to the Exams Manager and wider staff body.

Stage 2: Formal Testing

Formal assessments take place no earlier than during Year 9. These assessments are conducted in accordance with the JCQ guidelines. Permission to allow Access Arrangements expires after 26 months, after which the student may need to be re-tested, depending on which arrangement(s) they have. Access Arrangements are always determined by the most recent testing.

N.B. Access Arrangements cannot be applied for because of a privately commissioned assessment, unless the assessment has been agreed with the School and the assessor has received information about the student's current difficulties and support offered before the assessment is carried out.

Where exam Access Arrangements are provided because of a medical need, evidence will be required to be submitted by the parent to the school. The evidence should be from a medical specialist / consultant.

Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they cannot make the decision for the School. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual student'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.**

Stage 3: Formal Application for Access Arrangements

Once the SENCo is satisfied that sufficient evidence in line with JCQ regulations is on file, a formal online application for Access Arrangements can be made. Feedback for most arrangements is instant and permission for the Access Arrangement will be recorded and held by the School. Ratcliffe College operates in accordance with JCQ deadlines regarding applications.

The arrangements will continue to be monitored to ensure they remain the student's normal way of working.

A student progressing to Sixth Form, with Access Arrangements

When a student progresses to Sixth Form, a new application for Access Arrangements is required. The SENCo must collect evidence to confirm that the arrangement remains valid and reflects the student's normal way of working. In certain cases, it may be necessary to modify or discontinue the Access Arrangements.

Evidence Held and Malpractice

Schools are regularly inspected to ensure they have followed JCQ regulations. Ratcliffe College is required to hold evidence that can be inspected at short notice. For this reason, the school will keep copies of evidence of need, Form 8, letters from outside agencies, a record of Access Arrangements used and any Statement of Special Needs or EHCP, together with a data consent notice signed by the student.

The consequences of malpractice can be severe. These may include disqualification of the student from one or more examinations.

Where it is felt that pressure is placed upon the school and the SENCo by parents to award arrangements, the school is obliged to report this as malpractice to the Examination Boards. This may result in the young person being disqualified from exam.

Date: September 2025