



# Equitable Access to Assessment Policy

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## Guidelines for Equitable Access for Assessments

- School-based assessment
- National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)
- Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (OLNA)
- Externally set tasks (ESTs)
- ATAR course examinations

Information for principals and assessment coordinators

## Acknowledgement of Country

Kaya. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) acknowledges that our offices are on Whadjuk Noongar boodjar and that we deliver our services on the country of many traditional custodians and language groups throughout Western Australia. The Authority acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We offer our respect to Elders past and present.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Responsible officer	Principal Consultant, Special Provisions
Document type	Policy
Last review date	15/2/2024
Next review date	
HPRM number	2021/10678[v7]

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2021/10678[v7]

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## Policy statement

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) is committed to all students having access to curriculum and assessment that is appropriate to their needs. The Authority recognises and supports individual students who may need assessment adjustments to allow them to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills.

## Policy principles to enable equitable access

The Authority recognises that for some students the impact of a disability or impairment may be a barrier to accessing an assessment to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills.

For all assessments, the underlying principle of the Authority's *Equitable Access to Assessment Policy* is to provide students with the opportunity to participate in and complete their assessments in an equitable manner.

In relation to school assessments, schools should implement adjustments for school assessments based on the Authority's *Guidelines for Equitable Access for Assessments*. Not all school-determined adjustments will necessarily apply to the assessments conducted by the Authority. A candidate may not demonstrate the need for adjustments for some assessments, or may need different adjustments in different assessments. Further, the adjustments needed by the student may change over time.

The principles that underpin this policy and inform decisions are:

1. The Authority will make adjustments for students where their access to an assessment is affected by disability, illness, impairment or personal circumstances.
2. Any adjustment must provide equivalent, alternative arrangements for students.
3. To maintain the academic rigour of the assessment and the integrity of the credential, the same knowledge, understandings, skill requirements, and performance standards are applied to all candidates whether or not they are granted assessment adjustments.
4. Candidates whose capacity to participate in an assessment is adversely affected in a significant way by disability, illness, impairment or personal circumstances may be eligible to access appropriate, fair and reasonable alternative arrangements.
5. The adjustments made to an assessment are designed to facilitate access rather than remove or reduce the requirement to demonstrate the skill being assessed by the examination. Adjustments do not confer an advantage to any candidate over other candidates. If a requested adjustment confers an unfair advantage, an alternative adjustment may be offered.
6. The functional impact of the candidate's disability and its effect on accessing an assessment may vary over time and this will determine the level of adjustment approved.
7. Decisions about a candidate's eligibility for a specific adjustment in an assessment will be evidence-based and made by Authority staff and/or expert panels appointed by the Authority. A consistent approach to determining any adjustments is used for all students and every effort will be made to provide reasonable adjustments for eligible candidates.

8. This policy is established in accordance with the arrangements of the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* as amended in 2005 and the associated *Disability Standards for Education 2010*, and the *Equal Opportunity Act (1984)* (WA).

## Purpose

This policy and the accompanying guidelines aim to:

- specify the eligibility requirements for students seeking adjustments to their assessments.
- guide schools in the development of their own policies and procedures in relation to students seeking adjustments to school assessments.

# Guidelines for Equitable Access for Assessments

## Introduction

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) recognises that access to assessments could be significantly affected for students diagnosed with a severe disability, impairment, or medical condition. Adjustments may need to be made for these students to access the assessment equitably. Evidence of the diagnosis is required for approval of adjustments for students with a disability and/or medical condition.

This document provides a summary of the adjustments that may be appropriate for a particular student in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), the Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (OLNA), externally set tasks (ESTs), school-based assessments for courses and ATAR course examinations. Schools should refer to these guidelines to determine who is able to approve the adjustment and what evidence to support the approval is required to be collected.

## ***Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and Disability Standards for Education 2005***

The *Disability Standards for Education 2005* (the Standards) provide a framework to ensure that students with disability are able to access and participate in education on the same basis as other students and outline the obligations of education providers under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

The Standards outline legal obligations and responsibilities of educational authorities and education providers. Key to meeting obligations and ensuring maximum participation in the assessment is to make reasonable adjustments where necessary for students with disability.

The term ‘reasonable adjustment’ is described in Section 3.4 of the Standards as a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it achieves this purpose while taking into account the student’s learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students.

The following information is intended to assist decision-making in determining reasonable adjustments for students with disability and should be considered in conjunction with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the Standards.

## **Consider the disability**

Adjustments may be considered only for students who have a diagnosis from a relevant specialised medical professional or allied health professional that effectively states that the student’s disability diminishes test accessibility, and that a specific adjustment would restore test accessibility for that student, so long as that adjustment is permissible for the assessment in question.

Schools should consider the evidence available to determine the appropriateness of the adjustment required. A detailed assessment, which might include an independent assessment completed by an appropriately qualified expert, may be required to determine what adjustments are necessary for a student. Adjustments may not be required for a student with disability in some circumstances.

## Learning disorder diagnosis

The Authority requires a diagnosis of a learning disorder that uses the DSM V<sup>1</sup> criteria. These criteria specify that specific learning disorders with impairment in reading (including dyslexia), and/or impairment in written expression and/or impairment in mathematics (dyscalculia) are diagnosed through a clinical review of an individual's developmental, mental, educational, and family history, reports of test scores, teacher observations and response to academic intervention.<sup>2</sup> A psychologist with expertise in the assessment of specific learning disorders is best placed to undertake this assessment.

The diagnosis of dyslexia or any other specific learning disability cannot be made by someone who assesses vision, hearing, movement or any other skill in isolation.

In addition to a diagnosis, examples of evidence to demonstrate functional impact could include:

- health reports
- reading/writing standardised test scores
- adjustments used regularly for school-based assessments.

Evidence that has been used to inform decisions must be retained by the school in alignment with the legislative requirements pertaining to the management of student records.

The adjustment considered, and the level of evidence needed to support it, must be in the context of the assessment. The following items are important to remember when considering the implementation of adjustments in Authority-managed assessments.

- Adjustments should enable students with disability to access the assessment. Adjustments should be implemented at the lowest level needed to access the particular assessment. A student may have access to more than one adjustment in any one assessment if the disability is demonstrated to involve multiple restrictions on accessing the standard assessment. Adjustments for a given student may be different for different assessments.
- Classroom assessment activities should generally reflect the likely adjustments which may be made for an external assessment. These adjustments should allow students to demonstrate what they know and can do.
- When providing adjustments, the purpose and integrity of the assessment and its protocols for administration should be maintained. For example, reading the stimulus material and/or questions to a student during the reading test is not appropriate or permitted, even if this is what usually happens for the student in the classroom.
- The requirement for extra working time will need to be considered separately for each assessment, taking into account the nature of the work required.

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<sup>1</sup> Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders Version 5

<sup>2</sup> DSF *Understanding Learning Difficulties: A practical guide* page 16

## Student and/or parent/guardian/carer discussion

Before making an adjustment, the principal or delegated authority in the school must discuss with the student (or parent/guardian/carer) the following:

- whether the adjustment is reasonable
- the extent to which the adjustment would enable participation in the assessment on the same basis as a student without disability
- whether there is any other reasonable adjustment that would be less disruptive and intrusive and no less beneficial for the student.

When adjustments have been determined, the Authority recommends that schools develop and implement an appropriate plan for school-based assessments.

## Types of adjustments

The following types of adjustments may be typically provided, depending on the assessment.

1. Rest breaks
2. Extra working time
3. Discretionary time
4. Special format papers – large print, braille, black and white print
5. Oral/sign support
6. Support person
  - a. Reader
  - b. Scribe
7. Use of a computer/assistive technology – not applicable for the OLNA
8. Modification to environment, e.g. separate supervision, special furniture, lighting
9. Access to medication, e.g. diabetic support

### 1. Rest breaks

Rest breaks are appropriate when a student is physically or psychologically incapable of completing an assessment in the continuous period specified for that assessment.

The effectiveness of rest breaks will generally be evident from the student's use of that adjustment in classwork and internal assessment tasks of a similar length to the assessment. It should be clear to teachers that the student is more focused, alert or productive after taking a break.

#### School-based assessment

The length of a rest break will be determined by the length of the assessment however rest breaks are usually for up to five minutes per 30 minutes. Students approved for this adjustment may take a rest break at times of their own choosing. This adjustment does not affect the overall working time for the assessment.

#### NAPLAN

Generally, it is recommended that no more than five minutes of rest time per 30 minutes of test time be granted; however, in some cases, up to an additional 15 minutes per 30 minutes of published test time may be provided.



Where relevant, rest breaks should be used in preference to extra working time to avoid student fatigue, although there will be instances where both extra time and rest breaks are necessary.

For NAPLAN online, the pause function, operated by the test administrator, will enable students to pause and resume the assessment to allow for rest breaks.

### **OLNA**

Rest breaks are usually for up to five minutes per 30 minutes. Students approved for this adjustment may take a rest break at times of their own choosing.

The assessment will be adjusted for these students to include a timed pause function. The timed pause function will enable students to pause and resume the assessment to allow for rest breaks as required. The test will automatically resume when all the approved pause time has elapsed. This adjustment does not affect the overall working time for the assessment.

### **ESTs**

Rest breaks are usually for up to five minutes per 30 minutes. Students utilising this adjustment may take a rest break at times of their own choosing. This adjustment does not affect the overall working time for the assessment.

### **ATAR course examinations**

Rest breaks are usually calculated at the rate of five minutes per 30 minutes, with none calculated for the last 30 minutes. Students utilising this adjustment may take a rest break at times of their own choosing, up to the limit calculated for that examination.

The duration of rest breaks will be recorded to ensure the student is provided with the full amount of working time for the examination.

## **2. Extra working time**

Extra working time is appropriate for a student where access to the given assessment is impaired by:

- a diagnosed learning disorder for those who demonstrate very low reading accuracy, fluency and/or comprehension scores on standardised assessments of reading
- a diagnosed learning disorder for those who demonstrate very low written expression output and/or composition scores on standardised assessment of written expression
- a diagnosed learning disorder for those who demonstrate very low number sense, calculation skills and/or mathematical reasoning on standardised assessments of mathematics
- a physical or motor disability that significantly inhibits handwriting or use of a keyboard
- a vision impairment such that standard question/answer booklets or standard screen adjustments will not provide reasonable access
- working with a scribe or support person.

Generally, it is recommended that schools grant no more than five minutes of extra time per half hour of assessment time.

### **School-based assessment**

Generally, it is recommended that schools grant no more than five minutes of extra time per half hour of assessment time.

### **NAPLAN**

Generally, it is recommended that no more than five minutes of extra time per half hour of test time be granted; however, in some cases, up to an additional 15 minutes per half hour of published test time may be provided. This requires Authority approval.

### **OLNA**

The Authority will adjust the maximum amount of time allowed for approved students to complete the assessment to include the extra time. Generally, it is recommended that schools not grant more than 10 minutes of extra time per 60 minutes of assessment time; however, in some cases, up to an additional 25 minutes (30 minutes for writing) may be provided.

### **ESTs**

Generally, a maximum of 10 minutes for a 60 minute test (or the pro rata equivalent for a shorter test) is approved.

### **ATAR course examinations**

Generally, a maximum of 30 minutes for a three hour examination (or the pro rata equivalent for a shorter examination) is granted.

## **3. Discretionary time**

Extra time to use at a student's discretion is only appropriate for a student with a complex medical condition that requires constant management, or with multiple conditions that inhibit their ability to complete a task at the expected rate. Students have the discretion to use this time as working time or for a rest break.

### **School-based assessment**

Up to 10 minutes per hour can be made available in school-based assessments where the student's need is demonstrated to be not reasonably met by rest breaks, but requires more flexibility than extra working time provides, or requires a combination of working and non-working time.

### **NAPLAN**

Not applicable.

### **OLNA**

Up to 10 minutes per hour may be available in the OLN assessments where the student's need is demonstrated to be not reasonably met by rest breaks, but requires more flexibility than extra working time provides, or requires a combination of working and non-working time.

### **ESTs**

Not applicable.

### **ATAR course examinations**

Up to 10 minutes per hour may be available in the ATAR course examinations where the student's need is demonstrated to be not reasonably met by rest breaks, but requires more flexibility than extra working time provides, or requires a combination of working and non-working time.

## 4. Special format assessment

Some students with vision impairment will need additional or atypical adjustments, such as a modified assessment, crosshatching of maps or illustrations, materials printed on coloured paper or printed with a modified font.

### School-based assessment

Schools should provide appropriate alternative formats to students with sensory impairment or significant disability, such that their disability will prevent them accessing the standard format of the assessment.

### NAPLAN

Magnification – all students will be able to increase the size of text on screen. If this is inadequate, the assistive technology usually used in assessments by the student may be used. Where the use of assistive technology requires the locked-down browser to be disabled, approval from the Authority is required.

Adjustments can be made to substitute visually detailed items with alternative items and to allow adjustment of colour, contrast and brightness settings.

Braille test books are available for students who usually use braille in their classroom assessments.

Various formats of large print test books are available for students with vision impairment who cannot access NAPLAN online and who generally access their classroom assessments in this manner.

All alternative test format materials must be ordered in advance through the Authority.

### OLNA

Students with vision impairment who are unable to adjust the online format sufficiently to meet their access needs can be provided with a braille format for each component of the assessment. Principals must advise the Authority of this need at least four months before the scheduled assessment.

Magnification – all students will be able to increase the size of text on screen. If this is inadequate, the assistive technology usually used in assessments by the student may be used.

Adjustments can be made to substitute visually detailed items with alternative images that ensure sufficient contrast between parts of an image.

### ESTs

The School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory (SSENS) will inform the Authority of students with vision impairment who require the task formatted in braille or require other adjustments to the size of the font or formatting. The Authority will provide an EST to those students with the necessary adjustments based on information provided by SSENS.

### ATAR course examinations

Students with sensory impairment or significant physical disability such that their disability will prevent them accessing the standard format may be provided with the examination in an appropriate format.

## 5. Oral/sign support

Students who are deaf or have a hearing loss may access oral or signed communication (e.g. Auslan). The support person must be a skilled and familiar communication partner with the student and is permitted to read or sign the instructions in all assessments.

Parents/guardians/carers, family members or another student are not permitted to be used as a support person.

### School-based assessment

Signing is permitted in all school assessments.

### NAPLAN

Signing is permitted only for those sections of the tests that can be read to students without hearing loss.

Spelling items may not be signed. Spelling items that are accompanied by audio in NAPLAN online will be substituted with alternative items on application of the appropriate disability access code.

### OLNA

Signing is permitted only for those sections of the tests that can be read to students without hearing loss. Supervisor instructions may need to be given in writing.

### ESTs

Signing is permitted only for those sections of the task that can be read to students without hearing loss.

### ATAR course examinations

Signing is permitted in all aspects of ATAR examinations.

## 6. Support person

### General information

A support person can provide different types of support to help students with disability access assessments.

Parents/guardians/carers, family members or another student are not permitted to be used as a support person.

### School-based assessment

A support person may be granted for students with a physical disability who are unable to manipulate the assessment materials by themselves.

The support person:

- must not be a person likely to have a conflict of interest
- can be another appropriate person engaged by the school.

## NAPLAN

A NAPLAN support person can be used for the NAPLAN reading, language conventions and numeracy tests. A NAPLAN support person is not allowed for the writing test. (A scribe is the appropriate equivalent adjustment for the writing test.)

A NAPLAN support person is officially engaged by the school and can undertake tasks for students with a disability such as:

- assisting with access to the reading, conventions of language and numeracy tests, for example by clicking on or dragging answers indicated by the student, or typing short responses or answers dictated by the student for the tests
- providing access to the test by logging in for the student
- reading aloud only those elements of the test that can be read to all students.

More information on NAPLAN support persons can be found in the *National protocols for test administration* and the *NAPLAN online handbook for principals and NAPLAN coordinators*.

The support person:

- cannot be a person with responsibility for administering the assessment
- can be a teacher
- can be another appropriate person engaged by the school
- cannot be the parent/guardian/carer or a family member of any student in the class of students being tested.

## OLNA

A support person can be used for the OLNA reading and numeracy components. A support person is not allowed for the writing component. (A scribe is the appropriate equivalent adjustment for the writing component.)

A support person may be a teacher, or person officially engaged by the school to assist students with disability who can assist the student, to access the assessment by navigating the online environment and/or by selecting responses to multiple-choice items as indicated by the student in the reading and/or numeracy components.

A support person can read aloud only those elements of the assessment that can be read to all students.

## ESTs

A support person may be granted for students with a physical disability who are unable to manipulate the test materials by themselves. The support person cannot be the teacher or person with responsibility for administering the assessment.

## ATAR course examinations

A support person may be granted for students with a physical disability who are unable to manipulate the examination materials by themselves.

The support person:

- must not be a person likely to have a conflict of interest
- can be another appropriate person engaged by the school.

## 6. a) Reader

### School-based assessment

A recorded assessment or reader may be granted for a candidate with a specific learning disorder with impairment in reading or vision impairment such that the disability will prevent them from accessing the content of a standard written assessment. Use of a C-Pen Exam Reader scanning pen may be granted for students needing reading support.

### NAPLAN

Reading to a student is not considered an adjustment for disability for NAPLAN as:

- **all students** can ask to have the instructions for all tests, the numeracy questions (but not those numerals or symbols embedded in text), and the writing prompt read to them; and
- **no students** can have stimulus materials or questions in reading and language conventions read to them.

Either the supervising teacher or a support person may read questions where permitted.

### OLNA

Reading to a student is not considered an adjustment for disability for OLNA as:

- **all students** can ask to have the instructions for all tests, the numeracy questions (but not those numerals or symbols embedded in text), and the writing prompt read to them; and
- **no students** can have stimulus materials or questions in the reading assessment read to them.

Either the supervising teacher or a support person may read questions where permitted.

### ESTs

A reader or recorded task may be granted for a student with a reading disorder or vision impairment such that the disability will prevent them from accessing the content of a standard written task.

### ATAR course examinations

While a reader is not available in ATAR examinations, a recorded examination may be granted for a candidate with a reading disorder or vision impairment such that the disability will prevent them from accessing the content of a standard written examination. Use of a C-Pen Exam Reader scanning pen may be granted for students needing reading support.

## 6. b) Scribe

Students with physical disability who are unable to write or type may need to have a scribe.

### School-based assessment

A scribe may be granted for students with a writing or physical disability. Where a scribe is provided, additional working time is also allowed to compensate for delays in the communication of instructions.

### NAPLAN

A scribe may be provided for NAPLAN in the writing test for a student with disability who meets **all** of the following criteria:

- the student has significant difficulty with the physical act of typing due to a disability (this does not refer to a student's difficulty processing what they want to type) or lacks fine motor control

due to a disability, or experiences excessive fatigue of hands or upper limbs due to a disability;  
and

- the student regularly works with a scribe in the classroom; and
- the student would be unable to access the writing tests by any of the other adjustments available.

Scribes must have experience working as a scribe, be officially and regularly engaged by the school, and be aware of and abide by the NAPLAN scribe rules. A scribe is not permitted for a student with a temporary injury.

The scribe rules explain requirements, such as writing or typing as the student dictates, and not suggesting or prompting the student for ideas or words. The scribe rules can be found in the *National protocols for test administration* and *Handbook for principals*.

### **OLNA**

A scribe can be used for the OLNA writing test to assist a student with disability, provided the student has been using a scribe in their regular class assessments. Scribes must have experience working as a scribe, be officially and regularly engaged by the school, and be aware of and abide by the NAPLAN scribe rules. A scribe is not permitted for a student with a temporary injury.

The scribe must write (type) as the student dictates and may not suggest or prompt the student for idea or words. Further information regarding the role of a scribe is available in the *OLNA Handbook*.

### **ESTs**

A scribe may be granted for students with a writing or physical disability. Where a scribe is provided, additional working time is also allowed to compensate for delays in the communication of instructions.

### **ATAR course examinations**

A scribe may be granted for students with a writing or physical disability. Where a scribe is provided, additional working time is also allowed to compensate for delays in the communication of instructions.

## **7. Use of a computer/assistive technology**

### **School-based assessment**

Students with a permanent disability, such as muscular dystrophy, may use a computer for their school assessments. Spelling and grammar checks are not allowed. Additional working time is not usually allowed if assistive technology is provided. A computer is not suited to assessments requiring equations or calculations. In some courses, students with vision impairment may be granted a braille computer and/or a computer with voice output.

### **NAPLAN paper (Year 3 writing)**

Use of a computer may be permitted for all tests for students with disability who use this adjustment for their usual classroom assessments and for students with temporary injuries, such as a broken arm. Schools must seek advice and/or approval from the Authority for this adjustment prior to testing.

- Software providing text-to-speech outputs is permitted to enable students with disability who usually use this type of adjustment to access their own responses in all tests, where appropriate.

Unacceptable aspects of computer/assistive technology use include:

- word prediction
- spelling and grammar checking
- text-to-speech software for language conventions and reading tests
- calculator use (during the non-calculator numeracy tests)
- internet/internal network access.

### **NAPLAN**

Students can use motor-assistive technologies that are compatible with the platform and the test construct. Approval is required if the use of the assistive technology requires the locked-down browser to be disabled.

### **OLNA**

Students can use motor-assistive technologies that are compatible with the platform and the test construct.

### **ESTs**

Students with a permanent disability, such as muscular dystrophy, and who have been using a computer as part of their mode of assessment over several years, may be granted the use of a computer by the school. Spelling and grammar checks are not allowed. Additional working time is not usually allowed. Poor handwriting is not considered a disability that necessitates a computer unless it results from a diagnosed disabling condition. A computer is not suited to assessments requiring equations or calculations.

### **ATAR course examinations**

Students with a permanent disability, such as muscular dystrophy, which severely impairs handwriting, and for whom no other provision has been shown to be effective, may be granted the use of a computer. Spelling and grammar checks, and word counts are not allowed. Additional working time is not usually allowed if assistive technology is provided. Poor handwriting is not considered a disability that necessitates a computer unless it results from a diagnosed disabling condition. A computer is not suited to examinations requiring equations or calculations. In some courses, students with vision impairment may be granted a braille computer and/or a computer with voice output.

## **8. Modification to environment**

### **School-based assessment**

Depending on the student's specific need arrangements for separate supervision, special furniture, lighting or other environmental conditions are appropriate.

### **NAPLAN paper and online**

The principal may approve arrangements for separate supervision, special furniture, lighting or other environmental conditions.



### **OLNA**

The principal may approve arrangements for separate supervision, special furniture, lighting or other environmental conditions.

### **ESTs**

The principal may approve arrangements for separate supervision, special furniture, lighting or other environmental conditions.

### **ATAR course examinations**

Requests for separate supervision, special furniture, lighting or other environmental conditions will need to be applied for through the Equitable Access to Assessment process.

## **9. Access to medication**

Medication may refer to oral medication, eye drops, nasal sprays, ointments etc.

### **School-based assessment**

For the ongoing treatment for medical conditions, medication may be taken in and used during an assessment. The principal may approve this arrangement. No additional time is provided for the taking of medication.

### **NAPLAN**

For the treatment for ongoing medical conditions, medication may be taken in and used during an assessment. The principal may approve this arrangement. No additional time is provided for the taking of medication; however, the test administrator may pause the test.

### **OLNA**

For the treatment for ongoing medical conditions, medication may be taken in and used during an assessment. The principal may approve this arrangement. No additional time is provided for the taking of medication.

### **ESTs**

For the treatment for ongoing medical conditions, medication may be taken in and used during an assessment. The principal may approve this arrangement. No additional time is provided for the taking of medication.

### **ATAR course examinations**

Requests for the treatment for ongoing medical conditions will need to be applied for through the Equitable Access to Assessment process. Medication may be taken in and used during an assessment although no additional time is provided. Rest breaks will be provided where the candidate is required to leave the room for taking medication or receiving medical assistance.

## **Process for application for Equitable Access to Assessments**

### **School-based assessment**

The Authority recommends that schools implement adjustments for eligible students that are appropriate for the type of assessment. These adjustments should be consistent with the information provided in Appendix 1 and 2.

## NAPLAN

Adjustments are provided to students with disability to support access to the tests and encourage maximum participation. These adjustments are detailed in the *National protocols for test administration* (<https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/school-support/national-protocols-for-test-administration>) and the *Handbook for principals* (<https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/assessment/testing/naplan/schools/publications>).

ACARA has developed example adjustment scenarios demonstrating the application of adjustments permitted in NAPLAN tests. These scenarios were developed to support schools in their assessment of students requiring adjustments to participate in NAPLAN tests (<https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/school-support/adjustments-for-students-with-disability/disability-adjustments-scenarios>).

Schools must submit applications for, and receive approval from, the Authority, as the test administration authority for Western Australia, on the prescribed form before the date indicated on the form for the following adjustments:

### **NAPLAN:**

- alternative print formats for students with vision impairment who cannot access the online test
- braille format
- use of a computer for Year 3 writing
- use of a scribe for the writing test
- colour contrast modification that requires the locked-down browser to be disabled
- use of assistive technologies that require the locked-down browser to be disabled.

All other adjustments are made at the discretion of the school, with decisions based on their documented evidence of diagnosis of the disability and the usual practice within the school in assessment situations.

## OLNA

Schools must complete the relevant section of the OLNA Dashboard by the specified date indicating any student needing adjustments. Late applications cannot be accepted due to the programming required to accommodate the needs of these students. Students needing adjustments, who have not been registered by the due date, will need to sit the assessment in the next assessment window. Alternatively, students may choose to sit the assessment under standard conditions in the current assessment window and apply for adjustments for the next sitting, if required.

Principals must document all adjustment arrangements and keep a record for audit purposes. Where it is deemed by the Authority that a student has been provided with disability adjustments without sufficient evidence of need, and that the student has been advantaged by this action, any assessment results may be invalidated, and the student may be required to re-sit the assessment without the adjustment.

Where information provided by a relevant specialised medical professional or allied health professional effectively states that the student's disability prevents them from sitting the OLNA test

via an online format, the Authority will work closely with the school to support the student to complete the test using a written format.

## **ESTs**

Schools do not need to advise the Authority of any student needing specific adjustments.

Principals must document all adjustment arrangements and keep a record for audit purposes. Where it is deemed by the Authority that a student has been provided with disability adjustments without sufficient evidence of need, and that the student has been advantaged by this action, any assessment results may be invalidated.

## **Specific procedures for ATAR course examinations**

### **Eligibility for Equitable Access to Assessment arrangements**

Examinations for all candidates are conducted under standardised conditions, unless an adjustment has been deemed necessary by the Authority to accommodate impaired access to the examination caused by a disability. Candidates are eligible for equitable access to assessments when it can be demonstrated that their capacity to access the examination is impaired due to:

- hearing loss
- physical disability or fine motor disorders
- psychological or mental health disorders
- severe health impairment
- specific learning disorder
- vision impairment.

### **Early engagement and early application**

The Authority encourages schools to engage with the Authority as early as possible to discuss any issues related to managing students (Years 7–11) who may be eligible for or require specific adjustment in the ATAR course examinations.

Early engagement allows schools to discuss interventions and implement appropriate adjustments for school-based assessments in the years preceding ATAR course studies, to ensure they are consistent with the equitable access to assessment arrangements likely to be approved for ATAR course examinations.

### **The application process**

The Authority encourages schools to engage with the Authority as early as possible to discuss issues relating to appropriate arrangements and evidence requirements.

Students who have previously approved equitable access to assessment arrangements can generally expect that these provisions will be replicated for any additional ATAR courses undertaken in subsequent years, provided there is no change in their condition and the additional course is examined in a similar format. The Authority may request additional and/or updated evidence where it is deemed appropriate.

A candidate's application for Equitable Access to Assessment arrangements is to be completed and submitted by their school by the deadline provided by the Authority. Non-school candidates are required to lodge their application directly to the Authority.

The Authority considers information from the candidate's medical practitioner, psychologist or other relevant allied health professional to determine the adjustments that may be required. The manner and extent to which the disability/illness impairs the candidate's access to the examination will determine the appropriate adjustments. Some candidates with a disability/illness will not need equitable access to assessment arrangements to access their examinations.

Health professionals should consult the Authority's guidelines (Appendix 1) before making recommendations about adjustments to standard conditions. Professional, educational and academic assessments and recommendations are considered on a case-by-case basis.

The school case coordinator will outline specific adjustments that have been made at school to cater for the impact of the student's disabilities that are preventing access to the standard assessment.

To enable an informed professional judgement, the Authority will contact the case coordinator if the supporting information is incomplete or additional information is required.

Equitable Access to Assessment applications are considered under their disability categories. Assessment panels with expertise in the relevant disability and the education field apply consistent criteria to assess each application. Appropriate adjustments will be determined to accommodate the functional impact of the disability that impairs the candidate's access to the examination, as demonstrated by the evidence provided.

Following notification of the outcome of the application, several options are available should the case coordinator believe that the approved adjustments are not appropriate.

- A review process is only available to reconsider an application if new information has come to light since the original submission of application. This applies where there is a new diagnosis or deterioration in an existing diagnosis. Requests for a review are to be made by the case coordinator.
- An appeal may be made by the case coordinator should the student or parent/guardian/carer not be satisfied with the decision made by the assessing panels. The appeal must cite evidence they believe has been overlooked by the panel in making their decision. Appeals are considered by a multi-disciplinary committee and must be received within 14 days of receiving a decision notification.

## **Roles and responsibilities within the Equitable Access to Assessment arrangements process**

What the school must do:

- identify students with disability, illness or impairment who may be eligible for specific adjustments in their assessments
- consider whether the student's request for equitable access to assessment is appropriate and consistent with the eligibility requirements

- work with the student and parent/guardian/carer to complete the relevant sections of the application
- request any necessary documentation and evidence from the student/parent/guardian/carer
- consult with the Authority if unsure about appropriate arrangements
- administer tests/essays where required and gather other relevant supporting evidence
- complete the application for equitable access to assessment and submit it to the Authority, along with all supporting documentation, as early as possible, and at the latest by the date published in the Authority's Activities Schedule
- confirm the approved arrangements with the student and implement these in school assessments.

What the School Curriculum and Standards Authority will do:

- based on evidence provided, make a decision for each of the examinations
- advise the student and school of all approved arrangements
- implement the approved specific adjustments during the ATAR course examinations.

For ATAR courses, the Authority recommends that schools implement the specific adjustments that are likely to be approved by the Authority for the ATAR course examinations. Adjustments implemented by the school that do not meet the eligibility criteria established by the Authority for equitable access to assessment for the ATAR course examinations are unlikely to be approved. Schools should consult with the Authority if they are unsure about appropriate arrangements.

The Authority does not automatically accept a medical/psychological provider's advice or replicate the specific adjustment that a school may have put in place for school-based assessment. The reasons for this are:

- each school applies its own policy for school-based assessments. This policy varies from school to school, cannot be controlled by the Authority and may be affected by factors not directly related to the level of disability of the student
- the functional impact of a candidate's disability and its effect on accessing a particular assessment may vary. A candidate may not demonstrate the need for adjustments for some assessments, or may need different adjustments in different assessments. The adjustments needed may change over time
- medical/psychological providers are often not aware of the Authority's *Equitable Access to Assessment Policy*, the requirements of each examination and/or what types of equitable access arrangements are available and reasonable to assist with access to the examination
- medical/psychological providers vary in their recommendations as to the specific adjustments suggested for a given disability/illness. It would be inconsistent and potentially unfair to other candidates with a similar disability/illness for the Authority to simply follow each consultant's recommended adjustments.

## **Disability categories, appropriate arrangements and evidence requirements**

The following is a guide to schools in their case management of students identified as having permanent or temporary disabilities/illnesses. Students are eligible for equitable access to assessment arrangements when it can be demonstrated that their access to an ATAR course examination is impaired by their condition. Generally, approved arrangements are not cumulative

except for severe, multiple disabilities causing different impediments to access. Schools are encouraged to contact the Authority through the early engagement process before implementing multiple arrangements, or the highest level of adjustment for a disability where a range of possibilities are listed.

**Candidates who are deaf or have severe hearing loss** may be granted a supervisor who can answer questions relating to organisational matters or assist with vocabulary (oral/sign interpreter) during reading time. Oral instructions can be provided in writing. Other equitable access to assessment arrangements for candidates with hearing loss may be granted after consideration of the severity and demonstrated impact of the hearing loss on accessing the examination. Advice is sought from the School of Special Educational Needs – Sensory (SSENS).

**Candidates with severe vision impairment** may be granted a supervisor who can assist with the conduct of the examination. An oral reading of sections of the paper may also be granted to students who have severe vision impairment. Extra reading time, working time and/or rest breaks and use of magnification aids are arrangements that may be granted, depending on the severity and demonstrated impact of the impairment in the examination situation. Advice is sought from the School of Special Educational Needs – Sensory (SSENS).

**Candidates with specific learning disorders** may be granted additional working time. Candidates needing reading support may be granted the use of a C-Pen Exam Reader scanning pen. Applications must be supported by a school case-management history, current psychometric results, essays, and reading/written expression/mathematical results (as applicable).

**Candidates with mental health conditions** may be granted out-of-order seating, permission to take medication, rest breaks or extra working time, or separate supervision. See Appendix 3 for additional information for *Mental health conditions*.

**Candidates with other medical conditions/physical disabilities** may be granted arrangements listed in Appendix 1, as indicated by supporting evidence of the severity of the condition and its impact.

## Sickness/misadventure considerations

Candidates who suffer from a temporary sickness, non-permanent disability or an unforeseen event close to or during the ATAR course examinations, which they believe may have resulted in performance below expectations or non-attendance in particular examinations, can apply for assessment consideration. Application is made directly to the Authority by the candidate after the examination/s.

Sickness/misadventure arrangements are not available to non-school candidates.

Refer to Appendix 4 for the Guidelines for Sickness/misadventure considerations.

## Further information

Further advice or assistance in determining appropriate disability adjustments is available from:

NAPLAN – [naplan@scsa.wa.edu.au](mailto:naplan@scsa.wa.edu.au)

OLNA – [olna@scsa.wa.edu.au](mailto:olna@scsa.wa.edu.au)

ESTs – [info@scsa.wa.edu.au](mailto:info@scsa.wa.edu.au)

ATAR course examinations – [specialprovs@scsa.wa.edu.au](mailto:specialprovs@scsa.wa.edu.au)

## Appendix 1: Conditions and possible arrangements for assessments

The table below reflects the most common conditions under which adjustments can be provided for the ATAR course examinations. Consideration of possible arrangements should be based upon the demonstrated functional impact of the condition in the specific assessment being undertaken. Support should be trialled at the lowest level of adjustment, before moving to a higher level of support. Generally, approved arrangements are not cumulative except for severe disabilities. The arrangements listed as available may not be relevant or permitted in the shorter NAPLAN, OLNA and EST assessments.

Possible difficulty/impairment in assessment		Possible arrangements available (dependent on functional impact of condition)	Minimum documentation*
Allergies	Discomfort/pain	Permission to take medication	Current medical report
Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder	Concentration, organisation and planning difficulties	Rest breaks, permission to take medication	Specialist medical report School case management comments
Anorexia nervosa	Concentration, fatigue, difficulty with prolonged sitting	Rest breaks, hospital exam, enlargement of examination script	Specialist medical report School case management comments
Arthritis	Discomfort/pain, difficulty with prolonged sitting or writing	Rest breaks, specialised equipment, permission to take medication	Current medical report School case management comments
Autism spectrum disorder	Concentration difficulties, anxiety preventing performance in a group situation (must demonstrate current functional impact)	Specified seating, rest breaks, extra working time (if justified), separate supervision, permission to move	Specialist medical report Learning disability evidence (if applicable) School case management comments*
Back injury	Discomfort/pain, difficulty with prolonged sitting	Special chair, cushion, seating at back, permission to move, permission to take medication, rest breaks	Current medical report School case management comments
Bowel problems/Crohn's disease/Irritable Bowel Syndrome	Discomfort/pain, frequent visits to toilet	Rest breaks, out of order seating, permission to take medication, food/drink	Current medical report School case management comments

Possible difficulty/impairment in assessment		Possible arrangements available (dependent on functional impact of condition)	Minimum documentation*
Broken arm (writing hand)	Discomfort/pain, unable to write	Extra working time and use of a scribe	Current medical report School case management comments
Broken leg	Discomfort/pain	Ergonomic furniture/footrest	Current medical report
Carpal tunnel syndrome	Discomfort/pain with writing	Rest breaks	Specialist medical report School case management comments
Cerebral palsy	Impaired capacity to write or handle examination materials, fatigue	Rest breaks and/or extra working time dependent on the individual, use of a computer/scribe, specialised equipment/furniture	Specialist medical report School case management comments*
Chronic fatigue syndrome (including post-viral syndrome, glandular fever)	Tiredness/inability to concentrate due to illness	Rest breaks, permission to take medication, food/drink	Current medical report School case management comments
Chronic pain	Discomfort/pain with writing	Rest breaks, permission to take medication, heat/cold pack	Current medical report School case management comments
Colour blindness/deficiency	Unable to distinguish between certain colours	Relevant coloured sections of the assessment modified or annotated, magnification aids, enlarged colour pictures/diagrams, black and white pictures/diagrams	Specialist medical report School case-management comments
Depression (severe)	Concentration, organisation and planning difficulties	Rest breaks or extra working time (if justified)	Specialist medical report School case management comments*



Possible difficulty/impairment in assessment		Possible arrangements available (dependent on functional impact of condition)	Minimum documentation*
Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) (previously known as Dyspraxia)	Difficulty planning and coordinating physical movement, including handwriting	Modified writing lines (dotted thirds or wide spaced), rest breaks, extra working time, use of a computer/scribe	Specialist medical report (Occupational Therapist) School case management comments*
Diabetes	Need to maintain blood sugar levels Difficulty maintaining focus due to frequent medical management tasks.	Food/drink, glucose monitoring, permission to take medication, rest breaks/time at discretion (if justified)	Current medical report School case management comments
Dysgraphia (motor-based)	Difficulties with handwriting	Dotted thirds lines for essays, rest breaks, extra working time, use of a computer/scribe	Specialist medical report – Occupational Therapist (OT) School case management comments*
Epilepsy	Disruption to other candidates, risk of injury	Out of order seating, permission to take medication	Current medical report School case management comments
Fine motor disabilities	Difficulty writing, pain, excessive fatigue with writing	Rest breaks, modified writing lines, special format papers, extra working time, use of a computer/scribe	Specialist medical report School case management comments*
Gynaecological conditions	Discomfort/pain	Heat pack, permission to take medication	Current medical report School case management comments
Hand/arm injury	Difficulty writing, pain, excessive fatigue with writing	Rest breaks, extra working time, scribe, computer	Current medical report and/or OT or Physiotherapy report School case management comments*
Head injury – severe (sustained within two years of ARAR course examinations)	Mental processing difficulty	Rest breaks, permission to take medication, extra working time	Specialist medical report School case management comments*

Possible difficulty/impairment in assessment		Possible arrangements available (dependent on functional impact of condition)	Minimum documentation*
Head injury – severe (sustained more than two years ago)	Covered by learning disability arrangements	Covered by learning disability arrangements	Covered by learning disability arrangements
Hearing loss	Difficulty following supervisor’s instructions, difficulty hearing listening components, impaired use of written language, fatigue	Seating at front, instructions in writing, special equipment. Interpreter, extra reading or working time or rest breaks dependent on the individual	Current medical report School case management comments*
Immune system disorders	Discomfort/pain, fatigue, reduced immunity, need for medical treatment	Rest breaks, permission to take medication, heat/cold pack	Current medical report School case management comments
Infectious illness	Contagious for other candidates	Separate room or hospital exam	Current medical report
Irlen Syndrome (scotopic sensitivity)	Difficulty working from white paper	Coloured overlay or coloured examination papers	Specialist medical report School case management comments
Language disorder	Difficulty understanding concepts and vocabulary or expressing knowledge	Clarifier (reword questions in simplified language), extra working time	Current speech pathology report School case management comments*
Medical conditions (cancer, recent organ transplants)	Discomfort/pain, fatigue, reduced immunity, need for medical treatment, nausea	Rest breaks or extra working time dependent on the individual, food/drink, permission to take medication, hospital or home exam	Specialist medical report School case management comments*
Muscular dystrophy	Difficulty writing, pain, excessive fatigue with writing	Rest breaks and/or extra working time dependent on the individual, use of a computer/scribe, specialised equipment/furniture	Specialist medical report School case management comments*
Muscular problems (including Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome)	Difficulty writing, pain, excessive fatigue with writing	Rest breaks, specialised equipment, permission to take medication	Current medical report School case management comments

Possible difficulty/impairment in assessment		Possible arrangements available (dependent on functional impact of condition)	Minimum documentation*
Neurological disorder not separately listed (stroke, nerve damage, narcolepsy)	Difficulty writing, pain, excessive fatigue with writing, impaired processing	Rest breaks, extra working time, specialised equipment, permission to take medication	Specialist medical report School case management comments*
Obsessive-compulsive disorder/severe depression	Difficulty with cognition/concentration, repetitive behaviours	Rest breaks, extra working time dependent on the individual	Specialist medical report School case management comments*
Panic attacks	Concentration difficulty, anxiety preventing performance in a group	Specified seating near window or door, rest breaks	Specialist medical report School case management comments
Paraplegia/Quadriplegia	Difficulty writing, pain, excessive fatigue with writing	Rest breaks and/or extra working time dependent on the individual, specialised equipment, use of a computer/scribe, special papers	Specialist medical report OT report School case management comments*
Pregnancy	In hospital for birth, difficulty with prolonged sitting, frequent visits to toilet	Toilet breaks, food/drink, special chair, permission to move, rest/feeding breaks, home/hospital supervision	Current medical report giving expected date of delivery
Psychological/clinical anxiety	Concentration difficulty, anxiety preventing performance in a group situation	Rest breaks, specified seating near window/door, permission to take medication, separate supervision	Specialist medical report School case management comments
Rheumatism	Difficulty writing, pain, excessive fatigue with writing	Rest breaks, extra working time dependent on the individual, specialised equipment	Specialist medical report School case management comments*
Scoliosis	Discomfort/pain, difficulty with prolonged sitting	Rest breaks, ergonomic furniture, cushion	Current medical report School case management comments
Specific learning disorder in mathematics	Difficulties in use of arithmetic skills	Extra working time	Specialist psychologist report School case management comments

Possible difficulty/impairment in assessment		Possible arrangements available (dependent on functional impact of condition)	Minimum documentation*
Specific learning disorder in reading (includes dyslexia)	Difficulties with reading and spelling	Extra working time, C-Pen Exam Reader, use of highlighter during reading time	Specialist psychologist report School case management comments*
Specific learning disorder in written expression	Difficulties with written expression, spelling and handwriting	Extra working time, use of a computer/scribe (in severe cases only)	Specialist psychologist report School case management comments*
Stutter	Difficulty speaking in an oral test or examination	Additional time for oral test or examinations, inform the markers of condition	Specialist medical report School case management comments
Sweaty palms (hyperhidrosis)	Difficulty writing	Hand towel, gloves, rest breaks	Current medical report
Tendinitis	Difficulty writing, pain, excessive fatigue with writing	Rest breaks, specialised equipment	Specialist medical report School case management comments
Tourette syndrome	Condition that may prevent performance in a group, tics disturb other candidates, tics disrupt writing	Rest breaks and/or separate room, extra working time dependent on the individual/comorbid diagnoses	Specialist medical report School case management comments*
Tremor	Difficulty writing, pain, excessive fatigue with writing	Rest breaks, extra working time, use of a computer/scribe	Specialist medical report School case management comments*
Urinary disorders	Discomfort/pain, frequent visits to toilet	Rest breaks, out of order seating, permission to take medication, food/drink	Current medical report School case management comments
Vision impairment	Difficulties with reading and writing, fatigue	Extra reading time, rest breaks and/or extra working time, use of a computer, modified examination papers, modification of the assessment format, special equipment, use of highlighter during reading time	Specialist medical report School case management comments

Possible difficulty/impairment in assessment		Possible arrangements available (dependent on functional impact of condition)	Minimum documentation*
Long term injury or illness existing at start of Term 3**	Preventing participation in a standard practical performance examination	Special format practical examination	Current medical report

\* If requesting extra working time in the ATAR course examinations for any disorder, students will be required to submit essay samples, as required.

\*\* Note: These candidates do not have access to sickness/misadventure consideration (see *Year 12 Information Handbooks* and *11to12 Circular 1* for details).

## Appendix 2: Special arrangements for specific learning disorders in assessments

### For example, a specific learning disorder in reading (including dyslexia), in written expression and in mathematics

Students with a learning disability may have reading, written expression or mathematics skills significantly below expectation in relation to their present year level. In many cases, evidence of a processing impairment, frequently phonological in nature, will be present. A learning disability is presumed to be intrinsic to the individual and long-term, with the student failing to respond as expected to targeted intervention. It is not considered to be the direct result of intellectual disability, physical disability, sensory impairment, or a primary emotional difficulty. Neither does a learning disability appear to derive directly from inadequate environmental influences, or from the lack of an appropriate educational experience. Generally, approved arrangements are not cumulative except for severe disabilities.

	NAPLAN	OLNA	EST	ATAR course examinations
<b>Purpose of assessment</b>	A national assessment of skills in literacy and numeracy, made up of tests in four areas: reading, writing, language conventions (spelling and grammar and punctuation) and numeracy. All students are required to participate.	An assessment of the minimum standard of reading, writing and numeracy skills needed to meet the demands of everyday life and work.  All students are required to demonstrate minimum standard of reading, writing and numeracy skills for WACE achievement.	An externally set task (by the Authority) which is used to ensure fair assessment for Year 12 General and Foundation courses. It is used to provide feedback to teachers regarding their marking standard.	To assess the knowledge and understandings of the curriculum as specified for the course. This enables TISC to rank candidates for university entry.
<b>Form of assessment</b>	For online tests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>range from 40 to 65 minutes in length</li> <li>multiple-choice and open-response questions</li> </ul>	Series of three online tests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numeracy and Reading are 50 minutes in length and include multiple-choice questions</li> <li>Writing is 60 minutes in length and includes a typed response of up to 600 words</li> </ul>	Handwritten task 50 minutes in length for each Year 12 General and Foundation course.	Handwritten examination up to three hours in length for each ATAR course.
<b>Year/s level</b>	3, 5, 7, 9	10, 11, 12	12	12

	NAPLAN	OLNA	EST	ATAR course examinations
<b>Person/body that approves special arrangements</b>	Principal and/or the Authority depending on adjustment required	Principal	Principal	The Authority
<b>Evidence of learning disorder required for approval of assessment adjustments</b>	<p>Proof of diagnosis of disorder according to the current <i>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Version 5</i> (DSM V) criteria, and demonstration of functional impact in the assessment being undertaken (nature of the assessment, amount of reading, amount of writing).</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Documented evidence of an undiagnosed disability such as an individual adjusted learning plan for usual classroom learning and assessments</p>	<p>Proof of diagnosis of disorder according to the current <i>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Version 5</i> (DSM V) criteria, and demonstration of functional impact in the assessment being undertaken (nature of the assessment, amount of reading, amount of writing).</p>	<p>Proof of diagnosis of disorder according to the current <i>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Version 5</i> (DSM V) criteria, and demonstration of functional impact in the tasks being undertaken (nature of the assessment, amount of reading, amount of writing).</p>	<p>Proof of diagnosis of disorder according to the current <i>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Version 5</i> (DSM V) criteria, and demonstration of functional impact in the examinations being undertaken (nature of the assessment, amount of reading, amount of writing).</p>

	NAPLAN	OLNA	EST	ATAR course examinations
<b>Possible adjustment</b>	<p>Dependent on the type of specific learning disorder and its demonstrated functional impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extra working time</li> <li>• rest breaks (motor dysgraphia only)</li> <li>• scribe for writing test - see conditions in 6.8.2 of the national protocols</li> <li>• NAPLAN support person</li> <li>• assistive technology/ computers (motor dysgraphia only)</li> <li>• colour contrast modification (SLD in reading)</li> <li>• reading is <b>not</b> considered an adjustment for disability as <b>all students</b> can ask to have numeracy questions and the writing prompt read to them and <b>no students</b> can have the stimulus material or questions read to them in reading and language conventions.</li> </ul>	<p>For all tests, dependent on the type of specific learning disorder and its demonstrated functional impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extra working time</li> <li>• rest breaks</li> <li>• OLNA support person</li> <li>• Scribe/computer operator for writing test</li> <li>• reading is not considered an adjustment for disability as <b>all students</b> can ask to have numeracy questions and the writing prompt read to them and <b>no students</b> can have the stimulus material or questions read to them in reading.</li> </ul>	<p>For all tasks, dependent on the type of specific learning disorder and its demonstrated functional impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extra working time</li> <li>• rest breaks</li> <li>• scribe or computer operator</li> <li>• reading of the task (SLD in reading) or C-Pen Exam-reader scanning pen.</li> </ul>	<p>Dependent on the type of specific learning disorder and its demonstrated functional impact.</p> <p>Frequently, extra working time.</p> <p>Could also include scribe, oral reading of examination, use of C-Pen Exam-reader scanning pen, use of a computer.</p>



	NAPLAN	OLNA	EST	ATAR course examinations
<b>Notification to Authority of adjustments</b>	<p>Applications to the Authority on the prescribed form must be made by the school for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• alternative print formats and Braille tests,</li> <li>• use of a scribe for the writing test</li> <li>• use of assistive technology or colour contrast technology that requires an unsecured browser</li> <li>• use of a computer for Year 3 Writing</li> <li>• double extra time.</li> </ul> <p>Supporting documentation is to be retained at the school. All adjustments accessed during the test by a student will be recorded on the Participation Website and the disability access codes recorded in the NAPLAN online platform.</p>	<p>Schools are to request, from the Authority, approval for rest breaks, extra working time, alternative images, themes or a scribe.</p> <p>Supporting documentation is to be retained at the school.</p>	<p>Nil, unless the task needs to be formatted in braille or other special font size or format.</p> <p>Supporting documentation is to be retained at the school.</p>	<p>Application by the school.</p> <p>Application process which includes a form, diagnostic report, case management records (including success of targeted intervention and trialling of specific adjustments) and work samples.</p>
<b>Relevant publications</b>	<p><i>National protocols for test administration</i></p> <p><i>Handbook for principals</i></p> <p><i>Test administration handbook for teachers</i></p>	<p><i>Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Handbook</i></p>	<p><i>Externally Set Tasks Handbook</i></p>	<p>The Authority website:  <a href="https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/assessment/examinations/special-arrangements">https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/assessment/examinations/special-arrangements</a></p>

	<b>NAPLAN</b>	<b>OLNA</b>	<b>EST</b>	<b>ATAR course examinations</b>
<b>Guiding principle</b>	<i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> <i>Disability Standards for Education 2005</i>	<i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> <i>Disability Standards for Education 2005</i>	<i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> <i>Disability Standards for Education 2005</i>	<i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> <i>Disability Standards for Education 2005</i> ACACA national consistency Dyslexia SPELD Foundation Precedent from court or tribunal hearings nationally

## Appendix 3: Mental Health Conditions

### Operational Definition

For the purpose of assessing equitable access to assessment applications for ATAR course examinations, the following operational definition is used:

A mental health condition is a disorder or illness that affects a student's thought processes, judgement, perception of reality, or emotional and social wellbeing.

The symptoms significantly impact on a student's cognitive functioning.

The current presenting symptoms must be supported by evidence from a range of sources, including a student's history, school observations and appropriate health professionals.

### Evidence

The health professional providing supporting evidence must:

- be the student's primary treating health professional and be working within a relevant area of mental health as defined by the regulation body, and
- have made a comprehensive assessment of the student, have seen the student recently, and may have established a treatment program for the student. (The treatment plan may not be considered necessary in all cases, e.g. if requesting low level support such as out-of-order seating), and
- be independent from the student (e.g. not be related to or a friend of the student). Evidence provided by a school-based health professional is acceptable.

The health professional should provide the information required for the Authority to make an assessment as to the impact of the mental health condition on the student's access to the ATAR course examinations. This will include:

- clinical assessments, diagnosis (if available), date of diagnosis
- consultation history, presenting symptoms
- treatment periods and plans (if available)
- description of severity; the impact of the student's mental health condition on learning and assessment.

The school should provide relevant information, such as:

- history of the student's mental health condition, from the school's perspective
- observed difficulties in the classroom and during assessments
- changes in the student's condition over time
- history of any provisions approved at school level
- how the provisions have assisted the student.

### Appropriate Provisions

The most appropriate provisions for students with mental health conditions are:

- out-of-order seating, in the position most suitable for the student
- permission to take medication into the examination room, according to doctor's instructions

- rest breaks (in most circumstances) taken at the student’s discretion. These are calculated at the rate of 5 minutes per half hour of examination, with none calculated for the last half hour. The student is permitted to leave the room under supervision if they wish.
- extra working time – only where justified (as below)
- separate supervision – only for extreme cases where a student cannot attend class due to a social anxiety disorder or other situations (as below).

A request for **extra working time** needs to be supported by compelling evidence from treating health professionals and the school that demonstrates significant impact of the student’s executive functioning and a decline in academic productivity and performance that cannot be rectified by rest breaks. The evidence may include:

- results of a Developmental Neuropsychological Assessment (NEPSY) administered by a suitably qualified health professional (students aged 3–16), and/or
- results of a Behaviour Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF) administered by a suitably qualified health professional (students aged 5–18), and/or
- evidence of student’s decline in performance from the school providing student results or essays pre- and post- the onset of the mental health conditions; school observations and history of other provisions (specifically rest breaks) being trialled unsuccessfully for a reasonable period (usually six months).

## Separate Supervision

Students should not be removed from the standard examination room or special examination room unless there is compelling evidence of need. Most examinations in special centres are conducted in small groups.

Criteria for allocation of separate supervision include:

- contagious illness, with risk of infecting others
- susceptibility to infections, e.g. weakened immune system from recent chemotherapy
- a disruptive student who will interfere with the examination for others with vocal or noisy physical tics, or uncontrollable actions
- a violent student who poses a risk to other students or supervisors, e.g. uncontrollable behaviour when stressed
- inability to attend class due to extreme social anxiety
- use of technology likely to interrupt others, e.g. keyboard, ventilator
- requirements of lighting conditions unsuitable for other students
- requirements of frequent nursing care
- conditions that necessitate the need for separate supervision to enable the candidate to demonstrate their knowledge in an examination e.g. Tourette syndrome.

## Appendix 4: Guidelines for Sickness/Misadventure Considerations

Candidates who believe their performance in an ATAR course examination/s may have been affected by a temporary sickness, non-permanent disability, or an unforeseen event occurring during or just before an examination, may apply for special consideration to be given to their examination marks.

In general, students should sit examinations if possible, although not against specific medical advice given within two weeks of the examination. Attendance at an examination will not prejudice any application. However, non-attendance at an examination where the sickness/misadventure claim is declined may have a detrimental impact of the student's achievement of the WACE requirements.

If the application is approved, the Authority will calculate an examination mark using the applicant's school assessment as a basis.

### Eligibility

Applications must relate to sickness or misadventure that occurred during the examinations, or up to two weeks before the commencement of the student's first written examination, and the sickness or misadventure must have affected their performance in an examination or caused their non-attendance at an examination. For candidates undertaking practical performance examinations, such as Physical Education Studies or Dance, this includes a severe injury sustained after the start of Term 3, but still existing during the practical examinations. This will typically be considered for candidates who have completed at least the first semester of the course and for whom the school has a practical mark.

Submission of sickness/misadventure applications is a candidate responsibility.

Applications may be made in respect of:

- sickness or physical injuries suffered directly by the candidate, e.g. influenza, an asthma attack, or a lacerated hand
- accidents or other events beyond the candidate's control, e.g. the death of a close family member during the current year, disruption at the examination centre, or a faulty examination paper
- competing or umpiring in a recognised sport or cultural event at national or international level that conflicts with a practical examination only.

The provisions of the policy do not apply to:

- matters relating to long-term loss of preparation time and claimed inadequacies of teaching
- matters that could have been avoided by the candidate, e.g. misreading of the timetable
- long-term illnesses such as asthma, epilepsy and mental illness, unless there is evidence of an acute episode of the illness during the examination caused by an event not related to the examination (chronic illness itself will not be approved)
- long-term injuries or illnesses where the candidate was required to submit an application for a special format practical examination
- the same grounds for which equitable access to assessment adjustments have been made, unless there is evidence of additional difficulties during an examination
- matters relating to the school assessment in a course
- attendance at a sporting or cultural event during written examinations
- adverse weather conditions during a Physical Education Studies practical examination
- non-school candidates.

## The application process

The application forms are available at the time of the ATAR course examinations from examination centres, the Authority's office and the Authority website.

The application form for sickness/misadventure consideration should be completed by the candidate and returned along with supporting documentation to the Authority by the published deadline, usually within one week of the last examination. Applications relating to a practical or oral examination that are initiated by an event unlikely to occur during the written examinations (e.g. a voice problem, physical injury only affecting the practical performance) must be submitted immediately following the practical examination.

Candidates are responsible for the lodgement of their application by the due date. Completed forms are **not** to be returned to schools or examination centres. Late applications and electronic applications cannot be accepted. Applications cannot be lodged on behalf of a student without the student's consent. The application is to include the candidate's personal details, list the examinations for which consideration is requested, and give reasons for their application. Non-school candidates cannot make application.

## Evidence

Candidates are responsible for providing evidence that identifies clearly the unexpected disadvantage they suffered at the time of attempting the examinations. Supporting evidence from a relevant independent source is acceptable, but it must include all details requested on the application form.

### Medical evidence

For applications based on illness, information is to be provided by a doctor or other registered health professional who is not related to the candidate or the candidate's family. For short-term illnesses it is advisable to seek medical evidence as close to the examination day as possible.

### Misadventure evidence

Applications must be supported by a statement from a relevant person (e.g. a police officer) who is not related to the candidate. The psychological impact of a misadventure should be evident in the application.

## Outcome

Each application is considered on an examination-by-examination basis by a committee established for this purpose.

For approved applications, an examination mark will be calculated using the candidate's moderated school assessment and an appropriate statistical process. The candidate is awarded the higher of either the actual examination mark or the calculated mark. Practical and written marks are calculated separately.

The candidate will be informed of the outcome of the application via the student portal at the same time as the candidate's results.