# Special provisions for examinations – case studies

The Board recognises that some individual students will not be able to participate in SACE assessments on the same basis as other students if all students are treated in the same way. The SACE Board and schools share responsibilities and obligations to make reasonable adjustments in curriculum and assessment to enable students to participate in courses, and associated assessments, on the same basis as other students. In making reasonable adjustments, the knowledge, skills, and standards of subjects and certification requirements are entitled to be maintained.

Decisions about a student’s eligibility to be granted special provisions are evidence based and considered on a case-by-case basis. The evidence required to determine eligibility and establish the grounds for special provisions varies but must always include information from the student and school. Independent evidence may also be required from professionals or community members.

The management of special provisions should provide consistency of reasonable adjustments across both school assessment and external assessment.

The following scenarios are examples of actual cases.

| Evidence to support the need for adjustment | | | | |
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| Grounds for  Eligibility | Examples of  recommended adjustments | School evidence of current adjustments\* | Professional/diagnostic evidence | Recommended Assessment Adjustments |
| Anxiety / Depression  Disorder | Rest breaks as necessary  Separate invigilation  Extra time | Teacher observations   * Teachers comment that student tends to panic at the start of timed assessments, and sometimes during the assessment, and has benefitted from taking time out to regroup and calm down before re-engaging with the task. * Teachers observe that the student is calmer working alone, can disrupt others when panicky if working in a group environment.   Student evidence   * Student’s timed tasks demonstrate good productivity and achievement. | * Documentation from a health professional/school counsellor confirming an anxiety disorder. * Student is not on any medication, but a health plan is in place that recommends strategies to implement when stressed including breathing exercises and time out. * Recommends rest breaks to allow the student to use strategies if anxiety is heightened during assessment. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Supervised rest breaks as necessary (may also be implemented at the start of the assessment as needed). * Separate invigilation.   Evidence from teacher observations indicate supervised rest breaks and separate invigilation will be sufficient.  *Please note:* The student uses rest breaks to manage the anxiety and any non-working time used to reduce anxiety is made up at the end of the allocated time for the assessment to ensure the student has the same working time as other students. |
| Arthritis | Use of a word processor  Rest breaks | Teacher observations   * Teachers comment that the student experiences pain after handwriting for about 30 minutes. * Teachers observe that student is much more comfortable using a word processor.   Student evidence   * Student’s handwritten timed tasks demonstrate effortful and slow handwriting. * Word processed work is productive and student is able to complete the task. Some discomfort in hands still observed and reported by the student. | Pediatrician – reports juvenile arthritis for the last two years. Main impact is pain and inflammation in finger joints with handwriting, even for short periods of time, which can take a long time to dissipate. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Use of a word processor – evidence supports this provision. * Supervised rest breaks as necessary – even when using a word processor, the student may need additional rest time.   *Please note:* Consider reduced timed assessments of more than 130 minutes in length.  Extra time prolongs the working time further, which may not be appropriate for a student who is fatiguing over longer periods.  Schools submit Form 31 to request a reduced examination paper (Speak to the SACE Board before completing and submitting this form). |
| Autism Spectrum Disorder | Use of a word processor  Rest breaks  Separate invigilation | Teacher observations   * Student gets very anxious at the start of a test or exam. * Once started, the student works well, but often takes a long time to settle and hence rushes to finish. * Student has a history of access to a word processor.   Student evidence   * Word processor evidence is supports student. * With rest breaks at the start of tests student seems to be calmer and once work has begun they are able to maintain work rate and complete tests in time allocated. | * Psychological report provided confirms a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Academic skills high average to superior. Anxiety evident. * Suggests student may need to be prompted to refocus during the examination | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Supervised rest breaks as necessary. The student can also utilise a rest break at the start of the exam if anxious. This allows the student to settle before work time starts. * Separate invigilation – allows for a familiar setting for each examination. Schools are encouraged to practice the exam process with the student prior to the first exam so they are familiar with managing in this context. Refocus prompting if needed. * Word processor – student has a history of use enabling them to access assessment. |
| Auditory Processing Disorder | Extra time  Supervised rest breaks  Separate room  Additional CD with headphones for EAL, music or language exams | Teacher observations   * The student often needs clarification of verbal information given in the classroom. * Teachers provide written notes of class lessons. * Sometimes does not complete timed tasks. * Have provided extra time in tests on recommendation from psychologist.   Student evidence   * Handwriting speed, spelling and higher-order writing skills are good. * Some timed tasks not completed. | * Psychological report indicating superior reading and spelling skills. Reports some difficulty with the student processing auditory information and with organisation. Recommends extra time. * Reading test results – above average reading skills. | Schools use Form 31 to request an additional CD for external examination.   * Separate invigilation for language examination due to listening comprehension component.   Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Opportunity to seek clarification of any verbal instructions provided at the start of the examination before starting the examination. * Extra time – additional time to complete the task as per professional recommendation and timed assessment examples indicate. * Supervised rest breaks. |
| Broken Arm – late injury | Extra time  Rest breaks  Use of a word processor or scribe | Teacher observations  None, as injury is recent. | GP – student has broken their arm and is in a cast and sling support. Cannot write. Injury still painful. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Use of a scribe and separate invigilation or use of a word processor. * Supervised rest breaks – for pain management. * 10-minutes additional time per hour if using a scribe.   School could apply for use of a derived result if the student has difficulty managing with a scribe  Schools submit Form 32 to request the use of a derived result for external examination. |
| Cerebral Palsy | Separate invigilation  Supervised rest breaks  Extra time  Use of a word processor  Scribe  Reduced paper (if 130 minutes in length) | Teacher observations   * Student suffers fatigue completing tasks. * Legibility can be an issue when writing, even when extra time used. * Student has used word processor in both class work and assessments. * NCCD database information.   Student evidence   * Word processor supports student’s access to learning. | * Pediatrician – diagnosis of cerebral palsy. * Occupational Therapist report – fatigue and pain when writing for extended periods of time. Use of a word processor helps. * When fatigued this impacts on access to assessment. * Student health care plan. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Supervised rest breaks as necessary. Allows the student to rest when fatigued and/or in pain. * Use of a word processor. This improves the legibility of handwriting and assists with fatigue and pain. * For subjects where a word processor is not appropriate, extra time depending on the severity of pain/fatigue and the impact of medication, or for use of a scribe. * Separate invigilation and scribe. * 10-minutes additional time per hour if using a scribe. * Student to make up time lost attending to medical needs. * Assistive technology may be required.   Schools submit Form 31 to request a reduced examination paper   * Reduced paper if appropriate (contact SACE Board for advice)   *Please note:* When using the rest breaks, rest time is unlimited and made up at the end of the allocated time, so the student has the same working time as other students. |
| Chronic Fatigue | Supervised rest breaks  Extra writing time  Reduced paper | Teacher observations   * Student is often fatigued, particularly in the afternoon. * Student needs to stop and rest regularly.   Student evidence   * Shorter tasks completed in allocated time. * Longer tasks not completed as student fatigued and stopped several times during the task. | GP – diagnosed with chronic fatigue – severe. Needs extra time to allow for the need to rest regularly for at least 10 minutes. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.  Supervised rest breaks as necessary - Rest time is unlimited (within reason). Time used to rest is made up at the end.  Separate invigilation. This will allow the student to lie down and rest as needed and be supervised at all times.  Student can begin examinations scheduled for the afternoon earlier in the day and be supervised until other students have begun the examination.  Consider applying for the use of the moderated predicted examination mark if the student is affected during the examination  Schools submit Form 32 to request the use of a derived result for external examination.  *Please note*: Consider reduced external timed assessments. Contact the SACE Board for advice.  Extra time prolongs the working time further, which may not be appropriate for a student who is fatiguing over longer periods. Reduced paper recommendations (if more than 130 minutes in length) need to be approved by the SACE Board. |
| Crohn’s disease | Opportunity to make up time attending to medical needs  Supervised rest breaks  Separate Invigilation  Extra time | Teacher observations   * Student often fatigued. * Student needs to leave to room sometimes during tasks. | GP – diagnosed with Crohn’s Disease 2 years ago. May need to use the toilet regularly. Medication can cause fatigue. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Separate Invigilation – student may feel more comfortable in separate room, less disruption to other students * Student to make up time attending to medical needs – to allow the student to go to the toilet, take medication, etc. * Supervised rest breaks as necessary – time used to rest if fatigued is made up at the end of the allocated time. * 10 minutes per hour additional time to complete the examination   Consider applying for the use of the moderated predicted examination mark if the student is affected during the examination.  Schools submit Form 32 to request the use of a derived result for external examination |
| Dysgraphia | Use of a word processor  Supervised rest breaks | Teacher observations   * Student uses a word processor whenever possible which allows them to write more. * Handwriting is messy and student reports discomfort when writing for long periods of time.   Student evidence   * Word processor supports student’s access to learning. | Occupational Therapist – diagnosed dysgraphia due to slow handwriting speed. Recommended the use of a word processor. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Supervised rest breaks as necessary. Student is productive over 1 hour but may need to break to rest writing hand for longer tasks. * Use of a word processor for both school assessments and external examinations. |
| Handwriting difficulties (not diagnosed - imputed)\*  \* *a diagnosis is not mandatory* | Use of a word processor  Scribe  Separate Invigilation | Teacher observations   * Handwriting is mostly illegible and therefore difficult to assess. * A scribe has been used successfully for some assessment tasks including Mathematics subjects.   Student evidence   * Handwriting in a range of tasks is very difficult to read. * Word processed and scribed samples submitted. | Teacher observations | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Use of a word processor for written responses. * Use of a scribe for Mathematical or scientific responses (student has used a scribe before). * Separate invigilation – to facilitate the use of the scribe where relevant.   School could apply for use of a derived result if the student has difficulty managing with a scribe.  Schools submit Form 32 to request the use of a derived result for external examination. |
| Hearing Impairment | Separate Invigilation  Additional CD  Opportunity for verbal instructions to be clarified before starting timed assessments  A written copy of any verbal instructions | Teacher observations   * Student often needs to clarify information provided verbally in the classroom. * Student is provided with written notes of any verbal information provided. * Completes tasks in the time allocated. | * Audiologist – moderate to severe neurological hearing loss. Use of cochlear implants since age 4.   *Please note:*  Individual student impact will vary. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * The opportunity to clarify any verbal instructions given before the examination, prior to commencing working time.   Schools use Form 31 to request an additional CD for external examination and request to notify examiner of hearing impairment.   * Examiner informed for any oral examinations. * Separate invigilation for any examinations with a listening component (language, music, English as Additional Language). |
| Learning Disorder | Extra reading time  Use of a reader  Use of a word processor | Teacher observations   * Student always struggles to complete timed tasks – requires extra time, a reader and the use of a word processor. * Student has been using a reader for tests and examinations and screen reading software for other assessments.   Student evidence   * Word processed task enables student to access assessment . * Reader and extra time enables student to complete timed tasks. | * No psychological report available. * School counsellor provides learning support evidence (may use using Form 28) identifying imputed difficulties. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Extra time. * Use of a word processor . * Student can have the opportunity to clarify any verbal instructions given before the external assessment, prior to commencing working time. * Separate Invigilation. * Use of a reader. |
| Learning Disorder - Dyslexia | Use of a word processor  Extra reading time prior to the commencement of the assessment  Extra time | Teacher observations   * Student struggles to complete timed tasks in the allocated time due to slowness in reading and interpreting questions. * Student can misinterpret questions and uses incorrect spelling at times. * Student seeks clarification of written information in class.   Student evidence   * Tasks demonstrate misinterpretation of some questions. * Word processor supports student’s access to learning. | * Professional reports highlighting a significant difficulty with reading skills throughout schooling that has not improved. * Professional reports indicate spelling is below average. * Comprehension results – below average | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Extra time for reading – supported by the results of the tests, professional assessments, teacher observations and student’s work. * Use of a word processor. * Extra time. |
| Migraine | Supervised rest breaks  Time to attend to medical needs | Teacher observations   * Have only observed an onset of migraine once. When this occurs, the student is unable to continue working and needs to go home. | GP – migraine sufferer. Student needs to take medication and rest at the onset of a migraine. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Supervised rest breaks or permission to take medication if necessary.   *Please note:* Evidence suggests that student would not be functional if suffering a migraine. School is advised to apply for the use of the derived result if affected by this condition on the day of an examination or performance.  Schools submit Form 32 to request the use of a derived result for external examination. |
| Vision Impairment | Extra reading time and/or extra writing time  Enlarged paper  Rest breaks  Use of visual aids  Use of a reader and/or scribe/ or computer to read and/or respond | Teacher observations   * Student takes considerably longer to read the questions and write responses – generally an extra 15/20 minutes per hour is needed. * Even with enlarged papers the student works with their face close to the page. * Have observed fatigue during longer tasks. * Difficulty reading labels and fine details on diagrams and graphs.   Student evidence   * Tasks incomplete when no extra time provided even when paper enlarged. | Ophthalmologist report – limited visual acuity and nystagmus. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Extra 15/20 minutes additional time per hour. * Enlarged paper. * Rest breaks. * Use of a reader, or computer with applicable reading software where necessary, and separate invigilation if this is required.   Schools use Form 31 to request:   * Examination to be provided on CD for screen reading purposes. * Coloured paper (if specified).   Consider reduced external timed assessments. Reduced paper recommendations need to come through the SACE Board. |
| Misadventure – student misread the examination paper. |  | Teacher observations   * Student approached the invigilator after the exam when they realised that they had not seen the last question in the exam paper. Student was very upset. | Not applicable | * Special provisions are not provided for situations that could have been avoided. Schools are provided with copies of the examination covers prior to the examinations that include the number of questions and pages. This information is passed on the students in preparation for the examinations. |
| Student unable to sit examination. | Use of a derived result | Teacher observations   * Student’s family contacted school the day before the examination as the student was very ill, possibly contagious | On the day of the exam  Medical Practitioner – Completes confidential medical practitioner’s report providing diagnosis of the illness, severity, and the likely impact on the student’s ability to undertake or complete the assessment(s). | Schools submit Form 32 to request the use of a derived result for external examination.  Special provisions are provided for situations that are outside the student’s control.  *Please note:* For medical conditions the required evidence for Form 32 includes:   * Confidential school report * Confidential medical practitioner’s report on the day of the examination |
| Student sat an examination while suffering an illness. | Use of a derived result | Teacher observations   * Student arrived at exam looking ill. Student said that they felt feverish, shaky and nauseous but would attempt the examination. * Student brought medication which they need to take during the exam. | On the day of the exam  Medical Practitioner – Completes confidential medical practitioner’s report providing diagnosis of the illness, severity, and the likely impact on the student’s ability to undertake or complete the assessment(s).  *Please* *note*: Do not miss an examination or performance merely because you do not feel able to do your best. If you are eligible, the SACE Board will use the higher of your actual result and your derived result. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Supervised rest breaks as necessary. * Time to tend to medical needs. * Separate invigilation may be required or student situated so as to not disturb other students   Schools submit Form 32 to request the use of a derived result for external examination.  *Please note:* For medical conditions the required evidence includes a confidential school report and a confidential medical practitioner’s report from the day of the examination. |
| Diabetes | Supervised rest breaks  Time to attend to medical needs  Access to toilets  Separate invigilation | Teacher observations   * Student self manages medical breaks as needed * Attends to toilet breaks as needed * If hypo occurs, medical treatment sought | Medical Practitioner   * Provides school confidential medical practitioner’s report providing diagnosis of the illness, severity, and the likely impact on the student’s ability to undertake or complete the assessment(s). * Student health care plan. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Supervised rest breaks as necessary. * Time to tend to medical needs. * Time to take toilet breaks as necessary. * Separate invigilation may be required or student situated so as to not disturb other students.   Consider applying for use of a derived result if student is affected during the exam.  Schools submit Form 32 to request the use of a derived result for external examination.  *Please note:* For medical conditions the required evidence includes a confidential school report and a confidential medical practitioner’s report from the day of the examination. |
| Interruption to examination |  | Invigilator observations   * Note the time of the interruption. * If possible, secure exam papers/computers if required to leave the examination room. * Maintain integrity of exam room with students. * Monitor individual reactions.   If possible to resume exam   * Provide time for student to settle. * Make up lost examination time. | Possible events that could interrupt the exam include:   * Bomb hoax. * Invacuation / evacuation / lockdown. * Continuous bells. * Disturbance in examination room. * Blackout. * Fire / Bushfire. * Flooding. | Contact the SACE Board’s Special Provisions Helpline 8115 4854 for advice.  Schools submit Form 32 to request the use of a derived result for external examination.  *Please note:*   * Invigilator comments required * Individual students identified and possible impact described |
| Personal Circumstances | Supervised rest breaks  Extra time  Separate Invigilation | Teacher observations   * School supports students and discusses options with regard to examinations or performance dates and attendance   Contact the SACE Board’s Special Provisions Helpline 8115 4854for advice. | Possible personal circumstances that could impact of student’s ability to participate in an examination:   * Death of a person of significance to student. * Sudden severe illness of person of significance to student. * Funeral. * Road accident. * Suicide. * Significant community trauma. * Personal or Domestic violence. * Homelessness. | Schools approve the following reasonable adjustments and manage special provisions for both school assessments and examinations.   * Supervised rest breaks as necessary. * Separate invigilation may be required or student situated so as to not disturb other students. * Monitor student(s) affected   If provisions do not reasonably support the student then schools submit Form 32 to request the use of a derived result for external examination.  If students are unable to attempt the examination or performance:  *Please note:* The required evidence for Form 32 includes:   * Confidential school report. * Confidential medical practitioner’s report on the day of the examination. * *or* Statutory Declaration. * *or* School verifies personal circumstances. |