

Reasonable adjustments in assessment

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (AARA)

Schools are responsible for administering assessment within the requirements of the relevant syllabus and meeting quality assurance processes for Applied, Applied (Essential), General and General (Extension), including alternative sequences, General (Senior External Examinations) subjects, and short courses.

Under the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#) (DSE), they are also responsible for ensuring that adjustments are provided, as needed, to enable students with disability to access and participate in assessment on the same basis as students without disability.

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (AARA) are provided to minimise barriers for a student whose disability or medical condition may affect their ability to read, respond to or participate in assessment on the same basis as other students. AARA are also appropriate when illness or misadventure pose barriers for students in assessment.

AARA are determined in consultation with students and/or parents/carers. Decisions about AARA are considered on a case-by-case basis, based on the evidence and the functional impact of the disability, medical condition or other circumstance. For AARA applications, evidence is summarised in school statements and reports from medical professionals (or other professionals, in the case of misadventure).

Adjustments are 'reasonable' when they achieve the purpose of enabling access and participation for the student on the same basis as other students, while schools also:

- take into account the student's learning needs and balance the interests of all parties affected, including other students, staff and the school itself
- consider alternative reasonable adjustments that are less disruptive and intrusive but no less beneficial for the students, as needed
- maintain the academic requirements of subjects and ensure the integrity of assessment requirements and processes. All inherent requirements and components of the course must be maintained at the same standard for all students and AARA must not confer an advantage.

AARA are applicable for students who have completed required learning as outlined in the relevant syllabus or course. They cannot be used to compensate for learning that has not occurred or to exempt a student from the learning or knowledge and skill requirements of a subject or course.

Schools should regularly monitor and review student learning needs (current functional impacts) and the effectiveness of adjustments in enabling students to access and complete assessment on the same basis as other students and as independently as possible. When providing students with adjustments before summative assessment, schools are encouraged to take into account QCAA's principles of AARA, to ensure that enacted adjustments are consistent with AARA granted for Units 3 and 4.

Examples of AARA

As the application of AARA is based on the functional impact/s for the individual student, arrangements for assessment may vary significantly for different students with the same diagnosis, condition or circumstance. AARA may also vary from subject to subject and assessment to assessment for individual students, according to their individual needs and choices, and the nature of the assessment.

For this reason, the QCAA does not provide a prescriptive list of adjustments or impacts relevant to particular diagnoses, or an exhaustive list of possible conditions or circumstances to which AARA may be applied. The following table is designed to provide information and prompts for schools to make decisions to support their individual student's needs. See section 6.4.4 in the [QCE and QCIA Policy and Procedures Handbook](#) for further information about possible AARA.

| Possible impacts / barriers | Possible assessment AARA |
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| Accessing and manipulating materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance (e.g. a teacher aide assisting with manipulation of equipment and other practical tasks) • Physical equipment • Extra time or rest breaks |
| Accessing visual information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative format papers (e.g. enlarged print, electronic format, braille) • Assistive technology • Vision aids • Reader • Scribe • Physical equipment / environment (e.g. need for two desks to accommodate enlarged materials) • Extra time or rest breaks |
| Attending to verbal instructions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance (e.g. supervisor using the student's name in reading assessment instructions) • Individual instructions • Varied seating |
| Colour vision deficiency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternate format papers, i.e. black and white, where required |
| Coping with social dynamics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied seating |
| Epileptic seizure before or during assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparable assessment, extension for IA • Illness & misadventure application for EA |
| Epileptic seizure risk (i.e. diagnosed condition) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied seating • Medication |
| Focus, concentration, processing speed, working memory, 'cognitive load' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra time or rest breaks |
| Hearing verbal instructions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance (e.g. supervisor using the student's name in reading assessment instructions and/or prompting the student to start or continue the assessment task) • Individual instructions, Auslan interpreter • Varied seating • Physical equipment (e.g. sound enhancement) |
| Diabetes (Type 1) hypoglycaemia or hyperglycaemia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparable assessment, extension for IA • Illness & misadventure application for EA |
| Diabetes (Type 1) monitoring / correcting blood glucose levels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diabetes management |

| Possible impacts / barriers | Possible assessment AARA |
|--|---|
| Illness, occurrence of episodic conditions (e.g. migraine) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparable assessment, extension for IA • Illness & misadventure application for EA |
| Infant care / breastfeeding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied seating • Rest breaks • Physical equipment (eg. ergonomic furniture) |
| Pain, discomfort, fatigue — in producing written responses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer or scribe • Physical equipment / environment • Rest breaks, varied seating • Medication |
| Pain, discomfort, fatigue — in sitting for long periods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest breaks (e.g. to stand and stretch) • Varied seating • Physical equipment • Medication |
| Performing practical components of assessment — physical injury/disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparable assessment, extension for IA • Adjustment to physical activity (contact the QCAA) |
| Poor fine motor control, illegible handwriting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer or assistive technology |
| Reading instructions, questions, stimulus and own responses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reader or assistive technology |
| Regulating emotions, sensory processing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied seating • Assistance (e.g. supervisor to provide support and reassurance) • Rest breaks |
| Restrictive or repetitive activities/behaviours, executive functioning, processing differences, emotional regulation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied seating • Assistance • Individual instructions • Rest breaks or extra time |
| Visual strain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest breaks |
| Written expression | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer, assistive technology or scribe • Varied seating |

More information

- QCAA policies and processes
 - AARA factsheets, all available at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/aara
 - *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook*, Section 6
www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/certificates-and-qualifications/qce-qcia-handbook/6-aara
 - phone 1300 381 575 or email aara@qcaa.qld.edu.au.



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