

Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments (Years 9-12)

Preamble

It is a system wide expectation that teacher planning is for all students. Teacher planning must incorporate the differentiation required for all students to access the curriculum. This planning for personalised learning ensures that students achieve their entitlement to 'rigorous, relevant and engaging learning programs drawn from a challenging curriculum that addresses their individual, learning needs' as described by the Australian Curriculum and QCAA Senior Syllabuses.

Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA) are processes put in place by the College and/or the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA), to make assessment accessible for all students. AARA enable students to demonstrate the assessed knowledge and skills, irrespective of any short, or long term, impairment, condition or illness.

AARA are applied to the assessment conditions only and do not exempt a student from completing the assessment instrument. Nor do they change the criteria against which the student response is assessed. AARA are provided to minimise, as much as possible, barriers for a student whose disability, impairment, medical condition or other circumstance affect their ability to read, respond to, or participate in the assessment.

Purpose

To support students by:

- Proactively designing equitable learning and assessment programs
- Minimising barriers for eligible students to demonstrate their learning, knowledge and skill in assessment
- Providing reasonable adjustments for students where necessary to enable their access and participation

Success Criteria

- Minimise barriers for eligible students by submitting successful AARA applications to the QCAA
- Provide a clear processes for reasonable adjustments in assessment for eligible students
- All documentation for Planning for Personalised Learning is maintained by Senior Years teachers

Method

All relevant stakeholders (leaders and teachers) will follow the outlined College, Toowoomba Catholics Schools and QCAA processes to ensure reasonable adjustments are provided to eligible students.

1.0 Planning for Personalised Learning

All Senior Years teachers are required to use the Toowoomba Catholic School's Planning for Personalised Learning strategy to support students in accessing the curriculum and assessment.

“Personalised Learning is putting students at the heart of the education process so as to tailor teaching to the individual need, interest, and aptitude in order to fulfil every young person’s potential.” (Hopkins, 207)

Planning for Personalised Learning:

- Begins with students and their learning
- Owned and managed by classroom teachers
- Occurs for all learners, by all teachers
- Encompasses collaboration and consultation
- Connects student learning to the Australian Curriculum and QCAA syllabuses
- Focuses on the planning process not the product
- Incorporates evidence-based teaching practice for all students

Expectations for Teachers:

- By Week 6 of each term, Senior Years teachers must update their records of adjustments and evidence in the Diocesan Learning Profile (DLP). This evidence is crucial in future applications to the QCAA and NCCD
- All TLAPS must include evidence of modification and differentiation of verified students, plus any students who meet NCCD guidelines
- Discuss with the Assistant Principal Curriculum any student concerns, observations and successes as part of the teacher's planning for personalised learning
- Adhere to any reasonable directives from relevant Curriculum Leaders that relate to the improvement of planning for personalised learning and the support of ELAD students in the Senior Years

2.0 Reasonable Adjustments for EALD Students in Years 9 & 10

It is the continued responsibility of our schools to support all EALD students in mainstream classrooms. These students require specific support to learn and build on the English language skills needed to access the general curriculum, in addition to learning area-specific language structures and vocabulary (ACARA, 2015). In order to create an equitable learning environment that allows these students to access the curriculum and achieve educational outcomes equitable to their peers, appropriate support mechanisms and adjustments need to be in place.

2.1 Examination Adjustments

Where appropriate students will be offered the following reasonable adjustments:

- additional time (Band scales ≤ 5 , extra 10 minutes per 30 minutes working time, Band scales ≥ 6 , extra 5 minutes per 30 minutes working time)
- closed oral presentations
- provision of a bi-lingual dictionary (book) or vocabulary list and/or visual prompts
- use of reader (when reading is not the skill being assessed)
- comprehending tasks: use of simplified language in questions

2.2 Assignment Adjustments

Where appropriate students will be offered the following reasonable adjustments:

- additional time: Band scales ≤ 5 : up to 3 days, Band scales ≥ 6 : 1 to 2 days (depending on nature of the assessment)
- additional editing, including a second draft for all assignments (NB. Second draft should focus on language skills only, this may be explicit or simply provide the student with a check-list)
- closed oral presentations
- adjusted assignment task sheet: use of simplified language in questions.

3.0 Reasonable Adjustments for EALD Students in Years 11 & 12

Under the QCE system Year 11 and 12 EALD students, who do not have a recognised learning disability, are not eligible for any special provisions with regards to assessment. However, reasonable adjustments can be made within the learning environment to allow the student the additional support required.

4.0 Year 9 & 10 AARA

4.1 Applying for Extensions for Assessment or Rescheduling Exams for Students

Students wishing to apply for an extension or for an exam to be rescheduled, must complete the process outlined below at least 48 hours prior to the due date of the draft/assessment or exam, unless there are extenuating circumstances. To maintain academic integrity and to ensure the College complies with QCAA requirements, exams will not be re-scheduled except in extenuating circumstances and where the integrity of the piece can be maintained for all students.

If students require an extension to a due date for an assignment or exam, the following apply:

1. Student collects an *Assessment Extension Form* from the Student Desk or PRL Data and Tracking in Room 102 as early as possible to allow for application consideration. The application must be supported by a written request from parents with supporting evidence of why a variation is required.
2. Students drive the approval process and return the completed form to the Assistant Principal Curriculum.
3. The Assistant Principal Curriculum will notify the student as soon as possible of the outcome of the request.
4. A copy of the form/decision is uploaded to the student's profile in Sentral and the original document is placed in the student's enrolment folder.

In extenuating circumstances, the Assistant Principal Curriculum, in consultation with the classroom teacher reserves the right to cancel an assessment item if it is in the best interest to the student.

4.2 Ineligible reasons for a change to assessment conditions

Students are not eligible for an extension or rescheduling of an examination on the following grounds:

- matters of the student's or parent's/carer's own choosing (e.g. family holidays)
- sporting representation (other than State or National Representative positions in certain circumstances)
- cultural activities
- teacher absence or other teacher-related difficulties
- matters that the student could have avoided (e.g. misreading an examination timetable, misreading instructions in examinations)

4.3 Illness and misadventure

Students whose ability to attend or participate in an assessment is adversely affected by illness or an unexpected event may be eligible for provisions for illness and misadventure. Illness and misadventure can affect a single student or a group of students. The following principles apply:

- The illness or event is unforeseen and beyond the student's control.
- An adverse effect must be demonstrated.
- The situation cannot be of the student's own choosing or that of their parents/carers, such as a family holiday.
- The Assistant Principal Curriculum makes the determination if the student has been adversely affected.

4.4 Non-attendance during internal assessment

A student who is ill and unable to attend school for internal assessment should inform the Assistant Principal Curriculum or assessment supervisor as soon as practical prior to the assessment due date or examination session

Arrangements such as comparable assessment and extensions may be considered when illness or misadventure is established **as per section 4.1**.

A medical certificate must be provided to support an application for an extension for assessment or rescheduling an examination.

5.0 Year 11 & 12 AARA

5.1 Eligibility for AARA

AARA are provided to minimise, as much as possible, barriers for a student whose disability, impairment, medical condition or other circumstances may affect their ability to read, respond to or participate in assessment.

These barriers fall into three broad categories:

- permanent
- temporary
- intermittent.

The QCAA uses broad application categories for AARA eligibility:

- cognitive
- physical
- sensory
- social/emotional.

The definition of 'disability' used in the DDA is broad. It includes physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological and learning disabilities. It also includes physical disfigurement, and the presence in the body of disease-causing organisms. Students may also be eligible for AARA where illness and misadventure (i.e. unforeseen circumstances) or other situations may prevent students from demonstrating their learning, knowledge and skill in internal and/or external summative assessment. The QCAA will also consider applications for certain cultural obligations or personal circumstances.

5.2 Ineligibility for AARA

Students are not eligible for AARA on the following grounds:

- unfamiliarity with the English language
- teacher absence or other teacher-related difficulties
- matters that the student could have avoided (e.g. misreading an examination timetable, misreading instructions in examinations)
- matters of the student's or parent's/carer's own choosing (e.g. family holidays)
- matters that the school could have avoided (e.g. incorrect enrolment in a subject).

Categories of AARA:

1. Principal Reported
2. QCAA Approved.

5.3 AARA Applications

The following guidelines are in place for supporting students in an application for AARA.

The following staff will form the AARA team in the preparation of AARA applications:

- Assistant Principal Curriculum
- Learning Enrichment Co-Ordinator
- Program Leader – Data and Tracking
- Other staff members may be called upon to support any application

AARA review meetings will be held to ensure eligibility throughout the school year.

The following documents/evidence are used to support AARA applications:

- QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook (QCAA)
- Evidence contained in the Diocesan Learning Profile (DLP)
- AARA Medical Report Form
- AARA School Statement Form
- AARA Student Statement

An AARA application is individualised and is based on the **functional impact** of the condition in which AARA is sought. The application process must be consultative with teachers, students and parents to ensure accuracy.

These guidelines are intentionally non-prescriptive to ensure that each case is addressed on a case-by-case basis. While the AARA team may support an application, there is no guarantee that QCAA approved AARA will be obtained.

5.4 Illness and misadventure

Students whose ability to attend or participate in an assessment is adversely affected by illness or an unexpected event may be eligible for provisions for illness and misadventure. Illness and misadventure can affect a single student or a group of students. The following principles apply:

- The illness or event is unforeseen and beyond the student's control.
- An adverse effect must be demonstrated.
- The situation cannot be of the student's own choosing or that of their parents/carers, such as a family holiday.
- Schools implement Principal-reported AARA when possible, before considering an application for illness and misadventure.
- An illness and misadventure application cannot be made for the same condition or circumstances for which QCAA-approved AARA have been approved, unless it can be demonstrated that a significant deterioration or complication of the condition occurred that diminished the student's performance in external assessment.

5.5 Non-attendance during internal assessment in Years 11 and 12

A student who is ill and unable to attend school for internal assessment should inform the Assistant Principal Curriculum or assessment supervisor as soon as practical prior to the assessment due date or examination session. **Principal-reported AARA must be implemented to provide opportunities for the student to complete the assessment.**

Arrangements such as comparable assessment and extensions may be considered when illness or misadventure is established.

Where the school has attempted to implement Principal-reported AARA, or Principal-reported AARA is unable to be implemented due to the illness or event, and therefore the student is unable to provide a response to a summative internal assessment, the school may use evidence gathered by the student's teacher during the assessment preparation time, for example, draft work, to make a judgment about the student's work. This evidence must be available for quality assurance processes with the QCAA. Where the school is unable to provide any evidence of a student response gathered during the assessment preparation time, and the student is unable to provide a response to a summative internal assessment with AARA on or before the due date but has completed the required learning as outlined in the relevant syllabus or course, the school and/or student should complete an application for illness and misadventure provisions to the QCAA.

Groups of students

When a group of students is affected by an illness or adverse and unforeseen event leading up to or during the summative internal assessment schedule, or during an internal assessment session, Principal-reported AARA should be implemented to provide opportunities for students to complete the assessment. Arrangements such as comparable assessment and extensions may be considered when illness or misadventure is established.

Illness and misadventure — internal assessment

In the first instance the AARA will be dealt with by the College following QCAA guidelines. An illness and misadventure application should only be made once all Principal-reported AARA have been exhausted. Schools complete the application and provide supporting documentation via the QCAA Portal.

Illness and misadventure — external assessment

The QCAA advises students to attend every external assessment. However, the QCAA does not expect students to attend an external assessment against specific written medical advice. When students are in doubt about attendance to complete an external assessment, they should contact the school external assessment (SEA) coordinator (Assistant Principal Curriculum).

5.6 Submitting an application for illness and misadventure for external assessment

A submission for illness and misadventure may be made by a student or the school on behalf of the student or groups of students when performance in an external

assessment is affected by an illness or circumstances beyond their control, occurring in the lead up to or during the external assessment schedule, may submit an application for illness and misadventure. An illness and misadventure application cannot be made for the same condition or circumstances for which QCAA-approved AARA have been approved, unless it can be demonstrated that a significant deterioration or complication of the condition occurred that diminished the student's performance in external assessment. The QCAA will seek background information and a recommendation from the principal or the principal's delegate to verify a student's application for illness and misadventure.

5.7 Supporting documentation

To make an informed decision about an illness and misadventure application, the QCAA requires a report to be lodged 14 days prior to assessment that includes the following details:

- the illness, condition or event (including details of a diagnosis, where applicable)
- date of diagnosis, onset or occurrence
- symptoms, treatment or course of action related to the condition or event
- explanation of the probable effect of the illness, condition or event on the student's participation in the assessment
- for non-medical claims, written evidence from a relevant independent professional or other independent third party, such as a witness or police report.

5.8 Currency of supporting documentation

Supporting documentation must cover the date of the assessment for which the application is made.

5.9 Applying for Extensions for Assessment or Rescheduling Exams for Students

Unless there is evidence to support an application of AARA (including illness and misadventure), no applications for extensions for assessment or the rescheduling of examinations will be approved.

Assessment and examination dates are provided at the beginning of the year to ensure that students and parents can plan accordingly.

Appendix 1: Application and Notification Process

