



# DISABILITY PROVISIONS PROCEDURES

## INTRODUCTION

Under the Commonwealth *Disability Standards for Education Act 2005*, all education providers are required to make sure that every student with disability is able to access and participate in education on the same basis as students without disability. This includes the requirement to make or provide adjustments for the student where needed so that they have the same experience and opportunities as their peers without disability. The Standards include obligations for making reasonable adjustments to the student's learning program and /or learning environment. This includes making reasonable and appropriate disability provisions for assessment tasks and examinations to enable students with disabilities to be assessed on a fair basis. These disabilities may be of a permanent or temporary nature.

The college may approve disability examination provisions for assessment tests and examinations if a student has a disability that would, in a normal test situation, prevent them from:

- a) reading and interpreting the test questions; and/or
- b) communicating knowledge or understanding to a marker as effectively as a student without that disability.

Any student with a disability recognised in the Commonwealth *Disability Standards for Education 2005* may apply for a disability provision.

The definition of 'disability' in the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) includes:

- physical
- intellectual
- psychiatric
- sensory
- neurological, and
- learning disabilities, as well as
- physical disfigurement, and
- the presence in the body of disease-causing organisms.

Disability provisions also apply to temporary and emergency-related disabilities. A typical example of an 'emergency' is a broken arm. Students who become ill during an examination period may be eligible to make an illness/misadventure appeal rather than a disability provisions application.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide information and guidelines for teachers, parents and students about their rights and responsibilities relating to disability provisions.

Our procedures are derived from the Assessment, Certification and Examination (ACE) Manual documents from NESAC and the Department of Education. This is to ensure that:

- a) the college prepares its students for the types of provisions that they may be granted by NESAC in the HSC examination;

- b) the college, students and their caregivers are able to collect information and documentation that can support a formal application to NESAs for disability provisions.

It is to be read in conjunction with the College Year 11 and Year 12 Assessment Policy.

## **PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES**

### **1. The College complies with NESAs regulations with regard to disability provisions**

The Director is responsible for ensuring that the College Disability Provisions procedures conform with NESAs regulations and guidelines.

### **2. The Disability Provisions program is an integral part of the college assessment program**

The granting of disability provisions to individual students for internal tasks is at the discretion of the Learning Support Team.

Disability provisions may be granted for assessment tasks and examinations in Years 11 and 12.

### **3. Students and parents are informed of the grounds for disability provisions application**

Grounds for application are based on consideration of students' difficulties relating to documented disabilities that impact on their ability to be assessed on the same basis as students without that disability.

Regardless of the nature of the disability, the provisions granted will be determined solely on the evidence supplied regarding the implications of that need on test performance.

### **4. Students and parents are informed of available disability provisions**

The college's disability provisions include a reader, writer/scribe, extra time, rest breaks, small group supervision, food/drink/medication permitted in the exam room, use of Irlen glasses/transparency, particular seating or other provisions as documented and required.

Depending on the disability and medical evidence provided about the impact of that diagnosis on examination performance, rest breaks or additional time or a scribe are the possible provisions for writing difficulties. The use of a computer or laptop will only be approved by the College after this provision has been formally approved by NESAs for the HSC exams.

### **5. Students and staff are given information about the disability provisions program**

The Assistant Director and the Learning Support Teacher inform all students of the availability of disability provisions and grounds and procedures for application.

The Learning Support Team informs students of their provisions. The Learning Support Teacher informs teachers of the provisions on Sentral and in the students learning support plan.

The Learning Support Team informs students of implementation processes and their responsibilities in the process.

### **6. The college follows NESAs guidelines in the marking of tests/examinations**

No consideration, e.g. no extra marks, can be given in the marking of test/examination papers on the basis of a student's disability needs.

### **7. Procedures are in place for student applications for disability provisions**

Students or parents discuss the difficulty with the Learning Support Team in a Learning Support Meeting.

Students or parents make an application to the college outlining:

- the specific nature of the difficulty(ies);

- the disability provisions being sought;
- the test/examination situation(s) for which the disability provisions are being sought;
- the application includes appropriate supporting documentation that shows how the provisions sought will assist the student in test/examination situations.

Documentation accompanying the formal written application must follow NESAs guidelines, e.g. medical evidence.

In the case of Pathways students an application for renewal of disability provisions may be required every year and must contain updated documentation if available. This must also include updated information regarding subject selections. This is a NESAs requirement for the HSC.

Students must apply for college-based disability provisions in Year 11. Once a student has commenced the application process to NESAs in Year 12 they do not need to make a separate application for college-based disability provisions.

The granting of disability provisions by the college does not indicate that the same or any provisions will be approved by NESAs. No guarantee is made by the college as to the processes of or determinations made by NESAs.

## **8. Arrangements are in place for the administration of disability provisions for examinations**

The Learning Support Team is responsible for the processing of disability provisions, applications for college-based examinations and support for students requiring disability provisions, such as explaining provisions to the student, and determining the outcome of applications. Students applying for disability provisions and their parents/carers must attend a Learning Support Team meeting so that their needs can be discussed and appropriate support offered.

It is the Head Teacher's responsibility to ensure the student has the appropriate test/examination paper(s) for their subject areas.

It is the Head Teacher Administration's responsibility, in collaboration with the Learning Support Teacher to make timetabling and practical arrangements that facilitate disability provisions for formal assessment periods.

It is the Learning Support Teacher's responsibility to ensure that the Head Teacher Administration is supplied with the information required to facilitate disability provisions. This includes updated student lists, details of specific provisions, NESAs and ACE rules and requirements regarding the administration of various provisions.

## **9. Disability provisions are available for assessment tasks in class**

It is the Head Teacher's responsibility to coordinate approved and appropriate provisions for assessment tasks within their respective faculties.

It is the Learning Support Teacher's responsibility to ensure that the Head Teachers and class teachers are supplied with the information required to facilitate disability provisions. This includes updated student lists, details of specific provisions, NESAs and ACE rules and requirements regarding the administration of various provisions if needed. This information is stored in SharePoint.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their teachers are aware of any provisions that have been granted. They should do this in a timely manner.

## **10. Procedures for the provision of additional time and computers or laptops**

The provision of additional time by NESAs is subject to stringent requirements as, according to NESAs, the provision of additional time would benefit any student and can give students an advantage over other students rather than a fairer opportunity to perform under test conditions. In many cases, requests for additional time are declined.

It is the responsibility of parents and students applying for additional time to be aware that the College will usually grant additional time only after this provision has been granted by NESAs.

NESA states that “computers are granted to students for examinations under very stringent conditions. In many cases computer requests are declined and students are instead offered other forms of assistance such as a writer to take their dictation under separate supervision”. NESA states that, in their opinion, the use of a computer can give students an advantage over other students rather than a fairer opportunity to perform under test conditions.

It is the responsibility of parents and students applying for this provision to be aware that NESA grants the use of a computer in only a very few cases and that the College will grant the provision of a writer/scribe or rest breaks in place of a computer to help prepare students for these provisions, should the use of a computer be declined by NESA. The use of a computer or laptop will only be approved by the College after this provision has been formally approved by NESA for the HSC exams.

It is the responsibility of the Learning Support Team to inform students of their decision in this matter.

**11. Procedures are in place to allow assessment of student needs and data collection for supporting evidence for NESA applications.**

Students and parents must be aware that the College has to assess student needs, investigate the most appropriate provision and provide documentation in support of an application for Disability Provisions to NESA.

They must also be aware that procedures in Years 7-10 in other schools may not meet NESA or ACE requirements and, therefore, not be considered a reasonable adjustment in light of these requirements.

Staff will be required to make informed comments about how adjustments assist students in examination settings as part of a NESA Disability Provisions application. This means that in some cases, students are asked to sit some examinations without provisions, or trial particular provisions. This will take place in Year 11, wherever possible.

**12. Procedures and Roles/Responsibilities**

12.1 Application Procedure

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
When a disability, or possible difficulty/disability, is indicated or identified, a Learning Support Team Meeting is organised.	Learning Support Teacher
Students are made aware of available disability provisions, NESA and college requirements and application procedures.	Learning Support Team
Student submits application with supporting documentation to Learning Support Team	Student and parents or guardians
Learning Support Team considers application and makes a determination	Learning Support Team
Learning Support Team advises student of determination in writing	Learning Support Team
Learning Support Team notifies staff of provisions	Learning Support Teacher

12.2 Roles/Responsibilities during the administration of tasks/examinations

Head Teacher Administration

- arrange for appropriate rooming, supervision as required

#### Head Teachers

- coordinate disability provisions as appropriate for in class assessment tasks within their respective faculties
- provide copies of examination papers in suitable format according to specific provisions

#### Class Teachers

- provide copies of task or examination papers in suitable format according to specific provisions for in class assessments
- inform the Learning Support Teacher if a student or parent approaches them about provisions that they are not aware of or have not been granted by the college

#### Learning Support Teacher

- advise students and/or parents guardians about the provisions granted
- advises Head Teacher Administration or Head Teachers of provisions
- assist class teachers in formatting examination papers if necessary
- liaise with Assistant Director of need for readers/writers if needed

#### Students

- be aware of the provisions granted, the location and times of tasks
- discuss with their teachers any provisions granted before the day of a task where applicable
- supply writing equipment and writing paper if appropriate

#### Head Teacher Administration

- coordinate suitable people to act as readers/writers if needed

### **13. Monitoring and Review**

This procedure will be monitored annually and formally reviewed every two years by the College Learning Support Team. A copy of the principles and procedures will be made available via the college website.