

Disability provisions policy

ACE 10001

Last Updated: 15 July 2015

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) and the *Disability Standards for Education (2005)* require BOSTES to ensure that students with a disability are able to access and respond to an examination.

BOSTES may approve disability provisions for the Higher School Certificate examinations if a student has a permanent or temporary disability that would, in a normal examination situation, prevent him or her from:

1. reading the examination questions; and/or
2. communicating his or her responses.

Principals have the authority to decide on, and to implement, disability provisions for school-based assessment tasks including examinations.

Disability provisions program

ACE 10002

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Disability provisions are approved by BOSTES to provide students who have a **permanent** or **temporary** disability with practical support in the Higher School Certificate examinations.

Regardless of the nature of the disability, the provisions granted will be solely determined by the implications for the student's functioning in an examination situation.

Provisions may include Braille papers, large print papers, use of a writer, use of a reader, extension of examination time, rest breaks, small group supervision, individual supervision, permission to take medication, or other provisions as judged appropriate.

Disability provisions: areas outside BOSTES guidelines

ACE 10003

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BOSTES will not compensate students for difficulties in undertaking courses and preparing for the Higher School Certificate examinations.

Schools are responsible for any decisions made at school level to offer provisions to students with a disability in course work, assessment tasks and in-school tests. BOSTES can offer no guarantee that school-determined provisions will apply in the Higher School Certificate examinations, as each application is individually assessed to ensure consistency and equity.

BOSTES does not consider the lack of familiarity with the English language to be a disability in this context. Therefore, provisions such as the use of an English/foreign language dictionary will not be approved for students disadvantaged solely because of lack of familiarity with the English language.

Where a student has a condition that might manifest itself during an examination session (eg epilepsy or asthma), the occurrence of an episode during the examination will be covered by the illness/misadventure provisions.

Students for whom disability provisions are approved may not be eligible for illness/misadventure consideration for the same condition unless they experience a deterioration or variation in their condition during the actual examinations.

For further information on policies and procedures to be followed in the case of students affected by illness or misadventure during the Higher School Certificate examinations see:

ACE 11002 Higher School Certificate illness/misadventure applications

ACE 11003 Higher School Certificate illness/misadventure applications – procedures for lodging an application

ACE 11004 Higher School Certificate illness/misadventure applications – grounds for appeal

Disability provisions: application procedures

ACE 10004

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All applications for disability provisions and subsequent appeals must be submitted online.

Applications are lodged and decisions reported through Schools Online . Schools should note the due date for applications is the last day of Term 1. The late submission of a disability provisions application may disadvantage the student.

Emergency applications

During the examination period, emergency applications may be made by telephoning the Student Support Services branch at BOSTES. An application supported by documentary evidence should be submitted immediately afterwards.

Applications will be considered on the basis of individual need.

It is possible that provisions made by a school during its own tests will not meet BOSTES criteria for the Higher School Certificate examinations. Details of such provisions are requested on the application form.

BOSTES decisions

The decision on each application will be advised to the **school** through Schools Online , to the **student** (via the **school**) and to the **presiding officer**.

If a request for disability provisions is declined, the school may appeal on behalf of the student(s). Appeals should be made within 14 days of receiving the BOSTES decision.

Disability provisions: evidence

ACE 10005

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When an application is submitted, **evidence** must be included indicating the precise nature of the disability and the consequent effect on examination performance.

A student with a disability may be affected in a variety of ways in an examination. For example:

1. difficulty in reading and comprehending written questions
2. severe spelling difficulty which impedes communication
3. difficulty expressing thoughts in writing
4. illegible or extremely slow writing.

See Disability provisions case studies for information on examples of difficulties in examinations, possible provisions and evidence required in an application for disability provisions.

Disability provisions: small group and individual supervision

ACE 10009

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Some disability provisions may require the student to sit the examination separately from the main group. In these cases, small group supervision in a separate room will be approved. In other cases, individual supervision may be approved to address the student's examination needs.

The following arrangements, where considered appropriate, may be followed for the supervision of such students.

1. Students approved ***extra time*** or ***rest breaks*** may be seated together in the same room. This would be appropriate where students have been approved similar amounts of additional time. Small group supervision will be approved for these students.
Students approved additional time may elect to be seated at the back of the examination hall. The students must be seated in such a way that there is minimal disruption when other students from the main body of the hall leave at the end of an examination.
2. Students approved ***a reader and/or a writer*** should be accommodated together. The room must be large enough, however, to ensure that discussions between the reader/writer and the student cannot be heard by the other student(s) undertaking the examination in that room. These students will be approved small group supervision.
3. Students approved the ***use of a personal computer*** should be seated in one room, providing the room size allows each student to be seated in an isolated area.