

AARA

Access Arrangements and Reasonable
Adjustments Policy (Version 2.0, 1/8/2024)



SHALOM
COLLEGE
PROVIDING OUTSTANDING FUTURES

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Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA) Year 11 and 12

The Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) recognises that some students have disability, impairment and/or medical conditions, or experience other circumstances that may be a barrier to their performance in assessment. *Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (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 categories:

- Long-term and chronic conditions
- Short-term conditions and temporary injuries
- Illness and misadventure.

The QCAA uses four broad disability categories for AARA:

- cognitive
- physical
- sensory
- social/emotional.

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.

QCAA guidelines stipulate that schools make decisions about AARA for **Unit 1 and Unit 2**. Schools ensure that for Essential, Applied and General subjects, the AARA implemented for an eligible student for assessment are aligned to those that are available for summative assessment in Units 3 and 4. The provision of AARA for assessment in Units 1 and 2 by a school is not a guarantee that students will be provided the same access or the same adjustments for assessment in **Unit 3 and Unit 4**. This is determined by QCAA.

Documentation is required to support all AARA applications.

In approving AARA, a Principal or Principal's delegate must:

- be reasonably satisfied that the need for the AARA exists based on the functional impact on that individual student
- be able to provide evidence to justify the decision.

Ineligibility

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, driving lessons, sporting events, concerts, family formal photos)
- matters that the school could have avoided (e.g. incorrect enrolment in a subject).

Schools manage other situations where students are not eligible for AARA, such as school-approved absences for assessment or student transfers.

Reporting and approving processes

Process for Unit 1 and Unit 2 (Principal-reported AARA)

- Review student eligibility for AARA
- Gather information
- Consider upcoming formative internal assessment
- Identify AARA required
- Confirm arrangements with students, parents/carers and staff
- Administer assessment, enact AARA
- Monitor AARA effectiveness

Process for Unit 3 and Unit 4 (Principal-reported and QCAA-approved AARA)

- Review student eligibility for AARA
- Gather information and supporting documentation
- Consider upcoming summative internal assessment and external assessment
- Identify AARA required

Principal-reported AARA

- Confirm arrangements with students, parents/carers and staff
- Report to QCAA of AARA enacted
- Retain supporting documentation
- Administer assessment, enact AARA
- Monitor AARA effectiveness

QCAA-approved AARA

- Submit application for QCAA-approved AARA
- QCAA considers applications
- QCAA communicates decision to school
- Confirm arrangements with students, parents/carers and staff

Adjustments requiring QCAA approval (Unit 3 and Unit 4)

Type of assessment	Adjustment
Summative assessment — internal examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extra time • rest breaks
Summative external assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extra time • rest breaks • format of papers • assistance • use of a computer • assistance technology • a reader • a scribe • variation to venue (changes to rooms should be recorded) • any adjustments not identified as principal-reported.

Supporting Documentation and Evidence

School statement

A school statement must be submitted with all applications for QCAA-approved AARA. It provides, for each student requiring AARA:

- a detailed overview of the observed impact of the student's disability and/or medical condition on the student's functioning during timed assessment
- a description of how the disability, impairment and/or medical condition is a barrier to the student's access to the assessment and/or to the student's ability to communicate a response to assessment
- a list of the student's previous use of AARA in the school environment and the effectiveness of each AARA in removing barriers for the student in accessing assessment and demonstrating what they know and can do. Students should have AARA in place during teaching and learning for the disability, impairment and/or medical condition. The AARA that are in place for teaching and learning may not be appropriate for assessment.

The school statement should be prepared by the staff member/s most familiar with the needs of the student in relation to their disability, impairment and/or medical condition.

Applications for QCAA-approved AARA that are submitted by the main learning provider without an appropriate school statement will be declined until the appropriate evidence is provided.

Student statement (optional)

The student may choose to submit a statement with the application for QCAA-approved AARA about how their disability, impairment and/or medical condition affects them in assessment. However, the absence of a student statement does not disadvantage an AARA application.

Medical report

Applications for QCAA-approved AARA require the submission of a medical report that provides:

- diagnosis of disability and/or medical condition
- date of diagnosis
- date of occurrence or onset of the disability and/or medical condition
- symptoms, treatment or course of action related to the disability and/or medical condition
- information about how the diagnosed disability, impairment and/or medical condition affects the student participating in assessment, particularly timed assessment when considering external assessment
- professional recommendations regarding AARA.

The medical report may be completed by a relevant practitioner who is a general practitioner (GP), medical specialist, or psychologist registered under the *Health Practitioner Regulation Act 2010* (Qld), and who is not related to the student or employed by the school. Details of the diagnosis should be written by the practitioner who is best placed professionally to make the diagnosis.

The QCAA provides a medical report template which may be used to complete the report but is not compulsory, that is, medical reports may use a different format, as long as they provide the required details. Furthermore, applications may not be medical in nature, in which case no medical report is needed. Schools contact the QCAA for advice if a student is unable to provide a medical report.

Evidence of diagnosed disability

When a student has been a diagnosed disability a medical report or letter should be provided to the school.

A Social Emotional related diagnosis needs to be reviewed every six months and supporting medical letter provided.

Other evidence

For eligible students, supporting documentation may also include:

- teacher observations
- results from any standardised academic testing
- individual learning plans
- consultation/meeting records.

Where the condition is not medical, students may supply other relevant evidence including:

- police reports
- other government departments' reports
- official notices.

Schools will contact QCAA for further advice where the evidence requirements cannot be met due to extenuating circumstances.

For principal-reported AARA, schools are required to keep supporting documentation at the school and may be required to supply the documentation as part of the quality assurance processes for AARA or as part of a review.

Currency of supporting documentation

School statements should be current — they should be written at the time the application for AARA is submitted. The currency of supporting medical documentation depends on the diagnosed disability, impairment and/or medical condition.

Long-term conditions that are unlikely to improve over time

Except in exceptional circumstances, and with the prior written agreement of the QCAA, for long-term conditions medical documentation must be **dated no earlier than 1 January of the year of the student's Year 10 enrolment**. This means that from the perspective of their Year 12 external assessment schedule, **the maximum age of supporting medical documentation allowable is two years and 10 months**.

Where a diagnosis has been made **before Year 10**, an **update only is required**. This may be substantiated by a medical practitioner, general practitioner, paediatrician, or other relevant allied health provider.

Where an application has been submitted in the case of a student with a long-term condition and the condition deteriorates subsequent to the application decision, a further application may be submitted to provide updated information regarding the student's condition. It must include a medical report containing all relevant and current adjustments recommended by the relevant practitioner.

Short-term conditions or temporary injuries

Short-term conditions may improve or deteriorate over time depending on a range of influences and factors.

Except in exceptional circumstances, and with the prior written agreement of the QCAA, supporting medical documentation for short-term conditions or temporary injuries, including mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression, must satisfy the following time specifications.

- Summative internal assessments in all subjects and Short Courses: medical documentation must be **dated within the preceding six months of the relevant Unit 3 or 4 assessment** event
- Summative external assessments or the Senior External Examination: medical documentation **must be dated no earlier than 30 April of the assessment year**. The QCAA may require an updated medical report closer to date of the scheduled assessment.

Illness and Misadventure

To make an informed decision about an illness and misadventure application for medical reasons, the QCAA requires a report from an independent health professional 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.

Illness and misadventure applications for non-medical reasons, require written evidence from a relevant independent professional or other independent third party, such as a social worker, member of the clergy, police officer, solicitor or funeral director. In all circumstances, the person providing the supporting documentation must have specific knowledge of the illness, injury, personal trauma or serious intervening event, and must not have a close personal relationship with, or be related to, the student.

Summary of documentation requirements for QCAA-approved AARA

Category	Medical report*	Other
Long-term conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dated no earlier than Year 10 • temporary conditions: No earlier than 30 April of the assessment year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current school statement
Short-term conditions or temporary injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dated within the preceding six months of internal assessment • dated no earlier than 30 April for external assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current school statement
Category	Medical report*	Other
Illness and misadventure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • covering the date of assessment for which the application is made <p>*Required if the application is due to a medical condition.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current school statement • relevant evidence where the condition is not medical, e.g. police report, official notices or other.

Note: There is no requirement to upload supporting documentation for principal-reported AARA.

Timelines for Principal-Reported and QCAA Approved AARA

Type of AARA	Unit 3 and 4 General subjects — internal assessments	Unit 3 and 4 General subjects - external assessments
Alternative format papers, e.g. braille, large print	Due dates are determined by the school.	<p>Applications for Phase 1 and 2 CIA are due by the end of Unit 2.</p> <p>All other applications for alternative format papers are due by the end of February in the summative year (including Phase 3 and 4 CIA).</p> <p>For General (Senior External Examination) subjects, contact the QCAA AARA Unit as soon as possible after registration. Late applications may not be possible, as significant advance notice is required for design and production.</p>
QCAA-approved AARA (including in combination with principal-reported AARA)	<p>For existing long-term and chronic conditions — applications are due by completion of Units 1 and 2.</p> <p>For all others, applications are due as soon as possible before the assessment event.</p>	<p>For existing long-term and chronic conditions — applications are due by the end of Term 1 in the summative year.</p> <p>For short-term conditions or temporary injuries that are unlikely to resolve before mid-October — applications are due by the end of Week 5 Term 3 in the summative year.</p> <p>AARA applications for General (Senior External Examination) subjects close in August on the date published in by QCAA.</p>
Principal-reported AARA only	Notification is due before the relevant confirmation event	Notification is due by the end of Term 3 in the summative assessment year.
Illness and misadventure	Apply principal-reported AARA before contacting the QCAA.	Contact the QCAA from 14 days before the start of the assessment period to 7 days after the assessment.

Possible Access Arrangement and Reasonable Adjustments

AARA	Description of possible adjustments to assessment or conditions	Approval Type	
		Summative internal assessment	Summative external assessment
Alternative format papers	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • braille • A4 to A3 enlargement • electronic format • large print papers, e.g. N18, N24, • black-and-white materials 	Principal reported	QCAA-approved
Assistance	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a teacher aide assisting with manipulation of equipment and other practical tasks • a supervisor using the student's name in reading assessment instructions, providing support and reassurance, and prompting the student to start or continue writing/ undertaking the assessment task. 	Principal reported	QCAA-approved
Assistive technology	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amplification system • speech-to-text application • magnification application • screen readers • scanning pens • accessible hardware. <p>The types of assistive technology that the student may use to complete assessment will depend on variable factors, including the nature and severity of the student's disability and/or impairment and the functional impact related to the type and purpose of the assessment instrument.</p>	Principal reported	QCAA-approved
Bite-sized food	The student may take a sufficient quantity of bite-sized food in a clear container into the assessment room. Food must be unobtrusive in nature, i.e. not crunchy, strong-smelling or wrapped in noisy packaging.	Principal reported	Principal reported
Comparable assessment	An alternative comparable assessment that has not previously been administered to students in the subject cohort, may be administered on a different date.	Principal reported	Not applicable
Computer	Desktop computer or laptop computer with an approved software application.		QCAA-approved
Drink	A drink, other than water, that is required for a medical reason into the assessment room in a clear, unlabelled bottle.	Principal reported	Principal reported
Diabetes management	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bite-sized food, drink • blood-glucose monitoring equipment • rest breaks to eat, measure blood glucose level or access toilet facilities • medication • varied seating and rest time for the practical aspects of managing the condition. 	Principal reported	Principal reported

Extension	An extension to the due date for submission or completion of an: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extended response project or • performance or non-examination. 	Principal reported	Not applicable
Extra time	Additional working time at the rate of five minutes per half hour of examination assessment time.	QCAA-approved	QCAA-approved
Individual instructions	A clean, unannotated copy of the written instructions. The written instructions will be available for external assessment as a PDF document via the QCAA Portal for each subject. Schools should provide this document to eligible students.	Principal reported	Principal reported
Medication	Only prescribed medication may be taken into the assessment room in a clear container.	Principal reported	Principal reported
Physical equipment and environment	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specialised desk or chair • cushion or pillow • crutches • heat or cold pack • towel • lighting • ventilation • temperature • other physical aid. 	Principal reported <i>Not reportable as AARA if this is approved equipment for the assessment</i>	Principal reported
Reader	A reader that reads the assessment or the student's response aloud as often as the student requests.	Principal reported	QCAA-approved
Rest breaks	Time to rest at the rate of five minutes per half hour of assessment time, taken at any time during the assessment.	QCAA-approved	QCAA-approved
Scribe	Work with someone who transcribes the student's verbal response or directions during the assessment.	Principal reported	QCAA-approved
Varied seating	Varied seating, if needed, is determined by the school external assessment coordinator. Options include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • single student supervision (separate from the main assessment room at the same assessment venue, e.g. if using a reader) • small group supervision (separate from the main assessment room at the same assessment venue, e.g. the group of students needs rest breaks) • seated at the back, front or side of the main assessment room, e.g. a student with a back injury is seated at the back so that they can stand periodically. 	Principal reported	Principal reported
Variation to venue	Changes to the assessment venue or assessment room may be made due to severe weather conditions or other incidents.	Principal reported	QCAA-approved
Vision aids	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coloured transparency overlay • different lighting • other vision aids. 	Principal reported	Principal reported

AARA Application Process for Years 11 & 12

It is a **student and parent responsibility** to apply for Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA) should they require support provisions when undertaking assessment in Years 11 & 12. An AARA application involves the following process:

STEP 1: Identify the type of AARA you are applying for:

- Long-term and chronic conditions
- Short-term conditions and temporary injuries
- Illness and misadventure

STEP 2: Identify category of AARA you are applying for (see table on next page)

STEP 3: Identify adjustments you are applying for

STEP 4: Gather required documentation for AARA application

All AARA applications require documentation. Check the supporting documentation and evidence section (page 4) and currency of required documentation (pages 6-7).

STEP 5: Submit documentation

- Applications for students who have a long-term and/or chronic conditions will be actioned by the Student Services Faculty in consultation with the student and parent. Applications are submitted to the **Dean of Inclusive Learning** – Mrs Keryn Staley (Keryn_Staley@shalomcollege.com).
- Applications for students who have short-term, temporary injuries or illness and misadventure will submit their application to the **Dean of Senior School** – Mrs Patricia Allen (patricia_allen@shalomcollege.com)

On receiving a decision for an application for QCAA-approved AARA, Shalom College staff will:

- inform students and carers of the outcome of the application
- notify relevant teachers and support staff of AARA provisions to be implemented; and
- quality assure that approved AARA is being implemented

Should students and carers have any questions or require further assistance in relation to Access Arrangement and Reasonable Adjustments or making an AARA application, please contact any of the following staff:

- Dean of Senior School – Patricia_allen@shalomcollege.com
- Dean of Inclusive Learning – Keryn_staley@shalomcollege.com
- Assistant Principal – Curriculum – Gail_norris@shalomcollege.com

TYPES OF AARA CATEGORIES

COGNITIVE	PHYSICAL	SENSORY	SOCIAL/ EMOTIONAL
Auditory Processing Disorder (APD)	Anaphylaxis	Hearing Impairment (HI)	General Anxiety Disorder (GAD)
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	Arthritis	Colour Vision Deficiency	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
Attention Deficit Disorder (Inattentive type ADD)	Asthma	Vision Impairment (VI)	Attention Deficit Disorder (Inattentive type ADD)
Central Auditory Processing Difficulties (CAPD)	Broken Arm/Leg		
Dyscalculia	Cerebral Palsy	Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD)	Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
Dysgraphia	Chronic Fatigue		Depression
Dyslexia	Diabetes		Major Depressive Disorder
Executive Functioning Disorder (EFD)	Epilepsy		Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
Fatigue due to medical cognition	Hearing Impairment (HI)		
Intellectual Disability (ID)	Low Muscle Tone		
Specific Learning Disorder (SLD)	Multiple Sclerosis (MS)		
Speech Language Impairment (SLI)	Muscular Dystrophy		
	Spina Bifida		
	Quadriplegia		
	Vision Impairment (VI)		

Short-term applications (maximum 2 months)

Short term requests (eg. Extension or exam reschedule):		Short term requests (eg. Extension or exam reschedule):	
Subject 1:		Subject 2:	
Task:		Task:	
Date due/scheduled:		Date due/scheduled:	
New date approved:		New date approved:	

Other Requests:

Parent Signature

Dean of Senior School Signature

Long-term applications

Subject/s:	Adjustment/s:

Parent Signature

Student Signature

Dean of Inclusive Learning Signature

Dean of Senior School Signature

Office Use Only

Application complete: YES / NO	Principal Approved / QCAA Approved
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Parent, student, HOD informed of decision (in writing) YES / NO	AARA recorded on Spreadsheet: YES / NO
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Additional notes: