

SPECIAL PROVISIONS IN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

This information sheet explains special provisions at Stage 1 and Stage 2.

The SACE Board policy on special provisions in curriculum and assessment is available on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au).

Special provisions identify variations to curriculum and assessment for eligible students at Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the SACE. They are available to eligible students for both school assessments and external assessments.

Special provisions at Stage 1 are determined by the school in accordance with the SACE Board policy on special provisions.

Application to the SACE Board is required only for Stage 2 external assessments.

The SACE Board will provide students with appropriate, fair, and reasonable variations when their capacity to participate in an assessment is adversely affected in a significant way by illness, impairment, or personal circumstances. In making decisions, the SACE Board and the school must consider a range of evidence.

A recommendation or diagnosis from a professional does not automatically entitle the student to special provisions. The prime consideration is the impact of the student's impairment, illness, or circumstances on his or her capacity to participate in an assessment. As such, the most appropriate evidence consists of observations of the student and samples of the student's work under assessment conditions.

Special provisions cannot be used to compensate for learning that has not occurred. A student cannot be granted exemption from the learning requirements of a subject outline, or be granted exemption from any of the SACE requirements. However, in some cases, an alternative assessment may be used to collect appropriate evidence of learning against the requirements specified in the subject outline.

The same learning requirements and performance standards are applied to all students who undertake a subject, whether or not they are granted special provisions. Students who are eligible for special provisions are provided with variations to enable them to participate in external assessments. Performance standards are not adjusted to suit particular students.

Special provisions cannot be granted retrospectively. For example, special provisions cannot be applied for after the release of the results for a school year.

Approval for special provisions can be granted only for the current calendar year; a new application is required each year. Approval granted in one year should not be taken to infer that approval will be granted in subsequent years.

GROUNDINGS FOR GRANTING SPECIAL PROVISIONS

The grounds for which special provisions can be granted are:

- physical disability (e.g. multiple sclerosis, paraplegia, muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy)
- vision impairment (e.g. cataracts, glaucoma, abnormal colour vision, double vision)
- hearing impairment (e.g. deafness)
- medical condition (e.g. illness, chronic fatigue syndrome, glandular fever, diabetes, Crohn's disease, epilepsy, wrist injury)

- psychological illness (e.g. depression, anxiety disorder, Asperger's syndrome, attention deficit disorder, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, anorexia nervosa)
- learning disability ('a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction'*). Students with a learning disability have developmental and academic skills significantly below expectation for their grade level. The disabilities are presumed to be intrinsic to the individual and long term, but they are not considered to be the direct result of intellectual disability, physical and sensory impairments, or emotional difficulties; neither do they appear to derive directly from inadequate environmental experiences or lack of appropriate educational experiences. As a result of the learning disability, the student has reading or writing skills that are substantially below that expected of a student studying Stage 1 or Stage 2)
- misadventure (an incident beyond the student's control, such as a death in the family, a car accident, artwork that is stolen or damaged before final moderation, or a fire alarm during an examination)
- personal circumstances (e.g. family responsibilities, cultural obligations).

The following are *not* acceptable grounds for granting special provisions:

- Unfamiliarity with the English language.
- Teacher absence or other teacher-related difficulties.
- Matters that could have been avoided by the student (e.g. misreading an examination timetable, misreading instructions in examinations).
- Matters of the student's own choosing (e.g. family holidays, part-time employment).
- Matters that could have been avoided by the school (e.g. incorrect enrolment in a subject).

EVIDENCE REQUIRED

Eligibility for special provisions is based on evidence. The evidence required to establish the grounds for special provisions will vary, but will always include information from the student and the school. Independent evidence may be required from professionals or community members. In all cases the school must provide evidence of the impact of the illness, impairment, or personal circumstances on the student's ability to participate in an assessment. The responsibility for providing evidence rests with the student.

CATEGORIES OF SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Refer to the information sheets listed below for information on the different categories of special provisions:

- External assessment variations. See Information Sheet 37/12 and Information Sheet 38/12.
- Misadventure. See Information Sheet 39/12.
- Performance assessment variations. See Information Sheet 37/12.
- Personal circumstances. See Information Sheet 40/12.
- School assessment variations. See Information Sheet 41/12.
- Use of the moderated predicted examination result. See Information Sheet 42/12.

* *Disability Standards for Education 2005*, Attorney-General's Department, p. 7.