



**Catholic Schools Office
Diocese of Lismore**

**DISABILITY EXAMINATION PROVISIONS
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

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A. INTRODUCTION

Secondary schools are encouraged to write the decision processes and procedures regarding disability examination provisions during in school and standardised examination periods. Secondary schools must strive to identify those students who are prevented from demonstrating their skills and knowledge in examinations. The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability Standards for Education (2005)* require schools to ensure that students with a disability are able to access and respond to an examination. An essential consideration for schools is the principle of 'reasonable adjustment'.

It is recommended that your school based guidelines are reviewed and written in consultation with key stake holders such as the school principal, Leader of Curriculum, Additional Needs Teacher, and representatives from the Leaders of Subjects and class teachers.

Transparency and accountability are two important terms to consider when reviewing your current practices.

Transparency, with regards to disability provisions, refers to the extent in which all stake holders can understand the procedures followed by the school. It requires that school principals, teachers, parents, and students have access to the procedures, that they are followed and universally administered.

Accountability in your procedures refers to your guidelines having a clear specification of who is accountable to whom and for what actions. This refers to who is responsible for identifying students, collecting documentation, notification and supervision of exams.

B. REVIEWING PROCEDURES

Reviewing the school's current procedures and documentation is an appropriate starting point. A review could be conducted involving all teaching staff or a group of teachers. It is recommended that the student voice be included in the review process. Disability provisions are a service offered to students – their opinion of procedures and practices could give valuable information to improving the school's procedures.

Two sample documents are provided in *Appendix 1*.

C. RATIONALE

It is recommended that you work with a group of staff and write a rationale regarding why your school provides Disability Provisions.

Below is an example.

The college supports students by providing Disability Provisions for those students who are unable to access and participate in examinations and assessment tasks without adjustments.

Disability provisions are practical arrangements designed to assist students who couldn't otherwise make a fair attempt to show what they know in an examination setting. The [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#), issued under the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act, outlines the obligations of education and training providers to ensure that students with disabilities are able to access and participate in education without experiencing discrimination. Schools need to assess their students' examination needs and provide appropriate provisions.

The college is responsible for determining and approving disability provisions for all school based assessment tasks. The principal has the authority to decide on, and implement,

disability provisions for school-based assessment tasks including examinations. The Board of Studies determines Disability provisions for the Higher School Certificate (HSC) examinations only.

Students and parents/caregivers are advised that there is no guarantee the Board of Studies will grant the same provisions as those given at the college level in the HSC. The college carefully considers all applications and will consider the fact that not offering provisions that students are likely to be granted for the HSC could be discriminatory but allowing students provisions that they are unlikely to be approved for the HSC may unfairly raise expectations.

Therefore, it is important that each student's need to access disability provisions is investigated and reviewed throughout their years at secondary school. The disability provisions granted by the college are solely determined by how the student's exam performance is affected.

Key factors in determining disability provisions at the college are:

- *Every effort should be made to provide reasonable adjustments and access arrangements to a student with a disability needing such adjustments.*
- *The same academic standards are applied to all students.*
- *Provisions and access arrangements are made without giving an unfair advantage.*

The college will ensure that the information provided to students, teachers, and families is relevant and up-to-date. For example the school will follow the guidelines appropriate to the year of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in Years 7 and 9.

D. DECISION MAKING FRAMEWORK

School guidelines should include a decision making framework. A decision making framework will guide the college staff in the delivery of disability provisions. It is a process that the college will follow for each student in determining whether they can access the service. Throughout the process it is important that the college documents the decisions that are made. A framework is essential in meeting the principles of transparency and accountability.

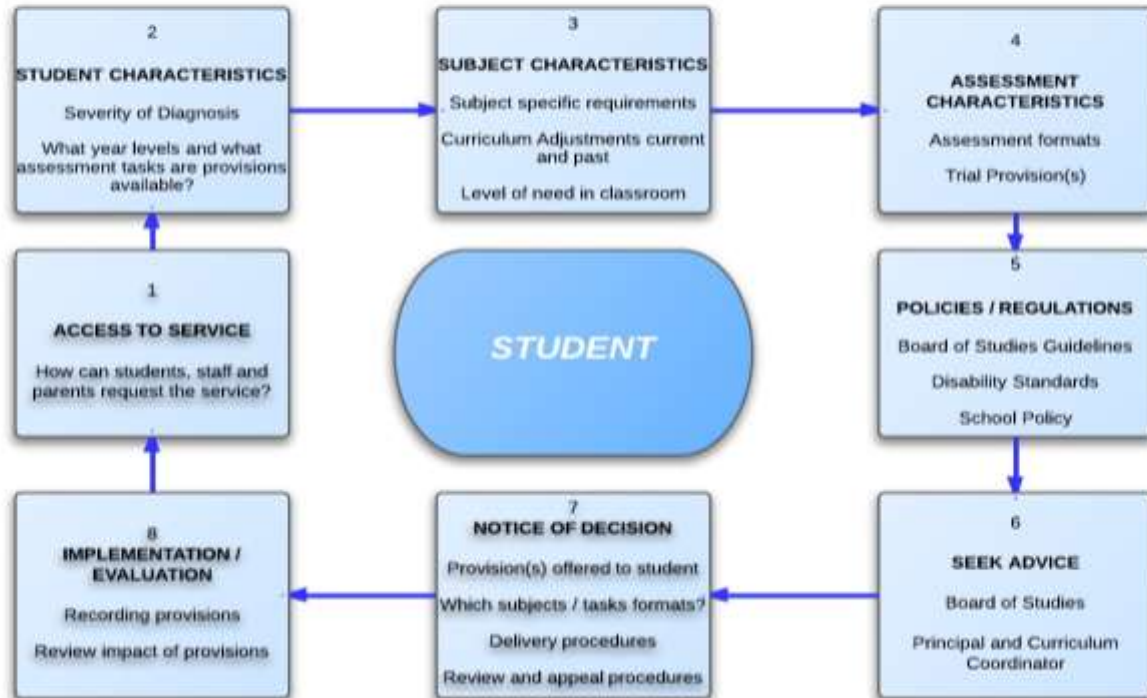
An example of the framework is displayed on the page below. Each section has a series of questions that the college can respond to. It is important that this framework expresses the procedures at your school – no two schools will be alike in how they assess, deliver and evaluate disability provisions.

The framework involves:

1. Access to the Service
2. Student Characteristics
3. Subject Characteristics
4. Assessment Characteristics
5. Policies / Regulations
6. Seek Advice
7. Notice of Decision
8. Evaluation

An example of what could be written that clearly states the schools decision process is provided as a guide.

DECISION MAKING FRAMEWORK - DISABILITY PROVISIONS



The following sections are questions that your review committee may like to answer. Once answered, a response is written to explain the process for discerning special provisions. A sample response is given for each section.

1. ACCESS TO SERVICE

QUESTIONS:

How do students / parents / teachers request disability provisions in your school?

How do you advertise the service?

What year levels, and for what assessment tasks are provisions available?

Sample Response: At the college students in Years 7 to 12 are able to access the disability provision service for school based and external examinations. At the start and end of each school year the service is advertised in the school newsletter. Parents and students are able to contact the Additional Needs Teacher for further information. Students, parents/caregivers can apply for access to disability provisions for examinations at the college through a number of avenues. They may approach the Additional Needs Teacher, class teacher or year coordinator requesting support. Class teachers are also made aware on how to identify students who may potentially need disability provisions. All cases are examined and the needs of each student are investigated.

2. STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

QUESTIONS:

What is the student's diagnosis and the severity of the diagnosis on the student's functioning?

What standardised assessment tools are used in your school?

How is evidence collected on the impact of the diagnosis on classwork and assessment tasks?

How are students included in the decision process?

Sample Response: A variety of documentation is required to investigate if the student requires disability provisions. For students with a medical condition a letter from a GP, psychologist, occupational therapist is required. A sample of the student's work is collected and information gathered from the class teacher. The impact of attempting a task in each specific subject without disability provisions is investigated with the student.

For students with literacy difficulties a standardised assessment tool, the Neale Analysis of Reading Ability 3rd Edition (1999) is used. Any student who receives a Reading Age above 13 years will not receive a reader no matter what year level they are in. At the college, a student will be considered for a reader if their accuracy and rate is more than 3.5 years below age appropriate. The South Australian Spelling Test and writing samples will be used to determine if the student requires a scribe for specific assessment tasks. A student may require a writer for a specific assessment task if they are unable to access the task.

In some cases a student may be able to use a computer for assessment tasks but this decision will be made in consultation with an occupational therapist, Leader of Curriculum and the Additional Needs Teacher.

Below is a table with the minimum documentation that the college requires when reviewing the student's access to disability provisions. The minimum documentation requirements are based on what is recommended in the Assessment, Certification and Examination (ACE) Manual.

MINIMUM DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS TABLE

Learning Difficulties

Difficulty/Impairment in Examination	Minimum Documentation
Difficulty in reading and comprehending the written word <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • slow reading speed • low level of reading accuracy • poor comprehension 	Current individual reading test results Essays Teacher comments
Slow writing rate	Essays Teacher comments
Severe spelling difficulty that impedes communication	Spelling test results Essays Teacher comments
Illegible handwriting	Essays Teacher comments

Medical Difficulties

Difficulty/Impairment in Examination	Minimum Documentation
<p>Hand/arm Difficulty with writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discomfort/pain prevents writing, or cast etc reduces mobility • excessive fatigue of hand 	<p>Current medical report Two timed handwritten essays One timed typed essay (if a PC is requested) Teacher comments</p>
<p>Chronic fatigue syndrome/ME cases Tiredness/inability to concentrate due to illness, eg chronic fatigue syndrome, post-viral syndrome, ME, glandular fever</p>	<p>Medical report Teacher comments should include number of days absent due to illness Teacher comments</p>
<p>Head injury sustained within the past three years Mental processing difficulty or slowness</p> <p>Head injury sustained more than three years ago Refer to Learning Difficulties (previous page) for possible provisions and minimum documentation</p>	<p>Medical report Teacher comments</p>
<p>Diabetes Need to monitor blood sugar</p>	<p>Medical report Teacher comments If applicable, specific reference should be made to the need for toilet breaks</p>
<p>Epilepsy May suffer from epileptic seizure during examinations</p>	<p>Medical report Teacher comments</p>
<p>ADD/ADHD Difficulty with focusing and impulse control</p>	<p>Medical report Teacher comments</p>
<p>Back injury Discomfort/pain due to back injury, significant pain after prolonged sitting</p>	<p>Medical report Teacher comments</p>
<p>Pregnancy In hospital for birth Breastfeeding</p>	<p>Medical report Expected date of delivery must be included Teacher comments</p>
<p>Psychological Anxiety preventing performance in a group situation</p>	<p>Psychological or psychiatric report, GP medical report Teacher comments</p>

Autistic Spectrum Disorder Behavioural difficulties preventing performance in a group situation	Specialist medical report Detailed teacher comments
Depression/Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Difficulty with cognition and/or concentration	Psychological or psychiatric report Teacher comments
Medication Change in medication which causes an inability to concentrate, drowsiness during exam	Medical report Teacher comments
Chronic physical difficulties Paraplegia, muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy etc	Medical report Teacher comments
Infectious disease Chicken pox, measles, glandular fever etc	Medical report Teacher comments

Hearing Difficulties

Difficulty/Impairment in Examination	Minimum Documentation
Mild to moderate hearing loss Difficulty hearing and understanding vocal instructions	Unaided audiogram and report Teacher comments
Severe to profound deafness Difficulty conceptualising from the written word	Unaided audiogram and report Teacher comments

Vision Difficulties

Difficulty/Impairment in Examination	Minimum Documentation
Vision impairment Difficulty in reading standard print and interpreting stimulus resource material	Medical/vision report Audio/vision/tactile efficiency profile Teacher comments
Difficulty seeing exam text Requires braille	Medical/vision report Audio/vision/tactile efficiency profile Teacher comments
Difficulty with light Sensitivity to white paper	Medical/vision report (evidence of scotopic sensitivity is required) Teacher comments

Source: <http://ace.bos.nsw.edu.au/disability-provisions>

3. SUBJECT / ASSESSMENT CHARACTERISTICS

SUBJECT QUESTIONS:

What are the subject specific requirements of the courses that the student is attempting?

What tasks is the student finding difficult in the classroom and assessment tasks?

What curriculum adjustments are being implemented? How have these adjustments supported the student?

ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS:

What will be the assessment formats of the courses that the student is attempting?

Will the student require provisions for all formats of assessments?

If needed trial, a provision and keep a record of the students results with and without the provision. Consulting with the student is an important step that must be included. Discuss with the student how they feel they are disadvantaged. Recommended questions:

- When was the last time you did not finish an exam in time? What exam was it?
- Are there words that you cannot read in your exam papers? If so, which exams were they?
- Did you ever get a reader/ writer in primary school assessment tasks?
- How do you feel you are disadvantaged by your spelling?

Each subject that the student would like to access disability provisions is reviewed. The Additional Needs Teacher will collate information regarding the curriculum adjustments and the student's progress. Areas to be investigated may include; can the student attempt class tasks, do they finish their work on time, does the student avoid tasks. Also are there tasks that the student is able to attempt successfully without adjustments?

In consultation with the Leader of Subject and class teacher the assessment schedule for the student will be discussed. A decision will be made as to which assessment tasks it is likely that the student will need disability provisions. The student may be able to attempt some of the tasks without provisions.

4. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Are there any current policies/procedures that will guide or inform provisions provided to students?

Sample Response: The college is guided in all decisions by the procedures regarding disability provisions in the Assessment, Certification and Examination (ACE) Manual. The manual outlines specific difficulties, possible provisions and minimum documentation required. In all decisions the college considers the following fact - not offering provisions to students who are likely to be granted by the Board of Studies for the HSC could be discriminatory but allowing students provisions that are unlikely to be approved by the Board for the HSC may unfairly raise expectations.

The college will access up-to-date information regarding disability provisions in the HSC from the Board of Studies website.

The college will be guided by specific guidelines regarding external assessments such as the NAPLAN. The NAPLAN assessment has specified procedures regarding who can assess special provisions and how they are to be delivered. The use of disability provisions in the NAPLAN is different to other examinations such as the HSC. The college will access up-to-date information regarding disability provisions in the NAPLAN from the ACARA website.

5. SEEK ADVICE

Who does the College seek assistance from regarding special provisions?

Sample Response: If the college is unsure about any decision throughout the process a representative such as the Additional Needs Teacher or Leader of Curriculum will contact the Board of Studies – Student Support Services Branch for advice. This advice will be documented and dated in the student's file. The college may also seek advice from the additional needs officer or other secondary schools who have followed a decision making process for a student with a similar disability. Such advice can be valuable for the school when collating information for applications to the Board of Studies. The college principal will be involved in the decision as to whether advice should be sort.

6. NOTICE OF DECISION

How do we communicate our decisions?

Following the decision making model the school will then in writing state the provision/s to be offered to the student. A parent may appeal the decision and it is therefore important that you follow your guidelines and collect data to validate your decision.

The decision will include:

- What provision/s are offered
- What subjects / assessment formats
- Delivery procedures
- Review procedures
- Grievance procedures

If the student does not wish to use the provisions provided it is recommended that you send a letter to the parents.

Sample Response: When the student's needs have been investigated the outcome will be provided in writing to the student and parent/ caregivers. The letter will outline what provisions will be offered to the student and what subjects apply. How the student will access the service will also be included eg: When the student has the examination they will meet a staff member at the library.

If the student does not wish to access the service noted in the letter the student/parent/caregiver will need to complete a section stating this. The letter is and filed for future reference.

All subject teachers, the year coordinator and Leader of Curriculum will be notified of the decision and what it means for them regarding accessing the service.

The final decision regarding the type of provision that is offered to the student will be guided by the suggested provisions provided in the ACE manual.

Parents and students often request extra time for disability provisions. The college will only offer extra time to students who have a severe literacy difficulty. The distinction between time to rest and extra time may need to be explained to parents and students. While parents may not see time to rest as a suitable strategy for their child, with practise students can learn to use this strategy effectively.

All students or parents/ caregivers have the opportunity to complete a grievance procedure if they are unhappy with the recommended provisions. A team of staff included the college executive will review the procedures and where needed contact appropriate outside agencies such as the Board of Studies. The opportunity for a parent/ caregiver or student to

ask for a grievance procedure is provided in the initial letter sent home.

7. EVALUATION

QUESTIONS:

How often do you review the student's level of need for the provision?

How do you record when and what provisions you provided to each student?

Sample Response: A record of when the student has accessed the service is maintained. This will include the date and subject that the student accessed the service. Attached to the student's exam paper will be a sheet that outlines for the class teacher what disability provision the student utilized in the examination.

At the start of each year the students who accessed the service in the prior year will be reviewed. It is important to review student's reading and spelling progress to determine if their skills have improved.

If there is a change to the student's access to the service then the student, parent/ caregiver and teaching staff are informed in writing. It can be difficult for the parent / caregiver or student to understand and accept that they are no longer able to access the service. This process is completed in a respectful and dignified way.

E. USE OF VOLUNTEERS

It is common practice for schools to use volunteers from the community or students to act as readers or writers.

In your policy you need to include following key factors:

- Community volunteers must have a Working with Children Check. This must be discussed with the school principal.
- Students should not supervise peers in the same grade level
- All volunteers must have training and guidelines to ensure that the practices are valid, ethical and confidential.
- Student volunteers must have permission from their parents to participate.

How do you recruit volunteers?

Example: Additional Needs Teacher to discuss potential volunteers in Top English classes. Ensure that the student volunteers are not missing important school work. Reward volunteers with a certificate.

Community Volunteers can be advertised in the parish and school newsletter.

How do you train volunteers?

Describe how you train volunteers. Important aspects to consider are:

- Confidentiality
- Board of Studies Guidelines regarding provisions
- A clear understanding of the fact that a reader can only read – not interpret, paraphrase, prompt or discuss questions.
- A clear understanding that a scribe can only write – not interpret, paraphrase, prompt or discuss responses.

Supervision of volunteers/ students

Describe how you will supervise the volunteers. The assessment task procedures must be supervised by a staff member to ensure the validity of the results. For larger groups use an area where the students are spread out and cannot hear each other.

Sample Response: The college will use volunteers to help staff the disability provisions service, particularly in block exam weeks. Student volunteers will be accessed by working collaboratively with the English faculty to source suitable students. The students will be recruited on a volunteer basis and complete a one period training/ orientation lesson. The importance of confidentiality and empathy will be discussed. The students will also be told the procedures and guidelines regarding the specific provision such as being a reader. Students can only be volunteers if a parent permission note has been completed. A letter will be sent home stating the date and time that the student will be needed. Where possible a student who will require a reader or writer for the HSC examinations will use the same student in the trial HSC examinations. This will allow the student and the reader/ writer the opportunity to practice the skills required.

The college will sometimes need to access community volunteers to support students. These volunteers will be recruited in the school newsletter and parish newsletter. The volunteers will participate in a half day training program. They will also need to have a Working with Children check. At no time will a student be left unsupervised with a community volunteer or peer volunteer.

F. SCHOOL BASED PROCEDURES

The guidelines should include a description of the procedures followed when a student has an examination. The description could include the procedures in class based examinations during a term and block examination weeks.

Sample Response:

Class based examinations.

It is the class teacher's responsibility to notify the Additional Needs Teacher that there is a class examination. They need to ensure that the support can be provided on the specific date and time. This notification must be made two weeks prior to the task using the College form.

Block Examination Weeks

The Leader of Subjects are provided with a current list of students requiring disability provisions and for which subjects by the additional needs teacher. It is the Leader of Curriculums responsibility to ensure that the timetable for examination block week will allow all students that require disability provisions to be able to access the service. The Leader of Subjects collate the exams and provide the appropriate number with the students name written on the front on the morning of the exam to the additional needs teacher. The completed examinations are returned to the Leader of Subject. It is the class teachers responsibility to work with the additional needs teachers to provide assistance to any student that is absent for their examination.

APPENDIX 1

SCHOOL REVIEW – SCHOOL DISABILITY PROVISIONS

ASPECT	BEST PRACTICE STATEMENTS	COMMENT
Documentation	<p>A written document in accordance with Board of Studies, ACE manual requirements and DDA.</p> <p>Parents/ caregivers provided with written information/ letters regarding disability provisions offered to the student.</p> <p>School keeps evidence of provisions provided to the student.</p> <p>School collates minimum documentation requirements in accordance with the ACE manual.</p>	
Training	<p>Teacher aides, community volunteers and peer scribes/ readers receive training prior to supervising or supporting a student with disability provisions.</p>	
Congruence	<p>There is a shared understanding of the purpose and procedures for disability provisions.</p> <p>Teachers are provided with accurate and up-to-date information regarding students who require disability provisions.</p> <p>Teachers are aware of what provisions a student used during an examination.</p>	
Student	<p>Students actively participate in the decision making process by completing assessments and providing comments regarding their need to have disability provisions.</p> <p>The students are treated in a respectful way at all times – how they are informed, where they receive the service, peer scribes and readers.</p>	
Grievance	<p>Parents/ caregivers and students have the opportunity to appeal the disability provisions that are offered by the school.</p>	
Review	<p>The students need to have disability provisions for examinations are reviewed annually.</p> <p>School procedures and practices are transparent.</p>	

STUDENT REVIEW – SCHOOL DISABILITY PROVISIONS

Student:

Grade:

1. How often have you received disability provisions?
2. Which disability provisions are you offered?
3. How do the disability provisions assist you?
4. Do you believe that you receive enough support to be able to access examinations?
5. What do you like the most about the disability provisions?
6. What do you like the least about the disability provisions?
7. How would you describe the suitability of the venue used to provide disability provisions?
8. Are there times when you are teased by your peers for receiving disability provisions?
9. Are there times when you believe others think that you are unfairly advantaged by receiving disability provisions? Peers / teachers
10. What could be improved in the delivery of disability provisions at the college?

APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE LETTERS

Letter Head

Volunteer Reader / Writer HSC

The college would like your child to assist with disability examination provisions for a student in Year 12. Students with special examination needs are able to apply to the Board of Studies for Disability Provisions for the Higher School Certificate Examinations.

The volunteer reader / writer under supervision will read the stimulus material and scribe the student's answers. They do not interpret questions or provide answers.

Your child has been selected as being suitable and the college would appreciate your support. If you agree your child will be required:

Date: _____ Time: _____

The volunteers will meet the supervisor at _____ prior to the start of the exam.

We thank you for your assistance and we will acknowledge their effort on their school report.

Regards

Volunteer Reader / Writer HSC

Student: _____

I agree to my child assisting with the Year 12 HSC examinations on _____.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Letter Head

Disability Provisions - HSC

STUDENT:

Attached is the letter from the Board of Studies outlining the results of the application for Disability Provisions for the Higher School Certificate (HSC) examinations.

Please read the decision letter carefully. Please discuss the results with your child to ensure that s/he understands what is available.

Please sign the form below acknowledging you have received and read through the provisions and return it to the college office.

Please contact the college to discuss any concerns.

Yours sincerely,

HSC Disability Provisions Outcome

Student: _____

I have received and read through the Board of Studies Disability Provisions letter.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Letter Head

Disability Provisions Notification Letter

STUDENT:

The college has investigated _____ needs regarding access to disability provisions for school based examinations. The college will offer the following provisions to your child.

Provision:

Subjects:

Assessments:

The student will be notified before each examination when and where they will be able to access the support. It is important that you discuss this with your child and if you have any concerns please contact the college. If your child does not wish to use the service please complete the section below..

At the start of the year the student's progress will be reviewed to determine if they are still eligible for the service. If you would like your child has not been granted a provision that you believe is suitable to their needs please contact the Additional Needs Teacher or Leader of Curriculum so their documentation can be reviewed.

Please sign and return the form below

Yours sincerely,

Disability Provisions Notification Letter

Student: _____

Put in a tick a box

- I agree that my child will use disability provisions.
- My child will not use the disability provisions for examinations.

Parent / Caregiver: _____ Date: _____

Student: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 3:

DISABILITY PROVISIONS – INITIAL REVIEW

Name:

Date of Birth:

School:

School Year:

Section 1: Intervention History

Summarise the history of the diagnosis of the student's disability and the intervention strategies used to address the problems encountered by the student. Specify which strategies have proven successful for the student.

Reason/s for investigating need for Disability Provisions:

Past Assessments

Intervention (Please detail remediation and intervention strategies/support adopted by the school or others as a result of the disability):

Any other support the school currently offers:

NAPLAN results

Section 2: Current Assessment

Date of Assessment/ Documentation:

Assessed by:

Results:

Work Samples – Collect work samples with and without provisions

Teacher Comments – Collate comments regarding the students' progress

Section 3: Decision

As a result of the review what decision has been made? Include Type of Provision.

Difficulty Identified in examinations: _____

What Action is needed?

Letter Home Yes / No

Information provided to the class teacher. Leader of Curriculum, Yes /No
Leader of Subject, year coordinator.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 5: TEACHER COMMENTS

DISABILITY PROVISIONS – HSC

STUDENT: _____

TEACHER: _____

The student is applying for disability provisions in the HSC. Can you please write a comment that will be typed into the online application form. Your comments are highly weighted in the decision process.

1. How does the students condition affect him / her in the classroom? Examples: attention, anxiety, low literacy, poor comprehension, extra instruction, behaviour, limited responses.

2. How does the student's condition affect him / her in exams? Example: not finish tasks, poor results not reflection of ability, anxiety, distracted, poor handwriting

3. How could / does special provisions assist the student? Reduce anxiety, able to attempt questions that could not read, able to access stimulus material,

PLEASE RETURN BY

APPENDIX 6: NAPLAN ADJUSTMENTS* & STUDENT COHORTS

*ADJUSTMENTS in this context, refers to 'provisions' that can be made or provided, for students with disability during NAPLAN assessments

Adjustments to assessment are to be made available for students who require them for participation in NAPLAN assessments. Information specifically relevant to NAPLAN assessment adjustments is contained in the following document:

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM LITERACY AND NUMERACY

NATIONAL PROTOCOLS FOR TEST ADMINISTRATION, 2012

Available at:

<http://www.nap.edu.au/Documents/PDF/National%20Protocols%20for%20Test%20Administration%2020270112.pdf>

This should be referred to each year when planning the provision of NAPLAN assessment adjustments (these may vary from provisions available for school-based assessments). Please note the following information, an excerpt from the protocols

2.1 NAPLAN is a national assessment, and all students are expected to participate. NAPLAN should be accessible to all students to demonstrate their actual skills and knowledge.

2.1.1 Disability adjustments should be granted that are appropriate for students to access and participate in the test.

2.1.2 It is not acceptable to exert influence on parents to withdraw their children from testing.

Principals, school NAPLAN test administrators and Additional Needs Teachers need to be familiar with student participation cohorts, as described in detail in the protocols document, to ensure that any withdrawals or exemptions the school permits are consistent with the protocols.

Key points to note:

-Exempt Students, Students with a Disability,

“Students with significant intellectual disability and/or those with significant co-existing conditions which severely limit their capacity to participate in the tests may be exempted from sitting the national tests”

“Students who qualify for exemption and do not submit a test attempted under test conditions are considered as assessed students and are counted in the ‘below minimum standard’ calculations for reporting purposes in national and jurisdictional summary data”.

-Absent Students

“Absent students are not counted as part of the cohort of assessed students.”

This may have implications for the school in terms of allocation of any available NAPLAN-linked support resources

-Withdrawn Students

“Students may be withdrawn from the testing program by their parent/carer. ... Withdrawals are intended to address issues such as religious beliefs and philosophical objections to testing.”

“Withdrawn students are not counted as part of the cohort of assessed students.”

This may have implications for the school in terms of allocation of any available NAPLAN-linked support resources