



Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

Guidelines for St Thomas More College

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www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_qce_qcia_policy_procedures_handbook.pdf

6 Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (AARA), including illness and misadventure

The QCAA recognises that a student's participation in assessment may be adversely affected by disability, medical condition/s, or other circumstances outside of their control. Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (AARA) are designed to assist these students.

The [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\) \(DDA\)](#) and the [Disability Standards for Education 2005 \(DSE\)](#) seek to eliminate discrimination against people with disabilities. The [Human Rights Act 2019 \(Qld\) \(HRA\)](#) asserts that every child has the right to access primary and secondary education appropriate to their needs.

Compliance with these documents ensures students with disability are able to participate in education and training on the same basis as students without disability. This is achieved primarily through consultation with the student and/or their parents/carers, making reasonable adjustments, eliminating harassment and victimisation and giving proper consideration to human rights.

AARA are action/s taken by the school so that an eligible student can participate in assessment on the same basis as other students. AARA processes are relevant to assessment in Applied, Applied (Essential), General, General (Extension), General (Senior External Examination) subjects and Short Courses. In this handbook, candidates for the Senior External Examination are referred to as students.

The use of AARA for student assessment is based on the functional impact of the condition for which AARA are sought. Students with the same condition may experience highly varied impacts on their education and on their ability to demonstrate their learning, knowledge and skill in assessments on the same basis as other students. This section does not include examples of every possible circumstance for AARA; it provides information to support schools with AARA decisions and processes relevant to their students' needs.

The QCAA encourages schools to develop a school-based AARA process that includes early and ongoing consultation with students and/or their parents/carers and aligns with AARA principles outlined below.

Most AARA applications for students with disability should reflect existing arrangements that have been in place and documented, e.g. as evidence to support judgments for the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on school students with disability (the NCCD). Adjustments required due to temporary medical conditions or injuries and unforeseen events should be identified and managed as soon as possible, in consultation with students and parents/carers.

For further information and resources about AARA see the QCAA website.

6.1 Principles

The following table outlines the principles that inform AARA decisions.

Table: AARA principles

Consultation	Functional impact	Academic integrity
- Schools make decisions throughout the application for, and implementation of, AARA in consultation with students, parents/carers and relevant school staff, as well as medical and allied health professionals and the QCAA where relevant. - Consultation must occur with students and/or parents/carers <i>before</i> adjustments are made. - Consultation should occur as early as possible to ensure eligible students are supported appropriately throughout a course of study and assessment. - AARA decisions balance the interests of all parties affected.	- AARA address the current functional impact/s of a student's disability, medical condition or circumstance in assessment, to enable them to participate on the same basis as other students. - Impacts may vary significantly for different students with the same diagnosis or circumstance and not every student with a diagnosed disability will require AARA in assessment. - A student may require different AARA for different subjects and assessment types. - Impacts and adjustment requirements for an individual student may change over time; there should be ongoing monitoring and review. - Students should have opportunity to participate in assessment as independently as possible with the least intrusive adjustment, supported by medical advice and school-based evidence.	- Schools are required to maintain the intent and rigour of assessment. - Relevant syllabus standards or marking guides are used to make judgments about student achievement and are not modified. - Achievement is assessed on evidence provided in student responses, not perceived ability or potential achievement. - AARA cannot be used to compensate for learning that has not occurred or to exempt a student from the learning or knowledge and skill requirements of a subject or course.
All students are entitled to equal access to AARA and exceptional circumstances should not prevent an otherwise eligible student from accessing the appropriate AARA (see Section 6.6: Exceptional circumstances).		

Adjustments may be made to:

- how an instrument is presented to a student, e.g. a student may require assessment materials in braille format
- how a student responds to an assessment, e.g. a student may need to use assistive technology or a scribe
- the time allowed, e.g. a student may need extra examination working time or rest breaks
- assessment scheduling, e.g. a student may need to complete an assessment at a later time than others
- the environment in which an assessment is undertaken, e.g. a student may need to sit in a different room to the other students
- the mode of an assessment, e.g. a student may need to engage in assessment through use of eye gaze or other technology.

6.2 Eligibility for AARA

Students may be eligible for AARA when participation in assessment is adversely affected by disability, medical condition/s or other circumstances outside their control.

Students may also be eligible due to certain cultural obligations such as Sorry Business and Sad News, or personal circumstances.

These conditions or circumstances may fall into the following categories, requiring different application processes and timelines:

- long-term and chronic conditions
- short-term conditions and temporary injuries
- illness and misadventure.

For AARA, disability has the same definition as the [DDA](#). The definition of disability used in the [DDA](#) is broad, including physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological and learning disabilities. It also includes physical disfigurement, the presence in the body of disease-causing organisms and disability that is imputed to the person.

For AARA applications the QCAA uses the same broad disability categories that are used for the NCCD:

- cognitive
- physical
- sensory
- social/emotional.

For more information about illness and misadventure see Section 6.5: Illness and misadventure.

6.2.1 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 examination instructions
- timetable clashes
- matters of the student's or parent's/carer's own choosing, e.g. family holidays or sporting events
- matters that the school could have avoided, e.g. incorrect enrolment in a subject.

AARA cannot be used to compensate for learning that has not occurred, or to exempt a student from the learning or knowledge and skill requirements of a subject or course.

Students are expected to complete the required learning as outlined in the relevant syllabus (see Section 8.2.1: Engaging in learning and assessment).

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

- school-approved absences, see Section 8.2.7: Gathering evidence of student achievement
- transfer students, see Section 8.2.1: Engaging in learning and assessment

- flexible delivery options, including variable progression, see Section 4.2: Delivery approaches to curriculum.

6.3 Roles and responsibilities for AARA

6.3.1 Schools

Schools are responsible for administering assessment within the requirements of the relevant syllabus and meeting quality assurance processes for all subjects and Short Courses.

Schools consider what access arrangements or adjustments to assessment conditions are reasonable in the context of an eligible student's disability, medical condition or circumstances. AARA are considered for all of a student's enrolled subjects and may vary by subject depending on syllabus assessment requirements.

Under the [DSE](#), there must be consultation with the student and/or parents/carers before an adjustment is made. Schools may also work in partnership with medical practitioners and/or other stakeholders, where possible and relevant, to make educational adjustments that allow students to participate in assessment on the same basis as other students. The principal or principal's delegate may appoint a suitable school staff member who is familiar with the student, or a team that can consult those most familiar with the student, to manage AARA applications.

The principal is responsible for AARA reporting and approving processes outlined in Section 6.4.

For summative internal and external assessment, when a student is enrolled with more than one learning provider, the MLP is responsible for submitting the application for AARA on behalf of the student. The MLP must communicate the QCAA's decision, and any relevant information, to any other learning providers or venues, who then enact the AARA for assessment. Learning providers should work collaboratively with MLPs. For information about MLPs, see Section 13.1.2: Using the QCAA Portal. Where students do not have an MLP that is a school they should contact the QCAA for application details.

For more information about AARA, schools may email aara@qcaa.qld.edu.au.

6.3.2 QCAA

The QCAA sets and amends the directions for assessment under its powers and functions listed in the [QCAA Act](#) and [QCAA Regulation](#). The QCAA is authorised to approve AARA for summative internal and external assessment.

The QCAA:

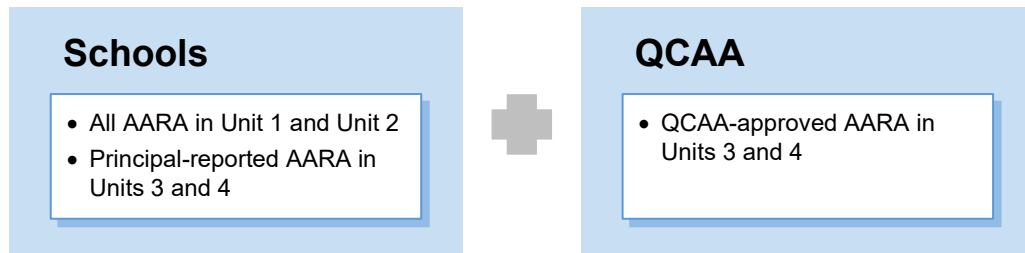
- supports schools, students and parents/carers in understanding AARA principles, eligibility and the AARA application process
- consults with relevant school staff about student AARA applications
- monitors notifications of principal-reported AARA from schools
- determines QCAA-approved AARA and notifies schools of decisions in the QCAA Portal.

6.4 Reporting and approving processes for AARA

6.4.1 Making decisions about AARA

Most decisions about AARA are made at the school level. The principal is responsible for making AARA decisions and following processes for recording information and seeking QCAA approval where required. Decisions should be based on AARA principles (see Section 6.1) and eligibility (see Section 6.2).

Figure: Making decisions about AARA



6.4.2 Application and notification process

AARA in Unit 1 and Unit 2

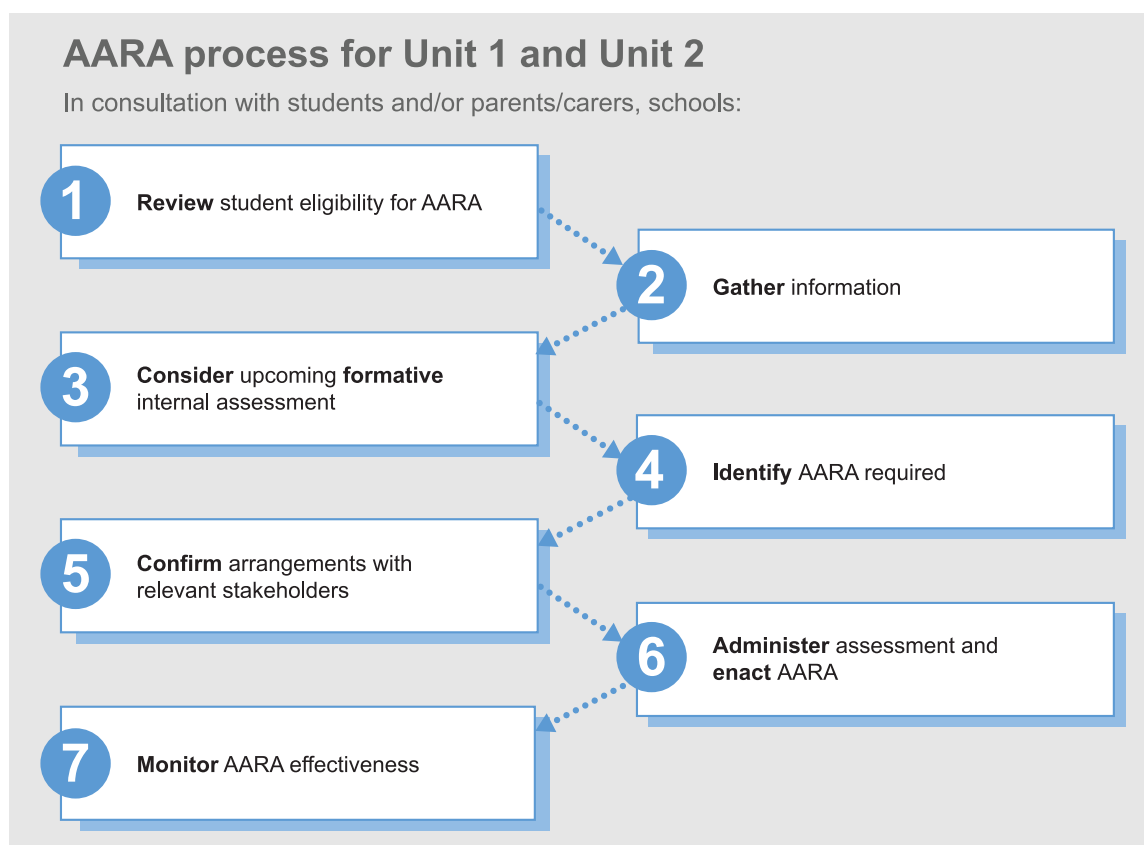
Schools make decisions about AARA for Unit 1 and Unit 2 in consultation with students, parents/carers and other relevant stakeholders.

To approve AARA, a principal or principal's delegate must:

- be reasonably satisfied that the need for the AARA exists based on AARA principles (see Section 6.1) and eligibility (see Section 6.2)
- be able to provide evidence to justify the decision. (The QCAA does not specify evidence required.)

Evidence of AARA being enacted for a student in Unit 1 or Unit 2 will be considered as part of an application for the same AARA in Units 3 and 4. However, provision of AARA by a school for Unit 1 and Unit 2 assessments does not guarantee that students will be provided the same AARA for assessment in Units 3 and 4. Schools are encouraged to submit applications for Units 3 and 4 as early as possible to ensure timely decisions and confidence for students.

Figure: Schools' AARA process for formative assessment in Unit 1 and Unit 2



Principal-reported AARA in Units 3 and 4

Principal-reported AARA are specific practical arrangements and adjustments authorised by the principal or principal's delegate for an eligible student, relevant to assessment in Units 3 and 4.

To approve AARA, a principal or principal's delegate must:

- be reasonably satisfied that the need for the AARA exists based on AARA principles (see Section 6.1) and eligibility (see Section 6.2)
- be able to provide evidence to justify the decision. (The QCAA does not specify evidence required.)

Schools must notify the QCAA, in the QCAA Portal, of principal-reported AARA for students undertaking summative internal and external assessment in Units 3 and 4 of Applied, Applied (Essential), General, General (Extension), General (Senior External Examination) subjects and Short Courses.

Schools retain supporting documentation for principal-reported AARA to supply, if required, to the QCAA as part of the quality assurance processes for AARA or as part of a review process.

QCAA-approved AARA in Units 3 and 4

The QCAA is responsible for approving identified AARA for students undertaking summative assessment in Units 3 and 4 of Applied, Applied (Essential), General, General (Extension), General (Senior External Examination) subjects and Short Courses.

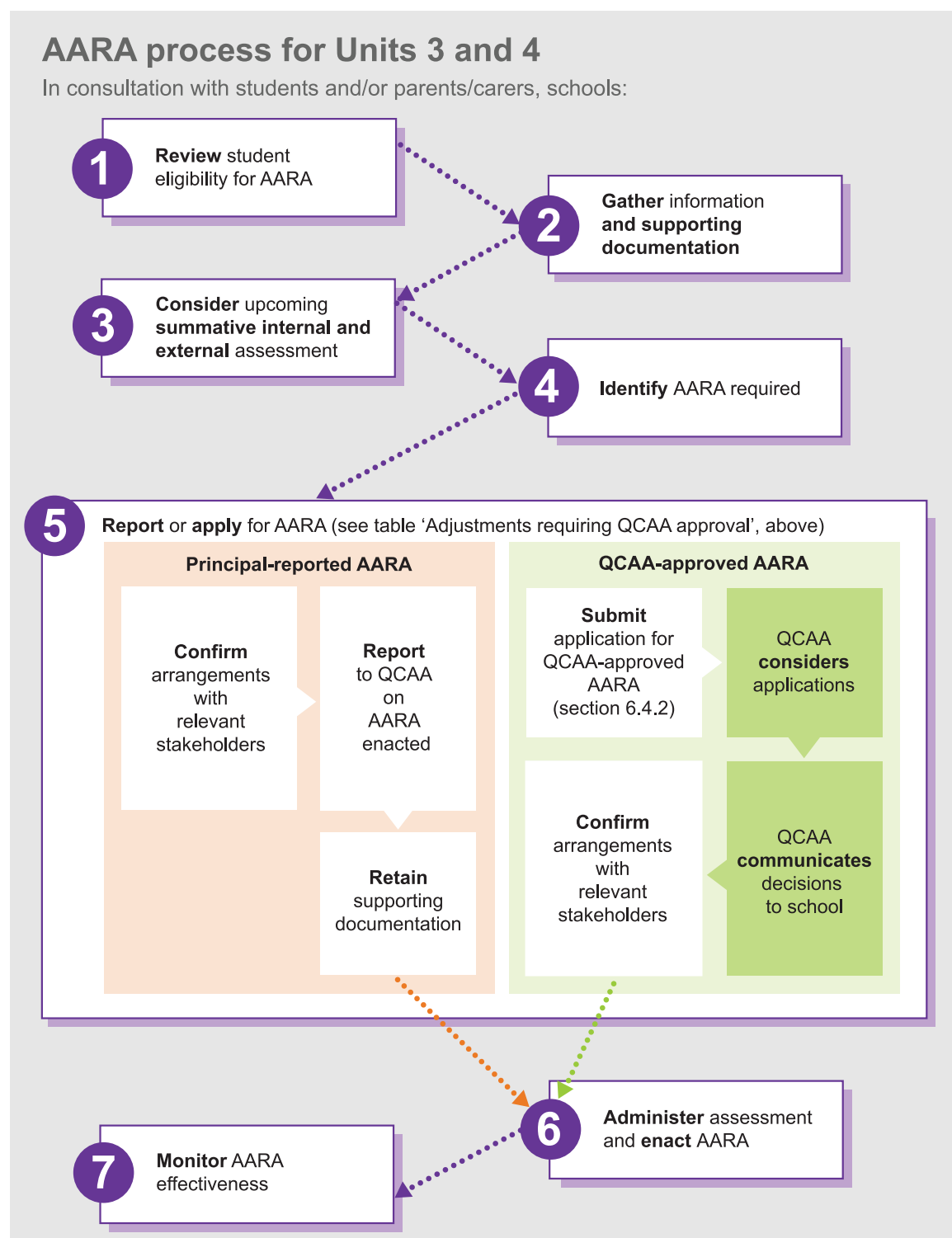
QCAA-approved AARA are specific practical arrangements and adjustments that can only be approved by the QCAA following consideration of supporting documentation submitted with the AARA application in the QCAA Portal. Schools are to contact the QCAA for advice where the evidence requirements cannot be met due to exceptional circumstances.

MLPs must submit applications for QCAA-approved AARA to the QCAA on students' behalf, in the QCAA Portal.

Table: Adjustments requiring QCAA approval

Type of assessment	Adjustment
Summative assessment — internal examination	• extra time • rest breaks
Summative assessment — common internal assessment (CIA) for Applied (Essential) subjects	• alternative format papers • assistive technology • computer • extra time • rest breaks
Summative external assessment and Senior External Examinations	• alternative format papers • assistance • assistive technology • computer • extra time • reader • rest breaks • scribe • variation to venue. See Section 10.4.1: Variations to venue • any adjustments not identified as principal-reported in the table in Section 6.4.4: Examples of AARA

Figure: Schools' AARA application/notification process for summative assessment in Units 3 and 4



6.4.3 Timelines

It is best to apply as early as possible, to ensure timely decisions and confidence for students. Applications for students with long-term conditions may be submitted as soon as students are enrolled in subjects in the Student Management app, and arrangements may be updated prior to assessment, as required.

Table: Submission dates for principal-reported and QCAA-approved AARA

Type of AARA	Unit 3 and 4 General subjects — internal assessments	Common internal assessment (CIA) — Applied (Essential) subjects	Unit 3 and 4 General subjects — external assessments <i>and</i> General (Senior External Examination) subjects
Alternative format papers, e.g. • braille • large print.	Due dates are determined by the school.	Applications for Phase 1 are due by the end of Term 3 in the formative year. Applications for Phase 2 are due by the end of February in the summative year.	Applications for General subjects are due by the end of February in the assessment year. For General (Senior External Examination) subjects, contact the QCAA AARA Unit as soon as possible after registration. Significant advance notice is required for design and production.
QCAA-approved AARA (including in combination with principal-reported AARA)	For existing long-term and chronic conditions — applications may be submitted as soon as students are enrolled in subjects in the Student Management app. Applications must be submitted by completion of Units 1 and 2. For all others, applications are due as soon as possible before the assessment event.		For existing long-term and chronic conditions — applications are due by the end of Term 1 in the summative year. 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. AARA applications for General (Senior External Examination) subjects close on the date published in the SEP calendar .
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 (extensions and/or comparable assessments) before contacting the QCAA. See Section 9.6: Confirmation (Units 3 and 4).		Illness and misadventure applications may be submitted from 14 days before the start of the assessment period to 7 days after the assessment . See Section 6.5: Illness and misadventure.
Note: Early applications benefit students and schools. If these timelines are not adhered to, the QCAA cannot guarantee that applications will be processed prior to relevant assessment. Alternative format papers require extended timelines and detailed consultation to be produced. Schools must meet the timelines for these papers or the QCAA cannot guarantee that they will be produced prior to relevant assessment. In extenuating circumstances, contact the QCAA.			

6.4.4 Examples of AARA

The following table provides examples of principal-reported and QCAA-approved AARA. The list is not exhaustive. Each individual student's circumstances should be considered on a case-by-case basis, while balancing the interests of the individual and other parties. Schools are encouraged to contact the QCAA for pre-application advice about students' needs for any adjustments not listed or where there are complex or extensive adjustments. Further details and resources can be found under AARA on the QCAA website. Email aara@qcaa.qld.edu.au or phone 1300 381 575.

The QCAA recognises that at times, a student's ability to participate in a performance assessment may require adjustment, e.g. temporary injury preventing participation in a physical activity, or impairment impacting participation in an oral presentation. Contact the QCAA to discuss individual student circumstances.

Table: Examples of possible principal-reported and QCAA-approved AARA

AARA	Approval type			
	Summative internal assessment	Common internal assessment	Summative external assessment	Senior External Examination
Alternative format papers (e.g. braille, A4 to A3 enlargement, digital format, large print papers)	Principal-reported	QCAA-approved	QCAA-approved	
Assistance (see the Assistance in examinations factsheet)	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	QCAA-approved	
Assistive technology (see the Computers and assistive technology factsheet)	Principal-reported	QCAA-approved	QCAA-approved	
Bite-sized food	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	
Comparable assessment (see Section 7.4: Developing a comparable assessment instrument)	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	Not applicable	
Computer (see the Computers and assistive technology factsheet)	Principal-reported	QCAA-approved	QCAA-approved	
Drink	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	
Diabetes management (see the Diabetes management factsheet)	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	
Extension	Principal-reported	Not applicable	Not applicable	

AARA	Approval type			
	Summative internal assessment	Common internal assessment	Summative external assessment	Senior External Examination
Extra time (see the Extra time factsheet)	QCAA-approved	QCAA-approved	QCAA-approved	
Individual instructions (e.g. Auslan interpreter for instructions, a copy of the written instructions)	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	
Medication (prescribed medication in a clear container only)	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	
Physical equipment and environment (e.g. specialised desk/chair, cushion/blanket, crutches, heat/cold pack, noise cancelling headphones)	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	
Reader (see the Readers and scribes factsheet)	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	QCAA-approved	
Rest breaks (see the Rest breaks factsheet)	QCAA-approved	QCAA-approved	QCAA-approved	
Scribe (see the Readers and scribes factsheet)	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	QCAA-approved	
Varied seating (e.g. single student supervision in separate room, small group supervision, out-of-order seating in main assessment room)	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	
Variations to venue (see Section 10.4.1: Variations to venue)	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	QCAA-approved	
Vision aids (e.g. coloured transparency overlay, magnification devices)	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	Principal-reported	
Other (any other uncategorised AARA; contact the QCAA's AARA Unit before applying)	QCAA-approved	QCAA-approved	QCAA-approved	

6.4.5 Supporting documentation for QCAA-approved AARA

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 functional impact/s of the student's disability and/or medical condition during timed assessment
- confirmation of the student's previous use of AARA in assessment and the effectiveness of each AARA in addressing the reported functional impact/s for the student in accessing assessment and demonstrating what they know and can do on the same basis as other students.

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

Applications for QCAA-approved AARA that are submitted by the MLP without an appropriate school statement will be declined until the appropriate evidence is provided. Applications are submitted in the AARA app in the QCAA Portal. For more information about submitting the school statement, see the QCAA website www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/aara.

School statement on imputed disability

Where a student's disability has not been formally diagnosed and a school team has imputed disability based on reasonable grounds and supported by documented evidence, a school statement on imputed disability may be submitted for applications for QCAA-approved AARA. It provides:

- information about the nature of the imputed disability and the student's inclusion in the NCCD
- a summary of documented evidence that undiagnosed disability is having a functional impact on the student's capacity to participate in education on the same basis as peers
- a detailed overview of the functional impact/s of the student's imputed disability during timed assessment
- confirmation of the student's previous use of AARA in assessment and the effectiveness of each AARA in addressing the reported functional impact/s for the student in accessing assessment and demonstrating what they know and can do on the same basis as other students.

Note: Imputing disability is not the same as diagnosing disability. While a school team may identify characteristics and impacts of disability, a diagnosis can only be made by a qualified medical or allied health practitioner.

For more information about submitting the school statement on imputed disability, see the QCAA website www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/aara.

Student statement (optional)

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

Medical report

Applications for QCAA-approved AARA for students with disability or medical condition/s require the submission of a medical report that provides:

- diagnosis of disability and/or medical condition
- date of diagnosis, occurrence or onset of the disability and/or medical condition
- information about how the diagnosed disability and/or medical condition may affect the student participating in assessment, particularly timed assessment.

The medical report may be completed by a registered medical practitioner including a general practitioner (GP), medical specialist, psychologist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist or optometrist, a certified practising speech pathologist or a speech pathologist who is eligible for membership of Speech Pathology Australia (SPA) as a certified practising member. This practitioner must not be related to the student or directly employed by the student's MLP. Practitioners, such as regional speech pathologists who are employed to support multiple schools or in programs such as GPs in schools, are not considered directly employed by the MLP. Schools are encouraged to contact the QCAA to check, if required.

Details of the diagnosis should be written by the practitioner who is best placed professionally to make the diagnosis. A medical report completed by a provisionally registered medical practitioner must be co-signed by a supervising practitioner with full registration.

The QCAA provides a medical report template that may be used to complete the report. Medical reports may use a different format, as long as they provide the required details and are signed and dated by the medical or allied health practitioner.

In cases of imputed disability and verified disability in the Education Adjustment Program (where a review of criterion 1 was not required) a medical report is not required.

The QCAA recognises there may be exceptional circumstances that prevent a student being able to access a medical practitioner. In exceptional circumstances, medical evidence may not be required. See Section 6.6: Exceptional circumstances for further information.

Evidence of verified disability

For many years, Queensland school students with disability were included in the Education Adjustment Program (EAP) when criteria were met in specified disability categories. The EAP has phased out (with the exception of verification for special school enrolment purposes). However, the formal notification of EAP provided by the relevant education authority may still substitute for a medical report in an AARA application. This applies:

- if the formal EAP notification specifies that EAP verification was approved and a review of EAP criterion 1 was not required
- to verification in all EAP categories except social/emotional.

Except with the QCAA's prior written agreement, in cases when a review of EAP criterion 1 was requested, an updated medical report is required. This may be provided by a GP or other relevant medical practitioner or allied health professional.

Schools should contact the QCAA for advice if a student is unable to provide an updated medical report or if an update is not appropriate.

Other evidence

For eligible students, supporting documentation may also include:

- teacher observations

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

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

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

Schools are to contact the QCAA for further advice where evidence requirements cannot be met due to extenuating circumstances. See Section 6.6 for more information.

Currency of supporting documentation for QCAA-approved AARA

School statements should reflect the current needs of the student.

The currency of supporting medical documentation depends on the nature of the diagnosed disability 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 when the student is not still covered by EAP verification (where a review of EAP criterion 1 was not required), medical documentation must be dated no earlier than 1 January of the year of the student's Year 10 enrolment.

Where a diagnostic report is dated prior to the student's Year 10 enrolment, only an update is required — *not* a reassessment or review of diagnosis. This may be provided by a general practitioner or other relevant medical practitioner or allied health professional.

Schools should contact the QCAA for advice if a student is unable to provide an updated medical report or if an update is not appropriate.

Where an application has been submitted for a student with a long-term condition and the condition deteriorates after the application decision, a further application may be submitted that provides updated information regarding the student's condition.

Short-term conditions or temporary injuries

Short-term conditions may improve or deteriorate over time depending on a range of influences and factors. Supporting medical documentation for short-term conditions and temporary injuries must cover the date/s of the assessment/s for which the application is made.

For internal assessment, schools should consider if extensions of time (new due dates) are most appropriate. Extensions and comparable assessments are principal-reported AARA. The QCAA does not specify evidence requirements or require upload of supporting documentation for principal-reported AARA.

See Section 6.5: Illness and misadventure.

Schools should phone the QCAA's AARA Unit on 1300 381 575 or email aara@qcaa.qld.edu.au if there are any barriers to students obtaining the appropriate documentation. See Section 6.6: Exceptional circumstances for more information.

6.4.6 Reviewing a QCAA-approved AARA decision

A student may request a review of a decision about QCAA-approved AARA.

If a student has had one or more QCAA-approved AARA declined, their school may submit a new application with updated supporting documentation. If the student is dissatisfied with a decision, they may apply for an internal review under section 79 of the [QCAA Act](#). The application must be in writing, must address the grounds of the application, including any new evidence, and must be made within 14 days from the date of the decision notice. The application must be lodged by the school in the QCAA Portal.

The process and timeline for this review will depend on the type of assessment — internal or external.

Upon receiving the application, the QCAA will appoint internal review officers to consider all the information relating to the decision, including the reasons for the decision. The officers will be different from those who considered the original application.

The QCAA will consider the internal review officer's recommendation and confirm or amend the original decision. Both the student and the school will be notified about the outcome of the review.

If the student is dissatisfied with the internal review decision, the school may apply under section 82 of the [QCAA Act](#) for an external review by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

For more information about review applications, phone the QCAA's AARA Unit on 1300 381 575 or email aara@qcaa.qld.edu.au.

6.5 Illness and misadventure

Students whose ability to attend or participate in an assessment is adversely affected by illness or an unexpected event may need an AARA or illness and misadventure application. Illness and misadventure can affect a single student or a group of students.

The following principles apply:

- The illness or event is unforeseen and beyond the student's control, such as personal circumstance or emergent cultural obligation, e.g. summons/subpoena to appear in court, close family member's death/funeral, Sorry Business.
- An adverse effect must be demonstrated.
- The situation cannot be of the student's own choosing or that of their parents/carers, such as a family holiday, or something that the student could have avoided, such as misreading the examination timetable or examination instructions.
- AARA cannot be used to compensate for learning that has not occurred or to exempt a student from the learning or knowledge and skills requirements of a subject or course.

6.5.1 Illness and misadventure — internal assessment

A student who is ill, becomes ill during a timed assessment, or is unable to attend or complete an internal assessment should inform the principal's delegate or assessment supervisor as soon as practicable. This may be before, during or immediately after the assessment session.

Principal-reported AARA must be implemented to provide opportunities for the student to complete the assessment. A comparable assessment and/or extension (new due date) should be implemented if illness or misadventure is established.

If the school has implemented an extension of time, the student may not be able to respond within the timelines for quality assurance processes, as published in the [SEP calendar](#). See Section 9.6.7: Confirmation requirements for illness and misadventure for further information.

If the assessment was not able to be implemented due to the illness or event, or the student is unable to provide a final response to the assessment instrument by the new due date, the school may use evidence of work gathered in response to the instrument, such as the draft, to make a judgment about the student's work. This evidence should only be used once other AARA have been exhausted. See Section 8.2.7: Gathering evidence of student achievement or contact the QCAA.

Students cannot be exempted from assessment, however, an illness and misadventure application can be made once all principal-reported AARA have been exhausted, e.g. an extension can no longer be granted. If the school is unable to collect any evidence in response to the assessment instrument by the new due date, but the student has completed the required learning as outlined in the relevant syllabus or course, the school should complete an application for illness and misadventure and provide supporting documentation in the QCAA Portal (see Sections 6.5.3: Application timelines and 6.5.4: Supporting documentation).

Note: Illness and misadventure applications are not required for Applied and Applied (Essential) subjects. In the event a student is unable to finalise an assessment for Units 3 and 4 of an Applied and/or Applied (Essential) subject by the final date published in the [SEP calendar](#), schools should contact the QCAA's AARA Unit on 1300 381 575 or email aara@qcaa.qld.edu.au for further advice.

6.5.2 Illness and misadventure — external assessment and Senior External Examination

The QCAA advises students to attend every external assessment. However, the QCAA does not expect students to attend an external assessment against specific written medical advice. When students are in doubt about attendance to complete an external assessment, they should contact their school's EA coordinator (see Section 10.1: External assessment roles and responsibilities). An illness and misadventure application should be submitted for students who:

- are unable to attend or attempt an external assessment due to illness or misadventure
- attend and complete external assessment and consider their performance was significantly and adversely affected by illness or misadventure
- begin external assessment but are forced to abandon it due to illness or misadventure.

A student who is able to attend the external assessment but becomes ill during the assessment should inform the external assessment supervisor of their illness as soon as practicable. This may be before, during or immediately after the external assessment session. If illness, or other circumstances beyond a student's control, occur in the lead-up to, or during, the external assessment schedule and affect a student's performance in an external assessment, it may be appropriate to submit an application for illness and misadventure.

Applying for illness and misadventure

An application for illness and misadventure may be made by the MLP on behalf of a student or group/s of students. Applications are submitted in the AARA app in the QCAA Portal.

An illness and misadventure application cannot be made for:

- the same condition or circumstances for which QCAA-approved AARA have been approved, unless it can be demonstrated that a significant deterioration or complication of the condition occurred that diminished the student's performance in external assessment

- matters that the student could have avoided, e.g. misreading an examination timetable, misreading instructions in examinations
- circumstances of the student's or parent's/carer's own choosing, e.g. family holidays or sporting events
- variations in the administration of the assessment, e.g. variation to venue.

The QCAA will seek background information and a recommendation from the principal or the principal's delegate, observers and invigilators where relevant, to verify a student's application for illness and misadventure.

Senior External Examination

As there is no internal assessment and the final result is based on the external assessment alone, students must complete the Senior External Examination to receive a result in a General (Senior External Examination) subject.

No alternative arrangements can be made if a student does not attend a scheduled written examination. A student who cannot attend the oral component of a language examination must notify the QCAA as soon as practical. If the reason for non-attendance is illness or misadventure, it may be possible to arrange a telephone examination for the oral component *only*. Refer to Section 4.1.2: General, General (Extension) and General (Senior External Examination) syllabuses for more information about Senior External Examination syllabuses.

Schools should contact the QCAA's AARA Unit by phoning 1300 381 575 or emailing aara@qcaa.qld.edu.au to discuss individual student circumstances, if performance in any aspect of senior external assessment is adversely affected by illness or misadventure.

6.5.3 Application timelines

For internal assessments, applications may only be submitted once all AARA options have been exhausted. For advice, contact the AARA Unit.

For internal and external assessments, illness and misadventure applications can be submitted from 14 days before the start of the external assessment period to seven days after the student's final assessment.

6.5.4 Supporting documentation

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:

- details of the illness, condition or event (including details of a diagnosis, where applicable)
- date of diagnosis, onset or occurrence
- treatment or course of action related to the condition or event, as relevant
- 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.

Currency of supporting documentation

Supporting documentation must cover the date/s of the assessment/s for which the application is made.

A health professional providing evidence of temporary illness must have examined, treated or had a consultation with the student, in the days immediately preceding or following the external assessment. Refer to Section 6.6: Exceptional circumstances if extenuating reasons impact the ability to collect appropriate evidence from an independent medical practitioner or relevant third party.

6.6 Exceptional circumstances

All students are entitled to equal access to AARA, and exceptional circumstances should not prevent an otherwise eligible student from accessing the appropriate AARA.

Schools should consider exceptional circumstances when making decisions about AARA for eligible students in Unit 1 and Unit 2 and principal-reported AARA in Units 3 and 4. See Section 6.4.2: Application and notification process.

The QCAA recognises that financial, geographical and other circumstances can create barriers to students obtaining documentation including medical reports. These circumstances should not prevent submission of an application for AARA or illness and misadventure that is required to address the functional impact/s of a student's disability, medical condition or circumstance in assessment. The QCAA considers applications on a case-by-case basis.

Schools should phone the QCAA's AARA Unit on 1300 381 575 or email aara@qcaa.qld.edu.au to discuss additional information that may be submitted in exceptional circumstances, e.g. fulsome school-based evidence.