SPECIAL PROVISIONS

SCHOOL ASSESSMENT VARIATIONS

This information sheet explains the possible variations to school assessment that can be used as special provisions at Stage 1 and Stage 2, and describes the associated processes.

The SACE Board policy on special provisions in curriculum and assessment is available on the SACE website. Refer to Information Sheet 37/13 for general information on special provisions in curriculum and assessment.

Schools are responsible for establishing the grounds for variations, and for identifying and implementing appropriate, reasonable, and fair special provisions for school assessments at Stage 1 and Stage 2. In accordance with the SACE Board’s Special Provisions in Curriculum and Assessment policy, variations to school assessment do not require approval from the SACE Board.

POSSIBLE VARIATIONS

The range of ways that schools can help eligible students to be assessed fairly against the learning requirements in the subject outline include the following:

• Delaying the presentation of an assessment (i.e. extension to school-set due dates).
  
  All schools should have a policy on school-set due dates. Due dates should be set so that the need for both teachers and students to manage workloads is recognised. Students should be informed of the process and the criteria for granting extensions.
  
  In cases where students are affected by illness, impairment, or personal circumstances in the short term, extensions to school-set due dates may be the most appropriate form of variation.

  Note: For external assessments such as investigations, extensions to dates beyond the SACE Board courier collection dates require SACE Board approval. Applications should be made on Form 22/13.
  
  For students affected by illness, impairment, or personal circumstances in the long term, extensions to school-set due dates may not be the most appropriate form of variation.

• Reducing the number of assessments while ensuring that there is still appropriate evidence that learning requirements are being assessed in each assessment type.
  
  For students affected by illness, impairment, or personal circumstances in the long term, a reduction in the number of assessments may be the most appropriate form of variation. In reducing the number of assessments, a teacher should focus on those assessments, in each assessment type, that assess learning requirements that will not be, or have not been, assessed elsewhere.
  
  The completion by a student of too few assessments would prevent a subject teacher from making a valid estimated grade for each assessment type.
  
  The way in which the estimated grade is determined should be documented by the subject teacher. The estimated grade should be used in determining the actual grade that is entered on the subject results sheet.
  
  Should a student’s illness, impairment, or personal circumstances impact severely on several subjects, it may be advisable for the student to reduce the number of subjects being studied and delay completion of the SACE.

• Replacing one assessment with a different type of assessment that is consistent with the learning requirements in the subject outline (e.g. replacing a written assessment with an oral assessment).
• Using another planned assessment to assess more learning requirements than originally intended.
• Using alternative arrangements to help the student to complete an assessment (e.g. a word processor, a spelling checker).
• Allowing the student additional working time (reading or writing time) for a timed assessment.
• Allowing the student rest periods during timed assessments.
• Providing a reader, a scribe, or assistive technology.

If the student’s work is part of the sample to be submitted for moderation, and his or her folio of work varies from the learning and assessment plan for the assessment group owing to the grounds for special provisions, the teacher must complete a ‘Variations — Moderation Materials’ form, which is available from the subject minisites.

EVIDENCE REQUIRED

For special provisions to be approved by the school, evidence is required to:

• establish eligibility on the basis of specific grounds
• determine the most appropriate variations.

The evidence required will vary but will always include:

• information from the student
• information from the teachers about the impact of the illness, impairment, or personal circumstances on the student’s capacity to participate in an assessment. (Refer to Sections 5.2.1 and 5.3.1 of the SACE Board’s Special Provisions in Curriculum and Assessment policy.)

The school may also seek evidence from independent professionals or community members.

The fact that a student has a diagnosis for a particular condition (i.e. illness, disability, or impairment) does not automatically entitle the student to special provisions. The prime consideration is the impact of the condition on the student’s capacity to participate in an assessment.

RESPONSIBILITIES

School Responsibilities

Schools are responsible for:

• determining eligibility and implementing appropriate and reasonable special provisions for school assessments at Stage 1 and Stage 2
• ensuring that any special provisions requiring a variation to the learning and assessment plan are consistent with the requirements of the relevant subject outline
• ensuring that the same knowledge and skill requirements and standards are applied to all students, whether or not they are granted special provisions
• using a range of evidence to inform decisions on an application for special provisions
• keeping records of student applications and any special provisions granted to students for school assessment at Stage 1 and Stage 2 (An addendum to the learning and assessment plan is not required for special provisions.)
• reviewing regularly the provisions granted to students to ensure that they are the most appropriate and are within the guidelines and principles of the SACE Board’s Special Provisions in Curriculum and Assessment policy
• making students aware that the special provisions granted by the SACE Board for external assessments at Stage 2 may differ from the special provisions that the school has granted for school assessments before Stage 2
• completing a ‘Variations — Moderation Materials’ form if the work of a student granted special provisions in school assessment is part of the sample submitted for moderation, and his or her folio of work varies from the learning and assessment plan.
SACE Board Responsibilities

SACE Board Officers will help schools to make determinations about special provisions for school assessments.

The SACE Board will monitor and review the decision-making and recording processes for granting special provisions for school assessments in a selection of schools on an annual basis.

APPEAL PROCESS

A student may appeal a decision made by a school in relation to special provisions for school assessment(s). If an agreement cannot be reached between the school and the student, the matter can be referred to the SACE Board for a final decision.

When referring the matter to the SACE Board, schools should forward all relevant information to the Chief Executive, including:

• what the student is requesting
• the evidence provided by the school and the student to inform the decision
• the school’s decision
• comments from the school outlining the reasons for the decision.