

Student Guide

Equitable Assessment and Special Consideration in Assessment in Years 11 and 12



What you need to do for the AST?

Forms for special case consideration are available from the AST Coordinator in your school. These forms comprise two parts. Part 1 consists of a student application and a confidential college report requiring the Principals' support based on recommendations from the school counsellor or special needs team. The AST Coordinator will send this to the Assessment Officer of ACT BSSS. Part 2 consists of a confidential medical report to be sent directly by your health professional to the Assessment Officer with relevant current documentation. In some cases further functional evidence may be required (e.g. a recent handwritten essay). This application MUST be submitted by the due date. (Check this with your AST co-ordinator).



People to seek help from in your school/college

Psychologists
Class teachers
Special Needs Co-ordinator/Team
Year Advisors/Supervisors/Coordinators
Careers Advisors



Short term misadventure/ special consideration

This booklet also applies in part to situations where a student's ability to demonstrate achievement is impaired by a circumstance of a short term temporary basis. This includes situations such as bereavement, depression, illness or injury. In these situations, a student would be entitled to :-

- alternative assessments
- extensions on submission of work
- sitting assessments at times different to other students
- extra time allowed for assessment items
- exemption from completing items (status for individual items)
- status for a semester or half-semester unit

In these circumstances a student needs to apply for Special Consideration and must supply appropriate and current documentation to the college.

See your year advisors, welfare team or psychologists for advice.

Further information can be obtained through
the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies
Phone (02) 6205 7181

Equitable Assessment

All students, including those with disabilities, must have equal opportunities to show their achievement whether it is in class assessment tasks, assignment work, major end of semester tests or the ACT Scaling Test (AST).

It is NOT a question of giving students with disabilities something extra – it is a question of giving them what is rightfully theirs – an equal opportunity to demonstrate their full capabilities.

Universities and TAFEs also make provisions for students with special needs. The special provisions for Years 11 and 12 are in line with these.

Provisions that are made for students with disability or special need are underpinned by the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and the Disability Standards for Education (2005).

Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act (1992) **defines disability** very broadly to include physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological or learning disabilities and special needs. It includes physical disfigurement, the presence in the body of a disease-causing organism (e.g. the HIV virus) and any other chronic or short term illness.

Special Needs students are those with functional difficulty caused by a disability or an impairment.

Special consideration for assessment requirements

Where a student's disability or special need impacts significantly on their ability to complete assessment items or tasks required as per the unit outline, the student may apply through the college Student Services team for Special Consideration. This process formally records the circumstance and decision making in accordance with OBSSS guidelines.

What kind of provisions can students ask for?

Examples of special provisions which may be used to support students include:

- **Technology** – use of laptop for writing tasks, voice activated software for students with low literacy skills, assessment items in electronic form for students with visual impairment
- **Alternative assessment formats** – practical tests, oral presentations, electronic forms of presentations, all allow demonstration of knowledge for students who have difficulty in writing
- **Assessment requirements** - extra time for reading and completing examination papers, extension of assignment due date, reasonable reduction in word limit required for assignment, use of a separate room for test
- **Assessment supports** - signing interpreters, scribe/note taker, built in relief breaks

Special consideration for the ACT Scaling Test (AST)

Students with disabilities/special needs should apply for assistance in undertaking the AST. Some of the special provisions mentioned before may be applicable to the sitting of the AST.

Students should discuss their needs and eligibility for assistance with the school counsellor and/or the Special Needs Team and the AST Coordinator early in the year they will be sitting the AST.

Note: All decisions regarding eligibility for Special Provisions in the AST or eligibility for the Second Sitting are the sole responsibility of the Office of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies and because of the nature of the AST some support given for college assessment may not be relevant/granted for the AST.