

Illness and misadventure

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (AARA)

This information is for students, parents/carers and school staff. It applies to students completing senior school studies in 2020 and beyond.

Students whose ability to attend or participate in an assessment is adversely affected by illness or an unexpected event may be eligible for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (AARA) if:

- the event is unforeseen and beyond the student's control (e.g. death of a family member)
- it is not of the student's own choosing or that of their parents/carers (e.g. *not* a family holiday)
- it has an adverse effect on the student's ability to attend or participate in assessment.

AARA are applicable for students who have completed required learning as outlined in the relevant syllabus or course. They 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.

Internal assessment

- A student who is unable to attend school for an internal assessment should inform the school as soon as practical. This may be before, during or immediately after the assessment session. If a student is ill at the time of an internal examination but still able to attend school, they should not sit the examination, but should be given the opportunity to sit a comparable assessment at a later date. **Note:** AARA must be applied at the time of the assessment and cannot be applied retrospectively, i.e. after the assessment is marked and a student receives their results.
- Schools implement principal-reported AARA, such as extensions and comparable assessment, to provide opportunities for the student to complete the assessment. These are reported to the QCAA through the AARA application. Regardless of when and how students complete assessment, they should have been provided with the teaching and learning and be prepared for the assessment.
- If the student is still unable to provide a response to an internal assessment, the school may use evidence gathered by the teacher during the assessment preparation time (e.g. a draft) to make a judgement about the student's work.

Supporting documentation

Schools make decisions about extensions and comparable assessment, and retain supporting documentation. These are principal-reported AARA that do not require QCAA approval. In approving AARA, a principal or principal's delegate must be reasonably satisfied that the need for AARA exists, and be able to provide evidence to justify the decision.

External assessment

General subjects

- The QCAA advises students to attend each of their external assessments. However, students are not expected to attend against specific written medical advice, or if it is clear they are unable to do so. When in doubt about attendance to complete an external assessment, students should contact the school external assessment coordinator.

- A student who is ill but able to attend the external assessment should inform the assessment supervisor of their illness as soon as practical. This may be before, during or immediately after the external assessment session.
- The QCAA will issue further advice for students who are showing any symptoms that may be related to COVID-19, closer to the assessment.
- An application for illness and misadventure may be made by a student, or by the school on behalf of the student, when performance in an external assessment is affected by an illness or circumstances beyond their control, occurring in the lead-up to, or during, the external assessment schedule.
- An illness and misadventure application cannot be made for the same condition or circumstances for which QCAA-approved AARA have been approved (i.e. for students with disability or temporary injury) unless it can be demonstrated that a significant deterioration or complication of the condition occurred that diminished the student's performance in external assessment.
- The QCAA may seek background information and a recommendation from the principal or principal's delegate, observers and external assessment supervisors, where relevant, to verify a student's application for illness and misadventure.
- Applications are due 14 days before the assessment and no more than 7 days after it.

General (Senior External Examination) subjects

- Students must attend all components of the examination to receive a result in a Senior External Examination.
- 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. A telephone examination for the oral component only may be arranged in extenuating circumstances.

Supporting documentation

Supporting documentation must be submitted with AARA applications as follows:

- For medical circumstances, a report from an independent health professional that includes
 - details of the illness, condition or event (including diagnosis and date of diagnosis/onset, if applicable); a general statement, such as 'unfit for duty' is insufficient
 - symptoms, treatment or course of action related to the condition or event
 - explanation of the probable effect of the illness, condition or event on the student's participation in the assessment.
- For non-medical circumstances, written evidence from a relevant independent professional or other independent third party such as a social worker, police officer, solicitor, member of the clergy, or funeral director.

More information

For more information, please phone 1300 381 575 or email aara@qcaa.qld.edu.au.



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