

External assessment: 2026 variation to venue application process

Purpose

To inform schools of the 2026 external assessment variation to venue application process.

Background

Although students are expected to sit external assessment at their main learning provider (MLP), the QCAA recognises there may be circumstances where a variation to venue is required.

Information

A variation to venue may be required for external assessment when:

- the MLP
 - is not suitable as an external assessment venue
 - is a distance education provider*
 - has students located across multiple campuses within a single school
 - is affected by construction or excessive noise that makes it an unsuitable assessment venue
- a student
 - is geographically isolated
 - is representing Australia or their state in an official capacity at a sporting, academic or cultural event
 - is currently residing outside Queensland
 - has a medical condition or injury preventing them from attending their MLP.

*Students who are studying a subject through distance education, but the distance education provider is **not** their MLP, will sit their assessment at their MLP. A variation to venue is not required in this case.

What you need to do

Schools must email externalassessment@qcaa.qld.edu.au by 31 August if a variation to venue is required for:

- whole cohorts — schools advise the change to a single alternative venue for the cohort
- MLPs with multiple campuses — schools confirm subjects and students completing assessment at each campus
- students whose MLP is a distance education provider — schools propose Queensland secondary school venues for these students.

Schools must submit applications via the AARA app in the QCAA Portal for individual students requiring a variation to venue for any other reason. To approve a variation to venue, the QCAA must be satisfied of the reason for the application and the suitability of the nominated venue and supervisor.

Note: Significant preparation time is required for venues that are not Queensland secondary schools.

Applications should be submitted as early as possible, and before 31 August 2026.

Finding out more

All information about the variation to venue application process, including information for MLPs, students, parents/carers and supervisors, is available on the QCAA website at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/external-assessment/variation-to-venue.

If you have queries, please phone 1300 381 575 or email aara@qcaa.qld.edu.au.

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