

2017 Special provision handbook

Queensland Core Skills (QCS) Test

January 2017

ISBN

Print version: 978-1-921802-75-1

Electronic version: 978-1-921802-74-4

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1 Introduction

The Queensland Core Skills (QCS) Test is conducted annually in the third-last week of Term 3 of the school year. Test results contribute, through scaling processes, to the calculation of Overall Positions (OPs) and Field Positions (FPs), which rank students for tertiary entrance.

All year 12 students have a right to sit the test in the year they receive their senior statement.

Year 12 students who are eligible for an OP or equivalent OP (visa students) must sit the test. Students who are ineligible for an OP may choose to sit the test.

The test dates for 2017 are:

Date	Testpaper	Perusal time	Working time
Tuesday 29 August	Writing Task (WT)	10 minutes	2 hours
	Multiple Choice I (MC I)	10 minutes	1 hour 30 minutes
Wednesday 30 August	Short Response (SR)	10 minutes	2 hours
	Multiple Choice II (MC II)	10 minutes	1 hour 30 minutes

The Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) sets and amends the rules for the test under its powers and functions listed in the *Education (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority) Act 2014* and the associated regulation. For detailed information about the QCS Test, see the *Queensland Core Skills (QCS) Test Guideline*, available at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/qcs-test/publications.

QCAA recognises that some students have a medical condition, impairment, or exceptional circumstances that may affect their access to the test or their demonstration of achievement in the test. QCAA attempts to minimise such barriers by making special provision available to these students.

1.1 Types of special provision available

Schools approve special provision for school-based assessment. Special provision for the QCS Test, however, is approved by the QCAA.

Before the test

Two types of special provision are available before the QCS Test: special arrangements and exemption.

- **Special arrangements** are practical adjustments to the test conditions, e.g. restbreaks, A3-size test materials, use of a computer to word process WT and SR responses.
- **Exemption** allows a student to be absent from the test and retain their eligibility for an OP.

After the test

Two types of special provision are available after the QCS Test: absentee exemption and declaring a test grade null and void.

- **Absentee exemption** allows a student who was unavoidably absent from the test to retain OP eligibility.

- **Declaring a test grade null and void** allows a student who sat the test to opt not to receive a test grade if they can show that their performance on the day was impaired by a recognised medical condition or impairment, or by exceptional circumstances. OP-eligible students will retain eligibility.

1.2 Principles

These principles guide QCAA's special provision policy and procedures:

- ensuring justice and equity
- providing students with impairments the opportunity to participate in the test on the same basis as students without impairments
- ensuring that special provision does not provide an unfair advantage to any student
- assessing actual achievement, not perceived ability or potential
- complying with the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*.

1.3 Rules

1. A student who applies for special provision (the applicant) must allow reasonable time for QCAA to process the application.
2. The applicant's privacy must be protected (see Section 1.4: Personal Information).
3. A decision regarding a special provision application must not impose an unjustifiable hardship on the applicant, other students or the education provider.
4. The given characteristics of the test must not be varied (see Section 1.3 of the *Queensland Core Skills (QCS) Test Guideline 2017*, available at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/qcs-test/publications).
5. The integrity of the test and the results gained by all students must be protected.
To achieve this:
 - a. the use of scribes, readers, interpreters, dictionaries or voice recognition technology is not permitted, because students sitting the test must do the required reading and writing
 - b. altering the format or substance of the test, e.g. the use of braille, is not permitted as this would mean varying the characteristics of the test.
6. Students' achievement in the Common Curriculum Elements (CCEs) as demonstrated at the time of sitting the test must be assessed and certified. Special consideration is not applied when marking test responses.
7. A decision to approve special arrangements is based on the need to remove, as far as possible, a barrier that prevents a student accessing the test, not on the need to compensate for a lack of knowledge or lack of ability.
8. All decisions are based on information provided in the application and supporting documentation.

1.4 Personal information

QCAA handles personal information in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

In situations where additional information is required, a QCAA officer will contact the applicant's school in the first instance (except for private applications). See Rule 2 in Section 1.3: Rules.

1.5 Using QCS Test results in the calculation of OPs

The most important factor in determining a student's OP is their achievement in their chosen Authority subjects.

A student's QCS Test results do not directly determine their OP. It is possible for a student to perform poorly in the test and achieve a high OP or to perform well in the test and achieve a low OP.

OP-eligible students' test results provide group scaling parameters for their school subject groups and their school group. This allows equitable comparison of the achievements of all students in their Authority subjects and produces students' rankings within the school and within the state.

For more information, see the tertiary entrance information on the QCAA website:
www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/tertiary-entrance.

1.6 The effect of special provision

Special provision does not affect OP eligibility or alter the method of OP calculation.

A student who has been approved exemption or who has had their test grade declared null and void will not contribute scaling data for the calculation of OPs for students in their school. However, the student's OP will be calculated in the same way as for all other OP-eligible students who sat the test, i.e. by using the group parameters to compare their achievements with the achievements of other students.

There will be no record of special provision on the student's Senior Statement, Statement of Results or Statement of Achievement.

	Application type	Will the student ...		
		contribute data for the calculation of group parameters?	receive a test grade?	remain OP eligible?
Before the test	Special arrangements	Yes, if OP eligible	Yes	Yes
	Exemption	No	No	Yes
After the test	Absentee exemption	No	No	Yes
	Declaring a test grade null and void	No	No	Yes

2 Application process

2.1 Through the school

The school may submit an application on the student's behalf. QCAA relies on the following information to help make fair, equitable and reasonable decisions:

- information provided by school staff about the impact of students' impairments/circumstances
- medical or other independent documentation.

Schools should make all students aware that special provision is available. Any student who believes they have a reason to apply for special provision may do so.

Discussing an application

Students, parents/carers and school staff should meet as necessary to discuss the need for an application and the provisions required.

School staff may not submit an application for special provision without the consent of the student.

Obtaining documentation

Documentation is required for most applications. Students are responsible for obtaining current documentation to support their application (e.g. medical certificate), but in some cases the school may have suitable documentation on file (e.g. verification documents).

Submitting an application

The school submits an application on behalf of the student through the Interactive Data Portal, located within the QCAA secure website, providing the supporting documentation and information about the impact of the student's impairment/circumstances in test situations.

2.2 To QCAA directly

A student may submit an application directly if they have a reason for not submitting their application through their school, e.g. if they have a medical condition they do not wish to disclose to school staff. In this case, the student or their parent/carer should phone (07) 3864 0227 for information and an application form.

Late applications

Late applications will be accepted if there are extenuating circumstances and if there is sufficient time to process them before the QCS Test.

If a student will be unable to obtain documentation by the due date indicated for the application category in Section 3.5: Application categories, phone (07) 3864 0227 to discuss a possible extension of time.

2.3 Eligibility and application dates

	Application type	Who can apply	Application due date
Before the test	Special arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OP-eligible students OP-ineligible students Private-entry candidates 	<p>Long-term impairments — applications close on 21 May 2017, unless the condition is diagnosed after this date.</p> <p>Short-term impairments — submit an application in accordance with the dates specified in Section 3.5: Application categories.</p>
	Exemption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OP-eligible students 	
After the test	Absentee exemption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OP-eligible students 	Applications close on 5 October 2017
	Declaring a test grade null and void	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OP-eligible students OP-ineligible students Private-entry candidates 	

2.4 Responsibilities

	QCAA	School	Student
Before the test	<p>Special arrangements</p> <p>QCAA notifies decision to the school and applicant within 4 weeks.</p>	<p>Ensure that you receive notification of the decision.</p> <p>Follow up outstanding applications.</p> <p>The chief supervisor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides the approved arrangements that the student wishes to use follows the instructions provided in the <i>Directions for Administration (DFA) 2017 Queensland Core Skills (QCS) Test</i>: www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/qcs-test/administration. 	<p>Speak with the chief supervisor 1–2 weeks before the test to advise which approved arrangements you wish to use.</p>
	<p>Exemption</p> <p>QCAA notifies decision to the school and applicant within 4 weeks.</p>	<p>Ensure that you receive notification of the decision.</p> <p>Follow up outstanding applications.</p> <p>If exemption is approved, QCAA will provide an override key by late October to allow subject achievement indicators (SAIs) to be entered into the Student Data Capture System (SDCS).</p> <p>For SDCS enquiries, contact the Helpdesk on (07) 3864 0278.</p>	Nil
After the test	<p>Absentee exemption</p> <p>QCAA notifies decision to the school and applicant by mid-October.</p>	<p>Ensure that you receive notification of the decision.</p> <p>Follow up any outstanding applications.</p> <p>An SDCS override key is not needed. Enter SAIs as usual.</p>	Nil
	<p>Declaring a test grade null and void</p> <p>QCAA notifies decision to the school and applicant by mid-October.</p>	<p>Ensure that you receive notification of the decision.</p> <p>Follow up any outstanding applications.</p> <p>An SDCS override key is not needed. Enter SAIs as usual.</p>	Nil

3 Before the test

Students may apply for special arrangements or exemption before the test if they are affected by:

- a recognised medical condition or impairment, whether long term or short term. The student must have received:
 - a diagnosis by a medical practitioner or
 - verification of the condition or impairment from Education Queensland, Queensland Catholic Education Commission or Association of Independent Schools Queensland.
- exceptional circumstances.

A student does not need to be receiving special provision for school-based assessment to apply for special provision in the QCS Test. Equally, a student who receives special provision at school may not be approved special provision for the QCS Test.

Any provisions approved may:

- be different from those in place for in-school assessment
- not necessarily be able to accommodate all recommendations made by a medical professional.

3.1 Special arrangements

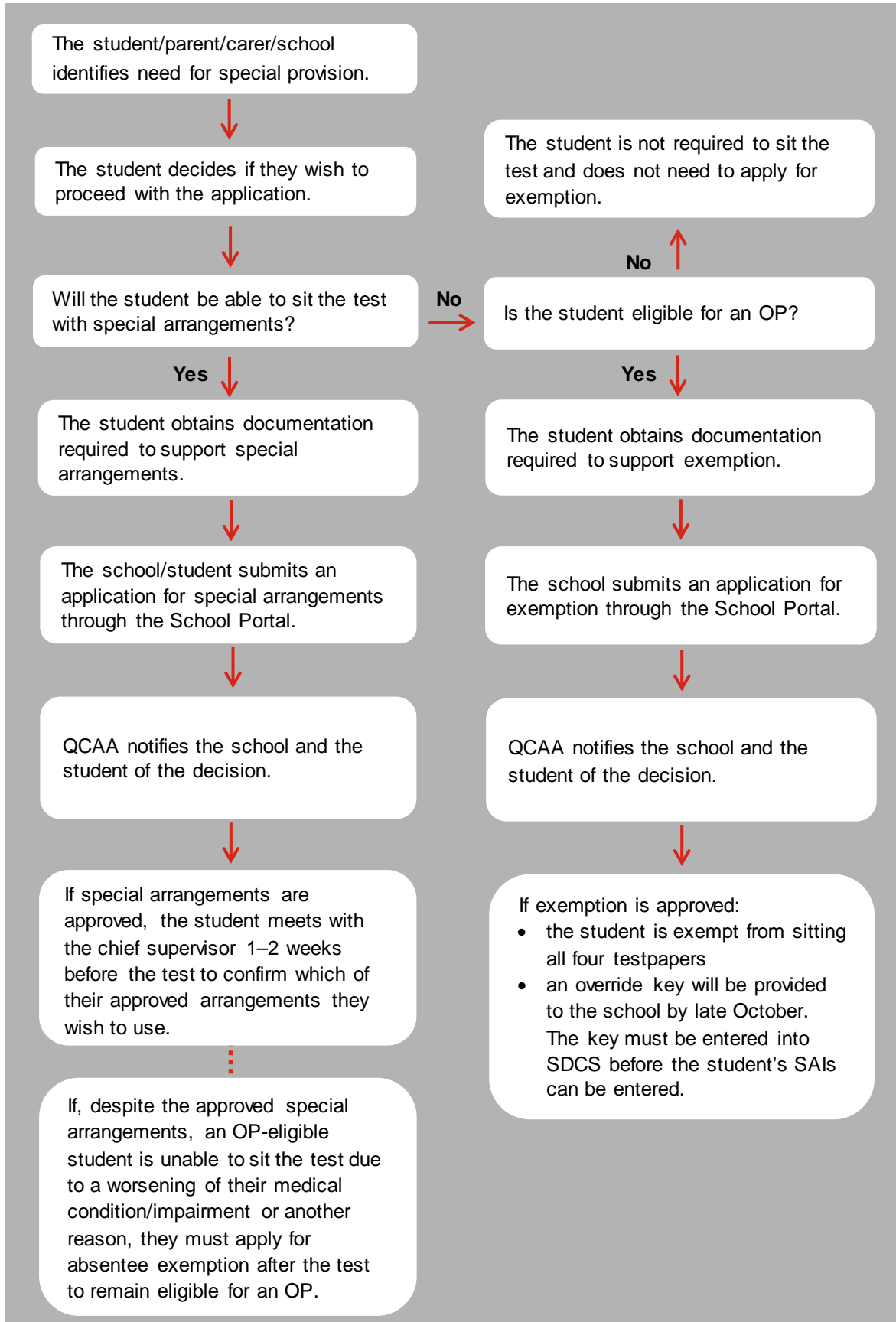
Special arrangements are practical adjustments made to test conditions. The test centre must implement the special arrangements approved. The student is not obliged to use all of the approved arrangements — they may use all, some or none of them. The student is the only person who can make this decision.

3.2 Exemption

Students should apply for exemption **only** if they are severely affected by their impairment or circumstances such that they are unable to sit the test without the special arrangements that are available.

A student who is approved exemption does not need to attend any of the four test sessions. However, if they do opt to sit all four testpapers, they will be awarded a QCS Test grade, and exemption will no longer apply.

3.3 Overview — before the test



3.4 Application requirements

The categories listed here apply to applications submitted **before** the test.

The list of reasons for applications is not exhaustive. For advice on reasons not listed here, phone (07) 3864 0227.

Documentation

Applications are assessed using the supporting documentation provided.

Medical documentation must:

- state the name of the medical condition or impairment
- describe how the student will be affected by the impairment at the time of the test
- be provided by a suitably qualified person (as indicated in the relevant application categories) who is not related to the student and who is not employed by the school.

Applications submitted without appropriate documentation are unlikely to be approved.

Standard arrangements

If an application for special arrangements is approved, the standard arrangements will be granted.

QCAA will not approve both extra time and restbreaks for a student. In addition, where an application is submitted with more than one category (e.g. Illness and Medication side effects), each type of arrangement will be approved once only.

Additional arrangements

A student may apply for additional special arrangements if the supporting documentation provides sufficient justification.

Exemption

For some application categories, QCAA will not approve exemption before the test. However, any student may apply for absentee exemption after the test if unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances prevented them from sitting the test.

For example, a student with asthma will not be approved exemption before the test. However, if the student experiences a severe asthma episode in one of the test sessions and consequently is unable to attend the remainder of test, they may apply for absentee exemption after the test (see section 4.1).

3.5 Application categories

Attention deficit disorder (ADD) or Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP, specialist doctor or psychologist dated from 1 January 2015
Standard arrangement Note: If student experiences side effects from prescribed medication, see Medication side effects on page 14	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks or extra time (5 minutes per half hour) Use of a computer for the Writing Task and Short Response subtests (see section 3.6) Assistance from a supervisor/carer, who may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the student's name when reading from the <i>Directions for Administration</i> • provide support and reassurance • prompt the student to start and/or continue working
Additional arrangements	Extension of restbreaks or extra time to 10 minutes per half hour — approved only if student is severely affected in test situations (e.g. student becomes combative/disruptive) and examples of previous incidents or behaviours are provided.
Exemption	Will not be approved
Applications due	By 21 May

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) including Asperger's disorder

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP, specialist doctor or psychologist, or copy of current verification documentation
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks or extra time (5 minutes per half hour) Use of a computer for the Writing Task and Short Response subtests (see section 3.6) Assistance from a supervisor/carer, who may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the student's name when reading from the <i>Directions for Administration</i> • provide support and reassurance • prompt the student to start and/or continue working
Additional arrangements	Extension of restbreaks or extra time to 10 minutes per half hour — approved only if student is severely affected in test situations (e.g. student becomes combative/disruptive) and examples of previous incidents or behaviours are provided. Cut-out 'mask' (provided by QCAA) and/or a pair of scissors for the WT testpaper.
Exemption	Will be considered if the student is severely affected and receiving a high level of support at school. Application must indicate why the student will be unable to sit the test with special arrangements.
Applications due	By 21 May

Bereavement

This category applies to students affected by the recent death of an immediate family member or significant person.

Documentation	Funeral notice or death certificate Application must indicate the relationship of the deceased to the student
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks (5 minutes per half hour) Standing/stretching/lying down, as necessary Liquid and bite-sized food Ease of access to toilet facilities Medication and water
Additional arrangements	N/A
Exemption	Will be considered if the funeral is on one of the test days or if the student is severely affected and receiving a high level of support at school. Application must indicate why the student will be unable to sit the test with special arrangements.
Applications due	From 1 July

Diabetes

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP or specialist doctor
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks (5 minutes per half hour; if hypoglycaemia or hyperglycaemia occurs, restbreaks may be extended to 10 minutes per half hour) Liquid and bite-sized food Ease of access to toilet facilities Blood glucose monitoring equipment Medication and water
Additional arrangements	N/A
Exemption	Will not be approved
Applications due	By 21 May

English as an additional language or dialect (EALD)

This category applies to students whose first language is a language or dialect other than Standard Australian English (SAE) and who receive support at school to develop proficiency in SAE.

Documentation	For students born overseas — proof of first entry into Australia after 1 January 2012 (e.g. copy of visa) or confirmation by school that date of first entry conforms to this requirement For Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students whose first language is not SAE — confirmation by school of support provided
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Test session instructions in writing
Additional arrangements	N/A
Exemption	Will not be approved
Applications due	By 21 May

Exceptional circumstances

This category applies to circumstances that are not health-related.

Examples include cultural or sporting representation (e.g. representing Queensland or Australia), court appearance, emergency, religious obligation, expulsion from school.

Documentation	All available supporting documentation, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • selection letter, together with itinerary that provides the time and venue of event and travel arrangements • summons/subpoena • letter from school principal detailing an emergency situation.
Arrangements	Special arrangements will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allocation to a different QCAA-approved test centre within Queensland for a student who is unavoidably away from home, e.g. flood, sporting representation • restbreaks if fasting as a religious obligation. The application should clearly list the special arrangements the student is seeking.
Exemption	Will be considered if the student has a valid reason for being absent from all or part of the test. Exemption will not be approved for family holidays or similar events.
Applications due	By 21 May or as soon as possible

Hearing impairment

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP, specialist doctor or audiologist dated from 1 January 2015, or copy of current verification documentation
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks or extra time (5 minutes per half hour) Test session instructions in writing
Additional arrangements	Extension of restbreaks or extra time to 10 minutes per half hour will be considered for students who are severely affected — application must indicate why the standard restbreaks/extra time will not be sufficient FM assistive hearing device, e.g. soundfield amplification system (SAS)
Exemption	Will be considered if the student is severely affected and receiving a high level of support at school. Application must indicate why the student will be unable to sit the test with special arrangements.
Applications due	By 21 May

Illegible handwriting

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP, specialist doctor or occupational therapist dated from 1 January 2016 Medical certificate/report is not required if school confirms that handwriting is illegible
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Use of a computer for the Writing Task and Short Response subtests (see page 22)
Additional arrangements	N/A
Exemption	Will not be approved
Applications due	By 21 May

Illness — contagious/infectious disease

Examples include chicken pox, hepatitis, glandular fever (recent diagnosis), influenza, measles, meningococcal disease, mumps, rubella, whooping cough.

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP or specialist doctor dated from 7 August 2017
Standard arrangements Note: If student experiences side effects from prescribed medication, see Medication side effects on page 14	Separate supervision Restbreaks (5 minutes per half hour) Standing/stretching/lying down, as necessary Liquid and bite-sized food Medication and water Note: Students with a contagious or infectious disease must observe the required exclusion period for that disease (see www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/timeout_poster.pdf).
Additional arrangements	Special desk Special seating
Exemption	Will be considered if the student is too unwell to sit the test or will be contagious at the time of the test
Applications due	From 7 August

Illness — physical or mental fatigue

Examples include chronic fatigue syndrome, glandular fever (long-term effects), hyperthyroidism, hypothyroidism.

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP or specialist doctor dated from 19 July 2017
Standard arrangements Note: If student experiences side effects from prescribed medication, see Medication side effects on page 14	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks (5 minutes per half hour) Standing/stretching/lying down, as necessary Liquid and bite-sized food Medication and water
Additional arrangements	Special desk Special seating
Exemption	Will not be approved
Applications due	From 19 July

Illness — recurrent

Examples include asthma, eczema, coeliac disease, Crohn's disease, migraine.

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP or specialist doctor dated from 1 January 2016
Standard arrangements Note: If student experiences side effects from prescribed medication, see Medication side effects on page 14	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks or extra time (5 or 10 minutes per half hour) only if ill during a test session Ease of access to toilet facilities Medication and water
Additional arrangements	N/A
Exemption	Will not be approved
Applications due	By 21 May

Intellectual impairment

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP, specialist doctor or psychologist or copy of current verification documentation
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Test session instructions in writing Use of a computer for the Writing Task and Short Response subtests (see page 22)
Additional arrangements	Restbreaks or extra time (5 minutes per half hour) Assistance from a supervisor/carer, who may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the student's name when reading from the <i>Directions for Administration</i> • provide support and reassurance • prompt the student to start and/or continue working
Exemption	Will be considered if the student is severely affected and receiving a high level of support at school. Application must indicate why the student will be unable to sit the test with special arrangements.
Applications due	By 21 May

Medication side effects

A student may apply under this category if taking **prescribed** medication causing inability to concentrate and/or drowsiness during the test, e.g. medication prescribed for ADHD, depression, epilepsy.

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP or specialist doctor dated from 1 January 2017 that states name of medication, side effects and usage. Certificate to describe the side effects <i>actually</i> experienced by the student, not the <i>possible</i> side effects of the medication
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks or extra time (5 minutes per half hour) depending on severity Standing/stretching/lying down, as necessary Liquid and bite-sized food Ease of access to toilet facilities Medication and water
Additional arrangements	N/A
Exemption	Will not be approved
Applications due	By 21 May or as soon as possible

Neurological impairment — general

Examples include acquired brain injury, cerebral aneurysm, cerebral tumour, concussion, narcolepsy, neuropathy, side effects from cancer therapies, Tourette syndrome.

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP or specialist doctor dated from 1 January 2016, or copy of current verification documentation
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks or extra time (5 or 10 minutes per half hour depending on severity) Standing/stretching/lying down, as necessary Liquid and bite-sized food Ease of access to toilet facilities Medication and water Use of a computer for the Writing Task and Short Response subtests (see page 22)
Additional arrangements	Wheelchair access Special desk Special seating
Exemption	Will be considered if the student is severely affected and receiving a high level of support at school. Application must indicate why the student will be unable to sit the test with special arrangements.
Applications due	By 21 May

Neurological impairment — motor coordination disorders

Motor coordination disorders causing difficulty with handwriting, e.g. agraphia/dysgraphia, motor apraxia/dyspraxia.

Documentation	Report from occupational therapist dated from 1 January 2016 If documentation is from another type of practitioner (e.g. an educational psychologist), apply under the specific learning difficulties category (SPLD).
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks or extra time (5 or 10 minutes per half hour depending on severity) Use of a computer for the Writing Task and Short Response subtests (see page 22) Crossing/stroking/highlighting Multiple Choice responses
Additional arrangements	N/A
Exemption	Will not be approved
Applications due	By 21 May

Neurological impairment — seizure

An example is epilepsy.

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP or specialist doctor dated from 1 January 2016
Standard arrangements Note: If student experiences side effects from prescribed medication, see Medication side effects on page 14	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks or extra time (5 or 10 minutes per half hour) only if ill during a test session Medication and water
Additional arrangements	N/A
Exemption	Will be considered if there is a strong possibility of a severe seizure during the test
Applications due	By 21 May

Other

Circumstances affecting a student's ability to sit the test that do not fall within any other category. These may include such physical or psychological conditions as mild discomfort, pain or distress due to soreness, itching, sweating, sensitivity to light, colour, heat, sound, location/nature of test room or other environmental factors.

Documentation	Supporting documentation, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medical report that details/cites the condition and its effect on the student • letter from school principal detailing condition and impact on student, and actions that have proved effective in previous test situations.
Standard arrangements	Special arrangements will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seating out of order/separate supervision • special desk/seating • modified/additional reduced lighting • use of own coloured transparency/overlay • use of personal desk fan • standing/stretching/lying down, as necessary • access to liquid and bite-sized food • ease of access to toilet facilities • access to medication and water. <p>The application should clearly list the special arrangements the student is seeking (see 'In response to requests ... checked by supervisor' on page 8 of <i>Directions for Administration (DFA) 2017 Queensland Core Skills (QCS) Test</i>).</p>
Additional arrangements	Modified test materials. Application must provide specific details of requirements (see page 23).
Exemption	Will not be approved
Applications due	By 21 May or as soon as possible

Physical impairment — injury

Significant injury or pain causing difficulties with handwriting or with sitting for long periods, e.g. broken arm, broken leg, back pain.

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP, specialist doctor or physiotherapist dated from 7 August 2017 that details the injury and effect on student's handwriting
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks or extra time (5 or 10 minutes per half hour depending on severity) Standing/stretching/lying down, as necessary Medication and water Crossing/stroking/highlighting Multiple Choice responses
Additional arrangements	Use of a computer for the Writing Task and Short Response subtests (if ability to write is affected) (see page 22) Assistance from a supervisor/carer, e.g. turning pages, holding testpaper steady while the student rules lines (application must clearly detail the assistance required). Note: The use of a scribe will not be approved. Special seating
Exemption	Will be considered if the student is severely affected and receiving a high level of support at school. Application must demonstrate that the student will be unable to sit the test with special arrangements.
Applications due	From 7 August

Physical impairment — motor skills

Examples include low muscle tone, hypertonicity, poor/impaired motor skills causing difficulty with handwriting.

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP, specialist doctor, physiotherapist or occupational therapist dated from 1 January 2016, or copy of current verification documentation
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks or extra time (5 minutes per half hour) Use of a computer for the Writing Task and Short Response subtests (see page 22) Crossing/stroking/highlighting Multiple Choice responses
Additional arrangements	A3-size test materials Assistance from a supervisor/carer, e.g. turning pages, holding testpaper steady while the student rules lines (application must specify the assistance required). Note: The use of a scribe will not be approved.
Exemption	Will be considered if the student is severely affected and receiving a high level of support at school. Application must indicate why the student will be unable to sit the test with special arrangements.
Applications due	By 21 May

Physical impairment — significant

Examples include arthritis, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, limb amputation, muscular dystrophy, paraplegia or serious spinal damage, recent surgery.

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP or specialist doctor dated from 1 January 2016, or copy of current verification documentation
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks or extra time (5 or 10 minutes per half hour depending on severity) Standing/stretching/lying down, as necessary Liquid and bite-sized food Ease of access to toilet facilities Medication and water Use of a computer for the Writing Task and Short Response subtests (see page 22) Crossing/stroking/highlighting Multiple Choice responses
Additional arrangements	Wheelchair access Special desk Special seating Use of medical equipment A3-size test materials Assistance from a supervisor/carer, e.g. turning pages, holding testpaper steady while the student rules lines (application must specify the assistance required). Note: The use of a scribe will not be approved.
Exemption	Will be considered if the student is severely affected and receiving a high level of support at school. Application must indicate why the student will be unable to sit the test with special arrangements.
Applications due	By 21 May or as soon as possible

Pregnancy or breastfeeding

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP or specialist doctor dated from 1 June 2017 stating the expected delivery date or breastfeeding status
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks (5 minutes per half hour if pregnant; 10 minutes per half hour if breastfeeding) Standing/stretching/lying down, as necessary Liquid and bite-sized food Ease of access to toilet facilities
Additional arrangements	Special desk Special seating
Exemption	Will be considered in exceptional circumstances
Applications due	From 1 June

Psychological or emotional impairment

Mild/moderate: Examples include long-term effects of bereavement, panic or anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder.

Severe: Examples include mood disorder, major depressive disorder, eating disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, schizophrenia.

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP, specialist doctor or psychologist dated from 1 January 2017, or copy of current verification documentation
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks or extra time (5 or 10 minutes per half hour depending on severity) Standing/stretching/lying down, as necessary Liquid and bite-sized food Ease of access to toilet facilities Medication and water
Additional arrangements	Use of a computer for the Writing Task and Short Response subtests (see page 22) Assistance from a supervisor/carer, who may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the student's name when reading from the <i>Directions for Administration</i> • provide support and reassurance • prompt the student to start and/or continue working
Exemption	Will be considered if the student is severely affected and receiving a high level of support at school. Application must indicate why the student will be unable to sit the test with special arrangements.
Applications due	By 21 May

Specific learning disorder (SPLD) or Speech language disorder (SLD)

SPLD examples include dyscalculia, dyslexia, processing disorder, reading disorder, writing disorder.

An SLD example is an auditory processing disorder.

Documentation	Report that may include and explain results of appropriate tests, from a qualified practitioner (e.g. educational psychologist (for SPLD), audiologist or speech pathologist (for SLD)), or copy of current verification documentation
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Test session instructions in writing Use of a computer for the Writing Task and Short Response subtests (see page 22)
Additional arrangements	Restbreaks or extra time (5 minutes per half hour) if the student is sufficiently affected to be receiving a high level of support at school
Exemption	Will not be approved
Applications due	By 21 May

Vision impairment — colour vision deficiency

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP, specialist doctor or optometrist
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Labelling of pencils to identify their colour Annotated colour page/s of the testpaper to describe the colour or requirement of colour
Additional arrangements	Black-and-white test materials
Exemption	Will not be approved
Applications due	By 21 May

Vision impairment

Examples include hemianopia, keratoconus, nystagmus, retinitis pigmentosa.

Documentation	Certificate/report from GP, specialist doctor or optometrist dated from 1 January 2015 detailing degree of vision impairment, or copy of current verification documentation
Standard arrangements	Seating out of order/separate supervision Restbreaks or extra time (5 or 10 minutes per half hour depending on severity)
Additional arrangements	Modified test materials (see page 23) Medication and water Use of a computer for the Writing Task and Short Response subtests (see page 22) Additional lighting Low-vision aids (not including tablet or internet-enabled devices) Note: Braille and enlarged font in A4-size test materials are not available.
Exemption	Will be considered if the student is severely affected and receiving a high level of support at school. Application must indicate why the student will be unable to sit the test with special arrangements.
Applications due	By 21 May

3.6 Definitions

Separate supervision or seating out of order

When students are approved seating out of order or separate supervision, the chief supervisor of the test centre will determine the most appropriate arrangement for students. For example:

- one student and one supervisor in a room separate from the main group
- all students approved this arrangement and supervisors in a room separate from the main group. It is recommended that supervisors be allocated in a ratio of 1 to a maximum of 15 students
- students approved this arrangement seated in the same room as the main group but seated at the back, front or side of the test room and separated from the main group by partitions or screens.

Restbreaks or extra time

The time allowed for each testpaper is sufficient for students to attempt all tasks. QCAA does not expect that all students will be able to complete all tasks.

The standard time approved for restbreaks or extra time is 5 minutes per half hour. In some situations, extended time of 10 minutes per half hour may be approved.

	5 minutes per half hour restbreaks or extra time	10 minutes per half hour restbreaks or extra time
Writing Task and Short Response	20 minutes	40 minutes
Multiple Choice I and II	15 minutes	30 minutes

Restbreaks or extra time longer than the 5 or 10 minutes listed will not be approved, even if a student has multiple impairments. This limit is to maintain the integrity of the test. A student will be approved **either** extra time **or** restbreaks, but not both.

Restbreaks

Restbreaks allow a student to stop working during a test session without forfeiting working time. The finishing time for the student will be extended by the amount of time taken as restbreaks, up to the maximum restbreak time approved.

During restbreaks, a student:

- must place their test materials face down so they cannot read, write or access their test materials
- may relax, stand and stretch, use toilet facilities, use previously learned coping strategies, focus their thoughts.

Restbreaks may be taken at any time during a test session, either in one long break or in a number of short breaks.

The student must indicate to the supervisor the beginning and the end of each restbreak. The supervisor will display a running record of the time taken in a place visible to the student.

Extra time

Extra time allows additional working time for a testpaper.

Restbreaks or extra time if ill during a test session

If a student is approved restbreaks if ill during a test session or extra time if ill during a test session, they may use the restbreaks or extra time only if they are affected by their medical condition or impairment during the test session.

Test session instructions in writing

The document *Test session instructions in writing* is an extract from the *Directions for Administration (DFA) 2017 Queensland Core Skills (QCS) Test* that provides the verbal instructions that supervisors will read to all students during test sessions.

Copies are sent to schools about two weeks before the test. Two copies will be provided for each student approved this arrangement: a copy to take home and a test-room copy.

School staff are encouraged to explain, translate or interpret the instructions for **any** students who request this **before** the test but are **not** permitted to do this **during** a test session.

QCAA will generally not modify the document for a student's individual circumstances. For example, the times listed will be the standard time given to complete the test and will not take into account any approved restbreaks or extra time. The school may modify the take-home copy of the document but may not modify the test-room copy.

Use of a computer

This arrangement allows students to use simple word processing software for the Writing Task and Short Response subtests only. The software (e.g. Microsoft Notepad or Microsoft WordPad) must be a simple text editor and must not have spellcheck, voice recognition or other language-enhancement facilities that could give an unfair advantage over other students.

It may not be possible to respond to all items on the Short Response testpaper using word processing software, e.g. a student may be required to sketch, draw, or plot a graph. In this situation, the student will need to respond on the hard copy of the testpaper provided.

Electronic copies of testpapers are not provided. Software other than a simple word processor is not permitted.

Specially approved equipment

The use of non-standard equipment or materials may be approved, e.g. transparency overlay, blood glucose meter, special seating, liquids and bite-sized food, or medication.

Any non-standard equipment or materials taken into the test room will be inspected by a supervisor, and any containers must be transparent and unlabelled.

If the use of a large item is approved, the student and chief supervisor should meet before the test to determine practical details, including whether the student or the school is to supply it.

Assistance from a supervisor

If a student is approved assistance from a supervisor, communication must be restricted to the arrangements stated in the letter of approval, e.g. providing support and reassurance, holding equipment. As stated in the Section 1.3: Rules, the use of a scribe is not permitted.

The supervisor must not communicate with the student about items on testpapers.

Modified test materials

Standard test materials are:

- in A4 format
- predominantly in 12-point font (Writing Task and Short Response) and 11.5-point font (Multiple Choice I and II)
- printed on semi-gloss paper (Writing Task), uncoated paper (Short Response) and matt-finish paper (Multiple Choice I and II).

The following modified test materials are available.

Modifications available	Details
A3-size test materials, resulting in font size approximating 16-point	Materials enlarged from A4 to A3 size (141%). The font size in A4-size test materials cannot be increased. In enlarged testpapers, scaled diagrams are carefully adjusted. Please note, however, that it may not be possible to enlarge some stimulus material, and this may cause a student to have a different perception of its intent.
Black-and-white test materials	If necessary, the testpaper will be annotated to describe colours or the requirement of colour, as stimulus material will be modified to ensure shadings are comparable to the colour version.
Test materials printed on colour paper (typically either blue or yellow paper)	It should be noted that colour in the stimulus material may be affected by the background colour of the paper.
Annotated colour page/s	If necessary, the testpaper will be annotated to describe colours or the requirement of colour. If the test does not contain questions that depend on the perception of colour, students approved this arrangement will not receive any additional material.
Writing Task testpaper printed on non-glossy paper	

All modified test materials are printed on standard laser copy paper.

A student who is approved modified test materials will also receive the standard version of the test materials.

QCAA will not provide braille test materials, electronic formats or provide modifications other than those listed above, as this would mean varying the characteristics of the test.

4 After the test

Students may apply for special provision after the test if they were unable to sit all or part of the test (apply for absentee exemption) or if their performance on the test was significantly affected due to a recognised medical condition or impairment, or exceptional circumstances (apply for test grade to be declared null and void).

Special consideration is not applied in the marking process (see Section 1.6: The effect of special provision).

4.1 Absentee exemption

An OP-eligible student who is absent from one or more test sessions must apply for exemption to remain eligible for an OP.

To be eligible for absentee exemption, the student's absence must have been **unforeseen and unavoidable**.

Applications close 5 October.

Application requirements

Documentation must cover the day/s of the test and provide a valid reason for the absence.

Reason for application	Documentation required
Medical condition	Medical certificate from a GP, specialist doctor or hospital admission or discharge statement that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• covers one or both test days• states the name of the medical condition or impairment and how the student was affected• is provided by a person who is not related to the student and not employed by the school. The student must see a doctor on one of the days of the test or as soon as possible thereafter.
Court appearance	Summons/subpoena to appear in court
Death of an immediate family member or other significant person, or attendance at their funeral	Copy of funeral notice or death certificate — application must state the relationship of the deceased to the student
Refusal of entry to, or expulsion from, the test centre on the basis that the refusal or expulsion was unjustified in the circumstances — the application must be made within seven days of the refusal or expulsion	Letter from student clearly detailing the circumstances
Other unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances that prevented the student from attending one or more of the test sessions	Documentation that details the reason for the absence provided by an independent person who is not related to the student and who is aware of the circumstances that affected the student, e.g. police officer. In cases where no other supporting documentation is available, a letter from the principal may suffice.

4.2 Declaring a test grade null and void

A student who attended all four test sessions and believes that a medical condition or impairment, or exceptional circumstances significantly affected their performance during all or part of the test may apply to have their test grade declared null and void. Such an application cannot be made after the test grade is released.

A student is considered to have attended a test session if the supervisor recorded the student as being present, regardless of whether the student made any attempt on the testpaper.

A student must submit their application without knowing their test grade.

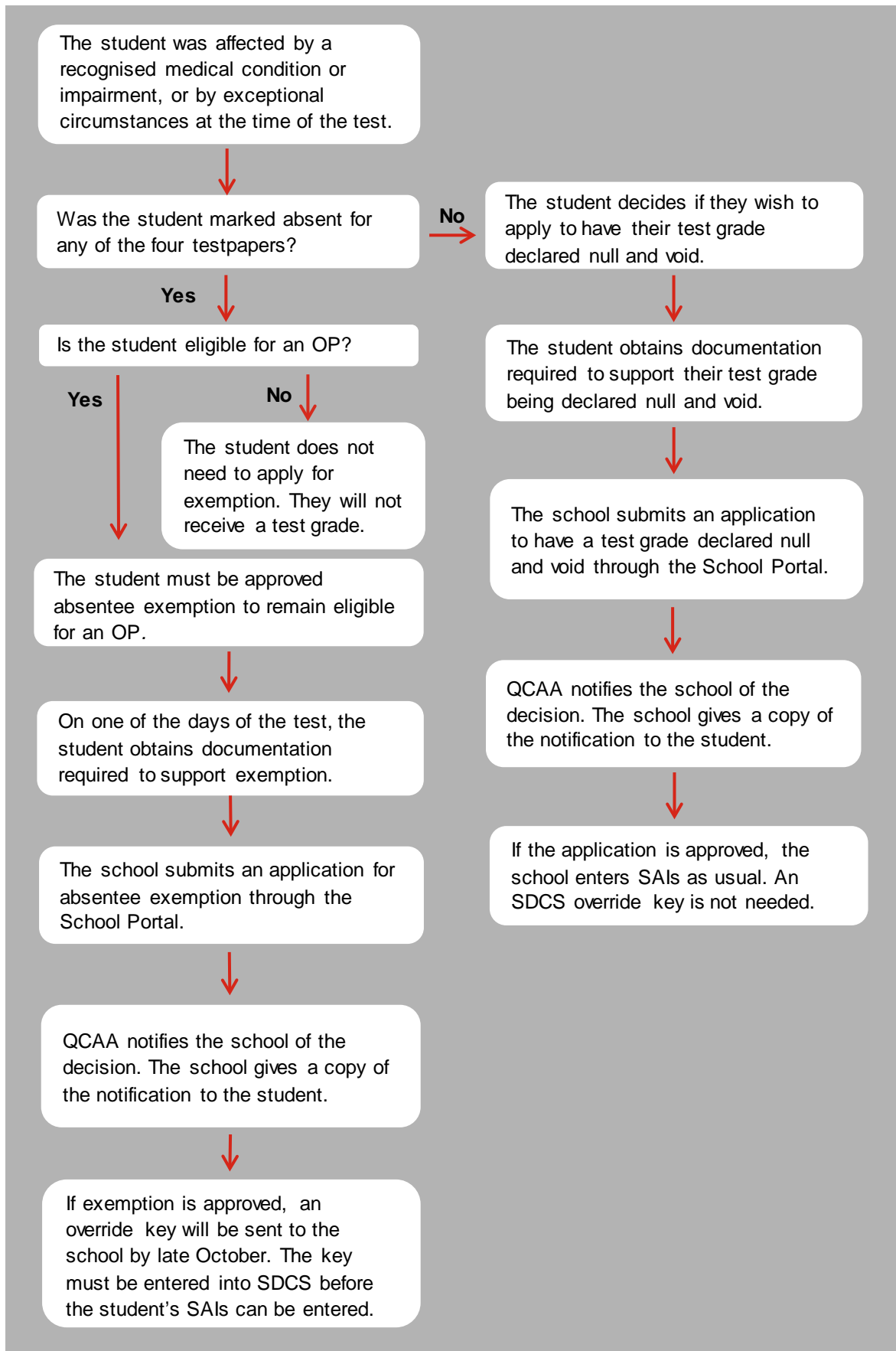
Applications close 5 October.

Application requirements

Documentation must support the student's claim that a medical condition or impairment, or exceptional circumstances seriously affected the student's performance during all or part of the test.

Reason for application	Documentation required
Medical condition	Medical certificate from a GP or specialist doctor that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• covers one or both test days• states the name of the medical condition or impairment and how the student was affected• is provided by a person who is not related to the student and not employed by the school. The student must see a doctor on one of the days of the test or as soon as possible after.
Death of an immediate family member or other significant person	Funeral notice or death certificate — application must state the relationship of the deceased to the student
Exceptional circumstances that seriously affected the student's ability to complete all or part of the four testpapers	Documentation that clearly details the reason for the application provided by an independent person who is not related to the student and who is aware of the circumstances that affected the student, e.g. police officer. In cases where no other supporting documentation is available, a letter from the principal may suffice.

4.3 Overview — after the test



5 Circumstances affecting a school group

If a school becomes aware of circumstances affecting a number of students (e.g. flu epidemic, death of a significant person), they should contact QCAA as soon as possible:

- before the test — to arrange special provision, call (07) 3864 0227 or email qcs.spc@qcaa.qld.edu.au
- after the test — to bring attention to a possible anomaly in the school's data, contact the QCAA's Scaling Anomalies Committee on (07) 0864 0363 or email office@qcaa.qld.edu.au. As soon as possible after the committee meets in the first week of December, it will inform the school of any action to be taken.

6 Reviews and appeals

This section provides information on reviews and appeals. Refer to Part 5 — Review of decisions of the *Education (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority) Act 2014*.

6.1 How to appeal

To appeal a decision, a student must write to QCAA within seven days of receiving the decision in writing. The student must state the reason for the appeal and provide additional supporting evidence.

6.2 What QCAA will do

An appeal will be considered by an internal senior officer. The officer will not have participated in making the original decision.

The officer will reach an outcome based on the following:

- the information provided in the application and supporting documentation that led to the original decision
- the reasons for the original decision
- any other relevant material.

QCAA will then either:

- confirm the original decision
- amend the original decision
- substitute another decision for the original decision.

QCAA will send the student and the school principal written notification of the outcome.

If the student is not satisfied with the reviewed outcome they may, within 28 days of receiving the reviewed decision, appeal against the decision to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

7 Resources

Resources available on the QCAA website using the search function
<i>About the QCS Test</i> (brochure), <i>Student Information Bulletin</i> , <i>Calculating OPs: The basic principles; Common curriculum elements; OP fast facts; OP myths; Queensland Core Skills Test Retrospective; Directions for Administration (DFA) 2017 Queensland Core Skills (QCS) Test</i>
Memos, QCAA news for schools fortnightly newsletter, information and policy statements
Student Connect (https://studentconnect.qcaa.qld.edu.au)
Visa student procedures: Equivalent Overall Positions (OPs) and Field Positions (FPs)

7.1 Contacts

QCAA staff are available Monday to Friday from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm excluding public holidays.

Subject	Contact	Telephone	Email
Special provision for the QCS Test	Assessment Operations Unit	(07) 3864 0227	qcs.spc@qcaa.qld.edu.au
OP calculation	Analysis & Reporting Branch	(07) 3864 0363	office@qcaa.qld.edu.au
Scaling Anomalies Committee	Qualitative Analysis Unit	(07) 3864 0363	office@qcaa.qld.edu.au
Student Data Capture System (SDCS)	SDCS helpdesk	(07) 3864 0278	helpdesk@qcaa.qld.edu.au
Special provision for school-based assessment in Authority and Authority-registered subjects	Contact the student's school. Note: Teachers seeking advice may contact the Quality Assurance Unit by email at office@qcaa.qld.edu.au (see <i>Special provisions policy for school-based assessment in Authority and Authority-registered subjects</i> at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/moderation-hub/special-provisions).		