

Workbook

Disability Standards
for Education



The **Disability Standards for Education** in Practice: Action Plan

This workbook is for students. It will help you to plan and set up reasonable adjustments for your time in education.

This resource was co-designed by students with disability and their parents and caregivers.

About this resource

This resource was funded by the Australian Government. It was designed by students with disability and their parents and caregivers, with help from Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA).

The Australian Government acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia. We acknowledge their continuing connection to land, water, and community. We pay our respects to them and their Elders past, present, and emerging. We pay our respects to the continuing cultural, spiritual, and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Note on language

This resource uses person-first language (e.g. 'student with disability'). But we recognise this approach does not suit everyone, and many people prefer identity-first language (e.g. 'disabled student').

It is up to each individual how they choose to identify. We encourage you to ask people what they prefer. We also acknowledge the deep history behind all these terms.

People use '**reasonable adjustments**', 'adjustments', or 'accommodations' to mean the same thing. We use these phrases interchangeably in this resource. '**Reasonable adjustments**' is used in the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*.

Additional Resources

This is one part of a group of resources. You can find these on the [Department of Education website](#) or scanning the QR code below.

This resource is also available in **Easy Read, Auslan, and several other languages**. You can access these using the link above or by scanning the QR code.



Scan the QR code to access this document in languages other than English

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Using this workbook

This workbook is for every student with disability. In here, you will find a series of steps and activities. These will take you through how to get accommodations to help you learn. You can use these steps in a school, university, or vocational education and training (VET) institution (e.g. TAFE).

Accommodations are actions or changes that support you to join in with your peers. These are sometimes known as reasonable adjustments.

You may be carrying out these steps with a parent, caregiver, mentor, or support worker. Or you might be doing this by yourself. Either way, you can use this workbook in whatever way helps you best.


Going through all these steps can take a lot of time and energy. You do not need to finish everything at once! In fact, we recommend going through it over a few days or sittings.



Your rights

Your rights are human rights. You should never feel bad or guilty for asking for accommodations. It is fair, and the reason why they are part of Australian law. You deserve to have the opportunity to join in at all times. And you deserve to be included and enjoy all the good things in life.

Students with disability have the right to take part in all aspects of education. These rights are explained in the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#). In this resource, we will refer to the Standards as the DSE. The DSE say you have the right to take part in a way that can be compared to your classmates. This means that you should have very similar choices and opportunities.



An example of having similar opportunities

Nadia is Deaf and needs videos to be captioned.

GOOD EXAMPLE

Her English teacher decides to play a movie in class and turns on the captions. This means that Nadia can understand what is happening on the screen.

Nadia can join in a similar way to her classmates.

Her teacher has made a small change in how they usually teach this lesson. This means that Nadia can join in and learn with her classmates.

BAD EXAMPLE

Her English teacher decides to play a movie in class but does not turn on the captions. This means that Nadia can't understand what is happening on the screen. Her teacher says that she can just take the movie home and watch it with captions.

Nadia is not able to join in a similar way to her classmates.

Her teacher has given her extra work outside of class.

Legally, your education provider must help you to join in education in a similar way to your peers. An **education provider** can be a secondary school, university, TAFE, etc.

In this workbook, we also use the phrase **education institution** or **institution** to mean a specific place. For example, if you are a secondary student, your school is ‘your education institution’.

Whether you go to a school, university, TAFE, or somewhere else, your institution should:

- a) **Meet with you.** They should meet with you to discuss whether you need any accommodations. They may also meet with your parent or caregiver, especially if you are in secondary school.
- b) **Make accommodations.** These may also be called **reasonable adjustments**.
- c) Put steps in place to **prevent** you from being mistreated.

The DSE are not the only laws protecting you in education. The DSE come under a bigger set of laws called the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) (DDA). This means it is against the law for others to discriminate against you because of your disability.

Getting what you need

This workbook will help you to:

- prepare to meet with someone who works at your education institution
- discuss what accommodations can be made
- put accommodations in place.

Doing this is a ‘process’, meaning it is a task with many steps to take to reach a goal. The goal here is for you to get the accommodations you need to take part in education.

We recommend that you read the whole workbook before getting started. You may like to highlight it, make notes, or whatever will help you. You may also find it useful to go over it with someone else.

Each step in this workbook will help you to carry out the next step. We recommend doing them in order if you can.

The steps in this workbook are:

1. [Step 1\) Research the process \(p.6\)](#)
2. [Step 2\) Gather evidence \(p.15\)](#)
3. [Step 3\) Set up the meeting \(p.27\)](#)
4. [Step 4\) Prepare for the meeting \(p.28\)](#)
5. [Step 5\) Have the meeting \(p.41\)](#)
6. [Step 6\) Take action \(p.45\)](#)
7. [Step 7\) Change or renew your accommodations \(p.49\)](#)

You may find that you do not need some of these steps. For example, if you are a minor (under 18 years old), your institution may take some of these steps for you. They may also ask for your parent or caregiver to be there or to give permission.



Making your action plan

The rest of this workbook will take you through making an action plan. This is a plan that outlines what you need to know and do at each step to reach your goal.

Step 1) Research the process

There is always a process or a series of steps that you will need to take to put accommodations in place.

Before you enrol

Part of moving from secondary school to further education is doing your research. (For example, you might research a specific university or TAFE.)

There are a lot of reasons why you may prefer one institution over another. Accessibility and how easy it is to get accommodations might be one of those reasons.

While you are making your decision, have a think about:

1. What experiences have other students had?

Often there are websites or forums where students can leave a review. These reviews can be a useful way of learning about how accessible an institution is in practice.

2. What is the institution's process for getting accommodations?

You can often find this information on the institution's website. This can show you how easy (or difficult) it will be to put accommodations in place. It can also show you how long this process will take.

This information can help you to decide where you want to enrol.

Every institution will do things slightly differently. Because of this, it is important to research what you need to do and have before you start the enrolment process.

You can also:

- Look on the institution's website. Try to find a section called 'Student Support / Services / Equity', or similar.
- Google '[*your institution's name and state / territory*] disability support'.
- Go to the administration building on campus. Ask for help finding what you need.
- Check out directories, like on the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET) website:



Disability Services – TAFE

<https://www.adcet.edu.au/students-with-disability/current-students/disability-services-tafe>



Disability Services – University

<https://www.adcet.edu.au/students-with-disability/current-students/disability-services-university>



Here are 5 key questions to ask while you are doing your research. There is also space for you to make notes on your discoveries.

Questions and answers

1. What is the timeline?

A timeline is a schedule of events and the order they occur in.

- **How soon do you need to have your meeting?**

If you are starting at a TAFE or university, you should try to have your first meeting as soon as possible. There may be an option to have it before classes officially start.

Depending on what you need to put in place, **you may need to reach out sooner**. For example, you might need to change which classrooms you use. This could lead to a big timetable change. So, you might have your first meeting six months before you need this change.

- **How long will the process take?**

It takes time for accommodations to be approved and put in place. Because of this, you should start the process well before you will first need them.

- **Are there any key events coming up?**

You might suddenly need accommodations in the middle of a term or semester. Or you might need different accommodations for different situations. For example, is there an exam or excursion coming up? Sometimes you need to make alternative exam arrangements separately.

- **Are there any events outside your institution coming up?**

Sometimes you need to go to a different organisation for accommodations. For example, in Victoria you go through the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Year 12 accommodations. You can use the Special Entry Access Scheme when applying for TAFE or university.

Notes



2. What evidence do you need?

Evidence is the facts or information that will help you get the accommodations you ask for. Details about what evidence you need are often on your institution's website. What you need can change depending on what they ask for.

For example, you might need a letter from your specialist.

- **What do you already have?**

You may have previous individual education or learning plans (IEPs or ILPs) or NDIS plans that can be used or adapted.

- **Do you need to book any appointments?**

You may need to have an appointment with a professional to get more information. (E.g. your NDIS provider, GP, specialist, or occupational therapist.) Sometimes there is a long wait time to make an appointment, so start this early.

Notes

3. Are there any forms to complete?

- **What do I need to fill out?**

Your institution may have forms or paperwork for you to fill out. You can often ask for help to complete these forms.

- **Does anyone else need to do this? When is this due?**

You might need to bring a form or template to a doctor or another professional who knows you well. They may need to fill this out before your first meeting with the institution.

Notes

4. Who do you contact?

- **Do you need to find out?**

The person you meet with to discuss accommodations will vary from place to place. Their title or role may also be different. For example, you might meet with the Assistant Principal, Disability Liaison Office, Access and Inclusion Service or Wellbeing Officer.

- **How can you find out?**

You may need to seek out this information. You can check the institution's handbook or website. You can also approach your teacher, year level coordinator, administration, or student union.

Notes

5. What supports are available?

Your institution may promote certain supports as being available. For example, they may have a student note-taking service, or compulsory lecture recordings.

Some of these may be available to every student, and some you may need to apply for. But if they already exist, you can ask to put them on your plan.

Notes

It is a good idea to keep a record of everything you do – and everything the institution does – during this process. This will help you to keep track of what is happening. It will also help you if the institution does not do something it promised to do, or if something goes wrong.

Try to get any agreements made between you and a staff member in writing.



Tips for keeping a written record

- Make a separate folder or label for emails to make them easier to find.
- Keep backups of all emails. Print them, download them, or forward them to an email address that is not your student email.
- Email people after meeting and summarise what you discussed. Do this even for short, informal conversations before class.
- Create a record of when meetings happened, who was there, and what was discussed.
- Bring another person with you to meetings (e.g. a friend or support person).
- Take notes during meetings.
- Ask if you can have a copy of any notes taken by the person running the meeting.
- Ask if you can record the meeting with your phone or another device. Make sure you research your local laws on recording conversations.
- Take photos or make photocopies of any relevant documents. This includes any paperwork that you give to the institution (e.g. letters or forms).



Step 2) Gather evidence

Your institution may ask for evidence that any accommodations you suggest are needed. This is very common and a normal part of the process.

Evidence can be a medical certificate, form or letter from a professional who knows you. This is a person who has provided support or medical care to you. In some cases, it can be a meeting with a professional. Your chosen person must be a registered professional.

This evidence is often called ‘supporting documentation’. Medical test results or photos of medications or injuries are not evidence.

As you gather evidence, have a think and make notes about:

- What type of evidence do I need? What is my institution asking me to provide?

- Where do I get this evidence from?

- Who do I need to ask for evidence?

- When do I need this evidence by?

The following four steps will help you to answer these questions:

- a) [a\) Map your existing supports \(p.16\)](#)
- b) [b\) Identify barriers \(p.18\)](#)
- c) [c\) Think of accommodations \(p.20\)](#)
- d) [d\) Collect your evidence \(p.24\)](#)

a) Map your existing supports

Have a think about what supports you already have in place to help you learn.

A support might be a therapist, a teacher's aide, or a piece of technology. For example, you may have permission to borrow a school iPad.

It can also be an accommodation that you already have, like extra writing time during tests. Or it can be an advocacy organisation or people in your life who know you well.

Use the table below to map out your existing supports. You might only have one or two supports to add to this table right now. This is completely fine!



A support I have is...**This helps me by...****I can ask them or use
this to...**

Once you have thought about your existing supports, then you can figure out if there are any gaps. The next section will help you to do this.

b) Identify barriers

There is more to education than getting information from teachers and finishing assignments! That is why it is important to think about every part of your education experience. This can include anything from excursions to how you move from class to class.

What is a barrier?

A **barrier** is something that stops or makes it difficult for you to learn or join in with your peers. Importantly, a barrier is **not** something that you do or cause by being yourself.

For example, a barrier is not, 'I can't make it to class because I use a wheelchair'. Instead, it would be, 'this classroom is not wheelchair accessible because there is a step'.

A good accommodation should remove the barriers to you taking part in education.

Use the table below to think of potential barriers to your learning. There is also space for you to explain **why** this barrier affects your ability to take part in education.

- Being able to explain why a barrier affects you can be useful when you ask for support to remove it.
- An example of how to use this table: 'A *barrier I have identified* is that my teacher delivers a lot of content out loud. *This is a barrier to my learning because* I do not have a record of what they say. This means that I miss out on part of the content that we cover in class.'

Type of barrier	A barrier I have identified is...	This is a barrier to my learning because...
Physical environment This can be the classroom, the building, the recreational areas, or something else.		
Social-emotional This can be anything that impacts how you feel or interact with other people.		
Curriculum This can be the classroom materials, activities, assignments, exams, or something else.		
Communication This can be written, verbal, visual, auditory, or something else.		
Events These can be swimming carnivals, excursions, or something else.		

c) Think of accommodations

Once you know what the barriers are, you can start thinking about accommodations. Your accommodations should support you to take part in a similar way to your classmates.

It can be tricky to think of accommodations to ask for if you do not know what options are there. To help you plan, you can:

- Discuss this with staff during your meeting. **You do not need to go to your meeting with all the answers!**
- Ask a parent or caregiver for help.
- Ask your health professional or service provider. They may have ideas that you can try out.
- Ask previous students about their experiences.
- Use social media to find ideas. Just make sure you stick to reliable sources. There is a lot of bad information out there that does not have any evidence behind it.
- Check out advocacy websites that relate to your disability or medical condition, or that relate to disability in general. They may have suggestions that are relevant to you and your needs. Make sure that the website is run by an organisation that you trust.

Here is a list of different accommodations that students have put in place. This is not a complete list, but should give you some ideas.

Type of accommodation	Examples
Physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remote study capacity • Options to access library at different times / more often than other students • Different seating (e.g. front or back of class, near a window) • More comfortable seating • Tables without chairs for wheelchair access • Ergonomic chair in lecture theatres • Separate room for exams / tests • Natural lighting / windows for timed assessments
Social and emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers allowing certain behaviours in class (e.g. involuntary or repetitive movements or use of obscene language) • Use of fidget toys • Swivel chair or other classroom equipment used for stimming

Type of accommodation	Examples
Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lecture recordings• Slides given before lectures• Note-takers• Extra writing time• Attendance adjustments• Scribe or reader for exams• Using a laptop• Rest / bathroom / snack breaks• Flexible deadlines / pre-approved extensions for assignments• Flexible and alternate assessments for group work• Alternative format for assessments such as digital exam or exam timing
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Auslan interpretation• Subtitles / captions• Adjusted presentations (e.g. colour and contrast)

Use the table below to think of accommodations that could help you to remove barriers.

- An example of how to use this table: 'A *barrier to my learning* is that there is not enough time to read during exams. A *potential accommodation* would be to give me extra reading time.'

A barrier to my learning is...	A potential accommodation would be...

d) Collect your evidence



Tip

Find out if you can reuse old paperwork.! This can cut down the number of appointments you need over your time in education.

You can discuss your ideas during an appointment with your specialist or another person in your life.

They may be able to help you find more ideas or give you suggestions. They will also be able to write a letter or complete a form as evidence.

Form or template

Many institutions have a **form or template** on their website that must be filled in by a professional:

- You will need to send this to your chosen professional / person or book an appointment with them. They will need to fill out the form or template and answer any questions it asks.
- You will then need to send this to your institution or bring it with you to your meeting.

Letter

Some institutions will ask you for a **letter** from your chosen professional / person.

- This involves them confirming your needs and suggesting accommodations. It may also involve them explaining a diagnosis.
- The institution may have a checklist of topics that need to be covered in the letter.
- If you have a learning disability, you may need to complete extra paperwork. Some institutions may ask for a summary of the test used for diagnosis.

You can share the following list with your chosen professional / person to help them write the letter.

Things to include in your letter

About your chosen professional / person

Somewhere in the letter should be:

- Your chosen professional's name and role, the name and address of their practice, and their phone number
- Registration number or practitioner's stamp (if either apply)
- Date and signature

About you

Your chosen professional / person should also describe:

- Your condition or situation and how it will impact your studies
- How long you have been impacted
- What type of impact it is (e.g. temporary, long-term or permanent)

Things to include in your letter

Recommendations They should also say whether you are impacted in any of the areas listed below. If you are, they should also recommend adjustments. These should be **specific to your situation** and give **concrete details**. Here are some examples:

- **Assessments**
 - Assignments – finishing essays or reports before a deadline
 - Exams – doing an assessment under test conditions
- **Attending and taking part.** Tutorials, practical classes, excursions, placements, commuting
- **Cognitive.** Memory, concentration, attention, processing, planning
- **Physical and mobility.** Manual tasks in practical classes, sitting or standing for long periods of time
- **Reading and writing.** Handwriting, text size
- **Performing and presenting.** Giving oral presentations in front of an audience

You might like to bring other forms of evidence into a meeting. For example, you might bring an NDIS plan or a previous individual education plan (IEP) into an IEP meeting at the start of the year.

Step 3) Set up the meeting

How you organise and prepare for a meeting will depend on what sort of meeting it is.

Meetings in secondary school are often different from those in tertiary institutions. For example, your school might be the one to ask for a meeting, and it may involve a whole team of people.

In TAFE or university, it is more likely to be a one-on-one session. Often, you will be the one to ask for a meeting (or someone on your behalf).

Here are some questions to ask yourself before you set up the appointment. Circle or mark the answer that applies to you.

Question	Circle or mark your answer to each question below
Do I need to send an email introducing myself first?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Do I organise a meeting manually? (E.g. over the phone, via email, or in person)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> Phone <input type="radio"/> Email <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> In person <input type="radio"/> Other
Do I organise the meeting using an online booking system?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Do I know what type of meeting it is? Online or in-person?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

There may be a lot of students who want appointments, so be sure to book early.

Meeting details

My meeting is on (date and time):

My meeting is at (location):

My meeting is with (person):



Step 4) Prepare for the meeting

Before your meeting, try to come up with a checklist. This is a list of tasks that you must do or things that you should bring.

We have started a checklist for you below with spaces for you to add more reminders to the list. You can go through this list before your meeting to make sure you have everything organised.

As you do each task, you can tick it off your list.

Meeting checklist

- ☐ I have booked my meeting.
- ☐ I know how to get to my meeting.
- ☐ I have all the paperwork I need for the meeting.
- ☐ I have organised any supports I need (e.g. a friend, an interpreter).
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

You can also make an **agenda**. This is a list of what you will discuss or get done during the meeting. For each item on the list, you might like to ask yourself:

1. What do I **have** to get done during this meeting?
2. How important is this? Is this **High** / **Medium** / **Low** importance?

You can use this as a checklist of things to discuss in the meeting. You also might like to send it to whoever you are meeting with beforehand.

If you would like to make an agenda, you can use this template to get started.

Agenda		
Importance (High / medium / low)	What you want to discuss or get done (Is this to discuss? Decide on? Organise next steps?)	Did we discuss this?

The following four steps will help you to prepare for your meeting:

- a) Plan to share your experiences (p.30)
- b) Write a script (p.33)
- c) Organise supports (p.38)
- d) Get in the zone (p.39)

a) Plan to share your experiences

You might want to share your experiences during the meeting. (E.g. how certain symptoms affect your learning.)

This is especially true if you are not sure what accommodations to ask for. Answering questions about your experiences can help the staff to make suggestions.

Remember, it is important to share your experiences safely.

There are ways to share that make the conversation safer for you and the person you are sharing with. Telling your story may be hard or distressing for you, which you want to avoid. It can also be upsetting for the other person, who may have their own experiences that you do not know about.

Below are some guidelines on how to share your experiences safely.



Safe storytelling

You can use the acronym CLIKE:

C = Consent

If a topic is potentially distressing, ask if they are in the right frame of mind to talk about it. Also think about whether you are as well!

- E.g. 'Would it be okay with you if I spoke about my current mental health state?'

L = Label your experience

It can be helpful to name what you are talking about, without giving any details.

- E.g. 'I would like to talk with you about a previous experience that wasn't positive for me.'

I = 'I' Statements

You can only speak for yourself, not everyone with your diagnosis or experience.

- You can try: 'I am struggling with this' rather than 'all people with my condition struggle with this.'

K = Keep it basic

Going into a lot of detail about a distressing topic can feel good in the moment. But it can also leave you feeling anxious or upset afterwards. You also do not know how this will affect the other person.

- Instead, you might say: 'Would it be okay if I talked about my mental health state? I would like to talk about my eating disorder. I won't mention any methods.'

E = Emotions first

People can often relate better to your feelings than your experiences.

- Rather than saying 'I am experiencing X symptom', you can say 'experiencing X symptom makes me feel Y'.

Use the space below to plan or think:

- a) What experiences you might like to share (if any).
- b) How you can tell your story safely.

Please keep in mind that you do not have to share anything if you do not want to!

b) Write a script

It can be useful to plan or script what you want to cover during your meeting with your institution.

During the meeting, you may not be able to follow this plan perfectly. The person you are talking with may have their own plan for the meeting as well. But knowing what you want to discuss and how you want to discuss it can help you to stay on track and cover your key points.

Work through the prompts below to start planning your script. You can also check out [Step 5\) Have the meeting](#) while you make this script.

Introduce yourself

This might include what you are studying and any other relevant information. You should also make sure you are on the same page about why you are having this meeting.

Give your 'elevator pitch'

An elevator pitch is a one minute speech you would give to someone if you only had a short time (e.g. in an elevator). An elevator pitch summarises your key points. You might like to explain your situation or diagnosis, as well as what this means for your education. For example, you might introduce your key symptoms.

Connect this to barriers

As you explain your situation, you can introduce the barriers that you identified in [Step 2\) Gather evidence](#). You can also ask the person you meet with if they have any ideas you missed.



Suggest accommodations

Here, you can summarise your ideas for accommodations and why you think they will be helpful. This is also a chance to bring up your evidence, if you have not already.

Something to keep in mind is that accommodations have to be **reasonable**. If your suggestions will help you and will not harm others, you should be able to put something in place. It may not be exactly what you asked for, but it **should** achieve the same thing.



This conversation will likely involve some discussion. The person you meet with may have more ideas for you to think about. They may also suggest some changes to your suggestions.

Keep in mind that if they suggest an accommodation that you do not need or want, **you can say no!**

Ask questions

You may also have questions for the person you meet with.



It is important to ask about **confidentiality**. This is about what information will be shared outside the meeting, who it will be shared with, and who by.

Below are some questions you might want to ask:

- Will the information I share in this meeting be kept confidential?
- If not, what information will be shared?
- Who will the information be shared with? How will the information be shared with them?
- How will information about me be stored?

You should aim to leave the meeting feeling like you know what is happening to your information.

c) Organise supports

Are there any supports that you need for this meeting? If so, have you checked that they will be available for the meeting?

Supports could include:

- A friend or support person.
 - Have you asked them to come with you?
 - Are they free at the correct day and time?
- Recording the meeting.
 - Do you need permission?
 - Do you have an app or device that can record? Is it charged?
- Staff or support.
 - Do you need a note-taker, interpreter, or participation assistant? If so, have they been booked? Do they need any information beforehand?

You can use the space below to organise your supports:

For support, I will have:

To make sure I have these during the meeting, I will:

I have confirmed that my supports will be available when I need them:

☐ Yes ☐ No

d) Get in the zone

It is very normal to feel nervous going into your first meeting! While you are preparing, you might find it useful to reflect on these questions.

What does the 'right head space' feel like for you?

- Do you want to feel pumped up and energetic before the meeting?
- Do you want to feel calm and steady before the meeting?

What are some steps that you can take to get into this head space?

- Is there a video / music / smell that can help you to feel your best?
- Do you need people around you right before / after?
- Do you need some space right before / after?

What does success look like for you?

- How will you know that you did well (by your own standards)?
- What will you do to celebrate your success?

Step 5) Have the meeting

If you have a list or agenda, you can go through each item on it one by one (see the Agenda table on [p.29](#)).

It is a good idea to create a record of what you discuss during your meeting. If you are taking physical notes, you can use the space below.



During your meeting, you may work together to come up with a plan. This can be called a disability action plan or an individual education plan (IEP). Or it could have a different name.

Next steps

It is important to think about what you need to do after you finish your meeting. It is a good idea to agree on next steps during the meeting itself.

You can ask the person you meet with:

- Who will tell my teacher / lecturer / tutor about the details of this plan?
Is it my job or the institution’s job to do this?
- Do I need to do any more paperwork? Do I need to organise some supports myself? For example, you may need to book a support person or alternative exam arrangements.
- Do I need another meeting with this person or another person? If so, do I need to organise this myself?
- When do I need to follow up if I am not contacted by anyone?

What do I need to do after this meeting?	What does the institution need to do?

After you finish the meeting, the institution may send you a record of what you discussed. If not, it is a good idea to email the person you met with. You can include a summary of what you agreed to do, and what the institution agreed to do.

Make sure to 'cc in' everyone who was at the meeting. This means sending the email to everyone who went to the meeting.

This will help you to keep a record of what should happen next.

Email template

Dear *[person you are emailing]*

Thank you for meeting with me on *[meeting date]* to discuss accommodations. I wanted to send through my notes from the meeting.

This is what we agreed on:

[Summarise your new accommodations]

These are what our next steps will be:

[Summarise the tasks that both you and the institution need to do next]

Please let me know if anything in this needs to be adjusted or corrected.

I look forward to hearing back from you with your thoughts.

Thank you again and take care.

Kind regards,

[Your name]

Different approaches

Your meeting may be less formal than what we have described. It might even be a casual chat with a teacher before or after class. You might make accommodations during this conversation.

Sometimes, you might know that you need something, and your teacher might too. But there are barriers in the way to making changes happen. We know that sometimes this can be related to a parent or caregiver, a support teacher, or a teacher's aide.

If this seems like something you are experiencing:

- a) Talk to your institution. If you are facing a problem with a staff member, you can try reach out to someone else. You can also try your student union or school captains.
- b) Discuss what can be done. There may be steps that your teachers or institution can take to support you.
- c) Get outside support. If things are not improving, you may need to reach out to someone outside your institution. This could be a trusted person, a disability advocacy organisation, or a young people's helpline.

Sometimes it is your teacher or institution that is doing the wrong thing. You and your trusted person may be able to find a solution with the institution. If things are not improving, you can also check out these websites:



Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC)

<https://humanrights.gov.au/complaints>



Disability Gateway <https://www.disabilitygateway.gov.au/legal>



Step 6) Take action

After your meeting, you should have agreed on one or more accommodations to put into practice. Or you may need to wait a few weeks for your plan to be approved.

Once you know that your accommodations are approved, then you can take action!

This section will cover:

- a) [Putting things in place](#)
- b) [Checking in on things](#)

a) Putting things in place

Often there will be a few tasks that you need to complete after your meeting. Consider the questions below to help you get started.

Do you need to:

- Introduce yourself to a teacher / lecturer / tutor and explain your accommodations?
- Reach out to someone who will arrange your exams, organise an interpreter, or find a note-taker?
- Contact someone in your own life? For example, do you need to tell your support worker about the plan?
- Is one of your accommodations a piece of equipment or technology? If so, do you need paperwork from your NDIS provider or health professional?

You can use the table below to keep track of who you need to reach out to and why.

I need to reach out to...	I need to do this because...	Their contact details are...	I have contacted them
			<div><input type="radio"/> Yes</div> <div><input type="radio"/> No</div>
			<div><input type="radio"/> Yes</div> <div><input type="radio"/> No</div>
			<div><input type="radio"/> Yes</div> <div><input type="radio"/> No</div>
			<div><input type="radio"/> Yes</div> <div><input type="radio"/> No</div>
			<div><input type="radio"/> Yes</div> <div><input type="radio"/> No</div>
			<div><input type="radio"/> Yes</div> <div><input type="radio"/> No</div>

Do you need to introduce yourself to a teacher, lecturer, or tutor? If so, you may like to use the template below, making any changes you need to suit your educational context.

Email template

Dear *[person you are emailing]*

My name is *[your name]* and my student number is *[your student ID or number, if relevant]*.

I am *[explain how you are connected to them, e.g. I am taking your class 'Human Biology' this semester]*.

I've been going through the process of working with *[your institution]* to organise accommodations, in line with the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#).

As a result, I have received a *[name of your plan or arrangement]*. It says that *[summarise the accommodations relevant to this class or course]*.

This means we need to be ready for *[first time you will need these accommodations. E.g. our first class on February 12]*. Based on my plan, I will need *[your accommodation, e.g. to sit up the front]*.

I'm really looking forward to hearing from you. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Please see the attached document for more information on my plan.
[Attach any documents given to you by your institution]

Kind regards,

[Your name]

b) Checking in on things

It may take time to put some accommodations into place. For example, sometimes a school needs to apply to the government for funding to buy a piece of equipment.

Once your accommodations are confirmed, you should keep track of them. It is a good idea to check whether your institution is following through.

To do this, you can:

- Set a date for personal review.
 - For example, put a reminder in your diary for one month after the meeting to reflect. What has been put into place already? Who might need a reminder or follow-up?
- Check in with your teacher / lecturer / tutor before or after class.
 - Have they seen your plan?
 - Do they understand your accommodations and how to make them?
 - Have they confirmed that they will put your accommodations in place?

After you have checked in, are there any new tasks that you need to complete?



Step 7) Change or renew your accommodations

Change

There are a few reasons why you might change your accommodations. Your situation may change, for example a new symptom might appear.

You may also find that your accommodations need to be tweaked or changed a bit to make them more effective. This is completely normal. You do not have to keep the same accommodations if they are no longer working for you!

Use the table below to reflect on your education experiences.

What is working?	What is not working?	What needs changing?

The process for changing your accommodations is the same as making them in the first place. You will need to book a meeting and check if any evidence is needed.

Renew

You might be happy with your current accommodations. But you will still need to renew them at some point during your time in education.

This can happen in a few different ways:

- **Automatic**

Some institutions will automatically carry over your plan from the previous year. When they do this, you may be given the chance to ask for this to be changed or added to. Or you might need to book another meeting.

- **Regular**

Many institutions need you to go through the process on a regular basis. This can be once a semester or once a year.

- **Partial**

You may find that you only need to renew your plan once a year, or not at all. But you may still need to reach out every time you start a new subject. You might need to organise in-class supports or introduce yourself to a teacher.

You can use the space below to note what your institution does.

I need to renew my plan by this date:

I will renew my plan by doing this:

Extra resources

Communication tracker

Use the table below to keep track of any meetings, emails, or phone calls that you have during this process.

[illegible]

General notes space

Use this space for any further notes or planning.



<https://www.dese.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005>