



# **ACT STUDENT DISABILITY CRITERIA**

**Last updated 2016**



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# INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

## ELIGIBILITY

For the purposes of ACT ETD disability eligibility, a student has a formal diagnosis of an intellectual disability defined by:

Significant deficit in intellectual functioning confirmed by both clinical assessment and a standardised intelligence test administered to an individual resulting in a standard score  $\leq 69$ .

### AND

Impairment in adaptive functioning as characterised by a composite score more than two standard deviations (standard score  $\leq 69$ ) below the mean. Impairment must be demonstrated in one or more areas on a measure of adaptive behaviour across both school and home settings. For example, a social impairment would need to be identified by both parent/carer and teacher. Note: Adaptive functioning determines level of severity.

### AND

Onset of intellectual and adaptive deficit is during the developmental period.

### AND

Academic achievement is significantly limited (i.e., standard score  $\leq 69$ , or  $\leq 2^{\text{nd}}$  percentile) in comparison to age expectations (for mild to moderate impairments).

### AND

As a result of the disability, significant adjustments are required to curriculum, school activities and assessment procedures to ensure the student is able to access and participate in education on the same basis as a student without a disability.

## **EVIDENCE**

- A report from a Psychologist or Paediatrician detailing the diagnosis of an intellectual disability based on clinical judgement of the following:
  - a) clinical assessment
  - b) approved standardised testing of intellectual functioning (standard score  $\leq 69$ )
  - c) adaptive functioning (standard score  $\leq 69$  in one or more composite areas, Conceptual, Social and/or Practical, in both home and school settings)
  - d) evidence of limited academic achievement (i.e., standard score  $\leq 69$ , or  $\leq 2^{\text{nd}}$  percentile) (for mild to moderate impairments)

When the use of a standardised cognitive assessment is considered inappropriate, a report from a Psychologist or Paediatrician detailing the presence of a severe to profound disability may be accepted. In such cases, diagnosis must be substantiated with:

- a) robust clinical assessment
- b) use of a standardised developmental tool (i.e., Developmental Profile, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)
- c) adaptive functioning (standard score  $\leq 69$  in one or more composite areas, Conceptual, Social and/or Practical, in both home and school settings)

All reports must clearly state the level of severity (e.g., mild, moderate, severe, or profound). Please see DSM-5 Table 1 for clarity.

*Reports must provide an accurate representation of the student's current academic, cognitive/developmental and adaptive ability for a valid determination to be made.*

- A Student Education and Impact Statement (see appendix A).

# LANGUAGE DISORDER

## ELIGIBILITY

A student is considered to have a language disorder where:

- Impaired understanding or expression of language is having a significant and measurable impact on their learning

## AND

- The severity and nature of the language disability cannot be attributed to an intellectual, physical or sensory impairment or to social/emotional or socio-cultural factors.

This is demonstrated by:

- Scores obtained from a standardised individual test of expressive and/or receptive language development that falls two standard deviations below the average range, and
- A descriptive analysis of a student's communication profile (including comprehension, language production and use, speech processing and speech production) that demonstrates a substantial reduction of the student's capacity for communication, social interaction or learning.

## EVIDENCE

- Formal assessment, by a speech pathologist including information from a standardised individual test which is not older than one year, detailing the severity of the disorder and the impact of the student's ability to achieve academically.
- There should also be a recent formal educational assessment by a Learning Assistance Teacher or a school counsellor that details the student's learning needs in the areas described above.

Note: These students will need a disability confirmation sheet to be completed annually.

# PHYSICAL DISABILITY

## ELIGIBILITY

A student is considered to have a physical disability where:

- the student has a current physical condition involving the motor system that significantly limits their level of functioning and independence in mobility or personal care

## AND

- their ability to physically undertake essential learning tasks.
  - Level 1** The student requires some assistance in at least one area of personal care or with mobility.
  - Level 2** The student requires significant assistance in two or more areas of personal care and with mobility. Gross-motor and fine motor development is significantly impaired.
  - Level 3** The student is totally or almost totally dependent on assistance for all area of personal care. Mobility is seriously restricted.

## EVIDENCE

- A report from a specialist medical practitioner, and/or therapist, detailing the nature and extent of the student's condition, and the impact on the student's ability to participate at school.

Note: Reports must be recent enough for a valid determination to be made.

# HEARING IMPAIRMENT OR DEAFNESS

## ELIGIBILITY

A child or student is considered to have a hearing impairment where there is a sensorineural hearing loss or on-going conductive loss impacting on speech, language, auditory processing, cognitive, social and educational development.

- Level 1** A hearing loss (unaided) greater than 30db.
- Level 2** Deaf or functionally deaf. Students require alternative/augmentative methods of communication or rely on sign language – Auslan or signed English.

## EVIDENCE

- An audiological report from the Australian Hearing Services or Nurse Audiometrist which is not more than six months old, including both a written statement and audiogram. An audiologist, otolaryngologist or Ear Nose and Throat Specialist may also provide this assessment.
- In addition, a functional report from a specialist teacher of the Deaf outlining the impact of the hearing impairment on the child's learning.

Note: Reports must be recent enough for a valid determination to be made.

# VISION IMPAIRMENT OR BLINDNESS

## ELIGIBILITY

The student is considered to have a vision impairment where there is a permanent vision loss in both eyes that impacts significantly on the student's learning:

- Level 1** Vision loss is 6/24 (corrected) or less in the better eye, or  
Visual fields reduced to a measured arc of less than 20 degrees.
- Level 2** Blind or functionally blind. Student requires oral instruction and demonstrations in a non-visual format. Student requires all written work in Braille or auditory format.

## EVIDENCE

- An assessment and report by an ophthalmologist, or a relevant agency
- In addition, a functional report from a specialist teacher of the Vision Impaired outlining the impact of the vision impairment on the child's learning.

Note: Reports must be recent enough for a valid determination to be made.

# PERVASIVE DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDER

## ELIGIBILITY

A student is considered to have a Pervasive Developmental Disorder where:

- their behaviour is characterised by the presence of stereotyped behaviour, interests and activities

### AND

- there is severe and pervasive impairment in reciprocal social interaction skills and communication skills

### AND

- the student displays behaviours distinctly below their development level or mental age with significant deficits in adaptive behaviour established by a score two standard deviations or more below the mean on two or more domains on an approved standardised test of adaptive behaviour.

The student must meet the eligibility criteria described in DSMIV or ICD 10 for the following Pervasive Developmental Disorders:

- Autism
- Rett's Disorder
- Childhood Disintegrative Disorder
- Asperger's Syndrome
- Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified.

## **EVIDENCE**

Documented evidence provided by a psychologist, a child psychiatrist, paediatrician, child health medical officer, or other medical professional with expertise in Pervasive Developmental Disorders.

Note: Reports must be recent enough for a valid determination to be made.

# MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER

## ELIGIBILITY

A student is considered to have a mental health disorder where:

- They exhibit significantly disturbed behaviours diagnosed at a level of frequency, duration and intensity that seriously affects their educational functioning

## AND

- The condition requires ongoing intervention from a mental health specialist.

## EVIDENCE

- A current report from a specialist medical practitioner or registered psychologist with appropriate clinical experience, or child psychiatrist, which details the diagnosis and nature of the behaviours.
- Documented evidence of ongoing individual intervention by a mental health practitioner or school counsellor.
- The behaviour/s must be evident in a range of environments.
- A Student Education and Impact Statement (see appendix A).

Note: These students will need a disability confirmation sheet to be completed annually.

# CHRONIC MEDICAL CONDITION

## ELIGIBILITY

A student is considered to have a disability due to a chronic medical condition where:

- their level of functioning and independence and ability to undertake essential learning tasks is significantly limited

## AND

- the student is highly dependent on others to access the learning environment.

## EVIDENCE

- A written statement from a medical practitioner outlining the diagnosis and providing detail of the impact of the disorder on the student's educational functioning.
- A Student Education and Impact Statement (see appendix A) documenting the impact of the medical condition on the student's learning.

Note: These students will need a disability confirmation sheet to be completed annually.

# APPENDIX A. Student Education Impact Statement



**ACT**  
Government  
Education and Training

## Student Education and Impact Report

This form should be attached to All applications and updates (DEPA and DCS Updates)

To be completed in consultation between the teaching staff and school psychologist. Please note: information on this form will be used to assist schools to make appropriate adjustments and will be seen by teaching staff at the school

### Student Information

Surname:		Given Name:		Student ID:	
DOB:		Current School:		Year Level:	
Impact of identified disability on learning:					
Educational Adjustments required:					
Involvement with other agencies:					
Other relevant information:					
A&TSI <input type="checkbox"/> EALD <input type="checkbox"/>					
<b>Mobility:</b>		<b>Personal Care:</b>		<b>Adjustments required:</b>	
Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Educational Program	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assisted	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hygiene assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guided assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toileting (assisted)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Motor Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walking aide	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toileting (full support)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
Power Wheelchair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eating Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	Behaviour/Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manual Wheelchair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Health/Medical	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bed	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>School Environment:</b>					
		Ramps/Hand Rails	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		Lift	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		Fencing	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		Automatic doors	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		High Visibility	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		Specialised equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Form Completed by:			Position:		