



**Tuawhiti O Akarana**

**Resource Teachers Learning and Behaviour Cluster 7**

**Special Assessment Conditions**

# What are Special Assessment Conditions (SAC)?

Special Assessment Conditions (SAC) [NZQA SAC](#) provide extra help for approved students studying for NCEA to remove barriers to ensure they are fairly assessed. SAC are used for both internal standards and external exams.

## What Special Assessment Conditions are available?

- Braille papers
- Enlarged papers
- Special papers
- Signing supervisor
- Signing Reader
- Reader
- Computer or Writer [When can a computer be used?](#)
- Separate accommodation
- Extra time
- Rest breaks

**Note** that use of a writer/computer or reader provides an automatic entitlement to separate accommodation [NZQA Reader/Writer information](#)

## Who is eligible to apply for SAC?

Candidates with a **permanent or long-term**

- sensory, physical, or medical condition
- specific learning disorder

that directly impacts on their ability to be assessed fairly for National Qualifications.

Candidates with a specific learning disorder will be granted Special Assessment Conditions where it will allow them to access the curriculum to achieve at the appropriate level of assessment.

SAC approved candidates will be able to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding without providing an unfair advantage over other candidates.

**Note:** Students identified and funded as speakers of English as a Second Language are not usually entitled to Special Assessment Conditions

Students may meet SAC criteria if they have learning difficulties (reading and/or writing and/or processing speed). Schools may apply for use of appropriate SAC based on school assessment or students may have assessment reports diagnosing a Specific Learning Disorder (SLD), such as dyslexia, from a registered assessor (psychologist or NZCER Level C assessor).

**Focus in Years 9 and 10:** the school should build a profile of students' difficulties and how they are managing so that an informed application can be made for SAC use for NCEA Level 1. As part of this, students should have opportunities to be assessed by themselves and with others with varying amounts of assistance.

NZQA assessors may approve or amend or decline all or any of the SACs requested for a student on the basis of the information provided. Approval means they are entitled to use the SAC for internal and external (exams) assessment for that year. A SAC may be declined when:

- another approved SAC fulfils the need, or
- the data provided does not show the need, or
- the SAC requested would confer an advantage to the applicant.

## How do teachers know who might be eligible for SAC?

Students might display some of the following:

- Letters or numbers reversed or confused b/d/p/q, n/u, 13/31
- Problems with labels, rhymes, sequences
- Being slower to process and needing repeated exposures to retain learning
- Retrieval issues – learns something one moment, gone the next
- Large gap between oral and written capabilities
- Poor sense of direction – difficulty telling left from right
- Reluctance, embarrassment or avoidance around reading out loud
- A preference for face-to-face meetings/phone calls rather than email correspondence, and for charts/graphs over text
- Frequent misspelling of words and mixing up words which sound similar (recession/reception), in speech or written work
- Poor handwriting, punctuation and grammar
- Misunderstanding or misinterpretation of instructions
- Problems meeting deadlines, despite working hard
- Fine motor coordination may be problematic, eg. tying laces, doing up buttons
- Difficulty with automatic word identification that can significantly affect acquisition of knowledge
- Slow rate of reading persists
- Difficulty with spelling and written composition
- Difficulty with note taking in class or lectures
- Difficulty organizing projects and completing assignments on time
- Has poor confidence and self-esteem
- Has areas of particular strength as well as persistent weaknesses
- Does not perform well in written tests
- Takes longer to process information
- Performance discrepancy between subjects
- Does not perform well under time pressure
- Performs better when given oral instructions
- Prefers conversation to email
- Often prefers practical tasks
- Inability to learn how to tell the time on an analogue clock
- Inability to understand the size of numbers
- Inability to count change and understand the actual amounts of money involved

## How are students referred?

- Parental request
- Student self-referral
- Recommendation by teachers
- Recommendation from previous school (in New Zealand or overseas)

## How does the process work?

- Applications are usually made through the SENCO
- Parents/Students who want more information or to discuss any aspect SAC usually contact the SENCO or the Dean of their year level. They can also visit the NZQA website [www.nzqa.govt.nz/sac](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/sac) for additional information
- Historical assessment data, reports or recommendations are collected from teachers, parents, specialists etc to support the application (should be kept from Year 9 as as a SAC Historical Record)
- Current school assessments
- SAC specific assessment (see below)

### NOTE:

- SAC will not be approved in situations where it is considered the validity of assessment would be compromised.
- Some standards are excluded from specific special assessment conditions. The full list is available on the NZQA website
- Special assessment conditions are not granted to candidates with short-term disabilities such as an illness or an accident suffered just prior to the external assessment. The option available to these candidates is to apply for a Derived Grade, either on the grounds of impaired performance or because they were unable to sit the examination at all.e.g. a writer cannot be provided for a candidate who breaks an arm in an accident. Working with a writer is a skill that candidates need to develop. The main reason for NZQA not approving such applications is that a candidate may in fact be disadvantaged by not having previously worked under special assessment conditions.

## Reapplying for SAC in subsequent years

After each year of entitlement, the school completes a needs analysis before the next school year starts. This includes looking at credit totals and talking to students and their teachers and any assistants who may have acted as a reader or writer for them. Parental input may be helpful. As a result of the needs analysis and in agreement with student in February the school may:

- remove student from the existing list (no longer wishes to use SAC or it made no difference to achievement), or
- confirm that the entitled SAC worked well and is to be continued, or
- update the application with a request for changed SACs.

Confirmed applications immediately roll over the SAC entitlement for the new school year. Updated applications will be assessed by NZQA assessors.

## Assessment Tools to support Special Assessment Conditions applications

Note: Current data must be less than 12 months old at the time of applying online for School Evidence applications.

The online application lists commonly-used tests. However, these will alter in time as more suitable tests become more widely available and used in schools. If the test you used is not listed, the option of "Other (specify)" is available for you to write the name and results. See also NZCER (NZ Centre for Educational Research) [www.NZCER.org.nz](http://www.NZCER.org.nz)

Assessment	Link	Provider
<b>LUCID</b>	<p><b>Lucid Ability</b>  <a href="http://www.itecnz.co.nz/lucid-ability.html">http://www.itecnz.co.nz/lucid-ability.html</a></p> <p><b>Lucid Exact</b>  <a href="http://www.itecnz.co.nz/lucid-exact.html">http://www.itecnz.co.nz/lucid-exact.html</a></p>	School / RTLB
<b>YARC</b> (York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension) [NZCER]	<a href="#">YARC</a>	
<b>DRA</b> (Diagnostic Reading Analysis)	<p><b>DRA</b>  <a href="http://www.nzcer.org.nz/pts/diagnostic-reading-analysis-dra-2nd-edition">http://www.nzcer.org.nz/pts/diagnostic-reading-analysis-dra-2nd-edition</a> )</p>	
<b>PAT</b> (Reading and Listening Comprehension; Vocabulary)	<p><b><a href="#">NZCER/PAT</a></b>            see school's assessment resources</p>	
<b>SAST</b> (South Australia Spelling Test)	<p><b><a href="#">SAST NZCER Text</a></b>            see school's assessment resources</p>	
<b>PATOSS</b>	<b><a href="#">PATOSS Instructions</a></b>	

### **DRA Diagnostic Reading Analysis**

The Diagnostic Reading Analysis is an oral reading test designed specifically for the less able reader between the ages of 7 to 16 years. The test is carefully structured, with an initial listening comprehension passage helping to verify the starting point for each pupil. The pupil then reads and answer questions on three graded passages - two fiction and one non-fiction - pitched at appropriate levels of difficulty. The purpose-written reading texts utilise vocabulary, and content and contexts with which pupils can readily engage; they are supported with full-colour illustrations throughout.

Each assessment takes up to 15 minutes. Pupils do not have to take the whole test: the user-friendly Pupil Record points you to the next appropriate reading passage. The Pupil Record

also shows at a glance which answers to the comprehension questions - literal and inferential - can be scored correct. Two parallel forms A and B allow for re-testing, to assess progress, while a photocopiable Diagnostic Checklist helps to identify patterns of reading performance and the cues a pupil uses when reading.

The Diagnostic Reading Analysis provides standardised measures of reading accuracy (as standardised scores and reading ages), fluency/reading rate and reading comprehension. Additionally, this second edition provides a standardised measure of comprehension processing speed, making the DRA ideal for access arrangements assessment.

### **YARC York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension**

*Available from NZCER (see The Secondary Australian Edition* comprises two sets of prose passages, both fiction and non-fiction, for students aged 12-18 that enables the assessment of a student's reading comprehension and fluency in a systematic way across the secondary school years.

Administered individually by teachers, school psychologists and speech pathologists, the assessment takes about 20-30 minutes to complete and is used to:

- Assess and monitor pupil progress
- Identify reading problems
- Assess eligibility of access arrangements
- Provide diagnostic information

### **Scoring**

Free online scoring and reporting is available. To assist assessors with the conversion of scores, a free Online Score Conversion Tool is available at [www.yarcsupport.co.uk/australia](http://www.yarcsupport.co.uk/australia). Instructions on how to use the Tool are provided there too. Once student information and raw scores have been added, score conversion is immediate and a short summary report is produced. Manual scoring and reporting can be completed using the tables in the Manual.

**The South Australia Spelling Test (SAST)** is a standardised test of spelling achievement for students in the age range 6 years to 16 years.

### **PATOSS Assessments:**

Three tests which assess students' writing and typing speeds against their ability to use a writer

Each test take 20 minutes to complete.

### **Assessments that are NOT considered acceptable for SAC Applications**

Note this is based on latest advice from NZQA Seminar - the NZQA website has not yet been updated to reflect this information)

NEALE

PROBE (may be used if no other assessment else available)

Burt

## **SAC Enhancements (changes) 2018/9**

Applications for candidates with illegible handwriting and meet no other SAC criteria have changed the procedure below simplifies the application for these students:

1. Referral from teacher as writing sample illegible
2. Complete PATOSS
3. In consultation with student choose either writer or computer
4. SAC Application
  - Enter student details
  - Use 'Physical' tab
  - Click 'Hand/arm'
  - The only option is 'rest breaks' click this
  - In the comments box put - Computer or Writer (depending on which you have selected) not Rest Breaks
  - Submit
5. Upload PATOSS assessment showing illegibility of handwriting

## **SAC Enhancements (changes) 2017**

- Dyscalculia (SLD with Impairment in Maths)  
Extra Time (ET) for Maths, Stats, Calculus, Physics, Economics, Accounting
  - Auditory Processing Disorder  
Separate Accommodation
  - A Writer may opt to Type  
This is not the student's choice.  
Must be pre-arranged with ECM, and the computer set up exactly as if the student was going to use it.  
No spell check for Languages
  - ET for Scholarship  
ET in place of CW for same subjects as NCEA Level 3 except Music
  - 2018 Applications  
May be prepared as Drafts from May 2017  
May be Submitted from 1 October 2017
  - Attaching SAC Entitlements to Externals  
Available from 1 July  
May select W for Geography  
For Separate Accommodation (SA), must attach either IS (Isolation) or SM (Small Group)
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## Special assessment conditions - documentation requirements

**L** - Learning    **M** - Medical    **S** - Sensory Impairment    **P** - Physical

<b>Possible Difficulty</b> <small>Updated to reflect the DSM-5                      (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual                      of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition)</small>	<b>Functional Impact/Impairment in formal assessments</b>	<b>Possible SAC Requirements</b>	<b>Minimum Documentation Requirements</b>
<b>Specific Learning Disorder (SLD)</b>	Inaccurate or slow and effortful reading, poor written expression that lacks clarity, difficulties remembering number facts, or inaccurate mathematical reasoning	Reader/Writer Reader or Writer Extra time Sep Accommodation	L Current school or other history/report  Psychometric assessment/report  Specific Learning Disorder evidence  Teacher comments
<b>Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) (was Dyspraxia)</b>	Writing difficulties associated with DCD	Extra time (ET) Computer Writer	P Current medical (paediatrician) and/or occupational therapist history/report  Cognitive profile report if applicable  Teacher comments
<b>Attention-Deficit /Hyperactivity Disorder, Disruptive, Impulse-Control and Conduct Disorders</b>	Severe concentration and impulse control/difficulty. Permission required to take medication during assessment	Separate Accommodation (SA)	M Current medical history/report Teacher comments
<b>Auditory Processing Disorder</b>		Separate Accommodation.  Personal FM system	S current medical history/report teacher notes
<b>ASD</b>	Severe concentration difficulties  Disruptive behaviour  Need for stability and routine	Separate accommodation  Computer	M Current psychological and/or medical history/report Specific Learning Disorder evidence (if applicable) Teacher comments

<p><b>Back/leg injury/chronic pain</b></p>	<p>Pain/discomfort due to injury</p> <p>Problems with prolonged sitting</p> <p>Permission required to take medication and to allow standing and stretching in room</p>	<p>Rest breaks</p>	<p><b>P</b> Current medical history/report and/or ACC file notes</p> <p>Teacher comments -</p> <p><b>Note</b> this is not for a recent injury</p>
<p><b>Deafness/Hearing Impaired</b></p>	<p>Inability to hear instructions</p> <p>Language delay</p> <p>Written instructions required</p> <p>Placement near the teacher</p>	<p>Extra time</p> <p>Supervisor who is capable of signing</p> <p>Reader using sign assisted English</p>	<p><b>S</b> Current medical history/report</p> <p>Teacher comments</p>
<p><b>Depression/psychosis</b></p> <p><b>Post Traumatic Stress Disorder</b></p> <p><b>Anxiety disorders</b></p>	<p>Anxiety in formal assessment</p> <p>Permission required to take medication</p> <p>Need for stability and routine</p>	<p>Rest breaks</p> <p>Separate Accommodation</p>	<p><b>M</b> Current medical history/report</p> <p>Teacher comments</p>
<p><b>Diabetes</b></p>	<p>Need to check blood sugar levels frequently</p> <p>Permission required to take food/drink into the examination, and/or permission to leave examination room under supervision to take medication</p>	<p>Rest breaks</p> <p>Separate Accommodation (if student has a noisy auto-insulin pump)</p>	<p><b>M</b> Current medical history/report</p> <p>Teacher comments</p>
<p><b>Epilepsy</b></p>	<p>May suffer from epileptic seizure during assessment.</p> <p>Permission required to take medication</p>	<p>Separate Accommodation</p>	<p><b>M</b> Current medical history/report</p> <p>Evidence of severe seizures</p> <p>Teacher comments</p>
<p><b>Brain Injury</b></p>	<p>Mental processing difficulty or slowness due to brain injury</p> <p>Permission required to take medication</p>	<p>Rest breaks</p>	<p><b>M/P</b> Current specialist medical history/report ACC file notes</p> <p>Psychological assessment / Learning Difficulty evidence (if applicable)</p> <p>Teacher comments</p>

<p><b>Pregnancy/Early Infant Care</b></p>	<p>Discomfort with prolonged sitting</p> <p>Padded seat cushion, and/or permission required to stand and stretch (at the back of the room)</p> <p>Need to breastfeed</p>	<p>Supervised rest/toilet breaks or feeding breaks out of examination room</p>	<p><b>P</b> Current medical/midwife report, including expected delivery date if applicable</p>
<p><b>Hand/wrist/arm/injury (long-standing)</b></p>	<p>Difficulty writing due to pain or discomfort in hand/arm, excessive fatigue in hand</p> <p>Permission required to take medication</p>	<p>Rest breaks and/or computer or writer</p>	<p><b>P</b> Current medical history/ACC file notes</p> <p>Teacher comment</p>
<p><b>Significant physical/muscular or neurological disability (Paraplegia, Muscular Dystrophy, Cerebral Palsy etc.)</b></p>	<p>Requires personal care and assistance</p>	<p>Rest breaks</p> <p>Separate Accommodation</p> <p>Extra time</p> <p>Computer</p>	<p><b>P</b> Current specialist medical history/report</p> <p>Teacher comments</p>
<p><b>Tourette's Syndrome</b></p>	<p>Twitch, verbal tic and outbursts</p>	<p>Separate Accommodation</p>	<p><b>M</b> Current specialist medical history/report</p> <p>Teacher comments</p>
<p><b>Vision Impairment</b></p>	<p>Blind, colour blind, visual impairment</p>	<p>Braille papers</p> <p>Assistive technology</p> <p>Enlarged papers</p> <p>Coloured papers / overlay / tinted lenses</p> <p>Extra time and/or reader and/or computer or writer</p>	<p><b>S</b> Current specialist medical history/report</p> <p>Teacher comments</p>