



Evidence Requirements for the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD)

Frequently Asked Questions

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Introduction

Understanding how to include students correctly in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) can sometimes be challenging. The Australian Government provides support and information for those who carry this important responsibility. The Australian Government Department of Education (the department) works closely with School Approved Authorities to ensure schools and teachers understand how best to discharge their obligations to assist students with disability to access and participate in education on the same basis as students without disability.

The department has collated and analysed more than 400 questions received from teachers, school leaders and Approved Authorities to develop a set of Frequently Asked Questions about the NCCD Evidence Requirements.

Quality Differentiated Teaching Practice (QDTP)

What evidence is required to include a student in the NCCD at the QDTP level of adjustment?

The evidence requirements for a student recorded in the QDTP level of adjustment are the same as for students reported at all other levels of adjustment. This includes evidence in all the following 4 general areas:

- assessed individual needs of the student
- consultation and collaboration with the student and/or parents, guardians, carers, or associates
- that at least 10 weeks of adjustment(s) have been provided to the student (in the 12 months preceding Census Day for the year) to address their assessed individual needs associated with disability and evidence to justify the level reported
- ongoing monitoring and review of the adjustments.

(Reference: [NCCD 2023 Guidelines C.5.1 Recording Evidence](#) page 22)

Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

Is an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) a prerequisite for students to be included in the NCCD? How does an ILP prove that adjustments are being provided?

The NCCD Guidelines do not mandate types of evidence. The NCCD Portal provides examples of evidence that could support a student's inclusion in the NCCD at all levels of adjustment ([Examples of evidence to support a student's inclusion in the NCCD - Nationally Consistent Collection of Data \(nccd.edu.au\)](#)). While an ILP is not a requirement under the NCCD Guidelines, the Disability Standards for Education 2005 require schools to consult and collaborate with the student and their parents, guardians, or carers (or associates), about the student's needs and identify reasonable adjustments. The documented outcome of this process is usually an ILP. An ILP may be used as one form of documentary evidence for the purposes of the NCCD at any of the four levels of adjustment.

An ILP with learning goals and interventions that have been regularly monitored and reviewed would constitute sufficient evidence that the adjustments are being provided.

(Reference: NCCD Portal [Refer to evidence to support decisions - Nationally Consistent Collection of Data \(nccd.edu.au\)](#) and [Curriculum and support services - Nationally Consistent Collection of Data \(nccd.edu.au\)](#))

Evidence for Monitoring / Review

How much evidence is required to demonstrate that adjustments provided to the student have been monitored and reviewed?

The NCCD Guidelines do not quantify evidence required for each of the 4 areas of personalised learning and support, as the quality of the evidence maintained is more important. A single document can fulfil the evidentiary needs if it provides enough high-quality evidence; however, additional documents may strengthen the evidence provided. Evidence of ongoing monitoring and review of the adjustments should include:

- evidence of review of the impact and effectiveness of the adjustment(s) being provided to the student
- documentation of any outcomes or changes to adjustment(s) from the monitoring and review
- evidence that the review occurred within the NCCD reference period and in consultation with the student and/or their associates, parents, guardians, or carers.

(Reference: NCCD Portal [Refer to evidence to support decisions - Nationally Consistent Collection of Data \(nccd.edu.au\)](#))

What are some examples of 'evidence of monitoring' when including students in the NCCD?

Evidence of monitoring might include:

- records of meetings to review adjustments with parents, guardians, carers or associates, and specialist staff where appropriate
- an individual education plan with learning goals and interventions that have been regularly monitored and reviewed
- student progress data, which may include both formative and summative assessments
- progress or file notes by teacher, specialist staff or paraprofessionals
- behaviour documentation including observational records and monitoring data, and
- health plan that is reviewed regularly.

(Reference: NCCD Portal [What evidence is the NCCD based upon? - Nationally Consistent Collection of Data \(nccd.edu.au\)](#))

Gifted Students

What level of adjustment would be reported for a gifted student?

Gifted students are not automatically reported in the NCCD. A gifted student would only be included in the NCCD if the student has a disability according to the definition in the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. The level of adjustment reported for a gifted student with disability would depend on the frequency, intensity, duration and range of adjustments and support being provided to address the functional impact of the student's disability on their schooling. Schools should refer to the definitions and descriptors of the levels of adjustment in the 2023 NCCD Guidelines and on the NCCD Portal at [Levels of adjustment viewer - Nationally Consistent Collection of Data \(nccd.edu.au\)](#).

(Reference: [NCCD 2023 Guidelines C.3 Step 3: Determine the level of adjustment\(s\)](#) page 19 and the NCCD Portal [Which students are included in the NCCD under the definitions? - Nationally Consistent Collection of Data \(nccd.edu.au\)](#))

Consultation / Collaboration

Can evidence of consultation be with the student only? Or must there always be a parent, guardian, carer, or associate involved? Is there an age when consultation can be with the student only?

Before the school makes an adjustment for a student, it must consult the student or an associate of the student to determine the type of adjustment(s) required. In most cases, schools should also consult with parents, guardians, or carers before making an adjustment(s). However, for some students, it may be more appropriate to consult only with the student themselves or with an associate. Under these circumstances, it is not mandatory for the school to consult with parents, guardians, or carers, but the adjustment(s) must still be made. In this circumstance the school should document the reasons why they have not consulted with the parent, guardian, or carer – a brief explanation will be sufficient.

In each case, this is a matter for the school to determine depending on the student's individual circumstances and their cognitive capacity to make decisions for themselves as mature minors.

(Reference: [NCCD 2023 Guidelines C.2.3 Consultation with the students, their associate, and parents, guardians or carers page 18](#))

Imputed Disability

How much evidence of assessed need is required to impute a student's disability?

The evidence requirements for imputed disability and diagnosed disability are the same. The NCCD Guidelines do not quantify evidence required, as the quality of the evidence maintained is more important. A single document can fulfil the evidentiary needs if it provides enough high-quality evidence; however, additional documents may strengthen the evidence provided.

The evidence for imputing disability must demonstrate that the student's needs for adjustments have been identified and arise from characteristics of disability.

Evidence may be drawn from a range of sources including, but not limited to, documents such as the student's personalised or individualised learning plan or behaviour management plan.

As with diagnosed disability, when imputing a student with disability, evidence of assessed need must include:

- evidence that the student has a disability as defined by the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- evidence that the school has assessed the functional impact of the student's disability in relation to their education
- evidence of consultation with the student and/or their parents, guardians, carers, or associates in planning adjustments to support the student's needs.

More information on imputing disability for the NCCD is available on the NCCD Portal at: [Imputing disability for the NCCD - Nationally Consistent Collection of Data \(nccd.edu.au\)](#).

(Reference: [NCCD 2023 Guidelines C.4.2 Imputing disability page 22](#) and NCCD Portal [Refer to evidence to support decisions - Nationally Consistent Collection of Data \(nccd.edu.au\)](#))

Student Enrolment / Attendance

What happens if a student has been enrolled for fewer than 10 weeks before Census Day?

Where a student has newly enrolled at a school during the school year, the student can be included in the NCCD if they are included in the school's Census and the student has been provided with 10 weeks of adjustment(s) within the 12 months prior to Census Day.

The new school can use evidence of adjustments from the student's previous school from the 12 months prior to Census Day together with evidence from the new school that demonstrates that similar adjustments are required, or being implemented, at the new school.

The 10 weeks can include any adjustment(s) provided during the 12 months prior to Census Day at their new school or a previous school. In this case, the new school must have evidence from both schools of the adjustment(s) provided to the student.

(Reference: [NCCD 2023 Guidelines](#) B.3.3 *Newly enrolled students with disability* page 13 and NCCD Portal [Frequently asked questions - Nationally Consistent Collection of Data \(nccd.edu.au\)](#))

Does a student need to attend every day of that week for it to count as one week of evidence?

No. The adjustments must span 10 weeks, but they do not have to be undertaken for all school hours in a week. Where a student receives adjustment(s) to address their disability for any amount of time within a school week, this constitutes a 'week' for the purposes of the NCCD.

The adjustment(s) provided:

- may vary from infrequent or occasional (e.g., for a specific class or activity) through to all day every day of the week
- do not need to take place each day over the 10 weeks
- may comprise weeks that are not consecutive and may be split across school terms
- may include time when a student is participating in a school-based activity during holidays (e.g., a camp, excursion) where the school is providing adjustments.

(Reference: [NCCD 2023 Guidelines](#) C.3.1 *Adjustment(s) must have been provided for a minimum of 10 weeks* page 20)

What happens when a student with significant additional needs enrolls at school after Census date – how does a school access funding for their support?

For any student a school wishes to include in their Census count who does not meet the 4 criteria for Census eligibility on Census Day (as outlined in the Census Requirements), the school must submit a special circumstances application.

(Reference: More information about Census requirements and the Census Post Enumeration Exercise can be located on [SchoolsHUB](#).)

Census Post-Enumeration Process

What happens if a student who requires substantial adjustments leaves at the end of Term 2? Can that student be included in the August Census?

Students must be enrolled at the school on Census Day to be included in the Census.

(Reference: More information about Census requirements and the Census Post Enumeration Exercise can be located on [SchoolsHUB](#).)

What happens if a student has been enrolled for fewer than 10 weeks before Census Day?

Schools can include a student in their NCCD count if they have evidence of at least 10 weeks of adjustments being provided. This evidence can include adjustments provided at a student's previous school.

(Reference: [NCCD 2023 Guidelines C.3.1 Adjustment\(s\) must have been provided for a minimum of 10 weeks](#) page 20)

In the Census Post-Enumeration, is the department checking that a school has the evidence it says it does, or checking that the department agrees that the evidence the school has supports the level of adjustment reported e.g., Supplementary?

The department's contractors are tasked with checking that there is evidence to support the data submitted by the school as part of their Census submission. The contractors do not assess the need for the adjustments provided, just whether the actual level of adjustment provided aligns with the claim made in the Census submission, as outlined in the 2023 NCCD Guidelines.

(Reference: [NCCD 2023 Guidelines C.3 Step 3: Determine the level of adjustment\(s\)](#) page 19)

Do schools that undergo the Census Post-Enumeration process then have an adjustment to their funding if there were over or underestimates?

If there are adjustments to a school's funding entitlement identified, then these adjustments will be normally offset or adjusted against the Approved Authority's next payment (payment plans may be considered). It is important to note that not all changes identified in the Census Post-Enumeration exercise will impact a school's funding.

(Reference: More information about Census requirements and the Census Post Enumeration Exercise can be located on [SchoolsHUB](#).)

If a school is included in the Census Post-Enumeration process, will it have to provide evidence for every student on its lists or will the contractors select certain students?

The department's contractors will assess enrolment forms for all students, including visa information for any students on a visa. Contractors will also check a sample of student ages and year levels (a 20% sample of the whole school), a sample of Quality Differentiated Teaching Practice (QDTP) students (5% of the QDTP students at the school), and a sample of non-QDTP NCCD students (the first 100 students, extending to all non-QDTP NCCD students if they identify any errors).

(Reference: More information about Census requirements and the Census Post Enumeration Exercise can be located on [SchoolsHUB](#).)

What training is provided to the Australian Government Department of Education's (the department) contractors?

The department's contractors are provided with a range of training material prior to conducting any site visits or desktop reviews. This training material includes, for example, Disability Awareness training, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Appreciation training, and Cross-Cultural Communication training.

Some schools' experience is contrary to the Individual Learning Plan covering all 4 NCCD evidence areas. The department's contractor often requested 4 separate pieces of evidence. Please clarify the Census Post-Enumeration process requirements.

The NCCD Guidelines do not specify the quantum of evidence required for each of the 4 areas of personalised learning and support. It is possible that evidence for all 4 areas can be recorded in one concise document, such as an Individual Learning Plan or similar. These personalised education or

adjustment plans may present the reviewing contractors with all (or a majority of) the evidentiary requirements needed for the student to be validated in the NCCD, though contractors may not be satisfied that all requirements are met with the single document and request additional evidence.

(Reference: [NCCD 2023 Guidelines C.5.1 Recording evidence](#) page 22-23)

Are schools informed of the selection of students that will be looked at to prepare the evidence for the contractors?

The department's contractors may inform schools of some student selections for the Census Post-Enumeration exercise. This will often be related to the Student Year Levels and Ages and the NCCD Quality Differentiated Teaching Practice checks, as these checks are conducted on only a specific sample of students at a school.

(Reference: More information about Census requirements and the Census Post Enumeration Exercise can be located on [SchoolsHUB](#).)

Please provide some information on the Census Post-Enumeration process. What are the expectations on where things should be held for ease of checking school data? Often data is held in different places – does the Australian Government Department of Education (the department) want copies of documents/emails/programs/Individual Education Plans all collated in one file, either paper or online?

Schools are expected to have all files available for the department's contractors on the day of the Census Post-Enumeration site visit. This can be in hard copy or soft copy. Any files that are not available on the day of the visit can be submitted to the contractors up to one week after the visit. For desktop reviews, information can be provided within one week before or after the scheduled online review.

(Reference: More information about Census requirements and the Census Post Enumeration Exercise can be located on [SchoolsHUB](#).)

Disability Standards for Education 2005

Recommendation 4 of the 2020 Review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005 is that the Australian Government Minister for Education, in consultation with people with disability:

- review and expand the current Exemplars of Practice available on the Australian Government Department of Education website
- develop information (“*Know your responsibilities*”) for education providers and bodies involved in the development and accreditation of curriculum.

While these products are for educators and providers, can they be expanded to parents to support their understanding of the NCCD and what responsibilities schools can provide?

The Australian Government has released new information resources on the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Standards) that were co-designed with people with disability with the help of Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA). The new resources provide easy-to-use information about the Standards and offer practical advice on how to navigate education systems. There are four new resources:

- *Explaining the Disability Standards for Education* – this resource outlines what the Standards are and what they are designed to do.
- *Milestones and Transitions* – this resource is to help students and their parents and caregivers make their way through their education journey.
- *Advocating with and for your child: Primary School* – this resource is for parents and caregivers of primary school students.
- *Disability Standards for Education in Practice: Action Plan* – this resource is for students who are in high school or tertiary education.

You can find the resources on the Department of Education website here:

www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005/students.

For compliance purposes, how do decision makers decide what is a 'reasonable adjustment'? What determines whether the adjustment is reasonable or not?

Under the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (DSE or ‘the Standards’), an adjustment is considered ‘reasonable’ if it fairly balances the interests of all parties. In assessing whether a particular adjustment for a student is ‘reasonable’, decision makers must have regard for all the relevant circumstances, including:

- the student’s disability (including functional impact and related support needs)
- the views of the student and/or their parent or support person
- the effect of the adjustment on the student’s achievement of learning outcomes, participation, and independence
- the effect of the adjustment on anyone else (such as fellow students)
- the costs and benefits of making the adjustment.

Section 3.4 of the DSE describes reasonable adjustments in detail. Further, the Guidance Notes for the DSE elaborate on the scope and practical application of the Standards including identifying and making reasonable adjustments.

(Reference: [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#) Part 3.4 *Reasonable adjustments* page 10 and [DSE 2005 Guidance Notes](#) Part 4.2 *Making reasonable adjustments*)

Is there a legal obligation under the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (DSE) to include goals/outcomes in curriculum planning? Is it a legal responsibility under the DSE that a teacher must record modified curriculum goals for a student with disability?

No, the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (DSE) do not include a requirement to include or record goals/outcomes in curriculum planning. Whilst the DSE does not legally require the keeping of records, having such records may be helpful in demonstrating compliance with the DSE and *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth.) in situations where a discrimination complaint is made.