

**TO: Principal
 Principal's Nominee
 Special Needs Coordinator/Head of Department**

Special assessment conditions – best practice guidelines

In November 2006, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority outlined best practice for schools regarding special assessment applications in the circular *SecQual S2006/040* and these have been added to the *Rules and Procedures* online (see *Record Keeping for Special Assessment Conditions* at www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/acrp/secondary/6/613.html). These or similar processes have been adopted by many schools with the result that significantly more applications than in previous years have been able to be approved without amendment.

The following checklist is designed to provide the Principal's Nominee and the Head of Special Needs with a best practice summary to follow to ensure that all candidates for special assessment have been identified at the start of each year and that all online applications are then completed by the closing date. This will assist all schools making applications on behalf of their candidates to ensure that all paperwork is in order at the beginning of each year.

Enquiries

Please refer any queries relating to this circular to your School Relationship Manager.

School Relationship Manager Schools Assessment and Liaison Telephone: 04 463 3000 Fax: 04 463 3113 Email: firstname.lastname@nzqa.govt.nz
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Circulars are available from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority website (www.nzqa.govt.nz/publications/circulars).

Checklist for Special Assessment Applications

Date	Note	Action	Completed ✓
November	At the end of this year ask your staff to assist you establish your list of potential special assessment candidates for next year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the list from the current year and record the names of any new potential applicants. • Check to see if each candidate has a valid report from an independent assessor. A valid report must have been written within the last three years. If they do not have such a report they need either a reassessment or an initial report. Send a letter to the candidate's home informing them of the need for a current report and keep a copy. • If it is a medical problem (e.g. arthritis - they need more time to write) get an updated medical report. Send a letter to the candidate's home requesting this information and keep a copy. 	
January	At the start of 2009, candidates with a current valid report can have special assessment conditions for internal assessments the rest of the year. If they do not have a valid report, they may not have special assessment conditions for internal assessment. <i>(See SecQual S2008/012, S2006/040 and the Assessment and Certification Rules and Procedures for guidance).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With reference to the information gathered by your Examination Centre Manager and your school results and in discussion with the candidate and their parents if appropriate, conduct your annual needs analysis of candidate behaviour and achievement in the external examinations with regard to the special assessment conditions that were provided • Amend your list of potential applicants where necessary. You should not trial a reader or writer or reader/writer for internal assessment purposes without some documentary proof from an independent assessor such as a psychologist or a Level C Assessor. 	
February		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write to remind parents of candidates on the list who have not yet provided you with a report of the need to have a current report be eligible to apply for special assessment conditions for external assessment. Set a deadline of the end of term 1. 	
April	By the end of April you should have the full list of names and valid reports for all your special assessment applicants. For some potential applicants who have not provided you with a valid report it may be appropriate to consider making an application based on alternative evidence. <i>(See SecQual S2008/012 and the Assessment and Certification Rules and Procedures for guidance).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your School Relationship Manager before you take this step. 	

1 May	1 May entry file due at NZQA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask your staff to check and sign that entries for examinations have been made for each potential applicant or that the applicant is not doing examinations. • Contact your SRM to get approval to make any applications based on alternative evidence. 	
June	At the start of June the online facility opens and you can confidently put in all your applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make appropriate applications for each candidate for each examination session for which they are entered. • Compile and send the necessary documentation to NZQA for any applications based on alternative evidence for which your SRM has given prior approval. 	
July	31 July applications for Special Assessment Conditions close.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete entry of online applications. • File copy of application on student's file. 	
August	You will be informed of any amended or rejected online applications. The panel will meet to consider any applications based on alternative evidence and you will be informed of the outcome.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform candidates of special assessment conditions granted. • Note and file any amendments to conditions. 	
Post July	Any candidate who arrives from another New Zealand school should bring documentation and their latest report with them on enrolment. Applications for special assessment conditions should not be made until you have a valid report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact this candidate's previous school to discuss their assessment needs, add this candidate to your list, make appropriate applications for external examinations and inform NZQA that the candidate is now at a new examination centre. 	
Post July	A rare occurrence may be a newly identified medical condition. In these cases ring NZQA for advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact SRM for advice and guidance. 	