# Stand Up For Your Rights:

# Primary and Secondary Education

## A guide to reasonable adjustments to ensure your child’s rights in primary and secondary education.



## About this Quick Guide

You may have come across the term “reasonable adjustments” before, but what does this actually mean for your child and their education?

## What are reasonable adjustments?

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (the DDA), your child has the right to reasonable adjustments to help them to participate in education.

An adjustment is:

“A measure or action (or a group of measures or actions) taken to assist a student with a disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students.”

Adjustments can relate to:

* The admission or enrolment process (are the online enrolment processes accessible?)
* The participation of the student in the course or program (is the course material accessible?)
* The use of facilities and services (is the technology accessible and are the paths of travel safe and accessible?)

### When can I request a reasonable adjustment?

You have the right to seek an adjustment at any stage of your child’s education not just or when they start. As your child progresses they may require further adjustments and you have the right to request these as the need arises.

Many adjustments take time to implement and often there is equipment or infrastructure involved. For this reason we recommend that you try to determine the majority of adjustments your child may need before they commence so that barriers can be addressed in advance.

What reasonable adjustments can I expect in education?

* Modifying educational premises, for example altering light and shade in the classroom, providing ramps, modifying toilets and ensuring that classes are in rooms accessible to the student;
* Modifying or providing equipment, for example adaptive technology or other aids;
* Changing assessment procedures, for example allowing for alternative assessment methods, such as oral exams, or allowing additional time for someone else to write an assessment for the student;

Changing course delivery, for example providing class notes or other materials in different formats, or setting your child’s position in the learning environment.

### What makes an adjustment “reasonable”?

An adjustment is considered reasonable if it accommodates the student’s learning needs while also considering the interests of other parties affected, like the education provider, staff and other students.

In making a reasonable adjustment, the education provider will try to maintain the academic and assessment requirements of the course.

At times, alternatives to your proposed or preferred adjustments will be considered. It is acceptable for the education provider to propose alternative adjustments if they are no less beneficial for your child and are also less disruptive or intrusive to others.

### When might an adjustment be unreasonable?

The costs and benefits of adjustments are considered when determining whether an adjustment is reasonable. An education provider may decide not to implement adjustments if providing the adjustment is too costly. This can be known as “unjustifiable hardship”.

The financial cost of providing reasonable adjustments is a key consideration. The provider also considers safety, public health and the impact of the adjustment on other students and staff.

You might find that it isn’t always clear what ‘unjustifiable hardship’ is, as it will depend on the circumstances of the school and the adjustments they need to make. Sometimes you might be able to find a compromise, and by helping the provider to understand the need for the adjustment they may do more to find ways to meet your child’s needs.

### Who should be involved in determining reasonable adjustments?

First and foremost, you and your child have the right to be at the centre of any discussion on the need and type of any adjustments your child may require.

It may also be necessary for you to engage professional expertise, such as orthoptists, ophthalmologists or adaptive technology consultants, to obtain an assessment of the nature of your child’s disability and the adjustment(s) appropriate for them.

### Can I expect adjustments to be implemented in a certain amount of time?

Your child has the right for adjustments to be delivered within a reasonable time frame.

A reasonable time frame is not easily defined, but a good way to measure this is by monitoring your child’s academic and social progress.

Your child should not be disadvantaged academically or socially because adjustments have not been provided, or there are lengthy delays.

In order for adjustments to be delivered within a reasonable timeframe, you will need to be prepared to provide any necessary information in a timely manner about how your child’s vision condition affects their education and what they might need to assist them in school.

## Find out more

For more information on advocacy in education, call our advocacy team on 1300 84 74 66 or email [advocacy@visionaustralia.org](mailto:advocacy@visionaustralia.org)