



Students with Disability Assessment Service

Assessments Australia Service Update

August 2023

This newsletter provides key information about privacy and consent considerations when contacting our service, as well as updates on the role of our service and referrals for students who will be new to Victorian government schools in 2024 (including incoming preps).

If you have further questions, please contact us by phone on (03) 9678 5100 or via email to psd-as@assessments.com.

Privacy and Consent Considerations

Assessments Australia values the privacy of every person. Assessments Australia, the Department of Education (the department), including all school staff, and contracted providers must comply with Victorian privacy and records law, and applicable privacy policies.

The collection of personal, health and sensitive information by Victorian government schools, on behalf of the department, is governed by the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and Health Records Act 2001 (Vic) (collectively, Victorian privacy law), and the Public Records Act 1873 (Vic). The [Schools' Privacy Policy](#) contains privacy requirements specific to schools.

This means that schools are legally required to obtain verbal consent from the parent/carer or legal guardian before sharing personal, sensitive or health information about a student during a pre-referral enquiry with Assessments Australia. If contacting us by telephone, you will be asked by our team to confirm verbal consent has been given and provide details about this. You will need to tell us details of the date when verbal consent was provided, the name of the parent/carer/legal guardian who provided this consent, and the name of the school staff member involved. If emailing our service, and a referral has not yet been made, it is important that you provide these details confirming verbal consent in the email. We are unable to take any referral details or look at any student information without this being explicitly stated.

Written consent from the parent/carer/legal guardian is collected through the referral pack, and the accompanying privacy notice provides information about how the student's information will be used.

Throughout the referral process, schools should ensure:

- discussions with parent/carer/legal guardian(s) and key actions recommending referral for assessment are documented e.g. in SSG minutes or student's file.
- that the consent given by the parent/carer/legal guardian is 'informed', meaning they are clear about the reason the student is being referred to our service. For example, if the

referral is to investigate an intellectual disability, this should be made clear, rather than a more general explanation such as 'to see if we can get help'.

- information provided is relevant to the reason for referral and does not include details or information about other students e.g. do not include Compass reports or behaviour logs.
- student information is managed and shared in line with the department's [Privacy and Information Sharing policies and guidance on PAL](#).

The referral pack details the information we require to enable us to proceed to assessment. Please get in touch with our team if you have any questions about information that is appropriate to include with your referral.

Prep and future students commencing school in 2024

Assessments Australia recently commenced accepting referrals for students starting at Victorian government schools in 2024, including those who will be entering Prep. Children may make considerable progress in social, communication, cognitive, behavioural and motor development in the year before starting school, and conducting assessments in the second half of the year means schools and families will receive the most up-to-date information about a child's abilities upon school entry.

We provide cognitive and language assessments for students and assist schools to identify and understand the educational support needs of students with an intellectual disability or severe language disorder with high functional needs.

Cognitive assessments also support specialist school enrolment processes for students with intellectual disability. These assessments provide evidence to address the eligibility criteria for the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) category of Intellectual Disability, and may be used to support applications to the PSD or the Specialist School Enrolment Verification Service for Disability Inclusion schools.

Schools are encouraged to commence the referral process now so that there is plenty of time to conduct the assessment, receive the assessment report, and prepare a funding or specialist school disability category verification request before the end of year rush.

To make a referral, or if you have any questions about this, please contact our team by phone on (03) 9678 5100.

Referral and Assessment Timelines

In most cases, assessments take place within three school weeks of Assessments Australia receiving all completed referral documents from the referring school. At times, it may be necessary to delay an assessment if there is a previous assessment that may still be considered current (i.e. a cognitive assessment less than two years old or language assessment less than one year old) or to meet the specific needs of the student, family or school. The school will always be informed if this occurs.

A written report is usually provided within three school weeks of the assessment date, for all assessments regardless of the assessment outcome. Schools should provide a copy of the narrative report to the parent/carer/legal guardian.

Further information about the referral and assessment process, including timelines, can be found on our [website](#).

School Dashboard

All schools have access to their own personalised Assessment Service Dashboard, and are encouraged to use this to check on the current status and progress of referrals that have been made to the assessment service.

School users can access this information online at any time by clicking the button below.

[Log in to School Dashboard](#)

Want some more information about Intellectual Disability and Severe Language Disorders?

After some easy to read handouts for parents?

After some more tips and strategies for working with students with additional needs?

Visit our updated [website](#) for more resources to support students at your school, and for families to understand a student's needs, as well as FAQs about our service.

Monash University in conjunction with the Victorian Department of Education also have a great website with information about a wide range of disabilities, and evidence based strategies for schools and families. The All Play Learn website can be accessed [here](#).

Key Dates

1 September 2023 - From September, schools may submit PSD applications and specialist school disability category verification requests, to the department, for future students (including Preps) commencing school in 2024.

15 September 2023 - Term 3 ends

2 October 2023 - Term 4 starts

10 October 2023 - Completed referral documents should be provided to Assessments Australia by this date to enable an assessment and report to be completed by the end of the school year.

20 December 2023 - Term 4 ends

T: 03 9678 5100

E: psd-as@assessments.com.au

W: [Students with disability assessment service](#)

max.

Every person. Every chance.

EMPLOYMENT | HEALTH | LEARNING



© Copyright 2022 MAX Solutions. To unsubscribe click here.