

Provide options for assessment

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Helpful classroom strategies in Years 9-13' from the Guide: [Dyslexia and learning](#)

Includes:

- Provide learner choice
- Prepare for external exams
- Talk with parents
- Accommoda­tions for assessments
- Support success in assessments
- Useful resources

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From

Guide: [Dyslexia and learning](#)

Strategy: [Helpful classroom strategies in Years 9–13](#)

Suggestion: [Provide options for assessment](#)

Date

10 July 2026

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Provide learner choice

Discuss with ākonga how they can best demonstrate what they know and have learned.

Allow to choose a way to present for an assessment. Give them:

- the mark scheme and list of assessment criteria
- a list of possible ways to present, for example, through a mind map, flowchart, storyboard, play script, video diary, model, Powerpoint presentation, or recorded interview
- the responsibility to choose a method of presentation that will generate a markable outcome.

(Source: Neil MacKay, Dyslexia Foundation New Zealand)

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Prepare for external exams

Explicitly teach students to plan their answer before writing in exams.

Work with students to:

- teach and talk through their answer with a talking partner
- use visualisation techniques to “photograph” the strategy during the exam recall and draw the alternative strategy very quickly as a planning exercise before starting to write.

The approach needs to be developed as soon as students enter secondary school and used consistently by all teachers.

(Source: Neil MacKay, Dyslexia Foundation New Zealand)

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Talk with parents

Parents may want or need to advocate for their child. Take time to discuss and plan what supports are needed.

The Dyslexia Foundation of New Zealand provides advocacy and mediation advice and representation.

Email info@dfnz.org.nz



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/iUMP8W-6k-w>

No captions or transcript

Source:

[NZCER \(NZ\)](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChMYjSxXeU7gb522kIQpNcg>

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Accommodations for assessments

Provide alternative ways to complete activities, assignments, and tests.

Make these available for all students.

Response – Provide alternate options for students to:

- dictate to scribe or record oral responses
- record oral responses on Livescribe pen
- point to response choices
- type (on a keyboard) their responses.

Setting – Change the location or the conditions to reduce distractions.

Timing – Provide flexible options:

- change the length of time allowed for completing a test, project, or assignment
- change the way the time is organised (for example, by including breaks)
- provide flexible scheduling (for example, having several shorter sessions instead of one).

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Support success in assessments

Discuss with students what supports they need to demonstrate their understanding in assessments.

Discuss:

- possible barriers in the physical environment, for example, unfamiliar layout of room, lighting, temperature
- possible barriers in the resources and materials, for example, cluttered presentation, hard-to-read diagrams, unclear layout, hard copies only
- ways to manage time allocations, such as calendar tools and visual timers
- ways to manage anxiety
- ways to maintain concentration
- breaks and extra time
- digital technologies, such as text-to-speech and predictive text
- pre-teaching specific assessment or exam skills, such as how to approach multiple-choice questions.

Identify whether a **SAC application** needs to be made for NCEA.

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Useful resources

Special Assessment Conditions (SAC) provide extra help for approved students when they are being assessed for NCEA.



Special Assessment Conditions (SAC)

Information about Special Assessment Conditions (SAC), which provide extra help for approved students when they are being assessed.

Publisher: New Zealand Qualifications Authority

[Visit website](#)



Accommodations for students with dyslexia

Read time: 9 min

Accommodations ensure equal access to the full school experience for students with dyslexia or other learning disabilities. An explanation of accommodations and examples of these in the classroom and in assessments.

Publisher: International Dyslexia Association

[Visit website](#)

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