

# Education Adjustment Program (EAP) Verification in the Category of Intellectual Disability Handbook

Last reviewed: December 2022



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## Introduction

The *Education Adjustment Program (EAP) verification in the category of intellectual disability Handbook* outlines the process for EAP verification in the category of intellectual disability for state schools.

### **Important note:**

From 2022, verification in the Education Adjustment Program (EAP) category of intellectual disability is only required for special school enrolment purposes to comply with the criteria set out in the [Special school eligibility \("person with a disability" criteria\) policy](#).

Special schools are responsible for the EAP verification process for new students to the state schooling system seeking enrolment at their school.

Primary and secondary schools are responsible for the EAP verification process for students enrolled at their school who are seeking enrolment at a state special school.

## EAP Verification

EAP verification in the category of intellectual disability confirms that a student has an intellectual disability and requires significant educational adjustments.

In the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF, 2001), the term ‘*disability*’ encompasses impairment of body structure and function and the experience of activity limitation and participation restriction for an individual.

For the purposes of identifying students eligible for the EAP, the term ‘*disability*’ encompasses the impairment and the activity limitations and participation restrictions that require significant education adjustments for an individual student in the EAP category of intellectual disability

# Intellectual Disability

## Definition<sup>1</sup>

An intellectual disability is characterised by deficits in intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour requiring significant education adjustments.

## Intellectual Functioning

Intellectual functioning associated with intellectual disability is characterised by deficits in reasoning, problem solving, planning, abstract thinking, judgement, academic learning and learning from life experiences. This is typically associated with an Intelligence Quotient (IQ) score of approximately 70 or below.

## Adaptive Behaviour

Adaptive behaviour associated with intellectual disability is characterised by deficits that impair functioning in comparison to a person's age and cultural group in one or more aspects of daily living, such as communication, social participation, functioning at school or work, or independence.

## EAP Verification Criteria

EAP verification in the EAP category of intellectual disability is based on two criteria.

### **Criterion 1: Diagnosis**

There are two elements to this criterion that must be met – that the student has significant limitations in:

- a) intellectual functioning; and
- b) adaptive behaviour.

### **Criterion 2: Student requires significant educational adjustments**

The student's identified level of functioning results in activity limitations and participation restrictions at school requiring significant education adjustments.

In defining and assessing intellectual disability, the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD, 2021) stresses that professionals must take additional factors into account, such as the community environment typical of the individual's peers and

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<sup>1</sup> This definition is from the *Special School Eligibility (person with a disability criteria) policy*.

culture. Professionals should also consider linguistic diversity and cultural differences in the way people communicate, move, and behave.

Assessments must also assume limitations in individuals often coexist with strengths, and that a person's level of life functioning will improve if appropriate personalised supports are provided over a sustained period.

## Evidence Requirements

Evidence must be provided as outlined below, in relation to the two criteria for an EAP verification in the category of intellectual disability to be accepted.

### Criterion 1: Diagnosis

Criterion 1 requires evidence related to the student's:

- a) significant limitations in intellectual functioning; and
- b) significant limitations in adaptive behaviour.

#### Significant limitations in intellectual functioning

Evidence includes:

- Scores obtained from current individually administered cognitive assessments are at least two standard deviations below the mean, considering the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) for the specific assessment instruments used and the instruments' strengths and limitations.
- Where formal psychometric assessment as detailed above, is not possible or not appropriate, then relevant information needs to be provided from a range of contexts, to support the presence of significant limitations in intellectual functioning.

#### Significant limitations in adaptive behaviour

Evidence includes:

- Significant limitations in adaptive behaviour are operationally defined as performance that is at least two standard deviations below the mean on either:
  - a) one of the following three types of adaptive behaviour: conceptual, social, or practical; or
  - b) an overall score on a standardised measure of conceptual, social, and practical skills.
- Limitations in adaptive behaviour are determined by using a broad range of assessment methods across a range of sources and settings.

## **Criterion 2: Student requires significant educational adjustments**

Criterion 2 requires that the student's identified level of functioning results in activity limitations and participation restrictions at school requiring significant education adjustments.

For the purposes of EAP verification, significant education adjustments:

- are personalised;
- may benefit all/other students, but are essential for the identified student to access and participate in the curriculum, school activities and environment;
- must be specific and targeted to the identified impairment and the individual student; and
- include the range and breadth, frequency and intensity of adjustments that are currently in place for the student.

Evidence includes:

- the student's functioning (activity limitations and participation restrictions) is significantly below peers;
- significant education adjustments currently in place to address the activity limitations and participation restrictions related to the identified intellectual disability; and
- ongoing monitoring of the appropriateness of the education adjustments in place for the student and learning outcomes achieved.

Criterion 2 information is to be completed by the student's teacher with support of the school team. Where more than one teacher provides the student's education program, this should be a teacher with an overview of the specific significant adjustments that are currently in place in all subject areas.

[Prompts for intellectual disability Criterion 2 information](#) are available to assist with the completion of the Criterion 2 information. The prompts can be used as a guide to assist school teams to report on the individual educational needs arising from the identified intellectual disability and the related significant education adjustments relevant for the particular student.

## **Professional Reasoning Statement**

All EAP verification requests require a professional reasoning statement (the statement) written by the guidance officer. The statement must consider all of the available information that supports both Criterion 1 and Criterion 2.

The statement must also consider any confounding variables, such as behavioural factors that might have impacted on assessment, and background factors (for example, a history of

hearing difficulties, or a trauma background).

For students currently enrolled in a primary or secondary school, the guidance officer must clearly record in the statement that the parent/carer has expressed a genuine interest to enrol their child in a state special school.

## Quality Assurance

While a proposal for verification in the EAP category of intellectual disability is made by a guidance officer, the proposal must be quality assured by a senior guidance officer (SGO).

Cognitive and adaptive behaviour assessment information presented for EAP verification must be current. In consultation with the SGO, currency can be determined taking into consideration the following factors:

- the validity of previous assessments;
- the age of the student when last assessed;
- the length of time since the last assessment;
- the results of the last assessment – in particular, how closely they satisfied the EAP criteria;
- the consistency in results of this and previous assessments;
- changes that have occurred since the previous assessment in any other assessments of ability and achievement, including data from informal observations; and
- the diagnosis of any new medical condition or disability.

To ensure quality and consistency and to monitor the data gathering, professional interpretation and reporting processes, the SGO will document their supervision and support in the quality assurance section of the EAP verification request.

### Students currently enrolled in state primary or secondary school

EAP verification in the category of intellectual disability will be undertaken for students currently enrolled in a state primary or secondary school if the parent expresses a genuine interest in special school enrolment.

The SGO must make a note in the quality assurance statement that the parents' interests are also noted by the guidance officer.

## EAP Verification Process

Parents must provide consent by completing the [EAP Consent Form](#), which includes consent for ongoing EAP verification before an EAP verification process can commence.

This form must be kept in the student's school file and uploaded as an attachment to Criterion 1 when an EAP verification request is completed on the Adjustment Information Management System (AIMS) in OneSchool.

The EAP verification process involves the following steps:

1. The completed EAP verification request is received by the Reasonable Adjustments Resourcing Quality Assurance (RARQA) team through AIMS in OneSchool and is assigned to the statewide verifier with experience and relevant qualifications in the category of intellectual disability.
2. The status on AIMS in OneSchool is changed from *Awaiting Verification* to *Assigned to Verifier*.
3. The statewide verifier considers the information according to the departmental criteria.
4. The statewide verifier will contact the relevant school or regional personnel if any further information is required.
5. The EAP verification decision is recorded on AIMS in OneSchool.

The EAP verification decision, as recorded on AIMS in OneSchool, will be either (a) Verified with or without a review, or (b) Rejected:

### a) Verified Decision

- The EAP verification request meets both Criterion 1 and 2 and is accepted without review required.
- The EAP verification request is accepted as meeting criteria with a review required for Criterion 1 and Criterion 2, or Criterion 2 only by a specified date.
- The EAP verification request to remove an EAP category is accepted (i.e. verifying an end date on AIMS in OneSchool – there will be an end date recorded in the relevant EAP category on AIMS in OneSchool) and the status will be recorded as *Verified (Removed from Category)*.
- The EAP verification request to remove an EAP category is not accepted (i.e. the end date is rejected on AIMS in OneSchool – no end date is recorded in the relevant EAP category on AIMS in OneSchool) and the earlier EAP verification status remains current.



## b) Rejected

- The EAP verification request does not meet both Criterion 1 and 2 and is not accepted.

If an EAP verification request is rejected, the principal and nominated school contact person will be informed of the reasons for the decision by email. A new request for EAP verification may be submitted at any time if further supporting documentation is available.

## Submitting the request for EAP Verification

The principal requests the documented impairment, related activity limitations, participation restrictions, and associated significant education adjustments be considered for EAP verification in the category of intellectual disability.

The principal does this by completing the principal section of the EAP verification request and submitting the request to the statewide verifier through OneSchool. In completing the principal section, the principal confirms:

- the student is enrolled and attending the school;
- a completed Parent Consent Form has been uploaded in the AIMS record in OneSchool;
- discussions have been held with the parent/carer and student (where appropriate) regarding this EAP verification and special school enrolment, and agreement to proceed reached;
- all sections of the EAP verification request are completed;
- appropriate personnel have been involved in data gathering and reporting;
- processes are in place to support this student within the school;
- Criterion 2 has been completed by the student's teacher, or the teacher with an overview of the specific significant adjustments currently in place in all subject areas, with support from the school team; and
- original documents supporting the EAP verification request are stored in OneSchool.

## Review of EAP Verification

At the time of EAP verification, the statewide verifier will determine:

- if a review is required;
- the criteria to be reviewed (Criterion 1 and Criterion 2, or Criterion 2 only); and
- the review date.

Verifiers will require a review if:

- Criterion 1: Information provided by the recognised specialist indicates that the student's significant limitations in intellectual functioning and/or adaptive behaviour may change over time, or if the verifier determines that further assessment will be required in the future to confirm a diagnosis of intellectual disability.
- Criterion 2: Information provided by the school indicates that the student may not require significant education adjustments to access and participate in education in the future.

The statewide verifier will record all EAP verification review dates on AIMS in OneSchool.

For review of an EAP verification, the school follows the same process as for an initial EAP verification. It is important for schools to check whether both Criterion 1 and Criterion 2 need to be reviewed, or only Criterion 2. If the review of an EAP verification is required for Criterion 2 only, then Criterion 1 information does not need to be updated, but Criterion 2 must be reviewed.

### Reviews for students enrolled in a primary or secondary school

Review of an EAP verification in the category of intellectual disability is only required for students currently enrolled in special schools, or students in primary or secondary school for special school enrolment purposes.

Information about Criterion 1 reviews for EAP verification in the category of intellectual disability for students enrolled in primary and secondary schools, is outlined in the [Education Adjustment Program intellectual disability verification requests and reviews: Primary and secondary schools factsheet](#).

## Submission through AIMS in OneSchool

The relevant sections of the EAP verification request will become editable to the appropriate roles on AIMS in OneSchool when the category of intellectual disability has a status of *Awaiting Verification* (Criterion 1, Criterion 2, Quality Assurance and Principal Request).

## Internal Review

EAP verification is a process based on consistent decision making in relation to the information submitted to the statewide verifier. In a small number of cases, the school may disagree with the EAP verification decision.

The principal may request an internal review of the decision within 21 days of the EAP verification decision being entered on AIMS in OneSchool to the Manager, RARQA via email at [EAP@ged.qld.gov.au](mailto:EAP@ged.qld.gov.au).

A departmental specialist will complete a review of the EAP verification request and associated documents as originally submitted. The final decision will be conveyed to the principal via email.