VALID Special Provisions

The need for support, such as reading of texts and variable test display, has been taken into account in the construction of VALID.

A range of other provisions can be offered. These are available to students who usually access this type of support in the classroom so that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do in science. Special provisions should be considered for any student who has accommodations that enable the student to work towards the same syllabus outcomes and content as all other students of the same age/Stage and where these accommodations are documented and endorsed by the principal and have the support of the school's Learning Support Team.

Note that specific injuries or illnesses of students close to the date of the test may also necessitate access to special provisions.

Important note

The school test administrator is required to use the VALID administration portal to accurately document the type of special provision provided for each student. A consent form must be completed and kept by the school.
This information is necessary for:

- students, parents and the school to meaningfully interpret the achievements of students in the test

- research about how to better cater for students with special needs.

Types of Special Provisions

Note that specific injuries or illnesses of students close to the date of the test may also necessitate access to special provisions.

Special provisions for VALID are described on the following pages. These should be modified as appropriate to meet the needs of students for this online test.

Reader

Note that the **instructions and text in resources** is read for **all** students in VALID. Students can control whether text is read and how often text is read.

Students who usually **use screen reader software** will be able to use it to **read other text**, such as the individual tasks in the test. Note that some animations are not able to be read by screen reading software.

For some students without screen reading software, a reader can be provided to ensure that all the words in VALID can be read to each student. These students would have:

- high support needs in reading, recognised by an established and documented school support program that is endorsed by the principal and has the support of the school's Learning Support Team

OR

- a processing difficulty due to a head injury.

If a reader is necessary, they may read everything to the student but must not interpret or explain. In almost all cases, a student with a reader will also require separate supervision for VALID. Extra time may also be provided.

Computer user (writer)

A computer user may be provided for a student who:
- has difficulty typing due to a medical condition or accident (for example, a broken arm)
- experiences excessive fatigue of hands or upper limbs due to a medical condition has a processing difficulty due to a head injury.

Directions to a computer user

- The computer user may be either a teacher or school support person who has been briefed in the test procedures and these directions.
- In almost all cases, separate supervision should also be provided so that other students are not disturbed. Extra time may be allocated if needed.
- Test procedures and conditions apply as outlined in the Administration Manual.

- The computer user will type as the student dictates and may not suggest ideas or words nor prompt in any other way.
- The computer user may read back the student's text throughout the process to help the student maintain continuity until the text is complete.
- The computer user may alter the text as directed by the student until the response is complete.

Oral or sign support

Students with moderate/severe to profound hearing loss may access oral or sign support. The support person must be a skilled and familiar communication partner with the student, such as the support class teacher or itinerant support teacher. The support person is permitted to read or sign all of the instructions.
Note that **all audio in VALID is also provided as text**.

Colour and size modifications

Computer settings can be adjusted to alter the display colours, font and image sizes. Assistive technologies can also be used to make text colour and size appropriate for students who regularly use these modifications in science lessons. Please contact your vision support teacher for additional assistance with these technologies. Students using magnification or text-reading software are allowed additional time of approximately 15 minutes per half hour for VALID.

Increase font size

You can use the browser's *View* menu to make the font size larger or to *Zoom in*. Note that for some browsers this needs to be done before opening VALID whereas other browsers allow size modification within VALID. Also be aware that increasing the font size too much can interfere with the screen layout of VALID.
The best approach for increased font size is to use magnification software such as ZoomText. This can increase the display to any size and can also read all screen text, including the test items. Students need experience using ZoomText in their everyday lessons for it to be useful during the test.

Colour modifications

The screen design for VALID has been tested for all forms of colour-blindness. The layout of black text on a white background throughout is suitable for students who usually use black-on-white printed materials.
Screen filters can be used in front of the screen to adjust colours. The system preferences can also be set to alter the screen colour and contrast. Contact the vision support teacher for further advice.

Braille

Alternate test materials will be provided for Braille users. These materials can be used with JAWS or similar software or Braille Notetakers. The VALID team will discuss alternate ways to complete VALID with the vision support teachers and STAs for each school. Additional time of up to 30 minutes per half-hour is allowed for students using JAWS or similar software with the alternate form of VALID.

Separate supervision

Separate supervision might need to be considered for some students to ensure that others are not distracted by their behaviour or access to special provisions. Considerations might need to be given to students:

- who require access to a reader, computer user, or oral or sign support
- with a medical condition that requires additional care, medication or other assistance, including access to toilets
- with a behaviour pattern that prevents performance in a large group situation, including students with concentration difficulties and mental health issues
- who require extra time or rest breaks
- with limited access to the test room, such as students using a wheelchair
- who require additional opportunities for movement
- who utilise voice output devices
- who use assistive technology that creates distractive noise factors.

Appropriate rooming and adjustable furniture

Students might require adjustment to the room or furniture, such as:

- a sloping or adjustable desk
- a padded chair or pillow
- a special chair
- seating near a doorway for students who may need to leave the test room due to a medical condition
- seating at the front of the test room for students, for example, with mild/moderate hearing loss when administrative instructions are to be given from the front of the room
- special lighting. Some students might need lighting to be brighter or less intrusive. This might impact on other students and require the students to be given access to separate supervision.

Rest breaks

Rest breaks are to support students who suffer fatigue due to a medical condition. Test time stops during a rest break. The student must not have access to test or

reference materials and must not access the computer or a text entry device during rest breaks. Rest breaks should not exceed five minutes per half-hour of the test.

Assistive technology

Students who normally use assistive computer technologies should access the same support for VALID.

Provide the type of computer and assistive technologies that are familiar to the student, preferably ones that are accessed on a regular basis in the classroom. Specialised software or hardware may be used if required, such as:

- a screen reader
- Perkins Brailler
- Mountbatten Brailler
- technology with a refreshable Braille display
- speech recognition
- an adaptive mouse or switch
- specialist keyboards
- scan protocols.

Extra time

Teachers might need to allow additional time (five minutes extra per half-hour of the test) to compensate for:

- use of a reader, computer user, or oral or sign support
- use of assistive technology
- a medical condition, including diabetes, chronic fatigue and acquired brain injury
- a disability including chronic physical difficulties, such as paraplegia, muscular dystrophy or cerebral palsy, or a mental health issue
- a moderate/severe to profound hearing loss.

Extra time is also available for students using magnification or text-reading software. Note that extra time of about five minutes is available for all students if they can use it constructively. **As a diagnostic test, the most important issue is that students have sufficient time to complete the test**.

Timing is under the control of the supervising teacher; the software does not lock a student out after a preset time.

Consent form for VALID special provisions

Copy this page then use the form to record a parent/carer's consent for special provisions. Signed forms must be kept by the school.

Consent for special provisions

School's name _____

Student's name _____

I have discussed my child's participation in *VALID Science 8/ VALID Science 10* with the school Principal/representative and give permission for my child to receive special provisions of

_____

Parent/carer's name _____

Signature _____   Date _____

Principal's name _____

Signature _____   *Date* _____