



Implementation Report for the recommendations of the 2020 Review of the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*

In 2020 the Australian Government reviewed the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#) (the Standards). The Standards clarify the responsibilities education providers have under the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) (the DDA). The Standards help to make sure students with disability can access and participate in education and training on the same basis as students without disability.

This report shows what the Australian Government has done to strengthen inclusive education for children and students with disability. These changes are also helping to support [Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021–2031](#).

Empowering and supporting students with disability and their families

Students with disability and their families and carers told us that there is a power imbalance between them and education providers. They felt it was up to them to understand the laws and the education system so they could advocate for reasonable adjustments.

What is changing	What we have done so far	What we will do next
Publishing more information for students with disability and their families	<p>In September 2022 we published new resources to help students with disability and their families understand their rights under the Standards. These are available in Easy Read, Auslan and community languages at https://raisingchildren.net.au/disability/disability-rights-the-law/rights.</p> <p>The resources were co-designed by young people with disability, with help from Children and Young People with Disability Australia (www.cyda.org.au).</p> <p>We shared the resources with states and territories, non-government education providers and disability organisations to pass on to students and families.</p>	<p>We will publish more resources about the Standards that will help students with disability and their families to advocate for their rights. The new resources will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps to raise a concern and resolve a complaint with your school • How to advocate • Getting started: disability and education • Perspectives of First Nations people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
Setting clearer rules on consulting with students with disability and their families and handling issues and complaints	<p>We worked with state and territory governments to write new principles for education providers to follow when consulting with students and their families and handling issues and complaints.</p> <p>These principles will be included in the Standards.</p>	<p>We will ask for feedback from educators, education providers and the community on the new principles and options for making changes to the Standards.</p> <p>This will help us to decide how the Standards will be changed.</p>
Sharing information when students change schools	<p>We investigated ways to share information when students move from one school to another or begin vocational education and training (VET) or higher education.</p>	<p>We are currently working on a new Schools Unique Student Identifier, which will help with sharing information for all students changing schools. We will do this in line with laws about children’s welfare and education records.</p>

Strengthening the knowledge and capability of educators and providers

People told us that many educators are unaware of their responsibilities under the Standards or do not have the information they need to implement them. Students with disability had better experiences when their educators and education providers had a good understanding of the Standards and knew how to follow the Standards.

What is changing	What we have done so far	What we will do next
Publishing information for education providers	<p>In 2022 we updated fact sheets on disability laws and how to make a complaint. These are available at www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005/information</p> <p>In 2023 we published new information resources for teachers and school leaders. These help educators better understand their responsibilities under the Standards and how to meet them. They are available at www.aitsl.edu.au/teach/supporting-students-with-disability and www.nccd.edu.au/dse.</p>	
Providing training on the Standards for teachers and school leaders	The former Minister for Education wrote to school education authorities asking them to ensure teachers and school leaders have access to professional training on the Standards.	School education authorities will lead this work as they are responsible for employing teachers.
Providing resources for VET providers	We are currently developing resources to guide VET providers on how to support students with disability throughout their training.	We will work with states and territories and VET regulators to promote and distribute these resources.
Including the Standards in higher education policies and practices	<p>We asked the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education for advice on how the Standards can be included in higher education policies and practices.</p> <p>As part of the 2023–24 Budget, an additional \$4.3 million each year will be invested in the Higher Education Disability Support Program to help universities to better support students with disability. More information is available in the Budget 2023–24 fact sheet at www.education.gov.au/about-department/resources/budget-2324-factsheet-higher-education-support-students-disability.</p>	<p>We will work with the higher education sector on how the Higher Education Disability Support Program can help universities to support students with disability.</p> <p>The Australian Government has asked a group of experts, the Australian Universities Accord Panel, to look at how to improve Australia’s higher education system. This includes looking at how to get under-represented groups of students into higher education.</p>

More accountability for the Standards throughout education

People said accountability for making sure the Standards are followed needs to be improved. They wanted more information about how education providers follow the Standards.

What is changing	What we have done so far	What we will do next
<p>Making sure education policies match the Standards</p>	<p>We worked with state and territory governments to make sure that education rules and policies match the Standards.</p> <p>The review of the Australian Curriculum between 2020 and 2022 included making sure the school curriculum is accessible and meets the Standards.</p> <p>We checked whether the national frameworks for teachers and principals match the Standards.</p> <p>We published new videos showing how teachers and school leaders can meet the Standards and support students with disability. They are available at www.aitsl.edu.au/teach/supporting-students-with-disability and www.nccd.edu.au/dse.</p>	<p>The updated curriculum (v9.0) is being applied in schools from 2023.</p>
<p>Improving VET for students with disability</p>	<p>The <i>Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015</i> (RTO Standards) are currently being revised. Revisions include stronger requirements for student support and wellbeing to ensure that reasonable adjustments can be made for students with disability.</p>	<p>The draft revised RTO Standards are being tested. We will continue to work with states and territories to further refine the draft before seeking agreement from Skills Ministers to implement the revised RTO Standards from January 2025.</p>
<p>Publishing more information on how schools support students with disability</p>	<p>We are working with state and territory governments and the non-government sector to improve the availability of information on the services and supports that schools provide for students with disability.</p>	<p>We will continue to work with states, territories and the non-government sector on ways to collect and publicly share information on how schools support students with disability.</p>
<p>Checking how well the Standards are followed</p>	<p>The former Minister for Education wrote to state and territory auditors-general asking them to conduct audits to check how well the Standards are followed in government schools.</p> <p>The former Minister also wrote to other Commonwealth Ministers to remind them that their portfolios need to follow the Standards in education programs they deliver.</p>	<p>As part of the 2025 review of the Standards, we will ask state and territory auditors-general to let us know what they learned in their audits.</p>

Building awareness and capability in the early childhood education and care sector

The Standards do not currently apply to child care providers, but providers must abide by the anti-discrimination laws set out in the DDA. There is strong support for making sure early childhood education and care (ECEC) educators and providers better understand their responsibilities and obligations under the DDA, including making reasonable adjustments for children with disability attending their service.

What is changing	What we have done so far	What we will do next
Publishing information for ECEC providers	In 2022 and 2023 the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) published new resources to help ECEC providers find out about and understand the DDA. These are available at www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/disability-discrimination-act-1992-dda-resources .	ACECQA is helping ECEC services to find out about and use the resources.
Making sure ECEC policies match the DDA	More information about how to support children with disability in ECEC was included in the national approved learning frameworks when they were updated in 2022. They are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia • My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia. 	We will work with ACECQA to include more detail on how to support children with disability in ECEC in the Guide to the National Quality Framework.
Changing the Standards to include ECEC	We have worked with state and territory governments, the non-government education sector and ACECQA on how to change the Standards to include ECEC.	We will consult the ECEC sector and the disability community on draft amendments to the Standards.

Making the changes

Some of the changes listed here are things the Australian Government can do on its own, but many of them need state and territory governments to agree to make the changes and to work together with the Australian Government. Some require state and territory governments and the education authorities who run schools to make changes or do something new.

Changes are being made with help and advice from education representatives and people with disability.

For more information, go to www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005.