



Australian Government
Department of Education

The Disability Standards for Education

What we have done so far

Easy Read version



How to use this report



The Australian Government Department of Education (DoE) wrote this report.

When you see the word 'we', it means DoE.



We wrote this report in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Bold
Not bold

We have written some words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these words mean.

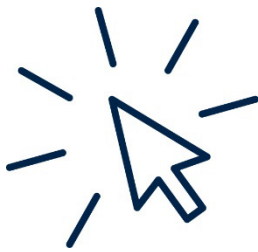
There is a list of important words we use in this report on page 5.

There is a list of other words we use on page 37.



This Easy Read report is a summary of another document.

This means it only includes the most important ideas.



You can find the other document on our website.

www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005/2020-review-disability-standards-education-2005



You can ask for help to read this report.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

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Words we use in this report



We have some words we always use in this report.

Knowing what these words mean can help you understand this report better.



Disability

A disability can affect your:

- brain
- body
- **senses.**



You use your senses to understand the world around you.



A disability can affect:

- what you can do
- how much you can do on your own.

A disability can affect how you:



- communicate



- learn



- do things.

Education



When you get an education, teachers support you to learn:

- new skills
- knowledge.



Educational institution

An educational institution is somewhere you go to learn.

This could be a:



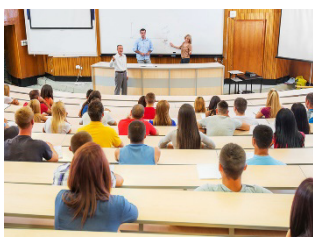
- pre-school or kindergarten



- primary school



- high school



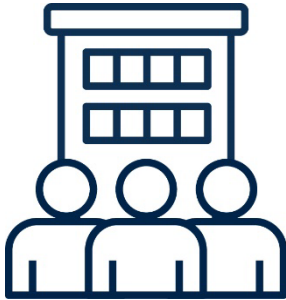
- university



- training organisation, such as TAFE.



An educational institution might be public – this means it's run by the government.



Or it could be private – this means another organisation owns and runs it.



Reasonable adjustment

When something changes so you can join in, we call it an adjustment.

This is sometimes called an accommodation.



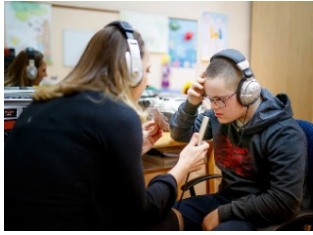
Adjustments can include:

- someone to support you
- doing things in new ways
- changing things.



When something is reasonable, it is:

- fair
- sensible.



Reasonable adjustments are things your educational institution must:

- do
- change.



Rights

Your rights are rules for how you can expect other people to treat you.

This includes educational institutions.

Standards



Standards are what we use to measure how well something is done.

We look at:

- what is done
- what the standard is.



Standards help us make sure things work well.



Educational institutions need to:

- reach the standard
- try to do better than the standard.



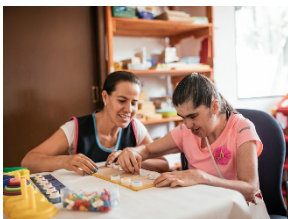
Students

Students are people who learn with an educational institution.

This includes when they learn:



- in a classroom



- at home



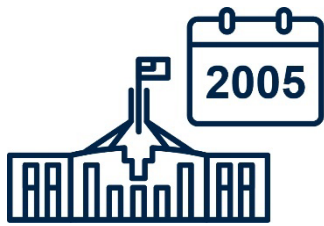
- at work.



Students can be people:

- with disability
- without disability.

The Disability Standards for Education



In 2005, the Australian Government published the Disability Standards for Education (DSE).



The DSE are standards for the education of students with disability.

The DSE talk about 2 important things:



- the rights of students with disability



- what educational institutions need to do.



The DSE protects students with disability.

About this report



In 2020, we **reviewed** the DSE.

When something is reviewed, it is looked over to see how well it has been going.



The DSE makes sure students with disability can take part in their education in the same way as students without a disability.



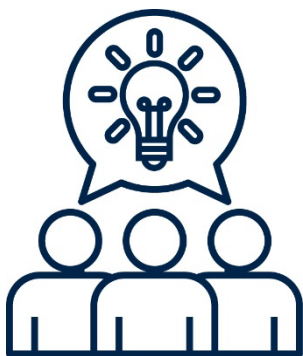
Discrimination is when someone is treated unfairly because of something about them they can't change.



Educational institutions need to follow a law called the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA).



The DDA says it is against the law to treat people with disability unfairly.



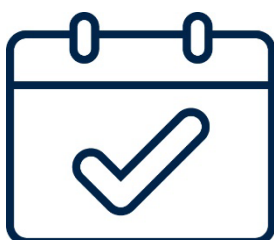
When we reviewed the DSE, we asked the community to share their ideas.



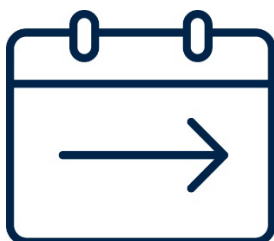
They told us about 4 areas that need to change.

Then we took steps to make some of these changes.

This report explains:



- what we have done so far



- what we want to do next.

More support for students with disability and their families



People said educational institutions have more power than them.



For example, people said they were worried about sharing their issues with educational institutions.



This includes people who are:

- parents and carers
- students.



People also said they were worried that if they did share their issues, they might be:

- ignored
- treated unfairly because they spoke up.



People also said they have to find out:

- what laws can help them
- how the education **system** works.



A system is made of different parts that work:

- together
- towards the same type of goal.

A system can be made up of organisations and people.



People said they shouldn't always have to tell educational institutions what they need.



This includes asking for the reasonable adjustments they need.

Sharing more information for students with disability and their families



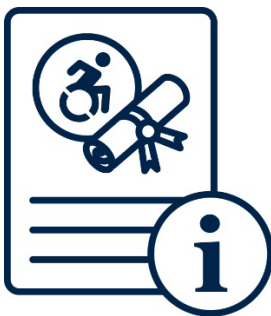
In 2022, we shared new information to help students with disability and their families understand:

- the DSE
- their rights.



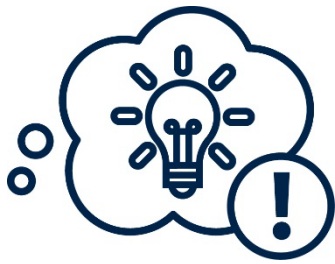
We also wrote this information in:

- Easy Read
- Auslan
- languages other than English.



We will share more information about the DSE to help people understand their rights.

What educational institutions need to do



Principles are important ideas we should always think about.

We wrote new principles for educational institutions to follow when they:



- talk to students and their families
- need to fix something that has gone wrong
- handle **complaints**.



When you make a complaint, you tell someone that something:

- has gone wrong
- isn't working well.

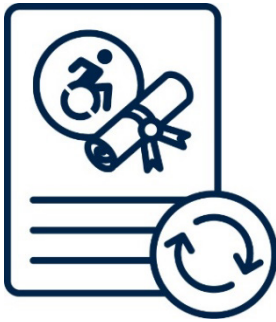


We will include these principles in the DSE.

We will ask people what they think about:



- these new principles



- what we should change in the DSE.

Sharing information when students change schools

We looked at better ways to share information about students who:



- move from one school to another



- move into training



- start university – we call this higher education.



We are working on a new way to share information about students who move from one school to another.



We will make sure we do this in a way that protects personal information about students.

Helping educational institutions understand what they need to do



We were told that many people who work at educational institutions don't understand the DSE.

They don't always:



- know what they need to do



- have the information they need.



Students with disability told us it's better when the people who work at educational institutions know and understand:

- the DSE
- how to follow the DSE.

More information for educational institutions

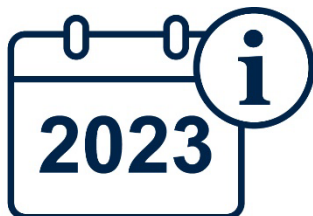
In 2022, we made changes to fact sheets about:



- disability laws

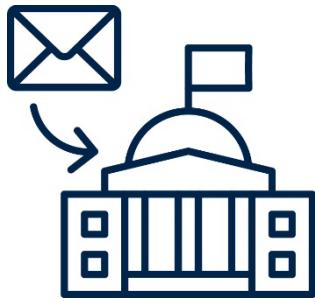


- how to make a complaint.



In 2023, we shared new information to help teachers and school leaders understand what they need to do.

More training for teachers and school leaders



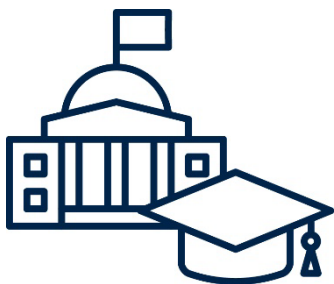
The previous **Minister** for Education sent letters to all government education departments.



A Minister leads an area of the government.



In the letters, the Minister asked the departments to make sure teachers and school leaders could take part in training about the DSE.



The government education departments will manage this training.

Resources for vocational education and training organisations

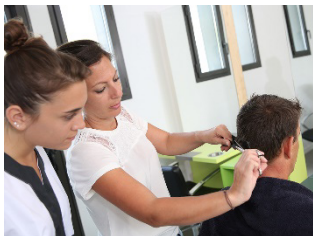


Vocational education and training (VET) is learning and training for people who learn skills to do certain jobs.

It includes:



- TAFE
- registered training organisations
- VET for secondary students.



It also includes **apprenticeships**.

Apprenticeships are when you learn how to do a job at a workplace.

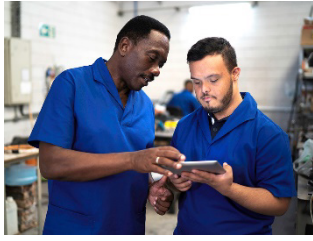
It also includes **traineeships**.

A traineeship is where you learn how to do a job.

You are paid to:



- work
- learn how to do that job.



We are making resources for registered training organisations.

These resources will help them learn how to support students with disability who are doing a VET course.



We will work with governments to share these resources.



We will also work with VET **regulators**.

A regulator makes sure:

- everything works well
- everyone follows the rules.

Including the DSE in university



We got advice about how we can include the DSE in university:

- plans
- processes.



The Higher Education Disability Support Program (the program) will get an extra \$4.3 million of **funding** each year.



Funding is money from the Australian Government that pays for services and supports.



The program will help universities better support students with disability.

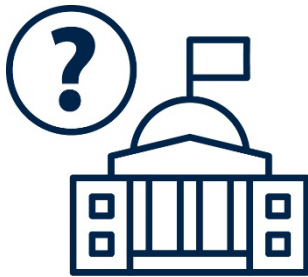


The Australian Government has also asked a group of experts to find out how to make Australia's university system better.

How to make sure educational institutions follow the DSE

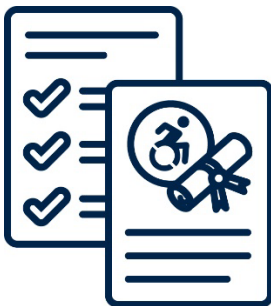


People told us they want to know how educational institutions follow the DSE.

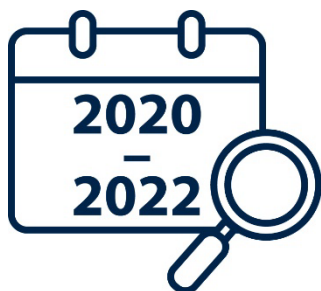


People also want to know how governments make sure this happens.

Making sure all education rules match the DSE



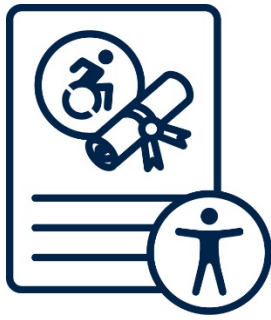
We worked with governments to make sure the rules that educational institutions follow match the DSE.



An organisation reviewed the Australian school **curriculum** between 2020–2022.



A curriculum is what students learn when they go to school.



They checked to make sure the Australian school curriculum:

- is **accessible**
- meets the DSE.



When information is accessible, it is easy to:

- find and use
- understand.

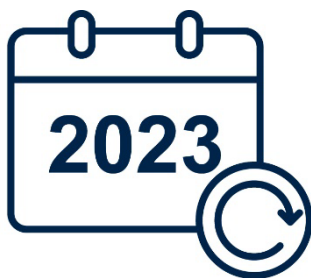


We checked to make sure that rules for teachers and school leaders follow the DSE.



We also shared new videos that show how teachers and school leaders can:

- meet the DSE
- support students with disability.



And in 2023, schools started using the updated Australian school curriculum.

Making VET better for students with disability



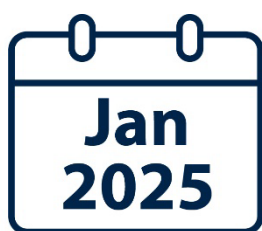
The Australian Government is working with state and territory governments.

They are making changes to the standards that registered training organisations follow.



Some of the changes include making sure they give support to students with disability.

For example, making reasonable adjustments.



Registered training organisations will start using the new standards in January 2025.

Sharing more information

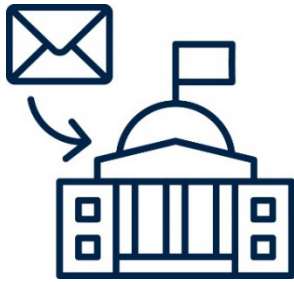


We will make sure there is more information about the services and supports schools provide for students with disability.



We will keep working with governments on ways to collect and share this information.

Checking how well the DSE are followed



The previous Minister wrote letters to governments.



In the letters, he asked them to check how well educational institutions follow the DSE.



The previous Minister also wrote letters to other Ministers.

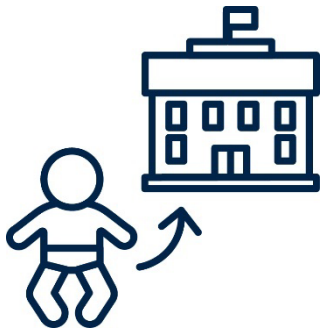


In the letters, he told them that the education programs they deliver need to follow the DSE.



When we review the DSE in 2025, we will ask governments to tell us what they learned.

The DSE for early childhood education and care



Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) is for children from birth to the start of primary school.



Children go to ECEC for:

- care
- teaching and learning.

ECEC takes place in:



- ECEC centres



- pre-school



- kindergarten.

ECEC centres include:



- long day care



- family day care.

The DSE protects young children when they go to:



- pre-school



- kindergarten.



At the moment, the DSE doesn't cover young children if they go to ECEC centres.



But ECEC centres still need to follow the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA).



People said ECEC services need to better understand how to follow the DDA.



Parents and families told us they need better information about the DDA.



This includes knowing how to make reasonable adjustments for children with disability who go to ECEC.

Sharing information with ECEC services



Between 2022–2023, we worked with governments to provide new information to ECEC services.



The information can help ECEC services understand how to follow the DDA.



Governments are also helping ECEC services learn how to find and use this information.

Making sure ECEC guides match the DDA



In 2022, governments shared updated learning guides for schools.



These guides explain how ECEC services and workers should support children with disability who go to ECEC.



We will keep working with governments to include more information in these learning guides.



And to make sure they match the DDA.

Adding early childhood education and care to the DSE



We have worked with governments on how to include ECEC services in the DSE.

When we make changes to the DSE, we will talk with:



- ECEC services



- people with disability in the community.

How we will make the changes

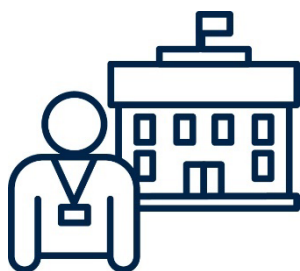


The Australian Government will make some changes on its own.



But it will work with state and territory governments too.

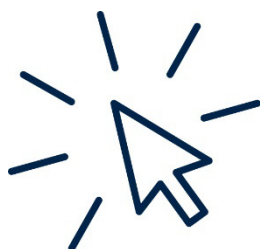
It will also work with:



- educational institutions



- people with disability.



You can visit our website to find out more information.

www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005

Word list

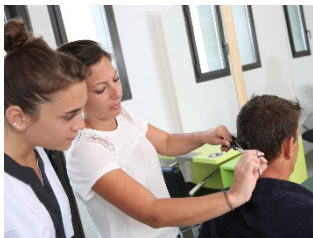
This list explains what the **bold** words in this report mean.



Accessible

When information is accessible, it is easy to:

- find and use
- understand.



Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are when you learn how to do a job at a workplace.



Complaints

When you make a complaint, you tell someone that something:

- has gone wrong
- isn't working well.



Curriculum

A curriculum is what students learn when they go to school.



Discrimination

Discrimination is when someone is treated unfairly because of something about them they can't change.



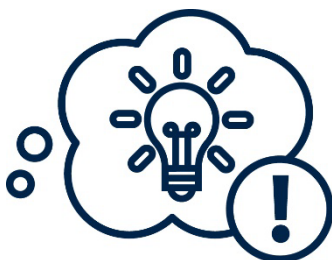
Funding

Funding is money from the Australian Government that pays for services and supports.



Minister

A Minister leads an area of the government.



Principles

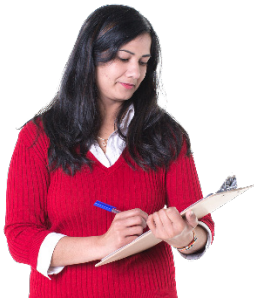
Principles are important ideas we should always think about.



Regulators

A regulator makes sure:

- everything works well
- everyone follows the rules.



Reviewed

When something is reviewed, it is looked over to see how well it has been going.



System

A system is made of different parts that work:

- together
- towards the same type of goal.

A system can be made up of organisations and people.

Traineeships



A traineeship is where you learn how to do a job.

You are paid to:

- work
- learn how to do that job.

Vocational education and training (VET)

VET is learning and training for people who need to learn skills to do certain jobs.

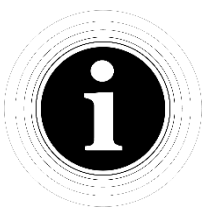


It includes:

- TAFE
- registered training organisations
- VET for secondary students.

It also includes apprenticeships.

It also includes traineeships.



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