

## Alternative Arrangements in Assessment: Policy and Procedures

### Purpose:

Carey Baptist College (“Carey”) is committed to providing equal opportunity and access to learning for all students and committed to promoting inclusion through an intentional approach to valuing diversity within our student body. The principles and process draw on the implementation guide for the provision of alternative arrangements

### Application and Scope:

Staff and Students of Carey

### Definitions:

**Alternative Arrangements:** inclusive assessment of learning outcomes that apply reasonable accommodation for an individual’s disability or impairment. These arrangements may concern both the wider learning environment and/or assessment approaches. This term is used in Aotearoa New Zealand in place of ‘reasonable accommodations’ which is used in other countries (as recommended by Ako Aoterao).

**Alternative Assessment:** A student’s disability or impairment is taken into account when administering the assessment, and appropriate adjustment is made to the assessment task to reduce the impact of the impairment whenever it is necessary and possible to do so. Academic standards and essential skills and knowledge should not be compromised in the accommodations.

**Assessment:** any process that demonstrates the extent of a student’s success in meeting the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme through standardised formative or summative assessment criteria used to gauge a student’s knowledge, skill, aptitude or competency.

**Disability:** a temporary, long-term or permanent condition which may result in any substantial disadvantage in assessment of learning outcomes (Human Rights Act, 1993)

**Impairment:** the New Zealand Disability Strategy states that “disability is not something individuals have. What individuals have are impairments. They may be physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, intellectual or other impairments.” Instead, “disability is the process which happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of the impairments other people have.”

**Disability/Impairment:** term used for the purposes of these Guidelines and Procedures in recognition that various definitions of disability exist.

**Hauā Māori:** a people-centred indigenous identity of impairment and difference. Māori peoples’ approaches to disability/impairment within particular cultural disability frameworks, especially involving whānau hauā, are to be respected.

**Kaiako:** a teacher, lecturer or tutor, usually in a wānanga.

**Inclusive Education:** an educational environment in which diversity among students is valued and procedures are implemented to facilitate equitable access, participation and outcomes for all students.

## 1.0 General Principles:

1. Carey is committed to the provision of support and appropriate alternative accommodations to allow students with disability/impairments to demonstrate their abilities and learning.
2. The student shall, ideally on enrolment, disclose to the student support team any relevant disability or impairment that may impact on their ability to participate in the life of the college and/or their learning.
3. Carey will endeavour to allow these students to participate in the life of the college and to be supported towards realising their individual learning goals through the reasonable accommodation of individual needs.
4. The student support team will discuss individual needs and circumstances directly with the student and recommend what alternative arrangements are most appropriate and that Carey is able to support.
5. Carey will endeavour to ensure processes are in place to support fair, consistent, valid and transparent alternative arrangements around assessments (alternative assessments) for affected students.
6. The Academic Director shall approve the alternative arrangements for assessments agreed upon.
7. All personal information provided by students will be treated in confidence and with care in also in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020.

## 2.0 Procedure:

The best-case sequence and timing of the identification and provision of alternative arrangements is as follows:

- 1) The student discloses any disability/impairment during the enrolment process
- 2) The Academic Registrar and Paihere Student Support team contacts the student before semester start to discuss their disability/impairment and to identify the most appropriate broad considerations and support interventions required.
- 3) This information is added to the student record (Learner Log - Disability Register) in Carey's Student Management System. This information will not be passed on or used outside the purpose of supporting ongoing study at Carey Baptist College in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020.
- 4) Alternative arrangements are explored and discussed between the Academic Registrar, the Paihere Student Support team and the Academic Director. Specific support requirements and alternative arrangement consideration are entered into the student file (Support Log). These details are shared with the relevant teaching team members.
- 5) The teacher designs the alternative assessment(s) in consultation with the Academic Director within the first two weeks of semester.
- 6) The teacher meets with the student (and a member of the student support team) to discuss the alternative assessments and clarifies any particular concessions and/or support requirements.
- 7) The Paihere Student Support team keep in regular contact with the student to ensure the appropriate support is in place.

### **3.0 Responsibilities of Student Administration and Support**

The wider Student Support team (including the Student Administration team, Academic Registrar and Academic Director) are responsible to assist students with disability/impairments to fully participate in all aspects of college life, including

- a) Providing support and advice during enrolment for students with impairments/disability.
- b) Formally evaluating a student's impairment/disability.  
The Academic Registrar and Paihere Student Support team will discuss and identify specific disabilities/impairments for these students and record this information on the student file. This information will not be passed on or used outside the purpose of supporting ongoing study at Carey Baptist College in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020.
- c) Determining which special arrangements are appropriate for individual students. Following discussions with the Academic Director and teaching team members, determine what support or accommodations are appropriate and communicate these to the relevant teaching team members.
- d) Coordinating the provision of specialised academic support or other accommodations as required
- e) Regularly connecting with and communicating with the impaired/disabled student to assess the efficacy and appropriateness of the alternative arrangements
- f) Providing a summary report for the academic committee on the agreed interventions and outcomes for affected students

### **4.0 Responsibilities of Students with Impairment/Disability**

- a) Any student with disability or impairment should discuss their situation with a member of the wider Student Support team as soon as possible, ideally during the enrolment process: and normally before study commences, or at the beginning of the semester, or when an injury/illness occurs.  
(Alternative arrangements can take time to organise, so late disclosure may result in a reduction in the range of accommodations that may be possible.)
- b) Wherever possible, students with disability/impairment should provide verification of their impairment or medical condition. Given the cost and limited access to services that are able to formally diagnose some learning needs, the intention is that no student will be unduly denied consideration for alternative arrangements if formal verification is not able to be provided.
- c) The student, in consultation with the Academic Registrar, will discuss their impairment/disability and these details will be recorded on the student file (and remain confidential to the Academic Registrar, Academic Director).
- d) The student will proactively inform the student support team of any issues or changes in circumstance immediately.

### **5.0 Responsibilities of Academic Teaching Staff**

- a) All courses and assessments should be designed in ways to avoid unnecessary barriers to access, participation and achievement.
- b) Academic staff, in consultation with the Academic Director, will develop the alternative assessments where required. Where the student's impairment/disability means that the course requirements are more challenging for them than for other students, or are not

achievable, the following principles should be used to inform the design of alternative approaches. Interventions should:

- i. Be tailored to in each individual student
  - ii. Take into account specific learning needs and physical/cognitive concerns of the students
  - iii. Ensure principles of equity and fairness are upheld
  - iv. Ensure consistency of approach and application of process (even where outcomes are tailored to individuals).
- c) The academic staff member will meet with the student (and usually a member of the Paihere Student Support team) to explain the alternative approaches and assessment at least one month before the due date.

### **6.0 Options for Alternative Arrangements include:**

- The use of readers, reader/writers to support exams (and by extension – assessments). Carey currently does not have trained reader/writers, but we do have peer writer assistants who can provide some limited support. Where there is a demonstrated impairment around spelling/writing ability then use of a writer is encouraged.
- Allowing extra time for exams / assessments / quizzes
- Providing the assessment question in different formats (different media, coloured paper, use of diagrams and visual aids etc)
- Use of speech to text / text to speech technologies
- Allowing breaks during exams (an extension of extra time provision) – may also involve “chunking” assessments or exams into smaller parts.
- Provisions can include:
  - Provision of an oral test or assessment instead of written
  - Flexibility around timing and scheduling of assessment/exam
  - Assessments can be split into parts

### **7.0 Guidelines for marking:**

- Reasonable accommodation can be provided during marking to ensure that a student is NOT disadvantaged due to:
  - Spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure.
- If content is being assessed then marks are typically awarded for core information and no deductions are made for spelling/grammar/syntax errors.  
NB: if written style or written communication is explicitly stated as a learning outcome (not a specific learning outcome for most of our courses) then this can not be ignored (and the use of a writer would be advisable).

## 8.0 Appeals/Requests for Review

- a) Any concerns in relation to decisions made under this policy and procedures document should, in the first instance, be discussed with the Academic Director.
- b) If the matter can not be resolved informally, a formal request for the decision to be reviewed by the academic committee may be made. The student must write to the Academic Registrar within two weeks of the initial decision to request this.  
This will apply to any decision where the student is dissatisfied with the alternative arrangements that have been recommended, or to any decision of the final course grade where an alternative arrangement for assessment has been put in place. The decision of the Academic Committee shall be final.

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