



### ROCKHAMPTON GIRLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

## Disability Policy

### PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

All students, including students with disabilities, should be treated with dignity and enjoy the benefits of education and training in an educationally supportive environment which values and encourages participation by all students, including students with disabilities.

#### Scope:

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, Board Members, students (including prospective students) and parents/guardians of RGGGS. This policy applies in assessing the application for enrolment of students with disabilities; identifying students with disabilities; and developing educational programs for students with disabilities.

#### Definitions

An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with a disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is **reasonable** if it achieves this purpose while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, RGGGS, staff and other students. RGGGS is not required to make an unreasonable adjustment.

**Disability** is a very broad definition and can include:

- loss of physical or mental functions (e.g. a person who has epilepsy or a hearing impairment)
- loss of part of the body (e.g. a person with an amputation)
- infectious and non-infectious diseases and illnesses (e.g. a person with allergies)
- the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of a person's body (e.g. a person with diabetes or asthma, or a birthmark or scar)
- a condition which means a person learns differently from other people (e.g. a person with autism, dyslexia, attention deficit disorder or and intellectual disability)
- any condition which affects a person's thought processes, understanding of reality, emotions or judgment or which results in disturbed behaviour (e.g. a person with a personality disorder)

A **disability** may:

- be present, or
- have previously existed but not longer exists (e.g. a person who has had an injury or illness); or
- exist in the future (e.g. a person with a genetic predisposition to a disease); or
- be assumed by another person (e.g. one person thinks that another person has a particular disability).

**Inclusive curricula** attempts to meet the learning needs of all students in schools by:

- including and making visible within the curriculum the experiences of all the diverse groups within Australian society; and
- valuing and responding to the learning styles of particular groups of students or of individuals.



### POLICY

Rockhampton Girls Grammar School (RGGS) is committed to providing equitable educational opportunities to ensure that students with disabilities have access to, participate in and attain positive outcomes from schooling on the same basis as students without disabilities. This includes the right to comparable access, services and facilities, and the right to participate in education and training unimpeded by discrimination, including on the basis of stereotyped beliefs about the abilities and choices of students with disabilities.

RGGS aims to treat a student with a disability “on the same basis” as a student without the disability by providing for the student opportunities and choices, which are comparable with those offered to students without disabilities, in relation to:

- Admission or enrolments; and
- Participation in courses or programs and use of facilities and services.

RGGS' commitment extends to all aspects of education including:

- Enrolment
- Participation
- Curriculum development, accreditation and delivery
- Student support services

Also, RGGS has developed and implemented strategies and programs to prevent harassment, discrimination and victimisation of students with disabilities. Discrimination, harassment and victimisation of students with disabilities is prohibited, as it is for students without disabilities.

RGGS will uphold the following principles under this policy:

- Recognising and acknowledging the different characteristics of all students
- Providing equitable educational opportunities for students with disabilities, from enrolment to the end of their schooling, through compliance with the legislation and in particular the *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)*.
- Supporting inclusive curricula through an array of educational options and flexibilities, including a Learning Support teacher and other support services personnel, the modification of facilities and /or the provision of specialist equipment, to support these educational options.
- Supporting the use of collaborative processes to develop and implement documented curricula for students with disabilities.
- Taking steps to ensure that students with disabilities are able to participate in education on the same basis as students without disabilities, by:
  - consulting with the student
  - considering whether adjustments are necessary (which may also involve using the Educational Adjustment Program); and
  - if adjustments are necessary, identify a reasonable adjustment, and effect that adjustment unless it would impose unreasonable hardship on RGGS.
- In considering whether adjustments are reasonable, RGGS will have regard to a student's disability, the views of that student (and/or their associate), the effect of the adjustment on that student, staff, other students and the School, the availability of resources and the costs and benefits of making the adjustment. Where alternative reasonable adjustments are available but may not be a student's preferred form of adjustment, these may be implemented by the School. In deciding whether to make a particular reasonable adjustment for a student, RGGS will:
  - assess whether there is any other reasonable adjustment that would be less disruptive and intrusive and no less beneficial for the student; and



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- assess whether the adjustment may need to be changed over the period of a student's education.
- When considering an adjustment for a student with a disability, RGGS is entitled to information about the student's disability and individual requirements if that information is directed towards:
  - providing the adjustment, including assessing the nature and extent of the adjustment needed and assessing the provider's capacity to provide the adjustment; and
  - an assessment that is intended to clarify the student's ability to comply with any non-discriminatory requirements of a course or training program.
- Any confidential information provided to RGGS for the purposes of making adjustments will not be disclosed except for the purposes of adjustment or in accordance with a lawful requirement.
- RGGS will:
  - take reasonable steps to ensure that any reasonable adjustments required to be made will be made within a reasonable time.
  - provide students and staff with information and/or training to ensure that they are effectively informed about their rights and responsibilities in dealing with students with disabilities and maintaining an environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation on the basis of disability. RGGS has an Anti-Discrimination Policy and an Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.
  - recognise parents/guardians and students have the right to be involved in educational decision making and to contribute to the effectiveness of the process.
  - liaise with government and non-government agencies to raise community awareness of issues concerning disability and promote effective and efficient delivery of services.

### **Education Adjustment Program (EAP):**

Education Queensland introduced a new process for identifying and responding to the needs of students with disabilities in 2005, which is intended to replace the former 'Ascertainment' process.

The Education Adjustment Program (EAP) identifies necessary teaching adjustments that need to be made at schools (including in class), and assists schools to provide an inclusive curricula for students with a verified diagnosis in autistic spectrum disorder, hearing impairment, intellectual impairment, physical impairment, speech-language impairment, vision impairment or a combination of these.

The program is based on six focus areas articulated by the Department of Education Guidelines, namely: curriculum; communication; social participation/emotional well-being; health and personal care; safety; and learning environment/access.

RGGS participates in this system from time to time to assist it (RGGS) to determine educational needs of students with disabilities.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

The responsibility for achieving the policy goals for the education of students with disabilities is shared by a partnership of the school, parents and the School community.



### School

The role of the school is to provide a framework of fair and equitable practices and an organizational structure that supports students with disabilities and considers the needs for all students through:

- participative development and review of school planning and accountability;
- deployment of resources to address the needs of all students;
- identification and planning for provision and allocation of resources;
- development and review of appropriate curricula that are responsive to the needs of students;
- provision of needs-based professional development activities for all staff;
- monitoring and supporting effective learning and teaching;
- participation and involvement of parent/guardians;
- participation and involvement of the community;
- management of the school budget to ensure it considers those needs of students with disabilities; and
- use of the EAP when required.

### Parents and School Community

Parents and the school community are encouraged to work collaboratively with the school to achieve fair and equitable practices by:

- participating in needs identification and action planning;
- contributing to student's learning;
- enhancing partnerships between the school and the school community;
- participating in school-based decision making;
- advocating for students with disabilities;
- participating in the planning and evaluation of individual student programs; and
- participating in the EAP.

### Education and Information:

- RGGS will ensure that students receive information and training about their rights and responsibilities in maintaining an environment free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of disabilities through pastoral care year level programs.
- RGGS aims to ensure that its staff members are equipped with the knowledge, skills and understanding to enable students with disabilities to participate in the full range of educational programs or services, on the same basis and to the same extent as students without disabilities. RGGS will ensure that staff receive ongoing professional development about their rights and responsibilities, including in relation to maintaining an environment free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of disability upon commencement of employment and biannually.

Information will also be supplied to parents/guardians regarding their rights and obligations and the RGGS policies and procedures relevant to students with disabilities.

### Complaints Procedure:

The RGGS Grievance Procedure applies to complaints related to treatment of students with disabilities. A person will not be victimised for making an allegation or a complaint.



### LEGISLATION

- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- *Disability Discrimination Regulations 1996 (Cth)*
- *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)*
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001 (Qld)*

### POLICY RELEASE DETAILS

<b>Date of Policy</b>	September 2011
<b>Reviewed by</b>	RGGS Executive
<b>Review Date</b>	Biennially
<b>Access</b>	Public Availability – RGGS Website

### RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

RGGS Parent and Student Handbook  
RGGS Confirmation of Enrolment Contract  
RGGS Staff Handbook  
RGGS Grievance Procedure  
RGGS Enrolment Policy