

Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability

Background to the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD)

All Education Ministers from Commonwealth, state and territory governments have endorsed the implementation of a nationally consistent collection of data on school students with disability in all Australian schools (government, independent and Catholic).

The nationally consistent approach to data collection provides all Australian schools, education authorities and the community with a clear picture of the number of students receiving adjustments because of disability in schools, and the adjustments they are provided to enable them to participate in education on the same basis as other students.

Authority for the collection of information for the purposes of the NCCD

The *Australian Education Regulation 2013* (the Regulation) (<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2016C00958>) requires the operators of all government and non-government schools that receive Australian Government funding (approved authorities) to provide information to the Australian Government Department of Education and Training (the Department) for the purposes of the NCCD.

The information that approved authorities must give to the Department is set out at section 58A of the Regulation. This includes, in relation to each student with a disability at a school operated by the approved authority:

- the student's level of education (i.e. primary or secondary)
- the student's category of disability (i.e. physical, cognitive, sensory or social/emotional)
- the student's level of adjustment (i.e. support provided within quality differentiated teaching practice, supplementary, substantial or extensive adjustment).

Other details about the information to be collected and the format in which the information is to be provided to the Department, are contained in guidelines approved by the Education Council (the committee of the Council of Australian Governments comprising the Commonwealth and state and territory Ministers responsible for

education). The NCCD guidelines are available on the Department's website at www.education.gov.au/nationally-consistent-collection-data-students-disability-guidelines.

The information **will not explicitly identify individual students** (subsection 58A(3) of the Regulation); no information that could reasonably enable the Department to identify individual students will be provided by approved authorities to the department¹.

Collection, use and disclosure of NCCD information

The information collected by schools for the purposes of the 2017 NCCD will ultimately be provided to the Department. In some cases, this will involve the school passing the information directly to the Department, and in other cases the school will provide the information to its state or territory government agency (or other relevant body) in the first instance, depending on the school's particular arrangements. In such circumstances, that state or territory government agency, or other relevant body, will then provide the information to the Department.

The Department, on behalf of the Joint Working Group², will use NCCD information for the purposes of preparing reports for and briefing the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee³ and the Education Council in relation to the NCCD. When providing these reports or briefing material, the Department will ensure that the NCCD information remains de-identified.

In December 2016, the Education Council released the report *Improving educational outcomes: Emergent data on students with disability in Australian schools* (www.educationcouncil.edu.au/EC-Reports-and-Publications.aspx). The Report provides high-level data from the 2015 NCCD and was the first public release of the NCCD data.

¹ In the event that NCCD information provided by an approved authority to the Department does inadvertently and indirectly enable the Department to reasonably identify an individual, the disclosure of that information by the approved authority, and the collection of that information by the Department, are both authorised by law for the purposes of the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). Nevertheless, the Department will seek to further de-identify such NCCD information.

Further information on the Department's Privacy Policy is available at www.education.gov.au/privacy.

² The Joint Working Group to Provide Advice on Reform for Students with Disability is comprised of representative members from all state and territory government educational authorities, Independent Schools Council of Australia, the National Catholic Education Commission, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, and the Australian Government.

³ The Education Council is primarily supported by a group of senior officials with responsibility for school education, early childhood and higher education who meet as the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC). AESOC is directly responsible to Council for the execution of Education Council decisions. For more information about AESOC visit: www.educationcouncil.edu.au/EC-AESOC.aspx.

NCCD information may also be used for policy development undertaken by the Department, including informing funding considerations relating to students with disability, and other policy development as agreed by the Education Council.

Contact

For further information about the collection, use or disclosure of information for the NCCD please contact: SWDPolicyTeam@education.gov.au. Any questions parents/carers or schools have about the completion of the 2017 NCCD may be directed to the relevant education authority contact in the NCCD Guidelines and at www.schooldisabilitydatapl.edu.au/other-pages/contact-us.