

GUIDELINES

TASMANIAN CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT (TCEA)

CONTENTS

PURPOSE.....	3
DEFINITIONS	3
PROCEDURE DETAILS.....	4
STEP 1 - ELIGIBILITY	4
STEP 2 – COLLECTION OF DATA, SUPPORTING EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION.....	4
STEP 3 – SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR THE TCEA	4
STEP 4 – DRAFT AND REVIEW DESCRIPTIVE TEXT	6
STEP 5 – QUALITY ASSURANCE.....	8
STEP 6 – ISSUING THE TCEA	9
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.....	9
PERSONAL INFORMATION	10

PURPOSE

The Tasmanian Certificate of Educational Achievement (TCEA) is a quality assured certificate issued by TASC to eligible students at the end of their senior secondary studies.

The TCEA recognises senior secondary education participation and achievements with descriptive text. The certificate is designed for students for whom certificates such as the Tasmanian Certificate of Education and the Qualifications Certificate do not provide an adequately just and fair account of their participation and achievements in their senior secondary years.

The TCEA is separate and distinct from the other TASC issued certificates that provide results in a standardised format i.e. the TCE and the Qualifications Certificate (QC). It is also different to VET qualifications and Statements of Attainment that are issued by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).

The TCEA is not an alternative for students who do not meet the requirements of the TCE.

DEFINITIONS

Advocacy is speaking, acting or writing on behalf of another person to promote, protect and defend the welfare of, and justice for, that person. Advocates support individuals or groups by being on their side, being primarily concerned with their fundamental needs and remaining loyal and accountable to them.

Attendance means complying with either the general attendance requirements of a school or a provider or with any special negotiated and agreed arrangements with the provider and/or, where appropriate, parent, caregiver or authorised advocate. Such arrangements could recognise places other than school, college or education and training provider as places where attendance could count.

Authorised Advocate is someone who has the approval of a person to work on their behalf and at their direction to achieve the outcomes wanted quickly and amicably while maintaining the person's privacy and confidentiality. An authorised advocate may include parents, guardians and carers who work to ensure a person's rights are protected and respected, and who work towards increasing the levels of power and control a person has over their life.

PROCEDURE DETAILS

STEP 1 - ELIGIBILITY

The student (and where appropriate, the parent/caregiver/authorised advocate) and the school must review eligibility requirements to ensure that an application for this certificate is appropriate.

A student is eligible for a TCEA application in their final year of senior secondary schooling (Year 12 or Year 13) when they meet at least one of the following eligibility criteria:

1. where an impairment, disability and/or condition impacts upon one or more aspects of their learning.
2. where personal circumstances and/or family circumstances and/or trauma related experiences have had a significant impact on learning or caused difficulties in learning.

STEP 2 – COLLECTION OF DATA, SUPPORTING EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION

If the student (and where appropriate, the parent/caregiver/authorised advocate) and the school agree that eligibility requirements are met and the issuing of a TCEA is appropriate, the school must then ensure that they have relevant resources that will inform the Descriptive Text to the standards set by TASC.

The student and school must collect and retain relevant data and information about the student's achievements against their *Individual Learning Plan* or learning goals. This is the primary information that will inform and substantiate the Descriptive Text on the TCEA.

This information will need to be provided with the application for the TCEA as supporting evidence.

The student should collect or keep a record of supportive evidence deriving from course work throughout their senior secondary study.

Teachers, parents, caregivers, authorised advocates and/or nominated referees can collect or keep a record of appropriate material that will support subsequent description of how the student's personal circumstances have impacted on their educational experience and performance.

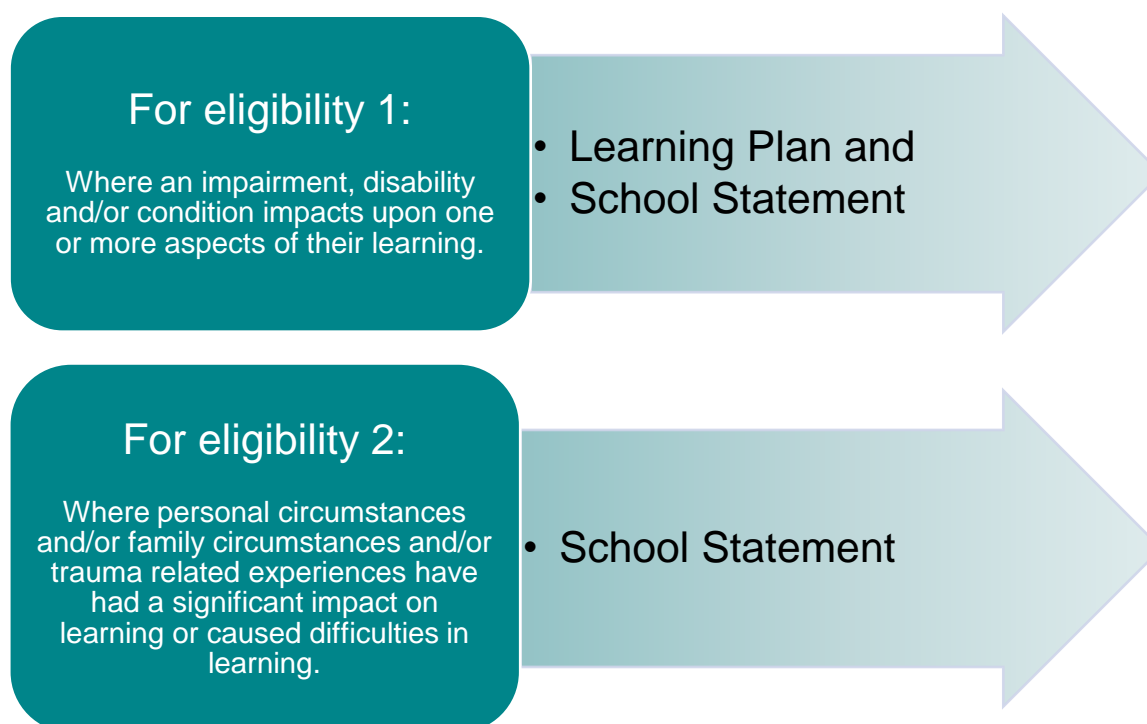
STEP 3 – SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR THE TCEA

The application for the Tasmanian Certificate of Educational Achievement, with all required information and supporting evidence, must be submitted by the TASC Liaison Officer (TLO) at the student's school.

This must be done through TASC's TRACS system (<https://tracs.tasc.tas.gov.au>) by the due date published on the TASC website.

TASC will consider the application against the eligibility requirements and the required supporting evidence.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE



Eligibility 1

The expectation is that for a known impairment, disability and/or condition that impacts upon learning, the school will have a Learning Plan in place.

Eligibility 2

Students may also be on a Learning Plan to manage their differentiated learning needs and goals. If a student applying through eligibility 2 has a Learning Plan, please include it as supporting evidence.

We ask for a school statement for **all** applications to summarise the nature of what makes a student eligible for the TCEA pathway.

TASC will confirm the outcome of the application to the TLO via the correspondence in TRACS.

To submit a TCEA in TRACS, TASC Liaison Officers should use the following steps:

1. Read the guidelines carefully to ensure the student's eligibility.
2. Log in to TRACS.
3. Find the student for whom you are submitting the request.
4. Create a Task for that student and select TCEA Application in TASK TYPE.
5. Complete the TCEA Application Form.
* Please download the TCEA Application Form from the TCEA webpage each year to verify that you are using the most recent version.
6. Ensure that the School Statement on the application form clearly outlines what makes the student eligible. TASC require enough information ascertain a student's eligibility, but we do not need to know the depth of personal situations and student privacy should be considered. The School Statement should clearly state if the student is claiming eligibility category 1 or 2 and the nature of the circumstances. TASC cannot confirm eligibility if the school statement is too vague or unclear.
7. Complete the School and Student Declaration on the Application Form.
8. Attach the completed TCEA Application Form to the Documents Tab of the TCEA Application task type in TRACS.
9. Upload the student's most recent Learning Plan to the Documents Tab.
10. The application will be received by TASC, and you will receive a notification in TRACS once it has been assessed.

LATE OR INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS

- Late applications will not be accepted.
- If new circumstances arise suddenly or unexpectedly in line with the eligibility categories, an exception may be considered. Contact TASC using a TCEA Enquiry task type in TRACS to discuss any late applications or changes in circumstances.
- An application missing any of the required components will not be considered complete. If outstanding requirements are not addressed within a reasonable amount of time, the application cannot be assessed and therefore cannot be approved.

STEP 4 – DRAFT AND REVIEW DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

If the application is approved, the school will be asked to draft Descriptive Text detailing the student's participation and achievements in their senior secondary studies. This must be based on evidence gathered in Step 2. TASC will use this Descriptive Text when issuing the TCEA at the end of the year.

The TCEA is intended to describe a student's educational participation and achievement in terms that are meaningful to employers, trainers and others in the community. In drafting the Descriptive Text, the author should:

- provide a maximum of 600 words, ensuring that the Descriptive Text can be printed on no more than two pages (front and back of one A4 certificate)
- make high-level statements, outlining a student's achievements and demonstrated skills against the specified categories
- provide coherent statements that are fair, equitable, supportive, consistent and expressed positively
- make statements using active sentence structure in the present tense
- focus on current achievement or abilities ('does') rather than potential or future abilities ('can do', 'able to'), for example – "completes set tasks" rather than "is able to complete set tasks"
- restrict comments to achievements that relate to education and training
- endeavour to not leave Descriptive Text categories blank or have a large imbalance across categories
- not repeat the same achievements across categories
- ensure that the Descriptive Text is substantial and positive enough to make the certificate valuable and meaningful.

To ensure a consistent style, comments should:

- be provided in dot point format
- use a consistent tense
- use the student's preferred pronouns and apply them consistently
- not describe attitudes or behaviours such as, 'a great attitude to...', 'strives to achieve' – but rather be a statement that certifies achievement
- avoid making value judgements or predictions ('will do well', or 'will be suitable')
- be cautious about naming schools, particularly if there are several, unless it is necessary to tell the student's story
- avoid being specific about locations or organisations (e.g. 'McDonald's at Hobart'), unless this is essential to giving a fair and just account of the student's achievements
- avoid using product names
- avoid using school terms that won't be understood by the broader community (e.g. homegroup names, school club names, program names)
- not use abbreviations or acronyms.

The student:

- has the right to review the information drafted for inclusion on the certificate and should be given the opportunity to review the final draft of the Descriptive Text prior to submission
- must consent to any disclosure of personal information (see Personal Information)
- may make reasonable suggestions to the school for changes in relation to additional information, deletion of material and modification of comments
- may withdraw from the process for issuing the certificate at this, or any, stage in the procedure.

The school may:

- agree to requested modifications by the student and make the changes, or
- refuse to make the requested changes.

Once reviewed and approved by the student and school, the Descriptive Text must be submitted to TASC for verification and use in issuing the TCEA. Descriptive Texts are entered into the same TCEA Application task in TRACS under the TCEA Submission tab.

The Descriptive Text for the TCEA must be submitted through TRACS by the due date published on the TASC website.

To ensure that the certificates are prepared and ready to release during TASC's end of year resulting and certification process, Descriptive Texts need to be submitted by the due date.

Descriptive Texts not submitted by the due date may not be included in certificate production that year. Descriptive Texts that are not actioned may result in the TCEA Application being cancelled.

STEP 5 – QUALITY ASSURANCE

To ensure that the TCEA retains its integrity, quality control processes governing eligibility, validity of support material and consistency in language style will be maintained by TASC as a key aspect in the issuing of the certificate.

The criteria governing eligibility is stated in the application phase. Through an open and transparent process, the student and school should together determine if the student is eligible to receive the TCEA. TASC will verify eligibility on receipt of the application.

As the issuing authority for the TCEA, TASC takes responsibility for the substantive truth of descriptive material included in the certificate. To ensure that comments represent true and accurate accounts of student achievement, TASC may request access to supporting documentation held by the school.

TASC will review the Descriptive Text provided to ensure that the language and style used conforms to the guidelines for writing prior to issuing the certificate.

Descriptive Texts that are exceedingly brief or not expressed positively, will not be accepted. Use the guiding documents and Descriptive Text examples on the TCEA webpage to ensure the school's Descriptive Texts are in line with national standards for this type of certificate.

STEP 6 – ISSUING THE TCEA

The TCEA will be issued at the same time as the TCE and the QC.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PARENT/CAREGIVER SUPPORT

Parent/caregiver support and input may not be appropriate in some circumstances. If parent/caregiver support and input is deemed inappropriate, the school may choose to work with the student directly or an authorised advocate may be appointed.

ROLE OF THE AUTHORISED ADVOCATE

In some circumstances, an authorised advocate may be required to represent a student by initiating, for example, a request for the certificate or working with the provider to gather information. An advocate is appropriate when the student is unable to make the application without assistance. Advocates can be a parent or guardian, teacher or counsellor, friend or trusted person, or a trained, independent advocate employed with an advocacy agency.

Where an advocate supports this process, the advocate will need to work with the school and have the school's TLO submit the application through TRACS.

WRITING INCLUSIVELY

In drafting the Descriptive Text, it is essential that schools use inclusive language. The focus should be on the achievements of the individual against their learning goals. Illness, impairment and/or disability should only be referred to where it has an impact on the student's learning and achievement.

ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT

For the purposes of pursuing a TCEA, there is no specified minimum level of attendance and engagement. For students on a TCEA pathway, engagement levels may look different for each student based on circumstances, such as home life commitments or the number of medical appointments they need to attend. The school should decide ultimately if the student is engaging with their Learning Plan to the best of their ability, based on their individual circumstances.

Descriptive Texts are intended to be a meaningful reflection of the student's senior secondary learning and a useful tool for the student as they take on ventures in the broader community after leaving school. If the student's learning team feel they cannot make statements of achievement or comment positively when developing the Descriptive Text, then the TCEA shouldn't be pursued in that instance.

It is important to remember that TCEA certificates are not a substitute for students who won't achieve a TCE. The Descriptive Text is designed to highlight student achievement where their learning was impacted by one of the eligibility requirements. It is not a pathway for anyone outside of TCE achievement or for students who have disengaged with school.

Reviewing the goals set out at the start of the year in the Learning Plan may help to guide if statements of achievement can be formed for the Descriptive Text and aid the decision making around whether the student engaged with their tailored Learning Plan in a meaningful way.

NAMES ON CERTIFICATES

TASC issues results and certificates in students' legal names. TASC certificates are government issued documents, and as such, preferred names cannot be honoured. For DECYP schools, student information comes through to TASC's system (TRACS) from the school's student management system. If a student wants to legally change their name, it will need to be managed by the school and updated in the school's student management system first which will then update TASC's data in TRACS. Schools from the Independent and Catholic education sectors will need to sight the student's legal name change documents and then update student records in TRACS.

YEAR 13

A TCEA can be issued to a student in year 13. TCEA certificates are issued once only to a student in their final year of senior secondary education. The school will need to be clear with the student and their family on whether a year 13 will be pursued prior to applying for a TCEA.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

TASC follow the requirements of the [Personal Information Protection Act 2004 \(the Act\)](#). The type of information required for the formation and verification of the TCEA falls under the definition of 'personal information' and/or 'sensitive information' in section 3 of the Act.

For the purpose of carrying out its functions, TASC collects and holds information as required or authorised by the [Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certificate Act 2003 \(No. 62 of 2003\)](#) and regulations made by, or under, this Act or any other Act. Before collecting and using any personal information, TASC must ensure the individual is aware of:

- the sort of information that will be held
- the purpose for which it is held
- how the personal information will be collected, used and disclosed by TASC.

The information held by TASC can be accessed and corrected if it is considered that it may be incorrect, incomplete, out of date or misleading.

A request to correct personal information can be made in writing to Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification and will be processed in accordance with the provisions of the [Right to Information Act 2009 \(no. 70 of 2009\)](#).

Personal information will only be used for the purposes for which it is collected as described above. Officers of TASC are bound by the confidentiality requirements specified in the [State Service Act 2000 \(No. 85 of 2000\)](#) and are required to restrict their access to information required to carry out their functions within TASC.