

EQUIPMENT BOOST FOR SCHOOLS



PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE GUIDE: INCLUSIVE EQUIPMENT & ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY



Acknowledgments

The Department of Education and Training (the Department) acknowledges and pays respects to Elders and all Victorian Aboriginal communities. We honour and respect Traditional Owners, past and present, and value the rich culture and history of the First Peoples of this land.

The Department also acknowledges the expertise and commitment of teachers and school leaders in Victorian government schools who work to build teaching and learning excellence every day.



Education
and Training

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INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY AND PRACTICE

Inclusive education means that all members of every school community are valued and supported to fully participate, learn, develop and succeed within an inclusive school culture. This includes making reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.

Data shows that Victorian schools make adjustments for 19 per cent of students because of a disability or an additional learning need. This is approximately 115,000 students in Victorian government schools, which suggests that every government school may receive benefit from equipment and assistive technology that supports their capacity to deliver inclusive education.

EQUIPMENT BOOST FOR SCHOOLS

The Equipment Boost for Schools initiative responds to calls to strengthen inclusive education practice to provide better supports for students with disabilities and additional needs by providing all Victorian government schools with:

- access to funding to purchase new equipment and assistive technology to support students with disabilities or additional learning needs to participate, experience, learn and achieve on the same basis as their peers
- support to identify their needs and utilise equipment and assistive technology to implement effective, evidence-based interventions (including through the provision of training).

The Equipment Boost for Schools funding model aligns with the SHARE Principles of Inclusive Education. The model provides schools with flexibility to collaborate with students, parents, carers, teachers and support staff to tailor equipment and technology needs to the unique requirements of their school and students in line within these principles.

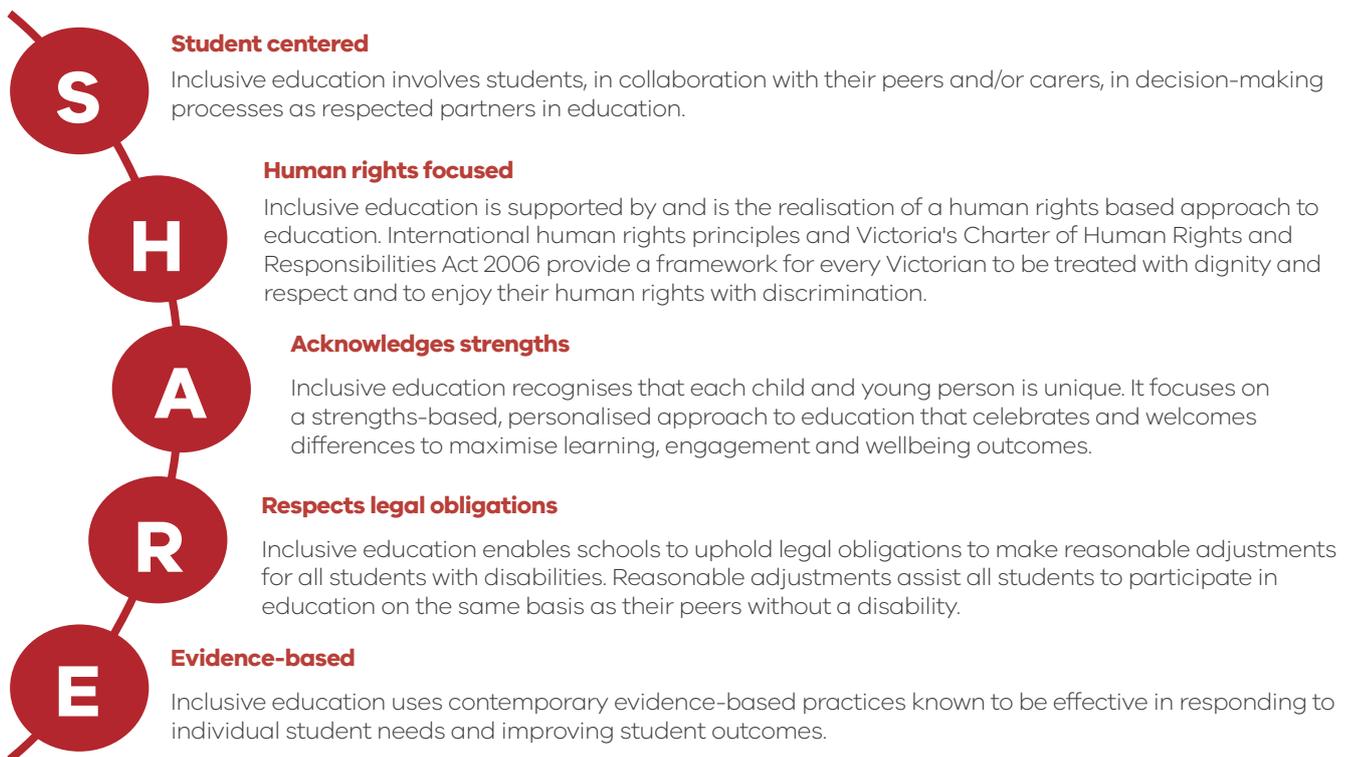


Figure 1. SHARE Principles of Inclusive Education (developed based on feedback captured in 2017 during public consultations on the Department's Education for All inclusive education policy)



INCLUSIVE EQUIPMENT AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

'Inclusive equipment and assistive technology' includes any item that supports students, including those with disabilities or additional learning needs, to fully participate, learn, develop and succeed in school and school-related activities. Examples of equipment and assistive technology include:

- customised or adjustable furniture
- mobility equipment and resources
- ability switches and switch-adapted toys
- portable amplification equipment
- literacy aids
- communication software
- inclusive recreation equipment and resources.

Equipment and assistive technology support inclusive education practice by:

- removing barriers to accessing curriculum content
- supporting students to fully participate in learning activities
- supporting students to demonstrate their knowledge and strengths
- enabling all students, including those with disabilities or additional learning needs, to participate and learn together in the learning environment.

Equipment and assistive technology can be used in schools to support students at a functional level (to access curriculum content), a participatory level (to interact and engage with other students and teaching practices) or a pedagogical level (to grow as self-directed learners). To determine the appropriate equipment or technology to support inclusive education, schools should consider factors such as:

- the student(s) who will most benefit from the use of equipment
- the outcomes expected from equipment use and whether these outcomes align with the school's priorities and goals
- the practicality of using, maintaining and storing the equipment within the school setting
- any training required to use the equipment appropriately and effectively
- how the school will evaluate the effectiveness of purchased items.

Adjustments, interventions and other supports should be personalised and individualised to address the strengths and learning needs of individual students, and reflect collaboration between: students; families; teachers; education support staff; school leaders and suitably qualified professionals (e.g. allied health professionals) to support students' needs.

Professional Practice Guides

The purpose of Professional Practice Guides, including this document, is to guide schools' decision-making in relation to identifying, purchasing and implementing inclusive equipment and assistive technology. This document includes:

- a recommended process to support schools' decision-making
- a visual overview of the recommended process
- a list of inclusive education equipment and assistive technologies used in Victorian government schools to:
 - » support students to participate in all aspects of school life
 - » improve students' access to learning
 - » enhance communication between students, families teachers and school staff
 - » enhance student engagement, independence and agency
 - » build inclusive school environments where all students are supported to learn together. This list has been developed in consultation with allied health professional peak bodies and regional, area and school-based Department staff. Please note that this list is intended to provide examples of equipment and assistive technology that are within scope of this initiative, and is not intended to be exhaustive.



RECOMMENDED PROCESS FOR SCHOOLS

To select the most appropriate equipment and technology for your school, it is recommended that you take the following steps.

Identify inclusion needs within your school

In consultation with students, families, teachers and other school staff, identify where students are not currently supported to fully participate, learn, develop and succeed in school. This may relate to individual students, groups of students or be a school-wide issue.

It is recommended that you identify a key staff member(s) to lead this process. This role will involve liaising with students, teachers, families, school staff and relevant professionals. To identify an appropriate staff member to fulfil this role, you may consider teachers and other school staff who:

- are currently working in special education
- have qualifications in special and/or inclusive education
- are responsible for completing your school's Inclusive Schools Index
- are currently studying a Masters in Special and/or Inclusive Education through the Inclusive Education Scholarships initiative
- have completed online training through the Inclusive Classrooms initiative
- have relevant expertise, knowledge or experience.

Inclusion in the classroom

Within the classroom, students may benefit from equipment that supports them to participate and learn across one or more curricular learning areas.

Equipment may also support teachers to implement specific teaching strategies and approaches that previously presented barriers to participation for some students; for example, students may benefit from equipment that removes barriers to participation in a range of classroom activities such as:

- interacting with teachers and peers
- group work
- floor work
- physical activities
- independent study
- using digital technology.

Inclusion in school life

Outside of the classroom, students may benefit from equipment that supports access, inclusion and participation in a range of activities, including:

- assembly
- extra-curricular activities
- recreational activities
- camps and excursions
- Outside School Hours Care.

Equipment may also support students to access areas of your school that may have been previously inaccessible to them, such as:

- the school library
- the school canteen/tuckshop
- bathrooms and changing rooms
- indoor and outdoor sports facilities
- indoor and outdoor playgrounds.

Consultation

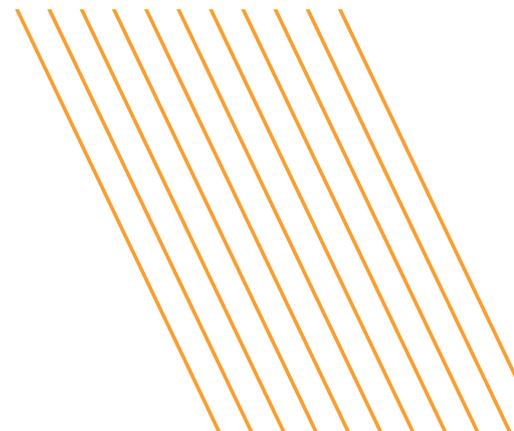
To effectively identify inclusion needs across your school, it is recommended that the responsible staff member consults with a wide variety of stakeholders, particularly where an identified need relates to an individual student. As applicable, you may consult with:

- students
- families
- teachers (including teachers who may not work directly with the individual student but may interact with the student in other areas of the school)
- other school staff, such as education support staff, health and wellbeing coordinators and welfare support coordinators
- other individuals who may interact with students during the school day (for example, building and grounds maintenance personnel, bus drivers)
- Student Support Groups
- Professional Learning Communities and other relevant networks
- Department of Education and Training (DET) regional staff, including allied health professionals, who have knowledge of students at your school
- suitably qualified professionals (for example a medical practitioner, occupational therapist, speech pathologist, psychologist, social worker, counsellor, guidance officer or audiologist)
- Outside School Hours Care staff.

Existing evidence of need

Where applicable, you may consider any existing evidence that demonstrates an identified need for an adjustment(s) to be made. For example:

- evidence of adjustments currently being provided to students
- results of formative and/or summative assessments
- students' individual learning plans
- evidence of students' responses to previous adjustments
- documented observations and/or discussions by teachers and/or other school staff
- evidence of family concerns
- documented reports from suitably qualified professionals (for example a medical practitioner, occupational therapist, speech pathologist, psychologist, social worker, counsellor, guidance officer or audiologist)
- evidence that has been used to support a student's inclusion in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data for Students with Disabilities (NCCD)
- previous applications for the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) (this may demonstrate a need regardless of whether the application was successful)
- your school's Annual Implementation Plan
- other available data and evidence.



Choose your equipment

Once you have identified the inclusion needs within your school, the next step is to consider whether the identified needs can be addressed or supported through the provision of age-appropriate equipment and assistive technology. If so, you will need to determine the types of equipment that will most appropriately and effectively support these needs. Equipment may be used:

- to enhance current practices, or
- to develop new practices that are more inclusive for all students.

To support you to identify the most appropriate equipment for your school's needs, the Department has developed this Professional Practice Guide. Using this resource as a guide, determine what equipment is best suited to meeting the identified objectives. Further research, including consultation with suitably qualified professionals, may assist you to determine the most appropriate equipment types or products to meet your school's needs, and is particularly encouraged where the equipment is intended to support an individual student. For ease of use, the equipment has been classified under the following categories:

Access to curriculum	<p>Equipment and technology that supports students to access the curriculum, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • customised or adjustable furniture • mobility equipment and resources • customised equipment to support students' participation in extra-curricular and recreational activities • literacy aids • amplification equipment • captioning software • optical character recognition technology.
Access to technology	<p>Equipment and technology that supports students to access digital technologies, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mouse/keyboard alternatives • mouse/keyboard training software • ability switches and switch-adapted toys • screen reader software • tablet mounting stands.
Communication	<p>Equipment and technology that supports students' communication, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • picture symbol software and resources • communication equipment and software.
Personal organisation	<p>Equipment and technology that supports students to organise their time and work, either independently or with support, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal organisation software • visual timers.
Sensory resources	<p>A wide range of resources that aim to address students' individual sensory needs.</p>
Inclusive education resources	<p>Resources that support teachers and other school staff to strengthen their inclusive education practices and create inclusive learning environments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • classroom resources that promote students' understanding of inclusion • teacher resources that support teachers' understanding and implementation of inclusive education practices.

When determining the most appropriate equipment for your school's needs, it is strongly recommended that you also consider the following.

Existing equipment

To ensure that your funding allocation is not spent on duplicating existing equipment within your school, consider whether your school already has the equipment, or similar equipment, that may address the identified need.

Staff capability and commitment

Some of the most common barriers to the effective implementation of assistive technology in education settings include inadequate staff training and support and negative staff attitudes.¹ Particularly with regard to more specialised equipment or digital technology, there is a high risk that the equipment will be abandoned if those using it do not understand how to effectively integrate it into the curriculum.² When choosing your equipment, consider whether students, teachers and other school staff have the technological capability and expertise to manage it effectively.

For equipment which will be used to support large numbers of students, consider identifying a teacher or staff member to act as a 'champion' for the equipment and take responsibility for:

- promoting the availability of the equipment
- on-training other staff members in its use.

In some instances, you may consider training for students, teachers and other school staff who will use the equipment. Investments in inclusive education equipment and assistive technology are unlikely to be effective unless they are accompanied with adequate and appropriate training.³ It is important to note that training may consist of two distinct components:

- training on how to use the equipment
- training on how to integrate the equipment into pedagogy and the curriculum.

Training may be provided in a variety of ways. For example,

- teachers, other school staff, and DET regional staff who are already familiar with the equipment may be able to on-train their colleagues
- manufacturers and/or suppliers may offer complimentary training (including online training) with your equipment purchase
- suitably qualified professionals with relevant expertise may be able to provide training and/or advice.

Where a manufacturer, supplier or suitably qualified professional offers training at a cost, your funding may be used to cover this cost.

When choosing your equipment, consider whether students, teachers and other school staff have the technological capability and expertise to manage it effectively.

¹ Copley & Ziviani, 2007

² Schoonover & Argabrite, 2015

³ Assistive Technologies for Students with Disabilities: Final Report to the Department of Education and Training (Nous Group, 2018)

Storage, maintenance and repair

Difficulties associated with the ongoing management of equipment and assistive technology are another common barrier to the effective implementation of assistive technology in education settings.⁴

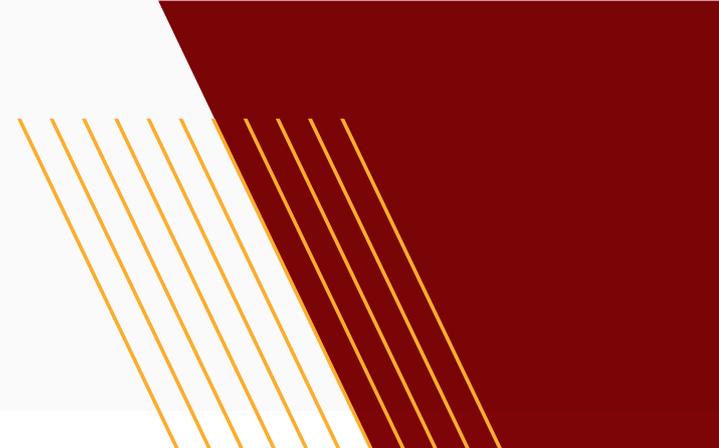
Your school is responsible for ensuring that equipment is maintained and repaired as required; it is therefore recommended that you consider whether the equipment requires occasional adjustments, modifications, servicing and/or repair when purchasing the equipment. For example:

- Is the equipment likely to require ongoing maintenance? Can this be addressed through the purchase of an extended warranty from the supplier?
- Does your school have the physical space to store the equipment? For more valuable equipment, is secure storage required?
- Does your school need to develop plans or processes to ensure that the equipment is used appropriately (for example, will your school need to implement a roster or booking system for its use)? Does your school need to allow time for teachers and other staff to do this?
- Does the equipment need to be set up and put away for each use? If so, how long will this take, and who will be responsible?

Equipment for formal examinations

If you are considering purchasing equipment which will support students to achieve the VCE or VCAL, it is recommended that you confirm with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) that the equipment meets the eligibility requirements for Special Provision.

⁴ Copley & Ziviani, 2007



Introduce the equipment

Once your school has purchased the equipment, there may be additional steps to undertake before the equipment can be used. For example:

- customised or adjustable equipment may need to be installed and modified based on students' individual needs
- teachers and other staff may need to complete training.

Evaluate the equipment

Once the equipment has been purchased and is being used to support inclusion in your school, it is strongly recommended that you evaluate whether the equipment is achieving the intended outcome(s). The evaluation process should involve consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including students, families, teachers, school staff and suitably qualified professionals as applicable.

If the review indicates that the equipment is not achieving its intended outcomes, you may consider whether it is necessary to review the use of the equipment, make modifications if required and/or seek professional advice.

To be used effectively on an ongoing basis, some equipment may require occasional adjustments, modifications and repairs. This may involve consultation with suitably qualified professionals. For example, adjustable furniture may need to be adapted on a regular basis as a student grows. Your school is responsible for ensuring that the equipment is maintained and adjusted as required and repaired as necessary.

The evaluation process should involve consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including students, families, teachers, school staff and suitably qualified professionals as applicable.

RECOMMENDED PROCESS FOR SCHOOLS – OVERVIEW





Develop and plan



Implement and monitor

Build capability and expertise

Some of the most common barriers to the effective implementation of assistive technology in education settings include inadequate staff training and support and negative staff attitudes. Particularly with regard to more specialised equipment or digital technologies, there is a high risk that the equipment will be abandoned if those using it do not understand how to effectively integrate it into the curriculum. When choosing your equipment, consider whether students, teachers and other school staff have the technological capability and expertise to manage it effectively.

Consider identifying a teacher or staff member to act as a 'champion' for the equipment and take responsibility for:

- promoting the availability of the equipment
- on-training other staff members in its use.

Training may consist of two distinct components:

- training on how to use the equipment
- training on how to integrate the equipment into pedagogy and the curriculum.

Introduce the equipment

Before introducing the equipment, consider whether there are any additional steps to undertake before the equipment can be used, for example:

- installation
- training.

Your school is responsible for ensuring that equipment purchased through the Equipment Boost for Schools is maintained and repaired as required.

Evaluate the equipment

Once the equipment has been purchased and is being used to support inclusion in your school, evaluate whether the equipment is achieving the intended outcome(s).

If the review indicates that the equipment is not achieving its intended outcomes, you may consider whether it is necessary to review the use of the equipment, make modifications if required and/or seek professional advice.

EQUIPMENT LIST

ACCESS TO CURRICULUM

EQUIPMENT TYPE	EXAMPLE ITEMS
Customised or adjustable furniture	
<p>Customised or adjustable furniture can be used in a range of school settings to support students' attention and engagement at school. Customised or adjustable tables and desks can support students to maintain a stable and correct postural position while sitting, which may help their engagement with tasks. Customised or adjustable seating can support students to maintain a stable and comfortable sitting position and support participation and engagement in a range of activities, including floor-based activities and games.</p> <p>Customised furniture (furniture that has been adapted for use by an individual student) may be appropriate for students who have physical challenges associated with low muscle strength, muscle fatigue or postural compromises, and in many cases can be adjusted as the student grows. To ensure safe and appropriate use, it is recommended that customised furniture is prescribed, installed and customised to students' individual needs by suitably qualified professionals.</p> <p>Adjustable furniture (furniture that can be quickly and easily adjusted) can be more easily adjusted to meet the needs of a variety of students. For example, if a height-adjustable table is used by more than one student, a teacher or other staff member can adjust the table to the appropriate height for each student.</p> <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved postural support • Increased participation and engagement with tasks • Inclusion in group work and social and/or recreational activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Height-adjustable tables • Slant-adjustable desks • Sit-to-stand tables • Cut-out tables • Therapy benches • Armrests • Footrests • Postural support cushions • Standing desks with anti-fatigue floor mats
Mobility equipment and resources	
<p>Mobility equipment and resources may provide opportunities for students who have physical disabilities to safely access a broader range of learning and/or recreational opportunities. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • portable wheelchair ramps can enable students who use wheelchairs to access areas that are otherwise inaccessible to them • non-slip mats can be used in conjunction with other equipment to remove safety hazards • slantboards offer a more portable alternative to an adjustable desk, and support students to maintain an upright posture by enabling them to engage in table top work at different angles. <p>Where mobility equipment is intended to meet the needs of an individual student, it is recommended that it is prescribed, installed and customised to students' individual needs by suitably qualified professionals.</p> <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to a broader range of learning environments • Increased ability to participate in collaborative group activities • Increased independence and engagement in learning • Inclusion in social and/or recreational activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilet seats/steps • Inclined wedges • Portable wheelchair ramps • Threshold ramps • Step-up ramps • Lap desks • Non-slip floor mats • Slantboards • Swivel boards • Scooter boards • Portable hoists • Lap trays • Wheelchair Trays

EQUIPMENT TYPE	EXAMPLE ITEMS
<p data-bbox="113 533 453 562">Inclusive sports equipment</p> <p data-bbox="113 607 1038 719">Inclusive sports equipment supports students to access, participate and engage in a range of sports and physical activities. For example, specialised sports balls may be used to support students who have low vision, sensory processing challenges or hearing impairments to participate in ball games with their peers.</p> <p data-bbox="113 734 453 763">Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul data-bbox="129 779 1075 909" style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased opportunities to access and participate in a broader range of sports and physical activities • Increased engagement in sports and physical activities • Inclusion in social and/or recreational activities. 	<ul data-bbox="1174 607 1442 898" style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapted sports balls <i>e.g. glowing or ringing sports balls</i> • Sensory sports balls • Tunnels • Ramps • Adapted bicycles • Adapted climbing equipment
<p data-bbox="113 969 472 999">Inclusive cooking equipment</p> <p data-bbox="113 1043 1082 1126">Inclusive cooking equipment may support students who have physical disabilities or additional learning needs to participate and succeed in cooking activities and subjects in which cooking is an integral part (for example, VCE Food Studies). For example:</p> <ul data-bbox="129 1144 1054 1290" style="list-style-type: none"> • easy-grip kitchen utensils can support students who have poor grip strength and dexterity to use a greater range of kitchen utensils • non-slip mats can be placed under mixing bowls and other kitchen equipment to stabilise the equipment, reducing the need for bilateral hand use as students can use one hand to mix ingredients. <p data-bbox="113 1305 453 1335">Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul data-bbox="129 1350 935 1413" style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased opportunities to access and participate in cooking activities • Increased independence and engagement in cooking activities. 	<ul data-bbox="1174 1043 1469 1234" style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy-grip kitchen utensils • 'Talking' kitchen utensils • Non-slip mats • Switch-adapted kitchen appliances
<p data-bbox="113 1469 560 1498">Inclusive arts and crafts equipment</p> <p data-bbox="113 1543 1078 1626">Inclusive arts and crafts equipment may support students who have physical disabilities or additional learning needs to participate and succeed in art activities and subjects. For example:</p> <ul data-bbox="129 1644 1066 1816" style="list-style-type: none"> • modified equipment such as paint brushes, textas and pencils may have an increased diameter, variable textures and/or modified pincer support in order to suit a student's specific needs and support them to engage with writing and drawing activities • tabletop easels may support students to work at an angle suited to their individual needs. <p data-bbox="113 1832 1043 1939">Where inclusive arts and crafts equipment is intended to be used by an individual student, it is recommended that you consult with a suitably qualified professional to determine the types of equipment that will most appropriately and effectively meet that student's needs.</p> <p data-bbox="113 1955 453 1984">Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul data-bbox="129 2000 879 2063" style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased opportunities to access and participate in art activities • Increased independence and engagement in art activities. 	<ul data-bbox="1174 1543 1461 1816" style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring-loaded scissors • Easy-grip scissors • Tabletop easels • Pencil grips • Modified textas/pencils • Easy-grip paintbrushes • Electric pencil sharpeners

EQUIPMENT TYPE	EXAMPLE ITEMS
Inclusive recreation equipment and resources	
<p>Inclusive recreation equipment and resources may support students to participate in a broad range of social and/or recreational activities, and create opportunities for students to interact with their peers and learn social skills in an informal setting. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dice alternatives may support students to participate in board games • modified gaming equipment may support older students to engage in a broader range of digital technologies and games. <p>Please note that inclusive playground equipment is limited to loose, non-fixed equipment that can be used in playgrounds. Schools can apply for fixed playground equipment through the Victorian School Building Authority's <i>Inclusive Schools Fund</i>.</p> <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased opportunities to access and participate in social and/or recreational activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dice alternatives <i>e.g. 'spinners'</i> • Inclusive playground equipment • Modified gaming equipment <i>e.g. modified game controllers</i> • Collaborative games
Literacy aids	
<p>Literacy aids aim to support students' engagement with reading and writing by removing barriers to learning associated with a disability or additional learning needs.</p> <p>Some literacy aids are designed to support a range of needs, while others are targeted at specific needs and learning difficulties. When considering this type of equipment for an individual student, it is important to consider whether the equipment supports that student's specific needs.</p> <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased ability to access literacy activities independently • Increased participation, engagement and success in literacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy development software/apps with a focus on inclusion • Assistive writing software/apps • Portable word processors • E-readers/e-books • Books with visual aids • Large-print books • Audiobooks • Handheld magnifiers
Mathematical writing software	
<p>Mathematical writing software can be used to write mathematical formulae and equations using digital technology. While the software can be used by all students and may suit individual students' learning preferences, it may be particularly beneficial for students who have difficulty writing legibly due to a disability or additional learning need.</p> <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased participation, engagement and success in mathematics. 	

EQUIPMENT TYPE	EXAMPLE ITEMS
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Smart pens

Smart pens are highly portable devices with a variety of functions, including:

- recording handwritten notes electronically
- converting text to speech
- recording audio
- providing word definitions by connecting to electronic dictionaries.

Some Smart Pens also offer additional functionality through accompanying mobile applications and digital notepads.

They may assist all students by supporting their comprehension of reading material, and may be particularly beneficial for students who have difficulty writing legibly due to a disability or additional learning need.

Anticipated student outcomes:

- Increased participation, engagement and success in literacy.

- Text-to-speech pens
- Handheld scanners
- Electronic note-takers
- Audio recording pens

Portable amplification equipment

Portable amplification equipment supports students who are hard of hearing or have auditory processing challenges and/or middle ear infections by amplifying the voices of teachers and other students while reducing background noise. It can support students to participate in school activities inside and outside the classroom, including assemblies, specialist classes and outdoor activities.

When considering room-based amplification equipment, it is recommended that you consider all of the students who will be using it; while this equipment may meet the needs of some students, it may also present a barrier to other students' learning and participation in some instances.

When considering portable equipment such as headphones and FM transmitters, it is recommended that you consider the equipment's compatibility with students' hearing aids/cochlear implants.

Anticipated student outcomes:

- Increased participation in group discussions
- Increased ability to actively listen to teachers and peers.

- Room-based amplification systems
- Remote microphones
- Wireless microphones
- FM transmitters
- Hearing aid/cochlear-compatible headphones

EQUIPMENT TYPE	EXAMPLE ITEMS
<p data-bbox="113 533 373 562">Captioning software</p> <p data-bbox="113 607 1075 745">Captioning software supports all students to access lesson content by converting speech-to-text with a high level of accuracy. For example, the software can display a teacher’s speech on a screen as the teacher presents the lesson. Some captioning software also allows users to record lessons (for example, for absent students to review later).</p> <p data-bbox="113 768 1075 880">This software may provide benefits for all students, and may be particularly beneficial for students who are hard of hearing and can read proficiently. The broader range of visual and auditory prompts may also assist students who are learning English as an additional language.</p> <p data-bbox="113 902 456 925">Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul data-bbox="129 947 627 1003" style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to classroom activities • Increased engagement in school activities. 	<ul data-bbox="1174 607 1369 663" style="list-style-type: none"> • Live captioning software/apps
<p data-bbox="113 1070 635 1099">Optical character recognition technology</p> <p data-bbox="113 1144 1066 1249">Optical character recognition technology converts typed or handwritten text on a page to an editable electronic document. For example, a teacher or student can convert a printed worksheet into a document that the student can then work on using a tablet or computer.</p> <p data-bbox="113 1272 991 1328">Optical character recognition technology can be combined with screen reader software to improve access to books and other resources.</p> <p data-bbox="113 1350 456 1373">Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul data-bbox="129 1395 868 1451" style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to a range of classroom activities • Increased participation and engagement in classroom activities. 	
<p data-bbox="113 1518 373 1547">Acoustic treatments</p> <p data-bbox="113 1592 1027 1697">Acoustic treatments can be used to adjust the acoustics and decrease the level of background noise in a room. This can support students who are hard of hearing or have auditory processing issues and/or middle ear infections to participate and engage in school activities.</p> <p data-bbox="113 1720 456 1742">Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul data-bbox="129 1765 906 1865" style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced communication between students, teachers and families • Increased ability to independently plan and organise school work • Increased ability to independently anticipate activities and routines. 	<ul data-bbox="1174 1585 1410 1686" style="list-style-type: none"> • Carpet boards • Velcro boards • Acoustic furnishing

ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

EQUIPMENT TYPE	EXAMPLE ITEMS
<p>Mouse/keyboard alternatives</p> <p>Mouse/keyboard alternatives support students who are unable to use standard computer hardware to access computer-based activities and tasks. This equipment may be particularly beneficial for students who have physical challenges associated with hand-eye coordination, fine motor skills, muscle strength or postural support.</p> <p>Where mouse/keyboard alternatives are intended to meet the needs of an individual student, it is recommended that they are prescribed, installed and customised to students' individual needs by suitably qualified professionals.</p> <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to curriculum content and computer-based tasks • Increased independence and engagement in computer-based tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-contrast keyboards • Large-key keyboards • Mouse emulating software • Trackballs • Joysticks • Styluses
<p>Mouse/keyboard training software</p> <p>Mouse/keyboard training software supports students to improve their proficiency in using standard computer hardware, and may support students who have difficulty using standard computer hardware to access a broader range of computer programs and software and more successfully engage with computer-based activities and tasks.</p> <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to curriculum content and computer-based tasks • Increased independence and engagement in computer-based tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typing software • Mouse/keyboard training games
<p>Ability switches and switch-adapted toys</p> <p>Ability switches and switch-adapted toys support students who have physical disabilities to control electronic toys devices using any part of their body that can be moved voluntarily. For example, an ability switch may enable a student to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • turn pages on an e-reader • use communication devices • control toys (for example, by moving a toy vehicle) • turn appliances on and off. <p>Ability switches can be purchased in a range of sizes and in most cases must be selected and installed based on the specific needs of the student who will be using them. Particularly where ability switches are intended to meet the needs of an individual student, it is recommended that they are prescribed, installed and customised to students' individual needs by suitably qualified professionals.</p> <p>Please note that a switch interface may be required to connect ability switches to computers and other devices.</p> <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access, participation, engagement and success with electronic toys and devices that may previously have been inaccessible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability switches • Switch-accessible software and games • Switch-adapted vehicles <i>e.g. vehicles, soft toys</i>

EQUIPMENT TYPE	EXAMPLE ITEMS
<p data-bbox="113 533 703 562">Screen magnification equipment and software</p> <p data-bbox="113 607 1066 689">Screen magnification equipment and software can be used to enlarge text and other content on digital electronic devices such as computers and mobile tablet devices. It may be particularly beneficial for students who have vision impairments.</p> <p data-bbox="113 707 1054 790">When considering this type of equipment, you may wish to note that many operating systems have built-in accessibility features, including screen magnification software. There are also free screen magnifier apps available for mobile tablet devices.</p> <p data-bbox="113 808 1027 891">For students who have more profound vision impairments, it may be appropriate to apply for specialised equipment through the Blind and Low Vision stream of the <i>Equipment Boost for Schools</i> initiative.</p> <p data-bbox="113 909 456 938">Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul data-bbox="129 956 919 985" style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to, and engagement with, digital electronic devices. 	<ul data-bbox="1174 607 1437 725" style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen magnification software • Screen magnification apps
<p data-bbox="113 1043 408 1072">Screen reader software</p> <p data-bbox="113 1117 1054 1200">Screen reader software converts text on a screen to speech, and may be a suitable alternative to screen magnification software in situations where a student is required to read large amounts of on-screen text.</p> <p data-bbox="113 1218 1070 1270">This software may assist students who do not benefit from using screen magnification software, as well as students who are learning English as an additional language.</p> <p data-bbox="113 1288 1054 1370">When considering this type of equipment, you may wish to note that many operating systems have built-in accessibility features, including screen reader software. Some screen reader software is also available for free.</p> <p data-bbox="113 1388 456 1417">Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul data-bbox="129 1435 919 1464" style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to, and engagement with, digital electronic devices. 	
<p data-bbox="113 1520 413 1550">Tablet mounting stands</p> <p data-bbox="113 1594 1070 1704">Tablet mounting stands enable students to use mobile tablet devices without having to physically hold or support the device. They can be secured to desks or wheelchairs and positioned to support a student to maintain an appropriate working posture while using the device.</p> <p data-bbox="113 1722 1054 1805">While all students may benefit from this support, tablet mounting stands may be particularly beneficial for students who have physical challenges associated with low muscle strength, muscle fatigue or involuntary muscle movement.</p> <p data-bbox="113 1823 1038 1874">It is recommended that adjustable mounting stands are installed and adjusted to a student's individual requirements by a suitably qualified professional.</p> <p data-bbox="113 1892 456 1921">Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul data-bbox="129 1939 1078 1995" style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access, participation, engagement and success in tablet-based activities and tasks. 	

COMMUNICATION

EQUIPMENT TYPE	EXAMPLE ITEMS
Picture symbol software and resources	
<p>Picture symbol software and resources support students who are non-verbal to communicate using pictures and symbols, and enable teachers and students to make visual resources such as checklists, timetables, schedules and social stories/social scripts.</p> <p>Picture symbols can be used to assist students' understanding of social/emotional concepts. For example, social stories/scripts describe a situation, skill, or concept in terms of relevant social cues, perspectives, and common responses, and aim to increase students' understanding of social situations and the appropriate behaviours for these situations.</p> <p>Where picture symbol software and resources are intended to be used by an individual student, it is recommended that you consult with a suitably qualified professional to determine the types of equipment that will most appropriately and effectively support that student's needs. You may also consider whether teachers and other school staff who work with the student will require training to use the equipment effectively.</p> <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased opportunities for effective communication between students, teachers and other school staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Picture symbol boards Picture symbol books Picture symbol software/apps Picture symbol 'wearables'
Communication equipment	
<p>Communication equipment can be used to support students, teachers and families to communicate more effectively and efficiently.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing access to a school telephone with volume control and/or text messaging capacity may support students who are hard of hearing to communicate with their families during the school day portable recording devices may be used to communicate important information between students, teachers and families when it is not possible to have a face-to-face discussion (for example, if the student attends Outside School Hours Care, travels to and from school on a school bus, or is non-verbal). <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased access to communication technology Increased opportunities for effective communication between students, teachers and other school staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telephone with volume control and/or text messaging capacity Portable recording devices

EQUIPMENT TYPE	EXAMPLE ITEMS
Communication software	
<p>Communication software can be used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support students’ verbal and written communication • provide options for time-efficient communication • provide opportunities for students to communicate with their teachers and peers using digital technology. <p>For example, speech-to-text software may support students to present more accurate and legible written work, and may be particularly beneficial for students who have learning difficulties such as dyslexia or dysgraphia.</p> <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to digital technologies • Increased independence and engagement in classroom activities • Increased opportunities for effective communication between students, teachers and other school staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecommunications software • Speech-to-text software • Accessible word processor technology

PERSONAL ORGANISATION TOOLS

CATEGORY	EXAMPLE ITEMS
<p>Personal organisation tools may support students to develop their organisational skills, and may be particularly beneficial for students who have executive function challenges, for example by providing visual schedules, cues and reminders.</p> <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased independence in organising and completing school work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphic organisers • Task sequencing devices/software • Cueing devices/software • Visual timers <i>e.g. sand timers</i> • Timer software • Scheduling software/apps

SENSORY EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES

CATEGORY	EXAMPLE ITEMS
<p>Sensory equipment and resources may support students' sensory processing needs, and may provide particular benefits for students who have a diagnosis of Sensory Processing Disorder. Other students may have sensory needs relating to their engagement in learning. When used appropriately and in collaboration with individual goals, sensory resources can support students to understand, engage and interact in their environment.</p> <p>Where sensory equipment and resources are intended to be used by an individual student, it is recommended that you consult with a suitably qualified professional to determine the types of equipment that will most appropriately and effectively support that student's needs. Sensory equipment and resources need to be carefully considered in relation to the type of feedback that will be beneficial to each individual, as no single piece of equipment will be suitable for all students' needs. Used inappropriately, sensory resources may create barriers to learning for the student.</p> <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased independence and engagement in school activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise-cancelling headphones • Sensory cushions • Seat wedges • Wobble seats • Stickle balls • Beanbag chairs • Fitballs • Bouncy bands • Sensory toys <i>e.g. sensory balls; kinetic sand</i> • Vibrating cushions/mats • Pedal desks

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION RESOURCES

CATEGORY	EXAMPLE ITEMS
<p>Inclusive education resources can assist teachers to strengthen their inclusive education practices by, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting teachers to introduce and discuss complex concepts within the school environment • supporting students, teachers and other schools staff to understand how they can support students' self-regulation and socio-emotional development • providing physical support for teachers to engage with students in a way that acknowledges their needs and preferences (for example, by allowing the teacher to sit at the students' level). <p>When considering inclusive education resources, consider whether teachers and students may benefit from resources that support the learning goals of students who have disabilities or additional learning needs, or support other interventions and therapies that students are accessing.</p> <p>Anticipated student outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased opportunities for collaborative learning about inclusion • Increased opportunities for students, teachers and other school staff to understand the challenges faced by individual students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low chairs • Classroom resources that promote students' understanding of inclusion <i>e.g. books, activities</i> • Teacher resources that support teachers' understanding and implementation of inclusive education practices <i>e.g. reference books</i>

