VCAA Statistical Report: Special Provision in VCE External Assessments 2012–2017

**Introduction**

This report provides statistical information on Special Provision related to VCE external assessments for the period from 2012 to 2017. This includes information on applications for Special Examination Arrangements (SEA) and Derived Examination Score (DES).

The statistics for SEA exclude students with three examinations timetabled on one day.

The statistics for DES are based on individual applications and exclude cases where a DES was approved due to either three examinations timetabled on one day or irregularities[[1]](#footnote-1).

The statistical information presented in this report is based on snapshots taken from the VCAA Assessment Processing System (APS). Figures extracted from snapshots provide more comparable statistical information over time. The 2017 figures are based on a snapshot as at 4 January 2018.

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Executive Summary

Overview of Special Provision related to VCE external assessments

* A high proportion of students who apply for Special Examination Arrangements (SEA) have their applications approved.
* A high proportion of students who apply for a Derived Examination Score (DES) have their applications approved.

Special Examination Arrangements (SEA) student applications and approvals
(see page 5)

* The overall number of students who applied for SEA has been increasing. In 2017, 5,042 students applied for SEA, an increase of 63.2% from 3,089 in 2012. Between 2016 and 2017, the number of students who applied for SEA increased by 8.7%.
* The overall number of students with approved SEA has been steadily increasing. In 2017, there were 4,859 students with approved SEA, an increase of 68.1% from 2,891 in 2012. Between 2016 and 2017 the percentage of students with approved SEA increased by 9.5%.
* A high proportion (96.4%) of the applications submitted by students were approved. The percentage of approvals has been relatively stable since 2013.

Breakdown of Special Provision categories for SEA applications (see page 8)

* The most common categories of approved SEA are significant health impairment followed by emergency application[[2]](#footnote-2).
* The proportion of approved SEA for significant health impairment has grown from 55.0% in 2012 to 65.3% in 2017.
* Of the approved SEA, 16.4% were accounted for by emergency application in 2017, which has steadily declined since 2012.

Derived Examination Score (DES) applications, approvals and DES used
(see page 12)

* From 2012 to 2016 the number of applications for a DES was declining with a significant reduction in the number of applications from 2012 to 2013 (see Table 4) due to the discontinuation of the June VCE examinations. In 2017, DES applications increased by 4.8% on the 2016 figure.
* Following the drop in 2013, the proportion of applications approved for a DES since 2014 has been increasing. In 2017, there were 2,730 (81.1%) DES approvals.

Breakdown of Special Provision categories for DES applications (see page 14)

* The most common categories[[3]](#footnote-3) of applications for a DES are acute illness/circumstances and chronic illness/circumstances, which combined accounted for 70.4% of all applications in 2017.

Section 1: Overview of Special Provision related to VCE external assessments

This section provides background information on Special Provision related specifically to VCE external assessments.

Background

The VCAA Special Provision Policy aims to provide students in defined circumstances with the opportunity to participate in and complete their secondary level studies.

The underlying principle of the VCAA Special Provision Policy is to ensure that the most appropriate, fair and reasonable arrangements and options are available for students to demonstrate their capabilities if their learning and assessment programs are affected by illness, impairment or personal circumstances.

Special Provision should provide equivalent, alternative arrangements for students but not confer an advantage to any student over other students.

There are two types of Special Provision available to students completing VCE external assessments:

* Special Examination Arrangements (SEA)
* Derived Examination Score (DES).

The VCAA is responsible for determining eligibility and for granting approval for both SEA and DES application processes.

This report provides statistical information on the SEA and DES application processes.

Section 2: Overview of the Special Examination Arrangements application process

This section provides background information on the Special Examination Arrangements (SEA) application process.

Background

SEA may be approved to meet the needs of students who have disabilities, illnesses or other circumstances that would affect their ability to access a VCE external assessment.

The VCAA recognises that some students with a disability, as defined in the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, or illness, may require SEA to enable them to access the examination/test questions and communicate their responses in a timed VCE external assessment.

In designing and approving SEA, the VCAA is mindful of the need to balance the competing demands of providing students with the opportunity to perform at their optimum with the need to preserve the academic integrity of the assessment process.

The VCAA considers each application for SEA on the basis of the independent medical and/or educational assessments, any history of school-based Special Provision and recommendations provided with the application, and the VCAA’s own assessment.

The fact that a student has a disability and/or illness does not automatically entitle them to SEA.

The prime consideration is the impact of that disability and/or illness on the student’s capacity to undertake their VCE external assessments and, if necessary, what reasonable adjustments can be made to enable the student to complete their VCE external assessments on the same basis as students who do not have a disability and/or illness.

SEA are available for VCE external assessments and the General Achievement Test (GAT), although only a small number of applications are received for the GAT.

Eligibility for SEA

Students are eligible for SEA if it can be demonstrated that their capacity to access a VCE external assessment is impaired due to a:

* severe health impairment
* significant physical disability
* hearing impairment
* vision impairment
* specific learning disorder (previously referred to as learning disability)
* severe language disorder.

Types of SEA

SEA may take the form of:

* extra working time (extra reading and/or writing time) not exceeding 10 minutes per hour and to be used in addition to the ‘scheduled writing time’ of the VCE external assessment. In specific or exceptional circumstances, the VCAA may approve ‘extra working time’ in excess of 10 minutes per hour
* rest breaks not exceeding 10 minutes per hour of the ‘total examination writing time’ (the scheduled writing time plus any ‘extra working time’ approved for the VCE external assessment). In exceptional circumstances, the VCAA may approve ‘unlimited rest breaks’ to facilitate management of a significant medical or physical condition. Students may decide how to manage their allocation, and decide when and how long each break will be, with the supervisor noting the start and end times on the Special Examination Arrangements Rest Break Log Sheet. The rest break allocation displayed on the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS) Special Examination Arrangements Advice Slip should not be exceeded. Students must be offered the full allocation of writing time in addition to the time taken for rest breaks
* alternative format examination papers such as enlarged print, electronic text and Braille (students with vision impairment may be eligible to apply for an exemption from the GAT because Braille and some other alternative format papers are not available for that VCE external assessment)
* permission to use technological aids such as a computer or Microlink assistive technology for a student with hearing impairment
* a reader and/or a scribe
* a clarifier, if the student has hearing impairment or severe language disorder
* an alternative examination venue, such as a separate room, a home or a hospital.

Section 3: Special Examination Arrangements statistics

This section provides information on the number of students who applied for SEA and the number that were approved, as well as a breakdown on categories for SEA. The statistics for SEA exclude students with three examinations timetabled on one day. Information on sector is based on the student’s home school or home provider.

Number of students with applications and approvals

The overall number of students who applied for SEA has been increasing (see Table 1).

In 2017, 5,042 students applied for SEA, an increase of 63.2% from 3,089 in 2012. Between 2016 and 2017, the percentage of students who applied for SEA increased by 8.7%.

From 2012, there have been increases across the three major sectors (that is, the Catholic, government and independent sectors).

The increase in the number of students submitting applications over the past six years may be attributed to one or more of the following reasons:

* greater awareness among schools, students and parents as to the provisions available to support students with special needs while they undertake their VCE
* improved support mechanisms within and outside schools
* greater numbers of students presenting with issues that potentially require Special Provision. This may be due to there being less stigma associated with students making their school, and potentially peers, aware of their specific health issues and/or personal circumstances.

The overall number of students with approved SEA has been steadily increasing (see Table 1).

In 2017, there were 4,859 students with approved SEA, an increase of 68.1% from 2,891 in 2012. Between 2016 and 2017 the percentage of students with approved SEA increased by 9.5%.

From 2012 to 2017, there have been large increases in the number of students with approved SEA across the three major sectors.

The increase in the number of students with approved SEA over this period is most likely attributed to similar reasons to those outlined above in relation to the increasing number of applications. In essence, schools are more likely to be better informed and equipped to manage the application process for their students, ensuring applications are only submitted where appropriate and all required evidence is provided.

**Table 1: Number of students with SEA applications and approvals by sector, 2012–2017**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SECTOR** | **Number of students with applications** | **Number of students with approvals** | **Percentage of students approved** |
| 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| Adult | 58 | 98 | 79 | 75 | 74 | 71 | 57 | 97 | 78 | 75 | 73 | 71 | 98.3% | 99.0% | 98.7% | 100.0% | 98.6% | 100.0% |
| Catholic | 762 | 834 | 920 | 1,046 | 1,094 | 1,209 | 718 | 811 | 896 | 1,032 | 1,062 | 1,168 | 94.2% | 97.2% | 97.4% | 98.7% | 97.1% | 96.6% |
| Government | 1,241 | 1,342 | 1,496 | 1,640 | 1,927 | 2,085 | 1,164 | 1,289 | 1,449 | 1,593 | 1,851 | 2,030 | 93.8% | 96.1% | 96.9% | 97.1% | 96.1% | 97.4% |
| Independent | 1,028 | 1,089 | 1,229 | 1,324 | 1,543 | 1,676 | 952 | 1,027 | 1,173 | 1,257 | 1,452 | 1,589 | 92.6% | 94.3% | 95.4% | 94.9% | 94.1% | 94.8% |
| Other Providers | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 |  |  | 1 | 1 |  | 100.0% |  |  | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Total | **3,089** | **3,364** | **3,724** | **4,085** | **4,639** | **5,042** | **2,891** | **3,225** | **3,596** | **3,957** | **4,439** | **4,859** | **93.6%** | **95.9%** | **96.6%** | **96.9%** | **95.7%** | **96.4%** |

**Figure 1: Number of students with approved SEA by sector, 2012–2017**



Note: Other Providers not included.

Percentage of students with approvals

A high proportion of the applications submitted by students were approved (see Table 1). The percentage of approvals had been relatively stable from 2012 to 2017.

In 2017, the overall proportion of applications approved was 96.4%, an increase of 2.8 percentage points from 2012. The proportion of applications approved is similar in the Catholic and government sectors and slightly lower in the independent sector. Although the adult sector has a high proportion of applications approved, the number of students applying is much smaller than the other sectors.

**Figure 2: Percentage of students with SEA applications approved by sector, 2012–2017**



Note: Other Providers not included.

Breakdown of Special Provision categories for SEA applications

The most common categories of approved SEA are significant health impairment followed by emergency application. The proportion of students with approved SEA for significant health impairment has grown from 55.0% in 2012 to 65.3% in 2017, while the proportion of students with an emergency application has decreased from 29.0% in 2012 to 16.4% in 2017.

From 2019, statistics relating to applications submitted on the basis of a Mental Health condition will be included.

**Table 2: Number and percentage of students with approved SEA by category, 2012–2018**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CATEGORY** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| Emergency application | 837 | 795 | 890 | 688 | 757 | 799 |
| Hearing impaired | 43 | 57 | 46 | 52 | 46 | 67 |
| Severe language disorder | 7 | 9 | 25 | 12 | 23 | 26 |
| Significant health impairment | 1,590 | 1,865 | 2,100 | 2,591 | 2,916 | 3,172 |
| Significant physical disability | 64 | 62 | 112 | 83 | 55 | 55 |
| Specific learning disorder | 290 | 368 | 361 | 457 | 573 | 667 |
| Vision impaired | 60 | 69 | 62 | 74 | 69 | 73 |
| Other | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| **Total** | **2,891** | **3,225** | **3,596** | **3,957** | **4,439** | **4,859** |
| Percentage of students with approved SEA by category |
| Emergency application | 29.0% | 24.7% | 24.7% | 17.4% | 17.1% | 16.4% |
| Hearing impaired | 1.5% | 1.8% | 1.3% | 1.3% | 1.0% | 1.4% |
| Severe language disorder | 0.2% | 0.3% | 0.7% | 0.3% | 0.5% | 0.5% |
| Significant health impairment | 55.0% | 57.8% | 58.4% | 65.5% | 65.7% | 65.3% |
| Significant physical disability | 2.2% | 1.9% | 3.1% | 2.1% | 1.2% | 1.1% |
| Specific learning disorder | 10.0% | 11.4% | 10.0% | 11.5% | 12.9% | 13.7% |
| Vision impaired | 2.1% | 2.1% | 1.7% | 1.9% | 1.6% | 1.5% |
| Other | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| **Total** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** |

Note: Specific learning disorder previously referred to as learning disability.

**Breakdown of Special Provision Applications by Category and Sector**

The largest growth in the number of student applications from 2012 to 2017 has been in the categories of Significant Health Impairment and Learning Disability. Student application numbers within the Significant Health Impairment category almost doubled in the Catholic and independent sectors and more than doubled in the government sector. The number of student applications in the category of Learning Disability more than doubled in the Independent sector and increased by up to 70% in the Catholic and government sectors.

**Table 3 Number of student applications by Special Provision category and school sector, 2012-2017**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CATEGORY** | **SECTOR** | **Number of Student Applications** |
| **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| **Emergency Application** | **Adult** | 1 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| **Catholic** | 226 | 217 | 221 | 216 | 214 | 235 |
| **Government** | 344 | 308 | 365 | 257 | 298 | 298 |
| **Independent** | 266 | 263 | 302 | 213 | 241 | 264 |
| **Other Providers** | 0 | 1 | 0 |  | 1 |  |
| **Hearing Impaired** | **Adult** | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 |
| **Catholic** | 13 | 15 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 17 |
| **Government** | 25 | 30 | 25 | 27 | 27 | 32 |
| **Independent** | 12 | 14 | 9 | 14 | 9 | 20 |
| **Learning Disability** | **Adult** | 9 | 10 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| **Catholic** | 85 | 96 | 87 | 83 | 121 | 145 |
| **Government** | 166 | 185 | 176 | 228 | 268 | 273 |
| **Independent** | 189 | 202 | 210 | 254 | 349 | 398 |
| **Severe Language Disorder** | **Adult** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Catholic** | 11 | 6 | 15 | 9 | 13 | 7 |
| **Government** | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 11 | 13 |
| **Independent** | 5 | 7 | 15 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| **Significant Health Impairment** | **Adult** | 44 | 76 | 70 | 64 | 61 | 57 |
| **Catholic** | 397 | 469 | 540 | 693 | 710 | 778 |
| **Government** | 648 | 754 | 841 | 1,048 | 1,258 | 1,409 |
| **Independent** | 520 | 569 | 650 | 790 | 902 | 947 |
| **Other Providers** |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |
| **Significant Physical Disability** | **Adult** | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **Catholic** | 13 | 15 | 30 | 20 | 14 | 14 |
| **Government** | 30 | 24 | 51 | 37 | 26 | 23 |
| **Independent** | 19 | 21 | 31 | 25 | 14 | 17 |
| **Visually Impaired** | **Adult** | 2 | 4 | 0 |  | 1 | 1 |
| **Catholic** | 17 | 16 | 16 | 14 | 11 | 13 |
| **Government** | 24 | 36 | 34 | 39 | 39 | 37 |
| **Independent** | 17 | 13 | 12 | 21 | 21 | 23 |
| **Total** | **3,089** | **3,364** | **3,724** | **4,085** | **4,639** | **5,042** |

Section 4: Overview of the Derived Examination Score (DES) application process

This section provides background information on the Derived Examination Score (DES) application process.

Background

Students who are ill or affected by other personal circumstances at the time of a VCE external assessment and whose result is unlikely to be a fair or accurate indication of their learning or achievement in the study may apply for a DES.

The purpose of a DES is to ensure that a student’s final result on a VCE external assessment reflects as accurately as possible the level of achievement that would be expected based on the learning and achievement the student has demonstrated in the study over the year. The DES is designed for students who have completed the course leading to the VCE external assessment but perform below expectations or cannot attend due to adverse circumstances.

A DES is not available for the GAT, Music Style and Composition Externally-assessed Task or Extended Investigation Externally-assessed Task written report.

Eligibility for a DES

Students are only eligible for a DES for a VCE external assessment if they meet all of the following criteria:

1. They have completed the course of study leading to the VCE external assessment, and have a result for at least one other graded assessment in the same study.
2. They experience the onset of an illness or the occurrence of an injury, personal trauma or serious intervening event in the period before or during a VCE external assessment, that has either prevented them from attending or affected their performance during the VCE external assessment.
3. They provide independent professional written evidence that demonstrates the illness, injury, personal trauma or serious intervening event has affected their performance in or has prevented them from attending the external assessment.

A ‘personal trauma’ may include, but is not limited to, the death or serious illness of a family member, or family break-up.

A ‘serious intervening event’ may include, but is not limited to, an accident on the way to or at an examination, attendance at a funeral of a family member or other person of close relationship, or the required attendance at a court proceeding.

DES versus achieved VCE external assessment score

For each approved application for a specific VCE external assessment, the VCAA will:

* calculate a range of possible DES scores, which will be calculated statistically from the student’s other assessments, including:
* moderated School-based Assessments
* GAT scores
* other examination scores if applicable
* indicative grades provided by the school
* record the DES as the final score if the highest possible DES is greater than the achieved VCE external assessment score
* use this final score to determine the grade for the VCE external assessment
* use this final score to calculate the study score.

Therefore, for approved applications the student will receive the score from either the DES or VCE external assessment, whichever is more favourable.

Section 5: Derived Examination Score statistics

This section provides information on student applications and applications approved for a Derived Examination Score (DES). The DES statistics are based on individual applications and exclude students with three examinations timetabled on one day and irregularities[[4]](#footnote-4). Information on sector is based on the student’s home school or home provider.

Number of applications and approvals

From 2012 to 2016 the number of applications for a DES was declining with a significant reduction in the number of applications from 2012 to 2013 (see Table 4) due to the discontinuation of the June VCE examinations. In 2017, DES applications increased by 4.8% on the 2016 figure.

The number of applications approved for a DES remained relatively unchanged from 2012–2017. Although the number of DES applications dropped significantly in 2013, the percentage of approvals has been steadily increasing, in line with the reduction in the number of applications. In 2017, there were 2,730 approvals for a DES.

The most common categories of application for a DES are acute illness/circumstance and chronic illness/circumstances, which together accounted for 70.4% of all applications in 2017.

Percentage of approvals

Since 2014, the overall proportion of applications approved for a DES has been increasing (see Table 5). In 2017, the overall proportion of applications approved was 81.1%.

**Table 4: Number of DES applications and approvals by sector, 2012–2017**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **SECTOR** | **Number of applications** | **Number of approvals** |
| **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| Adult | 88 | 61 | 33 | 38 | 19 | 25 | 81 | 47 | 24 | 29 | 8 | 19 |
| Catholic | 1,087 | 1,002 | 1,048 | 933 | 839 | 875 | 882 | 675 | 812 | 727 | 725 | 749 |
| Government | 2,132 | 1,796 | 1,618 | 1,616 | 1,472 | 1,469 | 1,545 | 1,263 | 1,208 | 1,237 | 1,159 | 1,165 |
| Independent | 1,379 | 1,097 | 1,018 | 811 | 884 | 997 | 989 | 800 | 738 | 643 | 706 | 796 |
| Other Providers | 18 | N/A | N/A | 1 | 1 | 2 | 18 | N/A | N/A | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **Total** | **4,704** | **3,956** | **3,717** | **3,399** | **3,215** | **3,368** | **3,515** | **2,785** | **2,782** | **2,637** | **2,599** | **2,730** |

**Table 5: Percentage of DES approvals and DES used by sector, 2012–2017**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SECTOR** | **Percentage of approvals** |
| **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| Adult | 92.0% | 77.0% | 72.7% | 76.3% | 42.1% | 76.0% |
| Catholic | 81.1% | 67.4% | 77.5% | 77.9% | 86.4% | 85.6% |
| Government | 72.5% | 70.3% | 74.7% | 76.5% | 78.7% | 79.3% |
| Independent | 71.7% | 72.9% | 72.5% | 79.3% | 79.9% | 79.8% |
| Other Providers | 100.0% | N/A | N/A | 100.0% | 100.0% | 50.0% |
| Total | **74.7%** | **70.4%** | **74.8%** | **77.6%** | **80.8%** | **81.1%** |

**Figure 3: Percentage of approvals by sector, 2012–2017**



Note: Adult and Other Providers not included.

Number of students with DES applications and approvals

From 2012 to 2016, there was a decline in the number of students with one or more DES applications, however, in 2017, the number of students with a DES application increased to a total of 1,382.

Some students are applying for a DES for more than one examination, however, they may not have all of these approved.

**Table 6: Number of students with DES applications and approvals by sector, 2012–2017**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **SECTOR** | **Number of students with DES application** | **Number of students with approval** |
| **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| Adult | 32 | 26 | 17 | 19 | 9 | 14 | 27 | 20 | 12 | 16 | 6 | 11 |
| Catholic | 406 | 364 | 359 | 327 | 306 | 363 | 355 | 286 | 303 | 288 | 285 | 320 |
| Government | 866 | 641 | 647 | 612 | 574 | 604 | 695 | 502 | 517 | 508 | 484 | 508 |
| Independent | 529 | 442 | 411 | 331 | 362 | 399 | 425 | 346 | 322 | 274 | 312 | 351 |
| Other Providers | 6 | N/A | N/A | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 | N/A | N/A | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **Total** | **1,839** | **1,473** | **1,434** | **1,290** | **1,252** | **1,382** | **1,508** | **1,154** | **1,154** | **1,087** | **1,088** | **1,191** |

Breakdown of DES categories

The most common categories of applications for a DES are acute illness/circumstances and chronic illness/circumstances, which combined accounted for 70.4% of all applications in 2017 (see Table 8).

All applications specifically related to the illness/trauma of family/close friend that met the eligibility criteria were approved.

**Table 7: Description of DES Categories**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CATEGORY** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| **Acute illness/circumstances** | First onset or flare-up of illness, flus, colds, headaches, migraines, hospitalisation during exams |
| **Chronic illness/circumstances** | Illness diagnosed longer than a month, family breakdown, homeless |
| **Death1** | Family member/close friend before or during exams |
| **Family** | Illness/trauma of family/close friend |
| **Psychological** | Newly diagnosed psychological illnesses |
| **Other** | Exam irregularities, fire, flood, etc |

1 Each case is assessed individually.

**Table 8: Number and percentage of DES applications by category, 2012–2017**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CATEGORY** | **Applications** |
| **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| Acute illness/circumstances | 2,477 | 1,917 | 1,813 | 1,733 | 1,654 | 1,763 |
| Chronic illness/circumstances | 977 | 817 | 849 | 748 | 531 | 607 |
| Death | 724 | 660 | 665 | 536 | 600 | 482 |
| Family | 414 | 490 | 335 | 270 | 324 | 444 |
| Psychological | 96 | 61 | 31 | 93 | 70 | 51 |
| Other | 16 | 11 | 24 | 19 | 36 | 21 |
| **Total** | **4,704** | **3,956** | **3,717** | **3,399** | **3,215** | **3,368** |
|  | **Percentage of DES applications by category** |
| Acute illness/circumstances | 52.7% | 48.5% | 48.8% | 51.0% | 51.4% | 52.3% |
| Chronic illness/circumstances | 20.8% | 20.7% | 22.8% | 22.0% | 16.5% | 18.0% |
| Death | 15.4% | 16.7% | 17.9% | 15.8% | 18.7% | 14.3% |
| Family | 8.8% | 12.4% | 9.0% | 7.9% | 10.1% | 13.2% |
| Psychological | 2.0% | 1.5% | 0.8% | 2.7% | 2.2% | 1.5% |
| Other | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.6% | 0.6% | 1.1% | 0.6% |
| **Total** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** |

**Table 9: Number of DES applications and approvals by category, 2012–2017**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CATEGORY** | **Number of applications** | **Number of approvals** |
| **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| Acute illness/circumstances | 2,477 | 1,917 | 1,813 | 1,733 | 1,654 | 1,763 | 1,813 | 1,307 | 1,313 | 1,372 | 1,301 | 1,412 |
| Chronic illness/circumstances | 977 | 817 | 849 | 748 | 531 | 607 | 595 | 438 | 542 | 476 | 378 | 399 |
| Death | 724 | 660 | 665 | 536 | 600 | 482 | 693 | 592 | 628 | 476 | 533 | 461 |
| Family | 414 | 490 | 335 | 270 | 324 | 444 | 337 | 403 | 255 | 234 | 303 | 400 |
| Psychological | 96 | 61 | 31 | 93 | 70 | 51 | 63 | 36 | 22 | 63 | 56 | 39 |
| Other | 16 | 11 | 24 | 19 | 36 | 21 | 14 | 9 | 22 | 16 | 28 | 19 |
| **Total** | **4,704** | **3,956** | **3,717** | **3,399** | **3,215** | **3,368** | **3,515** | **2,785** | **2,782** | **2,637** | **2,599** | **2,730** |

**Table 10: Percentage of DES approvals by category, 2012–2017**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CATEGORY** | **Percentage approvals** |
| **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| Acute illness/circumstances | 73.2% | 68.2% | 72.4% | 79.2% | 78.7% | 80.1% |
| Chronic illness/circumstances | 60.9% | 53.6% | 63.8% | 63.6% | 71.2% | 65.7% |
| Death | 95.7% | 89.7% | 94.4% | 88.8% | 88.8% | 95.6% |
| Family | 81.4% | 82.2% | 76.1% | 86.7% | 93.5% | 90.1% |
| Psychological | 65.6% | 59.0% | 71.0% | 67.7% | 80.0% | 76.5% |
| Other | 87.5% | 81.8% | 91.7% | 84.2% | 77.8% | 90.5% |
| **Total** | **74.7%** | **70.4%** | **74.8%** | **77.6%** | **80.8%** | **81.1%** |

1. Irregularities are events which materially interrupt and adversely impact a student’s performance in an examination and which are outside the student’s control. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Special Examination Arrangements for a student experiencing a sudden illness or accident around the examination period. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Please refer to Section 5, Table 7 for further details on the specific DES categories (for example, acute illness/circumstances). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Special Examination Arrangements for a student experiencing a sudden illness or accident around the examination period. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)