

Procedures Associated with the Policy on Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

(Revised July 2011)

Effective Date: October 5, 2010

A. Roles and Responsibilities of Applicants Applying to the University

Lakehead University encourages applications from students with disabilities.

The University will, upon request, provide admission information to applicants in alternate format within a reasonable time frame. In accordance with general admission procedures Lakehead will accept academically qualified candidates for admission to undergraduate and graduate programs by examining each applicant's academic record and any non-academic requirements (e.g., portfolio, audition) where required in accordance with general admissions procedures.

- a) As with all applicants, those with disabilities are encouraged to select programs of study that are appropriate for their skills, abilities, and career goals; programs in which all essential requirements for that course of study can be met. All students (whether at the undergraduate or graduate level) are urged to investigate individual programs regarding curricula, learning outcomes and essential program requirements – see Appendix II.
- b) Applicants are strongly encouraged to declare their disability and their need for academic accommodations during the application process to the University and should seek assistance from Student Accessibility Services, and an academic advisor in the selection of their program of study and their courses.
- c) All documentation related to the applicant's disability will be held by Student Accessibility Services. Relevant information related to making admissions decisions will be disclosed as required.
- d) In the event that any questions arise during the application process pertaining to the applicant's ability to fulfill the essential requirements of a program, even if accommodated, the issue will be discussed with the relevant offices which may include the Office of Admissions, Student Accessibility Services, and the Chair/Director of the Department /School and the Dean of the applicant's prospective Faculty.
 - The Chair/Director shall work with the applicant and Student Accessibility Services to determine what, if any, accommodations might reasonably be made to enable the applicant to meet the essential requirements.

- In the event that reasonable accommodation is not possible, the applicant will be so informed and other options will be discussed.
- e) In the event that any questions arise during the application process pertaining to the University's ability to reasonably accommodate the applicant without undue hardship, the issue will be discussed with the Vice-Provost (Student Affairs), the Vice-President (Academic) and the Vice-President (Administration and Finance).
- f) All personal information disclosed in the application process shall be used by the appropriate staff and instructors members (including, but not limited to, Admissions staff, Learning Assistance staff, Dean of the student's Faculty or the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Vice-Provost (Student Affairs), and the Vice-President (Academic)), to make decisions relating to admission.
- g) Acceptance of an applicant should not be interpreted as a guarantee of any sort that the applicant will be able to meet the essential requirements of the program or any specific course at any time in the future.
- h) Staff in Student Accessibility Services are available throughout the admission process to assist, support and advise students with disabilities.
- i) In the event that a student chooses not to disclose a disability during the application process but discloses a disability during the academic year and provides the appropriate documentation to substantiate the disability, any accommodations required begin at the point that the documentation is received. Accommodations are not retroactive and will not apply to any work already completed; neither will the grades or scores of work completed be retroactively adjusted

Appendix II

Determining Essential Requirements

Taken from Determining Essential Criteria: Guidelines for Accommodating Students with Disabilities in the University Sector, Inter-University Disability Issues Association (IDIA) 2003

“Essential” is defined by two factors; 1) the skill must be demonstrated to meet the objectives of the course; 2) the skill must be demonstrated in a prescribed manner.

“Terms that have been used [to describe essential] include indispensable, vital, and very important”. Thus, a requirement should not lightly be considered to be essential, but should be carefully scrutinized. This includes course requirements and standards. For example, it may likely be an essential requirement that a student master core aspects of a course curriculum. It is much less likely that it will be an essential requirement to demonstrate the mastery in a particular format, unless mastery of that format (e.g. oral communication) is also a vital requirement of the program. In contrast, non-essential duties would not detract from the main purpose of the [course or program] if they were not done or [done in a different manner]”.

“It is important that instructors identify the essential requirements (or components) in their course and/or program. If an instructor is very clear about what is being taught, and why it must be done a certain way, it is much easier to find creative solutions to the needs of students with disabilities”. Where an instructor has not determined the objectives prior to the design of the course, Student Accessibility Services may need to consult with the instructor in making informed decisions about determining appropriate accommodations without compromising the essential component.