

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

Effective Date: **October 5, 2010** (Revised June 2017)

A. Roles and Responsibilities of the Student

The University recognizes the importance of a student's experience and knowledge with respect to his/her disability and its impact on learning. This being the case, it is imperative that the student with the disability participates fully in determining the appropriate accommodations.

Students needing or requesting an accommodation shall:

- a) Engage in discussion with Student Accessibility Services, the instructor, Department/School or Faculty regarding any concerns they may have about whether or not they would be able to meet the essential requirements of a course/program prior to registering in a course/program.
- b) Make formal requests to Student Accessibility Services about any required accommodations at the beginning of each academic term.
- c) Provide all relevant and recent medical documentation (from an approved regulated health-care professional) to substantiate their disability, the impact of their disability and any resultant restrictions; Refer to Appendix I for full documentation guidelines.
- d) Work with Student Accessibility Services, instructors, and relevant administrative staff to develop an appropriate accommodation plan.
- e) Connect with Student Accessibility Services staff at the beginning of each term to ensure that the required accommodations are set in place.
- f) Follow procedures with regard to registering with Student Accessibility Services, complying with instructions relating to the implementation of any specific accommodation or support, and renewing registration with Student Accessibility Services in each subsequent term of study.
- g) Understand the duties to cooperate with the accommodation process – including a duty to cooperate with reasonable requests for medical and other expert evidence to enable the institution to understand the disability and a duty to cooperate with reasonable accommodation proposals put forward by the institution.
- h) Collaborate with instructor(s) to discuss specific accommodations when necessary (e.g., memory aids, rescheduling tests etc.). SAS advisors are available to assist upon request.
- i) Understand that if he/she chooses not to disclose a disability during the

- application process he/she may do so at a later date.
- j) Understand that he/she may be asked to provide documentation of any previous academic accommodation from prior educational institution(s).

Appendix I

Documentation Guidelines for Students with Disabilities/Medical Conditions

Introduction

Consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code which protects people from discrimination and harassment because of past, present and perceived disabilities such as: physical, mental and learning disabilities, mental disorders, hearing or vision disabilities, epilepsy, mental health disabilities and addictions, environmental sensitivities, and other conditions, students are not required to disclose their specific diagnosis in order to register with Student Accessibility Service (SAS) to receive academic accommodations. Documentation must indicate that a disability / medical condition exists, if the disability is permanent, temporary or being assessed, the functional limitations and restrictions that may impact a student's education, and the practitioner's recommendations. Diagnosis of a condition or disorder does not in itself automatically qualify a student for any and all accommodations.

The Medical Documentation Form will ask for the broad area of the disability and the functional restrictions and limitations associated with the disability to support appropriate accommodations. The Ontario Human Rights Commission recognizes that Disability Services Offices have expertise in dealing with accommodation issues in the academic environment, and as such, play a vital role in assisting with the accommodation process. Students who wish to disclose their diagnosis to their SAS Advisor may voluntarily do so and this information will be treated with utmost confidence.

To receive academic accommodations, the University requires that a student provide documented diagnostic information regarding how the disability(ies) can impact academic performance. Documentation must come from a regulated health care professional who is licensed to diagnose the disability / medical condition. The following are examples of regulated health care professionals who may be appropriate to provide documentation, depending on the student's individual disability / health condition: Audiologist, Chiropractor, Neurologist, nurse Practitioner, Occupational Therapist, Optometrist, Ophthalmologist, Physician, Physiotherapist, Psychiatrist, Psychologist. All documentation must be on the practitioner's official letterhead OR include an official office stamp. Note: evidence of a specific medical/ psychological diagnosis of disability may be required for the purpose of establishing eligibility for certain federally or provincially-funded bursaries and grants, and privately funded external scholarships and financial award.

If applicable, students are also asked to provide a copy of their Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) or letter from the high school or previous post-secondary institution attended detailing the types of academic accommodations utilized in the past few years.

This information will assist the University in determining the most appropriate aids, services and accommodations that will address the functional limitations of the disability.

Documentation Requirements

1. Students seeking academic accommodation for permanent or temporary disabilities / medical conditions will be asked to provide Student Accessibility Services (SAS) with written documentation from a licensed medical/psychological professional. SAS provides assistance to students who may require interim accommodation being assessed for a disability as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code.
2. The medical/psychological documentation should clearly indicate that the student has been diagnosed with, or is being assessed for a disability as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code.
3. The documentation should reflect current functional restrictions and limitations that may impact the student's academic participation and performance along with any other relevant information for supporting the student's accommodation.
4. The licensed professional shall be an independent, impartial individual. The documentation should be on letterhead and stamped or signed by the licensed professional.
5. Documentation and accommodations may need to be re-evaluated over time to ensure that they continue to meet the student's needs appropriately and as such students may be asked to provide updated medical/ psychological documentation for temporary or permanent disabilities and/or medical conditions.
6. With the express and informed consent of the student, SAS may consult with the practitioner named in the documentation when the accommodation needs are complex or where there is a need to clarify the information that has been provided regarding functional restrictions and limitations.

Privacy & Confidentiality

7. SAS considers the privacy and confidentiality of students to be of paramount importance. Accordingly, all information provided to us and a student's involvement with SAS is considered private and confidential.
8. Documentation is maintained within locked filing cabinets within the offices of SAS. Information will be disclosed to others outside of SAS (including Faculty, Teaching Assistants, and university staff) only with the express, informed consent of the student.
9. Students' involvement with SAS or the fact that they have received academic accommodations will never be identified on the student's official university records or academic transcripts.