



Title	Accessibility: Academic Accommodation for Students Policy
Policy Area	Student Services, Support and Conduct
Policy Number <i>(to be assigned by Information Services)</i>	D.2.3
See also <i>(related policies)</i>	Okanagan College Admission Policies Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy

Effective Date of Policy:	October 29, 2019
Approval Date:	October 28, 2019
Applies to:	Students, Employees
Approving Body:	President
New:	
Authority	<i>College and Institute Act</i> <i>British Columbia Human Rights Code</i>

The following are responsible for the administration of this policy,

Primary Office	Contact
Vice President, Students	Director, Student Services

1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 Okanagan College is committed to providing opportunities for students requiring an accommodation to meet their educational goals, while ensuring academic standards and essential learning outcomes are maintained.

2.0 Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to identify the principles and responsibilities in the provision of accommodations for students to support learning. This policy only addresses the provision of academic accommodations related to a protected ground under the British Columbia *Human Rights Code* ("Code").

3.0 Terms of Reference

- 3.1 Academic accommodations are individualized plans developed by the College after consultation with the student. The individualized plan is determined by the College and implemented by the College for the purpose of eliminating barriers to student learning arising from the existence of a protected ground under the Code.
- 3.2 Academic accommodations should enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and skill without reducing the quality or rigor of the curriculum or credentials, or detract from the responsibility of students to achieve individual results consistent with course/program essential learning requirements, competencies, standards or objectives.
- 3.3 The provision of academic accommodation for students is a shared responsibility among students, professors, instructors and administration.
- 3.4 Where a student is both an employee and student of the College, this policy only applies to those activities that are associated with their academic pursuits.
- 3.5 Academic accommodations are available in the following areas:
 - a) classroom/laboratory/shop;
 - b) exams;
 - c) studying;
 - d) assignments; and
 - e) other areas as the College determines necessary.

4.0 College Responsibilities

- 4.1 The College shall endeavor to provide reasonable academic accommodations to meet the needs of students requiring accommodation related to a protected ground under the Code and in accordance with its obligations under the Code.
- 4.2 The College will endeavor to respond to requests from students for academic accommodations in a timely and constructive way.
- 4.3 The College will consider and review all relevant and necessary documentation to ensure that recommendations and decisions regarding students' needs and academic accommodation are based on relevant and appropriate information in accordance with this policy.

5.0 Student Responsibilities

- 5.1 Students must ensure they meet the College admission, prerequisite, and academic requirements before submitting a request for an academic accommodation.
- 5.2 New Students to the College:
 - a) New students to the College requesting an academic accommodation should self-identify to the Accessibility Services Department at the time of acceptance into any course or program;
 - b) Once a new student is accepted by the College, the student should make an appointment with Accessibility Services Department as far in advance of the commencement of the course or program as possible (ideally at least three (3) months), in order to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations can be

considered, planned and/or implemented in advance of the commencement of the course or program.

5.3 Students Returning to the College:

- a) Students with an existing academic accommodation are required to contact the Accessibility Services Department prior to each semester or session in order to continue or modify an existing academic accommodation.

5.4 Every student seeking academic accommodation has the responsibility to:

- a) Understand their rights and obligations under this policy;
- b) Comply with the requirements and procedures under this policy;
- c) Bring requests for academic accommodation to the attention of the Accessibility Services Department in a timely manner and in the manner prescribed by this policy;
- d) Actively participate in the academic accommodation process by working collaboratively with the Accessibility Services Department and other relevant parties;
- e) Provide proper, current and relevant documentation necessary to support their request for academic accommodation in a timely manner to the Accessibility Services Department;
- f) Comply with all reasonable requests for additional documentation from the Accessibility Services Department in a timely manner;
- g) Assume the responsibility to obtain and assume any costs of diagnostic assessments and documentation;
- h) Notify the Accessibility Services Department of any changes in circumstances or conditions that may impact a current or future academic accommodation(s) (e.g., deterioration in academic performance, significant changes in health status, etc.) in a timely manner; and
- i) Accept reasonable academic accommodations offered by the Accessibility Services Department.

6.0 Professor / Instructor Responsibilities

- 6.1 Professors and instructors must make themselves aware of the College's accommodation policy and accommodation process, and recognize they have a duty to support the academic accommodation process.

7.0 Medical Documentation

- 7.1 Medical documentation acceptable to the College must be obtained from medical doctors, psychologists and/or special education/rehabilitation personnel or other health professionals who have specific training, expertise, and experience in the diagnosis of conditions for which the accommodation is being requested (collectively, "Health Professionals").

- 7.2 All Health Professionals submitting medical documentation must be appropriately certified and/or licensed to practice in their professions in Canada.
- 7.3 Medical documentation should:
- a) Be current and relevant;
 - b) Provide sufficient detail to confirm the existence of a medical condition and assist in the determination of the appropriate academic accommodation;
 - c) Include the Health Professional's contact information and signature;
 - d) Outline the nature of the student's medical condition, along with a detailed explanation of the functional impact of the medical condition on academic achievement and learning outcomes (a diagnosis alone is not sufficient to support a request for academic accommodation);
 - e) Include relevant reports or test results (e.g., an audiology report for a hearing disability; an ophthalmology report for a visual disability); and
 - f) Identify side-effects of medications that may adversely impact academic performance.
- 7.4 The College may, if deemed necessary, request additional medical information or documentation.

8.0 Procedures

- 8.1 Academic accommodations are provided based on identified learning needs, proper documentation and as determined by the Accessibility Services Department in accordance with this policy.
- 8.2 Upon receipt of the request for an academic accommodation, an Accessibility Services Coordinator will review all relevant documentation provided by the student. In consultation with the student, the Accessibility Services Coordinator:
- a) Will determine the range of academic accommodations that would be appropriate in a post-secondary setting based on the information provided;
 - b) May request additional information or documentation;
 - c) May, in exceptional circumstances, provide academic accommodations pending the receipt of satisfactory medical documentation; or
 - d) May take no further action if an academic accommodation is deemed:
 - i. unnecessary; or
 - ii. after consultation with the Director, Student Services, or designate, it was determined that the academic accommodation would constitute undue hardship on the College.
- 8.3 Once an academic accommodation has been determined, the appropriate professor(s) or instructor(s) will be notified of the Accessibility Services Department's determination of appropriate academic accommodation and the professor or instructor is expected to follow and apply those accommodations.

- 8.4 If a professor or instructor has concerns regarding the nature of the academic accommodation, the professor or instructor may request the assistance of the Accessibility Services Department and their Dean.

9.0 Timelines

- 9.1 The time to coordinate an academic accommodation will vary on a case-by-case basis. Depending on the nature of the academic accommodation and the timing of the request, it may not always be possible to implement the academic accommodation as desired.
- 9.2 To ensure requests for academic accommodations can be met in a timely manner, the College recommends the following timelines for academic accommodation requests. The timelines below are guidelines:
- a) new students should self-identify with the Accessibility Services Department regarding academic accommodation as early as possible, either at the time of their acceptance into any course or program, or at least three (3) months prior to the start of the semester, session or course;
 - b) returning students who wish to continue with an existing accommodation should contact the Accessibility Services Department prior to the beginning of each semester or session or course;
 - c) all requests for exam and other test accommodations (e.g. extended time, alternative location, etc.) should be received by the Accessibility Services Department at least:
 - i) one (1) week prior to the scheduled date for mid-term examinations/tests; and
 - ii) two (2) weeks prior to the start of formal (final) examination periods.
- 9.3 Failure to adhere to the above recommended timelines may result in the College being unable to implement the requested academic accommodation.
- 9.4 In the event a student does not request academic accommodations in a timely manner or requests an accommodation after a test/exam deadline or after course completion, the student should meet with an Accessibility Services Coordinator to discuss their particular circumstances. The Accessibility Services Coordinator will review the request and determine next steps on a case-by-case basis.

10.0 Confidentiality

- 10.1 The College is committed to keeping students' information and documentation confidential in accordance with the British Columbia *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- 10.2 By requesting an academic accommodation with Accessibility Services Department, the student understands and gives permission for the Accessibility Services Department to disclose the minimum information necessary to ensure the provision of services.
- 10.3 Professors or instructors who are approached by a student with a disability seeking accommodation should refer the student to the Accessibility Services Department and keep any such information confidential.

11.0 Student Appeals

- 11.1 If a student is not satisfied with the accommodation decision, the student must advise the Accessibility Services Coordinator in writing of their concerns. The Director, Student Services or designate will review the student's concerns, review documentation on file, review any information from the relevant program area and make a determination on the accommodation. The student will be provided written reasons for the decision.
- 11.2 The student may file a final appeal to the Vice President, Students or designate if the student is not satisfied with the decision under s.11.1. The student must put their appeal in writing, describe the accommodation that was determined by the Accessibility Services Department, state what accommodation the Student is requesting and provide their reasons for the appeal.
- 11.3 The Vice President, Students or designate will review the materials from the student, request any other relevant materials from the Accessibility Services Department and program area, and seek additional advice as appropriate. The Vice President, Students or designate will make a determination and provide written reasons. The decision of the Vice President, Students or designate is final.
- 11.4 The College reserves the right to determine the appropriate College policy, processes and procedures to follow to address an appeal.