

EQUITY ~ ACCESS ~ EDUCATION ~ AWARENESS ~ DIVERSITY ~ RESPECT ~ LEARNING

# **Student Accessibility Services Faculty Resource Guide**

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## INTRODUCTION

Student Accessibility Services provides academic accommodation and support to students with disabilities in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Commission's [Policy on accessible education for students with disabilities](#) and York University Senate Policy on [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

It is the responsibility of faculty members to be conversant with policies and resources related to teaching students with disabilities, to ensure specific rights and entitlements of students with disabilities are upheld in their class, and to create an equitable environment in their courses where respect for dignity of persons with disabilities is upheld.

This guide is designed to assist faculty and teaching assistants (TAs) in supporting students with disabilities in their courses. In the following pages, we hope to familiarize you with:

- Legislation that frames our work with students with disabilities;
- Information about disabilities and barriers to accessibility in education
- Strategies that improve course accessibility for all students;
- Services available on campus for students with disabilities.

**We have also developed several other resources to assist with accommodation implementation and support:**

- [Accommodation Implementation Guide](#)
- [Practicum Implementation Guide](#)
- [Student Accessibility Services: Accommodations video](#)

We hope that instructors will feel supported in their efforts to provide an optimal learning environment, not only for students with disabilities but for all students with whom they teach and learn.

## LEGAL AND POLICY BACKGROUND

### Ontario Human Rights Code

The Ontario *Human Rights Code* (the “Code”) requires the provision of equal treatment to all persons without discrimination because of disability (section 1). It provides that reasonable measures must be taken by service providers to accommodate disability, short of “undue hardship” (subsection 24(2)). The Code defines “disability” broadly, to include physical disabilities, infirmities, malformations, disfigurement or illness, as well as mental impairment, developmental or learning disability, language dysfunction or mental disorders.<sup>1</sup>

### York University Senate Policy

York’s Senate Policy Regarding Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (the “[Senate Policy](#)”), provides that the University “*shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations and adaptations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs.*” The Senate Policy states that disabilities are “those conditions so designated under the Code and will in any event include physical, medical, learning, and psychiatric disabilities” (see Appendix 2 for further [Guidelines, Procedures and Definitions](#)).

### Reasonable and Appropriate Accommodations

What constitutes reasonable measures will vary with the circumstances of the case. That is, different types of disabilities require different accommodations and each student must be assessed on an individual basis in the context of the particular course and its academic requirements.

The courts have said that the search for reasonable and appropriate accommodation is a “multi- party inquiry”, meaning the responsibility is shared among the student with a disability and the University (including the course instructor, staff, and disability support service providers). The student provides relevant information and documentation that substantiates the disability and facilitates the search for accommodation. The University is often in the best position to determine how the student can be accommodated without undue hardship in its operations and in a manner which sustains academic integrity. When the University has initiated a proposal that is reasonable and would, if implemented, fulfill the duty to accommodate, the student has a duty to co-operate in the implementation of the proposed accommodation.

Wherever possible, instructors should attempt to reach agreement with students on accommodations. However, where there is disagreement, the Senate Policy provides that the instructor should contact the relevant Accessibility Services Office on their campus for advice. Where issues remain unresolved, the Chair of the Department and/or Associate Dean or Dean of the Faculty should be consulted, and a mediation process may be implemented by the Dean of the student’s Faculty. In the end, the University’s obligation is discharged if a proposal is made that would be reasonable and appropriate in all the circumstances, whether or not it is accepted by the student.

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<sup>1</sup>Ontario Human Rights Commission. “What is a Disability?” Policy on Ableism and discrimination based on disability.

## No Modification of Essential Requirements

The Code does not require the University to accommodate where the student is “incapable of performing or fulfilling the essential...requirements” of the course of study (section 17(1)). Consistent with the Code, the Senate Policy provides that “[t]he nature and extent of accommodations shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses.”

This means that the University does not expect course instructors to modify curriculum or expectations for students with disabilities to the extent that academic integrity would be compromised or that a new course is designed for the student. A student must be able, with reasonable accommodation, to fulfill the essential requirements of the course curriculum, with no modification of those essential requirements.

The purpose of accommodation is to remove those barriers to learning which students with disabilities might experience as a result of their functional limitations, but not to relieve them from the responsibility to develop the essential skills and competencies expected of all students. That being said, it is important that course instructors not conclude that a student is incapable of performing essential requirements until and unless reasonable and appropriate accommodation has first been provided.

## Confidentiality and Records Management

Course instructors are advised to hold in confidence the information they receive regarding the accommodation needs of students with disabilities, and to use and share this information only for the purposes for which it was received. In addition, instructors are required to treat records related to students with disabilities in accordance with the Personal Information provisions of the University’s Policy on Records and Information Management (see <https://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/policies/records-and-information-management-policy/>).

## STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Student Accessibility Services provides academic accommodation and support to York students in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Commission's [Policy on accessible education for students with disabilities](#) and York University Senate Policy on [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Our services include:

- reviewing medical documentation, assessing educational needs and setting of accommodation plans
- assistive technology training and access to specialized computer labs
- accommodated test/exam centres and scheduling / invigilating services
- coordination of note taking and American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreters
- psychoeducational supports and resources (e.g. implementation of accommodations academic skill building, self-advocacy)
- consultation with faculty and staff regarding accommodation implementation
- liaising with other campus resources (e.g., Admissions, Advising, Housing, Financial Aid);
- peer supports (peer mentoring, academic coaching)
- summer transition support program (Project Advance) and an elective 6-credit course, The Language and Learning Seminar (LLS 1000 6.0)
- referrals to on and off campus services as needed

### Office locations and contact info:

#### **Student Accessibility Services, Keele Campus**

Office: North 108 Ross Building

Telephone: 416-736-5755

Email: [sasinfo@yorku.ca](mailto:sasinfo@yorku.ca)

#### **Student Accessibility Services, Glendon Campus**

Office: B108 York Hall (room B117)

Email: [sasinfo@yorku.ca](mailto:sasinfo@yorku.ca)

### Adaptive Computer Labs

These labs offer a variety of adaptive technology software, such as text-to-speech, speech-to-text, screen enlargers and brainstorming tools. In addition, software such as Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, and Internet Explorer are also available. The Keele and Glendon locations are below:

- **Adaptive Equipment Facilities, Library Accessibility Services**, located in Room 134 Scott Library (416-650-8484)
- **Assistive Technology Lab**, located at 1017 DB (Victor Dahdaleh Building)
- **Glendon Adaptive Technology Lab**, located in E 103 Glendon Hall, next to the Counselling Centre. You can only access the lab through the Counselling Centre (416-487- 6709, or ext. 66709).

## UNDERSTANDING DISABILITIES

Student Accessibility Services provides support to students who experience health or learning conditions that could potentially impact their academic pursuits.

Some examples include:

- Acquired brain injuries
- Attention deficit disorders
- Chronic health conditions (such as auto-immune disorders and cancer)
- Deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing
- Learning disabilities
- Motor or mobility limitations
- Mental health disabilities
- Low vision or legally blind
- Autism
- Temporary conditions (such as fractures and post-operative needs)

These conditions can manifest in various ways, whether they are visible or not, temporary, or permanent, episodic or chronic, and they can range in intensity from mild to severe. While certain patterns in recommended accommodations may emerge for students with specific disabilities, significant variations can also exist. For instance, not all individuals with hearing impairments necessitate sign language interpreters, and not every student with a visual impairment relies on Braille. The objective of offering accommodations is to eliminate inadvertent barriers stemming from the course design, taking into account the distinctive functional limitations that each student with a disability experiences on an individual level.

Students seeking access to accommodations must follow supplementary steps and protocols to secure accommodations and avail themselves of available resources. These steps encompass:

- ✓ Providing medical documentation to SAS that identifies their condition or outlines the functional limitations/requirements within the academic setting.
- ✓ Completing SAS registration forms, attending a registration meeting to discuss needs and set an accommodation plan, or reviewing accommodation information electronically.
- ✓ Submitting an accommodation letter to their Course Instructor for each enrolled course.
- ✓ Potentially engaging in communication with individual professors to discuss specific needs and the execution of the accommodation plan.
- ✓ Signing up online for all quizzes, tests, and exams to secure accommodations well in advance of deadlines (e.g., at least 3 weeks prior to the test date).

In situations where students inform the instructor about their disability but seem unaware of the available campus services, please share our website and how to register, found [here](#). Registration leads to the creation of an accommodation letter that outlines the recommended accommodations for their particular needs. Some students might opt not to disclose their disabilities, which is well within their rights.



## Accessibility Barriers for Individuals with Disabilities

The 5 most common barriers to accessibility within educational institutions are outlined below:

Barrier type	Examples
<p><b>Attitudinal:</b> behaviours, perceptions and assumptions that discriminate against persons with disabilities, often emerging from a lack of understanding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ treating the provision of accommodations as a favor, rather than a necessity</li> <li>▪ assuming one understands a person’s condition better than the person themselves due to shared personal experiences.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Organizational/systemic:</b> policies, procedures or practices that unfairly discriminate and can prevent individuals from full participation in an academic activity, often unintentionally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ academic programs which require students to enroll in a full course load</li> <li>▪ offering only in-person office hours, without providing alternative means of communication like phone, email or virtual</li> </ul>
<p><b>Architectural/physical:</b> elements of buildings or outdoor spaces that create barriers to access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ desks positioned at heights unsuitable for wheelchair users</li> <li>▪ poor lighting making it hard for individuals with low vision to navigate</li> </ul>
<p><b>Information or communications:</b> barriers occur when sensory disabilities (such as hearing, seeing or learning disabilities) have not been considered. These barriers relate to both the sending and receiving of information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ providing electronic documents lacking proper formatting, rendering them incompatible with screen readers</li> <li>▪ delivering lectures that lack organization, clear structure or visual aids or captioning on media</li> </ul>
<p><b>Technological:</b> barriers occur when a device or technological platform is not accessible to its intended audience and cannot be used with an assistive device.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ mandating the use of websites not meeting accessibility standards</li> <li>▪ distributing reading materials that cannot be interpreted by screen readers</li> </ul>

Taken from: Council of Ontario’s Universities. Understanding Barriers to Accessibility: An Educator’s Perspective  
<https://accessiblecampus.ca/tools-resources/educators-tool-kit/understanding-barriers-to-accessibility-an-educators-perspective/>

### Tips for Reducing Accessibility Barriers

- ✓ Encourage students to come forward and speak with you about their academic needs in your course. They may have suggestions or strategies that could work. If you feel uncertain about support options, request time for consideration before responding.

- ✓ Implement suitable accommodations and engage in the accommodation process in good faith. If you have concerns, contact the Accessibility Counsellor specified on the student's accommodation letter.
- ✓ Respect and prioritize student privacy by not questioning their health condition or identifying them in front of others.
- ✓ Identify and clearly express essential learning objectives of the course (e.g. on the course outline).
- ✓ Make lecture notes, slides and other handouts electronically available to students.
- ✓ Allow students to audio record or provide audio recordings of information presented in lecture.
- ✓ Request a classroom change if the physical space does not meet the learning needs of all your students.

## ACCESSIBILITY AND UNIVERSAL DESIGN

### Enhancing Academic Access for All Students Through Universal Design for Learning

Incorporating universal design principles in courses can bring a wide range of benefits for both faculty and students. Universal design in education aims to create an inclusive and accessible learning environment that accommodates the diverse needs of all students, regardless of their abilities, backgrounds, or learning styles. Here are some of the key benefits:

1. **Inclusivity:** Enhancing equal access to course materials, activities, and assessments, creates an inclusive environment where students with disabilities, as well as those from different cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, can fully participate and engage in the learning process.
2. **Diverse Learning Styles:** Making use of multiple teaching methods, resources, and formats that appeal to different learning styles and preferences helps students grasp concepts in ways that align with their individual strengths.
3. **Accessibility:** Promoting the creation of materials and resources that are accessible to everyone, including students with disabilities such as captions for videos, accessible documents, and content that can be navigated using screen readers.
4. **Flexibility:** Allowing students to choose engagement methods that suit their needs, such as offering multiple ways to access information, complete assignments, and participate in discussions.
5. **Reduced Need for Accommodations:** Offering proactive design can eliminate barriers that would otherwise require specific accommodation.
6. **Improved Learning Outcomes:** When materials and assessments are designed to be clear and understandable, students are more likely to grasp the content and perform well academically.
7. **Enhanced Engagement and Participation:** When students feel that their diverse needs are considered and accommodated, they are more likely to actively participate in class discussions, group activities, and other learning opportunities.
8. **Preparation for Diverse Workplaces:** By experiencing inclusive practices during their education, students develop skills for collaboration and communication across different backgrounds and abilities.
9. **Legal and Ethical Considerations:** Incorporating universal design helps institutions meet legal requirements for the provision of accommodations and uphold ethical principles of fairness and inclusivity.
10. **Positive Teaching Experience:** By creating materials and activities that cater to a diverse range of

students, instructors can witness increased engagement, enthusiasm, and satisfaction among their students.

While universal measures aim to suit the needs of all students, individualized accommodations might still be necessary based on a student's specific functional impairments. (While a "one size fits most" approach is valuable, it might not encompass all cases.) Overall, incorporating universal design principles in courses supports the broader goals of education by promoting equity, inclusivity, and effective learning experiences for all students.

## Universal Design Practices and Examples

- **Use of Multiple Learning Modalities:**
  - Provide content in various formats, such as written text, audio, and video, to accommodate different learning preferences.
  - Use images, diagrams, and charts to illustrate concepts, benefiting both visual and auditory learners.
  - Offer hands-on activities and real-world examples to engage kinesthetic learners.
- **Accessible Course Materials:**
  - Use accessible fonts, colors, and formatting in digital documents and presentations to ensure readability.
  - Provide alternative text (alt text) for images to describe their content for students using screen readers.
  - Ensure slides and documents are accessible but using the accessibility checker available in PowerPoint and Word
  - Caption videos and provide transcripts to make audio and visual content accessible to all.
  - Provide a detailed course outline before the course begins, outlining goals, expectations, topics, reading list, technical vocabulary, and evaluation procedures.
- **Multiple Assessment Options:**
  - Offer a variety of assessment formats, such as written essays, presentations, group projects, quizzes, and practical demonstrations. This allows students to choose the format that aligns with their strengths.
- **Clear Instructions, Expectations and Transparent Grading:**
  - Provide clear and detailed instructions for each assessment, including grading criteria and expectations. This helps all students understand what is required.
  - Provide detailed rubrics for assessments, outlining the criteria for success. This helps students understand how their work will be evaluated.
- **Extended Time and Flexible Scheduling:**
  - Offer extended time for assessments or flexible scheduling to accommodate students who require more time due to disabilities or other circumstances (e.g. religious observances, personal responsibilities, different time zones).
- **Collaborative Assessments:**
  - Design collaborative assessments where students work together in groups to solve problems or complete projects. This accommodates different learning styles and encourages teamwork.
- **Provide Practice Opportunities:**

- Offer practice assessments or sample questions that allow students to become familiar with the assessment format and expectations.
- **Responsive Feedback:**
  - Provide timely and constructive feedback on assessments, focusing on areas of improvement and offering guidance for future assignments.

The Teaching Commons aids instructors in crafting courses, strategies, assignments, and assessments with universal design and accessibility principles in mind. Visit <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/> to learn more.

## PROCEDURES FOR ARRANGING ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

### Process for Assessing Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

York's Senate Policy (See Appendix 2) outlines the procedures for identifying students who require academic accommodations as follows:

*Students with disabilities who require accommodations shall, in a timely manner, provide the relevant medical, psychoeducational, or psychiatric documentation to the appropriate York Office for students with disabilities to qualify for accommodations.*

The University's Student Accessibility Services office assist students in the identification of particular aspects of courses that might present barriers to them and work with them to identify the appropriate accommodations, provide supportive documentation, and liaise with students and instructors in the provision of accommodations.

### Suggested Language for Course Outlines

A detailed course syllabus should be made available to students, as early as possible before the first week of classes so that students can explore possible accommodations with their Accessibility Counsellor. York's Senate Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy Committee (ASCP) strongly suggests that course instructors add a section on access for students with disabilities to course outlines. Instructors may also provide a link to the ASCP website (<http://secretariat.info.yorku.ca/senate/academic-standards-curriculum-and-pedagogy-committee/>).

Course instructors are encouraged to include on course outlines language such as the following:

York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations and adaptations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs. The nature and extent of accommodations shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses. Provided that

students have given sufficient notice about their accommodation needs, instructors shall take reasonable steps to accommodate these needs in a manner consistent with the guidelines established hereunder.

### Discussing Accommodation Requirements with Students with Disabilities

Students are advised to share their accommodation letters at the start of the term through our online accommodation portal.

If an instructor has questions regarding the implementation of these accommodations within their course, they can reach out to the student and/or the Accessibility Counsellor (listed on the accommodation letter). Please meet privately to discuss matters related to a student's accommodations.

### The Student's Responsibility

The following statement from ASCP details the responsibility of students with disabilities to make appropriate and timely efforts to arrange for course accommodations:

*It is the student's responsibility to register with disability services as early as possible to ensure that appropriate academic accommodation can be provided with advance notice. You are encouraged to schedule a time early in the term to meet with each professor to discuss your accommodation needs. Failure to make these arrangements may jeopardize your opportunity to receive academic accommodations.*

### Disclosure of Disability

Students with disabilities are required to disclose information only as it pertains to the need for accommodation and any barriers or limitations. The documentation to support their need for academic accommodation is supplied to their accessibility services office only. Course instructors should focus their attention and any questions they have on the nature of the accommodations that are necessary and how they can be provided, rather than on the disability itself.

### Accommodation Agreements

The Policy regarding the Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (Appendix 2) encourages the establishment of a clear mutual understanding between student and instructor about the accommodations that will be provided. There is also a process for resolving disagreements.

## ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT

There are a range of services and resources in place at York to assist in making academic accommodations, including alternate format transcription services, assistive devices and support, and alternative scheduling of examinations and tests. Details about these services and resources are provided below, and contact information can be found in the Appendix 1.

### Accessible Materials (Alternate Format)

Students may require course materials to be provided in an alternate format (e.g. PDF/OCR so it can be used by a screen reader, Braille). Student Accessibility Services will connect the student with Library Accessibility Services staff to facilitate the transcription of their course materials.

Instructors are asked to provide required course tests and readings as early as possible in advance of the start of the course to facilitate this process. Reading lists should indicate whether readings are required, recommended or supplemental research in order to determine priority of transcription.

For guidance on how to create accessible learning materials, including lecture slides, textbooks or readings, please visit: [Council of Ontario Universities: Fact Sheet Template \(yorku.ca\)](#) It is most helpful to implement these at the construction stage.

Please forward your course reading list and direct any questions you may have about the process to the Manager, Library Accessibility Services (416-650-8484, [lashelp@yorku.ca](mailto:lashelp@yorku.ca)). Similarly, if a student asks you directly for a list of required readings please respond as soon as you are able.

### Course Web Sites

Posting your course materials on eClass or a course website is one way that you can provide all of your students with an alternative format for important course documents and updates. For some students with disabilities, eClass or a course website can be the primary means of accessing course information. At the same time, web pages can present barriers for some of those same students. For example, if a page contains images, a student who has a visual disability has incomplete information about the page unless equivalent text has been provided for his/her screen reading software to explain the visuals.

Some key criteria of an accessible web page include correct formatting, complete information, and simple design – strategies you can apply whether you use Microsoft Word or an advanced Web authoring system.

Learn more about how to improve the accessibility of course web pages from York's Learning Technology Services site ([www.lts.info.yorku.ca](http://www.lts.info.yorku.ca)).

Every faculty member is entitled to set up a course website, and York offers support to help you get started. Talk to your local computer coordinator about what help is available through your Faculty, or visit York's Learning Technology Services at 1050 Victor Phillip Dahdaleh Building (Formerly TEL Building), [lts@yorku.ca](mailto:lts@yorku.ca), [www.lts.info.yorku.ca](http://www.lts.info.yorku.ca).

## Multimedia

Options for enhancing multimedia in the classroom or on the web include captioning (open or closed) and video description. Captions can provide viewers with synchronized text-based information showing verbatim dialogue, background sounds and sound effects. Open captions stay permanently on screen while audio or video is being viewed. Closed captions can be optionally turned on or off at the discretion of the viewer. Video descriptions provide verbal descriptions of what is happening visually in the video. A verbatim transcript of any multimedia is generally a first step in the process.

## Tests and Examinations

The scheduling of alternate tests and examinations is coordinated by Alternate Exam/Test Scheduling Centre, after students have formally registered with Student Accessibility Services, signed an exam/test accommodation agreement form, and booked their tests/exams online ([www.yorku.ca/altexams](http://www.yorku.ca/altexams)).

## Specialized Furniture and Equipment

York is committed to working towards ensuring that its facilities are as accessible as possible to persons with disabilities (see the University Policy on Physical Accessibility of University Facilities at [www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=24](http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=24)). If you notice that a student requires adaptive furniture, please encourage the student to contact their counsellors at Student Accessibility Services (<http://https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/> Tel: 416-736-5755 E-mail: [sasinfo@yorku.ca](mailto:sasinfo@yorku.ca) ) who will make the appropriate referrals.

## Support for Faculty Teaching Outside Classroom Learning Experiences

### Who is Responsible

All stakeholders (e.g., faculties that have placement requirements; instructors; preceptors and students) have a responsibility to support students with disabilities in finding suitable placements as well as, during the placement experience. Students who identify with disabilities can and often face barriers that exclude them from fully participating in placement environments. One key aspect that will pave the way for an accessible placement experience is for instructors to create a welcoming environment and invite a conversation with students about their challenges and possible accommodation strategies.

Given the culture of stigma in some placements, Student Accessibility Services understands that students might not want to disclose the nature of their disability or diagnosis to faculty and according to the law there is no requirement for them to do so. The focus needs to be on accommodation due to their functional limitations. Student Accessibility Service encourages students to meet with their Accessibility Counsellor to discuss the ways in which they can support their students on how best to communicate their learning and accommodation needs.

### What You Need To Do

Several strategies to facilitate conversations are available including actively seeking training/workshops to support communication needs when working with students with disabilities. Faculty members are encouraged to refer students who identify with a disability, or even students who they may recognize as struggling, to register with Student Accessibility Services. Meeting with an Accessibility Counsellor will start the conversation about the placement setting and help in anticipating the type of barriers and suggested resources that may be needed to support students during their placements.

While expecting students to initiate the conversation with faculty might be challenging given what we know about stigma in many placement environments, it is advisable that instructors use clear statements in the course outline and during the first day of class **inviting students to approach them or referring them to Student Accessibility Services** to discuss their accommodation needs. Students who identify with disabilities are often the experts in understanding their own disability and should be invited to discuss possibilities and reasonable accommodations early (if possible) but also throughout the placement experience.

However, students often don't know what the placement experience may include, and so instructors are strongly encouraged to provide them with placements information or/ and ask students about their placement needs as early as possible. As each student has unique needs and experiences the process of accommodation is individualized. Student Accessibility Services is available for support



and consultation and counsellors will make recommendations based on the medical documentation they receive from the student, as well as, their past-experience and knowledge of the placement setting where possible.

Accessibility Counsellors may reach out to the various departments and encourage a meeting with the student and placement coordinators and other relative staff to create an accommodation plan that will provide the student what they need while maintain the academic integrity of the placement. The purpose of the communication is to optimize the student experience while exploring their abilities and capacities.

Reasonable accommodations in the placement setting are implemented for the purpose of minimizing barriers that may interfere with the student's specific needs. Early conversations about finding reasonable accommodation are paramount as accommodation are a collaborative initiative between students, instructors and Student Accessibility Services.

Some placement accommodation examples may include but are not limited to:

- 1) arranging the placement closer to the student's home to reduce travel time
- 2) lengthening the duration of the placement to incorporate a part-time model of service
- 3) providing ergonomic furniture and other equipment/assisted technology
- 4) modifications to the placement environment (e.g., extra time to complete tasks; private room to rest)
- 5) access to technology (e.g., sound magnifying stanoscope); allowing ASL interpreters to provide spoken communication for a deaf student
- 6) funds for parking or travel to placement. (See end of documents for more examples and resources).

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## Suggested Resources

Accessible campus when teaching outside classroom: <https://www.accessiblecampus.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Consideration-of-Student-Accessibility-When-Teaching-Outside-the-Classroom-Article.pdf>

Access College- The Faculty room:  
<https://www.washington.edu/doi/fieldwork>

## Appendix 1: DIRECTORY OF DEPARTMENTS & SERVICES

### Accessibility Services, Scott Library

General queries: 416-650-8484, [www.library.yorku.ca/web/ask-services/accessibility-services](http://www.library.yorku.ca/web/ask-services/accessibility-services). Offers the following for library users with disabilities: adaptive equipment room and facilitated services for circulation, library materials retrieval, and photocopying.

### Student Counselling, Health & Well-being

N110 Bennett Centre for Student Services, 416-736-5297 (voice), <https://counselling.students.yorku.ca/>. Provides walk-in personal counselling, crisis intervention, groups to promote personal and interpersonal growth.

### Student Accessibility Services – Glendon Campus

B108 York Hall <https://www.yorku.ca/glendon/supports-and-services/glendon-counselling/>

### Student Accessibility Services – Keele Campus

N108 Ross Building and they can be reached by telephone at 416-736-5755 or via email as [sasinfo@yorku.ca](mailto:sasinfo@yorku.ca).

### Alternate Exam and Test Centre

Coordinates the scheduling of space, assistive technology and invigilators for all alternate exams and test. N108 Ross Building and they can be reached by telephone at 416-736-5755, <https://altexams.students.yorku.ca/contact-altexams>. Professors can contact [altprof@yorku.ca](mailto:altprof@yorku.ca) for specific inquiries.

### York Federation of Students Access Centre

321 First Student Centre, [yfsaccesscentre@yfs.ca](mailto:yfsaccesscentre@yfs.ca), <https://www.yfs.ca/csqs>. Offers resources and peer support to students with disabilities.

## TEACHING AND FACULTY SERVICES & RESOURCES

### Teaching Commons

1050 Victor Phillip Dahdaleh Building, 416-736-5754 (voice), 416-736-5704 (fax), [teaching@yorku.ca](mailto:teaching@yorku.ca), <https://www.yorku.ca/teachingcommons/>. Offers workshops, discussion groups, forums, publications and special programming throughout the academic year to improve the quality of teaching at York; Resource library – print and web resources; AODA Web Accessibility at York, [www.aodaweb.blog.yorku.ca](http://www.aodaweb.blog.yorku.ca).

### Learning Technology Services

1050 Victor Phillip Dahdaleh Building (formerly TEL Building), 416-736-2100 (voice), [lts@yorku.ca](mailto:lts@yorku.ca), [www.lts.info.yorku.ca](http://www.lts.info.yorku.ca). Provides consultation and assistance to instructors in the use of technology to support their research and teaching activities.

### Teaching and Research Computing

Keele campus 416-736-2100 x 55800 (voice). Glendon campus (416) 736-2100 x 66700 (voice), [www.staff.computing.yorku.ca/faculty-staff/teaching-research-computing](http://www.staff.computing.yorku.ca/faculty-staff/teaching-research-computing). Provides media support for

York courses, special events and research, including delivery and set-up of digital and audio-visual equipment, development and production of multimedia materials, and audio-conferencing, videoconferencing and satellite technology.

#### Health, Safety and Well-Being

Employee Well-being Office, Kinsmen Building, 8 Chimenystack Road, 416-736-5491 (voice), <https://www.yorku.ca/hr/>, [hsewb@yorku.ca](mailto:hsewb@yorku.ca). Provides advice to the University on compliance with occupational health and safety legislation; assesses, monitors and provides consultation on the control of workplace hazards; advises on accommodation issues related to health and safety, and provides safety training and educational materials.

#### Ombudsperson

1050 Kaneff Tower, 416-736-2100 ext. 22937 (voice), [ombuds@yorku.ca](mailto:ombuds@yorku.ca), <https://www.yorku.ca/unit/ombuds/>. The Office of the Ombudsperson is a confidential, impartial and independent resource for University Community members (students, faculty and staff) to receive advice and guidance about their university-wide concerns and complaints regarding university policies, procedures and decision-making structures.

#### Centre for Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion

2070 Victor Phillip Dahdaleh Building, 416-736-5682 (voice), <https://rights.info.yorku.ca/>, [rights@yorku.ca](mailto:rights@yorku.ca). Addresses concerns and complaints about allegations of unfairness in University policy, process, or procedure, discrimination and/or harassment as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code and York's human rights policies.

#### York University Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities- Enable York

2070 Victor Phillip Dahdaleh Building (formerly TEL Building), 416-736-5682 (voice), [www.rights.info.yorku.ca/enable-york](http://www.rights.info.yorku.ca/enable-york), [enableyork@yorku.ca](mailto:enableyork@yorku.ca). Enable York is York University's advisory committee. Its role is to advocate on behalf of persons with disabilities and those encountering disabling circumstances who work and learn at York University, ensuring that the University fulfils its commitment to equity and access for these individuals. Access York also advises the President and other policy makers on disability-related matters and acts as a forum for new ideas and concepts that will help the University better fulfill its responsibilities to persons with disabilities.

## APPENDIX 2: SENATE POLICY

### Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (Policy)

#### Legislative History:

Approved by Senate 1991/06 as Policy on Students With Special Needs; Amended by Senate 2001/05/24; Amended and Renamed by Senate as "Policy Regarding Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities" 2005/02/24; Amended and approved by Senate 2017/06/15.

**Approval Authority:** Senate

**Signature:** Maureen Armstrong

#### Policy<sup>[1]</sup>

1. Pursuant to its commitment to sustaining an inclusive, equitable community in which all members are treated with respect and dignity, and consistent with applicable accessibility legislation, York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs. This policy aims to eliminate systemic barriers to participation in academic activities by students with disabilities.
2. All students are expected to satisfy the essential learning outcomes of courses. Accommodations shall be consistent with, support and preserve the academic integrity of the curriculum and the academic standards of courses and programs.
3. Requests for accommodations shall be made and dealt with expeditiously.
4. Accommodations shall be sufficiently flexible to address individual needs.
5. Requests for extension or for deferral based on unforeseen and transient personal circumstances such as bereavement or short-term illness should be considered on compassionate grounds, but are not generally matters of academic accommodation under this policy.
6. All members of the University community bear responsibility for implementing this policy, and should make themselves familiar with the policy and the resources available to them. Accommodations are collaborative in nature and shall be based on mutual understanding.
7. Disabilities' shall be defined as those conditions so designated under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. Accommodations shall be sufficiently flexible to address individual needs. Requests for extension or for deferral based on unforeseen and transient personal circumstances such as bereavement or short-term illness should be considered on compassionate grounds, but are not generally matters of academic accommodation under this policy. All members of the University community bear responsibility for implementing this policy, and should make themselves familiar with the policy and the resources available to them. Accommodations are collaborative in nature and shall be based on mutual understanding.

<sup>[1]</sup> This policy has been updated at a time when Universal Design for Learning has taken on greater significance in postsecondary education and public policy. It is intended to reflect and reinforce the growing relevance and application of this approach to teaching and learning. Please refer to the [Guidelines, Procedures, and Definitions](#) document for further information.

## Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (Guidelines, Procedures and Definitions) Guidelines

### *1. Accessibility, Accommodation and Course Design*

Accommodation and inclusive course design are methods of preventing and eliminating barriers for students with disabilities.

- a. Course curriculum, delivery and evaluation methods should be designed inclusively from the outset.
- b. Even when the principles of inclusivity (or Universal Design for Learning – UDL) have been applied, accommodations may be required and requested.

### *2. Privacy and Confidentiality*

- a. All documents and communications concerning accommodations shall be kept confidential and may not be disclosed without consent except to the extent that disclosure is necessary for the implementation of accommodations, resolution of a disagreement, or as required by law.
- b. Students are not required to disclose a mental health diagnosis when requesting accommodation. Medical documentation must confirm a diagnosed mental health disability without a specific diagnostic label.

### *3. Roles and Responsibilities*

- a. Accessibility Services (Keele Campus) and the Accessibility, Well-Being and Counselling Centre (Glendon Campus) are the primary offices for processing requests, working with students and faculty members to develop accommodation plans, and providing appropriate resources for the community.
- b. Students shall provide timely notice of requests for accommodation based on disability and the documentation necessary to develop an accommodation plan. Requests are normally expected to be made with the assistance of the appropriate University office or centre as noted in 3a). The information provided must be sufficient for the specialized staff in the appropriate office or centre to determine the appropriate accommodations in consultation with the student and the instructor. Students are expected to communicate in a timely way any change in their circumstances and to fulfill the role assigned to them in their accommodation plans in a timely way where required by such plans.
- c. Instructors shall take reasonable steps to accommodate in a manner consistent with these Guidelines and the information provided through the appropriate university office of centre.
- d. Programs / departments and if necessary the Deans / Principal shall make best efforts to arrange timely mediation in cases when disagreements between students and instructors about requests for accommodation are unresolved.

### *4. Instruction-Related Accommodations*

- a. Instruction-related accommodations may include, but are not limited to:
  - timely provision of reading lists and other course materials to allow for alternate format transcription / conversion
  - alternate format transcription / conversion
  - alternate scheduling for the completion of course, project, thesis work or competency examinations

- reasonable, proportionate extensions to program completion time limits
- use of assistive devices or auxiliary aids in the classroom/laboratory/field (e.g., sound amplification systems worn by course instructors; computerized note takers in the classroom)
- use of oral and visual language interpreters and/or notetakers in the classroom
- permission to audio-record or video-record instruction for accommodation purposes only
- special seating, wheelchair accessible tables
- adjustments to lighting

b. Accommodation in Examinations and Evaluations

- i. Test and examination accommodations may include, but are not limited to:
- alternate scheduling of examinations and essays
  - alternate forms of assessment
  - extended time to complete tests/examinations
  - use of special equipment (computer, assistive technology, etc.)
  - use of special facilities (alternate test/exam room and proctor) and/or examinations in alternate formats (e.g. Braille, audiofiles, etc.)
- ii. Whenever possible, the usual procedures for writing tests and examinations shall be followed.

## Procedures

### 1. *Requesting Accommodations*

- a. Students with disabilities who require accommodations shall, in a timely manner, provide all necessary documentation to the appropriate University office or centre, it is that office or centre that determines what is necessary documentation.
- b. Designated offices will help students to identify particular aspects of courses that might present barriers to them and will work with them to identify the appropriate accommodations, to obtain or provide supportive documentation, and to assist the students and instructors in developing accommodation plans.

### 2. *Accommodation Agreements and Dispute Resolution*

- a. accommodations having regard to input from the appropriate University office or centre.
- b. In cases where the instructor and the student cannot agree about the provision of accommodations, the instructor shall discuss the recommended accommodations with the specialized staff in the relevant designated office or centre, In the event of a disagreement over an accommodation plan or its implementation, normal dispute resolution processes shall be followed (beginning with the relevant program or department and, if necessary, the Associate Dean / Associate Principal of the relevant Faculty).

## *Definitions*

*Academic Integrity:* Academic integrity refers to the upholding of essential requirements of courses and programs: All courses and programs have core or essential requirements against which students are evaluated as to whether they are demonstrating the skills, knowledge or attributes at the designated level of the course. Learning outcomes involve learning tasks and objectives that must be undertaken successfully without compromising the standard required for success in a course or program.

*Appropriate University Office or Centre:* Refers to the Counselling and Disability Services Office on the Keele Campus and The Accessibility, Well-being and Counselling Centre on the Glendon Campus.

*Disability:* For the purpose of this policy, disabilities are defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code as follows:

- a. any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d. a mental disorder, or
- e. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

*Reasonable Academic Accommodations:* These are planned and agreed-upon variations in the manner in which students may receive course instruction, participate in course activities, or be evaluated. Accommodations are designed to eliminate or reduce barriers to participation in academic life and to ensure students are treated with dignity and respect. The University has a duty to provide accommodations up to the point of undue hardship, which may be related to the following factors identified in the *Ontario Human Rights Code*:

- Cost
- Availability of outside sources of funding
- Health and safety requirements

*Students:* For the purposes of this Policy, “students” are those individuals who have been admitted to the University, including the School of Continuing Studies, and are eligible to enroll in courses.

*Universal Design for Learning – UDL:* The principles of UDL (sometimes referred to as Universal Instruction Design or Inclusive Curriculum Design) emphasize:

- multiple means of representation, to give learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge
- multiple means of expression, to provide learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know
- multiple means of engagement, to tap into learners' interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation

For information and assistance, please refer to the Teaching Commons' resources at :

<http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/resources-2/accommodations-and-inclusive-teaching/>



