Guidelines for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

This document supports the Accommodations for Students with Disabilities policy by providing detailed explanations, examples, and practical steps to implement the outlined procedures. By clarifying key procedures and offering actionable guidance, this document ensures consistency, transparency, and fairness in handling diverse accommodation requests within the College.

Privacy Management of Accommodation Information

All records and information collected and created when students request accommodation for courses and programs are considered sensitive personal information.

Instructors and Accessibility Services staff only discuss accommodation requests to the extent necessary to support the student. Instructors will not share a student's accommodation needs with others unless required by college policies and procedures. Before sharing any necessary information, instructors will first consult Accessibility Services or senior leadership.

Instructors will not ask directly for accommodation details. If a student voluntarily shares information, the instructor will only use it if necessary.

Fast-Track Accommodations

To support the timely and effective implementation of accommodations, Accessibility Advising Services uses an internal framework to streamline the development of accommodation plans where appropriate. Some accommodations, due to their commonality and straightforward nature, can often be addressed more quickly. These situations allow Accessibility Advisors to move efficiently through the planning process without compromising the opportunity for deeper engagement where needed.

The internal "fast-track" approach is a tool used by Accessibility Advisors, not a label communicated to instructors or students. It exists to help guide flexible and responsive support practices, rather than prescribe a one-size-fits-all process.

- Some accommodation needs are clear and routine, allowing for timely action without requiring extensive documentation or in-depth consultation.

- In other cases, students may benefit from a more involved planning process that considers complex barriers, multiple needs, or evolving circumstances.

- Accommodation plans may also be developed incrementally, beginning with initial strategies that can be refined as more information becomes available or as student's needs change.

Instructor Communication and Role

Instructors are not expected to distinguish whether a student's accommodation was developed through a fast-track process. Any accommodation communicated by Accessibility Advising Services has been assessed as appropriate and aligned with institutional policy. Faculty are encouraged to contact Accessibility Advising Services with any questions or concerns about implementation.

Advisory Discretion and Follow-Up

Accessibility Advisors will determine the appropriate level of documentation, consultation, and follow-up on a case-by-case basis. While some students may require only brief communication, others may engage in more detailed conversations, meetings, or collaborative planning, including referrals to additional support if needed.

Examples of Commonly Requested Accommodations

Category	Fast-track Accommodation	Concrete Examples
Assignment Adjustments	Extended deadlines (3–5 days); staggered deadlines for large projects.	A student recovering from an illness gets 3 extra days to submit a research paper.
In-Class Support	Shared notes/recordings; flexible attendance when not critical to grading.	A student with migraines accesses lecture notes on Moodle and is excused for a non-graded class.
Media Accessibility	Captioning for videos; providing transcripts for audio materials.	A student with hearing loss watches a video lecture with captions or receives a written podcast transcript.
Audio Lecture Recordings	Allow students to access or produce audio lecture recordings **in coordination with Accessibility Advising Services** to ensure safeguards.	A student with ADHD records lectures for later review, with measures in place to protect everyone's privacy.
Course Content Access	Lecture recordings; slides and materials provided in advance.	A student with ADHD receives lecture slides before class to review key points in advance.
Technology Support	Use of assistive technology; laptops allowed for notetaking and	A student uses text-to-speech software to listen to readings

	Assistance with applying for support from external agencies.	or takes notes on a tablet in class.
Reading/Writing Help	Getting digital or large-print materials through external organizations; extended time for in-class writing tasks.	A student with dyslexia receives a digital textbook to use with a screen reader and gets extra time for an in-class essay.
Sensory/Environmental	Flexible seating; permission to move; reduced lighting or noise.	A student with chronic pain sits near the door to stretch easily, or a student with sensory sensitivity uses noise-canceling headphones.
Physical Accessibility	Rearranged seating; adjusted room lighting; accommodations for mobility aids.	A student with a wheelchair uses a desk with extra legroom, or a student with light sensitivity requests dimmed lighting during lectures.
Participation Modifications	Alternative discussion methods; relaxed turn-taking rules.	A student with social anxiety emails their discussion points to the instructor instead of speaking in class.
Testing Adjustments	Extended time (25–50%); multiple breaks; quiet testing spaces.	A student with test anxiety takes an exam in a quiet room and gets 30 extra minutes to complete it.
Tutoring Support	Referrals to tutoring or academic coaching.	A classmate shares their notes with a student struggling to keep up, and the student is referred to campus tutoring services.

Accommodations Requiring More Comprehensive Support and Consultation

If students have more complex or ongoing needs, Accessibility Advising Services will consult with the student to tailor accommodations to their specific circumstances.

Step	Ideal Timeline	Responsible Party	Notes
Initiate Request	Start ASAP, preferably well before the start of an academic term.	Student	Email Academic Success Centre or Accessibility Services
Schedule Intake Meeting	Within 10 business days, where feasible	Academic Success Centre or Accessibility Advising Services (directly)	Arrange intake meeting between the student and Accessibility Advising Services
Provide Documentation	Within 5–10 business days, where feasible	Student	Submit medical or professional documentation, particularly if requested or required.
Develop Plan	Within 10 business days, where feasible.	Accessibility Advising Services	Plan developed in collaboration with faculty and the student While these timelines serve as guidelines, Accessibility Advising Services will prioritize shorter timelines whenever possible to ensure prompt support.

Documentation Expectations and Interim Accommodations

Documentation supports the development of effective and individualized accommodation plans. Accessibility Advising Services works closely with students to ensure that documentation facilitates a comprehensive understanding of their needs without creating unnecessary barriers.

Interim Accommodations:
Accessibility Advising Services has the authority to approve interim accommodations without requiring formal or up-to-date documentation. Interim accommodations are based on the student's self-reported barriers and immediate needs. These supports prioritize accessibility to make sure students can continue their academic progress while they work to get any necessary documentation for more comprehensive, long-term accommodations.

Accessibility Advising Services operates on the principle of good faith, trusting students to describe their barriers openly and honestly. Interim accommodations will be provided promptly to address immediate academic challenges, particularly when students need more time to get formal documentation, or are unavailable.

Encouraging Documentation:
Students are encouraged to get up-to-date documentation to make sure long-term accommodations match their evolving needs.

Accessibility Advising Services may:

- Recommend assessment providers and subsidized services where available.
- Offer written guidelines to clarify what constitutes sufficient documentation for various accommodations.

Flexible Documentation Types:
Accessibility Advising Services may accept a range of documentation types, including:

- Brief letters from health or wellness professionals.
- Reports from previous educational institutions verifying accommodations.
- Other supporting documents that describe the functional impacts of the student's condition.

Guidelines by Condition:
Documentation requirements are tailored to specific conditions:

- Progressive or Episodic Conditions: Periodic updates every 5 years or sooner if significant changes occur.
- Documenting functional impacts: Documentation must clearly outline the disability and its functional impact on the student's ability to participate in academic activities. A diagnosis alone is not sufficient; the documentation should specify how the condition affects the student in the educational environment.
- Permanent and stable disabilities: For conditions that are permanent or stable (such as blindness, paraplegia, or certain chronic medical conditions), documentation does not need to be updated after the initial submission. Once submitted, this documentation will be accepted as valid unless there is a meaningful change in the student's condition or needs. Periodic check-ins may be conducted (typically every 10 years) to ensure the accommodation remains appropriate, but no further testing will be required unless the student's situation changes.
- Variable or Progressive Disabilities: For conditions that may change over time (such as mental health condition, autoimmune disorders, or progressive illnesses), updated documentation may be requested every 5 years to ensure that accommodations continue to meet the student's evolving needs.

- Temporary disabilities or health issues: For short-term conditions (such as a broken limb, temporary illness, or post-surgery recovery), temporary accommodation will be provided based on documentation. This accommodation will last for the expected duration of recovery, and students may be required to submit updates if their condition changes or recovery takes longer than expected.
- Psychoeducational assessments conducted at age 18 or older: Psychoeducational assessments conducted when the student is 18 years or older will be accepted without the need for updates, as cognitive and learning profiles tend to be stable in adulthood. These assessments will be considered valid for the student's time at CNC unless there is a significant change in their needs.
- Psychoeducational assessments conducted before age 18: Psychoeducational assessments completed before a student turns 18 may require updating if more than five years old. This is to ensure that the assessment accurately reflects the student's current learning needs and challenges, as learning profiles may shift during adolescence. However, exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis, particularly if the assessment remains relevant and no significant changes have occurred. Students are encouraged to discuss their individual circumstances with Accessibility Advising Services to determine whether updated documentation is necessary.
- For routine adjustments addressing common barriers, such as fast-tracked accommodations, the College may implement accommodations without requiring formal documentation, as outlined in the related procedures. Accessibility Advising Services will ensure consistency and fairness in these cases, minimizing barriers for students while maintaining institutional accountability.

Retroactive Accommodations

Retroactive accommodations are granted only in rare and exceptional circumstances where a student was genuinely unable to request support in advance or shortly after the barrier occurred, due to serious, unforeseen, and verifiable events—including acute medical or psychological crises.

Retroactive accommodations will only be considered if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The request is made within five (5) business days of the exam or assignment deadline.

2. The student had no reasonable ability to request support prior to or shortly after the missed deadline, based on the severity and immediacy of the barrier.

    i. This may include instances of acute psychological distress that significantly impaired the student's functioning at the time, as verified by a licensed mental health professional.

ii. Generalized or ongoing anxiety, or delayed recognition of distress after the fact, will not be considered sufficient grounds for a retroactive accommodation.

3. The student was unable to complete the exam or assignment, despite being aware of the deadline.
4. It remains logistically feasible for the student to complete an equivalent assessment and for it to be graded within the current course timeline.
5. The student provides verifiable documentation confirming the timing, severity, and impact of the extenuating circumstances.
6. The accommodation does not compromise academic integrity, academic standards, or provide an unfair advantage.
7. The accommodation would meaningfully affect the student's ability to meet course requirements, such as determining whether the student passes or fails the course.

Urgent Requests

An urgent request is for students who are facing a sudden problem that is seriously affecting their ability to do schoolwork—right now. These are situations that could cause the student to miss an important deadline, exam, or class activity in the next few days, and where waiting for a regular appointment would cause harm to their grades or academic progress.

Urgent requests are meant for serious and unexpected situations—not for things that have been building up for a while or could have been handled earlier.

When is a request considered urgent?

A situation may be considered urgent if all of the following are true:

- Something important is happening very soon (like an exam, test, or deadline), and the student might not be able to complete it without help.
- The problem came up suddenly, and the student could not have planned for it or asked for help earlier.
- The issue is serious, and is stopping the student from thinking clearly, doing schoolwork, or focusing in class.
- Support is needed quickly to avoid a major academic problem.

Examples of real urgent requests:
- A student is hospitalized or has a medical emergency the night before an exam.
- A mental health crisis is affecting the student's ability to study or attend class, and they are being supported by a professional.
- A fire, flood, or other emergency forces a student to leave home and they lose access to their learning space.

- A student's disability suddenly gets worse and they can no longer use the tools or strategies that used to work.

What is *not* considered urgent:
- Feeling stressed or overwhelmed, without a new or serious change.
- Asking for more time because of poor time management or forgetting about a deadline.
- Trying to get accommodations for a condition the student has had for a long time but didn't act on earlier.
- Needing help in a class generally, but not because of a sudden barrier or emergency.

Request Process
Email Accessibility Advising Services at access@cnc.bc.ca:
- Include name, student ID, reason for urgency, and proposed accommodations.
- Encourage students to communicate using their personal CNC account.

Response Process:
- Requests are acknowledged within three (3) business days.
- Interim accommodations are provided within five (5) business days of receipt by Accessibility Advising Services.
- Limitations: Response times depend on competing priorities, workload, and the time required to plan and implement accommodations reasonably. Students should understand that their requested timeline may not always be feasible.
- Faculty Support: If faculty are unsure how to implement urgent or interim accommodations, they must contact Accessibility Advising Services or their Deans immediately for guidance. Timely consultation ensures accommodations can be implemented without unnecessary delays.

Alternate Forms of Support for Infeasibility

If accommodations cannot be implemented due to timing or other challenges:

1. Course Withdrawal Without Academic Penalty: Students may withdraw from a course without it affecting their GPA or transcript.
2. Full or Partial Refunds: Students may be eligible for a refund of tuition or fees for affected courses.

Requesting Full-Time Status Documentation

Students with reduced course loads due to accommodations may request documentation to confirm full-time status for financial aid, scholarships, immigration, or other purposes.

- External Acceptance: While the College confirms full-time status under its policies, it cannot guarantee how this information will be interpreted or accepted by external

entities, such as immigration authorities or financial institutions. Students should verify the requirements of these organizations in advance.

- Institutional Benefits: Internally, students with approved reduced course loads will retain full-time status for institutional purposes, such as eligibility for campus resources or housing.

Steps:
- Submit Request: Email asc@cnc.bc.ca with the reason for the documentation (e.g., financial aid).
- Processing Time: Requests are processed within 10 business days.

Monitoring and Feedback

Accessibility Advising Services will:

- Conduct at least one check-in per term (within 60 days) to ensure that accommodations are being implemented effectively.
- Collect feedback from students and faculty at the end of each term to identify areas for improvement.
- Proactively adjust accommodation plans based on feedback, evolving needs, or changes in circumstances.
- **Note:** Ultimately, it's the responsibility of the student to take the initiative and notify Accessibility Advising Services if an approved accommodation is not meeting their needs or being effectively implemented.

Collaborative Problem-Solving and Dispute Resolution

Collaborative problem-solving and dispute resolution process supports situations where:

- There is a lack of clarity or consensus on how best to meet accommodation needs after initial meetings with Accessibility Advising Services and faculty.
- Unique or complex barriers require collective brainstorming to identify reasonable solutions.
- Stakeholders need structured processes to align feasible accommodations with the institution's duty to accommodate and the instructor's academic objectives, considering available resources, time constraints, safety needs, and regulatory requirements.
- The minimum amount of accommodation information will be shared, and individuals supporting the removal of functional barriers in the learning environment will avoid requesting information they don't need to achieve this outcome.

This process ensures collaboration, transparency, and fairness while prioritizing the student's needs and respecting institutional and faculty considerations. Accessibility Advising Services will avoid identifying the student and the specific condition when

possible, focusing instead on the functional barriers that exist in the learning environment.

Steps:
1. *Initial Consultation and Context Establishment:*

Accessibility Advising Services will confirm the following:

- The student's specific needs, barriers, and requested accommodations based on prior consultations and documentation.
- The instructor's academic objectives, course requirements, and any concerns or constraints related to the implementation of accommodations.
- Any interim accommodations already in place.

If these initial consultations do not clarify the path forward, the Accessibility Advising Services will convene a Collaborative Problem-Solving Meeting within five (5) business days.

Faculty are encouraged to consult Accessibility Advising Services or their Educational Administrators (for example: Associate Deans) if they have concerns or are unsure how to implement an accommodation effectively. This consultation ensures the proposed accommodation aligns with course requirements and institutional policies.

Task	Responsible Party	Timeline	Outcome
Meet with the student to document needs, barriers, and preferences	Accessibility Advising Services	Before meeting (ASAP)	Clear understanding of the student's needs and barriers
Gather instructor's input on constraints, academic requirements, and concerns.	Accessibility Advising Services	Before meeting (ASAP)	Clear understanding of the instructor's objectives and challenges.
Convene Collaborative Problem-Solving Meeting.	Accessibility Advising Services	Within 5 business days	Stakeholders gather to brainstorm solutions

2. Collaborative Problem-Solving Meeting:

The Director of the Learning Commons and Academic Success Centre will facilitate a meeting involving relevant stakeholders.

Participants	Role in Meeting
Director, Learning Commons & Academic Success Centre (facilitator)	Guide discussions and ensure all voices are considered.
Accessibility Advising Services	Summarize issues and highlight student's needs.
Faculty (e.g., instructor or lead)	Provide insight into course requirements and practical challenges.
Academic Program Representative (e.g. , deans, associate deans, faculty coordinators)	Ensure alignment with program standards and institutional policies.
Experts (as needed)	Offer specialized knowledge (e.g., teaching strategies, assistive technologies).

Objectives of this meeting are to:

1. Clarify Barriers: Summarize the student's needs and unresolved issues.
2. Incorporate Instructor Input: Discuss the instructor's academic objectives and practical considerations.
3. Balance Accommodations with Practical Realities: Develop solutions that balance the duty to accommodate with the instructor's ability to meet academic goals within time and resource constraints, safety needs, and regulatory requirements.
4. Achieve Consensus: Finalize a reasonable accommodation plan that satisfies all parties and preserves academic integrity.
5. Assess Undue Hardship: Review concerns related to undue hardship as defined in the policy. If concerns arise, they will escalate the matter to senior administration for final determination.

Focus Area	Key Discussion Points
Student's Barriers	How do the student's needs affect their ability to engage or succeed academically?
Instructor's Objectives	What are the core learning outcomes or essential course requirements?

Practical Constraints	Are there resource, time, or workload, safety, or regulatory challenges to implementing certain accommodations? Does undue hardship apply?
Potential Solutions	What creative or alternative solutions can meet the student's needs while addressing faculty concerns?

Outcome: A written action plan summarizing:

- The agreed-upon accommodations.
- Specific implementation steps.
- Any remaining challenges and next steps.

3. *Development of Interim Accommodations*

While discussions are ongoing, faculty should continue implementing interim accommodations recommended by Accessibility Advising Services and, where applicable, directed by their respective Deans. These accommodations should be implemented as reasonably possible to minimize disruption to the student's academic progress.

Interim Accommodation Examples	Purpose
Temporary extensions for assessments	Provide immediate flexibility while a final decision is made.
Adjusted participation requirements	Allow equitable engagement without penalizing the student for barriers.
Access to additional supports	Supplement resources with tutoring, assistive technologies, or modified timelines.

4. *Escalation to the Rapid-Response Team (RRT)*

If the Collaborative Problem-Solving Meeting does not resolve the issue, the Director of the Learning Commons and Academic Success Centre will refer the matter to the Rapid-Response Team (RRT) within five (5) business days.

Rapid-Response Team Composition	Role
Director, Learning Commons and Academic Success Centre	Chair the RRT and ensure fair, inclusive decision-making.
Dean of the relevant academic program(s)	Represent program standards and provide insight into essential learning outcomes.

Dean, Centre for Teaching and Learning	Offer guidance on instructional strategies and innovative solutions.
Accessibility Advising Services	Summarize issue and highlight the student's needs.

Responsibilities of the RRT:

- Assess whether the proposed accommodations align with the duty to accommodate and practical realities.
- Explore alternative accommodations or concessions if necessary.
- Determine whether undue hardship would result from specific accommodations.

Step	Timeline	Outcome
Review case details and Collaborative Problem-Solving Meeting outcomes.	Within 5 business days	Identify unresolved issues and evaluate proposed accommodations.
Develop recommendations for interim accommodations.	Within 10 business days	Provide actionable solutions to support the student while awaiting final decisions.

Outcome:
The faculty instructor should implement the RRT's recommendations as much as reasonably possible. This is true even if and while the Executive Committee is asked to review the case and issue a final decision.

5. *Final Decision by the Executive Committee*

If the Rapid-Response Team cannot reach a resolution that's acceptable to all parties, the matter will escalate to the Executive Committee for a binding decision.

Step	Responsible Party	Timeline	Outcome
Submit RRT findings and recommendations.	Rapid-Response Team	Within 10 business days	Provide detailed context and suggested solutions to the Executive Committee.
Review case and consult as needed.	Executive Committee	Within 10 business days	Develop a binding decision that addresses all concerns.

Communicate final decision.	Executive Committee (via Director of the Learning Commons and the Academic Success Centre)	Immediately after decision	Notify student, faculty, and Accessibility Advising Services and other members of the RRT of the approved accommodations or alternative solutions.

Key Considerations

Principle	Application
Balance Duty to Accommodate and Practical Constraints	Accommodations should meet the student's needs while respecting resource limitations, safety needs, regulatory requirements, and other constraints to the point of undue hardship.
Timeliness	Clear timelines ensure minimal delays in providing support.
Transparency	All stakeholders receive written documentation of decisions and rationales.
Academic Integrity	Accommodations will preserve essential course requirements and learning outcomes.

Post-Resolution Monitoring

Action	Responsible Party	Frequency
Notify Accessibility Advising Services of problems with accommodation implementation.	Student	As needed.
Follow up on accommodation implementation.	Accessibility Advising Services	At least once within 60 days.
Adjust accommodations as needed.	Accessibility Advising Services and faculty	Ongoing, as challenges arise.
Collect feedback from students and faculty.	Accessibility Advising Services	End of each term for continuous improvement.