



PROCEDURE TYPE:	Academic
PROCEDURE TITLE:	Students with Disabilities Procedure
PROCEDURE NO.:	ACAD-009.1
RESPONSIBILITY:	OntarioLearn Policy Committee
APPROVED BY:	OntarioLearn Board of Directors
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Introduction

OntarioLearn and its member colleges are committed to providing students with an inclusive learning environment that promotes equal rights for all persons with disabilities as set out in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. OntarioLearn and its member colleges recognize that a successful inclusive learning environment is achieved as a result of shared responsibility and commitment on the part of all members. This procedure outlines the mechanism by which students and host colleges/registering colleges address academic accommodation requests for students with disabilities for courses delivered through OntarioLearn.

Definitions

Academic accommodation refers to the educational practices, systems, and support services designed to accommodate functional challenges due to a disability.

Assistive Device is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Such devices could be a wheel chair, walker, scooter, cane, magnification or specialized learning software, communication board, etc.

Disability as defined by AODA, refers to:

- 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 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.

Host college refers to the college who owns/delivers the course.

Office for Students with Disabilities/ Accessibility Services: Individual colleges use different names for their office which provides services to students with disabilities. For the purpose of this policy/procedure, the disability/accessibility centres are referred to as the “Office for Students with Disabilities/ Accessibility Services”.

Reasonable accommodations refers to accommodations which do not impose undue hardship the form of significant changes to the fundamental nature of the learning outcomes.

Registering college refers to the College where the student is registered.

Support Person – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services.

Undue hardship - as reflected in *Ontario Human Rights Code*, a college is obligated to provide accommodation up to the point of undue hardship. Undue hardship refers to the capacity limit of a college to accommodate the student. A college is not expected to provide accommodation if doing so would bring unreasonable difficulties based on cost, availability of funding or health and safety considerations.

Procedures, Roles and Responsibilities

1. Students are responsible for self-identifying any disability requiring an academic accommodation. To initiate any support services, the student must contact with the “Office for Students with Disabilities/ Accessibility Services” at their registering college.
2. If an instructor is asked by a student for accommodations and an official academic accommodation is not in place for the student, or the official documentation does not include the particular accommodation requested, the instructor will refer the student to the “Office for Students with Disabilities/ Accessibility Services” at their registering college.
3. The “Office for Students with Disabilities/ Accessibility Services” at their registering college will complete an assessment of their special needs and provide a determination of any special accommodations required for their online course.
4. Protocols for Handling Academic Accommodations between Colleges:
 - a. If the registering college “Office for Students with Disabilities/ Accessibility Services” determines that the student is eligible to receive special accommodations, the counsellor must contact the OntarioLearn (OL) Coordinator at their college who will initiate communication with the host college. The host college OL Coordinator (or designate) will contact the instructor directly and will

- provide the accommodation letter as written by the “Office for Students with Disabilities/ Accessibility Services”.
- b. Any personal information regarding an official academic accommodation request is only disclosed on a “need to know” basis where the information is required to perform the accommodation.
 - c. The host college OL Coordinator will acknowledge receipt of any special needs request.
 - d. Where appropriate, the instructor will implement the academic accommodation of students with disabilities.
5. Protocols for Handling Academic Accommodations Disputes between Colleges:
- a. The instructor should contact the OL Coordinator at the host college with any questions or concerns related to the special needs request and the host college coordinator will follow up with the registering college to investigate.
 - b. In the event the instructor disagrees with a recommended accommodation, they can request that a consultation occur with the counsellor from the registering college “Office for Students with Disabilities/ Accessibility Services”.
 - i. The instructor will be expected to demonstrate that the implementation of the accommodation is inconsistent with the achievement of the course outcomes or the avoidance of undue hardship.
 - ii. The instructor must immediately communicate their disagreement (with rationale) to their host college OL Coordinator (or designate).
 - iii. If necessary, the host college OL Coordinator will immediately initiate communication with the registering college OL Coordinator for follow up with the counsellor from the “Office for Students with Disabilities/ Accessibility Services” for consultation. If necessary, and if approved by the host college OL Coordinator, the instructor may be contacted directly.
 - c. If, after the consultation, the instructor continues to have reservations regarding the implementation of the requested accommodation, the instructor can request that the issue be escalated to the host college OL Board member for resolution. This escalation must occur within one business day of the consultation.
 - i. The host college Board member (or designate) will consider the request for accommodation (within three business days of receiving the referral), recognizing the duty to accommodate within the limitations imposed by the required achievement of outcomes and the avoidance of undue hardship.
 - ii. If the host college Board member (or designate) determines that it is not possible to fulfill the recommended accommodation, they will provide the registering college and the student with an explanation as to why the accommodation is denied.
6. OntarioLearn permits course access to designated support persons to support any official student accommodation. Such arrangements are to be communicated by the

OntarioLearn coordinator at the registering college. Account fees are billable to the registering college.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) considerations

OntarioLearn's commitment to accessibility and AODA standards has been considered in the development of this policy.

Related policies, procedures and directives

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy (ADMIN-001)

Alternate Format Policy (ACAD-010) (under development)

Alternate Format Procedure (ACAD-010.1) (under development)

Integrated Accessibility Standards (ADMIN-002)

Students with Disabilities Policy (ACAD-009)

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11](#)

[O. Reg. 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards](#)

[O. Reg. 429/07: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service](#)