



Arrangement of Services and Study Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

One of a series of fact sheets for staff

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of services and study accommodations for students with disabilities is to minimise the impact of the disability upon academic performance. It is designed to place such students on a more equal footing with non-disabled students, not to give them any additional advantage. The same academic requirements and standards should be applied to all students whether or not they have a disability.

The objective in providing services and study accommodations is simply to accommodate the functional differences that exist because of the disability, thus allowing students with disabilities to perform to their potential. This improvement in performance is a reflection of students' actual academic abilities which would have been masked by the effects of the disability had effective strategies not been put in place.

IMPLICATIONS OF DISABILITY

The implications of a disability are more significant than defining the disability itself. Defining the disability gives us a label, but looking at the implications is the first step in providing suitable accommodations to ensure that the student with a disability has equal opportunity to participate in university life, and that approaches to teaching are as inclusive as possible.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT

Once the implications of a student's disability have been identified, accommodations and support services can be made available to ensure access to information, minimise the impact of their disability and accommodate their individual needs to maximise potential success. Some support services are provided directly through the Disability Service. The school or faculty concerned also needs to be advised as to what study and assessment accommodations are required by the student.

ROLE OF THE DISABILITY SERVICE

The Disability Service assists *students with disabilities* where relevant by facilitating:

- application to faculty for study and assessment accommodations;
- access to materials;
- access to the Student Access Study Centre and specialised equipment;
- library assistance – remote service privileges; and
- a case management process that includes student, staff and community organisation representatives as necessary.

The Disability Service assists *academic staff* by providing:

- advice and resources relating to inclusive teaching and learning;
- assurance that students' study accommodations are appropriate;
- advice relating to the implementation of study accommodations; and
- a forum for case management.

ROLE OF THE ACADEMIC SCHOOL

Schools may need to provide accommodations across the areas of access to study materials, flexibility in classroom management and expectations, inclusive teaching strategies, internal assessment and practicum placements.

This can be achieved through developing a relationship with the student and by meeting the study and assessment accommodation requirements as outlined in the student's individual Learning Access Plan (LAP).

The Learning Access Plan is the written confirmation of approval for study and assessment accommodations made by the Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning within the relevant faculty. It is the student's responsibility to meet with each lecturer to discuss these requirements.

If staff have any concerns, or if issues arise, they can contact the Associate Dean or seek advice and assistance from the Disability Advisers located at Student Services.

PROCEDURES FOR ARRANGING SERVICES AND STUDY ACCOMMODATIONS

An outline of the procedure for arranging services and study and assessment accommodations follows. (This process, introduced in semester 2, 2003, is illustrated in the flow chart on the next page):

- The student makes an appointment with the Disability Adviser at Student Services to learn about services and/or study accommodations that are available.
- The student asks his/her doctor, physio, psychologist etc. to complete a Health Practitioner's Report form (available from Student Services) and takes it and any other relevant information along to the appointment.
- The Disability Adviser assists the student to identify options for reducing the impact of his/her disability on study in consultation with academic staff as required.
- The student applies for study and assessment accommodations to the Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning of the relevant faculty. (Any application for alternative examination arrangements must be made by week 12 of the semester through the Disability Service or directly with the Examinations Office).
- The student receives confirmation (Learning Access Plan), within approximately 10 working days of approved study/assessment accommodations and will then need to meet with relevant staff to discuss the implementation of these within the course.
- The Disability Adviser arranges any other required services, monitors the effectiveness of study accommodations and reviews requirements at the end of each semester.
- A copy of the student's LAP is sent to Associate Deans for dissemination to relevant heads of schools in accordance with faculty procedures.

Disability Service Procedures for Arranging Services and Study Accommodations

