

# Fleming Faculty Guide to Accessible Education Services



COUNSELLING & ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION SERVICES

**2018-19**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank our colleagues at St. Lawrence College's Counselling and AccessAbility Services for sharing their faculty guide and giving us permission to use it as a framework for our version.

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# Contents

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<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Our Mission & Purpose .....	9
Confidentiality .....	9
Who We Are.....	10
<b>About This Guide</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Understanding Disability at Fleming College</b> .....	<b>12</b>
What is the Social Model of Disability? .....	13
Demonstrating Respect Through Language.....	15
<b>Key Definitions</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Academic Accommodation .....	18
Impairments or Functional Limitations.....	19
Duty to Accommodate.....	19
BFOR Test .....	19
Undue Hardship .....	21
<b>Introduction to Different Types of Disabilities</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>The Accommodation Process</b> .....	<b>21</b>
Registering with Accessible Education Services.....	21
Letter of Accommodation Distribution .....	23
Sample LoA .....	23
The LoA Emails .....	25
Sample LoA Email .....	25
Do Accommodations Expire? .....	26
LoAs and the Faculty Role in the Duty to Accommodate .....	27
<b>Faculty Reference Sheets</b> .....	<b>28</b>

***Absences Related to Disability*.....29**

**What is it & How Does it Help? .....29**

**What Role do Faculty Play?.....29**

***Alternate Format Text*.....30**

**What is it & How Does it Help? .....30**

**What Role do Faculty Play?.....30**

***American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreter*.....31**

**What is it & How Does it Help? .....31**

**What Role do Faculty Play?.....31**

        Quick Tips ..... 32

***Assignment Due Date Extensions*.....33**

**What is it & How Does it Help? .....33**

**What Role do Faculty Play?.....35**

***Assistive Technology* .....36**

**What is it & How Does it Help? .....36**

        Alternate format textbooks ..... 37

        Anti-glare screen filter ..... 37

        CCTV (stationary and portable) ..... 37

        Electronic spell checker (no definitions)..... 37

        Enlargement software (low-vision) ..... 37

        Ergonomic setup & devices ..... 37

        FM System ..... 38

        Graphic brainstorming software (organizers, mind maps)..... 38

        JAWS software (blind) ..... 39

        Large monitor ..... 39

        Lightwriter ..... 39

        Magnifying glass ..... 39

        Reading software (text-to-speech)..... 39

        Recording devices..... 39

        Smartpen ..... 39

# Faculty Guide to AES 2018

---

Talking calculator.....	40
Talking dictionary .....	40
Talking Dictionary (for blind students) .....	40
Talking/reading pen.....	40
Time management/organization .....	40
Voice activated software (speech-to-text) .....	40
Writing software.....	40
Typewriter (for photosensitive seizure syndrome) .....	41
<b>What Role do Faculty Play?.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b><i>Attendant or Support Person .....</i></b>	<b><i>41</i></b>
<b>What is it &amp; How Does it Help? .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>What role do faculty play?.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b><i>Closed Captioning .....</i></b>	<b><i>42</i></b>
<b>What is it &amp; How Does it Help? .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>What Role do Faculty Play?.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b><i>Learning Strategy Instruction .....</i></b>	<b><i>42</i></b>
<b>What is it &amp; How Does it Help? .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>What Role do Faculty Play?.....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b><i>No More Than 1 Test Per Day .....</i></b>	<b><i>44</i></b>
<b>What is it &amp; How Does it Help? .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>What Role do Faculty Play?.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b><i>Notetaking – Computerized Note Taking .....</i></b>	<b><i>44</i></b>
<b>What is it &amp; How Does it Help? .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>What Role do Faculty Play?.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b><i>Notetaking - Note Taking Express.....</i></b>	<b><i>45</i></b>
<b>What is it &amp; How Does it Help? .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>What Role do Faculty Play?.....</b>	<b>45</b>
Issue of Concern .....	46

# Faculty Guide to AES 2018

---

Proposed Solutions .....	47
Potential Objections .....	47
Relevant Information Related to Objections .....	47
Resolution - How do we move forward? .....	48
<b>Note Taking - Recording .....</b>	<b>49</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	49
What Role do Faculty Play? .....	50
<b>Permission to Leave Class if Needed .....</b>	<b>50</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	50
What Role do Faculty Play? .....	51
<b>Reduced Course Load .....</b>	<b>51</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	51
What Role do Faculty Play? .....	52
<b>Retroactive Accommodations .....</b>	<b>52</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	52
Principles to Guide Decision-making? .....	53
Questions to Ask to Guide Decision-making .....	53
What Role do Faculty Play? .....	54
<b>Test Accommodations .....</b>	<b>55</b>
Protecting Academic Integrity .....	55
<b>Test Accommodation – Extra Time .....</b>	<b>55</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	55
What Role do Faculty Play? .....	56
<b>Test Accommodation – Supervised Breaks .....</b>	<b>57</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	57
What Role do Faculty Play? .....	57
<b>Test Accommodation – Quiet Space .....</b>	<b>58</b>

# Faculty Guide to AES 2018

---

What is it & How Does it Help? .....	58
What Role do Faculty Play?.....	58
<b>Test Accommodation – Private Room .....</b>	<b>58</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	58
What Role do Faculty Play?.....	59
<b>Test Accommodation – Reader .....</b>	<b>59</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	59
What Role do Faculty Play?.....	59
<b>Test Accommodation – Scribe .....</b>	<b>60</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	60
What Role do Faculty Play?.....	61
<b>Test Accommodation – Noise Reduction Devices.....</b>	<b>61</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	61
What Role do Faculty Play?.....	61
<b>Test Accommodation – Basic Calculator.....</b>	<b>62</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	62
What Role do Faculty Play?.....	62
<b>Test Accommodation – Music .....</b>	<b>63</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	63
What Role do Faculty Play?.....	63
<b>Test Accommodation – Memory Aids.....</b>	<b>63</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	63
What Role do Faculty Play?.....	64
<b>Test Accommodation – Ergonomic Chair.....</b>	<b>64</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	64

What Role do Faculty Play?.....	65
<b><i>Test Accommodation – ASL Interpreter.....</i></b>	<b>65</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	65
What Role do Faculty Play?.....	65
<b><i>Test Accommodation –Spelling Aids .....</i></b>	<b>66</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	66
What Role do Faculty Play?.....	66
<b><i>Test Accommodation – Computer.....</i></b>	<b>67</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	67
What Role do Faculty Play?.....	67
<b><i>Test Accommodation – Software .....</i></b>	<b>67</b>
What is it & How Does it Help? .....	67
What Role do Faculty Play?.....	68
<b><i>Tutoring.....</i></b>	<b>68</b>



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## Introduction

Greetings from the counsellors and staff of Accessible Education Services at Fleming College.

### Our Mission & Purpose

We in Accessible Education Services (AES) strive to improve the accessibility of the college environment for all students with disabilities so that they may have a positive, inclusive and equitable learning experience. We work to provide students with disabilities the academic [accommodations](#) they need to eliminate barriers and level the academic playing field. We also provide [services](#) students need to build skills, develop learning strategies and resources to help make the most of college. We provide these accommodations and services to mitigate the functional limitations experienced by students with disabilities. We are firmly rooted in our commitment to respecting the student's dignity, integrity and, their right to make their own choices with respect to the accommodations and services they choose to use.

Our work is grounded in the legal framework enshrined under [The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms \(1982\)](#), [The Ontario Human Rights Code \(Revised 1990\)](#), and [The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(2005\)](#), particularly as it applies to our students.

An important principle guiding our work, that is often misunderstood, is that providing accommodations to students with disabilities is done to ensure **access** not success. Accommodations are not intended to provide an advantage – they are intended to remove a barrier/disadvantage experienced by the student or as we commonly say, to level the playing field.

### Confidentiality

As college employees we are all bound by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. In Counselling & AES we are also bound by additional privacy legislation (*Personal Health and Freedom of Information Act* or PHIPA) as well as the codes of ethics of our regulatory colleges.

AES counsellors and staff respect the privacy of our students and the confidentiality of the personal, educational, and health information entrusted to them. In order to protect this privacy, it is our practice to limit disclosure of personal information to that which is minimally necessary for the delivery of services/accommodations of the student, or that which is required by law or public safety. Faculty should never ask students for disability-related information such as their diagnosis. Some students may choose to disclose this information voluntarily.

If you as a faculty member have been given personal information about a student by the student or their AES counsellor, it is because the student has provided consent, believes the information is

important for their academic accommodations, and trusts you to also keep this information absolutely confidential. That is, it cannot be discussed with anyone without the student's written consent. This policy is governed by Ontario's Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Respect for students' privacy and compliance with privacy legislation does not necessarily present a barrier to open communication between a student's AES counsellor and their teachers. Faculty are welcome to discuss a student anonymously with an AES counsellor, asking such questions as, "If you had a student who..., what would you do?" It is also possible to request that the student provide written permission to allow communication between the counsellor and teacher or to arrange for a meeting with the student and their AES counsellor.

If you wish to learn more about relevant information and privacy acts, please check out the links below:

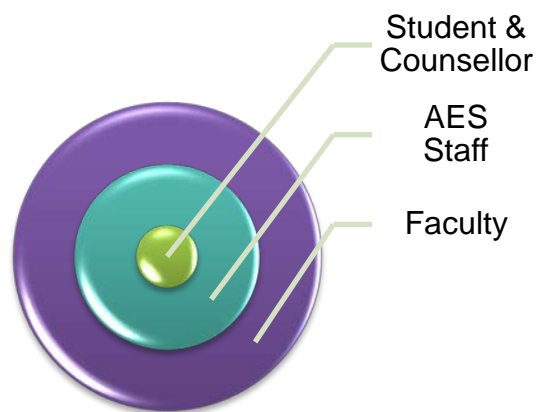
[Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(FIPPA\)](#)

[Personal Health Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(PHIPA\)](#)

[Personal Information and Protection of Documents Act \(PIPEDA\)](#)

## Who We Are

Leadership to our department is provided by our Director, Red Keating. We have five AES or accessibility counsellors. At Frost, Melissa McQuaid and Tim Piper are the AES counsellors, but Tim is only there 2 days per week. At Sutherland, the AES counsellors are Anita Arnold, Audrey Healy, Reta Wright and Tim Piper who is there 3 days per week. Audrey is also the coordinator of AES. Reta is the AES counsellor for students at the Cobourg campus. And Melissa is the AES counsellor for students at the Haliburton campus. We are in the process of determining whether Reta, Tim, Audrey or Anita will provide services to Norwood students.



Our learning strategy team is comprised of our learning strategist, Laura Gibson, who is located at Sutherland but goes to Frost on Wednesdays and provides learning strategy support to students at Cobourg and Haliburton as needed. Our learning strategy advisors are Michael Fleming and Claire Cruikshank at Sutherland and Jane Meadows at Frost.

Our assistive technology team is Joanne Mastrella and Kim Gunn. Both are located at Sutherland but Joanne goes to Frost on Wednesdays.

Kristi McKay is the AES Facilitator at Sutherland. She is responsible for accommodated testing, note taking accommodations, and ASL interpreting services. Kathleen Conway is the AES Facilitator at Frost. She has the same duties as Kristi plus she organizes the peer tutoring service. At the Sutherland campus peer tutoring is a separate department from AES and Angie Premate is the primary contact.

### Quick Facts

- ✓ *Annually we provide services to about 1000 students with documented disabilities.*
- ✓ *Our services are free, confidential and voluntary.*
- ✓ *We provide service to online, in-person, full-time and part-time students.*
- ✓ *We provide accommodations and services whether the disability is permanent or temporary.*
- ✓ *The most common type of disability among students registered with AES is learning disabilities, followed by mental health.*
- ✓ *Our AES counsellors are located at Sutherland and Frost but we cover the Cobourg, Norwood and Haliburton campuses too.*



### About This Guide

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We have created this Faculty Guide for you in order to provide general guidelines about the legal and ethical responsibilities of the college to accommodate students with disabilities, and practical information for faculty on how we implement accommodations to students with dignity and respect. Additionally, this Guide was developed to help new faculty understand their role in the accommodation process. Finally, we have developed this guide to provide greater detail on some of the more complex accommodations and the need for faculty and AES to work in partnership to deliver them effectively.

We hope this Faculty Guide will be a useful source of information about accommodating students with disabilities, that it will encourage dialogue with AES counsellors and staff, and that it will enhance your knowledge and confidence in creating inclusive learning environments for all our students.



We would appreciate any feedback you have about this document. Please send any comments and/or suggestions about this handbook to [disabilities@flemingcollege.ca](mailto:disabilities@flemingcollege.ca).

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## Understanding Disability at Fleming College

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A disability is an impairment that results in substantial limitations in one or more aspects of daily life. There are many types of disabilities and they can affect a person's vision, hearing, learning, attention, movement, mental health, physical health, memory, intellectual capacity, communication abilities and social relationships. At Fleming, the most common types of disabilities experienced by students are learning disabilities and mental health disabilities.

At Fleming, we use the Ontario Human Rights Commission [definition of disability](#) to ensure we comply with the law. However, our commitment to our students, employees and others who interact with the college, means that we go beyond just complying with the law.

The United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which has been ratified by Canada, recognizes the [social model of disability](#) (retrieved July 3, 2018). The social model of disability is important not only because it has been adopted internationally and thus represents progress in the area of rights for persons with disabilities, but also because it was developed by individuals with disabilities and because it puts greater pressure on societies (and communities like Fleming) to remove barriers to inclusion faced by individuals with disabilities.

## What is the Social Model of Disability?

Historically, the medical model of disability has been the dominant model guiding government policy, legislation, and service provision. The **Medical Model** takes the perspective that there is such a thing as a “normal body” and when someone deviates from normal, it should be fixed by a medical professional. Disability is seen as a negative thing to be fixed. The Ontario Human Rights Code definition of disability falls into the medical model. The **Social Model** situates the disability in the environment. This includes policies, structures and systems. The social model recognizes that we are all different in some way, so our focus should not be on fixing people with differences. The focus should be on how we create our environment in ways that are disabling and changing that.

A contemporary view of disability acknowledges a person has an impairment or medical condition, but that it is disabling barriers within society – negative attitudes, inaccessible buildings and environments, inaccessible communications and information – which prevent people with disabilities from being treated equally and from fully participating in all aspects of community life.

*“The social model sees ‘disability’ is the result of the interaction between people living with impairments and an environment filled with physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers. It therefore carries the implication that the physical, attitudinal, communication and social environment must change to enable people living with impairments to participate in society on an equal basis with others.”* (<http://pwd.org.au/resources/social-model-of-disability/>, retrieved July 4, 2017).

The social model makes a clear distinction between an impairment and a disability. An impairment is a condition that leads to a disability while a disability is the outcome that arises when a person with an impairment is affected by the physical, attitudinal, communication and/or social barriers in their environment.

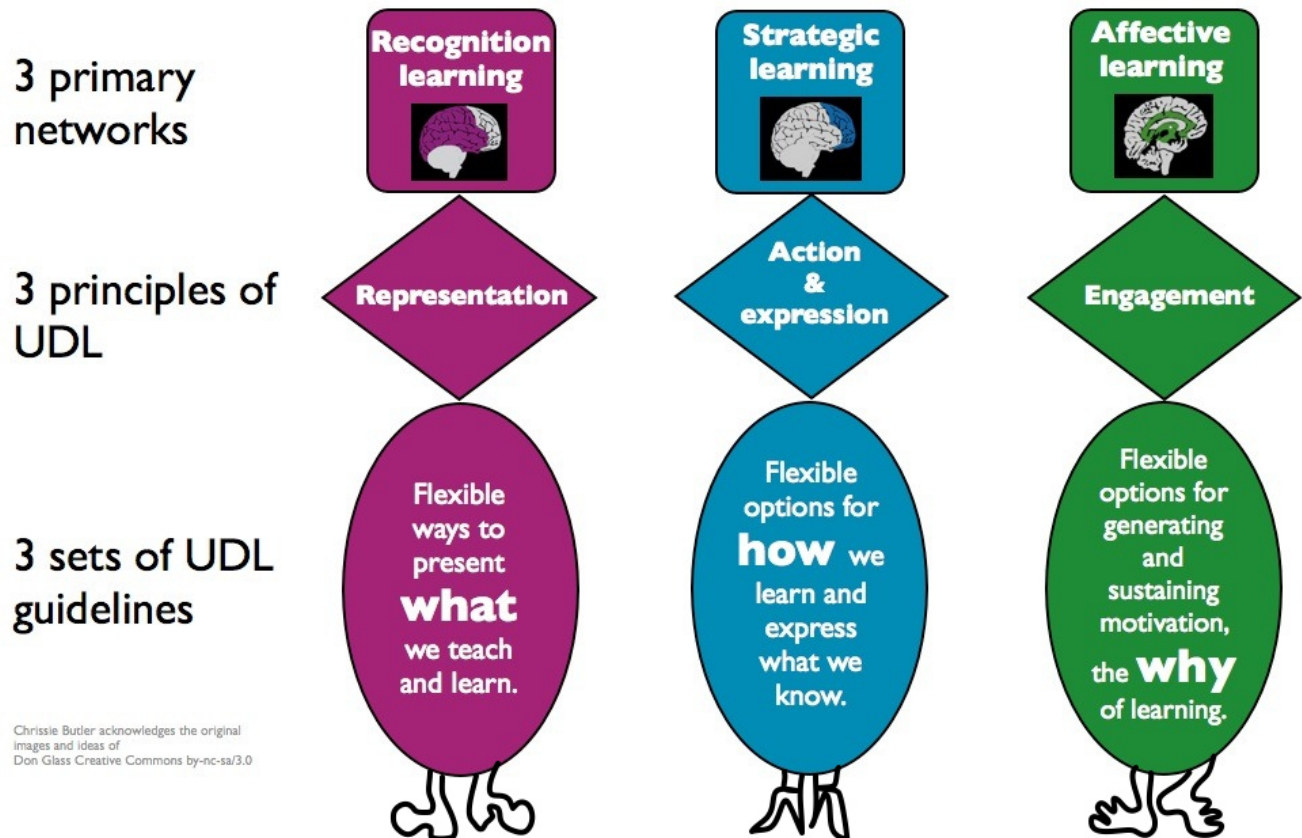
### **Fleming Example**

*Theo, a student with a learning disability, has an **impairment** that affects his learning from written text. The **barrier** he encounters in his classes is course materials that are text-based. The interaction between his impairment and his learning environment causes a disabling condition.*

*When we remove the barrier of text-based learning materials by providing him with a screen reader and electronic versions of all the text-based material in the course, he is able to participate to his full potential in the class just like his peers.*

When you view disabilities from the social model, it becomes clear that our efforts to create inclusive learning and working environments at Fleming, requires us to focus on removing barriers and designing curricula that are accessible from the start. The latter is done through [Universal Design for Learning](#). The goal here is to allow persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others.

## Universal Design for Learning



## Introduction to Different Types of Disabilities

We report annually to the ministry on the numbers of students with disabilities that we have provided services to. Here are the stats from the past 4 years. They are listed in order of most to least common:

Disability Category	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Learning Disability	467	456	467	447
Mental Health	165	196	236	273
ADHD	108	119	118	123
Chronic Illness/Medical	56	66	45	50
Autism Spectrum Disorder	29	35	40	25
Acquired Brain Injury	24	25	22	24
Deaf/hard of hearing	17	17	12	17
Mobility Impairment	13	8	14	12
Blind/vision impaired	6	2	6	3
<b>College Total</b>	<b>902</b>	<b>984</b>	<b>1008</b>	<b>1013</b>
<b>College Enrollment*</b>	<b>5822</b>	<b>5741</b>	<b>5673</b>	<b>6176</b>

\*College enrollment includes international and other “non-funded” students

Learning disabilities have been the most prevalent type of disability amongst our students since we have been keeping statistics. They consistently constitute about half of our students with disabilities. In the 2016-17, they made up 46% of all students accessing accommodations. However, the numbers have been relatively stable over the past several years.

In contrast, the numbers of students with mental health disabilities have been growing quickly. From 2014-15 to 2015-16 we saw a 19% increase. The following year we saw another 20% increase. Then in 2017-18 we saw a 16% increase over the previous year. The biggest increase we saw in this population was in 2009-10 to 2010-2011 where the increase was 74%. That year was anomalous because we also saw 63% increase in students with medical disabilities, 71% increase in students with ADHD and 32% in students with LDs.

Therefore the percentage of Fleming students who registered with AES as students with disabilities has grown from 15.5% in 2014-15 to 17.1% in 2015-16 and 17.8% in 2016-17. If it feels like there are more students with disabilities in your classes, that’s because there are, in terms of actual numbers of students and proportion of the student population.

There are resources available to help students with disabilities transition to post-secondary education. To gain insight into the academic challenges faced by students with a mental health concern, please visit the [Canadian Mental Health Association's \(CMHA\) \*Your Education, Your Future\*](#)

For students with disabilities, **transitioning to college** often involves more preparation and planning than experienced by their peers without disabilities. The Regional Assessment & Resource Centre (RARC) at Queen's University has created a [Transition Resource Guide](#) for students transitioning to post-secondary.

### Demonstrating Respect Through Language

Sometimes we get frustrated and confused by changing terminology. We may give up and dismiss it as “political correctness”. However, our choice of language impacts the way students with disabilities feel and are perceived within the Fleming community. As such, it is important that we all reflect on the meaning behind the words we use when talking to, referring to, or working with, students with disabilities.

Disrespectful language can make students feel hurt or excluded. How we write and speak about students with disabilities can profoundly affect the way they are viewed by their professors, their peers and themselves. Some words degrade and diminish people with disabilities or perpetuate inaccurate stereotypes.

As an educator, you choose your language carefully all the time so as to communicate to your students in the most effective way possible, to facilitate the learning of the terms, concepts and key constructs in your subject matter. So, it's not a giant leap to choosing your language about disabilities in a similarly careful way.

Unfortunately, many of us have unconsciously adopted language regarding disabilities that tends to be derogatory, degrading or discriminatory. For example, we may not even be aware that when we use phrases like, “she suffers from depression” or “he is a cripple” we are perpetuating stereotypes about disability. This type of language communicates that people with disabilities live lives that are inherently to be pitied, or that they wish to be ‘normal’.

Reality contradicts these outdated stereotypes. People with disabilities are people first, with diverse talents, characters, dreams, fears, and personalities. Students with disabilities are students first with the right to fully participate in the Fleming community. We have become accustomed to the fact that people should not be referred to in racially or sexually derogatory terms. We also need to ensure that we never refer to people with disabilities in ways that categorise their lives in a simplistic, one-dimensional manner. People with disabilities want respect and acceptance and we can all encourage this by being conscious of the language we use and committing to using respectful language.



## People First Language

- ✓ When at all possible, avoid describing students based on their disability. If necessary to refer to a student's disability, refer to the person as someone **with** or **having** a disability, disorder or medical condition.
- ✓ Rather than describing a student as '**epileptic**', refer to them as **having epilepsy**.
- ✓ Say "person with a disability" rather than "disabled person." Say "people with disabilities" rather than "the disabled."



Euphemisms like *physically challenged*, *special needs*, and *differently abled* imply that there is something distasteful about speaking openly about disabilities.

A wheelchair is a mobility device which allows users to get around physically and more fully participate in society, so terms like *confined to a wheelchair* or *wheelchair bound* are inaccurate as well as demeaning to wheelchair users.

When talking about places with accommodations for people with disability, using terms like *disabled parking* or *handicapped entrance* weirdly implies that the place is disabled. Accurate and respectful terms are *accessible* x such as an *accessible parking space*.

It's 2018 – this is the least you should do regarding language

- ✓ Use the term *disability*.
- ✓ Take the following terms out of your vocabulary when talking about or to people with disability: *handicapped*, *differently-abled*, *cripple*, *crippled*, *victim*, *retarded*, *stricken*, *special needs*, *suffers from*, and *afflicted with*.
- ✓ Ask people you are talking with what term they prefer if they have a disability.

Just because someone has a disability, it doesn't mean they are *courageous*, *brave*, *special* or *heroic*. People with disabilities are the same as everyone else. It is not unusual or unique for

someone with disability to have talents, skills and abilities so it is patronizing to characterize these as something extraordinary.

Avoid overly dramatic characterizations of people which imply they are to be pitied for living with such a ‘*tragedy*’ or that they *suffer from*, are *afflicted with* or are a *victim* of disability. The reality is that for many people with disability, it is just a fact of life and not something to be pitied.

When talking about people without disabilities, it is okay to say “people without disabilities.” But do not refer to them as “*normal*” or “*healthy*.” These terms can make people with disabilities feel as though there is something wrong with them and that they are “*abnormal*.”

When in doubt, call a person with a disability by his/her name.

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## Key Definitions

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### Academic Accommodation

An academic accommodation is an individualized adjustment to how a student with a disability will access or participate in a course or program. The goal of providing academic accommodations is to establish an even playing field for all students. As faculty incorporate the principles of Universal Design for Learning, the playing field for all students will begin to be leveled.

### Quick Facts

- ✓ *Reasonable academic accommodations must be linked to functional limitations.*
- ✓ *Academic accommodations don't alter the learning outcomes.*
- ✓ *Academic accommodations do not compromise academic integrity.*



Student with accommodation will learn the same content, take the same tests, participate in the same classes, they just might do it in a slightly different way. For example, the student might learn the content through an ASL interpreter, use extra time to complete their tests, or complete their

program with a reduced course load. Academic accommodations are individualized to the student's specific needs and the program requirements.

Accommodation is a shared responsibility of the college and the student. At Fleming the responsibility for developing specific accommodation plans for (and with) our students with disabilities is assigned to the AES counsellors.

## Impairments or Functional Limitations

These are the specific, identified areas of challenge, caused by a disability that may affect academic performance and are used to identify appropriate accommodations. For example, a student with a mental health disability may have a functional limitation regarding attention. Having note taking accommodations would be an appropriate accommodation. The teacher providing all students with access to their notes would be a Universal Design for Learning approach that would mitigate the impact of this functional limitation and may eliminate the need for accommodation for some students.

There are many kinds and degrees of functional limitations or impairments related to a disability. For example, being hard of hearing is different from being Deaf and having low vision is different from being blind. So we try to avoid making assumptions about a student's abilities based on their disability or diagnosis. Every person with a disability is unique, and accommodations and strategies must be determined on an individual basis.

## Duty to Accommodate

Human rights legislation states that we have a duty to accommodate students with disabilities. But what does that actually mean in practical terms at Fleming? We provide students with accommodations in a way that respects their dignity. This includes ensuring the student is a participant in decisions made about their accommodations. Each case is unique and students' needs must be assessed individually.

### **BFOR Test**

BFOR stands for Bona Fide Occupational Requirement. This is the test set out by the Supreme Court of Canada in the Meiorin (B.C. Firefighter) case to determine whether the duty to accommodate has been met. In *Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate* (2000), the Ontario Human Rights Commission describes this as follows:

*"If prima facie discrimination is found to exist, the person responsible for accommodation must establish on a balance of probabilities that the standard, factor, requirement or rule was adopted for a purpose or goal that is rationally connected to the function being performed, was adopted in good faith, in the belief that it is necessary for the fulfillment of the purpose or goal, and is reasonably*

*necessary to accomplish its purpose or goal, in the sense that it is impossible to accommodate the claimant without undue hardship.” (p. 17)*

Let's unpack this to see how it applies to Fleming. Essentially, we are allowed to discriminate against a person with a disability by not accommodating the student if, and only if:

- ▶ the requirement (which would be meeting a specific learning outcome) being asked of the student is essential
- ▶ the requirement is rationally connected to the student's program of study
- ▶ the requirement was adopted in the belief that it is necessary for the completion of the diploma or certificate
- ▶ there is no way to accommodate the student short of undue hardship (this is a key concept we will discuss below).

We can use an example of timed tests to see how this plays out in reality.

### **1. Is a timed test essential?**

Yes → go to Question 2

No → find an appropriate accommodation or waive the requirement (the timed aspect, not the whole test)

### **2. Is the timed test rationally connected to the diploma/certificate?**

Yes → go to Question 3

No → find an appropriate accommodation or waive the requirement (the timed aspect, not the whole test)

### **3. Is the timed test necessary for the completion of the diploma/certificate?**

Yes → go to Question 4

No → find an appropriate accommodation or waive the requirement (the timed aspect, not the whole test)

### **4. Is there a way to accommodate the student short of undue hardship?**

Yes → find an appropriate accommodation or waive the requirement (the timed aspect, not the whole test)

No → now it is ok to discriminate – however, the test for undue hardship is even more demanding, so don't be quick to jump to this conclusion.

Examples of Bona Fide Occupational Requirements relevant at Fleming:

- ▶ Rate of administering compressions in CPR

- ▶ Use of vision to drive a car
- ▶ Passing a fitness test to become a firefighter

Our duty is to provide accommodations to the point of “undue hardship” and so it is important that we also define this term.

### Undue Hardship

The Ontario Human Rights Code requires the college to accommodate students with disabilities to the point of *undue hardship*. In the test for undue hardship, three considerations apply:

- i. The cost of providing the accommodation;
- ii. The availability of outside sources of funding, if any; and
- iii. Health and safety requirements, if applicable.

The onus of proof to demonstrate undue hardship is the responsibility of the college and not the student requesting accommodation. Inconvenience, faculty and student morale, third party preferences, and collective agreements are not relevant in the test of undue hardship.

*“More than mere negligible effort is required to satisfy the duty to accommodate. The use of the term “undue” infers that some hardship is acceptable; it is only “undue hardship” that satisfies this test. The extent to which the discriminator must go to accommodate is limited by the words “reasonable” and “short of undue hardship”. These are not independent criteria but are alternate ways of expressing the same concept. What constitutes reasonable measures is a question of fact and will vary with the circumstances of the case.*

*Supreme Court of Canada in Central Okanagan School District No. 23 v. Renaud (1992) 95 D.L.R. 4th, 577 p. 585*

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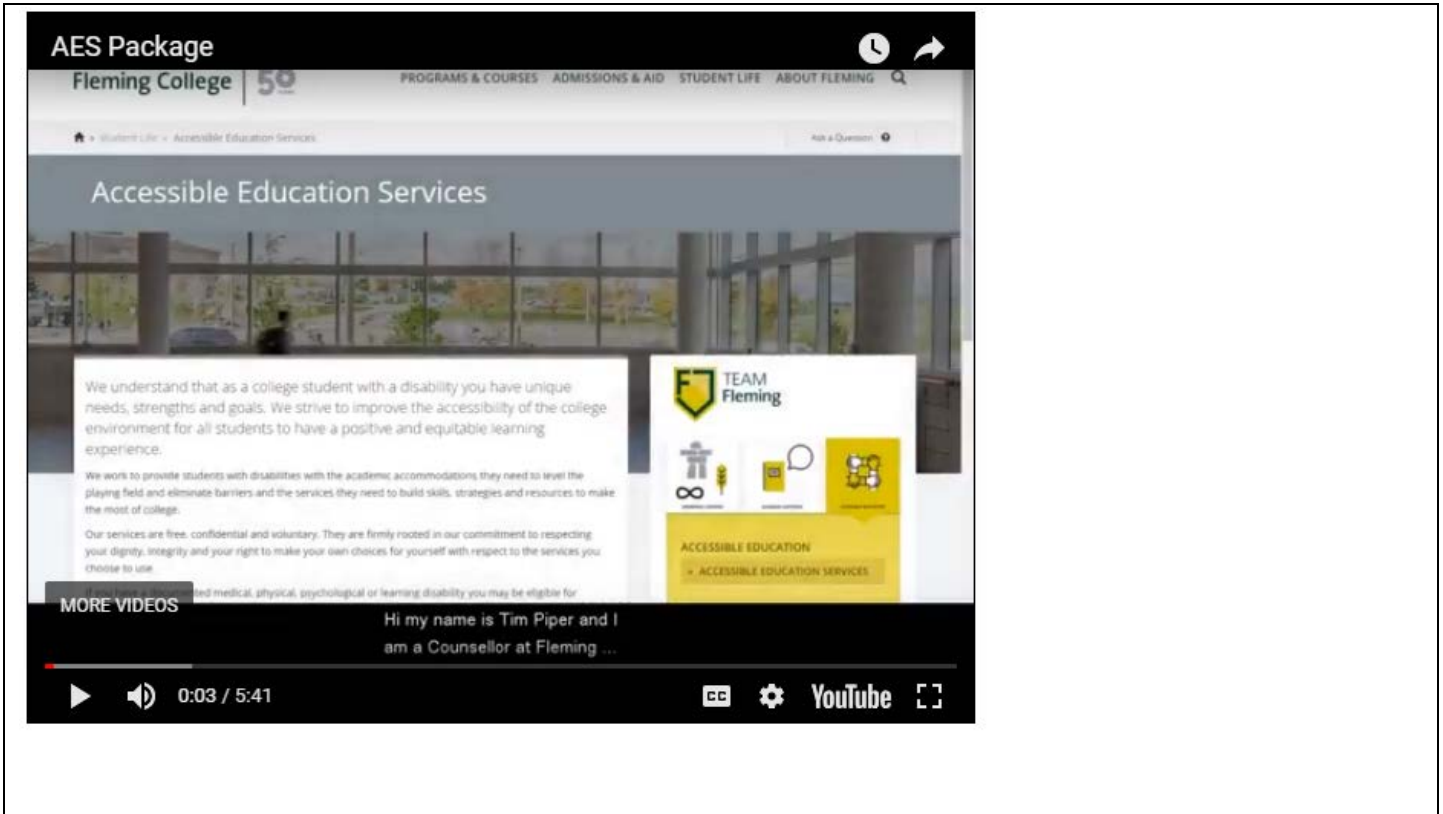
## The Accommodation Process

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### Registering with Accessible Education Services

Students are required to register with Accessible Education Services to let us know they are interested in accommodations. Registering with AES includes the student sending their disability documentation to the AES counsellors. The [AES website](#) helps students understand what specific documentation is required, depending on what type of disability they have.

Did you know we have a [Youtube channel](#)? We have created a few videos for students including this one on registering with AES and what will be covered in the accommodation appointment.



Once we have the documentation, we will call to schedule an appointment with a counsellor. We encourage students to book their appointment as early as possible.

The second step in registering with AES is the accommodation meeting with an AES counsellor. Before the appointment, the counsellor reads all the documentation sent. Then at the appointment, the counsellor and student discuss:

- ▶ documentation, if there is a need for additional or updated documentation, and if so, how to go about getting it;
- ▶ accommodations and services that the student has used in the past;
- ▶ any worries, concerns or questions the student may have;
- ▶ the demands of the student's new courses;
- ▶ any possible aspects of the courses which may be a barrier to the student based on their functional limitations;
- ▶ what accommodations we can offer to eliminate those barriers.

Together, the student and counsellor agree on the accommodations and services the student will be using and the counsellor creates an accommodation plan which lists all of the accommodations and services agreed on.

If students disclose a disability to you and they are not yet registered with AES, please encourage them to contact us as soon as possible.

One of the principles we operate under in Counselling & AES is respect for the autonomy of the student. This means we don't make decisions for students with disabilities. As a result, students with disabilities sometimes choose not to register with AES. Sometimes they choose to register with us but then choose not to actually use their accommodations. They are free to change their minds at any point about any accommodation. So ideally we set up accommodations for students before or at the start of their first semester, but some students will choose to access their accommodations later in the semester or even after an unsuccessful first semester.

Faculty might sometimes think that a student does not need the level of accommodation that is being provided, but AES counsellors typically have additional information about the student's disability that faculty do not have access to. However, if you have any concerns, you should discuss them with the student's AES counsellor.

## Letter of Accommodation Distribution

A Letter of Accommodation (LOA) is the individualized summary of the academic accommodations and services agreed upon by a student with a disability and their AES counsellor. The student and counsellor make the decision as to which accommodations and services will be used based on the student's individual learning needs, the demands of their courses, the accommodations that have worked for the student in the past and the disability documentation provided. After the accommodations and services are agreed to, the counsellor will create the student's LOA.

## Sample LoA

Below is an LoA for fictional student Jane Zebra. Please note that this is based on the 2017/18 LoA template and it may be adjusted slightly for 2018/19.



COUNSELLING & ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION SERVICES

**Fleming College**

LEARN | BELONG | BECOME

## Letter of Accommodation

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You are receiving this letter to let you know that your student, Jane Zebra (33333333), has registered with Accessible Education Services as a student with a disability. Jane met with me (Audrey Healy, Accessible Education Services (AES) counsellor), and together we considered

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August 23, 2018

Jane's strengths and talents; the challenges their disability presents; the accommodations used previously; relevant disability documentation and recommendations from the health care professional who diagnosed the disability (or who is most familiar with it); and the academic demands Jane can expect to encounter in their college program. We used all of this as the basis for determining what accommodations and services Jane will be using this semester. They are as follows:

### **Accommodations & Services**

#### **Test/Quizzes/In Class Assignments Accommodations**

- Extra Time for ALL courses: 1.5
- Quiet Space

#### **Assistive Technology**

- Reading Software (text to speech)
- Graphic/Brainstorming Software (organizers, mind maps)
- Voice Activated Software (speech to text)
- Recording Devices

#### **Learning Strategies Instruction**

- LSA for Learning Strategies

#### **Tutoring (all students have access to 2 hours of tutoring per week)**

- is critical
- 1 extra hour per week (on top of the regular 2 hours)

#### **Notetaking**

- Notetaking Express

#### **Other Accommodations**

- Reduced Courseload
- Other Accommodation: permission to record classes

These accommodations are in place until December 28, 2018

Neither the student nor myself are experts in the student's college program and courses so it is possible that some of these accommodations may not end up being necessary (for example, if teachers provide all students with copies of lecture notes in advance of class, a peer note taker would not be a required accommodation). The more teachers incorporate Universal Design of Learning principles into the design of their course curriculum, the less a student with a disability will need to access disability accommodations. However, if Jane does encounter a barrier because of



the way your course is designed they will discuss their concerns with you and if needed, we can all meet together to try to find an appropriate accommodation.

If you would like more information on accommodations, services, documentation requirements, there are a lot of resources on the Accessible Educations Services webpage on the internal college website.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns,

Audrey Healy [audrey.healy@flemingcollege.ca](mailto:audrey.healy@flemingcollege.ca)

### **A Note About Extra Time Accommodations for Tests**

Accommodations are put in place for students with disabilities to remove a barrier(s) they experience in the curriculum. When the curriculum is designed with the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) many of those barriers that students experience are not present. As a result, using UDL principles in test and curriculum design usually means students with disabilities need fewer accommodations to demonstrate their understanding of the material.

Have you used Universal Design Principles in the development of your tests by building in extra time for all students to complete? For example, you have designed the test to be completed in 60 minutes by most students but are giving all students 2 hours to complete the test. In this example a student would not require the accommodation of extra time as it is already built into the test. The student would not have to complete the Test Request form and would not have to write the test in Testing Centre. They would instead write the test in their regular classroom as you have designed the test with Universal Design

This document is available in alternate format upon request.

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### **The LoA Emails**

On September 10<sup>th</sup>, January 10<sup>th</sup>, and May 10<sup>th</sup> we send a batch email to all faculty who have students with LoAs in any of their classes. If a student meets with their AES counsellor after the batch emails have gone out, within 48 hours of the appointment, the faculty on the student's timetable will receive an email letting them know that they have a student with an LoA.

### **Sample LoA Email**

Below is an LoA email to fictional professor Mary Teacher.

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**From:** [disabilities@flemingcollege.ca](mailto:disabilities@flemingcollege.ca) [disabilities@flemingcollege.ca]  
**Sent:** 10 May 2018 23:00  
**To:** Mary Teacher  
**Subject:** Letter of Accommodation for One or More of Your Students

Hello Mary

I am sending you this email to let you know that one or more students in the following courses have met with a counsellor to set up academic accommodations for the current semester.

- BUSN 22 C01 – Management of Small Businesses
- BUSN 22 S01 - Management of Small Businesses

You can view your student's Letter of Accommodation (LoA) on the [Accessible Education Online Services](#) website, using your regular Fleming login and password. The link will take you to a list of students with LoAs in all your classes, not sorted by course. If you want to view accommodated students by course, just click on the "Courses" tab.

Each Letter of Accommodation indicates the student's AES counsellor. If you have any specific questions about a student, please contact the identified counsellor. For general questions about AES and Letters of Accommodation, please contact Audrey Healy, coordinator of Accessible Education Services at [disabilities@flemingcollege.ca](mailto:disabilities@flemingcollege.ca)

If you have access to the LoA of any student not in your section/course, please respect their privacy and refrain from opening their LoA.

**Please note**, some users of Safari web browser are unable to access the site. Try using a different browser, such as Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome.

Audrey Healy, B.A., M.Ed., C.C.C.

Counsellor, Coordinator of Accessible Education Services

[disabilities@flemingcollege.ca](mailto:disabilities@flemingcollege.ca)

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There are a small number of students who choose to distribute their LoAs to their teachers themselves. They may do it by email or hard copy.

LoAs are generally provided to all of their professors each semester, but some students choose to use their accommodations in only some courses.

Students are encouraged, but not required, to make an appointment with each teacher to discuss their accommodations and any individual needs regarding their accommodations (for example, recording classes).

Students are entitled to use any and all accommodations listed on their LoA, but they are not required to. For example, a student might have "record lectures" as an accommodation, but they choose not to in some classes because the teacher provides all students with notes in D2L.

## Do Accommodations Expire?

Letters of Accommodation have expiry dates printed at the end of the list of accommodations. Expiration dates are generally the end of the student's first semester (or the first semester they are accessing accommodations in the case of students who don't register with AES in their first

semester). After the first semester of accommodations, the student and counsellor will meet to review what is working and what isn't. Once this is settled, the counsellor will update the expiry date to the student's expected graduation date.

### LoAs and the Faculty Role in the Duty to Accommodate

The LoA lists all of the accommodations a student with a disability has access to. We have heard from many faculty who have been confused by the LoAs, thinking that they were responsible for the accommodations listed. In fact, most accommodations are delivered by AES staff and faculty don't actually have any responsibility for them. In the next section we will look at common and less common accommodations and we will describe what role faculty play in each.



The primary role faculty have in the accommodation process is ensuring that the learning outcomes for their course are not compromised by the accommodation. If you think (even if you aren't sure) that one or more of a student's accommodations will compromise one or more of the learning outcomes, you should contact the student's counsellor as soon as possible. It is not appropriate to simply deny the accommodation since the college has a duty to accommodate.

If there is a conflict between an approved accommodation and a learning outcome, the teacher, counsellor, and student need to work together to find a suitable alternate accommodation or, in rare circumstances, conclude that accommodation is not possible.

The next half of this guide focuses on the accommodations we provide at Fleming. For each accommodation described, we include an explanation of the faculty role associated with that accommodation.

# Faculty Reference Sheets

## Absences Related to Disability

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

As an accommodation, this means that a student is not penalized for absences. If a test or assignment due date falls on a day the student is absent, this accommodation allows them to negotiate with the professor an alternate date to write the test or submit the assignment.

Some students with medical, including mental health, disabilities may be absent for scheduled medical appointments (in some cases, they are seeing a specialist and don't have the flexibility to schedule appointments at times that work best for them). They may also

experience absences because of unplanned flare-ups if their condition. Because this is related to their disability, this accommodation prevents them from experiencing academic penalties for their absences. However, they are still responsible for learning all course material, whether they are present or not.

Students and their faculty should follow the [Class Absence Operating Procedure for Sanctioned Absences](#).

### What Role do Faculty Play?

As delineated in the Operating Procedure:

- ▶ For sanctioned absences, the professor will provide reasonable opportunity for the student to make up missed work
- ▶ Students are ultimately responsible for meeting with the professor and completing assigned materials
- ▶ The professor will determine if assignments, quizzes and exams need to be completed prior to, or after, the missed class(es)
- ▶ For unique in-class learning experiences the professor may design substitute assignments if feasible
- ▶ Should no alternate opportunity exist for a particular assignment, quiz or exam, the professor may re-weight course deliverables at their discretion providing that the learning outcomes of the course will be met



## Alternate Format Text

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

Some students will need all print materials available to them in digital format. Kim Gunn, one of the assistive technologists in AES, provides students with a copy of their textbooks in alternate format.

Students who are blind, students with reading-based learning disabilities and students with mobility impairments affecting their ability to hold a book or turning pages, need to use computer software (text-to-speech) to read aloud to them.

Students getting their textbooks in alternate format first purchase their textbooks like any other student. Then they meet with Kim and provide a copy of their receipt (to avoid any copyright challenges). If Kim has the book in digital format, she can give it to the student right then. If not, she has a series of steps she must go through to obtain a digital copy from the publisher. If that fails, her last resort is to take the student's textbook, remove the spine, scan it, convert it to a format the student can use, and have the textbook re-bound by Duplicating.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

It's important that all of your course materials are available to all students in accessible digital format. There is support available to faculty working on making their course materials conversion-ready, through the [Accessibility Facilitator](#), the [Learning Design & Support Team](#) and [Lynda.com](#)

The less frequently you change textbooks, the easier it is for AES to provide your students with alternate format textbooks. When you have no choice, or it is pedagogically the best choice, here are some suggestions that will make providing students with alternate format versions of your textbook as seamless as possible:

- ▶ Make your textbook selections as soon as possible to allow time for processing alternate format requests.
- ▶ Pick Canadian publishers or publishers that provide accessible formats to schools.
- ▶ Email our assistive technologist at [alttext@flamingcollege.ca](mailto:alttext@flamingcollege.ca) with the book information and she can let you know if she will be able to get an accessible format.
- ▶ Provide Kim with a desk copy that she can scan in. She can return the rebound book to you or give it to Tutoring & Academic Skills when she is done.

If you would like to learn more about different formats of alternate format, LD Online has an excellent [article](#). It speaks of children, but everything they are talking about applies to anyone with this accommodation need.

## American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreter

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

Students who are Deaf or hard of hearing often require classroom accommodations so they can understand and learn the material presented. Some individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing use sign language to communicate with others rather than writing, lip reading, or using a sound amplification device.

American Sign Language (ASL) is a visual language that uses signs made by moving the hands combined with facial expressions and postures of the body. ASL is quite distinct from English but it does contain all the fundamental features of a language—it has its own rules for pronunciation, word order, and complex grammar.

An ASL interpreter is a trained professional who facilitates communication between Deaf and hearing individuals. They do so by conveying all auditory and signed information so that both individuals may fully interact.

The ASL interpreter is bound by a code of ethics. Interpreters are required to maintain the integrity of the message, always conveying the content and spirit of the speaker. The interpreter's role is to facilitate communication and therefore they don't add or delete any information at any time. Because of the specific nature of the interpreter's role, it is important not to ask the interpreter for his/her opinion or to perform any tasks other than interpreting.

Students who are Deaf or hard of hearing should contact AES to set up an appointment with a counsellor four to six weeks prior to the beginning of courses. Counsellors will make every effort to provide the students with a qualified interpreter.



### What Role do Faculty Play?

Interpreters need a 10 minute break every hour, so if your class is longer than 1 hour, please ensure breaks are provided to the class regularly. For classes or meetings longer than two hours in duration, two interpreters may be employed if needed.

Interpreters should arrive at least 15 minutes before each class to ensure that seating is arranged, the computer equipment works, and that Deaf and hard of hearing student(s) have access to all class announcements, discussions, activities, etc.

Interpreters will need to meet with you to ensure they have the resources they need. Interpreters must endeavour to collect materials, books, and handouts. It is the interpreters' responsibility to request this information, and to pick up and familiarize themselves with the materials provided. AES will provide textbooks and other materials if requested by the interpreter and so you might be asked for assistance with this.

The interpreter will also need to check with you regarding jargon and terminology used in your course. If there is confusion, the interpreter and student may request a meeting with you to clear things up.

Effective use of interpreting services requires an accurate understanding of the interpreter's role and responsibilities as well as your own role and responsibilities as professor when an interpreter is present in your classroom.

### Quick Tips

***The Interpreter's Role.*** The interpreter is there to facilitate communication for both the student and you. They shouldn't be asked to run errands, proctor exams or, participate in the class in any way independent of the student or express personal opinions.

***Closed Captioned Videos.*** If you are showing a video as part of a class, please ensure that it is closed captioned. Captioned videos allow students direct visual access to the content.

***The Interpreter's Location.*** The interpreter and student will decide where the interpreter should be located in the classroom to maximally benefit the student while minimally distracting other class members. Your role is to avoid getting in the way of the lines of sight between the interpreter and student. The interpreter will always try to place themselves so the student can see you and any visual aids.

***Classroom Arrangement.*** For interactive situations, chairs arranged in circles or horseshoes work best for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

***Share Lecture Content.*** When the interpreter is familiar with the subject matter, they are better able to interpret your lectures. Whenever possible, meet with the interpreter to share outlines, texts, technical vocabulary, and any other information that you feel will help them.

***Speak Directly to the Student, not the Interpreter.*** The interpreter is there to facilitate communication for both the student and you, not to be a part of the discussion. The interpreter may occasionally request clarification from you and/or the student to ensure accuracy of the information conveyed.

***Technical Words.*** It's helpful to have technical terms or discipline-specific jargon to be spelled or written out (on the blackboard, projector, a handout, or some other visual aid).



**Speak at a Reasonable Pace.** Interpreters usually interpret with a time lag of one or two sentences after the speaker. This allows them to first process the information and then relay it. If you speak naturally at a modest pace, the interpreter will be able to keep pace with you.

**Use "I" and "You" References.** The interpreter relays your exact words. So you should use "I" and "You" when communicating using the aid of an ASL interpreter. Referring to the student in the third person ("ask him" or "tell him I said") will cause confusion.

**Communicate in Turn.** It is important that only one person speak or sign at a time. The interpreting process only allows one person to communicate at a time. Therefore, encourage all students in your class to wait before speaking until you recognize them.

**Allow Ample Time for Reading.** Students who use ASL interpreters cannot read and watch the interpreter at the same time. Avoid talking while students are focused on written work or PowerPoint presentations.

**Allow Ample Time for Questions.** During class discussions or when you take questions from students, give the student using an interpreter the opportunity to raise their hand, be recognized, and ask questions through the interpreter. Making time for questions allows the interpreter to finish interpreting for the current speaker and enables the student who is Deaf or hard of hearing to participate in class.

**Incorporate Strategic Lecture Breaks.** It is critical that you include breaks in your class so that both the student and the interpreter can get a rest. For the student, receiving information visually without breaks can be tiring and cause eye fatigue. For the interpreter, relaying information to the student while simultaneously processing new information from you can create mental and physical strain. For classes longer than 50 minutes, a 10-minute mid-class break is essential.

**Expectations.** Although many students with disabilities need accommodations, your roll as the professor is to hold all your students to the same standard as defined in the course learning outcomes. It is not appropriate to have a special grading scale or other criteria for them or to alter or water-down your curricula for students with disabilities.

**Guided Notes in D2L.** Providing students with guided notes that they can access through D2L prior to class assists all of them with focusing on the appropriate material. It will help them to learn more effectively in the classroom as well as take better notes.

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## Assignment Due Date Extensions

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

This accommodation is appropriate for students who have a documented disability that may result in episodic flare-ups of their condition. If the flare-ups are severe enough, and happen around the time of an assignment due date, the extension accommodation is probably appropriate.

This is **not** an appropriate accommodation for prolonged absences. In such cases we rely on the [Class Absence Operating Procedure](#).

### ***Shouldn't the student just get better at managing their time?***

Students have access to learning strategy support if they need help developing their time management skills but this accommodation is still appropriate because the student cannot anticipate whether or when their condition may flare up. Even with the best time management plan in place, it may sometimes be necessary to arrange a deadline extension. Conversely, even with the worst time management skills, a student who experiences incapacitating flare-ups of a medical condition should not be prevented from receiving an accommodation.

## **KEY PRINCIPLE**

It's an important point worth repeating: accommodations are human rights that the college has a legal duty to provide. They are not favours to be granted to students who are trying hard and denied to students who aren't so diligent.



### ***How much notice does the student have to provide the professor if an extension is required?***

This varies. The student should notify their professor as soon as they are aware that the extension is needed. Sometimes this may be a few days in advance of the due date and in rare cases it may be on the due date itself. The principle to be followed is the student must notify their teacher(s) as soon as the student realises they cannot meet a due date as a result of an exacerbation of their condition.

### ***How should a student request an extension?***

Usually by phone or email but if you have requested another method (such as D2L), the student should follow your instructions.

### ***What should the student include in the email?***

- Their name, student number, course name and section
- A reminder that assignment extensions are one of their approved accommodations
- The name and due date of the assignment

- A request for an extension that includes the proposed extension due date and a plan for submission (for example, offering to submit what has been completed so far). Sometimes the student is not able yet to propose an alternative extension due date. They may be uncertain exactly when they will be well enough to get back to working on it. If that is the case, the student should provide you with an explanation that their present health status is too uncertain to specify a new due date but a promise to re-connect as soon as the flare up has subsided enough that a new due date can then be proposed.

### ***How long should the extension be?***

A few days to a week would be typical but it depends on the duration of the flare up. It is possible that on the day the student notifies you of the need for an extension the student is unable to determine what extension date they should request. For example, if they know they need 2 more days to complete the assignment but they don't know how long the flare up will last, it may be hard for them to specify an extension date.

## **What Role do Faculty Play?**

### ***How does a teacher find out a student has this accommodation?***

It will be included along with all their other accommodations in the Letter of Accommodation. Teachers receive emails letting them know when one or more of their student has an Letter of Accommodation.

### ***What if a course policy is late assignments won't be accepted?***

If it's a course policy because there is a bona fide course learning outcome requiring meeting deadlines, then the conflict between the student's need for accommodation vs the standards for the course need to be resolved through a meeting with you, the student and, their AES counsellor.

If the policy is in place for other reasons, not related to learning outcomes, the policy may need to be waived so that the student's disability needs are accommodated. If you have questions or concerns about this, you should speak with the student's counsellor. Please contact the counsellor when you read the student's LoA so this can be resolved before the student actually needs it for an assignment.



### ***What should a professor do when they receive a request for an assignment extension?***

If you are unsure, you can review the student's Letter of Accommodation to confirm this is an approved accommodation. If this is an approved accommodation, you should consider the student's request for an extension in good faith, that the student is making an honest request for an extension based on their disability.

If you have any concerns about the due date extension proposed by the student (for example, it seems like an excessive amount of time beyond the original due date or it falls after the date you expect to return graded assignments to the rest of the class), you may suggest alternative due dates along with the reason why you are not accepting the date proposed by the student.

### ***What happens if the student requests a second extension on the same assignment?***

It may be that the student is still figuring out how long some academic tasks take. No one arrives at college with perfect study skills. Or it may be that the student underestimated the duration of the flare-up. A second extension shouldn't be approved or denied without careful consideration of what happened. It may be symptomatic of a larger problem that should be discussed with the AES counsellor or it may simply be a one-off miscalculation.

### ***What happens if the student requests an extension for every assignment?***

This is a red flag. If a student is unable to meet any deadlines, this is not an appropriate accommodation. Extensions are appropriate to accommodate occasional flare-ups of a medical condition. Any student who finds themselves unable to attend regularly, or in need of extensions for all assignments, should schedule an appointment with their AES counsellor to discuss the situation and look for alternative accommodation options. Any faculty who is being asked by a student to grant extensions on every assignment, should email the student and their counsellor to ask for a meeting to resolve this.

### ***What happens if the student needs an extension for a group project?***

The student should follow the same process as with independent assignments but the teacher and student will need to determine what should be communicated to the other students in the group. It will be up to the teacher to determine how to ensure the group project isn't disadvantaged by granting the extension.

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## Assistive Technology

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

Assistive technology (AT) refers to software or device and equipment that helps students with disabilities work around their functional limitations in order to learn or communicate their learning more easily, efficiently or effectively. Software that reads aloud text from a computer is AT. So is a laptop in the classroom if it allows a student with handwriting issues take notes in lectures. AT can help students with disabilities develop confidence in their learning abilities and belief that they can be successful in school. It can help them to become more independent.

Many students used AT in elementary school then abandoned it in high school. The reasons for this are varied but what we hear most often is:

- ▶ concern regarding stigma for having to use AT for activities others do easily;

- ▶ lack of support from an assistive technologist to help them understand how they can use their software to make learning easier;
- ▶ it's easy enough to pass without much effort.

The learning environment is quite different at college and so we do encourage students who can benefit from AT to use it and to stick with it. We have 2 full-time assistive technologists to teach students how and when to use the AT that is recommended for them.

While we are covering software in this section, it is important to note that our assistive technologists are familiar with a wide variety of comparable apps that students may use on their phones or tablets if they prefer. However, for tests, we require students to use our software.

### Alternate format textbooks

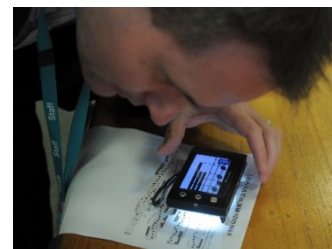
We can provide students with a copy of their textbooks in an alternate format. Some students need it in a digital format so that it can be read by [Texthelp](#) or [JAWS](#) software. Students are required to purchase their texts like any other student and we are then able to give them a free second copy in the format that works for them.

### Anti-glare screen filter

We have anti-glare screen filters available for students to borrow. These can reduce headaches for some students or make reading the screen more comfortable for them.

### CCTV (stationary and portable)

The CCTV is a device that can help people with low vision read by allowing a wider field of print at a time, making reading longer passages such as articles more continuous and easier.



### Electronic spell checker (no definitions)

They are used for students doing paper-based tests that need spellcheck.

### Enlargement software (low-vision)

This [software](#) is to help visually impaired students by magnifying what is on the screen and echoing what the student types or clicks.

### Ergonomic setup & devices

We can install an ergonomic workstation in any classroom or lab. Students may have a need for an ergonomic chair, microscope at wheelchair level, alternative keyboard in a computer lab.

We have the following devices available to students to borrow if they have a need for ergonomically correct equipment.

### **Alternative mouse**

We have alternative mice available for students to borrow. We have a variety available so we can help the student find one that works ergonomically for them.

### **Alternative keyboard**

We have alternative keyboards available for students to borrow. We have a variety available so we can help the student find one that works ergonomically for them.

### **Copy holder**

We have copy holders available for students to borrow. These are used for students who may have physical impairments or a need to maintain good ergonomics when they complete their course work.

### **Deluxe slant**

We have slant boards available for students to borrow. These allow students to rest their reading material or paper for writing, in an ergonomically sound position thereby minimizing fatigue and strain on eyes, neck and back.

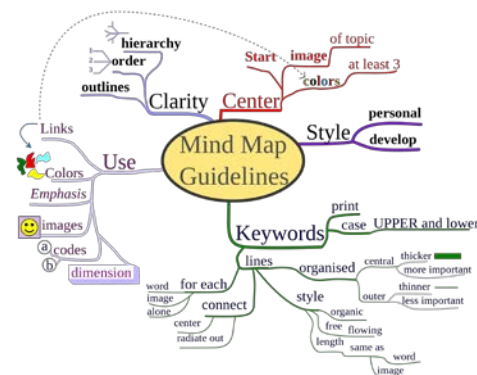
### **Palm/mouse rest**

We have palm/mouse rests available for students to borrow. These allow the student to rest their wrist on a soft surface rather than a hard desktop when they are working on a computer.

## **FM System**

We have FM systems that students may borrow. An FM system is a two-part device that includes a microphone and a receiver. The teacher talks into the mic and the student hears the teacher via the receiver. If the student uses hearing aids, their FM system will be one designed to work with hearing aids. Students who don't use hearing aids use the FM system with ear buds.

## **Graphic brainstorming software (organizers, mind maps)**



At Fleming we use [Inspiration](#) software. This software allows students to create flowcharts, mind maps and other visual aids to support their learning. Students who have weaker verbal comprehension abilities or strong visual memory abilities will often find that converting text based material into pictures, charts and other visually-based depictions much easier for them to learn and remember during a test.

### JAWS software (blind)

This [software](#) is screen reading software developed to meet the needs of blind people.

### Large monitor

We have large monitors available for student use in our quiet lab (Room C0111). If needed, we can set up a large monitor in a classroom for students use. These are typically used by students with vision impairments.

### Lightwriter

We have Lightwriters available for students to borrow. These devices allow a person who cannot speak to type what they want to say on the Lightwriter keyboard. This is then displayed on one screen facing the writer and the other screen facing the person to whom the writer wishes to communicate. A speech synthesizer will read the message aloud.



### Magnifying glass

We have magnifying glasses available for students to borrow. These are low tech tools to help students with low vision read print or view images.

### Reading software (text-to-speech)

The software we use at Fleming is [Texthelp Read & Write Gold](#). It is used as text-to-speech, meaning it reads text aloud, as well as writing software. It has better spellcheck features than Microsoft. Many students find it easier to edit their written work if they can hear it read aloud to them and TextHelp does this.

### Recording devices

We have digital recorders that students may borrow if they need to record classes for note taking purposes.



### Smartpen

The [Livescribe](#) pens are used by students to take notes and record lectures. The recording is synchronized with the notes so students can listen to parts of the class that they didn't understand or didn't capture well in their notes. There are many additional online features that make note taking easier and more easily aligned with students' learning preferences or strength areas.

### Talking calculator

We have talking calculators for students to borrow. These calculators announce each button that is pushed and the answer.

### Talking dictionary

We have [talking dictionaries](#) available for students to borrow. These handheld devices allow students to type in an unfamiliar word and then hear it read aloud. If they still don't know the word, they can access the definition.

### Talking Dictionary (for blind students)

We have [talking dictionaries](#) available for students to borrow. These handheld devices allow students to type in an unfamiliar word and then hear it read aloud as well as the definition. The device will announce each letter as it is typed.

### Talking/reading pen

We have talking/reading pens available for students to borrow. These handheld devices scan text then read it aloud. Its most frequently used to hear unfamiliar words. Definitions of the word are also read if the student doesn't recognize it when they hear it.



### Time management/organization

We don't have any software to assist with time management. However, given almost all students carry a smartphone daily, we work with them to learn apps that can help them with time management and/or organizational challenges they face.

### Voice activated software (speech-to-text)

We use [Dragon Naturally Speaking](#) at Fleming which is a program that allows the user to speak into a mic and it types what is being said. It has good accuracy out of the box, but our assistive technologists work with students to train the software to recognize how they pronounce words and thus increase its accuracy. They also teach the students how to use Dragon most effectively given their courses and writing requirements.

### Writing software

We use [Texthelp](#) for this. Students with writing impairments may benefit from its word prediction, advanced spellcheck and advanced grammar check features. Many students find it easier to edit their written work if they can hear it read aloud to them and TextHelp does this.



### Typewriter (for photosensitive seizure syndrome)

If a student must avoid screens, we do have a typewriter in our quiet lab (room C0111) they can use while on campus.

## What Role do Faculty Play?

For the most part faculty aren't required to do anything except respect the student's right to use their assistive technology. If the student has an ergonomic set up in your classroom, it may be necessary to remind other students that this workstation is reserved for the student who needs it. If the student is using an FM system, they will ask you to wear the mic at the start of the class and will need you to return it to them at the end of class.

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## Attendant or Support Person

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

An attendant is someone hired by the student to assist them with daily living activities. A support person may or may not be paid but they are present to assist the student with activities they cannot do themselves due to their impairments.

The attendant or support person makes it possible for the student to attend class. Without this support, the student would experience barriers they may not be able to overcome on their own.

The student is completely responsible for hiring, scheduling and directing the work of their attendant or support person.

### What role do faculty play?

The attendant or support person will not be on your class list, so please ensure there is adequate seating for them.

Discuss with the student what needs the attendant/support person may have, such as seating preferences, copies of handouts or other course materials that you provide in class. It is very important that you review any health and safety issues if they are attending a lab.

Remember to speak directly to the student, not through their attendant.

The attendant/support person's focus will be on the student, so they will not be participating in any class activities.

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## Closed Captioning

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

This is text on the screen conveying what is being spoken or communicated by sound in a video.

Students who are Deaf/deafened/hard-of-hearing rely on this to access video content. It also assists students with some learning disabilities, some students with ADHD and many students who are English Language Learners.

Select the closed-caption icon. 

### What Role do Faculty Play?

Even if you don't have a student in your class who has closed-captioning as an accommodation, it is a good idea to always enable it if you show videos in class so that anyone who can benefit from it will.

You should ensure that you are not using any videos that are not captioned or that are captioned poorly. Some online services do an inadequate job of captioning, so review the video captioning for accuracy and completeness before using it in class.

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## Learning Strategy Instruction

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

Developing the skills and strategies needed for learning in college is important for every student. The college learning environment can be fast paced, include multiple assignments, larger class sizes, and emphasize independent learning.

Learning strategies are the ways that an individual understands, approaches, monitors and develops their own learning. Learning strategy development provides an individualized program to help students develop their learning strategies.

Students with a disability may need enhanced support to develop and apply their learning strategies for college. This is especially true of students with neuro-diverse disabilities. Such students may have learning disabilities, mild intellectual disabilities, ADHD or autism spectrum disorders that result in their brains working in different and often highly creative ways but that may not fit easily with how our curriculum is delivered.



In learning strategies, we help students to:

- ▶ Understand more about how they learn and how to use that understanding at college
- ▶ Improve their self-advocacy
- ▶ Integrate technology into their learning
- ▶ Practice strategies for learning course content
- ▶ Develop strategies for being an overall effective learner

We have found the following directives from the [Ethics Statement](#) of the Learning Specialists Association of Canada to be helpful in guiding the work we do:

- ▶ Use students' strengths to guide the learning process and to help students' strengthen areas of difficulty through customized learning strategy instruction.
- ▶ Encourage students to become metacognitive, reflective, and life-long learners.
- ▶ Develop an awareness of resources to support students in the best way we can, referring students to services and supports as required.

Learning strategies are a service rather than an accommodation so we have decided to stop including Learning Strategies on students' Letters of Accommodation. Counsellors will still be recommending students access this service because there is research supporting the value learning strategies instruction plays in the academic success of students with learning disabilities.

### **What Role do Faculty Play?**

Faculty may want to refer students in their classes who are struggling with some critical academic skills like studying, time management, or textbook reading (among many others) to schedule a learning strategies appointment. This is done the same way students book tutoring appointments. More information about this is available on the [Tutoring & Academic Skills](#) webpage.

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## No More Than 1 Test Per Day

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

This accommodation involves rescheduling tests so that the student is not writing more than one per day.

Some students are impacted by fatigue more acutely than others and the stress of tests can be overwhelming. As such some students experience negative impacts to their health if they try to complete more than one test in a day.

The student will negotiate with the faculty involved to determine which test should be rescheduled to another day and what day and time it should be rescheduled for.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

Faculty are essential in this accommodation. You know if you have multiple or alternate versions of the test which can make rescheduling easier. You know if you are delivering the test in other sections of the course that the student could easily join. But it is equally important that you negotiate with the student and other faculty impacted with the shared goal of providing the student with test conditions that are fair and equitable.

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## Notetaking – Computerized Note Taking

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### What is it & How Does it Help?



These are near verbatim notes of class content.

Computerized notes are used by some Deaf or hearing impaired students who do not access class content aurally. Having access to a written record of what was covered in class allows these students to create their own notes or process the material in a way that works best for them.

Our AES facilitators are notified which students require this accommodation. They coordinate the students' schedules with the computerized note takers'

schedules to ensure all courses are covered. Computerized note takers are able to type sufficiently fast that they capture almost word-for-word everything covered in class.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

The computerized note taker is an AES staff member, not one of your students and therefore, it is important that there is adequate seating. The computerized note taker will make contact with you to ensure they have whatever resources they may need (for example, access to PowerPoint slides).

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## Notetaking - Note Taking Express

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

In a nutshell, Note Taking Express (NTE) is a service whereby a student records their classes and then downloads it to NTE. A person hired by NTE listens to the recording and types notes for the student. Within 48 hours the NTE note taker saves the notes in the student's NTE account.

There are details from the [NTE website](#) for anyone looking for more information.

Students who have physical challenges that prevent them from taking notes and students with ADHD who have trouble paying attention for a whole lecture and students with some learning disabilities who have to listen with great effort to process auditory information, all benefit from having someone else take notes of their classes.

AES works with NTE to set up accounts for students with this accommodation. Students upload their audio files to NTE and NTE downloads the notes to the student's account.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

Faculty are asked to allow students to record their classes. Students with this accommodation are provided an agreement form, to be signed by the student and professor, which specifies that it is an accommodation and that the student is not to share their recording or their notes with other students or on social media.



COUNSELLING & ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION SERVICES

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## Audio and/or Video/Photo Recording Agreement

In compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA)* and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, the following establishes the conditions under which a student may use audio and/or video recording during learning activities.

I \_\_\_\_\_, agree to use (check below as applicable):

- Audio
- Video
- Both Audio and Video/Photo

recordings from this class \_\_\_\_\_ taught by Professor

\_\_\_\_\_ solely for the purposes of learning the materials presented. I

will not share the audio and/or video recording or transcriptions of learning activities with other students or post on social media and will destroy at the end of the semester. I will turn off my recording device any time a classmate is sharing personal information.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Each party is to retain a copy of this form.*

*This form is available in alternate format upon request.*

Last updated January 19, 2018

### Issue of Concern

AES has experienced trouble recruiting and retaining peer note takers which means the college is not meeting its duty to accommodate. This puts students with note taking accommodation needs at

August 23, 2018

risk for failing or achieving lower marks. It is our responsibility to remove barriers that prevent students with disabilities from equal access to their courses.



### Proposed Solutions

- ▶ Faculty provide notes in D2L (preferably before class)
- ▶ Collaborative note taking
- ▶ Students record classes to make their own notes
- ▶ Students record classes to send to Note Taking Express (NTE)



### Potential Objections

- ▶ Faculty already provide notes
- ▶ Lectures are the intellectual property of the professor, not the student or NTE
- ▶ Students disclose personal matters in class that they don't want recorded
- ▶ Competing human rights



### Relevant Information Related to Objections

#### ***Lectures and Copyright***

In order to qualify for Copyright, a work must be both original and be “fixed” in some way. Lectures given based on prepared notes/slides would be deemed to meet the fixation requirement and be eligible for Copyright protection. Lectures given without the use of notes/slides would then not be covered by copyright.

Under Policy 2-215 of the Board of Governors and under Article 13 of the Academic CA, the College claims full ownership of all “works made in the course of employment” as defined under 13(3) of the Copyright Act. This would then include lectures given by Faculty in the classroom.

#### ***Note Taking Express (NTE)***

According to NTE's info recordings are uploaded by registered users (students) and then streamed through end-to-end encryption to their note takers to protect the material from theft, interception

and loss. Because it is streamed it is not saved on the computer of the note taker, preventing copies from being made. Audio files are saved on the student accounts for 1 year after the upload. NTE does not assert rights in the materials created.

### ***Guest Speakers***

Presentations in the classroom by guest speakers generally do not fall under “works made in the course of employment”. Explicit permission to record the session for the purpose of note taking would need to be received from the speaker prior to recording.

### ***Personal Information Disclosed***

The possibility exists in the context of the college classroom that questions/discussions of a personal nature may be shared during a lecture, by students, to highlight a key concept being covered or in asking for clarification on a point in the lecture. The classroom is seen as a “safe space” for such sharing to occur. Recording such information may inadvertently result in infringing another student’s right to privacy. Therefore, students with this accommodation are required to turn off their recording device whenever a classmate is sharing personal information in class.

### ***Traditional Knowledge Rights***

With the inclusion of indigenous perspectives across curriculum, the possibility exists as well that recording of some related lectures could infringe on the rights of indigenous knowledge holders. While some traditional knowledge, especially that which is transferred orally, may not meet the requirements for protection under copyright. Traditional knowledge also does not fall under work product and therefore cannot be owned by the college.



## **Resolution - How do we move forward?**

Counsellors will continue to explain to students that if a teacher provides the class with notes in D2L, then there is no accommodation needed for notes in that class (there are some exceptions to this based on the functional limitations of the student).

Counsellors will continue to approve “permission to record classes” accommodations.

Counsellors will continue to explain to students with this accommodation that they need to discuss the accommodation with their professors before they start recording any classes.

Students will continue to need their faculty to sign their recording agreement forms.

Faculty who have concerns about students recording their classes can:

- provide the class with comprehensive notes in D2L ahead of the class
- Record the classes themselves and post to D2L



- Facilitate [collaborative note taking](#)
- Request a meeting with the student and counsellor to find a reasonable accommodation.

If faculty object to being recorded on human rights grounds, they will need to state this and request the Human Rights Officer engage the competing human rights resolution process.



### UDL Ideas

One solution is for **faculty to record their own classes** and save them on D2L. That way all students in the class have access to the recording to make their notes. This would also help students using NTE because the quality of the recording would be better and if they were absent for a class, they would still be able to send an audio file to NTE to get notes.

Another solution is to support **collaborative note taking**. This is where one student organizes other students in the class to share their notes in a google doc and then students can use their collaborative efforts to create their own notes. The student who organizes the collaborative note taking is eligible to obtain Co-Curricular Record credit.

Faculty could also **post their own, comprehensive notes to D2L**. These would not just be a few bullet points on a few Powerpoint slides. Rather they would contain enough information that students could use them effectively to study for your tests. They would not be so dense and information laden that they rival the textbook in terms of volume of content. They should be a comprehensive summary of the material covered in class.

These UDL approaches benefit not only the students who have disabilities that require note taking accommodations but also the student who is home sick with the flu; the single mother who has to stay home because her kids have a snow day at school; the international student who is still developing his English language skills and would get more from your lecture if he could listen to it again, more slowly; the student who didn't get enough sleep last night and zoned out a bit during class and needs to review the 10 minutes where you talked about a critical idea.

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## Note Taking - Recording

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

Students with ADHD who have trouble paying attention for a whole lecture and students with some learning disabilities who have to listen with great effort to process auditory information, may choose

to create their own notes rather than use NTE. So, their note taking accommodation would be “permission to record classes”.

Students opting for this accommodation over NTE feel that notes they create for themselves are more helpful study aids than notes created for them by someone else. However, they still have impairments that prevent them from being able to listen and take notes simultaneously in class, so being able to listen to the recording later and take notes at their own pace, helps with their learning and ability to recall the content.

Students use whichever device works best for them, recording the class, except when other students are sharing personal information. Students may take photos of material you write on the white or blackboard. If it's a lab, some students may make video recordings of you demonstrating proper techniques.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

Faculty are asked to allow students to record their classes. Students with this accommodation are provided an agreement form, to be signed by the student and professor, which specifies that it is an accommodation and that the student is not to share their recording or their notes with other students or on social media.

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## Permission to Leave Class if Needed

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

In a college, with adult students, everyone is free to come and go as they please without asking others' permission. However, there are some students who need this accommodation so that their professors know that when they leave class it is because of their disability.

Students may have mental health conditions whereby they may experience unmanageable levels of stress/distress at times and in order to return to manageable levels they need to go to a comforting place, engage in a relaxing activity, or simply get away from where they are. For some students just knowing they have this accommodation is enough and they may never exercise it.

Some students have pain management concerns and may need to leave the classroom to relieve the pain they are experiencing.

The student simply leaves class. They should sit somewhere that is the least disruptive to you and other students if they do have to leave. They may return to class after a few minutes or they may not return till the next class.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

If the student contacts you afterward to find out what they missed, it is helpful if you either share with them notes from your lecture, guide them to the section of the textbook or other resource that covers the material you talked about, or provide some other alternate method for them to catch up on what they missed. Some students may not contact you because they are working with a study group or got the notes from a classmate. It's important to allow the student to take responsibility for determining who they want help from, but if it's you they reach out to, it's best to remember that they didn't leave the class because they found you boring and you should not take it personally when they leave the class.

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## Reduced Course Load

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

A reduced course load is an academic accommodation that reduces the number of courses a student takes in a semester. For example, a program might have 8 courses in one semester and a student on a reduced course load may take 4 courses per semester instead. It doesn't change the learning outcomes or program requirements. It is a different path to the same diploma.

College programs can move quickly and have many courses in a single semester. For some students, this design makes learning the material, keeping up in class, and juggling assignments incredibly difficult. For example, many students with learning disabilities have to put in twice as much effort as their non-disabled peers in order to achieve the same results. However, they all have the same 24 hours in their day, so some students will need to take fewer courses in order to have the time they need to do the work to a satisfactory level.

Some students have medical conditions that limit their energy. They become fatigued quicker than other students, or they experience an exacerbation of their symptoms if they push themselves too hard. For them a reduced course load is the only way they can complete their courses and maintain their health.

Students request this accommodation through their AES counsellor. This may be at the first accommodation appointment or later in the semester. There is no deadline by which the student needs to make this decision but if it's left till the end of the semester (after the withdrawal deadline), they may end up failing some courses.



### What Role do Faculty Play?

Most faculty don't have a role in this accommodation other than to respect that the student is not necessarily in all the same courses as the rest of your class. It is best not to refer to material covered in other classes.

Program coordinators however do have a key role to play in this accommodation. The student's counsellor will fill in an Educational Plan template and email it to the student's coordinator. The coordinator then needs to discuss with the student the best path to graduation and then to map out what courses the student will take each semester until they graduate. The completed Educational Plan is then sent to the student's AES counsellor and the staff in Records who create individualized time tables for students following Educational Plans. These are Marg McGee at Sutherland and Stacy Goheen at Frost.

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## Retroactive Accommodations

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

A retroactive accommodation is one that is provided after a scheduled evaluation such as a test or assignment has occurred. Retroactive accommodations are most commonly used by students with mental health disabilities but they may be appropriate for students with other disabilities.

A retroactive accommodation is needed when the student experiences a sudden flare-up of their condition and as a result are unable to meet their academic demands. Their condition impacts their functioning to a degree that they aren't able to follow normal practices for accessing accommodations (for example, submitting a Test Request for test accommodations in time or due to their circumstance they were unable to inform their faculty or counsellor of their condition and required absence from school.)

If the student knows their condition can worsen at times so much that it could interfere with their studies, they should discuss this in their accommodation appointment. The AES counsellor will include "may be absent for medical reasons" on the student's Letter of Accommodation which outlines all of the accommodations the student will be using.

However, in many cases it is not possible to know in advance that retroactive accommodations will be needed later on. If that happens, students are encouraged, once they are well enough, to meet with their counsellor to discuss the missed tests and assignments. The counsellor will communicate with the student's teachers to discuss the possibility of retroactively accommodating the missed evaluations. The decision to grant a retroactive request will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the faculty in consultation with Counselling Services, as required. Opportunities for students to make up missed work will be consistent with the Class Absence Operating Procedure.

The goal is to ensure an equalized opportunity for the student with a disability. In order to achieve that goal, counsellors consider a number of principles before recommending to a student and their professors that a retroactive accommodation is appropriate.

### Principles to Guide Decision-making?

- ▶ **equity** and **inclusion**
- ▶ **academic integrity** or **bona fide academic requirements**
- ▶ **individualized** accommodation
- ▶ **duty to accommodate.**
- ▶ student is an **equal partner** in the accommodation process and must participate in any decisions made about them
- ▶ act in **good faith** and assume that the student is as well
- ▶ accommodations must be **reasonable** - effective and respectful of the student's dignity but not necessarily the most expensive or most elaborate
- ▶ adopt a **social model of disability** and recognize that the presence of a condition does not, in itself, require accommodation, it is the impairments in required tasks which do
- ▶ The goal of accommodations is **not** to ensure success; it is to **equalize opportunity**
- ▶ **Timely** - if delays are unavoidable, temporary solutions are put in place

### Questions to Ask to Guide Decision-making

Counsellors also consider a number of specific questions before recommending to a student and their professors that a retroactive accommodation is appropriate. For some of these questions, the counsellor will need to consult with the program coordinator or faculty teaching the course impacted by the retroactive accommodation request.

**The Accommodation Request:** What is the retroactive accommodation being requested and are there different alternatives/options to meet the student's needs? What does the student want to leave with? Is the student's accommodation request reasonable and feasible?

**Equalizing Opportunity & Barrier Removal:** Does the retroactive accommodation provide an equalizing opportunity for the student? Does it address a barrier? What is the barrier and who owns it?

**Temporary Solutions:** Should you put in place interim accommodations while the request for retroactive accommodations is being considered?

**Learning Outcomes:** Are the course requirements or is the academic integrity compromised by providing a retroactive accommodation?

**Resource Availability:** Are there any issues with availability of resources (for example labs, equipment, qualified faculty)?

**Curriculum Changes:** Has the curriculum changed? Change of learning outcomes or skill set (for example, outdated technology); significant changes to the course learning outcomes?

**Health & Safety Issues:** Are there health and safety considerations related to the accommodation request (for example, paramedic needing extra time to perform CPR)?

**Regulatory Bodies:** Are there any regulatory body (such as the College of Nurses of Ontario) rules or restrictions that may be relevant? Have licensing requirements changed? How do we align the retroactive accommodation with accreditation or regulatory requirements?

**Policies:** Are there relevant college/program policies (for example, rules requiring students graduate within x number of years from start to end of program) that need to be considered? Are there policies creating systemic barriers? Which policies and what aspects of them? Who do we have to work with to get the policy waived?

**Fairness & Undue Hardship:** What, if any, is the undue hardship for the college? Is there a need to find a balance between fairness to the student versus undue hardship to the college?

**Medical Documentation:** What documentation is the student expected to provide? Can the student establish that there was a functional impairment at the time?

**Providing Proof** – What can we do to minimize the demand for the student to prove their disability and/or accommodation needs?

## What Role do Faculty Play?

Generally speaking, once a counsellor has determined that a student's circumstances warrant the consideration of a retroactive accommodation and the student has provided sufficient medical documentation, the counsellor will reach out to relevant faculty. Sometimes this is a preliminary discussion with the coordinator, sometimes it starts with the teachers of the courses where the student is requesting a retroactive accommodation. Sometimes it doesn't involve any teachers because the request relates to withdrawal from the college rather than making up missed tests or assignments.

The faculty role is to stand up for the integrity of their course. They are the only ones who can state that an accommodation would or would not breach the established course learning outcomes. Practically speaking, this may mean phone calls with the counsellor, attending a few meetings and, if the student is allowed to make up missed evaluation(s), it will be the professor who determines whether the student will write the same test or complete the same assignment as was done by the rest of the class, or whether an equivalent form needs to be created for the student. And of course,

in the end, the faculty will be the one who marks the evaluation(s) and assigns the student their grade for the course.

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## Test Accommodations

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Test accommodations are individualized adjustments to how a student completes a test and do not change the program requirements. Test accommodations are necessary for students with disabilities when the way in which the test is designed or delivered presents a barrier for them to demonstrate what they have learned.

Students may not need test accommodations for all their classes because different teachers design and deliver tests in different ways.

### Protecting Academic Integrity

We take academic integrity as it relates to tests as seriously as professors do. We understand you may have concerns about what steps we take in AES to ensure students who write their tests with us do not have any unfair advantages. It can be hard to feel confident about the invigilation of your tests by someone you don't know.

We take the following measures to ensure students writing tests in AES don't cheat:

- ▶ We have invigilators scheduled so they are watching the students and ensuring they don't have access to any materials not approved by their teacher or available to them as accommodations.
- ▶ We rely on faculty to tell us what resources, such as textbooks, notes or calculators, students may use for the test and do not allow students to bring anything other than the approved resources with them to the test.
- ▶ Our test rooms are small and have large glass windows. We are able to monitor students from inside and outside the test rooms.

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## Test Accommodation – Extra Time

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

Most students with extra time accommodations for tests receive 1.5x the regular test time. There are some exceptions where a student will receive double time for some (such as those that have heavy reading demands, or for math-based tests). Rarely would a student have double time for all tests.

It is true that most students will do better on a test if they have more time to complete it. So it would seem that this accommodation is an unfair advantage which of course is not our goal in providing accommodations. However, the extra time doesn't benefit all students equally. Students with reading-based learning disabilities with extra time catch up to students without disabilities scores when they are given additional test time.

Students are responsible for arranging test accommodations in advance using the Online Accommodated Test Booking system. They need to complete this process for every test for which they need Test Accommodations. They must do this 1 week (7 calendar days) before the scheduled test. If a student does not submit the request on time, AES cannot provide test accommodations and the student will need to write in class.



### What Role do Faculty Play?

When a student has booked a test using the online Accommodated Test Booking Wizard, you will receive an email to log in and confirm the test request. You also have the option to [log in](#) and input all of your test information beforehand. This way makes it easier for students to book their tests.

[Log in](#) to our online services website and review letters of accommodation and student test requests. There is an [Instructor FAQ](#) page and [Instructor Tutorials](#) that you can access to learn more about your role in the test accommodation process.

If students have questions during the test, even something as simple as what a word means, the invigilators in AES cannot answer them. We have students save their questions to the end then one of our invigilators take the student to the teacher.

If a student has back-to-back tests or other scheduling conflicts, they are to talk with their professors to find a solution that works.





## UDL Ideas

Provide all students with extended time.

Provide students with alternate methods for demonstrating their acquisition of the course learning outcomes. For example, allow students to decide what portion of their final grade should come from tests versus assignments.

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## Test Accommodation – Supervised Breaks

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

This is permission to take breaks during a test without the time being counted.

Some students use this as a means of coping with excessive anxiety. Some students use this because they have medical conditions that require biological breaks. Some students with chronic pain use it to move around in order to alleviate their pain.

Students are supervised by AES invigilators.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

If this is the only accommodation being used by a student, faculty may be able to accommodate the student in class provided the student's breaks won't interrupt other students and the faculty is confident in any measures they set up to maintain academic integrity.

When a student has booked a test using the online Accommodated Test Booking Wizard, you will receive an email to log in and confirm the test request. You also have the option to [log in](#) and input all of your test information beforehand. This way makes it easier for students to book their tests.

[Log in](#) to our online services website and review letters of accommodation and student test requests. There is an [Instructor FAQ](#) page and [Instructor Tutorials](#) that you can access to learn more about your role in the test accommodation process.

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## Test Accommodation – Quiet Space

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

AES testing is done in smaller rooms with fewer students around and thus our rooms are quieter spaces than classrooms.

Students may experience decreased anxiety if they are writing with fewer students, or in a quieter space or with others who aren't writing the same test. Some students are less prone to distraction in a quiet space.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

If your class is a small one, students with quiet space accommodations may not need to write their tests with AES. Faculty with small classes may choose to discuss this option with students.

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## Test Accommodation – Private Room

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

AES has a small number of private rooms available for students with this accommodation. They are rooms the size of a very small office.

The most common reason we use private rooms is to facilitate the reader/scribe accommodations. Because with the reader/scribe accommodations there is a need for the student and reader/scribe to talk, this must be done in a private room so as not to disturb other test takers. Some students access this accommodation because they need to read questions aloud in order to make sense of them. In rare cases, some students use this because of debilitating anxiety.

Students are scheduled into the private rooms based on availability. In some cases the AES facilitator may work with the student and teacher to arrange an alternate test time/date in order to ensure availability of a private room for the student.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

Some faculty choose to allow students to write in their offices under their supervision. This is not a requirement for any faculty since it is AES' responsibility to provide accommodations for students with disabilities. If faculty choose to provide this accommodation for a student, they need to ensure the student has access to all of the test accommodations they need (such as extra time).

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## Test Accommodation – Reader

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

Readers are AES staff who read test questions to students.

If a student with a learning disability, who has a functional impairment related to reading, is not yet proficient in the use of text-to-voice software, we use readers as a temporary accommodation until the student has completed their training with one of our assistive technologists. Having questions read aloud allows the student to access their understanding of the material efficiently. That is, they are able to understand the test questions more quickly and with less effort than if they simply read the questions themselves. A reader could also be used for a blind or low-vision student if there is a lot of content that their text-to-voice software would have trouble reading aloud in a sensible manner.

The student and reader work in a private room. The student determines what the reader is to read, may ask them to read it faster or slower and may ask them to repeat it as often as needed. The reader does not explain the question, or interpret what the question is asking, or define any terms or concepts. If a student doesn't understand something, they must ask their teacher, not the reader.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

Faculty may choose to provide this accommodation to a student but it is not expected of anyone since AES is tasked with the delivery of accommodations. If faculty choose to provide this accommodation for a student, they need to ensure the student has access to all of the test accommodations they need (such as extra time).

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## Test Accommodation – Scribe

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

Scribes are AES staff who record students' responses.

If a student with a learning disability, who has a functional impairment related to writing, is not yet proficient in the use of voice-to-text or other relevant writing software, we use scribes as a temporary accommodation until the student has completed their training with one of our assistive technologists. This is more common with essay-type tests but some students use it for short-answer tests. Having a scribe record the answers spoken by the student allows the student to express their understanding of the material efficiently. That is, they are able to communicate their answers more quickly and with less effort than if they try to write the answers themselves. Scribes are also used for students with mobility challenges that make completing a scantron sheet impossible – in such cases the scribe is a permanent accommodation rather than a temporary one.

The student and scribe work in a private room. The student determines what the scribe is to write, the scribe does not explain the question, or interpret what the question is asking, or define any terms or concepts. If a student doesn't understand something, they must ask their teacher, not the scribe.



### What Role do Faculty Play?

Faculty may choose to provide this accommodation to a student but it is not expected of anyone since AES is tasked with the delivery of accommodations. If faculty choose to provide this accommodation for a student, they need to ensure the student has access to all of the test accommodations they need (such as extra time).

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## Test Accommodation – Noise Reduction Devices

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

This could be disposable ear plugs or noise-cancelling headphones.

This is used for students who are prone to distractions. By blocking noise, students are better able to concentrate on their tests.

AES provides the student with the chosen device when they arrive for the test.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

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There is no additional responsibility for faculty with this accommodation.

## Test Accommodation – Basic Calculator

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

This is access to a calculator.

Some students have challenges with memory or may even have a math-based learning disability (dyscalculia). These functional limitations make simple calculations, such as adding and subtracting, challenging and time consuming. Requiring these students to perform such calculations unaided puts them at a disadvantage compared to other students since they are prone to errors and it would take them more time than other students. As long as the test is not testing their basic calculation skills, this accommodation allows them to demonstrate their understanding of the math skills being evaluated.

AES provides the student with the calculator when they arrive for the test.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

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There is no additional responsibility for faculty with this accommodation.



**UDL Ideas**

Allow all students to use a calculator for math-related questions.

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## Test Accommodation – Music

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

Students using this accommodation are allowed to listen to music during their tests.

Students with attentional challenges associated with ADHD often benefit from listening to music while performing tasks that require their attention.

Students choose whether to borrow one of the music CDs available from AES, purchase a CD and provide it to AES in its shrink-wrap or to prepare a playlist saved on a USB drive. An AES staff member will listen to all the songs on the drive before the student is allowed to use it.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

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There is no additional responsibility for faculty with this accommodation.

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## Test Accommodation – Memory Aids

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

Memory aids are intended to minimize the impacts of functional limitations that compromise a student's ability to recall information that has been learned. Memory aids typically consist of a number of cues that will aid a student in their memory of previously learned information. Each aid developed will look significantly different as the process of development is creative in nature and very individualized. They may be hand-written or typed. They may include diagrams, mind maps, formulae, acronyms, pictures, and so forth. They may be organized chronologically or by module or chapter. Often they only make sense to the person who created them and include only the information that the user cannot remember.

A memory aid is not meant to record all the facts; concepts or processes being tested. This means that a memory aid should not include specific examples of how formulae are used; complete terms and definitions; or be created instead of studying.

Once memory aids are approved as an accommodation by the counsellor, the student is required to work with the learning strategist to learn memory strategies, study strategies and, how to develop memory aids that trigger their memory without violating learning outcomes. The learning strategist and student will be consulting with faculty during this period.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

As a professor, you have final say as to where the line between a memory aid and a breach of test integrity or violation of a learning outcome lies. What is a memory aid in one situation could be an answer sheet in another. If, for instance, the purpose of a test is to discover whether or not the student knows the definitions of certain terms, having those terms on a memory aid would make it an answer sheet and, therefore, not allowable. If the definitions were written but not connected to the terms to be defined in any way, this may be allowable, since it will trigger the student's memory of the correct term.

It will remain your responsibility to approve the specific memory aid the student creates. Only you are in the position to judge whether it crosses the line. You may choose to consult with Laura Gibson, the college's learning strategist, at any point.

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## Test Accommodation – Ergonomic Chair

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

AES can provide students with ergonomic chairs which are designed to be more supportive of the body than our regular chairs (in AES or in classrooms).

For students with back injuries or other physical conditions which cause sitting to be painful or uncomfortable, ergonomic chairs can mitigate against the pain.

Our AES facilitator ensures one of our ergonomic chairs is in the testing room that the student will be writing in and the invigilator ensures its provided to the student when they come to write.



### What Role do Faculty Play?

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There is no additional responsibility for faculty with this accommodation.

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## Test Accommodation – ASL Interpreter

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

AES can schedule a sign language interpreter to read the test questions and then sign them to the student.

Deaf students' first language is often American Sign Language and they may struggle with English. Being able to have their test questions signed to them helps ensure that what they are being evaluated on is strictly the course material and not their ability to understand and communicate in English.

The student directs the interpreter as to how much to interpret. It could be the whole question or just some words or phrases. Usually the student records their own answers.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

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There is no additional responsibility for faculty with this accommodation.

## Test Accommodation –Spelling Aids

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

AES offers a variety of spelling aids. Some nursing students use the Webster’s Medical Speller which contains medical and scientific words without definitions. Some students use a handheld speller called the Franklin Language Master. However, the most commonly used spelling aid is spellcheck on the computer.

Students with learning disabilities may have processing challenges that make learning correct spelling of words extremely difficult. Unless spelling is a course learning outcome, tests are not intended to penalize spelling attributes. So if a student is able to correctly answer a question but cannot spell the words of the correct answer, a spelling aid can allow them to demonstrate their understanding of the curriculum.



Students are provided with the aid when they come to AES to write their test. By using our resources, students aren’t able to hide any notes or information that would be considered cheating.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

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There is no additional responsibility for faculty with this accommodation.



You can include a word bank of commonly used words in your subject area

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## Test Accommodation – Computer

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

Access to a computer to use specialized software programs or to assist with writing.

Use of a computer generally speaking compensates for one or more functional limitations and it has the added benefit of promoting independence. For example, some students with learning disabilities are accustomed to having readers and scribes for their tests. We shift them over to using special software that reads and writes for them so they are less dependent on other people doing things for them.

We have a fair number of computers in our testing rooms and schedule students who need access to them when we receive test accommodation requests from students.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

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There is no additional responsibility for faculty with this accommodation.

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## Test Accommodation – Software

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### What is it & How Does it Help?

There are a variety of programs:

- ▶ **Texthelp Read & Write Gold** – this is text-to-voice software and some students use it to read test questions aloud. Some will also use it to help them edit their essay answers.
- ▶ **Dragon Naturally Speaking** - this is voice-recognition software and some students use it to record their answers.
- ▶ **JAWS** – this is screen reading software that blind students use to access print materials.
- ▶ **Enlargement Software** – allows students with low vision to enlarge the text to a size that works for them.

All of these software programs help students access the test in a way that by-passes their functional limitations. Students select the software they need for the test when they do their test requests. We ensure they are assigned to a computer that has the software they need on it.

### What Role do Faculty Play?

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There is no additional responsibility for faculty with this accommodation.

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## Tutoring

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All students are able to access 2 hours of tutoring support per week from the [Tutoring & Academic Skills Centre](#). Students with disabilities may have need for additional tutoring.