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| Fleming College LogoThis is our department logoPreparing for your Accommodation Appointment | A booklet to orient new students to Accessible Education Services at Fleming College and explain the details related to the Informed Consent & Confidentiality form.  |

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Preparing for Your Accommodation Appointment

# Welcome to AES

On behalf of the Accessible Education Services team, we are happy you have decided to meet with an accessibility counsellor. We have created this booklet to help you understand what you can expect in your first appointment with your counsellor.

Part I of this booklet provides more detail about the items in the *Informed Consent & Confidentiality* form you were asked to sign. We don’t believe you should sign any form without understanding it, so this booklet should give you all the information you need to feel comfortable signing the *Informed Consent & Confidentiality* form. However, if you still have questions, or if you are uncomfortable with any aspect of the form, do not sign the form, but instead email the counselling receptionist at caes@flemingcollege.ca to let her know this is something you want to discuss with your accessibility counsellor.

Here is the link to the [*Informed Consent & Confidentiality*](https://department.flemingcollege.ca/aes/attachment/1782/download) form.

Part II of the booklet provides more detailed ideas about what you can do to prepare for your accommodation appointment.

# Part I – Understanding Informed Consent & Confidentiality

## What is Accessible Education Services & Accessibility Counselling?

In Accessible Education Services, we work to improve the accessibility of the college environment for all students with disabilities. We provide students with disabilities the academic accommodations they need to level the playing field and eliminate barriers and the services they need to build skills, strategies and resources to make the most of college.

Our services are free, confidential and voluntary. They are firmly rooted in our commitment to respecting your dignity, integrity and your right to make your own choices for yourself with respect to the services you choose to use.

Accessible Education Services is made up of a diverse team of professional staff including counsellors, learning strategist and learning strategies advisors, assistive technologists and service facilitators. We each work within our own area of expertise to provide you with the accommodations and services you need but we also function as a team or *circle of care* to ensure we are doing our best to meet your disability-related needs. Each member of your circle of care only has access to the information about you that they need in order to provide you services.

## Expectations You Can Have of Us

As a student with a disability at Fleming, here is what you can expect from your accessibility counsellor and the staff in Accessible Education Services:

* We will work hard to make sure you have access to the accommodations you need as a result of the functional impairments you experience in school because of your disability.
* We are committed to our values which include:
	+ Respect for your privacy
	+ Respect for your autonomy and independence
	+ Respect for your dignity
	+ Respect for your right to access the college’s courses and services without discrimination.
* We will do what we say we will do and tell you what we are going to do on your behalf.
* Be on time for appointments.
* Get things done when we said we would or email you to let you know if there will be a delay.
* Your accessibility counsellor will be there for you to help you resolve any conflicts or problems you might experience in the delivery of your accommodations. This could include talking with your professors, service providers or anyone else who can help resolve the problem, but we would always do this with your prior knowledge and permission.
* We will continuously learn about disability, related human rights legislation, accommodations and technological solutions.
* We will not require you to disclose your diagnosis in order to access accommodations but if you do share it with us, we will respect your privacy and not share it with others unless you give us permission.
* We respect your right to refuse any accommodation your accessibility counsellor recommends for you.
* We will not charge you any fees for our services or for you to access your accommodations.

## Expectations We Have of You

As a student with a disability at Fleming, here is what we expect of you:

* You notify us as soon as possible that you require accommodations (any time after you confirm your acceptance to the college). It is really important that you know that **your IEP doesn’t automatically transfer to the college**.
* You provide us with the documentation related to your disability before your accommodation appointment with your accessibility counsellor. If you don’t know what documents are needed, you will check out the AES website <https://department.flemingcollege.ca/aes/>
* If you have never had to arrange your own accommodations or if you have any concerns about talking with professors or other staff, you will talk with your accessibility counsellor about this so the two of you can figure out a solution that works for you.
* If you run into problems accessing your accommodations from a professor or an AES staff member, you will handle the problem respectfully and if you feel you can’t resolve it on your own, you will contact your accessibility counsellor.
* If you feel you need additional accommodations, you will meet with your accessibility counsellor to find a solution. It’s not ok to make side deals with your professors.
* You participate in any meetings we need to schedule to resolve possible conflicts or problems with your accommodations.
* You will book an appointment with your accessibility counsellor if your accommodations expire or are about to expire (the expiration date is on your Letter of Accommodation).
* You will attend any appointments you book. If you need to cancel, you will call or email to cancel as soon as possible. If you don’t show up for your appointments 3 times, you will have to meet with the Director of Counselling & Accessible Education Services to discuss your use of services.
* You will be on time for any appointments you book. Your appointment will be cancelled if you are more than 15 minutes late.

Accommodations are about leveling the playing field so your disability isn’t a disadvantage. They aren’t there to guarantee your academic success. You are an active participant in your own learning and your success comes from you and your efforts.

## Confidentiality

Counsellors are bound by law and ethics to safeguard your privacy and the confidentiality of your personal information. We collect, use, and disclose only the information necessary to provide the supports you request. We also believe you should fully understand the limitations of confidentiality for you to make an informed decision about what you disclose in counselling.

We are required to disclose confidential information to third parties if any of the following conditions exist:

* You present a serious risk of harm to yourself or others (This may require sharing of relevant information with the Fleming Behaviour Assessment Management Team, as defined under Fleming’s Violence Prevention policy #4-420)
* You share information that leads to a suspicion that a child under the age of 16 has been or is at risk of being physically, emotionally or sexually abused.
* Your file is subpoenaed as part of a court proceeding.
* You reveal that you have been sexually abused by a health care professional who is covered by the Regulated Health Professions Act (for example, a doctor or psychologist).

Please note: if any of the exceptions listed above occurs, your counsellor will, as much as possible, let you know what information they have to share and who they will share it with, as well as the possible consequences, before the disclosure is made. You should also know that any member of Counselling & AES who is aware of instances of the issues listed above, is also required to report this information.

The Director of Counselling and AES, will have access to your file as needed, in order to provide appropriate consultation and supervision.

## How We Store your Personal Information

Any documentation about you that we may acquire in the course of providing our services is kept in a confidential filing system in the Counselling & AES office and/or electronically in our secure file software (Clockwork). Case notes are also stored in Clockwork. Access to your counselling notes is limited to Fleming counsellors who are directly involved with you, the director of Counselling & AES and our consulting psychiatrist. If you are seen by the college’s consulting psychiatrist or the learning strategist, they too can review your disability documentation as needed in order to provide you with supports. In rare cases, the director of Counselling & AES may need to review your documentation – this is usually done if there is a problem or complaint that the director needs to resolve.

If you require documentation of your counselling sessions, you may request this from your counsellor.

If you are referred to our consulting psychiatrist, please note that their assessments will form part of your Fleming College counselling file. Where information collected by the consulting psychiatrist is relevant to the delivery of counselling services, it will be shared with members of the counselling team responsible for such services.

## Sharing your Personal Information within your Circle of Care

As part of our team approach and to ensure we are providing you with the best care possible, your counsellor may consult with their Fleming Counselling & Accessible Education Services colleagues. If your counsellor is away, other available members of the counselling team may access information about you in order to be able to assist you. At all times, the information shared is only that which is required to provide the best service to you.

The accommodations that you and your counsellor agree upon will be saved in our database. Members of the AES team may view your accommodations in the database if they are responsible for delivering one or more of your accommodations or services. They do not have access to your disability documentation or your counsellor’s file notes.

## Sharing Information with Your Teachers with Your Permission

After your counsellor and you have decided what accommodations you will use, if you agree, your counsellor will choose the option in our Clockwork database so that an email is sent to all of your teachers with a link to your Letter of Accommodation. This will be sent out each semester to your teachers.

Due to system limitations; timetabling, schedule changes, faculty assignments, there is potential that your Letter of Accommodation may be accessible by a faculty assigned to your program but who may not be your direct subject/classroom faculty this semester. If this occurs faculty is directed to disregard the Letter of Accommodation and report it to Accessible Education Services who will work to correct the matter. I consent to this potential disclosure of my letter of accommodation.

If you would like your counsellor to be able to communicate with one or more of your teachers or your program coordinator, your counsellor will ask you to sign a form giving them your written permission to do so.

## Sharing and Using Information About You Without Your Name Attached

From time to time the Counselling & AES department needs to review the effectiveness of our services and the success rates of the students we serve. We also report annually to the government of Ontario on how our services are being used and by how many students. To do this we may need to access and connect data we have about the services and accommodations you received along with your marks. When we report on this information, however, your name is not attached and we only report on groups of students, not individuals (for example, success rates of first semester students who use test accommodations).

## Fees

Our services are offered at no extra charge to any current student at Fleming, regardless of their course load status.

## Risks & Benefits

There are risks and benefits to accessing disability accommodations. In order to find the most appropriate accommodations and services for you, your counsellor and you will have to discuss the areas of learning and school that present challenges and difficulties for you. You will need to be open and honest about the struggles you experience with learning and some students may find this stressful.

Some students begin college with the hope that they can put their disability behind them, as if it were part of their childhood, but not part of who they are as an adult. However, by definition, a disability is something that has an impact on important aspects of your daily living, so it doesn’t go away. Students who attempt to ignore their disability needs often choose not to connect with AES or not follow-up with the accommodations and services they agree to with their counsellor. Often, students who follow this path end up in academic difficulty or at risk of failing courses. So, there is a risk to not accessing accommodations and services or not accessing them until late in the semester.

There are many benefits to accessing disability accommodations and services.

* It can mean the difference between failing and passing a course.
* It can create a sense of independence as you are the one who determines when and how to access your supports.
* It can create a stronger sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy as you see how your efforts pay off in terms of good marks.
* It can build a sense of social justice as you realize the human rights component of disability accommodations.
* It can improve your assertive communication skills as you start talking in a positive way about your accommodation needs with teachers, AES staff, and peers.

## Right to Refuse or Withdraw Consent and Timeframe Covered by the Consent

By signing the Informed Consent & Confidentiality form, you are agreeing to the terms outlined above. Also, you are authorizing the above noted individuals to share your information for the purposes of delivering the aforementioned services, within the Counselling & AES circle of care. If you have questions or concerns relating to confidentiality or any other aspect of counselling, please discuss them with your counsellor. This consent is deemed to be in effect for the duration of the time that you are a student at Fleming College. You may, upon written request, revoke this consent.

## Complaint Procedures

If you have any complaints about Counselling or Accessible Education Services (for example, if you feel confidentiality has been breached, if you are not happy with a service, if you want to change counsellor) you have two options:

* Speak directly with the person you have a complaint about. This is the preferred approach because it allows for a quick resolution to most problems.
* Speak with the Director of Counselling & Accessible Education Services.

# Part II - What Should You Do to Prepare for your Accommodation Appointment?

As a first year college student you are about to face many transitions and because you have a disability, you have a few more that other students don’t have. So, we encourage you to meet with your counsellor in the months before classes start so that you can take care of the disability-related tasks ahead of time. That way, when classes start, you have dealt with the disability matters and just have to deal with the same stuff everyone else is.

## Disability or IEP

Throughout school you may have had an IEP. You are probably pretty used to calling your disability your IEP. But once you leave high school, IEPs no longer exist. In college you are a *student with a disability* and you have an *accommodation plan*. Why is it important that you make this transition? Mostly because of human rights law. Under Ontario and Canadian human rights legislation, you are entitled to accommodations for your disability. This is true in college, in your workplace, in housing and in accessing services. Your IEP was your high school Individual Education Plan and it is essential in high school but just doesn’t apply to other settings.

There isn’t anything really you need to do about this. It’s ok if you call your disability an IEP because your counsellor will know what you mean. But you will get used to calling it a disability over time because that is the language your teachers, counsellor and disability services providers will be using.

## There Is No Resource Room & No Resource Teachers

In high school you probably accessed most of your accommodations through the Resource Room. You probably received assistance from the Resource Teacher. Since neither of these exist in college, it can be confusing, so here is how Fleming has organized its disability services.

The first step in the process is to meet with your accessibility counsellor to identify what accommodations you need. These are the adjustments we make in your academic responsibilities so that your disability doesn’t disadvantage your academic success. So, for example, if you have a learning disability that makes reading a very slow process for you, your counsellor will talk with you about services and technology accommodations related to reading.

Once you and your counsellor have agreed on what accommodations and services you need, your counsellor will enter them into the computer. This creates your *Letter of Accommodation* which lists your accommodations. If you have provided your permission on the Informed Consent & Confidentiality form, your teachers will get an email with a link to your Letter. You will get an email at the same time letting you know which teachers the email was sent to and a link for you to view your Letter of Accommodation. You can view it any time you like on the [AES website](https://department.flemingcollege.ca/aes/aes-online-services/).

## What Role Will Your Parents Play?

During elementary and high school, you may not have participated much in your IEP development. You may have had accommodations in your IEP that you didn’t use. Or, you may have had academic challenges that weren’t met by your IEP. Your parents might have been the ones advocating for you.

In your accommodation appointment, your counsellor will be talking directly to you, asking you about your experiences with accommodations, what your needs are, and so forth. It’s perfectly ok if you want to bring one or both of your parents to your meeting, and they can contribute to the conversation, but you are expected to speak for yourself.

Before your appointment with your counsellor, talk with your parents about their expectations and yours. How involved should they be in your college life? Do you want them to be able to call your counsellor and get information about you or would you prefer to be the one who shares information with them?

If you want them to be able to speak directly with your counsellor, you then need to discuss with them what information it is ok for them to get and what you want to keep private. Keep in mind that throughout the semester, your counsellor does not have access to your grades or your attendance in class. The information your counsellor can share, if you give them permission, includes your access to your accommodations and what you talk about in your counselling appointments.

❒ I don’t want to give permission to my counsellor to share information directly to my parents.

❒ I want to give permission to my counsellor to share information with my parents about:

## What is the Right Course Load for You?

If you check out your program’s webpage on the [college website](https://flemingcollege.ca/programs/a-z), you can click on the *View curriculum* link to see what courses you will take each semester.



The course load shown for your program is likely higher than what you are used to in high school. You probably are used to taking 3 or 4 courses per semester and most programs at Fleming have 6-8 courses per semester.

Taking a reduced course load is an appropriate accommodation for some students with disabilities. But how do you know if you will need this accommodation? Some important questions to consider, to help you decide:

* Does my disability cause me to take longer than most students to complete the required reading for a course?
* Does my disability cause me to take longer than most students to complete the writing assignments for a course?
* Does my disability cause me to take longer to understand course material (for example, needing to work with a tutor or study group to understand the course material for most of my courses, or taking a lot of time to review course materials and class notes in order to understand)?
* Does my disability cause me to have too much trouble keeping track of what I am supposed to be doing, such as, when assignments are due or, when tests and quizzes are scheduled?
* Does my disability cause me to have health problems (physical or mental) that cause me to miss a lot of classes?

This is not an appropriate accommodation if you need it in order to find time for a part-time job. We know that for most students, going to college puts a lot of financial pressure on them. However, financial pressure is not a disability so, a reduced course load isn’t an appropriate solution.

You don’t have to decide right away. A lot of students with disabilities take a reduced course load but a lot of them don’t. If you aren’t sure if this is a good accommodation for you, you can take a *wait-and-see* approach. That is, you can start the semester with a full, 100% course load and see if it works for you. At any point you can decide that your course load is too high and meet with your accessibility counsellor to discuss reducing it. So, you can decide to take a reduced course load:

* Before you start first semester
* Once you have started first semester and have tried managing a full course load
* At the end of your first semester, before the second one begins
* Any time before you graduate

## What Questions Do You Have About Disability Accommodations?

You may find it helpful to write down your questions before your appointment so you don’t forget to ask any of them.

Questions I want to ask my counsellor:

## What Accommodations Are You Going To Need In College?

This is sometimes a hard question to answer. You don’t know exactly what your teachers are going to be asking you to do so it can be hard to anticipate what challenges you will face. But it’s worth thinking about this because it will be the central point of discussion in your accommodation appointment with your accessibility counsellor.

You may want to review your high school IEP and think about the accommodations that are listed in it. Are there some that you used regularly and will want to continue in college? Are there some that you didn’t use, but think you should once you start your college classes?

The following chart of functional limitations can help you consider what types of academic tasks challenge you the most.

| **Academic Task**  | **This is a strength for me** | **This is a challenge for me** | **Accommodations that have worked in the past for this** | **Thoughts, ideas, questions about this** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Cognitive Skills/Abilities |
| **Attention/Concentration**(during exams, classes, labs; while writing essays/ reports) |  |  |  |  |
| **Short -Term Memory**(information that is stored for about 30 seconds; for example, ability to follow class directions) |  |  |  |  |
| **Long-Term Memory**(ability to recall and retrieve stored information, especially in time-limited testing situations) |  |  |  |  |
| **Information Processing**(ability to input, process, store and retrieve information) |  |  |  |  |
| **Manage Distractions**(ability to filter out distracting visual and auditory stimuli during classes and/or testing situations) |  |  |  |  |
| **Executive Functioning**:Planning, Organizing, Problem Solving, Sequencing, Time-Management(ability to: meet exam/assignment deadlines; multi-task {such as, listen and take notes at the same time}; prioritize academic tasks {such as, complete assignments, study, attend classes}; manage time effectively {such as, stay focused on task}) |  |  |  |  |
| **Judgment**: anticipating the impact of one’s behavior on self and others (for example, understand when it is an appropriate time to interrupt a professor in class) |  |  |  |  |
| **Communication** (the ability to effectively convey and receive information orally or in writing) |  |  |  |  |
| **Other** Cognitive Skills not listed above |  |  |  |  |
| Social-Emotional Skills/Abilities |
| **Effectively control emotions during routine academic interactions**(for example, work cooperatively and collaboratively during in-class group work situations; be calm when interacting with others {professors, students fieldwork clients}, ability to approach professors when needed) |  |  |  |  |
| **Effectively read social cues**(follow established classroom protocols such as wait to be asked before answering professor’s question, understand when is an appropriate time to interact with others) |  |  |  |  |
| **Effectively control emotions during evaluation situations**(sit in assigned seating during exams/tests with the rest of the class; deliver oral presentations to peers/professors; accept constructive feedback on performance without adverse reaction) |  |  |  |  |
| **Effectively manage the demands of academic life**(pressures of multiple assignments, readings, tests/exams; being away from home; placement expectations) |  |  |  |  |
| **Participate appropriately during in-class and group work situations**(participate in classroom discussions, collaborate with peers on group assignments) |  |  |  |  |
| **Respond to change effectively**(such as, change of: classrooms, assignment deadlines, class schedule, professors) |  |  |  |  |
| **Other** Social-Emotional Skills not listed above |  |  |  |  |
| Physical Skills/Abilities |
| **Mobility**(Ability to: get to and from classes/fieldwork independently; ambulate within classroom, lab, placement environment; climb stairs; maintain balance) |  |  |  |  |
| **Gross Motor**(Ability to: lift, carry, reach overhead, twist, bend, kneel) |  |  |  |  |
| **Fine Motor/Manual Dexterity**(Ability to: grip pencil/pen and write; type; perform repetitive activities; operate precision instruments such as a microscope; manipulate tools safely {such as, scissors, screwdrivers, tweezers, saws, drills, etc.})  |  |  |  |  |
| **Stamina/Ability to engage in academic activities**(Ability to attend 15+ hours of classes per week, complete the resulting study requirements and meet assignment and exam demands) |  |  |  |  |
| **Sit for sustained periods of time**(such as, during a 3 hour lecture or while on placement) |  |  |  |  |
| **Stand for sustained periods**(such as, during a 3 hour lab or while on placement) |  |  |  |  |
| **Other** Physical Skills not listed above |  |  |  |  |
| Vision |
| **Visual acuity loss** (best corrected), left eye, right eye, bilateral, visual field limitations |  |  |  |  |
| Hearing |
| **Hearing Loss** (best corrected), left ear, right ear, bilateral) |  |  |  |  |
| Speech |
| Any issues related to speaking. |  |  |  |  |
| **Fieldwork-Specific Skills/Abilities** (Complete only if fieldwork is required by your program of study)❒ Fieldwork is not required by my program of study |
| **Work safely with vulnerable populations**(people who are ill, people with disabilities, children and older adults) |  |  |  |  |
| **Stamina: Meet the demands of fieldwork**(35+ hours of fieldwork per week, possible 12-hour shifts; day, evening or night shifts) |  |  |  |  |
| **Other** tasks associated with fieldwork |  |  |  |  |

Also, some disabilities may have an impact on your health and safety or the health and safety of those around you. Do you have any conditions such that the college may need to respond in an emergency if symptoms of the condition appear while you are on campus or during fieldwork, (for example, seizure disorder, severe allergic reaction)?

 ❒ Yes ❒ No

If “yes”, please remember to discuss with your accessibility counsellor this condition(s) and what strategies you have put in place in the past regarding it.

## Financial Aid

Your counsellor will ask you if you have or intend to apply for OSAP. We encourage all students with disabilities to apply for OSAP because there are government funded programs for students with disabilities that can only be accessed if you are eligible for OSAP assistance. You may want to discuss your options with a Fleming financial aid advisor. You can contact them by email at finaid@flemingcollege.ca .

**No thanks - I don’t want to accumulate student debt!**

That’s fine. We respect your perspective on this. However, you don’t have to accept the loan in order to qualify for the disability funding, so even if you don’t want to take the loan, please apply for OSAP anyway.

**My family makes too much money for me to qualify for OSAP.**

Don’t assume this to be true. There are calculators on the OSAP website that can let you know if you are likely to qualify.

**My older sister applied last year and was refused because our family income was too high.**

The OSAP rules change from year to year and if your family has 2 children in post-secondary this year, both you and your sibling may now qualify.

**What kind of disability funding can I get if I am eligible for OSAP?**

There are two programs that are tied to OSAP eligibility. One is the *Bursary for Students With Disabilities/**Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Students with Permanent Disabilities*, which we call the **BSWD** for short. This program covers the cost of disability related educational expenses. It is not a program you can apply for on your own. You and your counsellor will complete a BSWD application if the two of you decide you have a disability related educational need that could be covered by the bursary.

The second program is the *Canada Student Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities*. This program allows you to convert up to $2000 per year of loan money to grant money (meaning you don’t have to pay it back). This lessens the amount of debt you graduate with and that’s a good thing. If you are in a 2 year program, this will save you $4000!