

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES INTAKE AND ACCOMMODATIONS PROCEDURE**

This procedure is governed by its parent policy. Questions regarding this procedure are to be directed to the identified Procedure Administrator.

<b>Functional Category:</b>	Academic
<b>Parent Policy:</b>	Duty to Accommodate Students with Disabilities Policy
<b>Approval Date:</b>	October 20, 2021
<b>Effective Date:</b>	October 20, 2021
<b>Procedure Owner:</b>	Vice President, Academic
<b>Procedure Administrator:</b>	Vice President, Learner Experience

### **Overview:**

NorQuest College’s Duty to Accommodate Students with Disabilities is a college wide policy that seeks to provide accommodation(s) to students with experience of disability as a moral and ethical best practice, while at the same time acknowledging the provision of accommodation(s) as a legal requirement set out by the *Alberta Human Rights Act*.

The Disability Services Intake & Accommodations Procedure details the college’s role in meeting these moral and ethical best practices through intake process (how decisions of accommodations are made and what information guides these decisions) and also outlines the process for providing accommodations to students, including the standards of usage for Instructional Assistants.

Authority to establish this procedure is derived from the [NorQuest College Board of Governors Policy No. 5](#) which delegates authority to the President and CEO to establish policies and procedures for the college’s management and operation.

### **Procedures:**

#### **Students with Disabilities Intake Process**

Unless specified by unique enrolment or registration of student/client needs, all NorQuest College students seeking accommodations must first meet with a Student Navigator to register for accommodated support. During the meeting with a Student Navigator, students with existing medical documentation will be provided with information about how to submit their medical documentation. Students without medical documentation will be provided with further direction on obtaining the necessary medical documentation. Students without medical documentation will be provided with temporary accommodations for up to three months until formal documentation can be obtained.

While family members, legal guardians, or community support workers may be present during the intake process, it is necessary for students seeking accommodations to attend meetings with Student Navigators.

- All students are either encouraged or required to meet with a Student Navigator prior to the start of their studies at NorQuest.

- A student who wishes to arrange accommodation for a disability is required to book an appointment with a Student Navigator so that the accommodation(s) can be arranged.
- A student may be encouraged to meet with a Student Navigator after classroom observation or other college professional referral.
- It is the responsibility of the referring college professional to discuss their observations directly with the student being referred, encourage student follow-up with a Student Navigator, and/or use the referral form to outline the specific details that have been noticed
- It is within the students right to refuse a meeting with a Student Navigator for the purposes of registering for accommodated support, and therefore to refuse accommodations

### **Accommodations – Assistive Technology; Academic Coaching**

Upon meeting with a Navigator, the student requesting accommodated support is required to complete an electronic intake form for Assistive Technology Services and Academic Coaching Services. Once complete, the student will be provided with information on booking an introductory session with the services in order to activate their individual accommodation.

- The determination of individual level, scope, and span of accommodation is made by the accommodated service providers, based on a number of criteria, including but not limited to:
- Student’s experience of functional impacts and self-assessment for Assistive Technology and Academic Coaching support
  - Student’s individual academic goal(s)
  - Student’s’ functional impact or impairment
  - Severity of functional impact or impairment
  - Previous accommodations used by the student in other educational settings (high school or post-secondary)
  - Student’s ability/comfort in the use of technology
  - Student’s previous educational level
  - Number of years a student has been away from a structured educational setting
  - Structure of class(es)/program(s) (i.e., Computer labs, Labs, Lecture, Group Work, etc.)
  - Number of classes taken by student in a term
  - Mode of course delivery (i.e., online, face-to-face, distance, etc.)
  - Recommendations from Psychological Educational Assessment or other medical documentation if required
    - Evaluations made by a psychologist in the Psychological Educational Assessment are understood to be guided recommendations. A Psychological Educational Assessment is made outside the student’s total educational situation and cannot be viewed as prescriptive. Students may not

receive all recommended accommodations outlined in a Psychological Educational Assessment.

- Information gathered from student's first-person experience of their individual functional impacts.
- Student accommodated support is created using evidence-based research and strategies for general learning support, as well as specific interventions to address functional impacts of that unique student when required.
- Throughout a student's educational career with NorQuest, it may be necessary to review and revise accommodations at certain points (ex. new barriers arise, structure of the class changes from term to term, student transitions between programs). The student has the right to ask for a review of their accommodation. It is the student's responsibility to trigger this process by talking to their accommodation provider.

#### **Criteria for Provision of Instructional Assistants to Students**

- Prior to the provision of an Instructional Assistant as an accommodation, alternative accommodations are considered that support the student's independence within the classroom.
- Instructional Assistants may be provided at the discretion of the Manager, Accessibility Services, to support students' achievement of learning goals who meet one of the following criteria:
  - Functional impacts related to severe cognitive, developmental, or mobility deficits as indicated by medical documentation and corresponding academic goal. Student's whose primary goal at NorQuest is not focused on academics, but who still require support within the college, must provide their own individualized support.
  - Blind or low-vision, in which the impairment creates barriers to access of necessary learning material
- The provision of an Instructional Assistant to a student is meant as a step toward academic independence for the student, and should not be viewed as a permanent accommodation. This provision of an Instructional Assistant to a student will be reviewed on a term by term basis.
- Due to the structure and support available in some programs, such as the Transitions to Employment Program (TEP), Instructional Assistants may not be required unless the functional impact is outside of the intended program design.

#### **Role of the Instructional Assistant for Students with Experience of Disability**

The role of an Instructional Assistant in the classroom is to support a student in accessing the material taught by the instructor, and to support the student in the mitigation of educational barriers. The Instructional Assistant's role is academic in nature and does not include areas of behavior management, supports outside of the classroom, or supports related to a

student's personal care. Students requiring personal care support must have external support arranged prior to arriving in their program of study.

An Instructional Assistant is provided as an accommodation for individual students, and therefore, when assigned to work with a specific student in a classroom, should not assume (or be directed to assume) the role of support for instructors or other students within that classroom.

- Instructional Assistants do not provide support to students in appointments or activities outside the college, unless those activities are directly related to in-class field trips or participation in other class-related events.
  - Instructors are responsible for deciding upon field trips that meet the functional abilities of all students in the classroom. Through consultation with the Instructional Assistant, instructors are responsible for securing transportation for all students attending the field trip.
- Students must demonstrate a degree of independence including navigating between classrooms and remaining unsupervised within the college while not in classes, and (except in rare cases where an exception has been made between the Manager, Accessibility Services and the student and/or student's parent/legal guardian) the Instructional Assistant will not be able to provide students with this level of support outside of class.
- In supporting a student in the classroom, the Instructional Assistant role may include:
  - Facilitating student engagement in achieving academic success, both individually and in small groups, that meets with the student's individual academic goal(s)
  - Supporting learning through implementing techniques and strategies acquired from other accommodation areas (i.e., Assistive Technology or Academic Coaching)
  - Review/reinforce lessons and concepts presented in the classroom
  - Support student in synthesizing newly learned classroom material with classroom material previously learned prior knowledge
  - Support student with note-taking or scribing duties as necessary
  - Other support as dictated by students documented functional impacts, unique in-class needs, and the student's individual academic goal(s)
- Instructional Assistants are not responsible for, and should not participate in planning, preparing, designing, or developing curricular materials to be used within the classroom. Instructional Assistants can be consulted regarding questions of accessibility when it comes to curricular materials
- Instructors are responsible for classroom management of all students, including students working with an Instructional Assistant.

### **Instructional Assistants and Student Responsibility**

- Students are required to complete an Accommodation Transition Plan outlining the goal(s) they wish to work towards at NorQuest. This Accommodation Transition Plan will be the basis for outlining the supports provided to a student by their Instructional Assistant.
  - Students must have individual academic goal(s) and demonstrate their dedication towards meeting those goals by: attending classes; participating in class discussions (whether in-class or through online forums as required for non-face-to-face classes); completing homework and assignments; attempting tests and exams, all to the best of the student's abilities.
  - In cases where, over a prolonged period, students do not demonstrate the above criteria on a consistent basis, the accommodation of an Instructional Assistant may be removed from the student's accommodation plan, and alternative accommodations may be implemented to meet the student's functional impacts.

### **Universal Design Extra Time for Timed Assessments**

NorQuest College is transitioning to a Universal Design approach to time-and-a-half accommodated exams, beginning in Spring 2020 with full implementation expected in Spring 2022. Academic classes (whether face-to-face, online, or hybrid) that use timed testing as a mode of assessment will provide all students taking that test/exam with universal time-and-a-half. Time-and-a-half is calculated at one-and-a-half times the base times (see definition below). The universal time-and-a-half tests/exams will fit within the allotted time length of the class. As of Spring 2022, students writing universal time-and-a-half tests/exams will not be eligible to write their exam in the Testing Centre, unless a student has additional exam accommodations (e.g., speech-to-text, text-to-speech, distraction reduction, double time, etc.) that require the use of the Testing Centre.

During the implementation phase, students who receive an accommodation of Universal Design time-and-a-half only will receive information about their time-and-a-half exams from their Instructor or Chair.

The provision of universal time-and-a-half is designed to support students with diagnosed, undiagnosed, or undisclosed disabilities as well as supporting students who are studying in their second language.

#### **Definitions:**

**Barrier:** anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal; anything that is based on information or communications; anything that is the result of a policy or a practice – that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional impact.

**Base Time:** base time is the amount of time that an exam should take to write, based on the standards or guidelines set by the program.

As an example, if a standard existed that stated a multiple-choice question should take 1 minute to answer, then an exam with 30 multiple-choice questions would have a base time of 30 minutes.

**College Community:** any student, faculty, administrative or staff member of the college, member of the public serving in a recognized capacity for the college, and employee of an agency contracted by the college.

**Duty to Accommodate students with experience of disabilities:** refers to the requirement under Section 5 of the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and Section 4 of the *Alberta Human Rights Act* that prohibits discrimination regarding goods, services, accommodation, and facilities. As a result, educational institutions are required to make arrangements, adjustments, and alterations in the educational environment to ensure that it does not have a discriminatory effect on a student because of student's disability. The duty to accommodate students with disabilities is part of the college's larger duty not to discriminate.

**Essential Requirements:** essential requirements include both bona fide occupational requirements and bona fide educational/academic requirements. Essential requirements include, but are not limited to, the knowledge and skills that must be acquired and demonstrated in order for a student to successfully meet the learning outcomes of the course, program, or workplace experience.

**Extra Time:** added time over and above the base time.

At NorQuest we currently provide two kinds of extra time as an approved accommodation:

- Time-and-a-half – Calculated as 1.5 times the base time of an exam. E.g., a student writing a 30-minute exam accommodated at time-and-a-half would have 45 minutes to complete the exam.
- Double Time – Calculated as 2 times the base time of an exam. E.g., a student writing a 30-minute exam accommodated at double time would have 60 minutes to complete the exam.

**Functional Impact:** the ways in which a disability will affect an individual's access to activities, such as learning. Functional impacts are used to identify reasonable accommodation(s) for students with experience of disabilities.

**Instructional Assistants:** an approved accommodation provided to a student that will support the reduction of educational barriers, with the intent of supporting students' movement toward their individual expression of independence in the classroom. The Instructional Assistant works one-on-one with a student in the classroom.

<b>Related NorQuest College Information:</b>
<b>Related External Information:</b>
<b>Next Review Date:</b>
<b>Revision History:</b>

**Psychological Educational Assessment (Psych Ed):** a collected series of assessments performed by a professional psychologist with the express intent of uncovering a student’s barriers and functional impacts. A psychological educational assessment provides a post-secondary institute with recommended accommodations to support a student’s functional impacts.

- [Academic Misconduct Procedure](#)
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy \(FOIP\) Act Policy](#)
- [Duty to Accommodate Students with a Disability Policy](#)
- [Non-Academic Misconduct Procedure](#)
- Testing Services Procedure (to be developed)
  
- [Alberta Human Rights Act](#), Section 4
- [Canadian Human Rights Act](#), Section 5
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy \(FOIP\) Act](#)

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