

Policies and Procedures

Academic Accommodation

Originator: Dean of Student Services
Approver: Senior Academic Committee
Effective: July 20, 2016
Replaces: May 13, 2008

- 1. Preamble** Red River College is dedicated to ensuring access to education for academically qualified persons with disabilities. Arrangements must be made so the learning opportunities available to students with diagnosed disabilities are also available to students facing a physical, medical, learning, or psychological disability. This requires both the identification and implementation of Accommodations. All members of the College community share responsibilities for providing Accommodations.

- 2. Policy** Red River College will provide Accommodation to meet the needs of persons with Documented Disabilities. Students with disabilities are required to meet the same academic criteria as non-disabled students. Accommodation will be reasonable, appropriate, effective, practical and subject to the College's financial and resource constraints.

- 3. Definitions**
 - 3.1 "**Accommodation**" means a reasonable intervention that helps a student with a Documented Disability receive the most benefit from course delivery and demonstrate required performance standards. Accommodation may occur in the classroom or at a field placement. Examples include: tutorial services, adaptive technologies, exam modifications (additional time, reduced distraction settings or oral exams)

 - 3.2 "**Documentation (or Documented)**" refers to information obtained from a qualified professional whose credentials are approved by Student Support Services. This professional will have specific training, expertise and experience in the diagnosis of the condition for which Accommodation is being requested. Documentation must include the impact the student will face within the learning environment.

 - 3.3 "**Documented Disability**" refers to permanent or temporary significant physical, sensory, psychiatric or learning disabilities which interfere with a person's ability to perform the range of activities expected in an academic or field placement setting

 - 3.4 "**Field Placement**" refers to all situations where a student attends a workplace to participate in supervised practical experience pursuant to College curriculum. Accommodation may be provided in a Field Placement as long as the individual remains a student of the College.

 - 3.5 "**Student Support Services**" refers to Counselling and Accessibility Services, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, and Exam Accommodations and Assistive Technology .

- 4. Principles**
 - 4.1 To be admitted to the College, students with a Documented Disability must meet the same academic standards as other students.

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4.2 Students who self-identify as having a Documented Disability will be provided with information to help them receive support and information on Accommodation from Student Support Services.

4.3 The practical and ethical purpose of any Accommodation is to equalize access and opportunity as much as possible between students with and without disabilities. The intended outcome is for equal opportunity between students with a Documented Disability and non-disabled students. The core issue of academic accommodations involves the determination of what allowances can equitably be made for the learning process while maintaining academic standards. Accommodation will provide full access to curriculum to students with a Documented Disability and will facilitate the student's ability to demonstrate his/her knowledge.

4.4 Students with a Documented Disability are expected to demonstrate and achieve the same competencies as other students in their program or department.

4.5 Generally the most appropriate Accommodation can be attained through a collaborative effort between the student, who has personal knowledge of his/her disability, the instructor who has content knowledge and an understanding of the required outcomes, and a Manager or counsellor from Student Support Services who has a broad-based knowledge of disabilities and their impact on academic performance.

4.6 Review of documentation provided by a qualified professional is a vital component of determining appropriate Accommodations.

4.7 The College has a legal obligation to accommodate students with disabilities and this is reflected in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Manitoba Human Rights Code.

5. Process

5.1 A student with a Documented Disability is encouraged to identify his/her disability at the time of application to the College or as soon as the disability is identified. Requests for Accommodation should be made as soon as possible to provide adequate time for planning and implementation.

5.2 In order to receive Accommodation, a student must contact Student Support Services and work with either Counselling and Accessibility Services, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, or Exam Accommodations and Assistive Technology.

5.3 A student with a Documented Disability will be expected to provide adequate Documentation. Guidelines for what constitutes adequate Documentation are provided on the College's website. Where the Documented Disability is not obvious or may be unique, the student should provide as much medical information as they have at the time of the request and be prepared to collect and provide more.

5.4 Student Support Services will assess the needs of students with a Documented Disability. An Accommodation strategy will be discussed with the student and, if required, the instructor. Student Support Services will then facilitate the implementation of the Accommodation. Professional recommendations of Accommodation will be considered. The final determination of Accommodation, however, will be made by Student Support Services, and will be based on specific course objectives, learning outcomes, and available resources.

5.5 Once an Accommodation is implemented, the student will meet regularly with their assigned counsellor or applicable manager to monitor the effectiveness of the Accommodation.

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5.6 Abuse of an Accommodation, or Accommodation facilitator, will result in discipline or loss of the Accommodation. A non-exhaustive list of abusive actions include: sharing notes (in any manner) that were provided through Accommodation, misusing the right to audio record lectures, using abusive language toward an Accommodation facilitator (including Student Support Services staff), or misrepresenting an Accommodation need.

6. Appeal Process

6.1 Within five College working days of receiving an Accommodation decision with which the student does not agree, the student may appeal the decision through the process outlined in S3 - Student Appeals. Accordingly, students pursuing an appeal of an Accommodation should review the procedures and timeframes detailed in the Student Appeals policy.

6.2 For the purposes of this policy, The informal resolution process stipulated in section 4.1 of policy S3 – Student Appeals will take place by discussion between the student, the Manager responsible for the accommodations being appealed (Counselling and Accessibility Services, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services or Exam Accommodations and Assistive Technology) and the instructor if applicable.

6.3 The informal resolution process must be satisfied before the formal appeal process may proceed. Permission from the Director of Student Support Services is required if the student, or the Manager responsible for the Accommodation, does not want to participate in the informal resolution process.

6.4 If the matter is not resolved through the informal resolution process, the formal appeal process stipulated in policy S3 – Student Appeals applies. Under such circumstances, the appeal authority will be the Director of Student Support Services.

6.5 If a satisfactory conclusion cannot be reached, a student may appeal to the Dean of Student Services in accordance with the Student Appeals Policy.

6.6 Once these levels of appeal have been exhausted, a student may request that the matter be heard by an Appeal Committee in accordance with the Student Appeal Policy.

6.7 Where a College employee disagrees with an Accommodation decision, they may appeal the decision in accordance with the procedures set forth from time to time by the Counselling and Accessibility Services Department.

7. Confidentiality

7.1 Student Support Services will keep all student files confidential.

7.2 Information regarding a student's disability will only be disclosed with the express permission and signature of the student, unless otherwise permitted or prescribed by law. For greater clarity, an instructor will only be notified of a student's disability and Accommodation with the express permission and signature of the student.

7.3 An instructor in possession of information regarding a student's Documented Disability will keep all such information confidential. He/she will not release information regarding any aspect of the student's Documented Disability without the student's informed consent, unless otherwise permitted or prescribed by law.

8. Responsibilities

8.1 Accommodations require collaboration and full support from deans, chairs, instructors, Student Support Services, and students.

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8.2 **Academic Administrators** have the responsibility to model the College's commitment to provide equal access to courses and programs for students with Documented Disabilities. They have the responsibility to be actively engaged in working with instructors, Student Support Services, and students to ensure effective Accommodation.

8.3 **Instructors** have the responsibility to create a classroom atmosphere that is inclusive non-discriminatory and free of harassment. If any instructor believes a student would benefit from Accommodation, they should refer the student to Student Support Services.

Instructors will facilitate Accommodations as recommended by Student Support Services. If an instructor believes that an Accommodation compromises learning outcomes, it is critical that this opinion is shared with Student Support Services so that the situation can be reviewed.

8.4 **Student Support Services** has the responsibility to support and assist students with a Documented Disability throughout their time at the College. This includes reviewing Documentation, assisting a symptomatic student to seek a diagnosis, and recommending and implementing Accommodation. Student Support Services will also act as a College-wide resource to provide consultation and education to all staff.

8.5 **Students with a Documented Disability** who are seeking Accommodation have the responsibility to self-identify early in their College career. They are required to

- i. follow the processes outlined by Counselling and Accessibility services, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, and Exam Accommodations and Assistive Technology.
- ii. meet the appropriate standard of Documentation.
- iii. cooperate with individuals assisting with an Accommodation, including but not exclusive to: Student Support Services, instructors, or Accommodation facilitators.
- iv. apply for available government funding to offset the costs of Accommodation.
- v. follow the Student Support Services' Handbook for Students with Disabilities.

8.6 **The Entire College Community** has the responsibility to foster an environment that is courteous, inclusive and respectful. By so doing, each individual contributes to the positive learning experience of every student. Members of the College community are also responsible for complying with Policy H1 – Discrimination and Harassment.

Related Policy and Legislation

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982)

The Manitoba Human Rights Code Chapter H175

2.9 Executive Limitation – Student Success Red River College Board of Governors Policy Manual

A1 – Application and Admission to College Programs

G3 – Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

H1 – Discrimination and Harassment

H12 – Equity Diversity & Inclusion

S1 – Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities

S3 – Student Appeals

Student Support Services' Faculty Reference Guide

Student Support Services' Handbook for Students with Disabilities