

## ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATING PROCEDURE: Access and Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

<b>Procedure ID:</b>	#7-701
<b>Approved by Executive Leaders Team:</b>	<i>Original:</i> 2008
<b>Current Review Date:</b>	November 2023
<b>Effective Date:</b>	November 2023
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	2026
<b>Administrative Contact for Procedure Interpretation:</b>	Accessibility Manager

### Policy Statement

At Fleming College Toronto, we are committed to building an inclusive and accessible learning and working environment. We believe in and promote the rights of all persons with disabilities as enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA, 2005) and its related Accessibility Standards Regulations. The College supports the intent of the AODA and its goal of achieving accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, Accommodations, employment, buildings, structures and premises.

The College affirms the rights of all persons, including those with disabilities, to have access to equal opportunity in employment, education, Accommodation or business dealings with the College.

The College commits to inclusive design, systematic removal of barriers and accommodating the remaining needs. Counselling & Accessible Education Services is responsible for leadership in the delivery of Accommodations and services for students with disabilities at Fleming College Toronto. This includes setting operational procedures, administration of funding targeted for the provision of services for students with disabilities received by the government and working with other areas of the College to promote the systematic removal of barriers.

### Definitions/Acronyms

The following definitions and acronyms apply to this operating procedure, in addition to those included in its linked Policy 3-341 Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities.

**Academic Accommodation:** An Academic Accommodation is an individualized adjustment to how a student with a disability accesses or participates in a course or program. These Accommodations are individualized to the student's specific needs and the program requirements. Academic Accommodations do not alter the learning outcomes or essential program requirements. Examples include the use of an ASL interpreter, the use of extra time to complete tests, or taking a reduced course load.

A reasonable Accommodation is one which does not impose undue hardship on the College in the form of significant alteration to the fundamental nature of the learning outcomes and/or the academic standards of a program or course; significant alteration to a work process that would disadvantage other employees; substantial economic hardship to a College program or department that would affect its economic viability; significant adverse impact on learning opportunities for other students; the health and safety of other students or employees and/or safety hazards to other persons or property; or significant disruption of College operations.

**Alternative Text:** Print textbooks can create barriers to learning for students with various disabilities. Alternate format textbooks are an Accommodation for such students. One of the most common alternate formats students with disabilities access is electronic formats that can be read by text-to-voice software such as Kurzweil, Texthelp or JAWS. Braille textbooks are another format.

**Disability Documentation:** In general, Disability Documentation should be written by a health care professional qualified to diagnose the condition and identify the difficulties it may have on the student in school or at work. Students with disabilities may generally be expected to provide documentation that states that the student has a disability, the limitations or needs associated with the disability, whether the student can perform the essential duties or requirements of their academic program, with or without Accommodation and the type of Accommodation(s) that may be needed to allow the student to fulfill the essential duties or requirements of their program.

## Operating Procedure

### 1.0 - Requesting Accommodation Due to a Disability

1.1 - The College will communicate to students and potential students the mechanism by which requests for Accommodation are made. The following are examples of how this occurs:

- The Admissions department includes, as part of the general information that is mailed to students who have been accepted, specific instructions regarding disclosure procedures for disability needs.
- Disability Accommodation information is provided in college calendars and other college publications.
- Disability Accommodation pamphlets are displayed prominently at college recruitment events.
- Staff inform people about such procedures by phone.
- A web page on disability Accommodations is established on the college's website

1.2 - A student who wishes to request Accommodation has a responsibility to communicate their needs in sufficient detail and lead time and to cooperate in consultations to enable the college to respond to the request.

Some forms of Accommodation require substantial notice of 10 weeks or more. Examples include but are not limited to Braille, alternate format textbooks, and American Sign Language interpreters. Failure to provide sufficient notice may negatively affect the college's ability to respond to Accommodation needs without a resulting delay.

Students who require Accommodation must contact the college to schedule an appointment with a counsellor to discuss their needs.

1.3 - Returning students wishing to continue Accommodation arrangements are required to meet with a college counsellor prior to or at the beginning of each semester to discuss the renewal of or changes to the previous arrangements.

### 2.0 - Determining Accommodation Requirements

2.1 - The college counsellor will assess the request for Accommodation using the definition of disability from the Ontario Human Rights Code (see definitions).

2.2 - After meeting and consulting with the student with a disability and after referring to pertinent Disability Documentation, the counsellor will recommend appropriate Accommodations.

- a) When a student does not have Disability Documentation, the counsellor will work with the student to help them acquire it. This could mean having the student or counsellor contact the student's high school to obtain copies of documentation on file. In cases where no disability has been previously diagnosed, the counsellor will provide the student with a plan for obtaining a diagnosis from a qualified health professional. While the student is in the process of obtaining Disability Documentation, they may access "interim Accommodations," which are limited to extra time for tests (1.5x), learning strategies instruction and tutoring supports (note-taking assistance may also be provided if the college has already hired a note taker for the student's courses). Interim Accommodations are not renewed the following semester if the student does not follow through on their requirements to obtain documentation.

**2.3** - Formal procedures are in place for students to access most Academic Accommodations. This is being done to facilitate their implementation. For example, many students require additional time for tests or writing them in a quiet location. The Accessible Education Services department has a form that students with disabilities and their professors must complete for AES staff to schedule space and invigilators properly.

**2.4** - The college counsellor will consult with others as appropriate (e.g., faculty, facilities) to discuss recommended Accommodation and arrange implementation.

**2.5** - Faculty are not automatically informed about services and Accommodation required for a student with a disability. Students are encouraged to advocate for themselves and the assistance they need. Counsellors provide their students with a memo which outlines the Accommodations that the students may choose to share with their professors.

### **3.0 - The Admissions Process**

Any assessment of an applicant's ability to meet the published admission requirements will be based on the applicant's functional ability at the time of the application. Anticipated physical or mental deterioration or incapacity will not be a factor in any assessment.

Prospective students must not be excluded from college programs due to a perception that it is unlikely the applicant will be successful in obtaining employment due to disability or lack of Accommodations for that disability in the labour market. However, all students should be counselled as to the possibilities and realities of future employment in order to be able to make an informed decision. As part of the process, counsellors may link the student with faculty, coordinators, health services or other suitable sources of information to enable the prospective student to feel fully informed. The decision to apply or not rests with the prospective student.

### **Complaint Procedure**

Occasionally, disputes may arise concerning the provision of Accommodations for students with disabilities. Students may choose to discuss the issue with their counsellor. For matters not resolved at that level, the student may choose to pursue a complaint under the College's Harassment and Discrimination complaint procedures.

### **Related Documents**

- College Policy #3-341, *Access and Accommodation for Persons with Disabilities*
- College Policy #3-311, *Harassment and Discrimination Prevention*
- Administrative Operating Procedure #3-311 OP, *Harassment and Discrimination Prevention*

**History of Amendments/Reviews:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
2008	Original approved
2009	Reviewed and approved
2015	Reviewed and approved under multi-year accessibility plan
2023	Reviewed and approved