

DATE ORIGINATED: 1999-02-09
LATEST REVIEW: 2005-06-01
NEXT REVIEW: 2010-06-01

SELKIRK COLLEGE POLICY: 3300 (Former B3003.1)

REFERENCE: STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC DISABILITIES

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY: DEAN OF STUDENT DEVELOPMENT/REGISTRAR

POLICY:

1. **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate access to Selkirk College courses, programs, and services by students with specific disabilities (physical, sensory, psychological, or cognitive). The policy is intended to assist students with disabilities to participate in a class and achieve success in the area of learning not precluded by the disability.

In addition, it allows alternatives in meeting course objectives and evaluation procedures in ways which do not affect course or program standards. The purpose of this policy is also to specify the resources and services available for both students and faculty, and procedures for making appropriate modifications to accommodate students with specific disabilities; and the guidelines to be used in determining what constitutes a reasonable accommodation within the overall course or program goals or standards. The guidelines are attached as Appendix A to this policy.

2. **GENERAL POLICY:**

Disabled students will have reasonable access to appropriate learning opportunities within the College system provided that:

- a. College resources and budget priorities permit;
- b. specific course prerequisites have been met;
- c. other, non-academic, stated program requirements have been met;
- d. admission to a course or program does not present a safety hazard to the student and others, and does not reduce the learning opportunities of others;
- e. course objectives and course or program standards are not compromised.

Services (detailed below) will be provided to disabled students who have documentation of their disability or who can provide strong evidence of an undiagnosed disability and who meet the criteria above. Services will be provided upon request on a first come, first served basis for students who are deemed to be enrolled in courses which match their current skill level.

While Selkirk will make every reasonable effort to accommodate students with a disability, students must also accept their responsibility as defined within this policy. Provision of accommodations involves many people, including the student, the instructor(s), the Disability Service Advisor, Learning Specialist and many others. For accommodations to be made, disclosure must occur early enough to provide sufficient time to arrange for any special equipment, supports or other strategies.

Also in line with student responsibility, an individual who chooses not to disclose a disability, and who is unsuccessful as a consequence, is likely to jeopardize the success of any appeal based on the College's failure to accommodate the disability. Similarly, a student who discloses a disability but who chooses not to follow through with the planning process for accommodations, or to utilize appropriate supports that may be provided, undermines his or her ability to challenge the College.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a student who is unaware of a disability, but who is identified as having or becomes aware of having a disability at any point following application or registration, will be accommodated following disclosure to the extent possible given the circumstances at the time.

3. PROCEDURES:

The Disability Service Advisor will be responsible for day-to-day processing and negotiation of accommodation requests, strategies and approvals. When circumstances warrant, the Advisor will be assisted by an advisory group consisting of the Department Head of Student Access and Support, the Dean of Student Development/Registrar and the Human Rights Advisor. This core group may be augmented by others as appropriate.

Selkirk College normally requires documentation in order to accommodate students with disabilities. However, if there is sufficient indication to suggest that a bonafide disability may be present, the student may make an appointment with the Special Services/Accommodations Advisor to discuss his/her learning barriers. Alternatively, an instructor may recommend that a student consult with the Special Services/Accommodations Advisor. At this time, the Special Services/Accommodations Advisor may suggest strategies to address the student's particular learning needs (e.g., one-on-one tutoring), as well as options that may exist for formally documenting the disability.

- 3.1 Where alterable existing physical characteristics of the campus pose obstacles or unsafe conditions for a disabled student, these physical characteristics will be modified subject to College resources.
- 3.2 The College will attempt to ensure that specific substitutions or adaptations for measuring admission requirements are made for students with specific handicapping conditions, e.g., oral entrance exam, extended time, sign language interpreter for interview, typed writing assessment.
- 3.3 It is important for students with known disabilities to apply and register as early as possible. This will facilitate the provision of special arrangements necessary to accommodate the disabilities. For example, it usually requires four months to access taped textbooks and sign language interpreters.
- 3.4 Additional services available to students with specific disabilities include transition planning into the College and from the college to the student's next placement, the development of an educational plan, assistance with registration, counselling, assistance in obtaining academic and vocational assessments, help in acquiring learning assistance and tutors, assistance in obtaining financial aid, coordination of agencies working with the student, and provision of special equipment or interpreters. Recommendations for learning/study strategies and equipment will be available based on the particular needs of the individual student.
- 3.5 The Disability Advisor and Learning Specialist will serve as resources to faculty. A handbook of recommendations for classroom and instructional delivery adaptations for specific disabilities will be available to faculty. Consultation and tailoring of recommendations for specific student's needs will also be available upon request (by either student or instructor). Additional information enabling instructors to learn more about specific disabilities (i.e., learning disabilities, auditory impairment, sight impairment, etc.) will be available in print and video formats. Periodically, inservice opportunities will be provided to faculty to improve their knowledge of specific handicapping conditions and their ability to make appropriate modifications.
- 3.6 When a student's disability impacts negatively on the student's ability to take conventional examinations or complete particular assignments, the Disability Service Advisor and the Learning Specialist will be responsible for identifying appropriate modifications, communicating these modifications to the student's instructors, and providing the support to implement these modifications. Such modifications will be discussed with and agreed to by the appropriate departments. In every case the modifications will be designed to match the functional limitations of the student without compromising the course or program objectives and standards. The intent is to provide the accommodations which are necessary in order for the student to be able to show what he/she does know. With the use of these accommodations the student is expected to achieve the same standard of quality and proficiency as required of other students in the course.

Procedures will be established for 1) everyone involved in proctoring or delivery of accommodations including a complete, careful training process; 2) secure collection and delivery of exams; 3) requirements of reasonable advanced notice by students who wish special test accommodations (e.g., one or two weeks).

Test accommodations are always to be matched appropriately to the student's functional limitations. How long a student works on a test, any unusual circumstances that occurred, and any help given will be documented.

No mention of accommodation will be placed on a transcript unless the student fails to meet the usual course requirements/standards.

Possible accommodations include the following:

- a. A quiet, proctored, separate place for testing. This is particularly helpful for students with attention deficits. It is also required by those students who use verbal strategies for problem solving or recalling.
- b. Pace during psychomotor or laboratory test. The idea is to minimize the impact of the student's disability and to provide an equal opportunity for the disabled student to demonstrate acquired knowledge or skills.
- c. Provision of a reader. Alternatives include the use of a text reader, a computer with voice synthesis or recording the test questions on an audio tape.
- d. Some form of scribe or simplified writing. Alternatives include making responses on a computer or recording responses on a tape recorder.
- e. Oral exam (for essay tests or psychomotor skills). An alternative here is to audio or video tape the student's responses in order to simplify and objectify the marking.
- f. Technical Aids. These may take many forms, dependent upon the nature of the disability and the nature of the technical aids available. The desired way to use the aid is to expect the same quality of finished product from the disabled student as from any other student.
- g. Extended time. This may be desirable so that speed doesn't become a limiting factor in testing. This may be an appropriate accommodation for a student with a learning disability, a perceptual disability, a processing disability, or a motor disability.
- h. Question interpretation. This may be appropriate for a student with a language disability. This would only be done on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the instructor regarding exactly what help is to be given. Prior approval of the instructor is required. (A superior alternative is to rephrase the test questions before the test is given). The individual working with the student will fully document the specific test questions dealt with and the assistance provided.

- 3.7 When all objectives of a course cannot be completed due to a specific disability, the student's instructor and Disability Service Advisor or Learning Specialist will submit to the Registrar a Recommended Anecdotal Grade form listing the disability and the course components which will be completed. At the end of the term the final grade, the nature of the disability, plus a brief list of completed components are again submitted to the Registrar's Office. Grade and anecdote will be printed on the transcript.

Anecdotal Grade standing is subject to approval by the appropriate Dean.

- 3.8 Reasonable effort will be made to provide or procure specialized equipment/resources as required to meet the specific needs of disabled students.

These may include the following: talking books, large print books, vision enhancers, computers, spell checkers, interpreters, tutors, adjustable lab work stations, campus orientation tours, text readers, word processor with voice synthesizer, tape recorders.

- 3.9 While the College will do its best to provide appropriate support and accommodations, the student must accept the final responsibility for meeting course and program requirements. Those providing services will make a conscious effort to encourage students with disabilities to become autonomous learners and self advocates.

4. If a student is not satisfied that Disability Service Advisor has addressed his/her particular needs and does not feel that the appropriate accommodations have been made, the student has the right to appeal through the various channels, beginning with the Department Head of Student Access and Support. (See also Policy 3007, Student Appeals Policy.)

Appendix A

Guidelines for Determining Appropriate Accommodations

Before appropriate accommodations can be identified, it is necessary to consider what the minimal, critical performance expectations are for students in the course or program and how these relate to the possible accommodations. The following questions are designed to guide that determination. In general, the aspects to be considered include student entry criteria, learning and performance outcomes, minimal acceptable levels of performance, instructional limitations, and assessment techniques.

- I. Determining Essential Program or Course components.
 - A. What is the primary overall purpose or goal of the program or course? (For example, is it for general interest, employment preparation, a prerequisite to further study, a program completion prerequisite, or other.)
 - B. What are the outcomes variables that are absolutely required of all participants?
 1. At the program level
 - a. What skills or competencies will be needed in the field after graduation?
 - b. What are the requirements for licensing or professional accreditation?
 - c. What are the requirements for successful completion of the program?
 2. At the course level
 - a. What specific knowledge, principles, concepts or skills must be mastered and/or demonstrated?
 - b. What are acceptable levels of performance on these measures? (For example, 100% of program competencies must be demonstrated; 85% of exam questions must be answered or performed correctly.)
 - C. What methods of instruction are non-negotiable? Why? (For example, auditory presentation of musical compositions may be deemed absolutely necessary in a music appreciation class because of the designated nature and purpose of the course.)
 - D. What methods of assessing outcome variables are absolutely necessary? Why? (For example, a nursing student's proficiency in starting an IV must be assessed by physical performance and this skill is a requirement of the program and/or the licensing agency.)
- II. Student Variables
 - A. What pre-existing knowledge, abilities, skills or attributes must all participating students possess in order to meet program standards? (For example, aviation students need to be able to see; firefighters require physical strength; certain academic prerequisites may be necessary.)
 - B. What is the minimal pre-existing level of proficiency in these abilities? (For example, pilots may need an uncorrected standard of 20/60 vision correctable to 20/20; firefighters may need to be able to lift and carry 50 kg for a distance of 100 ft English 12 with a C+ may be needed.)
 - C. Does the ability or skill necessarily need to be performed in a prescribed manner? (For example, lifting a patient must be done in a particular way to avoid injury to both the patient and attendant.)
 - D. Does the student understand the essential purposes of the course, and the nature and reasons for any restrictions on accommodations with respect to methods of instruction or means of evaluation?

- E. Can the student meet all essential requirements in spite of his or her disability when given reasonable accommodations?
- F. Will accommodating individual needs pose a risk to personal or public safety? (For example, a person with epileptic episodes might successfully complete a program - or drive a car - but still pose a hazard.)

III. Considering Reasonable Accommodations

- A. What alternate methods of instruction involving different perceptual or cognitive abilities could be used to present essential program or course components? (For example, the traditional format of oral lecturing could be supplemented with advance notes or use of an overhead projector to highlight key concepts. Or, a deaf student could be provided with an interpreter.)
- B. What auxiliary aids might be beneficial to the student? (For example, taped texts might help a student with a reading disability or a student who was visually impaired.)
- C. In what ways is the instructor willing to facilitate the use of auxiliary aids? (For example, the instructor might ask the class for volunteer note takers or peer tutors.)
- D. What alternative methods of evaluation could be considered for assessing essential outcome variables? (For example, a traditional written exam might be given orally or be scribed.)
- E. How will scores from alternative measures be equated with traditional standards? (For example, how would oral exams be compared with other students= written responses?)
- F. What are acceptable levels of performance on the alternative measures? (For example, if process as well as product is part of evaluation, how will the two be weighted?)
- G. Will the use of any of the above accommodations compromise the accomplishment of essential requirements? (For example, providing an interpreter for a deaf student who wants to do medical transcription.)

INTERNAL CIRCULATION:	2005-06-01
PRC RECOMMENDATION:	2006-03-03
PRESIDENT'S / EDCOUNCIL APPROVAL:	2006-03-16
POLICY CIRCULATION:	2006-03-20

06-03-20 / MP