

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Section:	Academic/Student (AC)
Subject:	Student Performance and Behaviour
Legislation:	
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APPROVED: _____
President and CEO

POLICY

SAIT is committed to providing a learning environment that supports students with disabilities and to ensuring that such students have equal opportunities at and are reasonably accommodated by SAIT. As well, SAIT will endeavour at all times to meet its obligations under applicable human rights and privacy laws as they affect students with disabilities.

PROCEDURE**DEFINITIONS**

Accommodation The process of making alterations to the delivery of services so that those services are accessible to students with disabilities. Accommodation does not require SAIT to lower its academic standards, and a student with a disability has the responsibility to acquire and develop the essential skills and competencies expected of all students.

Accommodation plan The documented plan between SAIT and the student that specifies the reasonable accommodations that SAIT will provide for the student.

Disabilities Physical or medical conditions including, but not limited to, hearing loss, vision loss, mobility disabilities, psychological/psychiatric disabilities, learning disabilities,

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neurological disorders, health problems and illnesses. Disabilities may be temporary or permanent.

Disability documentation

Documentation establishing that a student has a disability.

Release

The document that the Accessibility Services unit of the Learner Services department prepares and that the student signs, which allows Accessibility Services to release information about the student to individuals specified in the release. Accessibility Services keeps originally signed releases.

Undue hardship

A situation where accommodating a student with disabilities leads to unreasonable and excessive challenges for SAIT. This includes but is not limited to situations where:

- a) The accommodation significantly interferes with the rights of other students;
- b) The accommodation creates health and/or safety concerns;
- c) The financial cost of the accommodation is excessive, in the context of SAIT as a whole; and/or
- d) The accommodation would result in a course or program requirement not being met.

Workplace accommodations

Reasonable accommodations which may be necessary to allow a student with disabilities to successfully complete a project or workplace experiential learning placement, where such project or placement is a required component of the student's program at SAIT.

PROCEDURE

A. Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities have the right to:

1. Access SAIT services and programs. SAIT upholds and implements the principle that its students with disabilities must be reasonably accommodated, provided such

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accommodation does not cause undue hardship to SAIT. What constitutes reasonable accommodation in each case will be guided by Accessibility Services' recommendations.

2. Have their disability information and documentation kept confidential. Such confidentiality is subject to disclosure to SAIT's employees and agents working in SAIT's Accessibility Services and to applicable benefits providers on a strict "need-to-know" and confidential basis, and subject further to applicable laws and court orders. It is also subject to procedure [AD.1.1.2 Confidentiality of Student Information](#). A student with a disability may also grant written approval to disclosure of part or all of the confidential information in the form of a release.
3. Appeal accommodation decisions made by SAIT, as set out below:
 - a) Accommodation decisions made by Accessibility Services:
 - i) If a student with a disability disagrees with an accommodation decision made by the student's accessibility advisor, the student shall meet with the accessibility advisor in order to informally resolve the disagreement.
 - ii) If the disagreement cannot be informally resolved, the student may formally appeal the accessibility advisor's decision within five business days of receipt of that decision by way of a letter to the manager of Accessibility Services (the "manager").
 - iii) The manager shall meet with the student within seven business days of receipt of the student's appeal letter.
 - iv) The manager shall advise the student in writing of the decision within five business days of that meeting.
 - v) The student may formally appeal the manager's decision by way of a letter to the associate vice president responsible for Accessibility Services.
 - vi) The associate vice president shall meet with the student within seven business days of receipt of the student's appeal letter. The student is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by another individual, such as the SAITSA vice president, academic; in general, however, only the student shall speak on the student's behalf.
 - vii) The associate vice president shall advise the student in writing of the decision within five business days of that meeting.

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- viii) The student may formally appeal the associate vice president's decision within five business days of receipt of that decision by way of a letter to the vice president, academic.
 - ix) The vice president, academic shall meet with the student and the associate vice president within seven business days of receipt of the student's appeal letter. The student is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by another individual, such as the SAITSA vice president, academic; in general, however, only the student shall speak on the student's own behalf.
 - x) The vice president, academic shall advise the student in writing of the decision within five business days of that meeting.
 - xi) The vice president, academic's decision is final and binding.
- b) Accommodation decisions made by instructors/academic chairs/coordinators:
- i) If a student with a disability disagrees with an accommodation decision made by the student's instructor, the student shall meet with the instructor in order to informally resolve the disagreement.
 - ii) If the disagreement cannot be informally resolved, the student may formally appeal the instructor's decision within five business days of receipt of that decision by way of a letter to the academic chair/coordinator of his or her program.
 - iii) The academic chair/coordinator, accessibility advisor, manager of Accessibility Services and instructor shall meet with the student within seven business days of the receipt of the student's appeal letter. In a situation where service instruction is provided by a program other than the student's program, the academic chair/coordinator of that program shall be consulted and may participate in the meeting.
 - iv) The academic chair/coordinator of the student's program shall advise the student in writing of the decision, within five business days of that meeting.
 - v) The student may appeal the academic chair/coordinator's decision by way of a letter to the dean of the student's program within five business days of being advised of the academic chair/coordinator's decision.
 - vi) The dean of the student's program shall consult with the associate vice president responsible for Accessibility Services.

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- vii) The dean of the student's program shall meet with the student and the academic chair/coordinator within seven business days of receipt of the student's appeal letter. The student is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by another individual, such as the SAITSA vice president, academic; in general, however, only the student shall speak on the student's behalf.
- viii) The dean shall advise the student in writing of the decision within five business days of that meeting.
- ix) The student may formally appeal the dean's decision within five business days of receipt of that decision by way of a letter to the vice president, academic.
- x) The vice president, academic shall meet with the student and the dean within seven business days of receipt of the student's appeal letter. The student is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by another individual, such as the SAITSA vice president, academic; in general, however, only the student shall speak on the student's behalf.
- xi) The vice president, academic shall advise the student in writing of the decision within five business days of that meeting.
- xii) The vice president, academic's decision is final and binding.

Students with disabilities have the responsibility to:

1. Pursue their studies with the same diligence required of all SAIT students and accept responsibility for their role in successfully completing courses/programs.
2. Identify their specific needs to Accessibility Services prior to or at the start of their program of studies, or as soon thereafter as possible, if they wish to identify themselves as a person with a disability and to request a reasonable accommodation for such disability. Students should be aware that they need to give sufficient notice, as determined by Accessibility Services' procedures, to enable SAIT to arrange any necessary reasonable accommodation(s) for the disability.
3. Provide relevant and current medical, psycho-educational and/or psychological documentation to Accessibility Services, or be willing to undergo assessment if documentation is not available, in order to determine eligibility for reasonable accommodations and services. The student is responsible for the costs associated with such documentation/assessment. The documentation must:

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- a) Be provided by a medical or psychological professional who has expertise in the area of the disability;
 - b) Be submitted on letterhead, and include the date(s) of assessment(s) and the title, phone number and address of the professional documenting the disability;
 - c) Be signed and dated by the professional documenting the disability;
 - d) State the student's disability and indicate how the disability interferes or will likely interfere with the student's academic performance in a post-secondary learning environment; and
 - e) Suggest/recommend specific accommodations and services that may help minimize the impact of the disability on the student's academic performance in a post-secondary learning environment.
4. Apply for applicable funding for reasonable accommodations, as identified by the accessibility advisor.
 5. Contact Accessibility Services before the start of each term to review their current needs and to update current personal information.
 6. Participate in developing appropriate strategies, be willing to try proposed reasonable solutions and work with SAIT instructors, academic chairs/coordinators and Accessibility Services personnel to resolve disagreements regarding reasonable accommodation(s).
 7. Research and learn about the workplace requirements in their chosen occupational field and, where applicable, in their workplace experiential learning organizations, so that students understand if, how and to what level their disabilities can be accommodated in particular workplace environments. Students should consult with their academic chairs/coordinators for further information.

B. Instructors and Academic Chairs/Coordinators

Instructors and academic chairs/coordinators have the right to:

1. Ensure that a course's academic integrity and standards are not detrimentally affected despite a student's disability and that established competencies and requirements for SAIT's programs and courses are not compromised.

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2. Fail any student who has not passed or successfully completed a course or program or mastered course content as applicable.
3. Discuss a requested accommodation(s) with Accessibility Services.
4. Determine the appropriate method of adapting teaching styles to meet a reasonable accommodation(s).
5. Consult with Accessibility Services to determine how best to reasonably accommodate students with disabilities in their courses and programs.

Instructors and academic chairs/coordinators have the responsibility to:

1. Work with Accessibility Services and students to provide the reasonable accommodations requested in an accommodation plan and to attempt in good faith to resolve disagreements regarding requested reasonable accommodations.
2. Work on a reasonable basis with a student who has a documented disability in relation to that student's participation in required course field trips and/or off-campus activities. If the student's participation is not possible or practical, instructors and academic chairs/coordinators, in consultation with Accessibility Services, will determine if there is an alternative learning activity that can be an acceptable reasonable accommodation for the student.
3. Discuss requested reasonable workplace accommodations with workplace experiential learning organizations, in consultation with Accessibility Services, where the student's program requires the student to complete a workplace project or a workplace experiential learning placement, subject to the student signing a specific Consent to Release Information authorizing such discussion.
4. Attempt to maintain the student's dignity and privacy, subject to applicable laws.

C. Accessibility Services

Accessibility Services has the right to:

1. Consult with instructors, academic chairs/coordinators, deans, students, administrative staff and external professionals in order to determine the scope and implementation of reasonable accommodations.

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Accessibility Services has the responsibility to:

1. Review documentation of a student's disability to ensure its validity and currency, and request updated documentation from the student as necessary.
2. Make recommendations to instructors, academic chairs/coordinators, deans, senior management and others regarding appropriate reasonable accommodations and services. In making its recommendations, Accessibility Services will consider, but is not bound by, the suggestions/recommendations provided in the student's documentation. Accommodations are intended to remove a specific barrier created by the disability. Not all recommendations noted in the documentation are necessarily considered accommodations.
3. Consult with academic chairs/coordinators in situations in which a student with a disability has requested or is likely to request accommodations in a workplace experiential learning organization.
4. Prepare reasonable accommodation plans.
5. Prepare applicable Consents to Release Information, and obtain the student's signature on those releases, as appropriate, subject to ensuring the student has voluntarily and without duress agreed to sign same.
6. Coordinate reasonable accommodations and services for students with disabilities.
7. Provide support to instructors and academic chairs/coordinators in reasonably accommodating and working with students with disabilities.
8. Work with students, instructors and academic chairs/coordinators to resolve disagreements regarding requested reasonable accommodations.
9. Keep current with associated applicable laws.
10. Retain disability documentation and accommodation plans on file, document each and every accommodation process, and retain such documentation for at least six years following termination of the accommodation process.

POLICY/PROCEDURE REFERENCE

AC.3.16 Accommodations for Students with Disabilities policy

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