

MACEWAN

Guide book

for Prospective Students with Disabilities

Services to Students with Disabilities

www.macewan.ca/ssd

*Fostering the full and self-directed participation of
people with disabilities in post-secondary education.*

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This Guidebook is available on line at the Services to Students with Disabilities (SSD) Webpage as follow: www.macewan.ca/ssd. Braille, enlarged and e-text versions can be obtained from the SSD office upon request.

INTRODUCTION

Services to Students with Disabilities (SSD) at MacEwan has prepared this guidebook to provide general information about the services and accommodations available to MacEwan students with disabilities. If you are considering becoming a MacEwan student, please read the sections relevant to your specific needs, and direct any questions about the information provided to SSD. With the aim to support students in achieving their academic goals, we want to ensure that students have clear and reasonable expectations of MacEwan and SSD.

Good luck in your academic endeavours! We look forward to supporting you in achieving your goals.

OFFICE OF SERVICES TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

LOCATION

Services to Students with Disabilities (SSD) is part of the Student Resource Centre. The primary SSD offices are located at the City Centre Campus in Room 7-112 and at the South Campus in Room 121. At City Centre Campus, the testing area is located in Room 7-199. SSD staff will also travel to the Centre for the Arts (3rd floor) and Alberta College (6th floor) campuses as necessary. In addition, services can also be extended to the satellite campuses and to students studying at a distance.

SERVICE HOURS and APPOINTMENT SCHEDULING

The Student Resource Centre offices are open Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Appointments can be scheduled by calling the reception staff:

City Centre Campus
South Campus

(780) 497- 5063
(780) 497- 4041

HOW TO CONTACT STAFF

Abigail Parrish-Craig, Chair/Counsellor

City Centre Campus

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Assistive Computer Technology Specialists

(780) 497-5826

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Educational Assistants

City Centre, Centre for the Arts & Alberta College

(780) 497-5823

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Educational Assistants

South Campus

(780) 497-4194

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Fax Numbers

City Centre (780) 497-4656

South Campus (780) 497-4080

GETTING STARTED

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In the last section of this handbook, you will find a copy of the policy on Students with Disabilities (E3400). MacEwan also has a policy on Student Rights and Responsibilities which is published in the calendar. Please familiarize yourself with these documents as they outline important information regarding expectations of students and MacEwan.

As policy E3400 states, MacEwan shall take all reasonable measures, short of undue hardship, to provide accommodation to students with disabilities. The policy also identifies that a student with disabilities has certain responsibilities regarding his/her educational experience including the following:

- To self-identify his/her disability in order to access accommodations and services
- To provide required documentation of the disability and its functional impact
- To follow established procedures for accessing accommodations and services
- To provide timely notification of the need to change any accommodations and/or service requirement.

IDENTIFICATION OF A DISABILITY

Prior to commencing studies, students are encouraged to self-identify their disability to SSD. With adequate preparation time, SSD is better able to ensure that the necessary services and accommodations are arranged by the time that classes begin.

SSD will request that the student with a disability provide current documentation of his/her disability from a licensed professional qualified to provide information about the identified disability. SSD requests that the documentation minimally outlines the following information:

- Specific diagnosis
- Description of the functional effects of the disability particularly as they pertain to post-secondary study
- Recommendations for accommodations and support services that will permit full and equal participation in post-secondary study.

For disabilities with a medical basis, SSD has a standard Documentation of Disability and Recommendations form that can be completed by the professional if necessary. This form can be obtained from SSD or the Webpage (www.macewan.ca/ssd).

Students with learning disabilities, attention deficit disorders, and/or neurological conditions are required to provide current psychological assessments providing detailed information about intellectual abilities, academic achievement, and information processing functions.

Determination of accommodations and services occurs through a process involving review of presenting documentation and discussion among the individual student, SSD and, where necessary to ensure a full consideration of course requirements, the appropriate faculty. The following factors will be considered in this process:

- Functional effects of the disability
- Design of the course and/or academic requirements
- Accommodations and/or services that will
 - ✓ facilitate equal access to course materials, activities and requirements
 - ✓ maximize the independence of the student
 - ✓ maximize the full participation of the student
- Preferences of the individual student
- Availability of services and resource
- Reasonableness of the accommodations considering the impact on the student, instructors, SSD, other students and MacEwan in general.

ADMISSION PROCESS

Students with disabilities who are applying to MacEwan programs follow the standard documented admission process and are expected to meet the standard admission requirements. Therefore, applicants with disabilities are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the admission requirements of the MacEwan programs in which they are interested and to follow the standard procedures.

Applicants with disabilities, who are required to write the Skills Appraisal as part of the admission process and who require accommodations due to disability, are advised to contact SSD to arrange for individual administration of the Skills Appraisal. If there are other aspects of the admission process for which the individual with a disability identifies a need for accommodation, he/she is advised to contact SSD in advance to assess the need and to implement the appropriate accommodation.

FUNDING FOR ASSISTIVE SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGIES

A student with a disability may be eligible for financial assistance through resources such as the Canada Study Grant for the Accommodation of Students with Permanent Disabilities (DSG) or Disability Related Employment Supports (DRES) to cover the cost of disability related needs while he/she attends MacEwan. Costs that may be considered disability-related include the following: note taking, preparation of materials in alternate formats, some exam accommodations, academic strategy instruction, tutoring, interpreting for deaf students, specialized transportation, digital recorders, computers, assistive technologies and assistive listening devices.

Students with disabilities, who will require assistive services and technologies, are advised to meet with an SSD Counsellor, Deaf Services Coordinator or Learning Disabilities Specialist to complete the necessary applications and to be referred to a career consultant from Alberta Employment and Immigration. Using the documentation of disability and other relevant information, SSD will develop an Individual Service Plan (ISP) that outlines the specific recommendations for program planning, accommodations, services and technologies. This ISP will be included with applications for funding for disability-related needs.

SERVICE AND ACCOMMODATION OVERVIEW

Services to Students with Disabilities co-ordinates a range of assistive services and accommodations to students depending upon their individual needs. Individual service needs are assessed and negotiated by the Counsellor, Learning Disabilities Specialist and/or Deaf Services Coordinator in conjunction with the student and other relevant service providers familiar with the student's needs.

REDUCED COURSE LOAD

Some students with disabilities can be considered full-time with a reduced course load if this consideration is deemed to be an appropriate accommodation for the disability. If considered full-time with a reduced course load, the student may be eligible for the following:

- Students Finance as a full-time student
- Consideration for scholarships and awards that include full-time status as an eligibility criterion
- Access to benefits offered to full-time students such as UPass and Student Health and Dental benefits.

NOTE TAKING

The note taking services offered at MacEwan usually involve the student with a disability recruiting one to three classmates who are willing to be peer note takers. The volunteers record their notes on the NCR (copy) paper that the student with a disability has obtained from SSD. The peer note taker keeps one copy and the student with a disability is given the second copy.

LECTURE RECORDING

SSD may recommend that a student with a qualifying disability be permitted to record (audiotape, digitally record) class lectures as an academic accommodation. Use of this accommodation of recording class lectures is subject to the following conditions:

- The student acknowledges that audio records of class lectures are only for the student's personal use in study and preparation related to the class;

- The student agrees that he/she may not share these audio records with any other person, even a person is in his/her class;
- The student acknowledges that the audio records are sources and any use in academic work is governed by rules of academic integrity at MacEwan;
- The student agrees to destroy any audio records when they are no longer needed for his/her academic work.

The student, who has been granted permission to audio record class lectures as an accommodation, must agree in writing to abide by each of the above conditions.

ALTERNATE FORMAT MATERIAL PREPARATION

Students who have difficulties reading standard print material usually require access to the alternate format material preparation services provided by Educational Assistants through SSD. Depending on the student's disability, need and preferences, academic print materials may be provided in one or more of the following formats:

- Enlarged print
- Audio (CD, MP3)
- Electronic text
- Braille
- Audio-visual transcription

EXAM ACCOMMODATIONS

Exam accommodations are alterations to exam conditions to ensure the student with a disability has the opportunity to demonstrate his/her mastery of the material tested by an exam. Accommodations are provided by SSD to eliminate any disadvantage caused by the disability. However, exam accommodations are not intended to allow students with disabilities to have an advantage over other students on exams.

Exam accommodations, which vary depending on the individual's need, may include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following: extended time (specified), alternate format exam, alternate format response system, isolation, access to assistive and/or computer technology.

ACADEMIC STRATEGY INSTRUCTION

Academic strategy instruction is offered individually by the Learning Disabilities Specialist and/or a Writing and Learning Services Specialist. The instruction is designed to assist students in learning how to learn making the best use of their learning strengths while considering the effects of identified learning challenges. Specific instruction may be provided in the study skills involved with reading, writing, editing, note taking, time management, task management, and memory.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

Some students with disabilities may need one to one assistance to allow them the opportunity to participate fully in their academic coursework. This assistance may be required in and/or out of class. For example, a visually impaired student may require an educational assistant in some classes to read or describe visually presented material and/or to provide scribe assistance to document the student's responses to assigned work. In a science laboratory, a blind or physically disabled student may require an educational assistant to follow the student's instructions in completing experiments. In another situation, a physically disabled student may require an educational assistant to scribe the student's work on in-class assignments. Another student may require individualized assistance from an educational assistant to access the resources housed in the Library.

INTERPRETER SERVICES

Interpreter services are provided to facilitate communication in post-secondary settings between hearing people and individuals with hearing loss who use a signed and/or oral language to communicate.

COMMUNICATION ACCESS REAL-TIME TRANSLATION (CART) REPORTER SERVICES

Communication Access Real-Time Translation (CART) Reporter services are provided to facilitate communication among hearing people and individuals with hearing loss in post-secondary settings. The CART reporting system provides a visual display of spoken words. With appropriate software, the size and contrast of the projected copy can be modified to facilitate communication access from the instructor and class to the student with a hearing loss. The display provided will be a near word-for-word transcription of the events as they occur.

TUTORING

In this context, tutoring involves meetings between a student with a disability and an individual who is knowledgeable about a particular field of study. The purpose of the tutoring sessions is to assist the student to acquire or strengthen knowledge or skills required in his/her program of study. The tutoring sessions may be scheduled on a regular basis or as the need arises.

FIELD AND CLINICAL PLACEMENTS

Many of MacEwan's programs include field or clinical placement components. Depending on the design of the placement and the functional nature of a student's disability, the student may request accommodations, services and/or access to assistive technologies to facilitate his/her full participation in meeting placement requirements. Some examples of field and clinical placement accommodations include, but are not limited to, the following: rearrangement of workplace furniture to allow for wheelchair accessibility, schedule changes to accommodate personal care or transportation needs, access to assistive technologies to facilitate reading and writing tasks, guidance from a strategist to assess the demands of the field or clinical placement with a view to identifying the most suitable management strategies, and/or interpreter services for group discussions.

ASSISTIVE COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

The Assistive Computer Technology Services (ACTS) are centralized in room 7-112 at the City Centre Campus although service can be provided at other campus locations if necessary. The ACTS office houses a range of assistive technologies that facilitate the use of the computers by students with disabilities and other devices that make it easier for students to complete course work as independently as possible. The following services are available through ACTS.

ASSESSMENT

Assessments are conducted to determine appropriate computer technologies required to facilitate the learning of an individual with a disability. The assessment process includes the following steps:

- ✓ Review of background and referral information
- ✓ Interview with the individual to determine goals and needs
- ✓ Trial experiences with a range of technologies
- ✓ Assessment of computer skills
- ✓ Preparation of a report summarizing findings and recommendations.

To undergo an assessment, individuals are advised to contact an SSD Counsellor, Learning Disabilities Specialist or an assistive computer technology specialist to discuss the request and identify the appropriate referral procedure.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACCESS PROGRAM

The Assistive Technology Access Program (ATAP) provides eligible students with **timely access** to the assistive technologies that they need to participate fully in their educational activities.

How does ATAP work?

Step 1: AT Assessment

- ✓ Student is referred for an assistive technology (AT) assessment, usually by a career and employment consultant with Alberta Employment and Immigration
- ✓ ACTS staff conducts an assessment to determine appropriate AT for the student
- ✓ AT package (including training hours) is recommended and a report including the ATAP fee is provided to Alberta Employment and Immigration.

- ✓ The SSD Counsellor or Learning Disabilities Specialist incorporates the ATAP recommendations in the Individual Service Plan developed to support the application for funding for disability-related educational supports (usually DSG or DRES: see page 5 for more information)

Step 2: AT Training

- ✓ Student attends AT training sessions to ensure his/her basic proficiency with the technology
- ✓ Additional training sessions will be offered if required.

Step 3: AT Package Release

- ✓ The recommended AT package (equipment/software) will be released to the student when all of the following have occurred:
 - The student is registered in classes, and classes have begun;
 - The student has completed AT training;
 - The funding paperwork has been submitted for processing; and
 - The student has signed an agreement with respect to the terms for accessing ATAP technology.

Step 4: Funding

- ✓ When funding is approved, MacEwan will invoice the funding source. Once funding has been received, ACTS will schedule an appointment so the student can sign ownership transfer documents.
- ✓ Students who do not return technology that is not funded will be invoiced for replacement costs.

Step 5: Technology Evaluation and Maintenance

- ✓ ACTS staff will set up the equipment and restore it to the original state if there are any technical problems or when the equipment is returned. The student will be responsible for backing up his/her own documents and files.

INDIVIDUALIZED TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION

On a fee for service basis, ACTS will provide individualized instruction to individuals who have specific learning goals and needs. Individuals with disabilities and/or their sponsors may contract with ACTS to provide such training.

IN-CLASS ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACCESS

ACTS will provide technical training and assistance to students with disabilities who need access to assistive computer technology in their regular MacEwan classes. Determination of need and appropriate processes will occur through a collaborative discussion between the relevant parties which may include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following: student, instructor(s), SSD, ACTS, Information and Technology Services and the Library.

ACCOMMODATION LETTERS

If a student is requesting classroom or academic accommodations due to disability, it is his/her responsibility to take an accommodation request letter to his/her instructors. Accommodation letters are prepared by Services to Students with Disabilities (SSD) at the request of the individual student. The letter is addressed to the student's instructors and outlines the accommodations identified as necessary to ensure that the student will have the opportunity to access and participate fully in his/her coursework. The student will be asked to sign a **Consent Form for the Disclosure of Personal Information** to specify the information that can be disclosed in the accommodation letter and in discussions with the instructors and program staff.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

PARKING

Students requiring designated parking because of a disability or a disabling condition are advised to contact a Counsellor at their campus for authorization. An individual requesting designated parking is required to show that he/she has a provincial parking placard because of a disability or to provide medical documentation verifying his/her need for it.

LOCKERS

Services to Students with Disabilities have reserved several lockers for students with disabilities in each part of the City Centre and South campuses. If you have been unable to locate a locker suitable for your needs, contact a Counsellor at your campus to inquire about alternatives.

POLICY E3400: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

1.0 POLICY:

MacEwan shall take all reasonable measures, short of undue hardship, to provide accommodation to students with disabilities. The reasonable accommodation of students with disabilities shall not require MacEwan to lower its standards, academic or otherwise, nor shall it relieve a student of the responsibility to develop and demonstrate the essential skills and competencies expected of all students pursuing post-secondary studies.

2.0 RATIONALE AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

This policy is intended to support MacEwan's mission and the provision of an accessible environment in support of teaching and learning excellence, as well as judicious stewardship of resources, respecting the importance of a consultative learning community.

This policy is guided by federal and provincial human rights legislation and by the following principles:

2.1 MacEwan is committed to the principles of equality and inclusion.

2.2 Members of MacEwan's community are required to act in compliance with federal and provincial legislation regarding the accommodation of persons with disabilities and the regulations and rules set out in this policy.

2.3 Students with disabilities have an equal right to access all MacEwan programs and services subject only to MacEwan policies, regulations and procedures that provide for admission to MacEwan programs and those which regulate student conduct.

2.4 Students with disabilities are responsible for identifying all need(s) for academic accommodation to MacEwan's Services to Students with Disabilities department in accordance with this policy. A student's responsibility to identify the need for accommodation is an on-going responsibility that may begin at the admission stage and continue throughout the student's enrolment at MacEwan.

2.5 Upon admission to a MacEwan program in accordance with policy C5010, students with disabilities are presumed to be capable of fulfilling the academic requirements of their program with the provision of reasonable accommodation.

3.0 SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS:

3.1 SCOPE

This policy pertains to students with disabilities who apply to and, having satisfied admission criteria, are enrolled in MacEwan programs and courses including off campus activities such as clinical and practicum placements. Academic activities undertaken off campus are addressed by agreement with the third party involved.

3.2 DEFINITIONS

Accessibility refers to the extent to which services and facilities can be used by all regardless of disability.

Accommodation means the process of making alterations to the delivery of services to become more accessible to students with disabilities with the goal to ensure full participation in all aspects of their educational experience (*Alberta Human Rights Duty to Accommodate Students with Disabilities in Post-Secondary Institutions, interpretive bulletin, August, 2004, pp. 2-5*).

Disability encompasses the definitions of the terms “physical disability” and “mental disability” that are included in provincial human rights legislation (*Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act, Section 44*).

Duty to Accommodate refers to the requirement under federal and provincial legislation 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 the student’s disability.

Reasonable Accommodation under provincial legislation and the Supreme Court of Canada, refers to the requirement of educational institutions to provide accommodation up to the point of *undue hardship*, that is, the provision of accommodation to a standard that overcomes a discriminatory effect, but does not require the institution to choose the most expensive or comprehensive level of accommodation.

Shared Responsibility refers to the expectation that accommodation is a shared responsibility between the student and the institution, and that arriving at accommodation is an iterative, consultative process.

Undue Hardship, under both provincial and federal legislation, is deemed to have a very high standard and would include, but is not limited to, the following: financial cost that hurts the viability of the service, program or institution; a situation in which students cannot meet the requirements for entering or completing a program; significant interference with the rights of other students; and health and safety concerns. The institutional responsibility requires due diligence and may require adjudication under legislation.

Services to Students with Disabilities department means the MacEwan department responsible for coordination of reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities.

4.0 REGULATIONS:

Administrative Responsibilities

- 4.1 The Vice President Student Services is responsible for the overall management of this policy.
- 4.2 Under the authority of the Director, Student Resource Centre, the Chair of the Services to Students with Disabilities department is responsible for the administration and coordination of MacEwan's duty to accommodate students with disabilities in accordance with this policy.
- 4.3 The Director of Facilities is responsible for the administration and implementation of alterations to the physical environment of MacEwan facilities in accordance with this policy.

MacEwan's Responsibilities to Students with Disabilities

- 4.4 MacEwan acknowledges and accepts its duty to accommodate students with disabilities up to the point of undue hardship.
- 4.5 MacEwan shall foster and support positive relationships between itself and students with disabilities through open communication regarding the duty to accommodate. To this end, communication between MacEwan and its students with disabilities will be made accessible to all such students from the time of inquiry.

- 4.6 Where deemed by MacEwan to be reasonably necessary, MacEwan shall retain qualified and knowledgeable consultants to facilitate the assessment and coordination of accommodation to students with disabilities.
- 4.7 MacEwan shall educate all members of its community, including faculty, staff, students and contractors, on the duty to accommodate students with disabilities and the existence of this policy.
- 4.8 The Services to Students with Disabilities department shall publish procedures for students with disabilities in accordance with this policy.

Responsibilities of Students with Disabilities to MacEwan

- 4.9 In addition to the responsibilities of all students as indicated in E3101 Student Rights and Responsibilities, students with disabilities who seek accommodation are also responsible for the following:
 - 4.9.1 To provide all required documentation in support of the request for accommodation in a timely manner to the Services to Students with Disabilities department in accordance with published procedures (4.8).
 - 4.9.2 To abide by all recommendations and procedures for accommodation developed or coordinated by the Services to Students with Disabilities department.

Documentation in Support of a Request for Accommodation

- 4.10 Documentation in support of a request for accommodation must meet guidelines as developed and published by the Services to Students with Disabilities department and as noted below:
 - be completed by a licensed professional with specific training and expertise in the diagnosis and description of the condition(s) for which accommodation is being requested.
 - describe the nature of the disability and provide an explanation of the functional impact(s) of the disability.
 - describe the student's current functioning.

- 4.11 In exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Services to Students with Disabilities department, a student will be provided accommodations on an interim basis without documentation.
- 4.12 A student is not required to reveal the specific details of his or her disability to anyone other than the Services to Students with Disabilities department.
- 4.13 All information obtained by the Services to Students with Disabilities department will be treated as confidential and according to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act. Personal documentation held by the Services to Students with Disabilities department will be destroyed consistent with the institution's Records and Information Management policy (D7220) and any relevant professional body's regulations (e.g. College of Alberta Psychologists).

Decisions Regarding Recommended Accommodations

- 4.14 The Services to Students with Disabilities department will review the documentation submitted by a student with a disability and conduct an assessment of the individual's need for accommodation.
- 4.15 To determine the appropriate reasonable accommodations, consultation will take place between the student and the Services to Students with Disabilities department, and, where necessary, the appropriate academic personnel. The student and/or the Services to Students with Disabilities department will document the recommended accommodations in writing. The student will deliver this documentation to each instructor. Efforts will be made to provide timely notice to instructors of the needs of students with disabilities in their classes.
- 4.16 The determination of reasonable accommodations for an individual may vary between courses, including required off campus components of programs, and/or over time depending upon individual circumstances. MacEwan reserves the right to alter or discontinue the provision of accommodation upon review of individual needs and relevant course or program demands.
- 4.17 If an instructor does not agree with the recommendations of the Services to Students with Disabilities department, he or she will communicate this disagreement to the Services to Students with Disabilities department in an attempt to reach a resolution that meets the duty to accommodate.

4.18 If a resolution is not reached in 4.17, the Chair of Services to Students with Disabilities shall discuss the matter with the Chair of the program. If necessary, the matter may then be referred to the Director of the Student Resource Centre who will consult with the Dean and may seek the advice of the Vice President Student Services, legal and/or human rights counsel to facilitate a resolution that meets the duty to accommodate.

Appeal

4.19 Students wishing to appeal matters pertaining to this policy must follow the regulations as set out in E3103 (Student Appeals).