



RED RIVER COLLEGE
OF APPLIED ARTS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



Handbook **for students with disabilities**



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INTRODUCTION

The Handbook for Students with Disabilities has been prepared by Accessibility Services staff at Red River College. The purpose of the handbook is to provide you with information about accommodations available to RRC students with disabilities, to outline your responsibilities in requesting and using accommodations, and to ensure that you have clear and reasonable expectations of the roles of the Accessibility Services program and staff.

MISSION AND MANDATE

A mandate of Accessibility Services is to provide access to education through a range of accommodations for students with diagnosed disabilities. Our department develops and implements accommodation plans for students with disabilities depending on their individual needs. We provide quality service by treating everyone with respect, maintaining a positive, professional rapport and soliciting input from everyone concerning the accommodations provided.

Red River College has an Academic Accommodation Policy. This policy applies to all students with disabilities. The policy was written in accordance with The Manitoba Human Rights Commission and The Charter of Rights and Freedoms.



The policy states:

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 without diagnosed disabilities are also available to students facing a physical, medical, learning, or psychological disability. This requires both the identification and implementation of accommodations.

To read the entire policy, please see:

<http://www.rrc.ca/files/file/policies/A28-Academic-Accommodation.pdf>



ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Disabilities may impact access to post-secondary education. The accommodations available through Accessibility Services assist students with disabilities and “level the playing field” between students with disabilities and students who do not have disabilities. The purpose is not to provide an advantage or to compromise learning outcomes.

Accessibility Services works together with students with disabilities and their program to facilitate individualized and appropriate accommodations to help reduce the impact a disability may have on learning and the demonstration of knowledge and to equalize access to education.

You - as the student with a disability - have the responsibility of providing us with the information we need in order to best assist you. After all, you are the expert on yourself!



Who Is Eligible for Accommodations?

Students who have documented disabilities could be eligible to receive accommodations. Students are required to provide appropriate documentation from a qualified professional (e.g. physician, psychologist or psychiatrist) in order to be supported for classroom and/or exam accommodations.

Guidelines for documentation are available at:

<http://blogs.rrc.ca/accessibility/getting-started/disability-guide/>

For most disability types, with the exception of learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities and ASD, students can choose to have their physician or Registered Health Care Provider complete our Medical Documentation Form:

<http://blogs.rrc.ca/accessibility/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/DocumentationForm.pdf>



In order to qualify as a student with a disability, and thus for academic accommodations, a student's disability must be consistent with the definition as described by the Government of Canada:

“Permanent Disability means a functional limitation caused by a physical or mental impairment that restricts the ability of a person to perform the daily activities necessary to participate in studies at a post-secondary school level or the labour market and is expected to remain with the person for the person’s expected life.” (www.gov.mb.ca)



Accessibility Services at RRC recognizes various major areas of disability that are consistent with this definition and are likely to occur among the college population.

They are:

- Learning Disabilities
- Attention Deficit Disorders
- Psychiatric Disorders or Mental Health Disabilities
- Chronic Illnesses
- Physical/Mobility Disabilities
- Deaf and hard of hearing
- Low Vision or Blindness
- Autism Spectrum Disorder



Accessibility Services should be your first point of contact

By making an appointment, you begin the process of developing your accommodation plan while you are a student at Red River College.

The professionals in Accessibility Services work together in a large team which include: Counselling and Accessibility Services, Exam Accommodations and Assistive Technology, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, Academic Success Center, Assessment Services, and Student Employment Services.



How to Contact Accessibility Services and book your first appointment

Appointments can be booked in person at the Counselling and Accessibility Services Offices. Students returning for subsequent appointments can also schedule appointments by phone.

Notre Dame Campus

D102

204.632.3966

Exchange District Campus

P210

204.949.8375

A student can also book a first time appointment online at:

<https://blogs.rrc.ca/accessibility/getting-started/book-an-appointment/>

Hours of Operation

The Accessibility Services office is open from **8:00 am - 5:00 pm** Monday through Friday.

Some appointments are available after **4:00 pm** when necessary.

This chart illustrates how you and Accessibility Services work together to develop your accommodation plan.

→ **FLOW CHART**

INTAKE

- Complete intake form (in person or online)
- provide documentation from licensed professional
- indicate whether you are a prospective or current student or an applicant

MEET WITH ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

- review documentation with Accessibility Services
- indicate if you require accommodations for admissions testing
- book admissions test with Assessment Services

DEVELOP ONGOING ACCOMMODATION PLAN

- book appointment with Accessibility Services to discuss disability, program requirements, and possible accommodations
 - referrals made to implement plan
- ongoing follow up discussed and subsequent appointment booked





FACTS ABOUT THE DISCLOSURE OF A DISABILITY

Disclosure of a disability is voluntary. However, if you would like to receive accommodations based on your disability, you must complete a Registration Form with Accessibility Services, provide documentation regarding your disability that meets our requirements and meet with Accessibility Services to develop a plan. All information is treated confidentially and will only be shared if you sign a release of information form, which gives Accessibility Services permission to discuss your academic and accommodation plans needs with your instructors, as necessary.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students

Students have a right to:

- Equal access to participation in the post-secondary education experience
- Be treated with dignity and respect regarding their disability and accommodation needs
- Appropriate, individualized accommodation
- Protection of confidential information



- Timely service provision, consistent with notice provided by the student
- Prompt, equitable investigation and resolution of complaints
- Opportunity to appeal accommodation decisions

The student with a disability has a responsibility to:

- Meet admission requirements and on-going academic standards of the selected college program
- Comply with RRC's Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities, as all students of the college are required
- Self identify as a student with a disability to Accessibility Services
- Provide relevant and current documentation verifying the disability as per documentation guidelines found at: <http://blogs.rrc.ca/accessibility/getting-started/disability-guide/>
- Make requests for accommodations by contacting Accessibility Services at the beginning of each term
- Develop an accommodation plan in collaboration with Accessibility Services



- Follow procedures in receiving accommodations as set out by Exam Accommodations and other units within Student Support Services
- Establish good working relationships with instructors which may involve discussing with them your disability, accommodation plan or concerns (self-advocacy)
- Meet regularly with Accessibility Services, as mutually agreed, in order to monitor the effectiveness of the accommodations and supports
- Make needs for assistive technologies and/or alternate format of materials known to Accessibility Services in advance, so they can assist in meeting your accommodation needs in a timely way
- Apply for the Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Persons with Permanent Disabilities, which could provide funds for assistive technology/ accommodations and help offset costs in their provision



Instructors

Instructors have the right to:

- Determine course content and general methods of teaching
- Ensure that the standards of the course are not lowered or compromised
- Ensure that a student has demonstrated mastery of the essential learning outcomes of the course in order to obtain an appropriate grade
- Fail any student if he/she does not demonstrate mastery of essential learning outcomes relative to their peers who do not have disabilities
- Question, discuss and appeal a specific accommodation
- Be treated respectfully by all students in class

Instructors have the responsibility to:

- Provide a classroom atmosphere that is harassment-free, inclusive and nondiscriminatory
- Encourage students with disabilities to identify themselves privately
- Protect and maintain student confidentiality



- Collaborate and cooperate with Accessibility Services in providing authorized academic accommodations
- Consult with Accessibility Services on questions regarding disabilities and academic accommodations, when necessary

Accessibility Services

Accessibility Services has a right to:

- Request current documentation from a professional verifying disability diagnosis as well as additional information regarding the impact of the disability on learning
- Request consent from the student to communicate with professionals to understand the student's need for accommodation
- Set and maintain healthy boundaries in relationships with students

Accessibility Services has the responsibility to:

- Treat each student as an individual, and with respect and dignity
- Maintain confidentiality of all information submitted by the student; release information only with written consent of the student or on a need to know basis with prior consent



- Maintain documentation of the disability and any other written records pertaining to the disability
- Help students determine which accommodations are appropriate and explain how they will be provided
- Provide advocacy and support to students when communicating with instructors, as necessary and with student consent





ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations are student-specific and are unique to the individual and their courses (program).

Accommodations are forms of assistance that are provided or arranged by Accessibility Services and other Student Support Services to help you achieve your academic goals.

Types of accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- Exam Accommodations
- Alternate Format of Print Materials
- Assistive Technology
- Note Taking
- Audio Recording of Lectures
- Access to Instructor PowerPoint Presentations
- American Sign Language - English Interpreting
- Computerized Note taking
- Tutoring Services
- Counselling/Referrals
- Assistance accessing disability-related financial resources
- Reduced course load



MEETING WITH ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Typically, your first appointment should occur before you start your program at RRC to develop your accommodation plan.

Additional meetings should occur at the beginning of each semester, and then on a regular basis as mutually decided with Accessibility Services.

Accessibility Services can discuss challenges with academics, monitor the effectiveness of your accommodation plan, and support you in the midst of personal struggles, should they occur.

During your very first appointment, bring your documentation verifying your disability and recommending accommodations. Together with Accessibility Services you will discuss your academic history, what kinds of accommodations you may have used in the past and any other types of issues that may impact on your academics.

After sufficient information is gathered, the two of you can begin to work on your accommodation plan.



ACCOMMODATIONS ARE:	ACCOMMODATIONS ARE NOT:
Specific supports to reduce the barrier the disability presents	Modifying course standards or course outcomes
Established best practices that acknowledge no accommodation is perfect	Giving a student an advantage
Student and course specific individualized supports	A method to weaken academic/program requirements



TYPES OF ACCOMMODATIONS

1 Reduced Course Load

You may find your learning needs are best met by reducing the number of courses you take during a semester. This can be an option for some - it may take a little longer to complete your program - but it may help you manage your workload more successfully and learn more effectively.

To utilize this accommodation:

- Make an appointment with your program coordinator to discuss a reduced course load. You want to ensure that you are not dropping courses that are prerequisites in subsequent semesters. Your program coordinator is the best person to recommend what courses you should take.
- Meet with Accessibility Services, and discuss the options given to you by your program coordinator. This may be very helpful in your decision making process.

***Please Note:** Not all Red River College programs can be taken part time due to the program's fundamental structure or intake schedule.*



2 Test & Exam Accommodations

You may require accommodations for your tests and exams. If you wish to use this accommodation, you will need to write your tests/exams in the Exam Accommodations area. Here are a few of the accommodations that may be available to you depending on your disability and the documentation provided:

- Extra time - typically 1/2 hour per hour, up to one hour maximum
- Small group environment
- Individual space (monitored by a proctor)
- Reader and/or Scribe
- Use of a computer
- Alternate format
- Use of a dictionary or calculator, if the use of such does not compromise learning outcomes
- American Sign Language-English Interpreting



To utilize this accommodation:

- Meet with Accessibility Services and discuss your needs
- If you are eligible for this accommodation, you will be referred to Exam Accommodations and meet with an Exam Accommodations Facilitator
- The Exam Accommodations Facilitator will provide you with their process including your responsibilities and guidelines to follow
- These processes include but are not limited to:
 - Providing Exam Accommodations one week's notice prior to your test/exam
 - Providing complete and accurate information on your exam request form (your name, student number, telephone and email address, date of test, start time of test, instructor's name, course name, length of test etc.)

Exam Accommodations Locations

Notre Dame Campus - D110

Exchange District Campus - P210



3 Notetaking

When your disability affects your ability to take notes in class, Accessibility Services may recommend a number of options including:

- Access to Instructor notes or PowerPoints
- Audio recording of lectures
- Asking a reliable peer to take notes for you

You may find that having one of these accommodations is helpful in some classes and not necessary in others, depending on the structure of the course.

To utilize this accommodation:

- Make an appointment to meet with Accessibility Services
- Together you will explore the best fit for you
- Please see #5 and #6 for specific information concerning accessing instructor notes and audio recording of lectures



4 Tutoring Services

All students at Red River College are eligible for up to 12 hours of peer content tutoring per semester at no cost, depending on tutor availability.

To register for peer tutoring services, you can visit the Academic Success Centre to make this request.

Notre Dame Campus - D110

Exchange District Campus - P210

You can also participate in regularly offered study skills workshops and select course review sessions.

If English is your second language, you can access ESL tutoring and support by visiting www.rrc.ca/esl

Visit the ASC's website to learn more:

www.rrc.ca/asc

As a student with a disability, you could also be eligible for up to three hours of staff tutoring per week (based on a full time course load and if you have been approved for sponsorship).



To utilize this accommodation:

- Meet with Accessibility Services
- Accessibility Services may make a referral for you to receive up to 3 hours of tutoring per week if you have been approved for sponsorship
- Our tutoring coordinator will match you with a tutor to meet your needs based on available resources
- You are responsible to prepare for your tutoring sessions by bringing the necessary materials and knowing what you need to work on
- If you cannot make a scheduled tutoring appointment, let your tutor know at least 24 hours in advance. Tutoring may be suspended if you miss a session without notice or explanation. (Remember - there are other students who may be waiting for a time to meet with a tutor!)



5 Audio Recording Lectures

You may find it useful to audio record some of your class lectures so that you can listen to them again after class.

To utilize this accommodation:

- Meet with Accessibility Services
- If this is deemed to be a reasonable accommodation for you, you will be provided guidelines regarding the recording of lectures which includes signing an agreement to use the recorded information responsibly
- Accessibility Services will inform your instructors that you will be using this accommodation



6 Access to Instructor PowerPoint Notes

If you have difficulty taking notes while you listen to your lecture, due to your disability, you may find it useful to have copies of the PowerPoint notes your instructors may use in class. This way, you can focus on listening in class and then review the PP later.

To utilize this accommodation:

- Meet with Accessibility Services
- If this is deemed to be a reasonable accommodation for you, you will be provided guidelines regarding accessing instructor materials which includes signing an agreement to use the information responsibly
- Accessibility Services will inform your instructor that you are eligible for this accommodation and that you have signed this agreement

***Please Note:** Using accommodations such as note taking, audio recording of lectures or accessing copies of your instructors' PowerPoint notes, do not substitute for your need to attend class.*



7 Textbooks in Alternative Format

You may require your study materials to be in an alternate format. Often, textbooks can be provided in a variety of formats such as e-text or Braille. As specified by copyright laws, to be eligible to receive the textbook in an alternative format, you must purchase the textbook and provide receipts.

To utilize this accommodation:

- Meet with Accessibility Services and provide a list of your text books, including title, author, edition and ISBN
- A search will be conducted for the availability of the alternate format

***Please Note:** Inform Accessibility Services as soon as you know what textbooks you will require in alternate format as it can take up to a few months to have the books transferred to the requested format.*



8 Assistive Technology

You may benefit from a variety of software programs designed for students with disabilities. Many programs are available for use and trial in our assistive technology lab.

Notre Dame Campus - D110

Exchange District Campus - P210

Some students with disabilities may already know what types of assistive technology works for them. Others may have never been introduced to the different software programs. Students who are not aware of assistive technology may be referred to our Assistive Technologist or may be referred to a consultant in the community for recommendations and training.



9 American Sign Language-English Interpreting and Computerized Note taking

For students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, the accommodation of ASL-English interpreting and computerized notetaking is provided.

To utilize this service:

- Meet with Manager, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services and indicate when booking the appointment if an ASL-English interpreter will be required
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services will assess your needs and set up a plan with you
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing individuals are required to provide as much notice as possible prior to the start date of the college program to ensure staff are available to meet these accommodation needs.



10 Accessibility Accommodations

If you are a student with a mobility disability, you may have concerns about getting around the college efficiently, where your locker will be and where you will park your vehicle.

Lockers - specific requests for a wheelchair accessible locker can be made at the Print Shoppe

Notre Dame Campus - DM19

Exchange District Campus - W104

Parking - specific requests can be made to Parking Services

Notre Dame Campus - D101

Exchange District Campus - P308

Wheelchair Accessible Desks -

to request wheelchair accessible desks in your classrooms, notify Accessibility Services of your classroom locations.

Wheelchair Lift in J Building (Notre Dame Campus) - if you use a wheelchair and your classes are located in J Building, please advise Accessibility Services as soon as possible that you will need to use the wheelchair lift. You will be provided a key for the lift and trained on how to use it safely and independently.



The College continues to put forth effort to make college campuses increasingly more accessible. If you have feedback for us, please don't hesitate to share it with Accessibility Services and put it in writing. Your feedback is important to us and will be provided to our Facilities Department.



MAKING SURE YOU RECEIVE THE ACCOMMODATIONS YOU NEED

Accessibility Services

Our goal in Accessibility Services is to provide you with a safe and confidential environment, excellent services, and helpful support. However, we also understand that there could be times students have concerns or complaints about services they receive. We want to resolve any student concerns as quickly as possible. If you do have a complaint, we suggest you follow these steps to help resolve the problem:

- If you are not receiving the services that you need or have asked for, tell Accessibility Services as soon as possible as they may be able to help you resolve the situation or suggest a course of action
- If you have a problem with or a complaint about anyone who works in Accessibility Services, please discuss your complaint with that person first
- If these suggestions do not resolve your concern or complaint, please contact the appropriate Manager in Accessibility Services to discuss further



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Resolving Instructor Questions or Concerns About Your Accommodations

Accommodation recommendations are made according to the Manitoba Human Rights Code and the documentation you provided from your registered health care professional.

Ideally, you, Accessibility Services, and your program coordinator/instructors collaborate about the accommodations that would be appropriate given all the information.

There may be times, however, when instructors or programs question the accommodations you have been provided and would like more information about their legitimacy.

In these situations, please consult with Accessibility Services to discuss the situation and consider ways to work it through. Most often, a resolution is found in one of two ways:

- The program or instructor will become more aware of why the accommodation is reasonable
- The program or instructor will provide information that confirms the accommodation compromises a learning outcome

Understanding, communication and collaboration are key in this process.



Appeal Process

If you have been denied requested accommodations that you believe you should be eligible for, a formal appeal process can be pursued as outlined in Student Appeals - Non Academic Decisions, Policy S3.

However, as mentioned above, the informal appeal should take place first by discussion between you, Accessibility Services and your program/instructor. If you are unsatisfied with this outcome, the Formal Appeal Authority would be the Director of Student Support Services.

If a satisfactory conclusion cannot be reached, you may appeal to the Executive Director, Community and Student Services. Should these levels of appeal be completed, a student may request that the matter be heard by an Appeal Committee.

For more information please see:

<http://www.rrc.ca/files/file/policies/S3-Student-Appeal.pdf>



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

1 Canada Student Grant for Persons with Permanent Disabilities

If you have a permanent disability and qualify for a federal student loan you may receive \$2,000 per academic year to help cover the costs of accommodation, tuition, and books.

2 Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Persons with Permanent Disabilities

If you have a permanent disability which requires you to incur exceptional education-related costs for things such as tutors, interpreters, computerized note takers or assistive technology, you may receive up to \$8,000 per academic year to help cover these expenses.

For further information about these grants or other financial assistance available through Manitoba and Canada Student Loans Programs, please see:

www.manitobastudentaid.ca



Red River College Awards for Students with Disabilities

1 Accessibility Services Director's Award

Automatic Selection

An award of \$500 will be presented annually to a student who is a client of Accessibility Services. Students will be nominated by a counsellor or manager within Accessibility Services for consideration. Selection will be based on the letters of support provided as part of the nomination process.

2 Students with Disabilities Award

Specific Application

Awards are available annually to assist students with disabilities who are experiencing significant financial need, and are maintaining satisfactory academic progress.

Inquiries should be directed to Accessibility Services for further information regarding the application process and the deadline for submission.



3 Students with Disabilities Crisis Bursaries

Specific Application

Bursaries are available annually to assist students with disabilities who are experiencing financial crisis. Inquiries should be directed to a counsellor or manager in Accessibility Services for further information regarding the application process.

For further information about these awards or other awards available through Red River College, please see:

<http://me.rrc.mb.ca/Catalogue/AvailableAwards.aspx>



Counselling and Accessibility Services

Notre Dame Campus

D102

204.632.3966

Exchange District Campus

Roblin Centre - P210

204.949.8375

Language Training Centre

123 Main Street

204.945.8774