

Policy History
Policy No. ST14
Approving Jurisdiction: President
Administrative Responsibility: Provost and Vice President Academic
Effective Date: May 2006

Services for Students With Disabilities Policy

RATIONALE

Kwantlen Polytechnic University recognizes its moral and legal duty to provide accommodation. The University must remove barriers and provide opportunities to students with a disability enabling them to access University services, programs and facilities and to be welcomed as participating members of the University community. The University's goal is to ensure fair and consistent treatment of all students, including students with a disability in accordance with their distinct needs and in a manner consistent with academic principles.

SCOPE

Students with disabilities attending Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

PRINCIPLES

1. The University will provide academic accommodation to students with disabilities in accordance with the Human Rights Code (BC) and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
2. Provision of academic accommodation shall not lower the academic standards of the University.
3. Academic accommodation shall not remove the need for evaluation and the need to meet essential learning outcomes.
4. Eligibility for services and range of accommodations to be provided will be determined by the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities.
5. All students with disabilities, and any advocates/parents, agency and rehab workers, etc. **must** be referred to the Disabilities Office in the Counselling Department on any campus to verify disability, accommodations, and to obtain a letter of approval for instructors. Course accommodations **must not** be provided without such a letter of approval.

A. Responsibilities of the University Towards Students with Disabilities

1. The University has a responsibility to:

- a. ensure that persons are not denied admission on the basis of their disability;
- b. accommodate students with disabilities, where appropriate, with respect to admission criteria;
- c. make its courses or programs accessible to students with disabilities in accordance with the Human Rights Code (BC) and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;
- d. review documentation to ensure that recommendations and decisions regarding accommodation are based on appropriate medical information as well as educational considerations;
- e. provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities;
- f. ensure that faculty and staff are knowledgeable about relevant University policies and procedures and familiar with broader issues regarding persons with disabilities;
- g. treat the information obtained as confidential according to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (BC).
- h. ensure students don't endanger self or others:

B. Responsibilities of Students with Disabilities

1. Every student with a disability at Kwantlen Polytechnic University who seeks academic accommodation due to their disability has a responsibility to:
 - a. meet established admission and assessment requirements and specific course pre-requisites;
 - b. provide the necessary documentation to the Services for Students with Disabilities office. Kwantlen Polytechnic University does not provide or assume the cost of diagnostic services.
 - c. bring the request for accommodations or changes in the accommodation needs to the attention of appropriate personnel in a timely manner in order to allow for arrangement of accommodations.

C. Documentation

1. Documentation acceptable to the University must be obtained from medical doctors, psychologists and/or special education/rehabilitation personnel or other health professionals who have specific training, expertise, and experience in the diagnosis of conditions for which accommodation is being requested.
2. All persons submitting documentation must be appropriately certified and/or licensed to practise their professions.
3. Documentation should outline the nature of the disability, along with a detailed explanation of the functional impact of the disability. A diagnosis alone is not sufficient to support a request for an accommodation.
4. All information obtained by Services for Students with Disabilities will be treated as confidential.
5. When releasing information about the nature of the disability, its likely impact in an academic setting and recommended accommodation to instructors, support staff and/or others concerned, Services for Students with Disabilities actions will be governed by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (BC).
6. Documentation must be current:

- a. For new students who have a stable condition, usually no more than three years must have elapsed between the time of the assessment and the date of the initial request for accommodation.
- b. For returning students whose condition has remained stable since the time of submission of the original supporting documents, no further documentation will be required.
- c. When a new or returning student's functional abilities have shown significant change (i.e., either an improvement or deterioration of status has taken place or is expected to take place) or when the accommodation requests have changed significantly over the course of studies (e.g., from 1st to 2nd year), new or updated information may be requested by Services for Students with Disabilities. Kwantlen Polytechnic University does not provide or assume the cost of diagnostic services.
- d. In exceptional circumstances, a student will be provided accommodation on a limited basis without documentation.

DEFINITIONS

1. Student

A student is a person who:

1. is registered in full-time or part-time credit or non-credit courses offered by the University;
or
2. has formally applied to the University as a prospective student.

2. Disability

Persons with disabilities are persons who:

1. have a significant and persistent mobility, sensory, learning, or other physical or mental health impairment which may be permanent or temporary, AND
2. experience functional restrictions or limitations of their ability to perform the range of life's activities, AND
3. may experience attitudinal and / or environmental barriers that hamper their full and self-directed participation in life.

To be eligible to receive academic accommodation, students must self-identify and provide appropriate documentation of disability to Services for Students with Disabilities in a timely manner.

3. Academic Accommodation

An academic accommodation is a change in the allocation of University resources, or in teaching or evaluation procedures, which is designed to meet the particular needs of a student with a disability.

4. University

"University" includes all individuals involved in the provision of University-related services including teaching, advising, administrating or other support services (e.g., faculty, administrators, counsellors, or other support staff).

PROCEDURES

A. The University has the responsibility to:

1. Ensure students don't endanger self or others:
 - a. When it is believed that a student is endangering him or herself or others by virtue of a physical or mental impairment, the University will ask the Coordinator / Counsellor for Students with Disabilities to meet with the student and the department to determine what steps can be taken to accommodate the disability.
 - b. The Coordinator/Counsellor for Students with Disabilities will determine what assistance, if any, the student needs to be safely accommodated in the program or course, and will attempt to obtain that assistance.
 - c. If possible, while the above determination is in progress, the faculty will assign the student to work that will not endanger the student or others. If this is not possible, the student will be temporarily withdrawn from the program or course.
 - d. If the Coordinator/Counsellor for Students with Disabilities, after consulting with program faculty, determines that reasonable assistance is not available, or that reasonable assistance could not make the situation safe, the student will be withdrawn from the program or course, and be given credit for all work completed and a refund for all remaining tuition fees paid.

B. Responsibilities of Students with Disabilities

1. New students are encouraged to self-identify to Services for Students with Disabilities at the time of acceptance to the University.
2. All returning students who will be requesting an accommodation are required to contact Services for Students with Disabilities at the beginning of the academic term.
3. Students who become disabled either permanently or temporarily, and students with disabilities whose health status changes significantly during their time at the University should contact Services for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible.
4. At the beginning of each term, all students should discuss their approved accommodation needs with each instructor from whom they are seeking accommodation. Services for Students with Disabilities may contact instructors prior to this meeting if requested to do so by the student.
5. All student requests for exam and other test accommodations (e.g., extended time, alternative location, etc.) should be received by Services for Students with Disabilities at least one week prior to the scheduled exam date.

C. Process for Reaching Accommodation

1. Services for Students with Disabilities will review the documentation provided. In consultation with the student, Services for Students with Disabilities faculty and staff will determine the range of accommodations that would be appropriate in a post-secondary setting based on the functional impact of the disability and the student's field of study.
2. The student will notify his/her instructor(s) to discuss Services for Students with Disabilities determination of the range of accommodation for their disability.

3. With consideration of essential learning outcomes for the course or program at issue, the instructor will review the range of recommended accommodations with the student to determine which of these accommodations are appropriate for the course or program.
4. If an agreement is reached between the student and instructor, the accommodation(s) will be implemented promptly.
5. If an agreement cannot be reached, the student or instructor may request the assistance of Services for Students with Disabilities faculty to determine appropriate accommodation.

D. Facilities

1. A review of physical access requirements will be undertaken annually by the Director of Facilities and the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities and implemented in accordance with the standards of the British Columbia Building Code.

E. Appeals

1. Students with disabilities who do not agree with academic accommodation decisions may appeal in accordance with the Complaint Policy (AD2).

RELATED POLICIES:

AD2 Complaints about Instruction, Services, Employees or University Policies
ST15 Student Access to Interpreting Services