



# **Accessibility Services Graduate and Professional Program Student Handbook**

**St. George Campus  
2022-2023 Academic Year**



UNIVERSITY OF  
**TORONTO**

**STUDENT  
LIFE**

**Accessibility  
Services**



# ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO ST. GEORGE CAMPUS

Welcome to Graduate Studies at the St. George campus of the University of Toronto. Accessibility Services is pleased to work with you to develop appropriate accommodations and supports while you undertake new academic challenges.

This handbook is designed as a roadmap to assist you in navigating the accommodations process, as well as the services and supports available at Accessibility Services.

Whether you are an incoming or returning student to U of T, please take the time to review its contents. If you have any further questions, please contact us.



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# UPDATES

We are looking forward to welcoming new and returning students to our campus this fall. Accessibility Services continues to be committed to offering a wide range of virtual and in-person services and programs during the 2022-2023 academic year.

- Students can meet with their Accessibility Advisor, Adaptive Technologist, or Learning Strategist via in-person appointment, phone or Microsoft Teams. Contact our administrative team at **[accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca)** or 416-978-8060 to request an appointment.
- Students can attend a wide variety of virtual and in-person workshops and peer-led groups. Visit our website at **[accessibility.utoronto.ca](https://accessibility.utoronto.ca)** to explore our program offerings.
- Contact our administrative team if you have questions about meeting remotely.
- For the most updated information, please visit: **[accessibility.utoronto.ca](https://accessibility.utoronto.ca)**

# CONFIDENTIALITY AND NOTIFICATION OF INFORMATION SHARING

Accessibility Services respects your privacy and keeps your information confidential. Your information will be shared with relevant University of Toronto staff on a need-to-know basis so that they can perform their duties and provide academic or other disability-related accommodations.

## **These may include:**

- Notifying Accommodated Testing Services of your quiz, test and exam accommodations.
- Liaising with professors, course instructors, registrars or program staff regarding accommodations.

Information provided to Accessibility Services is protected in accordance with the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

All University staff receiving information follow University policies and guidelines.

Information provided to Accessibility Services is protected in accordance with the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

All University staff receiving information follow University policies and guidelines.

## Things to keep in mind:

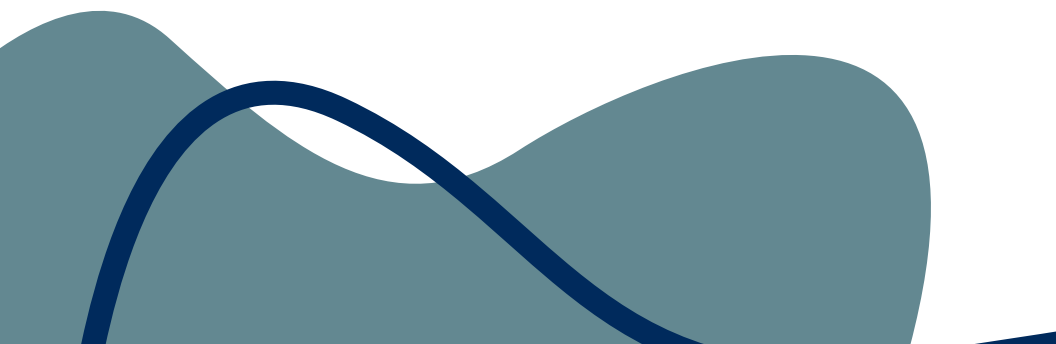
- Registration with Accessibility Services is not noted on your transcript.
- You do not have to disclose the nature of disability or information about your health to professors, course instructors, or other staff at the University.

## Providing Consent

You will need to provide consent for Accessibility Services to share information with your family members or guardians, and with external service providers.

If you have questions about confidentiality and information sharing, contact our administrative team: **accessibility.services@utoronto.ca** or 416-978-8060 or visit **studentlife.utoronto.ca/task/policy-accessibility-services-statement-of-confidentiality/**.

This Handbook provides general information; policies and processes may be subject to change as Accessibility Services makes improvements to better serve students. For the most updated information on our policies and processes, please visit **<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/departments/accessibility-services/>**.





# ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Accessibility Services at the University of Toronto St. George campus comprises an interdisciplinary team of professionals who strive to provide equitable access to education for University of Toronto students with disabilities, health conditions, and diverse ways of learning. We collaborate with the University community to identify and remove barriers for students, and foster inclusion within learning environments.

Through a collaborative, individualized, and affirming accommodations process, we support students to:



**Achieve** their academic goals;



**Engage** in a personal skill development and learning process; and



**Navigate** and fully participate in academic life and beyond.

We provide individualized and reasonable solutions that meet the accessibility needs of registered students, while upholding academic standards and academic integrity within the University. We also act as a resource in developing an equitable, inclusive, and accessible student experience.

Our work is anchored in the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act*, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, and the *University of Toronto's Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities*.

**We serve undergraduate, graduate and professional students with disabilities. Students registered with Accessibility Services may be living with:**

- Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)
- Chronic health conditions
- Concussions and head injuries
- Learning disabilities (LD)
- Mental health conditions
- Mobility or functional disabilities
- Sensory disabilities
- Temporary disabilities and injuries

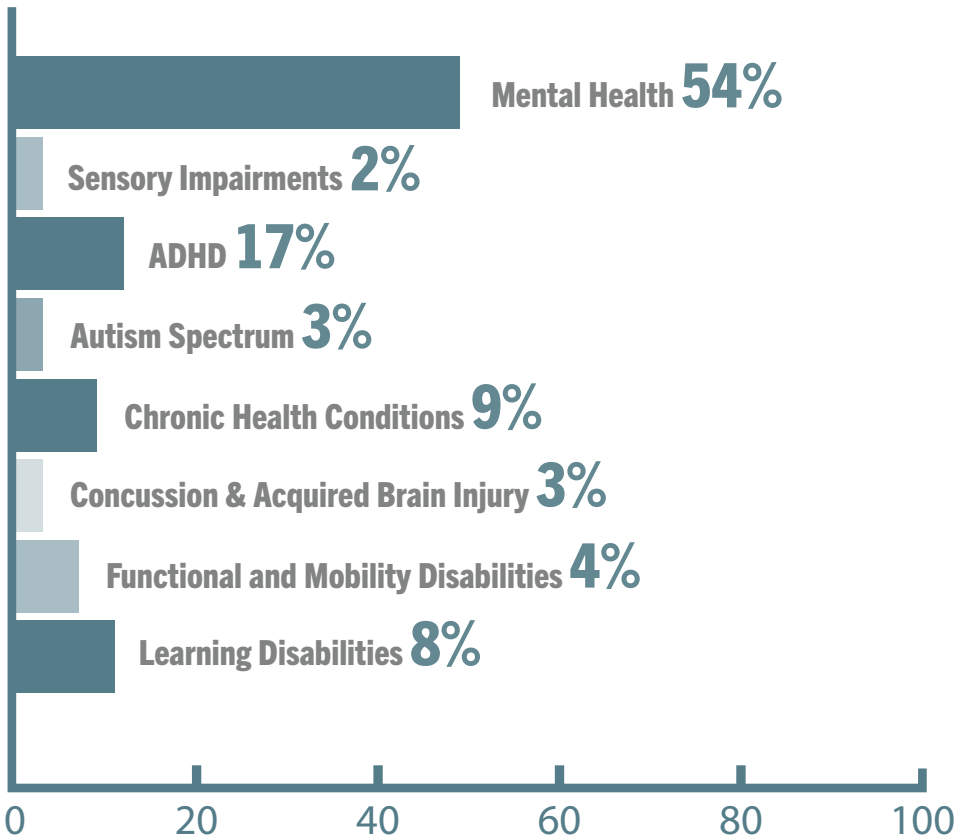
**Did you know** that nearly **90%** of registered students have non-visible or non-evident disabilities?

## Some Numbers

# 5730

## students registered

(2021/2022)



# WHAT DO WE DO?

- We confidentially review your documentation and disability-related needs.
- We work with you to determine appropriate academic accommodations for your program of study.
- We assist you in navigating using your accommodations with faculty and staff.
- We provide access to financial support, as appropriate, for accommodations and skill development.
- We provide access to disability-related adaptive furniture, equipment and technology.
- We coordinate specialized services such as sign-language interpretation and real-time captioning
- We offer opportunities to help you find a sense of community and belonging with other students.

# YOU ARE IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Students with disabilities are responsible for requesting accommodations and services at U of T. You are also responsible for knowing policies and deadlines related to your program of study, as well as those related to your accommodations. There are a variety of services and supports available to you as a student registered with Accessibility Services, and more broadly as a St. George student, that may benefit you that you are welcome to use. Learning about the accommodation process is essential to your success.

We encourage you to communicate directly with course instructors, graduate coordinators and practicum coordinators as appropriate regarding your accommodations. If, however, you are uncomfortable doing so, you can ask that your Accessibility Advisor assist with navigation and communication regarding using your accommodations.

## Your responsibilities:

- Register as soon as possible by submitting your *Intake Package* online.
  - You can register at any point during your time at U of T; the earlier you register, the sooner we can assess your needs and provide support. For new students beginning in the Fall, register as soon as you accept your offer to avoid the September rush.
- Provide appropriate and current documentation describing the functional impact disability has on your academic life.
- Follow the procedures as outlined in this handbook and on our website (e.g. when requesting extensions, registering for testing accommodations or applying for funding for disability-related needs).
- Check your UTMail+ account regularly. All communication from our office will be directed to that account, so it's important to check your inbox regularly to ensure you receive correspondence from our office and are informed about important updates.

These responsibilities can be difficult to manage, especially when you are new to U of T or new to Accessibility Services. We have Peer Mentors and Advisors available for support ([page 48](#)).

*“Accessibility Services has provided me the tools I needed in order to successfully complete my degree. I am grateful for their existence and support.”*

***Graduate Engineering student living with a learning disability***



## No two university experiences are alike

Every student has unique strengths and needs. There isn't one "right" way to achieve success at U of T, and this is especially true if you are a student with a disability.

We encourage you to:

- Go at your own pace and determine an academic workload that works for you in consultation with your Accessibility Advisor and academic program advisors.
- Build the skills to not just survive, but thrive at U of T.
- Seek and enjoy the rich academic experiences offered to all students.
- Build connections with others to foster a sense of belonging.
- Access support from others.
- Practice self-care and self-compassion.



Check out tips and opportunities to engage in self-care and find balance at [healthyuoft.ca](https://healthyuoft.ca).

# REGISTERING WITH ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Not every student living with a disability requires academic accommodations. Accommodations are based on disability-related barriers you encounter within a learning environment. Only students registered with Accessibility Services can access academic accommodations and the services provided by our office.

“Early registration with Accessibility Services was extremely beneficial. It helped ease my anxiety going into the semester knowing that I had a team on my side.”

*Masters of Nursing student living with a concussion*

## Registration deadlines

### New to U of T or new to Accessibility Services?

You can begin the registration process as soon as you have accepted your offer of admission. Check our website for summer deadlines to receive accommodations by the start of the fall term.

If you are in a program that requires practicum work and wish to request placement accommodations, we strongly recommend you register with Accessibility Services at least one full term prior to your first scheduled placement to begin the process, and well before the process for assigning practicums begins within your program of study.

If you are uncertain when your practicums are scheduled in your program, contact your Program Administrator or Clinical Education Office for details.

### **Already registered with Accessibility Services and returning for another term or year?**

The expiry date of your accommodations is listed on your Letters of Accommodation. You need to reactivate your registration annually. During the first week of May, information will be sent to your U of T email address from Accessibility Services outlining how to reactivate your registration.

### **I missed the deadline and the school term has already begun. Is it too late to begin the registration process?**

No, it's not too late to submit a registration request. We accept registrations on a rolling basis. However, to receive quiz, test and exam accommodations for the fall and winter exam periods, your intake package must be submitted by the deadlines indicated on our website [accessibility.utoronto.ca](https://accessibility.utoronto.ca).

## **PLEASE NOTE:**

Registration after our exam period deadlines means test and exam accommodations will not be available until the following term, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. a temporary physical disability like a concussion or broken bone, an emergency surgical treatment or hospitalization).

For registration deadlines, visit our website:  
[accessibility.utoronto.ca](https://accessibility.utoronto.ca)



# HOW TO REGISTER WITH ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

**Register as early as possible.** You can register as soon as you have accepted your offer of admission to U of T using your UTORid or JOINid.

## Step 1

### Obtain required documentation

To register, you will first need documentation of your disability. You must scan the documentation and upload it digitally.

#### DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The required documentation depends on the nature of disability or disabilities. Please read the following sections to determine what documentation you will need to register.

#### 1. Chronic Health, Mental Health and Sensory and Physical Disabilities

- The *Certificate of Disability* completed by a health care practitioner familiar with your disability who is licensed to make a diagnosis ([uoft.me/as-documentation](https://uoft.me/as-documentation))
- Additional documentation related to disability can also be provided (e.g., a report from an audiologist).
- If you live with a mental health disability, you are not required to disclose your specific diagnosis.

#### 2. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

- A *Certificate of Disability* (CDIS) which indicates diagnosis of ADHD (as per DSM5 guidelines) and adult functional impacts as they relate to post-secondary studies is necessary. A brief diagnostic note from the assessing practitioner or a prescription for ADHD medications/ treatments is not sufficient.
- An assessment report that confirms several inattentive or hyperactive-impulsive symptoms were present before

age 12. The report must clearly identify sources of information for this diagnostic evidence.

### 3. Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

- Medical documentation by a trained psychologist, psychiatrist, or other physician with specialized training in assessing Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- If documentation dates to early childhood, supplemental documentation that outlines functional impacts as an adult will be required.
- The assessing professional must complete the Certificate of Disability and outline impacts rather than identifying only testing areas of impaired (not relative weakness) skills.
- The report may be no older than 5 years or completed at age 18.
- For more detailed information, please visit our website [uoft.me/as-documentation](https://uoft.me/as-documentation).

### 4. Learning Disabilities (LD)

- If you have a copy of a recent psycho-educational assessment (completed at 18 years old or older or within

5 years prior to the date of registration with Accessibility Services) please provide our office with a copy. We need the full report, including appendices with all test scores. Reports must clearly outline dates of assessment and that the assessment was conducted in person.

- If you had an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or psychoeducational assessment from previous schooling, limited accommodations may be able to be put in place on an interim basis while appropriate documentation is secured. Your accommodations may differ from what you received in previous learning environments.

More information regarding what is required to be accommodated for Learning Disabilities is available on our website at [uoft.me/as-LD](https://uoft.me/as-LD).

You can discuss all available funding options with an Accessibility Advisor, so don't let the cost of an assessment deter you from registering.

**Please note:** Adult (age 18 or older) documentation is required for many government financial

supports for students with disabilities.

## 5. Concussion or Brain Injury

- A *Certificate of Disability* completed by a health care practitioner familiar with your disability who is licensed to make a diagnosis ([uoft.me/as-documentation](https://uoft.me/as-documentation)) **OR** Recent medical documentation from an appropriate health care practitioner (e.g. an emergency room physician, family doctor, and/or neurologist) that outlines the functional impacts of disability and related accommodation needs.
- A psycho-educational or neuropsychological assessment may be needed if significant cognitive accommodation is required.
- Additional documentation may be requested to verify the need for continued services if your condition persists beyond 6 months.

## 6. Temporary Physical Disabilities (broken limbs, sprains/strains, soft tissue injury, short-term follow-up after surgical care)

- A *Certificate of Disability* completed by a health care practitioner familiar with your disability who is licensed to make a diagnosis ([uoft.me/as-documentation](https://uoft.me/as-documentation)) **OR** Recent medical documentation from an appropriate health care practitioner (e.g. an emergency room physician, family doctor, and/or neurologist) that outlines the functional impacts of your disability and your accommodation needs.
- Additional documentation may be requested to verify the need for continued services after the estimated duration of the condition.

## Step 2

### Complete our online *Student Intake Form*

- Have your required documentation available in a digital format.
- Set aside 30-40 minutes to complete the online *Student Intake Form* as you will not be able to save and return to the form.
- Visit [uoft.me/as-registration](https://uoft.me/as-registration) to access and complete the online Student Intake Form.
- Provide information in all required fields.
- Attach your required documentation.

## Step 3

### Attend an Intake Appointment

- After you submit your *Intake Package*, you will be contacted to schedule an appointment with an Accessibility Advisor.
- The Accessibility Advisor will review your Intake Package and your needs so they can work with you to determine appropriate academic accommodations for your program of study.

If you need help with any step of the registration process, please connect with our office. A Peer Advisor or a member of our administrative team will be able to assist you.

If you are unsure of what documentation you need or require accommodations or assistance with completing the *Intake Package*, please contact our front desk at [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca) or 416-978-8060.

## What if I'm not sure I have a disability?

We can work with you if you believe you have a disability or are in the process of obtaining documentation. Accessibility Services does not provide services to diagnose disabilities, but we can discuss difficulties you are experiencing and, if appropriate, provide information about how to obtain an assessment.

Contact our front desk to arrange a brief consultation meeting with our Intake Coordinator at [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca) or 416-978-8060.

If you believe you might have a Learning Disability and/or ADHD, please complete our online *Student Intake Form* prior to meeting with our Intake Coordinator.

## If you believe you have a disability and are having difficulty with your studies, there are additional supports and resources you may explore:

- Meet with an Academic Advisor to discuss program requirements and the supports available to you within your program or faculty (e.g. OHPSA for Faculty of Medicine students, the Academic Success Program for JD students, the Rotman Write-Now program). Meet with a Learning Strategist and attend workshops at Academic Success to develop new learning skills [uoft.me/academicsuccess](https://uoft.me/academicsuccess).
- Meet with your instructors or supervisors to discuss areas of improvement.
- Visit Health & Wellness for strategies to manage stress: [healthandwellness.utoronto.ca](https://healthandwellness.utoronto.ca).
- Connect with the Centre for International Experience to get acquainted with your new city [cie.utoronto.ca](https://cie.utoronto.ca).
- Attend workshops at the Graduate Centre for Academic Communication.
- Connect with writing supports available to you: <https://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres>. Visit [gradlife.utoronto.ca](https://gradlife.utoronto.ca) for more information about resources and support.

## **I have accommodations at another university and am taking courses at U of T. Can I transfer my accommodations to U of T?**

No. Unfortunately, we do not transfer accommodations from other institutions.

The University of Toronto offers unique programs, each of which has specific academic expectations. Students may experience opportunities, as well as challenges and barriers that may not exist in other university contexts. It is important to ensure students have access to an individualized accommodation plan that provides appropriate supports within our learning environments.

To receive academic accommodations, you must register as a new student with Accessibility Services using the steps on **page 17**. You may upload relevant documentation from your home university as supplemental documentation.

If you have questions, contact our administrative team at **[accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca)** or 416-978-8060.

# INTAKE APPOINTMENTS

Once you have submitted your *Student Intake Package* online, we will schedule a one-hour meeting with you and an Accessibility Advisor. Your Advisor will review your documentation and work with you to outline appropriate and reasonable accommodations and supports.

## What to expect during an intake appointment

To help us develop an accommodation plan that's right for you, an Accessibility Advisor may ask questions at your intake appointment to learn more about:

- How disability impacts your life and learning
- Your previous learning experiences and the environments in which you learn best
- Your learning style and strengths
- If relevant, your family history

## Annual renewal of accommodations

Your accommodations expire on April 30<sup>th</sup> of each year. You must reactivate your registration with us to renew your accommodations.

During the first week of May each year, an email will be sent to your UTmail+ account from Accessibility Services outlining how to reactivate registration. We encourage you to renew your accommodations each May so they are in place at the start of your next academic term.

There are two types of renewals:

**1. You have current documentation regarding your disability, and you and your Accessibility Advisor don't anticipate changes in your accommodations or needs.**

- You may be able to renew your accommodations electronically. If so, an individualized link to renew them will be sent to your UTmail+ account.

**2. You need updated documentation and/or wish to discuss changes to accommodations.**

- You will need to meet with your Accessibility Advisor to reactivate your accommodations.



# ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

## What are they?

Individualized, effective and reasonable academic accommodations can be provided if you experience disability-related barriers in demonstrating the knowledge and skills required in your program of study.

Academic accommodations provide an equal opportunity for success while upholding academic standards and academic integrity.

## How are academic accommodations determined?

Students provide documentation completed by a qualified medical professional that confirms functional limitations and barriers related to a diagnosed disability requiring academic accommodations. The Accessibility Advisor reviews this documentation and meets with the student. This lets students share their lived experiences in terms of navigating disability, including successes and skillsets they have developed over time. The Advisor then considers this information, as well as best practices and the expected learning outcomes/core competencies of the academic program, to develop an accommodation plan. Over time, these accommodation plans can be modified in response to changes in the disability-related circumstances of the student and/or the academic demands of the program.

## It is important to note:

- Academic accommodations do not change the essential requirements of a course or program curricula.
- You will be expected to meet the same academic standards, and demonstrate the same knowledge and skill development as your peers.

# TYPES OF ACCOMMODATIONS



## Classrooms, labs, course work

- Accessible classrooms and labs, adaptive furniture, and assistive technology
- Reasonable extensions on individual assignments
- Sign language interpretation, professional/computerized notetaking
- Access to materials in alternate formats (e.g. braille, large print, digitized text, voice-activated software, assisted-hearing devices)



## Quizzes, tests, and exams

- Accommodations may include access to a space with fewer distractions, additional writing time and breaks.
- Access to alternate formats like large print or braille
- Use of adaptive furniture and equipment (e.g. using a keyboard for writing or screen-reading software)
- Accommodations for oral and comprehensive exams and defenses

“Students may not know what they’re allowed to ask for if they don’t know what they’re entitled to. Knowledge is definitely power.”

*OISE Graduate Student living with mental health and concussion symptoms.*



## Practicum and placements

- Guidance on requesting accommodations during a practicum or placement
- Developing safe, appropriate accommodations at a practicum or placement site in collaboration with the program's Practicum or Placement Coordinator



## Research

- Working with you and your department to determine whether additional time may be required to complete your research/degree



## Outside the classroom

- Working with residences regarding disability-related housing needs
- Connecting you with campus and community resources
- Offering peer mentoring and co-curricular programming



For a list of some academic accommodations, please visit [uoft.me/as-accommodations](https://uoft.me/as-accommodations)

# YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Once you register with our office, you are in the driver's seat when it comes to accessing your accommodations, and various services and programs offered through Accessibility Services.

## Responsibilities checklist

- ☐ Download your *Letters of Accommodation* and provide them to your professors, course instructors or the appropriate person within your program ([p.30](#)).
- ☐ Communicate with professors, course instructors or the appropriate person within your program about your accommodation needs — including whether you need to request extensions ([p.32](#)).
- ☐ Register to write tests, quizzes and exams with Accommodated Testing Services ([p.43](#)).
- ☐ Meet your Accessibility Advisor for guidance with navigating accommodations related to research and thesis work, and to practicum, lab and coursework.
- ☐ Connect with an Accessibility Services Adaptive Technologist and/or and Learning Strategist when this is recommended by your Advisor ([p. 54-55](#)).
- ☐ Explore options for Financial Aid to help you with disability-related educational costs ([p. 55-56](#)).
- ☐ Get connected and find support through our Community and Peer Support programs.

# LETTERS OF ACCOMMODATION

*Letters of Accommodation* are used to inform your professors, instructors, and/or Program Administrators about your learning needs and to verify your need for accommodations. **Please check with your Accessibility Advisor regarding the process within your department/faculty.**

If you are not comfortable communicating with your program, you can ask your Accessibility Advisor do so for you.

Your *Letters of Accommodation* may not list all your accommodations such as those related to accommodations for practicums, placements or field courses. Meet with your Accessibility Advisor to discuss whether you need a tailored Letter of Accommodation for experiential learning environments.

*Letters of Accommodation* maintain confidentiality about the nature of disability while providing information to the reader so they can implement your accommodations. This may include:

- Specific details about classroom, lab or practicum accommodations
- Instructions to send tests, quizzes and exams in the correct format to Accommodated Testing Services
- Confirmation that a student may request a coursework extension on an individual assignment up to one week from the original deadline
- Notification that a service provider or aid will be present in the classroom



Go to **[uoft.me/LOA](https://uoft.me/LOA)** to download your *Letters of Accommodation* — there will be one for each of your courses.

To view and download your letters, you must use the following web browsers: Firefox, Microsoft Edge, Chrome or Internet Explorer v.11 and above.

Not sure how to draft an email to your professor or course instructor requesting an accommodation? Take a look at our draft email to professors (<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/Emailing-Profes.pdf>), or connect with a Peer Advisor at Accessibility Services. For hours, visit: [uoft.me/as-peers](https://uoft.me/as-peers).

**If you have trouble accessing your Letters of Accommodation online, please note the following:**

- It may take up to 48 hours for your letters to become available after your intake appointment.
- You can only use Firefox, Chrome, Microsoft Edge, or Internet Explorer v.11 to access your letter of accommodation.

If the problem persists, please contact our administrative team at [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca) or 416-978-8060 for assistance, or connect with a Peer Advisor.

## WORKING WITH PROFESSORS, COURSE INSTRUCTORS, AND PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS

When deciding how to discuss accommodations with professors, instructors or Program Administrators, consider what they need to know and what information is relevant for them. If you are not sure how to request or discuss accommodations, connect with your Accessibility Advisor.

You do not need to provide details about disability, diagnosis or personal struggles. Instead, discuss your specific learning and accommodations needs, and any limitations you might experience in meeting your program requirements. You may also wish to discuss strategies and approaches that have been effective for you in the past to support your success in the program.

Some examples might be:

“I have an academic accommodation that allows me to sit in the front row of the classroom for disability-related reasons.”

“I have an academic accommodation for the times I will need to miss class due to disability-related reasons. This is why I require note-taking services.”

“Because it takes me longer to process written information, I may require clarity around instructions and may potentially need extensions on coursework.”

Quick tips when requesting accommodations:

- If you make a request in person, by phone or virtually, follow up with an email outlining what you discussed. If you are following up at a later date, reattach your *Letter of Accommodation*.
- In all your correspondence, make sure to include your course code and section since professors/instructors often teach more than one course.
- Avoid writing angry or confrontational emails. If a challenging situation arises, make an appointment with your Accessibility Advisor to get advice on next steps.

**Students in professional faculties may need to provide *Letters of Accommodation* to a registrar or Program Administrator. Consult with your Accessibility Advisor or Program Coordinator for program specific information on where to share your *Letters of Accommodation***

“Accessibility Services has helped me a lot during my two years here. I feel my Accessibility Advisor helps me to navigate the complexities of trying to earn a PhD while having multiple disabilities.”

***PhD student living with mental health and chronic health conditions.***

# WORKING WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR

Some graduate and professional programs involve working with a supervisor. The relationship between a student and their supervisor is important as supervision can significantly influence a student's academic progress and experience.

Supervisors can provide accommodations to students with disabilities who register with Accessibility Services to ensure they have the opportunity to demonstrate and develop their academic, research and scholarly potential. We recommend you speak to your Accessibility Advisor first before discussing accommodations with your supervisor.

## **Accommodations may include and are not limited to:**

- Requesting meetings take place in an accessible room/space
- Extending a submission deadline for written work (e.g. thesis chapters)
- Providing additional assistance in a lab setting
- Requesting recording of meetings with your supervisor
- Accommodations for exams/oral defence
- Extending timeline for degree completion and exploring alternate sources of funding if required

Negotiating the terms of the supervisory relationship helps clarify the frequency and type of contact expected between a student and their supervisor. Things to discuss may include:

- Availability for appointments (duration, frequency, etc.)
- Communication styles, preferences and/or needs
- The essential skills and learning outcomes a student is expected to demonstrate
- Expectations about responsibilities



The School of Graduate Studies has developed a helpful resource on the graduate supervisory relationship. Please refer to the Graduate Supervision Guidelines for more information: <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/resources-supports/supervision-guidelines/>

The Centre of Graduate Mentorship is also available to provide confidential support on the graduate supervisory relationship. Please refer to **Page 68** or visit [cgms.utoronto.ca](https://www.cgms.utoronto.ca) for more information.

# WORKING WITH SUPERVISORY COMMITTEES

Some graduate and professional programs include working with a supervisory committee, who work with students to meet their academic goals of their respective programs.

Accommodations may be available for students who are registered with Accessibility Services to ensure they have the opportunity to demonstrate and develop their academic, research, and scholarly potential. We recommend you speak to your Accessibility Advisor at least six weeks before meeting with your Supervisory Committee to coordinate accommodations.

## **Accommodations may include and are not limited to:**

- Negotiating communication styles, preferences, and/or needs
- Requesting recordings of meetings with your supervisory committee
- Developing written summaries establishing what was discussed in your supervisory committee meeting, including next steps
- Extending a submission deadline for written work

# REQUESTING AN EXTENSION ON COURSEWORK

**Please note:** The extension process varies among programs. In some programs, you can request a coursework extension directly from your professor or instructor. In others, you will need to communicate with a Program Administrator or Registrar. If you are unsure of the process for your program, your Accessibility Advisor can support you with navigation.

## One-week coursework extensions

Your Letters of Accommodation serve as a confirmation of your registration with Accessibility Services, and will confirm that you have an accommodation for extensions on coursework for up to one week.

All disability-related extension requests require approval from your professors, instructors or Program Administrator. The request should be made before the original due date. We recommend asking for an extension at least one week before the assignment is due.

Approval of the instructor is requested to determine whether or not the request is feasible in the context of the course. It should not involve an assessment by your instructor to determine whether or not the accommodation is warranted. Should you feel this is taking place, please connect with your Accessibility Advisor immediately to discuss.

We understand that sometimes, disability-related challenges may prevent this from happening. Should this occur, speak with your Accessibility Advisor to discuss next steps.

**“** *Having accommodations that I can rely on has greatly improved my experience as a student. My disability is aggravated by stress, which makes meeting deadlines challenging.* **”**

*Graduate professional student living with a mental health disability*

### **There are situations when a professor or instructor might not approve an extension. For example:**

- When the extension request concerns a group assignment
- When the answers for the assignment are posted or taken up in the next lecture
- When the extension request does not allow sufficient time for marking

In these circumstances, meet with your Accessibility Advisor to discuss potential next steps or alternate accommodations.

## Extensions beyond the end of term

Students who are part of the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) must complete an SGS Extension to Complete Coursework form to request extensions beyond the end of the term. You can ask your Accessibility Advisor to submit a letter to accompany the form. It is important that you continue to work on individual assignments to the best of your ability while an extension request is being reviewed.

Students in professional programs that are not part of SGS should consult with their program or Accessibility Advisor about the process.

More information about how School of Graduate Studies students can request extensions on coursework is available on the School of Graduate Studies website: [sgs.utoronto.ca/policies-guidelines/coursework-extensions/](https://sgs.utoronto.ca/policies-guidelines/coursework-extensions/)

### Can I get an extension on group work?

Extensions may not be possible or appropriate for group work. They are not usually granted. If you are unable to complete group work due to disability-related reasons, speak with your instructor and your Accessibility Advisor as soon as possible to discuss potential alternatives. Meet with your Accessibility Advisor to problem-solve how to address the workload issues you are facing and to consider whether an extension on an individual assignment in a different course might be possible so that you can have more time to prioritize and focus on group work.

## How can I stay on top of my deadlines?

At the beginning of the semester, map out your deadlines using a planner or a calendar. This may help to ensure you have time to make the most of the resources available to you as a student, including those offered by **our office**, a **Writing Centre**, the Academic Success **Centre** and the Graduate Centre for Academic Communication.



Visit [studentlife.utoronto.ca/task/motivation-and-procrastination/](https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/task/motivation-and-procrastination/) for a list of programs and resources that can help you stay on top of deadlines.

## Where can I get help with planning my semester?

Peer Advisors are available to assist you. Stop by during one of our Peer Advisor drop-in sessions when they are available, or visit **uoft.me/as-peers** to be connected to a graduate student who can meet with you throughout the semester.



# REQUESTING A PROGRAM EXTENSION

You may, for disability-related reasons, require additional time to prepare or complete components of your degree such as your thesis proposal, thesis, comprehensive or oral exams that will subsequently delay completion of your program. In these instances, students in the School of Graduate Studies should complete the appropriate SGS form, in collaboration with your Accessibility Advisor. SGS forms can be found here: <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/current-students/student-forms-letter-requests/>.

For students who are not part of the School of Graduate Studies, please communicate with your Accessibility Advisor if you anticipate needing additional time to complete your degree due to disability-related reasons.

## **Academic consideration for non-disability reasons**

You may require special consideration for reasons that are not connected to your disability. There are different processes to request accommodations for reasons that are not disability-related. Speak to academic advisor or program administrator to learn more. Your Accessibility Advisor can support you with navigation if you need assistance.

## Illness or injury

- At this time, a Verification of Illness (also known as a “doctor’s note”) is not required “in most cases of short term absence. Students who are absent from academic participation for any reason (e.g. COVID-19, cold/ flu and other illness or injury, family situation) and who require consideration for missed academic work should report their absence through the **online absence declaration** form: <https://help.acorn.utoronto.ca/blog/uFAQs/declare-an-absence/>. The declaration is available on ACORN under the Profile and Settings menu. Students should also advise their instructor of their absence. Visit the COVID-19 Information for University of Toronto Students page on the Vice-Provost, Students website for information on this and other frequently asked questions: <https://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/covid-19>.
- Each academic area has its own policies which may change some of the information and guidance provided above. Contact your Faculty Registrar or Program Administrator for more information.

## Religious observances

- Alert your professor or course instructor regarding religious observances that might impact your ability to meet course requirements during the term: [viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/policies-guidelines/accommodation-religious](https://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/policies-guidelines/accommodation-religious).

## Illness or death of a family member, or personal or family crisis

- Alert your Faculty Registrar or Program Administrator if you face exceptional life circumstances to discuss your options.
- Accessibility Services is unable to provide accommodations related to caregiving of a family member, including family members who are living with a disability. If this is your situation, please contact your Faculty Registrar, Program Administrator or the UofT Family Care Office: [familycare.utoronto.ca](https://familycare.utoronto.ca)

# QUIZ, TEST, AND EXAM ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodated Testing Services (ATS) is responsible for administering accommodations for quizzes, tests and exams for students registered with Accessibility Services. Our office works collaboratively with ATS to provide you with the opportunity to write your tests and exams with your approved accommodations.

## **How to register for quiz, test, and final exam accommodations**

There are additional steps for students registered with our service to request testing accommodations for timed written assessments. If you are planning to complete any timed written assessments with accommodations (quizzes, tests, exams, and online assessments), you must register with Accommodated Testing Services by the set deadlines: [https://lsm.utoronto.ca/ats/info\\_for\\_students.html#Important\\_Dates](https://lsm.utoronto.ca/ats/info_for_students.html#Important_Dates)

Please note that your professor, instructor or Program Administrator may be informed of your testing accommodations if they need to input them into an online test platform.

Please note that some programs require testing accommodations to be requested directly with the program (no involvement from ATS). The advisor will discuss the appropriate process for registering for testing accommodations with students in these programs (e.g. Masters of Nursing, Physician Assistant, Pharm D for Pharmacists etc.).

When you successfully submit a request for accommodations, you will receive an automated confirmation email. To review and check the status of your requests, please click “my registration history” on the registration page: <https://clockwork.studentlife.utoronto.ca/custom/misc/home.aspx>



## For quizzes and tests

- Check your syllabus for quiz and test dates.
- Register with 14 days' notice prior to the date of the quiz or test.
- Please ensure you use the appropriate forms on the ATS website when registering for term tests versus final exams.

## Final exams

- Check your exam schedule once it has been posted.
- Register by ATS Registration Deadlines each term: [https://lsm.utoronto.ca/ats/info\\_for\\_students.html#Important\\_Dates](https://lsm.utoronto.ca/ats/info_for_students.html#Important_Dates)

Keeping track of deadlines can be difficult during busy times. Keep checking your UTmail+ address for reminders about important deadlines.

Our Peer Advisors are available to help you with the registration process. Attend one of our drop-in hours to plan ahead and register for quizzes, tests, and exams. Visit <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/peer-advisors-daily-drop-in> to find out more.

## Quiz, test, and exam accommodations may include:

- |                               |  |                                       |
|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| • Additional writing time     | • Stopped-clock breaks                     | • A scribe                            |
| • A distraction-reduced space | • Adaptive software, lighting or furniture | • Access to food, drink or medication |

## Online/Virtual Assessments and Exams

Students writing virtual/online tests and exams still need to register with Accommodated testing Services for each assessment. ATS will make appropriate arrangements with your instructor to ensure your accommodations for tests and exams are implemented.

**If you know you will need to miss a test, quiz, or lab for disability-related reasons before the deadline occurs:**

Email your professor, instructor, or Program Administrator with a copy of your *Letter of Accommodation* to notify them that you are registered with Accessibility Services. Connect with your Accessibility Advisor as soon as possible to discuss next steps. Read your syllabus or speak with your instructor to request a make-up test, quiz, or lab.

**If you have missed a past test, quiz, or lab for disability-related reasons during the term:**

Email your instructor, professor, or Program Administrator to notify them. Connect with your Accessibility Advisor as soon as possible to discuss next steps.

For more information about Accommodated Testing Services, visit:  
<https://ism.utoronto.ca/ats/index.html>



# COMPREHENSIVE/ QUALIFYING EXAMS

Comprehensive exams may be in an oral, written or combined format and are dependent on a student's program of study. When accommodations are needed to overcome disability-related barriers, a student's Accessibility Advisor will communicate with the student's supervisor, program Chair and/or Graduate Office to review the proposed accommodations before they are finalized. For written exams, a student may be able to register to write with accommodations at Accommodated Testing Services.

**Depending on the disability-related barriers, oral comprehensive/qualifying exam accommodations may include:**

- Distraction-reduced space
- Adaptive software, lighting or furniture
- Additional writing/response time
- Stopped-clock breaks

## **Musical Performance/Skills Evaluations**

Please consult with your Accessibility Advisor and instructor on how to arrange accommodations for such evaluations as early as possible. Examples of musical performance evaluations are private applied lessons, group rehearsals, ensembles, concert performances and music juries. These may include academic and/or technical practical competencies including ear training, musical reading and listening skills, music dictation, combined with written music and music analysis. Your Accessibility Advisor may need to connect with faculty, instructors and/or Program Administrators to discuss accommodations well in advance, so connect with your Advisor to discuss ahead of time.

# CLINICAL SKILL EXAMS: BELL-RINGERS, PRACTICAL SKILLS EXAMS, OSCES, AND IOSCES

Check with your Accessibility Adviser and your program on how to book accommodations for such assessments.

Bell-Ringer, practical skills, OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical) and IOSCE (Integrated Objective Structured Clinical) exams are designed to assess clinical skills. They are used in many professional programs and usually involve a standardized patient or client played by an actor who presents with certain problems/symptoms to simulate real-life client/patient interaction. These kinds of tests may be graded or formative (for review and clinical development).

## Bell-Ringer Exams

This testing is commonly used to assess accuracy in identification (e.g. anatomy) within a specific timeframe. It is used in programs such as Medicine, Nursing, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy. Bell-Ringers typically include the ringing of a bell or activation of an alarm to signal when students need to move from one station to another to demonstrate clinical skills. They usually involve the following components:



**Reading:** A student reads information about a part of the anatomy to be identified.



**Station interaction:** The student examines and evaluates the anatomical part.



**Write-up:** This may include recording and describing the identified anatomical part.

## Practical Skills Exams, OSCEs, and IOSCEs

This testing is designed to assess clinical skills. Generally, it involves interaction with a standardized client/patient or work within a station that requires a student demonstrate a particular clinical skill. Such exams are often used in professional health sciences programs such as Social Work, Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry and Physical Therapy. They may involve one station or several stations, each with a time constraint, and include the following components:



**Reading:** the student reads information about the client/patient or the skill to be performed.



**Client or Patient/Station interaction:** a client/patient is questioned and examined, and a clinical skill is performed.



**Write-up:** this may require writing case notes to summarize the interaction.



**Oral Presentation:** a student may be asked to describe the interaction and report findings to a faculty member.

## Accommodating Clinical Skills Exams

Students with disabilities may request accommodations for clinical skills exams.

Arranging accommodations for clinical skills exams take time and coordination. Thus, we recommend contacting your Accessibility Advisor well in advance of these exams to determine whether you need to request accommodations. Providing your Advisor with a clear understanding of what the test will entail will be helpful in the process.

Your Advisor may need to connect with clinical faculty and/or program administrators to discuss the feasibility of unique accommodation requests. Once an accommodation plan is complete, your Advisor will write a tailored accommodation letter outlining your requests.

## Clinical Skills Exam Accommodations may include:

- Additional time to review written material prior to interacting with a standardized patient/client or station
- The use of reading software to review written such material
- Additional time to complete written responses
- The use of speech-to-text software to dictate case notes or report
- Stopped-clock breaks if there are multiple stations to complete within a particular timeframe.

# PLACEMENTS, INTERNSHIPS, ROTATIONS, ON-CALL WORK

Accommodations that are appropriate within a classroom setting may not be suitable to meet the needs of a student completing experiential learning components within their program. Professional programs within the Faculty of Information, Faculty of Music, OISE, and Rotman MBA may also have opportunities for practicum work and internship. Clinical professional programs such as Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Counselling, and Social Work often include students engaging in clinical work serving the public that create important ‘duty of care’ responsibilities that must be met, and which accommodations cannot compromise.

The unique demands of clinical environments may result in a need for accommodations even when a student hasn’t needed accommodations in the past for other types of programs. As with classroom and testing accommodations, placement accommodations are based on medical documentation and functional impacts.

The process to determine appropriate placement accommodations is interactive. When deciding on reasonable accommodations in such settings, you should meet with your Accessibility Advisor to ensure that accommodations allow you to meet professional standards and

responsibilities and are feasible within a placement setting. Coming up with a placement accommodation plan may involve Accessibility Services, clinical faculty/staff, and program administrators.

## Confidentiality

Sometimes students may have concerns about how they will be perceived by others in terms of professional competence if they request accommodations. Accessibility Services provides information on a need-to-know basis only. Your Advisor will not disclose the specific nature or extent of disability to instructors, supervisors or program administrators. If you have any concerns about privacy and confidentiality, you are welcome to discuss them with your Accessibility Advisor.

## Task Analysis

Accessibility Advisors work with students, clinical faculty/staff and program administrators to complete a task analysis of a placement setting to determine appropriate accommodations.

This task analysis may involve questions such as:

- What competencies need to be demonstrated by a student in a particular placement?
- What are the required learning outcomes for a student in a particular placement?
- What methods are required for assessments and why?
- Are there any significant consequences if a skill to be learned and demonstrated is performed at varying levels of competence?

## Meeting an Accessibility Advisor Early in the Process is Crucial

Finding a placement that is a good fit for an accommodated student is important. Additional time may be needed to arrange a placement that can accommodate a student's needs. Thus, it is important to start the process of requesting placement accommodations with your Accessibility Advisor well in advance of placements. Sufficient time is required to guarantee placement accommodations. **The matching process for some placements may start as early as a year in advance. Thus, we recommend you learn the anticipated start dates of your**

**placements and speak to your Advisor well in advance (minimum 12 weeks in advance of the start date and well before placement settings are finalized) of all placements to start the process.**

Each placement setting may have different essential requirements and learning outcomes students are expected to demonstrate; thus, it is important to stay in touch with your Advisor to discuss whether placement accommodations need to be modified.

### **Placement accommodations may include:**

- A distraction-reduced space for charting/writing notes
- Additional time for charting/writing notes
- Additional time to prepare for patient/client/student interactions
- The use of adaptive technology
- Ergonomic set up of workspace
- Sign language interpretation
- Ability to make up placement hours missed due to disability-related reasons; this is subject to scheduling/availability and limits that may be set by the program and/or regulatory College.

### **Communicating your placement accommodation plan:**

Once your Advisor has completed a task analysis and helped you develop a placement accommodation plan, they will draft a tailored accommodations letter outlining your requests. You will have opportunities throughout the process to ask questions and provide feedback.

### **Accommodations in Teaching Assistantships**

Teaching Assistants are university unionized employees and should seek accommodations at Health and Well-Being. Let them know you are registered with Accessibility Services and what your accommodations have been.

**[hrandequity.utoronto.ca/inclusion/accessibility/accommodation/accommodation-guidelines-for-employees-with-disabilities/](https://hrandequity.utoronto.ca/inclusion/accessibility/accommodation/accommodation-guidelines-for-employees-with-disabilities/)**



# WORKING WITH YOUR ACCESSIBILITY ADVISOR

Once you are registered with our office, you are assigned an Accessibility Advisor who can help ensure you know how to request accommodations.

Your Accessibility Advisor may be located in our central office or in an office near your program faculty or department. Visit [studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/accessibility-advisor-support](https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/accessibility-advisor-support) to find out where your Advisor is located and how to contact them.

**Virtual, phone, and in-person appointments will continue to be available for students throughout the 2022-2023 academic year.**

You and your Accessibility Advisor will collaborate to develop your accommodations. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Once you are registered with our service, meet with your Accessibility Advisor to keep them in the loop about any changes to your health or accessibility needs or if you encounter any challenges using your accommodations.
- You should connect with your Advisor as soon as possible if you are experiencing difficulties or a flare-up of your symptoms, to discuss your options. They can be much more effective in helping you if you let them know at the time, rather than afterwards.
- It will be helpful to connect with your Advisor to discuss when and why you may be struggling with completing certain kinds of academic work, to consider next steps.
- Let them know how well your accommodations are working so you can discuss changes or alternatives if needed.
- Your accommodation needs may change over time and with different academic demands.



Visit [studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/accessibility-advisor-support/](https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/accessibility-advisor-support/) for your Accessibility Advisor's contact information.

### **If you are experiencing a flare-up of symptoms that prevents you from attending a meeting:**

Please communicate with your Accessibility Advisor to update them on your situation as soon as possible. This update will be added to your file, but you may still need to meet your Accessibility Advisor to plan or discuss next steps.



*My Accessibility Advisor gave me the peace of mind of knowing I can approach them for any difficulties or inquiries.*



*Graduate Engineering student living with a learning disability.*

## **STAYING IN TOUCH WITH YOUR ACCESSIBILITY ADVISOR**

### **We prefer meetings vs emails**

Your Accessibility Advisor can provide the most valuable support - through a meeting. Interactions in person, virtually or over the phone allow Accessibility Advisors to speak with you about your strengths, your challenges and how they can provide support. Email communication tends to require multiple back and forth clarifications where the situation is complex and detailed, which delays our being able to support you in a thorough and timely way.

There are multiple ways you can stay in touch with your Advisor which are outlined on the next few pages.

## Appointments

### When should I book an appointment with my Accessibility Advisor?

- To discuss the impact of disability on your academic work and to learn more about the services offered at Accessibility Services
- To request assistance accessing disability-related funding you may be eligible for
- To receive information about services and assessments
- To review updated medical documentation
- To discuss changes to your academic accommodations and options regarding managing your academic workload
- To provide information about petitions that you are filing for outstanding work or deferred exams
- To discuss changes to your ability to complete academic work due to disability
- To discuss navigating lab, clinical, or placement accommodations

## Our Appointment Policy

Your scheduled appointment time is reserved just for you.

We encourage you to be on time for appointments. Here are some things to keep in mind about your appointment:

- If circumstances change and you are not able to attend an appointment, please notify us by email or phone with 24 hours' notice so your appointment is released and available to other students.
- We prioritize rescheduled appointments for students who provide notice.
- For a Monday appointment, we require notice no later than 8:30 a.m. that morning.
- Students arriving more than 15 minutes after the start of their appointment may need to reschedule.

# EMAILING YOUR ACCESSIBILITY ADVISOR

For most questions and concerns, we encourage you to book an appointment with your Accessibility Advisor.

However, there may be times that you will need to provide a brief update to your Accessibility Advisor, especially if you are experiencing a flare up of disability-related symptoms or have limited ability to meet due to being engaged in a practicum/placement.

In these circumstances, you may send an email to your Accessibility Advisor to update them on your situation.

## **Please note:**

- You may still need to attend a drop-in hour or book an appointment to discuss next steps.
- Personal and academic issues are best addressed during appointments.
- Email should not be used to make contact in emergency situations. If you are experiencing an emergency, please call 911 or visit your nearest hospital emergency room.

## **When should I email my Accessibility Advisor?**

- To update your Advisor during a flare up of disability-related symptoms with an academic impact (e.g. you have to miss a test or exam or need to request an extension on coursework beyond the term). You may still need to meet with your Advisor to problem-solve or discuss a change in your accommodations.
- To update your Advisor that you will miss or have missed a class or lab, or a significant amount of placement hours due to disability-related symptoms
- To notify your Advisor of an update in medical or disability-related circumstances

## Contacting our administrative team

Contact our administrative team to book an appointment with your Accessibility Advisor or to ask general questions. During busy times of the year, our administrative team receives high numbers of emails and phone calls; as such, response times can be longer than normal.

Contact our administrative team at [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca) or 416-978-8060.

### When should I contact the administrative team?

- To request information about registration and the Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD).
- To ask about accessibility-related deadlines.
- To report problems with the Accessibility Services website.
- To make or cancel appointments, and/or to speak with another Accessibility Advisor when yours is away.

### Do you want to work with another Accessibility Advisor?

Transferring to another Accessibility Advisor is determined on a case-by-case basis as we consider each Advisor's caseload and particular expertise.

Contact our administrative team at [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca) or 416-978-8060 to arrange a meeting with a Team Lead or our Assistant Director to discuss available options.

### Drop In Hours

All advisors have drop in hours that you can attend in person to address more urgent matters. Information and location for specific advisors is available in the 'Contacts' section of our main webpage:

[studentlife.utoronto.ca/departments/accessibility-services](https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/departments/accessibility-services)



# SERVICES

## Note-taking

If you are having difficulty taking notes during class due to disability-related reasons, you can request access to our volunteer notetaking program.

Please speak to your Accessibility Advisor if you think you might benefit from the note-taking service. As this program relies on volunteers, we cannot guarantee notes will be available for all your courses.

If notes are not available for a course you're taking, contact [as.notetaking@utoronto.ca](mailto:as.notetaking@utoronto.ca) as soon as possible to discuss your options.

## Accessing class notes

Making the request for a note-taking accommodation is your responsibility.

1. Provide the appropriate Letter of Accommodation to your instructors when you need to request an accommodation. This may be at the beginning of each semester, depending on your accommodations.
2. Visit our Note-taking Portal to request a volunteer note-taker as soon as possible; we recommend you do this no later than the third week of classes.
3. Download your notes from the Note-taking Portal.

Download your course notes from the Note-taking Portal regularly throughout the term. Volunteer notes will not be available on the Portal for download once a course is over.

Note-taking Portal: [uoft.me/notetakers](https://uoft.me/notetakers)

## What if notes are not available, or there are problems with the notes?

After you request peer notes via the portal, our office automatically emails professors/course instructors to make an in-class announcement to recruit volunteer note-takers. However:

- If notes are not uploaded or not available within two weeks, please reach out to **[as.notetaking@utoronto.ca](mailto:as.notetaking@utoronto.ca)**
- If notes are not available after 3-4 weeks, please reach out to your Accessibility Advisor to discuss alternative accommodations.
- If notes are inconsistent, please provide feedback to **[as.notetaking@utoronto.ca](mailto:as.notetaking@utoronto.ca)**.

## Adaptive technology

Our Adaptive Technologist will meet with you to:

- Identify what technology and/or software is available and appropriate for the functional limitations you are managing
- Assist you in learning how to use the technology and/or software

Are you interested in learning more about adaptive technology that may assist you? Meet with your Accessibility Advisor to discuss a referral to our Adaptive Technologist.

**For more information about Adaptive Technology, refer to <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/adaptive-technologist>**

## Learning strategies

Any student can meet with a Learning Strategist for individualized support. A Learning Strategist works with you one-to-one or in a small group to help you:

- Identify the impact of disability on your learning

- Discover how to use your learning strengths for graduate/professional work
- Prepare for oral presentations and defenses
- Understand graduate/professional writing and research work
- Learn to manage time and address procrastination, perfectionism, and prioritization issues
- Develop new strategies for reading, writing, and active studying to help you achieve your academic goals

We have in-house Learning Strategists that work specifically with students registered with Accessibility Services. You can book an appointment to meet with them by contacting our administrative team.

**Did you know?** You can also access Learning Strategists through the Academic Success Centre. Your program may also offer Learning Strategist supports.

**Find out more at [uoft.me/academicsuccess](https://uoft.me/academicsuccess)**

## Financial support

### Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)

Domestic students must first apply for OSAP (or an equivalent financial assistance program in your home province or territory) to determine eligibility for disability-related grants and bursaries.

Access to funding for disability-related services and equipment begins with determining OSAP eligibility. Even if you are not likely



*My Learning Strategist helps me to stay on track. We designed a system for studying for comprehensive exams that really helped as I went along. Having my Learning Strategist's support was wonderful, as he understood my questions and could identify better ways to study.*

**PhD Research student living with mental health and chronic health conditions.**





to be eligible for OSAP, apply anyway as it is a required first step for other sources of funding. You do not need to request or accept a loan to be eligible for disability-related funding.

## **Students with a Permanent, Persistent/Prolonged Disability Designation**

If you have a Permanent, Persistent/Prolonged disability and are a domestic student, you may be eligible for the Canada Student Grant. You and your doctor will need to complete an OSAP Disability Verification Form to submit to Enrollment Services.

If you have a Permanent, Persistent/Prolonged disability, you may also be eligible for full-time funding through OSAP if you are studying with a reduced course load due to disability. Funding guidelines and options may change over time. For updated information, visit the OSAP website: [osap.gov.on.ca](https://osap.gov.on.ca)

## **Funding for disability-related services/equipment**

You may be eligible for disability-related services (e.g. tutoring, counselling, coaching) and/or equipment, depending on disability documentation. These services are a private agreement between you and your service provider but we may be able to facilitate contact and help you explore funding options.

You can meet your Accessibility Advisor to discuss your needs and eligibility for funding options.

## **The Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD)**

If you are eligible for OSAP, you may also be eligible for the BSWD to help cover certain disability-related educational services and equipment. These may include:

- Psychoeducational services
- Assessments
- Note-taking
- Tutoring
- Counselling
- Technical aids
- Adaptive technology

Meet with your Accessibility Advisor for more information about applying for the bursary. Make sure you are aware of the deadlines

to apply for BSWD funding each term.

If you are not eligible for OSAP or are an international student with financial need, meet with your Accessibility Advisor about alternate sources of financial assistance for disability-related services/equipment.

For more information about financial support, visit [uoft.me/financial-aid-disabilities](https://uoft.me/financial-aid-disabilities)

## **Funding, fees, and receipts**

It is important to note:

- Any funds you receive from a bursary or grant must only be used for the service or equipment requested on the application. No changes or substitutions can be made.
- Services received for specific courses cannot be transferred to other courses. Discuss this with your Accessibility Advisor should you have any questions about this process.
- If you do not use all of your funding in one term, do not assume that funds can be carried over to the following term. In some situations, a new application must be submitted. For example, funding from a winter term typically cannot be transferred to a summer term.
- All receipts must be submitted to the funding body and any unused funds must also be returned. Keep copies of receipts for your records. Connect with your Accessibility Advisor to ensure you're aware of the processes involved in submitting receipts and repayments.
- If you do not submit receipts or repayment by the end of the term you received funding it can impact your ability to receive OSAP funding, as well as other types of funding.

## **The School of Graduate Studies – Financial Supports**

### **SGS Financial Advising**

#### **Financial Advising Appointments**

It's best to seek advice early so your problems don't get out of control. Financial Advising can help relieve your stress and assist

you with navigating financial emergencies. SGS Financial Advisors are trained to assist currently registered students with navigating the various funding practices at the university. They can also provide support with budgeting and debt load management.

### **SGS Accessibility Grant**

The SGS Accessibility Grant supports significant educational expenses not normally covered by the student, the graduate unit, provincial, or federal agencies. Each student's situation is unique and funding will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The grant was established to assist with accommodations necessary to meet unexpected needs arising from the particular demands of the graduate program. Please speak with your Accessibility Advisor for more information.

### **SGS Emergency Grant**

The SGS Emergency Grant program aims to assist registered, full-time graduate students who have encountered an unforeseen, urgent, and/or serious financial emergency during the course of their program. The Emergency Grant is not intended to replace or make up a shortfall in OSAP or other funding sources or serve as routine or long-term support, but aims to provide short-term, immediate relief during a financial crisis and/or time of unexpected expenses. Students submitting an SGS Emergency Grant are expected to meet with a member of the SGS Financial Advising Team to review the application.

### **Graduate Student Awards, Grants and Bursaries**

There are funds available to Master's and Doctoral students, depending upon eligibility requirements. A list of awards, grants and bursaries can be found [here](#).

# LIBRARY SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

University of Toronto Libraries offer a variety of supports for students with disabilities.

In some cases, your Accessibility Advisor may refer you to the Library Accessibility Office directly for further support. With a referral from your Advisor, the library may provide:

- Reading material in an alternate format
- Access to laptops with assistive technology
- Retrieval of books on your behalf

Contact the Library Accessibility Office for more information ([library.accessibility@utoronto.ca](mailto:library.accessibility@utoronto.ca) or 416-978-1957).

Find out more at <https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/accessibility-office/library-accessibility-office>.

## COMMUNITY AND PEER SUPPORT

Connecting with others who share your interests and life experiences will help you find a sense of community on campus, making your student experience richer. Visit [ulife.utoronto.ca](http://ulife.utoronto.ca) for a full list of on-campus opportunities to get involved.

At Accessibility Services, we are committed to fostering a sense of belonging and community for our students. Through connections with Peer Mentors and Peer Advisors, students can share their experiences of navigating disability and accommodations to come up with strategies and problem-solving techniques together, and build resiliency.

We support student learning and development by providing workshops, dialogues and events that explore and help develop academic, self-advocacy, communication and leadership skills.

# ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES PROGRAMS

## Moving Forward: Orientation Program

Incoming students with a disability are encouraged to check out our Moving Forward: Orientation Programs scheduled regularly from May through September. They offer opportunities to develop skills to meet new academic expectations, learn about academic and co-curricular programs and building your network on campus. Learn more online at <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/moving-forward-summer-transition-program>

At each of these single-day workshops, you will:

- Learn about services and programs on campus for students with disabilities.
- Learn effective study strategies and habits.
- Connect with other students.

## Access Us Peer Mentorship

The Access Us Peer Mentorship program is designed for newly registered students to connect with upper-year Peer Mentors for support throughout the term.

By regularly connecting one-to-one with your Peer Mentor, you can get support:

- Navigating the campus and disability-related challenges
- Accessing various campus resources and opportunities
- Understanding university policies and procedures

Join a safe and comfortable community and access support and encouragement. Visit [uoft.me/accessus](https://uoft.me/accessus) to register for the program.

## Peer Advisor Drop-in

Peer Advisors are upper-year students registered with Accessibility Services, who can provide one-to-one support during short drop-in appointments.

Connect with our Peer Advisors to:

- Learn about the services offered by Accessibility Services.
- Discover supports and resources available to U of T students.
- Register for quizzes, tests and exams.
- Download your Letters of Accommodation.
- Write emails and get tips on communicating with professors and course instructors.
- Plan out your semester.
- Get tips on time management and managing schoolwork.

During the academic term, Peer Advisors are available throughout the week. For hours and information about how drop-in appointments are currently being offered (e.g. virtually, phone, or in person), visit <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/peer-advisors-daily-drop-in/>

## ADHD Peer Connections

ADHD Peer Connections provides an online space to connect with other students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Find community, share strategies to build resilience and be yourself! Learn more about ADHD Peer Connections at <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/adhd-peer-connections>

## ASD Peer Connections for Women & Trans Students

ASD Peer Connections for Women & Trans Students provides women and trans students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) an informal space to connect and discuss topics relevant to their disability and identity. Visit [studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/asd-peer-connections-for-women-trans-students](https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/asd-peer-connections-for-women-trans-students) for more information.

## Social Association for Students with Autism

The Social Association for Students with Autism (SASA) provides students with ASD, the chance to connect, contribute and develop new friendships.

By joining the group, you will:

- Build a social network within the university in a safe and comfortable environment.
- Connect with students who share similar interests.
- Access support to address academic and social challenges you may experience.

Visit <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/social-association-for-students-with-autism/> for more information.

## Grad Productivity Group: Actually Work from Home

- Grad Productivity Group: Actually Work from Home is a supportive online environment where you can work in company with grad school peers. The goal is for you to have supportive, structured time in your week on a regular basis. Sit down, turn off your other devices and boost your productivity for two 40-minute sessions of concentrated work on any of your tasks.
- These groups are facilitated by an experienced graduate student peer.
- Weekly sessions are available specifically for students registered with Accessibility Services.
- Visit <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/grad-productivity-group-actually-work-from-home> for more information.

## Virtual Accountability Check Ins

- Virtual Accountability Check-ins offer the opportunity to connect with Accessibility Services staff and your peers two times a week. These check-ins help you stay on track, increase accountability and allow you to celebrate your weekly successes!
- Visit <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/virtual-accountability-check-ins> for more information.

## Graduate Writing Groups

- Graduate Writing Groups provide a small, informal and encouraging atmosphere for you to focus on your writing goals with the support of an experienced graduate student facilitator.
- At the beginning and end of the session, participants have the opportunity to discuss their writing goals and strategies.
- Weekly sessions are available specifically for students registered with Accessibility Services.
- Visit [studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/graduate-writing-groups](https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/graduate-writing-groups) for more information.

## Wellness Support Group

- The Accessibility Services MSW Intern program and Gerstein Center will be partnering up to provide a free Wellness Support Group to students registered with Accessibility Services.
- The Wellness Support Group is a 9-week group that addresses topics such as stress, goals, self-talk, resilience, gratitude and supports. The last two weeks focus on creating a wellness plan. Objectives of the Wellness Support Group:
  - To create a strength-based space to encourage participants to connect and foster tools to support their mental wellness.
    - To learn from each other and enhance self-awareness.
    - To develop strategies and skills to cope in overwhelming situations.
    - To provide an opportunity to foster and practice wellness tools and skills.
- Please note that this is NOT a therapy group. In order to be eligible, students must be: registered with Accessibility Services, currently enrolled in courses, committed to attending weekly. Please connect with your Accessibility Advisor for more information or if you are interested in the group.



# WORKSHOPS, DIALOGUES AND EVENTS

We offer workshops, events, dialogues and socials to help you build community and learn new skills. These opportunities aim to support student learning so you can discover your strengths, navigate your accommodations, build communication and leadership skills and develop academic skills.

Workshops and Special Events include:

- Speaking to power and self-advocacy
- Academic resilience
- Learning and study strategies
- Leadership development

We also work with Career Education and Exploration to offer programming to help students with disabilities explore careers and make the transition to post-university life. Speak to a Peer Mentor, Peer Advisor, or your Accessibility Advisor to learn more.

## Accessibility Dialogues

We host regular dialogues (informal conversations) where students can share ideas and questions and discuss the intersections of accessibility, life and learning. Topics include speaking with parents, self-care, managing distractions, and approaching disclosure.

For more information on our workshops, events, dialogues, and socials, visit the Programs tab on our homepage:

[accessibility.utoronto.ca](https://accessibility.utoronto.ca).

# U OF T RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS FOR GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL FACULTY STUDENTS:

## **GradHub — <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/gradhub/>**

Here, you'll find the essential information you need, at every phase of your graduate student journey. Created for graduate students, by graduate students, to help you feel welcomed, connected and prepared to thrive, check out this amazing list of resources. Learn where to meet other grad students and equity partners, how to conduct research, what is expected in supervision and mentorship, ways to develop professionally, and access health and wellness as well as family responsibility supports.

## **Graduate Centre for Academic Communication: [sgs.utoronto.ca/gcac:](https://sgs.utoronto.ca/gcac/)**

- Free non-credit courses covering topics such as academic writing, becoming a better editor and oral presentation skills
- Single-session workshops and writing incentives

## **Writing Centres: [writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres](https://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres)**

- **Writing Centre for Graduate Students**  
**[writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/graduate-students/](https://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/graduate-students/)**
  - o In addition to providing non-credit courses and workshops, GCAC provides one-on-one consultations for graduate students who seek individualized assistance with their writing.
- **Health Science Writing Centre: [hswriting.ca](https://hswriting.ca)**
  - o For students in Dalla Lana School of Public Health (PhD students only), Nursing, Pharmacy/Pharmaceutical Sciences, Kinesiology & Physical Education and Social Work.
- **Daniels Writing Centre: [daniels.utoronto.ca/students/student-services](https://daniels.utoronto.ca/students/student-services)**
  - o The Writing Centre at the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture,

Landscape and Design is a resource for all Daniels students seeking assistance with academic writing and related skills in design and visual studies.

### **Academic Success: [studentlife.utoronto.ca/asc](https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/asc)**

- Offering group workshops, graduate writing groups and individual appointments with learning strategists.

### **OISE Student Success Centre: [uoft.me/osscc](https://uoft.me/osscc)**

- Support with academic writing, presentation skills, career advising, English language development, French proficiency support, international transition advising, teacher skills development, graduate student writing groups and more.

### **The Centre for Graduate Mentorship and Supervision (CGMS) - [www.cgms.utoronto.ca](https://www.cgms.utoronto.ca)**

Supervision of graduate students is an essential activity in a research-intensive university. The CGMS serves as the focal point for supports, learning, and outreach aimed at promoting excellence in graduate mentorship and supervision to supervisees, supervisors, and other members of the graduate community. The Centre promotes and fosters excellent mentoring and supervision practices by Graduate Faculty Members, provides structure and frameworks to enhance graduate supervision and mentoring experiences, and assist students with navigating supervisory relationship challenges when they arise.

### **Office of Health Professions Student Affairs (OHPSA): [md.utoronto.ca/OHPSA](https://md.utoronto.ca/OHPSA)**

- Available to MD, MD PhD, Medical Radiation Sciences, Physician Assistant, Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy students.
- OHPSA offers support to help students attain their full potential in academic achievement, personal growth and professional development; facilitates student-led activities; and provides outreach and service learning opportunities.

Visit [gradlife.utoronto.ca](https://gradlife.utoronto.ca) for more information about resources and support from the School of Graduate Studies.

# APPENDIX

## DEFINITIONS

### What is a disability?

There are many ways to define disability. The University of Toronto abides by the definition in the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.19:

- Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation, or disfigurement (including chronic health conditions, sensory impairments, functional, or mobility disabilities)
- A condition of mental impairment or developmental disability
- A learning disability or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language
- A mental disorder
- An injury

### Defining disability is a complex, evolving matter

The term *disability* covers a broad range and degree of conditions. The Code is not exhaustive and does not speak to the complex and intersectional lives that students with disabilities lead or the strengths they demonstrate every day.

Students with disabilities are thriving at U of T in nearly every program, faculty and division. Students registered with our service are defined by their intelligence, their hard work and their resilience.

The word “disability” is imperfect and we acknowledges that for some, it can be uncomfortable because it calls attention to our limitations rather than our strengths. While it is the protected status

under the Ontario Human Rights Code at the centre of our work, many members of our community do not identify with this word. As a result, it is often better to talk about “accessibility” as an alternative.

Disability is not a standalone experience, but rather intersects with many other equity-deserving identities. We recognize that disabled Black, Indigenous and Persons of Colour may encounter even greater barriers than white people and settlers. Members of LGBTQ2IA+ communities, those who experience poverty, and religious minorities, may face more intense social exclusion when also experiencing a disability. Cis men with disabilities may be treated as having a more legitimate experience as compared to those from less privileged genders. Against this backdrop, it is important to always be mindful of how trauma can add complexity and further marginalize people.

## DUTY TO ACCOMMODATE

The *Ontario Human Rights Code* guarantees the right to equal treatment in education without discrimination on the grounds of disability. The University of Toronto has a duty to accommodation and is committed to considering accommodations when:

- They are requested by a student
- We become aware of a student's accommodation needs in a reasonable time
- Accommodations do not cause undue hardship to the University (e.g., safety to self and others, cost, and academic integrity of programs of study)

We will arrange appropriate, effective and respectful accommodations that level the playing field so all students meet the same academic standards. Requests for accommodation are considered in good faith.

## Checklist

- ☐ Download your Letters of Accommodation and provide them to professors, instructors or the appropriate person within your faculty or program.
- ☐ Communicate with instructors or the appropriate person in your faculty or program about your accommodation needs, including requesting extensions.
- ☐ Register to complete quizzes, tests and exams with Accommodated Testing Services well in advance and be aware of registration deadlines for each term.
- ☐ If you need accommodations for clinical skills, internships, rotations, practicums, placements or oral exams, connect with your Accessibility Advisor well ahead of time to discuss.
- ☐ Connect with an Accessibility Services Adaptive Technologist and/or a Learning Strategist when this is recommended by your Advisor.
- ☐ Explore financial aid options with your Advisor that may help with disability-related educational costs.
- ☐ Get connected and find support through our Community and Peer Support programs.

**You can keep track of your accommodations here:**

**Courses:**

**Quizzes, Tests, Exams:**

**Practicums, placements:**

**Professional/Clinical Skills:**

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Accessibility Services**

University of Toronto

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