

# Student Handbook

## SERVICES

for students with  
disabilities

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Policies and procedures	1
Legislation	1
Confidentiality	1
Exceptional circumstances	2
How we protect your information	2
Academic accommodations process for students with disabilities	3
Responsibilities of the student with a disability	4
Responsibilities of the Student Success, Centre for Access & Disability Services	5
Responsibilities of post-secondary institutions	5
Role of parents and guardians	5
Documentation guidelines for students with disabilities	6
Guidelines for the required documentation of a learning disability	7
Guidelines for the required documentation of Adult Attention-Deficit / Hyperactive Disorder	8
Guidelines for the required documentation of a mental health disability	9
Guidelines for the required documentation of a medical, physical or sensory disability	10
Temporary disabilities and academic accommodations	11
Booking tests and exams	12
Other services and accommodations	13-14
Student Success contact information	15

## Policies and procedures

This student handbook describes services available within Georgian College's Centre for Access and Disability Services. Other specific services within the college/university are also explained.

## Legislation

Georgian College endorses and adheres to the Ontario Human Rights Code and its supporting legislation. Additionally, the College is compliant with Ontario privacy legislation including Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990 (FIPPA) and the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 (PHIPA). Accordingly, all students with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodation.

## Confidentiality

Protecting your privacy has always been important. Both of Ontario's privacy laws require anyone who provides you with services to protect your personal information. Personal information identifies you as a unique individual, for example, your gender, age, emotional and physical health history, activities, views, etc.

With a few exceptions (see below), information provided by students to the Centre for Access and Disability Services is **confidential**. While information is shared, when needed, among our professional staff, the guiding principle is that information students give is not released to any office or individual outside of this group without the student's written consent. Students will be requested to sign a *Consent to Release and Exchange of Information* form each semester.

In some situations, the disability specialist will inform instructors and other staff that a student is seeking assistance, particularly if there is a health and safety issue.

## Exceptional circumstances

We may be allowed or legally required to use and/or give out some of your personal information *without* consent in the following situations:

- All staff are legally required to report to Family and Children's Services any reasonable suspicion of abuse of a child under the age of 16 that is currently occurring or may occur
- In rare situations involving court actions, staff and/or their records can be subpoenaed
- Staff will take reasonable personal action (which may involve informing responsible authorities) if, *in their judgment*, a student intends to follow through with an activity that may result in serious injury to him/herself or others

## How we protect your information

The Student Success Office understands the importance of protecting your personal information. We have taken the following steps to ensure that your records are secure and protected from loss, tampering, or unauthorized use or access:

- Paper information is either under supervision or secured in a locked or restricted area
- If sensitive information is removed from the office, it is kept under the constant control of the Student Success staff member and transported via secure means
- Electronic hardware is either under supervision or secured in a locked or restricted area at all times. In addition, passwords are used on all computers and laptops and all electronic client information is secured.
- Electronic information is transmitted either through a direct line or has identifiers removed
- Each Student Success staff member is trained to collect, use and disclose personal information only as necessary to fulfill their duties and in accordance with privacy legislation

# Academic accommodations process for students

## with disabilities

A student requesting academic accommodation due to a disability must contact the Student Success Office. New students are encouraged to contact the Student Success Office and provide the required information as soon as possible after receiving an offer of admission.

Returning students should check with the office at the ***beginning of each semester***, for direction on requesting their accommodation letter and to book an appointment with his/her disability specialist.

Students whose circumstances have changed (i.e. a new diagnosis of a disability or symptoms of a condition change) should contact the Student Success Office and book an appointment with his/her disability specialist.

**Failure to make requests for accommodations and/or provide the required documentation may delay or prevent the implementation of academic accommodation.**

The disability specialist will prepare an accommodation letter outlining the proposed accommodations. Students are required to request accommodation letters **each semester**.

The student must make an appointment to meet with his/her professor to deliver the accommodation letter and discuss the proposed accommodation directly with the instructor. ***No exam accommodation will be allowed until the student has given his/her instructor the accommodation letter.***

Accommodation decisions require the collaboration and agreement between the student, instructor, and the disability specialist. It is expected that every effort will be made by all parties to bring about a mutually acceptable agreement between students and instructors.

# Responsibilities of the student with a disability

The following is **student driven**

- advise the disability specialist of the need for accommodation and provide adequate up-to-date documentation
- participate in discussions regarding possible accommodation solutions
- initiate reasonable requests for accommodation in a timely manner at the **beginning of each semester**
- fulfill agreed upon responsibilities once accommodation is provided
- work with the disability specialist on an ongoing basis to manage the accommodation process
- ensure that he/she is aware of all of Georgian's policies, procedures and deadlines
- speak with his/her professors about specific needs
- provide the professors with a current letter of accommodation **every semester**
- keep the disability specialist informed of any changes to his/her personal information
- inform the disability specialist if something is not working (**immediately**) so that other options can be explored in a timely manner



# Responsibilities of the Student Success/Centre for Access & Disability Services

- accept the request for accommodation in good faith, unless there are legitimate reasons for acting otherwise
- obtain expert opinion or advice where needed (i.e. consultants such as psychologists, doctors, occupational therapists, etc.)
- take an active role in ensuring that possible options are investigated and explore various forms of possible accommodation and alternative solutions
- keep a record of the accommodation request and action taken
- maintain confidentiality

## Responsibilities of post-secondary institutions

Educators at the post-secondary level are responsible for participating in the accommodation process including the provision of specific accommodations, being knowledgeable about and sensitive to disability issues, and maintaining student confidentiality.

## Role of parents and guardians

Georgian College adheres to FIPPA and PHIPA regulations. In order to protect students' personal information Student Success Staff are unable to disclose **any** student information to parents/guardians. It is up to the student to report to their parents and guardians information regarding their academics and accommodations.



## Documentation guidelines for students with disabilities

Documentation must indicate that a specific disability exists and that the disability substantially limits one or more of life's major activities which could include walking, sitting, standing, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, or other similar activities.



Diagnosis of a condition or disorder does not in itself automatically qualify a student for any and all accommodations. The student must communicate his or her needs in sufficient detail and co-operate in consultations to enable the person responsible for accommodation to respond to the request. Sufficient information must be provided to properly assess the impact of the disability on the specific academic task.

Documentation must come from a **qualified practitioner who is certified in the areas of the disability.**

Qualified medical practitioners include:

physician	psychiatrist
psychologist	audiologist
chiropractor	occupational therapist
optometrist	ophthalmologist
physiotherapist	speech-language pathologist

## Guidelines for the required documentation of a learning disability

A student must provide a copy of his/her latest psycho-educational assessment which has been **completed within the last five years** by a registered psychologist or psychological associate. Documentation that is more than five years old is reviewed on an individual basis.

*It is the student's responsibility to provide current documentation.*

The report must contain a **clear diagnostic statement** indicating the presence of a learning disability. Statements such as “suggest the presence of” or “may indicate” are **not acceptable** diagnostic statements.

A student may also submit a previous IEP, IPRC or letter from his/her high school/college detailing the types of academic accommodation that have been utilized in the past few years. Interim accommodation may be put in place until proper documentation can be provided.



## Guidelines for the required documentation of Adult Attention-Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder

A clinical or educational assessment completed **within the last five years**, by a licensed mental health professional, such as a psychiatrist, neuropsychologist, using the current version of the DSM must be provided. Evaluation by clinicians who have extensive training and experience in differential diagnosis with adults is recommended.

*It is the student's responsibility to provide current documentation.*

The assessment should include:

- early indicators of difficulties with attention and/or hyperactivity and impulsivity in the student's school history and/or through consultation with someone who has known the student well over a significant period of time (e.g. family, teachers)
- thorough family, social, academic and/or occupational history which includes consultation with individuals who know the student well
- information regarding the functional impact of the student's disability on his/her ability to participate in the post-secondary educational setting
- the diagnosis must be recent, that is, within the last **five years** or made when the student reached 18 years of age or older. Documentation that is more than five years old will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## Guidelines for the required documentation of a mental health disability

Students who have a persistent, diagnosed psychiatric disability (e.g. bipolar disorder) must provide a letter from a qualified psychiatrist, psychologist or medical practitioner which **must be current** and include:

- a statement of the nature of the disability that includes a current DSM diagnosis
- pertinent treatment
- current medications, including possible side effects on academic performance
- name of practitioner, professional credentials, address, phone number, date and signature



NOTE: Questions regarding documentation or accessing appropriate assessments for diagnosis of a disability should be addressed in a scheduled meeting with a Disability Specialist at the campus you will be attending (Campus locations are indicated on the last page of this document).

## Guidelines for the required documentation of a medical, physical or sensory disability

A **current** letter from a licensed medical practitioner, qualified in the appropriate specialty area must be provided.

This letter should include the following:

- name
- date of birth
- diagnosis of disability
- current medications, including possible side effects on academic performance
- prognosis
- name of practitioner, professional credentials, address, phone number, date and signature.

Students with a hearing disability should also include:

- audiologist report
- use of assistive devices (e.g. hearing aids, FM system)

Students with a visual disability should also include:

- visual acuity (best corrected)
- visual field limitations

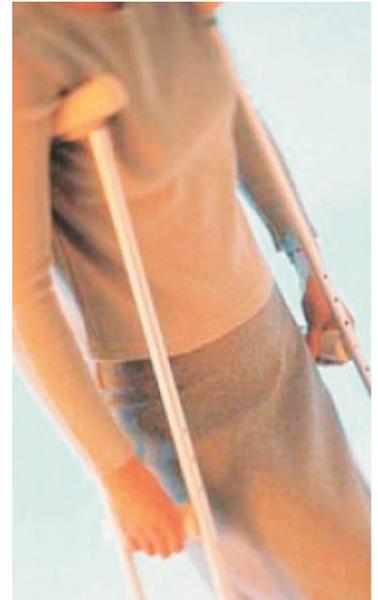


## Temporary disabilities and academic accommodations

Students who experience a short-term medical impairment unrelated to a documented disability may require temporary academic accommodations. A temporary impairment may be a virus, broken bone, sprained muscles, lacerations, or minor surgeries.

Temporary accommodations may be put in place, for one semester, if appropriate, as determined by the disability specialist.

A letter from a qualified mental health professional or medical practitioner is required.



The letter **must be current** and include:

- a statement of the nature of the difficulty
- pertinent treatment
- current medications, including possible effects on academic performance
- severity of symptoms
- name of practitioner, professional credentials, address, phone number, date and signature

**All documentation must be on the practitioner's official letterhead or include an official office stamp.**

# Booking tests and exams

Barrie, Orillia, Owen Sound, and Regional Campus locations

- 1) Provide instructor with the accommodation letter
- 2) Decide if Testing Services is required for tests and exams
- 3) Book your test using the procedures provided by your Disability Specialist

Students will be instructed to go to Testing Services the day of the test/exam.

Requests must be booked **five business days** in advance of the test date.

***Tests are to be booked on the same day and time as the class writes. Students must write on the same campus as the class.***

- Read the procedures carefully prior to completing the request form
- Instructor's e-mail and student to e-mail must be included
- The completed request form goes electronically to the instructor and Testing Services
- Testing Services books the appointment and sends a confirmation to both the student and instructor by e-mail
- If confirmation is not received within 24 hours of the test date, contact Testing Services
- If further assistance is needed, please contact Testing Services



<http://www.georgiancollege.ca/student-success/testing/test-centre-hours/>

## Other services and accommodations

Disability services staff act as case managers to provide information, support and advocate for students with physical, medical, sensory, mental health, or learning disabilities. At Georgian College, we are committed to supporting students through the educational process, encouraging independence and helping students to succeed. Each student's needs are unique, and services and accommodations are recommended on an individual basis.

### **Learning Strategists**

Learning strategists assist students to develop and practice study and test-taking skills, time and task management, managing procrastination, organizing information and scheduling.

### **Counselling**

Students can access professional confidential counselling for free. Counsellors are available for counselling in adjustment to college life, academic issues/concerns, personal counselling issues, program and career issues, student/professor issues and referral to community resources as appropriate.

### **Career Services**

Students can access career assessments, labour market information, outline guidance programs, job search skills, interview tips, graduate employment data, resumé preparation, and there is a work transition consultant to assist students dealing with career/employment barriers.

### **Co-op Services**

Co-op advisors assist students in obtaining co-op work terms, coaching for co-op placements, liaison with employers and employer development, co-op workshops, training in e-recruiting and assistance with job search, resumé and cover letters.

### **Health Services**

A nurse practitioner can diagnose, prescribe some medications and order some medical tests. The nurse practitioner is located off campus, near the Barrie Campus and an appointment can be made through Student Success.

## Peer Services

Peer Services employs upper-year students as tutors based on availability. Tutors are also available in the Knowledge Hubs in the library. Their hours are posted outside of each of the Knowledge Hubs.

## Adaptive lab

If a disability specialist recommends use of adaptive technology, the student will be asked to book an appointment with an adaptive technologist. The adaptive technologist will review the student's documentation and perform an assessment. The adaptive technologist will also provide initial training.

There are adaptive labs located on the three main campus locations. These labs are for the use of students registered with the Student Success, Centre for Access & Disability Services to use for homework and assignments. Read & Write Gold, Dragon, Inspiration, and other software is available to assist students. Students must sign in and out of the lab.

## Alternative format materials

Print material can be converted to electronic format for Read & Write Gold (CD version of textbooks). To use this service please make an appointment with a disability specialist.

## Physical accessibility

Most lecture and seminar rooms are accessible directly from the floor on which they are located; however, students are encouraged to review class schedules and room locations to ensure accessibility. If a student has difficulty with stairs, uses a mobility aid (i.e. wheelchair, scooter, cane, etc.) and/or has any concerns with a particular location, he or she should notify a disability specialist as soon as possible. Elevators are located in most buildings, and ramps are available.

## Interpreting Services

If a student requires sign language interpreting service, or computerized note takers, he or she should contact a disability specialist at least **one month** prior to beginning the semester. This accommodation is provided to hearing impaired students. Digital recorders are allowed in the classroom, with a recommendation from a disability specialist.

# Student Success Contact Information

To take advantage of any of the services offered through Student Success, go to the Student Success office on your campus or call the following numbers:

## Barrie

Room B110

(705) 722-1523

## Orillia

Room A200

(705) 329-3113

## Owen Sound

Room 607

(519) 376-0840

## South Georgian Bay

499 Raglan Street

(705) 445-2961

## Orangeville

22 Centennial Road

(519) 940-0331

## Midland

649 Prospect Blvd

(705) 526-3666, ext.3720

## Muskoka

111 Wellington Street

(705) 646-7629



*Information in this handbook has been compiled by Georgian College Student Success Services staff.*