

Academic Accommodation Fact Sheets

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Duty to Accommodate

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What is the Duty to Accommodate?

The British Columbia Human Rights Code prohibits the “denial or discrimination in the provision of services customarily available to the public.”¹ This law applies to education and stipulates that educators and institutions cannot discriminate against individuals with disabilities. To ensure compliance, institutions must remove barriers to participation experienced by persons with disabilities. This is known as a duty to accommodate. The duty to accommodate is a legal obligation to accommodate individuals in a protected group that face adverse hardship due to policy, practice, or other barriers.

Types of accommodations vary, depending on the situation, individual, and disability. Accommodating students with disabilities does not provide them with an advantage. Rather, accommodations aim to provide an equitable experience for students with disabilities. The duty to accommodate is an obligation to adjust policies, practices, and rules to enable full (or as full as possible) participation, reduce discrimination, and provide an equitable experience. This may extend to alternative arrangements to provide an equivalent experience or form of participation. Academic accommodations do not change the learning outcomes. Students with disabilities must meet academic requirements. Reasonable accommodations do not impose undue hardship on an institution.

Under the duty to accommodate equity trumps equality. Providing the same experience for all students may have a negative effect on a student with disabilities. The duty to accommodate ensures all students receive their human right to equitable access to education.

Reasonable Accommodations

The duty to accommodate requires that reasonable accommodations:

1. [BC Human Rights Code Section 8](#)

- Must be based on documented individual needs.
- Aim for the most equitable and integrated experience possible.
- Not compromise the essential academic requirements of a course.
- Not pose a threat to personal or public safety.
- Do not impose an undue hardship or administrative burden. This is determined on a case-by-case basis and may not be the same outcome at different institutions.
- Are not based on personal preferences. While all students are unique, accommodations must be based on documentation and should be consistent for individuals with similar circumstances.

A reasonable accommodation requires a person or institution to take all reasonable steps to ensure equitable treatment of a person with a disability. Anything beyond a reasonable accommodation is considered undue hardship.

Undue Hardship

The duty to accommodate is an obligation to accommodate a person's disability up to the point of "undue hardship." That is, an accommodation may require additional work and/or cost. However, an unreasonable cost or change to academic outcomes could be considered undue hardship.

Some accommodation requests may not be reasonable and do not have to be met under a duty to accommodate. A student's disability does not mean they can make unreasonable demands or have the right to get any accommodation they want.

If the student is offered a reasonable accommodation that meets their access needs, the student cannot refuse that accommodation in hopes of holding out for an accommodation that the student prefers.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important consideration under the Human Rights Code. Medical documentation is provided to as accessibility services office but kept confidential. Students will provide instructors with a letter informing them of required accommodations. A dialogue between the student and instructor is encouraged to best facilitate the accommodation. Instructors may direct questions about an accommodation to accessibility services offices.

Students may choose to voluntarily share more information with their instructors or staff. Students should not be asked by instructors to share details of their diagnosis.

Alternate Format Course Material



Alternate format presents print and visual information in different mediums. Some students require alternate formats to equitably access learning material.

Alternate formats may be needed for textbooks, readings, lecture material, assignments, quizzes, notes, presentations, video content, and other learning materials. Digital copies of physical content or remediated copies of inaccessible digital material will need to be provided to learners.

Who is this for?

My name is Mark. I absorb information best by hearing it so I use text-to-speech software that allows me to read and hear content at the same time. Sometimes my textbooks or other material I use doesn't work with my software. That means I miss out on information until it is converted to an accessible format.



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Alternate format course material may be necessary to support equitable learning opportunities for learners:

- Who consume content in large print, braille, or audio format.
- Who experience barriers to perceiving information presented in visual format only.
- Whose disability impacts their reading comprehension, accuracy, rate, or fluency and or causes significant reading fatigue.
- Who require the customization of text size, background color, or other visual elements to reduce sensory overload or distraction.
- Requiring the use of assistive technology, such as text-to-speech, screen reader, and or magnification software.
- Whose stamina would impact their ability to read physical material.
- Who may experience difficulty manipulating physical material.

This accommodation supports students to:

- Equitably access course materials regardless of access means.
- Use assistive technology to consume, interact, and engage with learning material.

What it is

Alternate formats are equivalent versions of learning material. Created to to ensure learners can consume content in their preferred/required format, alternate format material may be accessible documents (HTML, Docx, PPTx, PDF), Braille material, audiobooks, and other formats that allow learners to adjust the appearance of content and/or use assistive technology as required.

Alternate formats may be a conversion of physical content to accessible digital content or remediating inaccessible digital content to more accessible formats.

Alternate format material is copyright compliant.

Alternate format is a direct conversion of material from one format to another. There is no change in the content, only the format.

What it's not

Alternate format course material:

- Is not different content, only a different medium.
- Does not alter required readings or the details of content.
- Does not change course or program requirements.

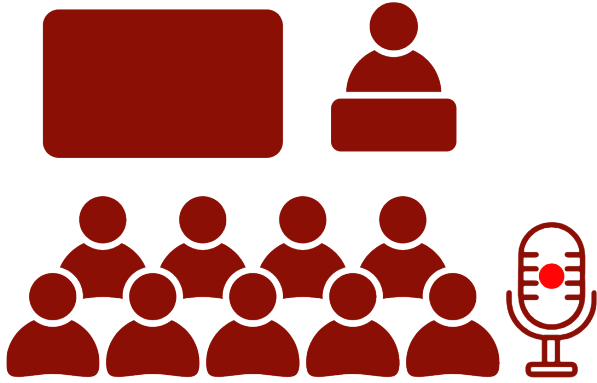
How can I support this in my classroom?

Generally, instructors will not be involved in the alternate format process, apart from providing required material to remediation services (CAPER-BC or other organization) when requested. However, choosing learning material that is accessible will reduce the need for material to be converted to an alternate format. Consult your library or teaching and learning centres for more information on choosing accessible content.

Note that alternate format material page numbers may not exactly match the page numbers in the physical material. Please include details such as the chapter and section headings to ensure the student using an alternate format is aware of the required readings.

[Download a print-only copy \(PDF, 262 KB\)](#) of this page. As [PDFs are meant to be printed](#), not viewed on screens, and take excessive time to make accessible, these files are not accessible to assistive technology. Only use these files for printing, not digital distribution. The content on this web fact sheet is accessible, responsive, and up to date. Share the links to fact sheets.

Audio Recorded Lectures



An audio recorded lectures accommodation allows students to record audio of class material including lectures, discussions, presentations, and demonstrations. Students may use a personal device such as a digital recorder, phone, or computer to record audio. Recordings are for personal review and studying purposes and may be used to annotate notes or create a text transcript.

Audio recorded lectures allows students with disabilities an equitable opportunity to receive, record, and process information presented in class. Audio recordings are the equivalent of written notes taken by other students.

Who is this for?

Audio recorded lectures may be necessary to support equitable learning opportunities for learners:

- Who experience barriers to perceiving information presented in visual format only.
- Who experience barriers to capturing and reviewing lecture content in visual forms.
- That use assistive listening devices, amplifiers, or transcription services.
- Who experience barriers to perceiving information presented orally.
- Whose spelling, grammar, and punctuation and or clarity and organization of written expression is significantly below expected level.
- Whose stamina, energy, or ability to engage is significantly diminished by disability.
- Experiencing significant pain due to persistent, episodic, or temporary medical conditions impacting the ability to take notes.
- Who have physical difficulty writing quickly and legibly or typing.
- Have difficulty filtering out distracting visual and auditory stimuli impacting their ability to focus, process information and record information.
- Whose disability impacts their reading comprehension, accuracy, rate, or fluency or causes significant reading fatigue.
- Who experience barriers to interpreting and understanding audio information, even if their hearing is unaffected.
- Who experience barriers to processing information and benefit from reviewing audio notes at their own pace.

- Whose ability to follow information over short periods is significantly impacted by disability.
- Requiring the use of assistive technology such as specialized note-taking, transcription, or mind mapping software.

This accommodation supports students to:

- Focus on lecture content by alleviating extraneous limitations on their ability to take notes.
- Equitably access class material. Audio recordings are the equivalent of written notes taken by other students.
- Augment their own note-taking efforts.
- Understand and organize information.
- Review concepts and ideas.
- Revisit instructions and guidelines.
- Prepare for tests and assessments.
- Enhance the detail and accuracy of notes.
- Engage and actively participate in class.
- Be more autonomous.
- Use assistive technology in class.

Hi, I'm Jacob. I am blind and use screen reader software to use my computer. I also have a digital recorder to record lectures. I use those recordings as my notes and then have them transcribed to text so I can interact and manipulate the notes.



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What it is

Audio recorded lectures are a direct equivalent of other students' notetaking methods. Students may record audio in any situation in which other students are permitted to type or write notes. Students may use an audio recorder or software on a phone, tablet, or laptop computer.

Students are responsible for making and storing their own recordings. Recordings are only for the student's individual personal use to study, review, and prepare.

Instructors will be informed via accommodation letter that their lectures will be recorded.

Right to privacy and copyright concerns do not override a student's right to this accommodation.

Some institutions have students sign an agreement that recordings are for personal study use only and recordings will not be shared. Accessibility services offices will work with students and instructors to develop recording agreements.

What it's not

An audio recorded lectures accommodation is not:

- A barrier that prevents students from working with peers or in experiential settings.

- A substitute for attending and engaging with in-person instruction and discussion.
- A change to course or program requirements.

Audio recordings may not be shared with any other person, even a student in the same class.

Recordings are not to be reviewed by the instructor, nor can instructors request recordings be destroyed as they are the equivalent of other student's written notes.

Recordings do not compromise the privacy or confidentiality of discussions. Students can only record when all other students are permitted to take notes. More information on privacy is available below.

How can I support this in my classroom?

Coordinate with accessibility services offices and accommodate student requests to place a recording device near you.

Inform guest speakers that the class will be recorded.

There are instances where recording may not be possible. However, in any instance that students are permitted to type or handwrite notes, a student with an audio recorded lectures accommodation must be permitted to record. Remember, the audio recording is the direct equivalent of written or typed notes.

A classroom is built on an implicit consent to the recording on paper or digital document by anyone in class of all comments, questions, and discussions. As an audio recording is a direct equivalent to note-taking, students implicitly consent to the recording of audio as a necessity of a student's accommodation.

Some classroom discussions include personal disclosure, confidential information, and particularly sensitive subjects. In those instances, best practice would be to inform the class that no one should record the session, be it via handwritten, typed, or audio recorded notes.

Allowing students to type or handwrite notes but prohibiting a student from recording audio will be a failure of the legal duty to accommodate as the audio recording is the student's substitute for written or typed notes.

Instructors can record lectures and distribute the files via the institution's LMS or email. Recording lectures allows instructors to stop and start, or retroactively edit, the recording as appropriate to exclude sensitive discussions.

Additional Notes

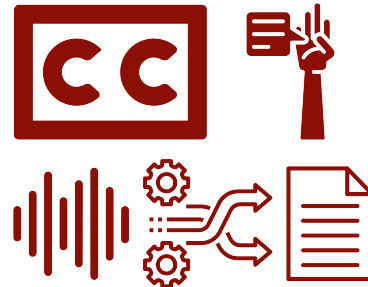
British Columbia law allows individuals to record without consent, provided one party is aware of the recording ([Privacy Act of British Columbia, S. 2\(2\)\(a\)](#)).

Students may request to put a digital recorder or phone close to the speaker.

Audio recording outside of typical classroom instruction such as clinical settings, fieldwork, etc. may need to be tailored on a case-by-case basis. Collaboration between instructors, students, accessibility services staff, and appropriate external parties may be needed.

Closed Captions and Transcripts

An accommodation may require a student has access to **closed captions** for live and recorded content and **transcripts** of recorded audio.



Who is this for?



Hi, my name is Miriam. I have difficulty understanding videos and audio material when they don't have captions and transcripts. When content doesn't have a text equivalent, I miss out or have to wait until an accessible copy can be provided.

[“Miriam”](#), by Sue Doner is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)

A closed captions and transcripts accommodations may be necessary to support equitable learning opportunities for learners:

- With a hearing impairment, that are hard of hearing, Deaf or Deafblind students.
- Who use text to speech and screen reader software to read transcripts aloud.
- Who benefit from a visual reinforcement of spoken content.

This accommodation supports students to:

- Equitably access audio content that would be missed due to hearing loss or other disability.
- Access or process information by providing written or visual equivalents to audio content.
- Access or process audio information through the use of amplification or other listening devices.

What it is

- Closed Captions
 - Text version of audio content synchronously displayed on screen for pre-recorded video content.
- Transcripts of pre-recorded audio content.

What it's not

- A barrier that prevents students from working with peers or in experiential settings.
- A change to course or program requirements.
- A service students are required to pay for.

How can I support this in my classroom?

To facilitate communications access accommodations, you may be asked to:

- Meet with students, captioners, transcribers, and accessibility services staff.
- Share materials (lectures, handouts, etc.) with service providers in advance to allow them to prepare by learning terminology, key terms, etc..
- Identify audio/visual material (videos, recorded lectures, podcasts, etc.) used in your course and verify they are accurately closed captioned or transcribed.
- Work collaboratively with students, service providers, and accessibility services offices.

Additional Notes

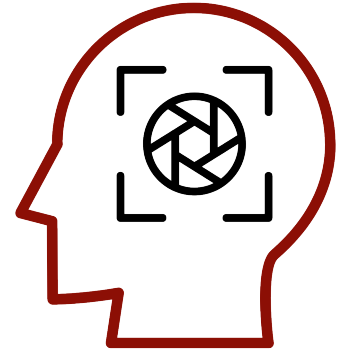
While essential for some, all viewers may benefit from closed captions. Studies show that captions increase comprehension, understanding, and focus¹ and that 80% of 18 to 25-year-olds regularly use captions when watching video.²

1. Gernsbacher, "[Video Captions Benefit Everyone](#)"

2. Youngs, "[Young viewers prefer TV subtitles, research suggests](#)"

Distraction Reduced Environment

An alternative testing location or environment allows for a distraction-reduced setting in which students can attempt assessments in a private, semi-private, or room with fewer students or fewer distractions than a traditional classroom or lab setting.



Who is this for?

A distraction-reduced environment may be necessary to support equitable learning opportunities for learners:

- Who experience difficulty in their ability to filter out distracting visual and auditory stimuli including crowded and noisy environments.
- Who experience hypersensitivity to light and or noise.
- Requiring the use of assistive technology such as speech to text or text to speech software.
- Who use a reader and/or scribe or other service provider.
- Who require a quieter space to manage a variety of disability-related symptoms.

Hi, my name is Ann. I have ADHD. I use text-to-speech software that allows me to read and hear content at the same time. This helps me focus and understand information. I need a private setting for exams so I can focus and so that my software isn't a distraction to other students.



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This accommodation supports students to:

- Equitably attempt assessments.
- Reduce visual or auditory distractions due to attention or other neurological, chronic health, or mental health related disabilities.
- Comfortably attempt assessments in an environment designed to mitigate symptoms of their disability
- Use assistive or adaptive technology (speech-to-text, text-to-speech, etc.) that could be a distraction to other students.
- Engage with readers, scribes, interpreters, access aides or other service providers that could be a distraction to other students.

What it is

Alternative assessment location is approved by disability experts based on medical documentation.

- Students will attempt the same assessment as other students. A copy of the assessment must be provided to accessibility services or testing centres.
- Exam rooms are managed and monitored by accessibility services staff.
- A distraction-reduced environment allows students to equitably attempt assessments.

What it's not

An alternative assessment location does not:

- Allow for unlimited time.
- Change the format or number of questions.
- Change modality from in-person to

take-home.

- Provide students with an advantage.
- Allow students to access material other students cannot.
- Offer students additional time to edit, refine, or double-check responses.
- Guarantee a student will finish an assessment.
- Address general test anxiety not related to diagnosed disability.
- Address general concerns about grades or finishing exams not related to diagnosed disability.

How can I support this in my classroom?

To facilitate alternative assessment locations, ensure timely coordination with accessibility services and testing centre staff. Understand that professionals will manage and invigilate the assessment, maintaining strict academic integrity standards while ensuring students have their needs met. If the format of the assessment cannot be replicated in an accessibility services exam room (e.g. a science lab), consider offering a quieter or alternate time for the student to complete the exam, potentially immediately before or after the scheduled time.

Extended Time for Assessments



Extended Time for Assessments is an accommodation that provides students with a set amount of additional time to demonstrate what they know. Extended Time can be applied to a range of timed assessments including quizzes, tests, midterms, and exams. The extended time is in addition to the standard time allocated by the instructor, determined on an individual basis factoring in the verified nature and severity of the impairment, and the course requirements or restrictions ensuring extended time would not alter the explicit learning outcomes.

Who is this for?

My name is Natalie and I live with anxiety. This significantly impacts everything I do and I often feel like the stakes are significantly higher than they really are. My accommodation helps allows me more time to mitigate symptoms of my anxiety and focus on completing my assessments.



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Extended Time for Assessments may be necessary to support equitable learning opportunities for learners:

- Whose disability impacts their reading accuracy, rate, or fluency and or causes significant reading fatigue.

- Needing extra time to mitigate issues around focus, attention, hyperactivity, and or impulsivity.
- More time to read test questions due to vision impairment, vision loss, or blindness or neurological or cognitive impairments.
- Requiring breaks due to disability related fatigue or stamina.
- Who require more time or the use assistive technology due to physical barriers to writing caused by temporary, episodic, or persistent disability.
- Requiring breaks for medical reasons, including taking medication.
- Experiencing significant pain due to persistent, episodic, or temporary medical conditions.
- Needing additional time to process information and/or produce a response.
- To mitigate barriers related to clinical anxiety.

This accommodation supports students to:

- Record or otherwise demonstrate their learning.
- Have sufficient time to read and process questions.
- Have sufficient time to formulate and convey responses.
- Self-regulate due to mental health disabilities.
- Manage pain and/or restricted movements due to persistent or episodic physical disabilities such as chronic pain, concussions, or physical disabilities.
- Factor time for loss of concentration or focus due to attention deficits, concussions, or other cognitive disabilities.
- Access and respond to exam content due to vision loss requiring assistive technology, Braille, enlarged print, or individualized support such as a reader or scribe.
- Attend to medical needs such as taking medication, managing pain, or monitoring blood sugar levels.
- Rest, necessitated by a medical issue affecting stamina.
- Use assistive technology such as text-to-speech, speech-to-text, magnifiers, or other tools.

What it is

Extended Time is approved to compensate students for the time they use to cope with their disability symptoms or functional limitations, ensuring they have equitable time to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.

Consider that in addition to evaluating what a student knows, timed assessments evaluate extraneous skills such as:

- Concentration.
- Sitting for extended periods.
- Reading and writing ability.

Time spent on those peripheral competences may hinder the student's ability to demonstrate what they know about the assessment material.

What it's not

Extended Time for Assessments does not:

- Allow for unlimited time.
- Change the format or number of questions.
- Change modality from in-person to take-home.
- Provide students with an advantage.
- Offer students additional time to edit, refine, or double-check responses.
- Guarantee a student will finish an exam.
- Address general test anxiety not related

to diagnosed disability.

- Address general concerns about grades or finishing exams on time not related to diagnosed disability.

How can I support this in my classroom?

If students are completing timed assessments in Brightspace (even if writing in accessibility services testing centre) [set up quiz accommodations](#) for the student allowing for the prescribed extended time. Consult with appropriate departments if using another LMS.

If students are using an accessibility services testing centre, ensure timely cooperation with staff and invigilators including delivery of material in accessible formats.

If possible, reduce the number of traditional exams and quizzes in favour of more [authentic assessments](#). Consider offering flexible options for when, where, and/or how students demonstrate learning.

Additional Notes

Timing may be an essential academic requirement of some assessments. In such cases, instructors must contact the accessibility services office to discuss potential options.

Group Work



A group work accommodation provides students with additional supports for group work or an alternative to group work that allows the student to demonstrate learning and participation.

Who is this for?

A group work accommodation may be necessary to support equitable access for learners:

- Whose disability imposes challenges to navigating social dynamics and communication.
- That experience a barrier to maintaining the pace of others due to persistent or chronic health conditions.
- With a disability impacting communication and speech.
- That struggle to interpret and understand spoken information, even if hearing is unaffected

This accommodation supports students to:

- Equitably demonstrate learning by alternate means when disability impacts their participation in group work.
- Allow students to participate in group work by providing reasonable amendments to group work requirements.

My name is Alex and I am on the autism spectrum. I can have difficulty understanding someone if they do not say exactly what they mean. I can struggle with overstimulation. Having an accommodation to allow me to work independently rather than in a group helps me show what I know in a way that works for me.



[“Alex”](#), by Sue Doner is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)

What it is

When working in a group or demonstrating knowledge through group work is not a stated learning outcome or essential requirement, this accommodation provides alternate means to demonstrate learning and participation where communication and social requirements may create barriers for the learner.

When working in a group or demonstrating knowledge through group work is a stated learning outcome, this accommodation provides additional supports and alternatives for learners to participate in group learning, projects, and presentations.

What it's not

An exemption from group work when working in a group is a defined learning outcome or essential requirement being taught or assessed.

How can I support this in my classroom?

An altered group assessment could include:

- Assigning specific parts of group work to specific students in a group and/or allowing for student with accommodation to complete a specific piece of work.
- Group (or individual) presenting only to the instructor.
- Allowing recorded presentations.

For an individual requiring an alternate to group work, instructors should consider:

- An individual assignment or project with equivalent learning outcomes.
- Reasonable alternatives discussed with the learner.
- The confidentiality of the student while ensuring they are assessed on the content of the course.

Additional Notes

For more information on general group work, consult [7 Tips For Using Group Work Effectively in a Diverse Classroom](#) and [From Team Charters to Reflections: Six Steps for a Successful Group Project](#).

Interpreter

An interpreter provides real-time Sign or Visual language interpretation.



Who is this for?

An interpreter accommodation may be necessary to support equitable learning and class participation opportunities for Deaf or Deafblind learners or learners with a hearing impairment such as those that are hard of hearing.

This accommodation supports students to:

- Equitably access audio or verbal content in real-time that would be missed due to hearing impairment.
- Access or process information by providing visual equivalents to audio or verbal content in real-time.



Hi, I'm Steven. I am deaf. For live, including remote, classes I have an interpreter to access lectures and participate in class.

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What it is

- Sign or Visual language interpreters present in class.

What it's not

- A barrier that prevents students from working with peers or in experiential settings.
- A change to course or program requirements.
- A service students are required to pay for.
- An interpreter is not a translator.

How can I support this in my classroom?

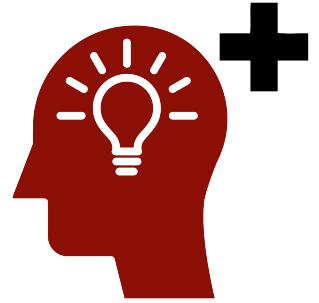
To facilitate an interpreter accommodation, you may be asked to:

- Meet with students, interpreters, and accessibility services staff.
- Share materials (lectures, handouts, etc.) with service providers in advance to allow them to prepare by learning terminology, key terms, etc..
- Identify audio/visual material (videos, recorded lectures, podcasts, etc.) used in your course and verify they are accurately captioned or transcribed.
- Accommodate requests for students to sit where they can see the presented material, instructor, and interpreters.
- Work collaboratively with student, service providers, and accessibility services offices.

Remember to address the student, not the interpreter.

Memory Aid

A memory aid is a single sheet of paper that students with significant memory deficits use to prompt information recall.



Who is this for?

A memory aid is an accommodation for students with a documented medical condition, learning disability, or neurological impairment that impacts spontaneous retrieval of information from long-term memory. Only students with a significant memory deficit, verified by specific medical documentation, are considered for a memory aid accommodation.

This accommodation supports students to:

- Equitably demonstrate knowledge of course material by helping to prompt and guide the student's memory.
- Use an alternative method of effectively accessing previously learned information.
- Retrieve information from memory they have already learned, studied, and understood, but which they may have difficulty accessing.

What it is

A memory aid is a single sheet of paper created by the student and **approved in advanced by the instructor.**

A handwritten or typed document including:

- Acronyms
- Acrostics
- Categories
- Diagrams

- Drawings
- Formulae
- Mind Maps
- Mnemonics
- Pictures
- Rhymes

The contents of a memory aid are cues to assist student's recollection of previously learned information.

A formula sheet may contain symbols, figures, and equations. Formula sheets may be permitted when assessing the application, as opposed to recollection, of formula.

What it's not

A memory aid is not:

- A substitute for studying or exemption from learning course material
- An answer sheet
- Course notes or copies of course material
- List(s) of facts, details, definitions, or concepts
- Instructions, steps, or specific examples
- A list of conversions
- Specific examples of how formulas are used
- Pre-conceived answers to potential questions

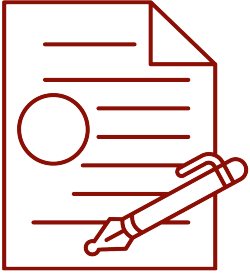
If a learner does not know the course material, a memory aid will not help them.

A memory aid does not alter academic requirements or standards by which performance is assessed.

How can I support this in my classroom?

Instructors are within their right to disallow a student the use of a memory aid, or specific content within a memory aid, that presents any risk to academic integrity or if they were not given sufficient time for review.

Note-taking



A note-taking accommodation helps students with disabilities record real-time instruction. When unable to take notes, a note-taking accommodation provides an alternative method for students to obtain equivalent information. A note-taking accommodation may be used in lectures, labs, tutorials, seminars, and other educational activities.

Note-taking accommodations may include:

1. A volunteer peer notetaker
 - a. A student in the class provides their notes to student who is unable to take notes.
2. A specialized note taker
 - a. A professional notetaker records notes for a student who is unable to take notes.
3. Copies of Instructor's Notes, where possible
 - a. The instructor provides class notes to the student or posts class notes online.
4. Use of a laptop for note-taking
 - a. Instructor permits use of a laptop in courses where laptop use is normally not permitted. Student may require use of a keyboard or tablet/stylus to take notes or may require assistive technology.

Who is this for?

Note-taking may be necessary to support equitable learning opportunities for learners:

- Who experience barriers to perceiving information presented in visual format only.
- Who experience barriers to capturing and reviewing lecture content in visual forms.
- Who experience barriers to perceiving information presented orally.
- Whose spelling, grammar, and punctuation and or clarity and organization of written expression is significantly below expected level.
- Whose stamina, energy, or ability to engage is significantly diminished by disability.
- Who experience significant pain due to persistent, episodic, or temporary medical conditions.
- Who have physical difficulty writing quickly and legibly or typing.
- Who have difficulty filtering out distracting visual and auditory stimuli impacting their ability to focus, process information and record information.
- Whose disability impacts their reading comprehension, accuracy, rate, or fluency or

causes significant reading fatigue.

- Who experience barriers to interpreting and understanding audio information, even if their hearing is unaffected.
- Who experience barriers to processing information.
- Whose ability to follow information over short periods is significantly impacted by disability.
- Requiring the use of assistive technology such as specialized note-taking or mind mapping software.

This accommodation supports students to:

- Focus on lecture content by alleviating extraneous limitations on their ability to record notes.
- Equitably access class material.
- Augment their own note-taking efforts.
- Understand and organize information.
- Review and apply concepts and ideas.

- Revisit instructions and guidelines.
- Prepare for tests and assessments.
- Enhance the detail and accuracy of notes.
- Engage and actively participate in class.
- Be more autonomous.
- Use assistive technology in class.

What it is

A note-taking accommodation:

- Is an alternate method to record class material.
- May replace or supplement a student's own note-taking efforts.
- Helps students engage with class material.

What it's not

A student with a note-taking accommodation must still attend class and engage with classroom material and activities.

Instructors are not required to evaluate the quality of notes. For volunteer notetakers, instructors only need to find volunteers and facilitate note sharing with the student.

How can I support this in my classroom?

You may be asked to help find and support a volunteer notetaker from students in your class. A volunteer notetaker is required to record and share legible handwritten or typed notes for lectures, labs, tutorials, seminars, and other educational activities. Make an announcement to the class asking for anyone willing to share their notes with another student. You may consider asking for a backup notetaker to account for illness and/or absence.

Ensure you do not disclose personal information about the student.

Some institutions may offer verified volunteer hours for notetakers. Advertising this opportunity may help recruit volunteers.

Some students may wish to connect directly with the volunteer notetaker, while others will wish to remain anonymous. In event of the latter, collect the notes from the volunteer and forward them to the student anonymously.

If a specialized notetaker is present in your class assisting a student, you are not required to make any special arrangements.

Consider providing a copy of your lecture notes to all students.

Additional Notes

If a volunteer notetaker cannot be found:

- Providing a copy of your speaker notes
- Allow the student to take a picture of presentation materials
- Allow student to record audio for personal review only.

You may need to refer the student back to accessibility services to discuss other solutions. Other accommodations could require instructors to share their notes with the student and/or allowing [audio recordings of lectures](#).

Participation

A participation accommodation provides the learner with an alternative means to participate in classroom settings. This accommodation encompasses participation in cold-calling sessions, and/or in-class discussions.



Who is this for?

A participation accommodation may be necessary to support equitable learning opportunities for learners:

- Who struggle to understand when it is appropriate to speak and interact with others during a lesson.
- Whose disability may require alterations to established classroom protocols.
- Who face challenges to navigating social dynamics and communication.
- Experiencing a persistent health condition, including requiring breaks for medical reasons, including taking medication.
- With a disability impacting communication and speech.

This accommodation supports students to:

- Equitably demonstrate their learning in a course.
- Mitigate barriers to participation.

What it is

An alternative means to demonstrate participation, such as:

- Written responses to specific questions.
- Individual discussion with instructor or with instructor and small group of peers.

- Flexible response options such as a Q&A, written notes, or online discussions.
- Advance notice when a student may be called on, including the question(s) they may be asked so they can prepared their response(s).
- Not calling upon a student.

What it's not

An exemption from participating or an alteration of learning objectives.

A participation accommodation would not be reasonable if the essential requirements would be altered.

Alternatives to participation may not be reasonable if a course has an essential learning objective related to the ability to engage in extemporaneous analysis and discussion of topics with others.

How can I support this in my classroom?

Provide multiple means of engagement including online discussions, interactive activities, asynchronous participation, and reflective formative assessments.

Presentations

A presentations accommodation may apply for students who experience significant disability-related barriers to delivering presentations. A presentations accommodation allows for an alternative assessment based on the same learning outcomes or consideration of flexibility within the existing presentation requirement.



Who is this for?

An accommodation for altered presentations or alternatives to presentations may be necessary to support equitable access for learners:

- With a hearing impairment, those that are hard of hearing, or Deaf students.
- Who experience communication and/or social navigation barriers
- With a disability impacting communication and speech.

This accommodation supports students to:

Effectively demonstrate their learning via an alternative assessment method or with additional support and flexibility when presenting.

What it is

When demonstrating knowledge through presentation is not a stated learning outcome or essential requirement, a presentations accommodation allows the student reasonable flexibility to demonstrate learning.

What it's not

An alteration of learning objectives, essential requirements, or course content.

If demonstrating knowledge through presentation or the ability to present is a stated learning outcome or other measured core competency, a presentations accommodation is not necessarily an exemption from presenting.

How can I support this in my classroom?

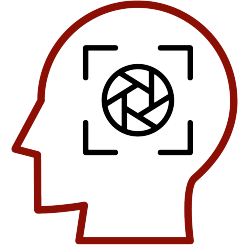
For a student that has a presentations accommodation, consider alternatives or amendments to presentations, such as:

- Allowing the student to present directly to the instructor.
- Allowing the student to present to the instructor and a small group of peers.
- Providing flexibility about when the student presents (date and sequence in class).
- Allowing student to sit or stand as preferred.
- Allowing student to read from notes, handouts, or script.
- Allow submission of a prerecorded presentation, submitted directly to the instructor or to be viewed by the class in lieu of live presentation.
- Flexibility around responding to questions such as allowing students to record the questions and answer later via email, discussion board, etc.
- In group presentations, assist student in assigning roles and responsibilities, including allowing student to have non-presenting part.
- For group presentations, reduce the scope to allow the student to produce an individual presentation instead.

Or allowing for an alternative assessment such as written paper, video, or portfolio demonstrating mastery of the subject matter.

Private Room for Exams

An alternative testing location is a distraction-free private setting in which students can attempt assessments.



Who is this for?

A private room may be necessary to support equitable learning opportunities for learners:

- Who experience difficulty in their ability to filter out distracting visual and auditory stimuli including crowded and noisy environments.
- Who experience hypersensitivity to light and or noise.
- Requiring the use of assistive technology such as speech to text or text to speech software.
- Who use a reader and/or scribe.
- Who require a quieter space to manage a variety of disability-related symptoms.

This accommodation supports students to:

- Reduce visual or auditory distractions due to attention related disabilities.
- Comfortably attempt assessments in private to mitigate symptoms of clinical anxiety.
- Use assistive or adaptive technology (speech-to-text, text-to-speech, etc.) that could be a distraction to other students.
- Engage with readers, scribes, or interpreters that could be a distraction to other students.

What it is

A private room is approved by disability experts based on medical documentation.

- Students will attempt the same assessment as other students. A copy of the assessment must be provided to accessibility services or testing centres.

- Private rooms are managed and monitored by accessibility services staff.
- A private/semi-private room allows students to equitably attempt assessments.

What it's not

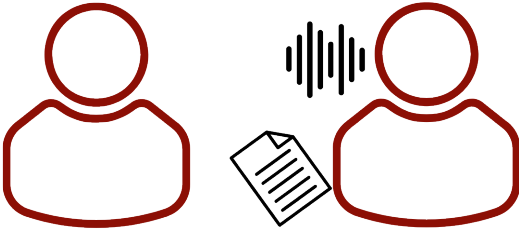
An alternative assessment location does not:

- Allow for unlimited time.
- Change the format or number of questions.
- Change modality from in-person to take-home.
- Provide students with an advantage.
- Allow students to access material other students cannot.
- Offer students additional time to edit, refine, or double-check responses.
- Guarantee a student will finish an assessment.
- Address general test anxiety not related to diagnosed disability.
- Address general concerns about grades or finishing exams not related to diagnosed disability.

How can I support this in my classroom?

To facilitate alternative assessment locations, ensure timely coordination with accessibility services and testing centre staff. Understand that professionals will manage and invigilate the assessment, maintaining strict academic integrity standards while ensuring students have their needs met.

Reader



A reader works one-on-one with a student to read assessment material aloud. Additionally, the reader may read the student's recorded responses back to them for revision purposes.

Who is this for?

A reader may be necessary to support equitable learning opportunities for learners:

- Who experience barriers to perceiving information presented in visual format only.
- Whose disability impacts their reading comprehension, accuracy, rate, or fluency or causes significant reading fatigue.
- Where assistive or adaptive technology has been tried but has proven to be ineffective or not feasible.

This accommodation supports students to:

Equitably access assessment material.

Hi! My name is Diana. I have partial vision loss and use magnification software. However, if I have to look at a screen for long periods my eyes fatigue and I get headaches. For my exams, I have an accommodation for a reader to read questions aloud to me. This helps me show what I've learned and mitigate the impacts of extending screen time.



[“Diana”](#), by Sue Doner is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)

What it is

The student will instruct the reader to start and stop reading. Students will indicate to the reader when they are ready for the next question. Readers will read at a speed requested by the student.

Students are permitted to skip questions, complete questions out of order, and return to a previous question.

Students may request the reader repeat words, sentences, or whole passages as many times as needed.

Students can ask the reader to read their recorded answer aloud as often as necessary to allow the student to review and edit their responses.

Readers read the text exactly as written including punctuation.

What it's not

Readers do not assist the student by:

- Tracking time
- Suggesting when to move on
- Using tone to suggest answers
- Repeat text without being asked.

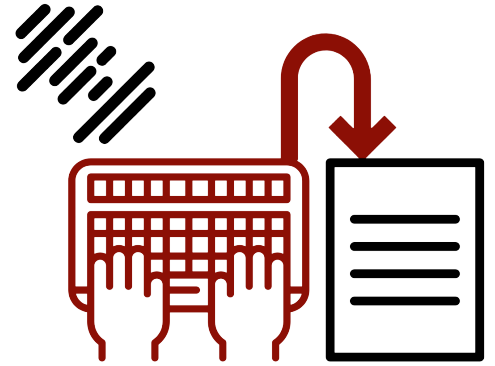
Readers will not rephrase or explain the meaning of words or provide suggestions as to the intent of a question.

How can I support this in my classroom?

Coordinate with accessibility services offices to ensure timely delivery of assessment material.

Real-Time Transcription

Real-time transcription provides live conversion of audio and verbal content to text as word-for-word translation via CART (Computer aided real-time transcription) or a condensed synthesis via TypeWell transcription.



Who is this for?

A real-time transcription accommodation may be necessary to support equitable learning and class participation opportunities for Deaf or Deaf Blind learners or learners with a hearing impairment such as those that are hard of hearing.

This accommodation supports students to:

- Equitably access audio or verbal content in real-time.
- Access or process information by providing text-based transcription or equivalents to audio or verbal content in real-time.

What it is

- A transcriber present in class.
 - CART services provide live, verbatim transcription of audio and verbal content.
 - TypeWell transcribers “accurately convey the essential meaning of what is said in a clear, concise format.”
- A remote transcriber that students access via computer.

What it's not

- A barrier that prevents students from working with peers or in experiential settings.
- A change to course or program requirements.
- A service students are required to pay for.
- A transcriber is not a translator nor an intermediary for the student.

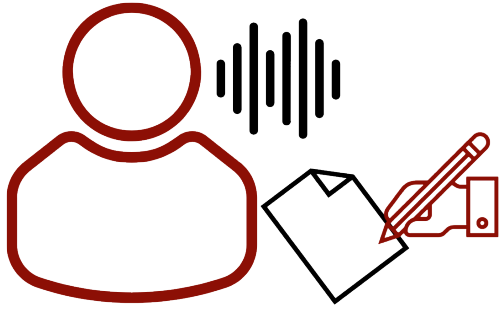
How can I support this in my classroom?

To facilitate a real-time transcription accommodation, you may be asked to:

- Meet with students, interpreters, and accessibility services staff.
- Share materials (lectures, handouts, etc.) with service providers in advance to allow them to prepare by learning terminology, key terms, etc..
- Accommodate requests for students to sit where they can see the presented material, instructor, and transcribers.
- Work collaboratively with student, service providers, and accessibility services offices.

Address the student, not the transcriber.

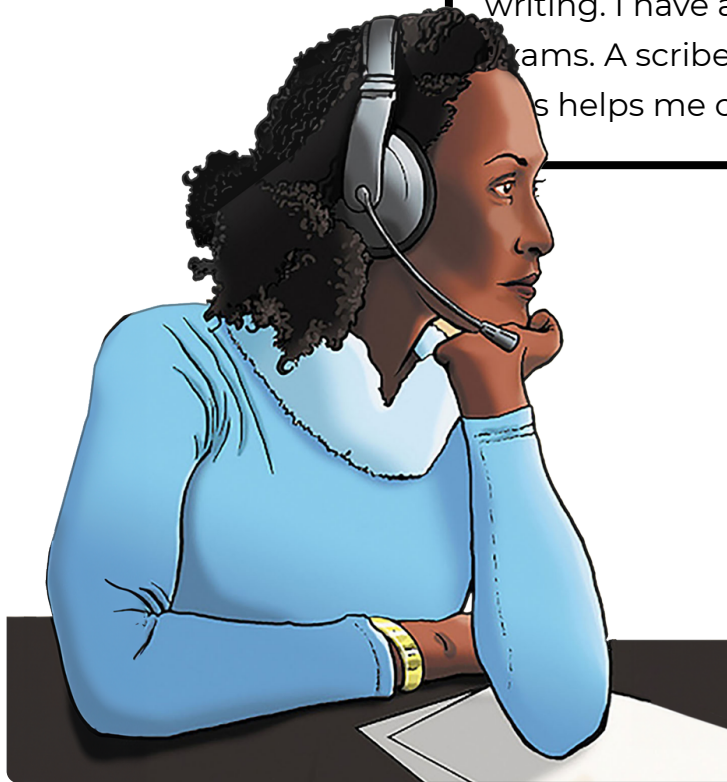
Scribe



A scribe works one-on-one with a student to record the student's responses verbatim as they speak aloud.

Who is this for?

My name is Kelly. I sustained a brain injury that affects my vision and my ability to transfer my thoughts and ideas to writing. I have a scribe accommodation to help me with exams. A scribe sits with me and writes down what I say. This helps me complete quizzes and exams.



“Kelly”, by Sue Doner is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

A scribe may be necessary to support equitable learning opportunities for learners:

- Who have difficulty writing legibly.
- Experiencing significant pain due to persistent, episodic, or temporary medical conditions.

- Whose stamina, energy, or ability to engage is significantly diminished by disability.
- Whose spelling, grammar, and punctuation and or clarity and organization of written expression is significantly below expected level.
- Where assistive or adaptive technology has been tried but has proven to be ineffective or not feasible.

This accommodation supports students to:

Equitably complete assessments.

What it is

A scribe records verbatim the student's speech and instructions.

Students are permitted to skip questions, complete questions out of order, and return to a previous question.

Students can review and edit answers throughout assessment.

Students are responsible for correct punctuation and spelling of technical terms. Students can correct errors during dictation or afterwards.

What it's not

Scribes will record the student's answer, even if it is wrong.

Scribes will spell words as the student dictates, even if it is incorrect.

Scribes do not assist the student with hints, suggestions, strategies, indicating correct or incorrect answers, or directing student to redo or review any part of their assessment.

Scribes record exactly what the student dictates without paraphrasing, editing, omission, or addition.

Scribes may ask the student repeat words or phrases to ensure accuracy and clarity of transcription, but not to suggest changes or corrections.

How can I support this in my classroom?

Coordinate with accessibility services offices to ensure timely delivery of assessment material.