
Academic Accommodations Translated into Employment Settings (i.e. applications, interviews and workplace)

Points to Consider

- Not all individuals with disabilities will require work place accommodations - many do well without modifications.
- When considering accommodations in the workplace, it is important to address the "essential duties" of a job – that is, those duties that are a central part of the role and which the employee must be able to do. Similarly, the University of Guelph's Student Accessibility Services department strives to provide academic accommodations that work well for the student but also allow the essential learning outcomes of each course to be fulfilled.
- All accommodations provided by the employer should be decided upon in consultation with the employee.

Academic Accommodation: Time Management (such as extra time on tests/assignments, flexibility with deadlines, work material in advance, no exams on same day)

Possible Workplace Accommodation(s):

- Advance notice of deadlines when possible
- Assign a mentor to support employee i.e. Hold regular check ins, assist with managing time
- Divide large assignments into several small tasks or chunks in order of importance/priority
- Provide a checklist of assignments
- Plan and structure times of transition and shifts in business activities
- Supply an electronic or handheld organizer and train on how to use it effectively
- Schedule regular e-mail reminders
- Provide a wall calendar or online calendar to emphasize deadlines
 - Develop a colour-coded system (each colour represents a task, or event, or level of importance)
 - Allow co-worker(s) or supervisor to add entries on the calendar or to double-check entries added by the employee
- Assign new project(s) only when previous project is complete, when possible



- Provide a "cheat sheet" of high-priority activities, projects, people, etc.
- Take time at the end of each day to organize and set up for the next day

Academic Accommodation: Assistance with Prioritization/Breaking Up Tasks

Possible Workplace Accommodation(s):

- Separate tasks so that they can be completed one at a time
- Create a flow-chart of tasks that must be performed at the same time, carefully labeling or colour-coding each task in sequential or preferential order
- Provide individualized/specialized training to help the employee learn techniques for multi-tasking (e.g., typing on a computer while talking on the phone)
- Clearly identify tasks that must be performed simultaneously and tasks that can be performed individually
- Provide specific feedback to help the employee target areas of improvement
- Remove or reduce distractions from work area
- Supply ergonomic equipment to facilitate multi-tasking
- Clearly represent performance standards such as completion time or accuracy rates (e.g. Provide examples of how long one should take on a specific task)

Academic Accommodation: Distraction-free/Private Room (test taking) to minimize/assist with concentration

Possible Workplace Accommodation(s):

- Provide breaks to increase stamina including short walks, getting up for a drink of water, and rotating through varied tasks
- Job restructuring (in consultation with the individual) so the most difficult tasks are performed at the time of day the employee has the most mental energy or stamina
- To reduce **auditory distractions**:
 - Provide a noise canceling headset
 - Hang sound absorption panels
 - Provide a white noise machine
 - Relocate employee's office space away from audible distractions
 - Redesign employee's office space to minimize audible distractions



- To reduce **visual distractions**:
 - Install space enclosures (cubicle walls)
 - Reduce clutter in the employee's work environment
 - Redesign employee's office space to minimize visual distractions
 - Relocate employee's office space away from visual distractions

Academic Accommodation: Assistive Technology/Software (such as Dragon, Kurzweil 3000, Smart Pen, Zoom Text, etc.). Can be used to assist with literacy, reading, writing or organizational challenges including for individuals with learning disabilities. Can also assist low vision users.

Possible Workplace Accommodation(s):

- Access to same or similar software in the workplace, depending on the individual's specific accessibility need(s)

Academic Accommodation: Accessible Room(s)

Possible Workplace Accommodation(s):

- Parking spots close to entrance
- Adding ramps to an entrance
- Keeping pathways clear from obstructions
- Clearly marking accessible entrances and spaces
- Automatic doors, wide door frames
- Grab bars in washrooms
- Placing office and kitchen equipment in areas and at heights that can be reached by all

Academic Accommodation: Alternate Method of Evaluation

Possible Workplace Accommodation(s) (most often required as part of selection & interview process):

- Offer assessments in alternative format such as: large print, Braille, colour-coded text, audio (reader, tape/cd, or computer)
- Offer the presence/support of a reader (a person who reads the test to the test-taker) or a scribe (someone who takes down the test-takers notes/responses)
- Testing in a private room
- Providing extended time



- Testing on computer with voice output
- Using symbols or pictures where appropriate
- Allowing verbal responses instead of written responses
- Allowing use of graphic organizer
- Providing test on tape/CD
- Removing staples from a booklet and laying flat
- Allowing practice on test device or unit
- Using speech recognition
- Using one handed-keyboards

Academic Accommodation: Adaptive Furniture (such as desks, chairs, PCs)

Possible Workplace Accommodation(s):

- Ideally, the same type of adaptive furniture would be provided to the worker in a workplace setting
- Visit the [Ontario Government's webpage describing the Assistive Devices Program](https://www.ontario.ca/page/assistive-devices-program) or <https://www.ontario.ca/page/assistive-devices-program> for information about accessing funding for these devices

Academic Accommodation: Regular Breaks

Possible Workplace Accommodation(s):

- Provide breaks to improve stamina, including short walks, getting up for a drink of water, and rotating through varied tasks

Resources:

[The Job Accommodation Network's webpage on Solutions for Executive Functioning Deficits](https://askjan.org/limitations/Executive-Functioning-Deficits.cfm?cssearch=2018959_1)

https://askjan.org/limitations/Executive-Functioning-Deficits.cfm?cssearch=2018959_1

[The Job Accommodation Network's webpage on Solutions for Managing Time](https://askjan.org/limitations/Managing-Time.cfm)

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[Accessibility Checklists for Employers from the inclusionNL website](http://inclusionnl.ca/inclusive-workplaces/accessibility-checklists/)

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