Post-Secondary School: Accommodations

What is an Access Centre or “Disability Office”? Attending college or university with a chronic health issue or disability can require some extra support. Every college and university in Ontario has a disability centre or access centre that helps students with chronic health issues and/or disabilities attending post-secondary schools (both colleges and universities).

If you have a disability or chronic illness, you may be eligible for:

- **Accommodations**: This includes reduced course load without penalties (if needed due to health reasons), extension on assignments due to unexpected health circumstances, extra time on exams and other supports.

- **Funding**: Bursaries, scholarships and grants are available for students who meet various eligibility criteria, such as having a disability.

- **Services**: This can include anything from note takers to tutoring supports.

How do I register with the Access Centre? All eligible students must register with their school’s access centre to receive support.

**Register Early!** Even if you don’t think you will need any accommodations or supports, registering with an Access Centre is important in case anything changes in your health or ability to attend school.

**Students report that the earlier you register the better!**

Steps to register:

- **Find the website and phone number** for your school’s access centre. Access centres can have different names at Ontario Colleges and Universities, such as Campus Disability Services or Accessibility Services.

  If you are having trouble finding the office, the website for the National Educational Association of Disabled Students has a list of all of the offices and the links and contact information for each one: [www.neads.ca/en/norc/edlink/](http://www.neads.ca/en/norc/edlink/)

- **Download or order a copy of the registration forms** for your school. You will need to fill out part of the information yourself, often complete a consent or confidentiality release form and then bring the forms to a health care provider, such as a doctor or a psychologist to prove eligibility of your medical or mental health condition.

  It would be helpful to bring any other documentation or lists of accommodations you have required in the past to help identify what you will need in post-secondary school.
- **Book an appointment** as soon as possible with the Access Centre to review your forms and explain what types of accommodations you would need. Consider registering even before you start classes (some schools require this!) to allow help quickly if you need them.

- **Pay attention to the registration requirements.** Some schools will require you to update your forms each year or when changes in your health occur.

**DISCLAIMER:** This resource was developed in April 2016 and content was based on the following references. Changes can occur to programs at any time. This resource may not reflect changes made after this date nor will it include information from other sources not listed below. Please refer to original resources for comprehensive definitions and terms related to the program, eligibility criteria, determination of rates, additional benefits, and other important information.

**REFERENCES CONSULTED:**

**Government Websites**
Ontario Government, Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development
Website: [www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-advanced-education-and-skills-development](http://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-advanced-education-and-skills-development)
Relevant Pages: Students in Special Circumstances
Accessed: Jan 2017

**Other Websites**
National Education Association of Disabled Students (NEADS)
Website: [www.neads.ca](http://www.neads.ca)
Relevant Pages: Campus Disability Services
Accessed: Jan 2017