

Transitioning to Post-Secondary Education

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions



Services for Students with Disabilities:

- Offers support services and accommodations for students with documented disabilities, for example:
 - chronic medical conditions
 - learning disabilities
 - permanent physical disabilities
 - temporary physical disabilities



Facilitating a Successful Transition

From Secondary to Post-Secondary

Disability Identification
Advocacy

Accommodation Decisions
Learning Supports

Disability Identification:

- *Secondary*
 - The school identifies students with disabilities
- *Post-secondary*
 - Students with disabilities need to identify themselves to Disability Services at least **3 months** before the start of their semester



Advocacy:

- *Secondary*
 - Parents, students and school officials advocate for students
- *Post-Secondary*
 - Students take on the responsibility of advocating for themselves
 - Students are considered independent adults, therefore personal and confidential information cannot be discussed with parents or others without a student's written consent
 - Parents take on a coaching role



Accommodation Decisions:

- *Secondary*
 - Accommodation decisions are made by parents/guardians, teachers and school staff
- *Post-Secondary*
 - Accommodation decisions are made by Disability Services in consultation with the student
 - Accommodation decisions are based on the documentation provided by the student



Accommodation Decisions (cont'd):

- Documentation Required:
 - Must be current (usually 3 years for medical and 5 for psycho-educational)
 - Provides:
 - Diagnosis (DSM-IV, if applicable) of the disability
 - Symptom(s)
 - Functional limitation or impact of the disability in the post-secondary environment
 - Timeline for recovery (if disability is temporary)
 - Recommendations for accommodations

Learning Supports:

- *Secondary*
 - Accommodations are based on an Educational Plan
 - Students may receive individualized instruction
- *Post-Secondary*
 - Accommodations are based on the diagnosis and address the functional limitations identified in the medical or psychological documentation provided by the student
 - Modification to admission criteria, curriculum and programs is not available



Learning Supports cont'd:

Learning Supports may include:

- Academic accommodations for the classroom, assignments and exams
- Referrals to appropriate educational supports (e.g., academic strategists, aides & tutors) and community resources
- Support in applying for Student Aid Alberta **'Schedule 4'** Grants
- Access to the Assistive Technology



Suggestions for Students to Facilitate a Smooth Transition:

- Browse the institutional website and check for programs and courses
- Create career goals
- Attend an information session for your program(s) of choice (if available)
- Apply to your institution of choice:
 - Colleges, Universities, Technical Schools, Private Vocational Schools, and Apprenticeship Programs
- Book an intake appointment with Accessibility Services EARLY, at least three months prior to the start of the semester



Some Tips for Preparing and Attending a Post-Secondary Institution:

- Bring documentation of your disability to the first meeting with your advisor
- Understand your disability
- Advocate for yourself
- Be strategic when planning your course load
 - E.g., Reduced Course Load (RCL) - students with permanent disabilities may take 40% or more of a full time course load and still be considered a full-time student



Tips cont'd

- Learn about Student Aid Alberta
- Learn about accommodations and services
- Learn about the services on campus
- Be prepared for many procedures & some paperwork
- Be familiar with Schedule 4



- Available online (separate from main loan application)

Schedule 4 cont'd

- Canada Student Grant for Services & Equipment for Persons with Permanent Disabilities (up to \$2000/yr)
- Reduced course load – 40-60% of a full course load
- Must be submitted with documentation (outlined in Schedule 4)
- Disability advisor may be authorized to sign for Schedule 4

Federal/Provincial Grant for Post-Secondary Students with Permanent Disabilities 2013-2014

Schedule 4
13/14 S4

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

If you have a documented permanent disability and are attending full-time post-secondary studies, you may be eligible to receive more student aid. You will have to include medical documents with your first application.

What is a Permanent Disability?

A permanent disability is a functional limitation caused by a physical or mental impairment that restricts the ability of a person to perform the daily activities necessary to participate in studies at a post-secondary level or labour force, and is expected to remain with the person for the person's expected natural life.

Before applying...

Talk with a Disability Advisor at your school about your educational goals and what kind of supports may already be in place at your chosen institution.

What permanent disability student aid could I be eligible for?

- **Canada Student Grant for Persons with Permanent Disabilities:** \$2,000 per loan year to assist you with education and living costs.
- **Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Persons with Permanent Disabilities:** Up to \$8,000 per loan year to help you with exceptional education related costs such as assistive services or equipment.
- The Canada Student Grants program will cover 75% of the cost of a **Learning Assessment** (up to a maximum of \$1,200 per loan year) if the assessment confirms you have a learning disability.

When should I apply?

It is best to apply in early July for September study. You can apply at any time of the year but Student Aid Alberta must receive your application, including Schedule 4, at least 30 days before this year's program ends in order to process it.

What is a reduced course load?

Your disability may limit you from taking a full course load. If so, you can carry as little as 40% of a full course load and still apply for full-time student aid. Your Schedule 4 must be signed by the Disability Advisor at your school to confirm that you are taking a reduced course load. If you are studying part-time, you may also be eligible for permanent disability funding. A part-time application can be printed from studentaid.alberta.ca

Who has to sign my Schedule 4?

If you apply for student aid online, you must still submit a signed paper Schedule 4.

The Disability Advisor at your school may be authorized to sign your Schedule 4. Check with the Advisor first for assistance and further instructions.

Do I need to keep receipts?

If you receive student aid for assistive services and equipment, you must submit your receipts to Student Aid Alberta by the end of your study period to show that the student aid you received was used as intended. Write your Social Insurance Number (SIN) and your name on each receipt.

If you do not use all of the student aid, you must return the unused funds to Student Aid Alberta. Make your cheque or money order payable to Government of Alberta. If you do not send receipts or return the unused funds, you will be in an overaward situation.

MAILING ADDRESS

Mail your Schedule 4, receipts or unused funds to:
Student Aid Alberta
Attention: Disability Grants
PO Box 28000 Stn Main
Edmonton AB T5J 4R4

APPLICANT AGREEMENT

If I receive a disability grant for services or equipment for post-secondary students with permanent disabilities, I hereby agree to provide, by the end of my study period, receipts which will show that the student aid was spent for its intended purposes. Ensure you include your name and Social Insurance Number on all receipts sent in.

Applicant's Signature (sign in ink)

Today's Date (in ink)

Telephone

Day Month Year

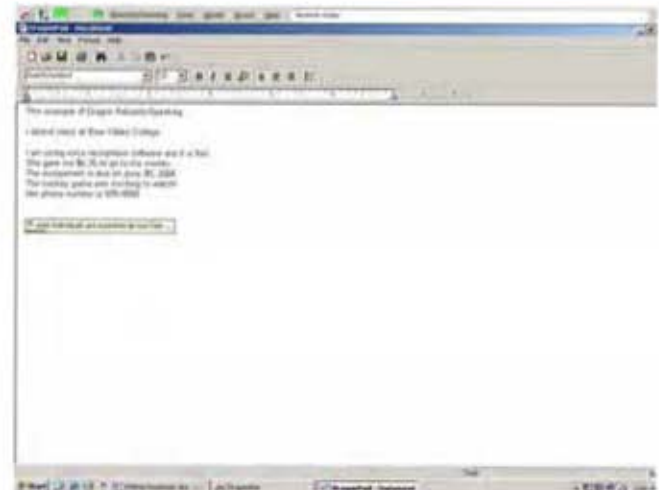
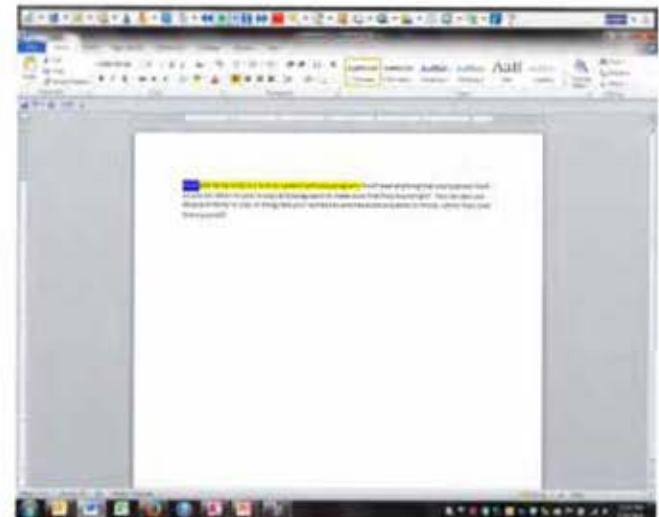
Digital Recorder



- Record class lectures and review them at a later date
- Some recorders – like the LiveScribe Pen – can link your handwritten notes to the audio recording
- Some examples:
 - Digital Voice Recorders
 - LiveScribe Pens

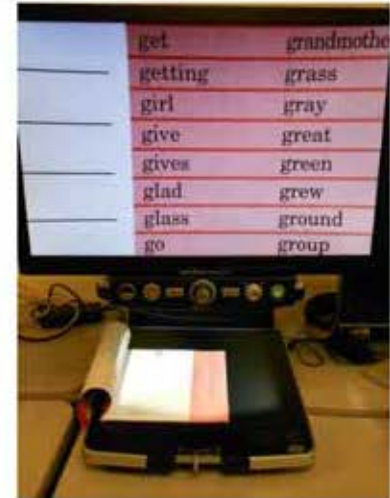
Electronic Reading/Writing Software

- Text-to-Speech (TTS) Software
 - Reads any text that is typed into a computer
 - Using a scanner, printed materials (textbooks, handouts) can also be read
 - Some examples:
 - Kurzweil 3000
 - Read and Write Gold
- Speech Recognition
 - Converts spoken words into typed text
 - Some examples:
 - Dragon Naturally Speaking



Assistive Devices for Visual Impairments

- Depending on the severity of the vision impairment, different AT can be suggested.
- Some examples:
 - CCTVs and Magnifiers
 - Magnify printed materials like textbooks and handouts
 - Screen Magnification Software (ZoomText)
 - Magnifies computer screen
 - Screen Readers (JAWS)
 - Reads out everything seen on a computer screen
 - Refreshable Braille Displays
 - Used with a computer or a portable device like an iPhone – converts information to Braille



Assistive Devices for Hearing



- FM Systems – 2 piece units
 - the instructor speaks into a microphone unit
 - the student listens through headphones attached to the receiver unit
- Portable Amplification Systems – 1 piece unit
 - the student points the device towards the instructor



Tips cont'd

- Be aware of academic policies
- Be prepared for larger class sizes & a much larger institution
- Be prepared for fast academic pace & independent learning
- Monitor your academic performance



Tips cont'd

- Learn and practice time management, organization and learning strategies
- Remember you are not alone!
 - A good reference is the “Transition Planning Guide for Students with Disabilities and their Families” available for download at:
www.alis.alberta.ca/disabilities



Student Panel Questions

1. In what ways have your self-advocacy skills been important in accessing supports in your post-secondary program? What were the first steps in getting started?
2. How did your support through your Accessibility Centre impact your academic progress during post-secondary studies?
3. What are some of the services offered by your institution , other than accommodations, that have been of help to you in addressing your difficulties?
4. What advice do you have for students who are wondering whether they should connect with their Accessibility Department as a new student? What about feelings of “being different”?