

# POLICY ON ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMODATION FOR STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES

**Effective Date:** April 2, 2003 (Currently under review)

**Originating Office:** Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic

**Supersedes /Amends:** VRS-14/n/a **Policy Number:** PRVPA-14

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## **PREAMBLE**

The University is committed to the inclusion and participation of current and future students and employees with disabilities as well as to facilitating the prevention, identification and/or removal of barriers for persons with disabilities to ensure access to services, events, activities, facilities, premises and buildings, employment, digital structures and university processes and accommodations.

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all members (as defined below) of the university including students, employees, volunteers, online activities, and to all settings and events including athletic, research, co-op, experiential learning, internship, class activities, and employment activity, or workshops. The policy also applies to both potential students, and applicants to employment positions who may have disabilities.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the respective roles and responsibilities of the University for current and future students and employees with disabilities with respect to accessibility. The related procedures\*, (\*Procedures for student accommodation and employee accommodation are under development) updated from time to time, set out the details of the processes that apply to students and employees.

## **DEFINITIONS**

“Accessibility” is a general term for the degree of ease that something (such as, for example: a device, service, physical environment, and information) can be accessed, used, and enjoyed by persons with disabilities. The term implies conscious planning, design and/or effort to ensure that the environment, service or device, as per the above examples, are accessible to persons with disabilities.

“Accessible format” means alternate media that can be used by persons with disabilities and can include but is not limited to, large print, web content, recorded audio, electronic formats, closed captioning, and braille.

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“Assistive devices” are equipment or methods which help a person with a disability to perform everyday tasks and activities.

“Barrier” means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability, including but not limited to, physical barriers, architectural barriers, information or communication barriers, attitudinal barriers, and technological barriers.

“Communication supports” means aids that facilitate effective communication and can include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, and sign language.

“Disability” means a diagnosis by a licensed health professional, such as: a chronic health or mental health impairment; physical impairment; neurodevelopmental impairment, or sensory impairment, which may be permanent, temporary, or episodic. The disability may interfere with educational pursuits or employment and may result in functional restrictions or limitation and/or experience of attitudinal and /or environmental barriers that hamper participation in work or study.

“Employee” means any full-time, part-time, contract, or temporary employee of the University, including staff, faculty, post-doctoral fellows, researchers, and stagiaires.

“Instructor” means any University employee who is teaching, advising, supervising, mentoring, overseeing the allocation of resources to, and/or coaching students. Such employees include, but are not limited to, full and/or part-time faculty members, faculty administrators, librarians, laboratory or other instructors, principal investigators as well as teaching assistants, research assistants, staff members, and graduate student supervisors, and coaching staff.

“Member” is used in this policy interchangeably with the expression “students and employees”. Member means employees, postdoctoral fellows, students, and interns, stagiaires or researchers.

“Reasonable accommodation” means identifying and implementing adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, and/or modifying practices, procedures, or facilities in response to a disability requiring such an accommodation.

“Undue hardship” means the legal limit on the obligations of an institution to accommodate where the desired accommodation places an unreasonable burden on the institution’s resources.

“Student” is a person who is registered in at least one course in an on or off campus program at the university. Prospective students, persons recently enrolled at the university or persons

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intending to continue studies from a previous session as a continuing student will also receive consideration under this policy.

### POLICY

#### Roles and Responsibilities

##### The University

The University provides an inclusive and welcoming environment and informs all those with disabilities about the relevant services and supports including specifically the ACSD and HR and reduces barriers to entry for potential students and job applicants. The University will ensure that this policy and its related guidelines are communicated to all members of the university community.

##### Members

It is the responsibility of all Members, according to their different roles and responsibilities, to engage in creating an accessible and inclusive university environment, through minimizing of barriers, and in the accommodation processes. Members will make themselves aware of the policy and their responsibilities and participate in training and education opportunities dedicated to accessibility.

##### Accessibility Committee

The committee is dedicated to accessibility and includes students, and employees appointed by the Equity Diversity and Inclusion office executive director. The mandate of the committee will include ensuring the implementation and communication of this policy, advising on this policy, making recommendations on campus initiatives supporting accessibility, and the communication of efforts to address accessibility at the university.

#### Intersectionality

The University is a diverse community and every effort to address accessibility must be grounded in an understanding that each person's experience is impacted by many factors. The University recognizes that a person's perspective or circumstance (such as race/ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, faith, disability/ability, indigeneity, immigration status, medical condition, language ability and/or socio-economic factors) could impact their needs, options, and choices. The needs of each member with a disability vary and the types and forms of support and accommodation available will be tailored to the needs on an individual basis, within the limits of university resources.

##### Assistive Devices

The University makes every effort to ensure that Members with disabilities can use their own personal assistive devices to access services. If unable to accommodate the use of personal

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assistive devices, the University will work with the person to provide a reasonable accommodation.

### Universal Design

Universal design, as in universal design for learning, or the equivalent, refers to the creation of sustainable approaches focusing on the accessibility of the environment rather than the needs of specific individuals and seeks to ensure a greater level of accessibility for all. To this end, the University is committed to the principles of universal design to guide the continuing work on accessibility and inclusion throughout the university.

### Service dogs

Service dogs are permitted in accordance with the Animals on University Premises Policy (VPS-22). Service dogs are trained and certified and help members with visual or hearing impairments or motor or neurodevelopmental impairments.

### Facilities

The University is committed to working towards ensuring its facilities are as accessible as possible. To that end the University is committed to ensuring that new building projects are designed with an awareness of the needs and requirements of persons with disabilities. The University will continue to renovate existing facilities to achieve greater accessibility. The University complies with building codes and accessibility provisions therein and will endeavour to elevate accessibility standards when building or making changes to spaces.

### Procurement

The University will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities.

### Communication

The University shall provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. Additionally, the university will design and create websites that are accessible for people with disabilities and/or who use assistive technology, the whole in compliance with applicable standards and law.

### Education and Training:

Through training and dissemination of educational materials for students and employees, the University aims to identify, prevent, and minimize barriers within the university. The University will develop training and resources for members of the university specially focused on accessibility.

### Privacy and Confidentiality

Personal information concerning a member's disability will be held in the strictest of confidence and cannot be shared without prior consent of the individual and is managed in a manner that is

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consistent with applicable legislation. Personal information is shared confidentially with the internal units or persons who are responsible for processing or implementing an accommodation.

### **STUDENTS**

The University's commitment to providing equal educational opportunities to all students includes students with disabilities. To demonstrate full respect for the academic capacities and potential of students with disabilities, the University seeks to remove barriers that may hinder or prevent qualified students with disabilities from participating fully in University life.

#### **Prospective students**

Persons with disabilities will be given equal consideration for admission to any program offered by the university. Additionally, support can be provided in the application process

#### **Internships, work terms and other external student academic placements**

Students with disabilities performing internships, work terms (coop students) and other similar academic related external placement activities are supported by the university in their request for reasonable accommodation.

#### **Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD)**

Accommodation for students creates an accessible learning environment that enables them to meet the academic requirements of university courses, programs, and to participate in university activities.

The ACSD provides support services and reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. The ACSD coordinates services, supports students with self-advocacy, and collaborates with instructors on the implementation of academic and classroom accommodations. Students have the responsibility to register with the ACSD, provide the required documentation regarding their disability and/or needs for accommodation and keep the ACSD up to date on any changes to their situation.

#### **Instructors and Academic Staff**

Instructors and academic staff are responsible for collaborating with the ACSD. The ACSD notifies the relevant instructor and/or department of the need to provide accommodation and instructors, advisors, and program directors are responsible for implementing the accommodations with the advice and support of the ACSD.

### **EMPLOYEES**

The University is committed to facilitating the prevention, identification and/or removal of barriers to participation by employees with disabilities. Decisions made with respect to

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employees who require workplace accommodation will be made taking into consideration the employee's situation and the requirements of the position, as determined by the university.

### **Human Resources (HR)**

HR coordinates services, supports employees with self-advocacy, and collaborates with internal and external partners as appropriate such as Employee and Labor Relations, Environmental Health and Safety, Disability Management Services, Office of the Provost, Facilities, Unions and health care professionals. HR ensures that recruiting and hiring are conducted in accordance with university policies, procedures, and collective agreements and advises applicants and employees of the same, including the mechanisms available to them for pursuing solutions.

- The procedures for employee accommodation can be found [here](#)\*. (\*Procedures for student accommodation and employee accommodation are under development)

### **Managers and Supervisors**

Managers and supervisors are responsible for collaborating with HR and the employee to implement the accommodation.

### **Policy Review**

The overall responsibility for implementation and making amendments to the policy shall rest with XXXX.

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### APPENDICES:

#### Appendix 1: Procedures\*

(\*This section is currently under development).

- i. Procedures on accommodation for students with disabilities.
- ii. Procedures on accommodation for university employees and job applicants with disabilities.
- iii. Procedures to report a Facility accessibility concern.

#### Appendix 2: Support Services

Access Centre for Students with Disabilities	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/students/accessibility.html">https://www.concordia.ca/students/accessibility.html</a>
Birks Student Services Centre	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/students/birks.html">https://www.concordia.ca/students/birks.html</a>
Campus Wellness and Support Services	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/health.html">https://www.concordia.ca/health.html</a>
Campus Security	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/campus-life/security.html">https://www.concordia.ca/campus-life/security.html</a>
Centre for Teaching and Learning (responsible for training of Faculty)	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/ctl.html?utm_source=redirect&amp;utm_campaign=ctl">https://www.concordia.ca/ctl.html?utm_source=redirect&amp;utm_campaign=ctl</a>
Counselling & Psychological Services	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/health/mental/counselling.html">https://www.concordia.ca/health/mental/counselling.html</a>
Disability Management Services (DMS)	<a href="mailto:medicalabsence@concordia.ca">medicalabsence@concordia.ca</a>
Employee & Labour Relations	<a href="#">Employee &amp; labour relations (concordia.ca)</a>
Environmental Health & Safety	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/campus-life/safety.html">https://www.concordia.ca/campus-life/safety.html</a>
Exams Office	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/students/exams.html">https://www.concordia.ca/students/exams.html</a>
Facilities Management	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/offices/facilities.html">https://www.concordia.ca/offices/facilities.html</a>
Human Resources	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/hr.html">https://www.concordia.ca/hr.html</a>
Instructional & Information Technology Services (IITS)	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/offices/iits.html">https://www.concordia.ca/offices/iits.html</a>
Mental health and wellness	<a href="#">Mental health and wellness (concordia.ca)</a>

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Office of Rights and Responsibilities	<a href="http://www.concordia.ca/conduct/behavioural-integrity.html">http://www.concordia.ca/conduct/behavioural-integrity.html</a>
Ombuds Office	<a href="#">Ombuds Office (concordia.ca)</a>
Sexual Assault Resource Center (SARC)	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/conduct/sexual-assault.html?utm_source=vanity&amp;utm_campaign=sarc">https://www.concordia.ca/conduct/sexual-assault.html?utm_source=vanity&amp;utm_campaign=sarc</a>
Student Services	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/students/your-services.html">https://www.concordia.ca/students/your-services.html</a>
Student Success Centre	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/students/success.html">https://www.concordia.ca/students/success.html</a>

### Appendix 3: Resources

ACSD Exam FAQs for students	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/students/accessibility/register.html#faq">https://www.concordia.ca/students/accessibility/register.html#faq</a>
ACSD How to register with our services	<a href="#">How to register (concordia.ca)</a>
Campus Map – SGW Campus Map - Loyola	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/maps/sgw-campus.html">https://www.concordia.ca/maps/sgw-campus.html</a> <a href="https://www.concordia.ca/maps/loyola-campus.html">https://www.concordia.ca/maps/loyola-campus.html</a>
Concordia Shuttle Bus	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/maps/shuttle-bus.html">https://www.concordia.ca/maps/shuttle-bus.html</a>
Enable Montreal: Inclusive Innovation Guide – key considerations for making social innovation activities more accessible.	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/offices/oce/docs/core-docs/T19-54791-OOCE-Inclusive-Innovation-Guide-design-Enable-Mtl_EN_V7-Final-web%20(2).pdf">https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/offices/oce/docs/core-docs/T19-54791-OOCE-Inclusive-Innovation-Guide-design-Enable-Mtl_EN_V7-Final-web%20(2).pdf</a>
Hospitality Services – planning an event on campus	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/hospitality.html">https://www.concordia.ca/hospitality.html</a>
Policy concerning the protection of personal information – SG-9	<a href="#">SG-9.pdf (concordia.ca)</a>
Policy on animals on university premises – VPS-22	<a href="#">VPS-22.pdf (concordia.ca)</a>
Web content accessibility guidelines	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/web/accessibility.html">https://www.concordia.ca/web/accessibility.html</a>



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### Appendix 4: Legislation and existing guidelines and processes

Accessible Canada Act (S.C. 2019, c 10)	<a href="https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-0.6/">https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-0.6/</a>
Act Respecting the Protection of Personal Information in the Private Sector	<a href="http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/showdoc/cs/P-39.1">http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/showdoc/cs/P-39.1</a>
Employment Equity (Canada)	<a href="https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/e-5.401/">https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/e-5.401/</a>
Code of Rights and Responsibilities – BD-3	<a href="https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/common/docs/policies/official-policies/BD-3.pdf">https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/common/docs/policies/official-policies/BD-3.pdf</a>
Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms	<a href="http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/showdoc/cs/c-12">http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/showdoc/cs/c-12</a>