

# Guidance Counsellors: Modified Admissions

Advocacy  
Documentation  
Accommodations

Friday, June 7<sup>th</sup> , 2013



# Across the System

- Modified admission consideration available at many universities and colleges
- Services available at all Colleges and Universities
- Students should choose a university that is the best for them
  - program, lifestyle, support services

# Context - Vocabulary



- Differences between HS and post-secondary
- Modification stops after the admission process – accommodation continues



# Modified Admission is an Open Inclusive Process



- Available to ALL students
- Includes those with disabilities

# Differences Between High School and Post-Secondary



Language

Location – Centralization vs Decentralized Services

Disclosure

# Language



- Students are identified as have a specific type of disability as opposed to a “learning challenge” with various strengths
  - We work within a legal framework of the Human Rights Code and so it is important to use words like “disabilities” with its associated rights to supports
- Accommodations are provided at the university level – which provide equal access – not success

# Centralization/Decentralization



- Disability offices are the ones who support the determining and administration of accommodations and support – which students then communicate to individual professors
- Disability offices do not relay this information to faculty and staff

- Affiliation with disability services is confidential and so there is nothing on university transcripts, course lists, etc. that flag a student as registered





## Learning Disability Services

- 1264 students



Physical, Medical, Sensory  
Disabilities (Physical  
Disabilities)- 850

Students with Mental Health  
Disabilities – 1000 (and rising)

Over the last 5 years, most disability categories have grown, but “Invisible” disabilities have grown the most



**Disability Category as a Proportion of Total Number of University Students with Disabilities**

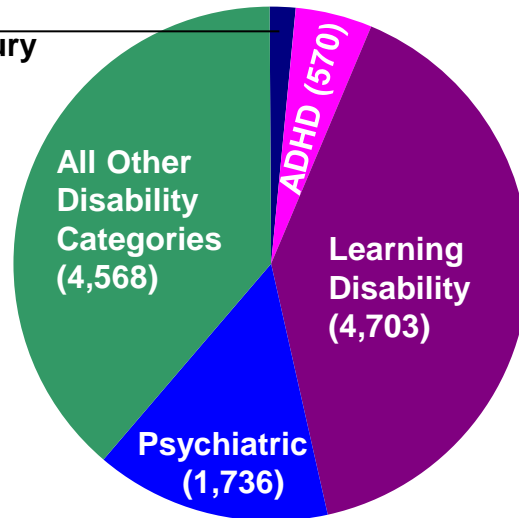
**2003-2004**

Students with “Invisible” Disabilities: 7,190  
 Students in All Other Disability Categories: 4,568  
 Total University Students with disabilities: **11,758**

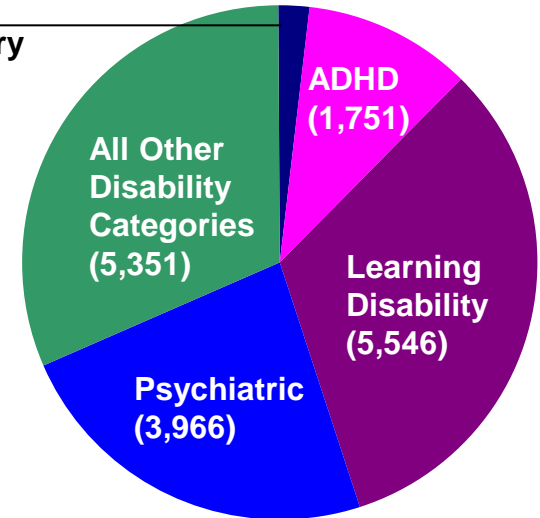
**2007-2008**

Students with “Invisible” Disabilities: 11,611  
 Students in All Other Disability Categories: 5,351  
 Total University Students with disabilities: **16,962**

**Acquired  
 Brain Injury  
 (181)**



**Acquired  
 Brain Injury  
 (348)**



# Admission to Post-Secondary



- Different institutions have different admissions policies
- Type of documentation required/age might vary somewhat
- Disclosure of a LD is optional – though not recommended
- Access to services to optional



# Guiding Principles


York University actively encourages applications from students with disabilities.

The Admissions Committee selects academically qualified candidates for admission by examining each applicant's academic record and the relationship of any **extenuating circumstances.**



# York's Reputation

- First program to support students with Learning Disabilities in Ontario
- Great services, fair and respectful admission consideration



## What does “modified admission” mean?

Applicants must meet all minimum requirements:

- High School Diploma
- 6 grade 12 U or M courses
- all Faculty prerequisite courses

Grade requirements are given consideration



# Categories

Applicants with *diagnosed*:

- **Learning Disabilities**
- **Mental Health Disabilities**
- **Physical, Sensory & Medical Disabilities**

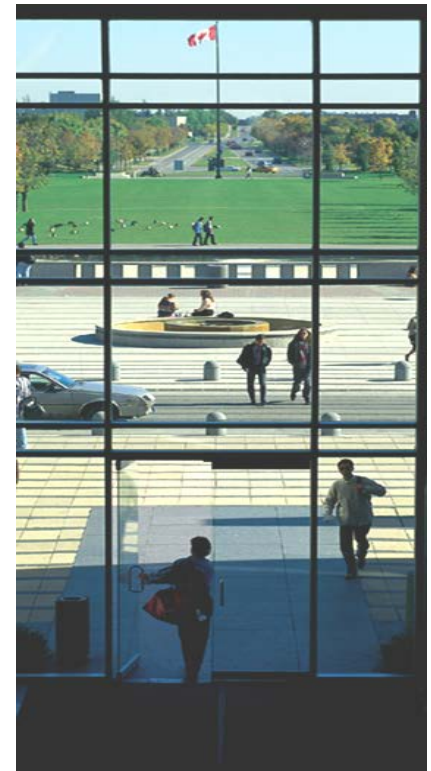
All applicants must present a **complete basis** of admission.





## Required documentation

- complete recent psychoeducational report **(3 years preferred, 5 years accepted)**
- Subtest scores (WAIS III)
- personal written statement (500 words)
- IPRC reports (if available)
- letter from Special Education Personnel or academic letters of recommendation
- transcripts and other admissions information



# How to Access Modified Admissions



Physically send/drop off all documentation to :

Special Admissions Office  
Bennett Centre for Student Services  
York University  
4700 Keele Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
M3J 1P3



## LD Admissions Process

### If admissible:

- receive the documents
- admit => forward information to support area
- send letter with important information and contact #s
- would never use the documentation to refuse an admissible applicant

### If below requirements:

- receive the documents
- if reasonably within range then forward information to LD experts
- recommendation: admit, refuse or interview
- conduct interview - detailed recommendation
- committee decision



Ontario high school applicants

March 1, 2013

Other applicants

April 1, 2013



# Accessing Accommodations



Contact the [Learning Disability Services](#) upon accepting offer for admission

Fill in on-line registration and ensure documentation arrives.

Check email for confirmation of appointment.

Familiarize self with website



# Transitional Issues in Accessing Accommodations



Students need to self-identify

- York will not automatically note that a student will be using or requesting accommodations.

Students are responsible to ensure that their documentation reaches the disability services office.

- admissions office does not always forward this information
- student usually needs to activate the file



Faculty are not automatically told which of their students have diagnosed learning disabilities

Student often need to disclose to their instructors  
– students need to become good self-advocates.

There is often a system in place for taking tests - students are responsible to know and follow the system.



# Possible Test/Exam Accommodations



\*\*\*\* Notes Regarding drawback to using service \*\*\*

Separate Room

Word Processor

Text to Speech software program or Reader (less common)

Voice Dictation or Scribe

Instructions/Directions Clarified (content is NOT clarified)

\*explanation of “oral” exams

# Possible Accommodations – In Class



- ? Note-taker ?
- ? Extensions on papers?
- ? Getting professor's notes ?
- ? Re-weighting of assignments?

Seating near the front

Tape recording lectures – requires permission

Enrolling in classes that use WebCT/Moodle



## Assistive Technology Lab

- Kurzweil (text to speech)
- Inspiration (mind mapping/visual organizer)
- Dragon Dictate (voice dictation)
- TextHelp (editing and writing tool)

## Peer Language Skills Tutoring

Group Workshops on Reading, Writing, Note-taking...

## Advisor System



# Possible Accommodations



## Self-Help spelling Aids

Use of authorized spelling list, list of formulas or other items that need to be memorized – WITH CONSENT OF PROFESSOR

No dictionaries unless approved in advance

Extra Time: Multiple Choice/Heavy Reading Component

Extra Time: Essay Questions/Heavy Writing Component

Extra Time: Mathematics

Use of a calculator for mathematically based subjects



Change in time allowed

Change in actual supports used

# Accommodations Not Generally Seen



Course substitutions (e.g., cannot take a Natural Science course/Statistics and therefore take another in its place)

Change in format – asking a professor to turn a multiple choice test into another format

Role of supplemental assignments

Role of re-weighting

“Oral” exams

## Other Support Services



Mentorship Groups

MHDS

LDS Career

Mentorship

Project ADVANCE

ASD Transition Day

Assistive Technology Lab

- 1:1 Training on  
technology

Group Workshops

Transcription Services

Government Funding -  
BSWD

# BSWD – Bursary for Students with Disabilities



- Need to be OSAP eligible
  
- BASED ON DOCUMENTATION
  
- Disability related expenses (not student expenses)
  - Tutoring
  - Counseling
  - Assessment
  - Technology
  
- “up to” \$10 000 annually



## Bottom Line



Regardless of how students with learning disabilities manage the requirements of university, they must be able to understand material, form opinions, and draw conclusions about printed information.

With few exceptions, students will be required to demonstrate their knowledge in written form.