



MEDICINE HAT
COLLEGE



Accessibility Services Student Handbook

2023-24 Academic Year

(Revised November 2023)

NOTE:

The material in this handbook can be obtained in large print format or in audio format by calling 403-504-3683.

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Welcome

Welcome to Accessibility Services at Medicine Hat College!

Our mission is to provide learning strategies, assistive technology, and accommodations based on the 'Duty to Accommodate' to help Medicine Hat College students with documented disabilities overcome barriers to educational success.

Students with a confirmed diagnosis of a permanent disability by a professional in the field of the disability may register with Accessibility Services. Students must provide documentation of their disability(s).

Disabilities accommodated at Medicine Hat College include:

- Acquired Brain Injury
- ADD/ADHD
- Chronic Medical/Systemic
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Learning Disability
- Low Vision, Blind
- Mobility/Functional
- Psychiatric
- Other

Services Provided by Disabilities Services:

- Planning for reasonable accommodations
- Advising regarding disability-related academic matters
- Assistance in accessing government funds for disability-related services or equipment
- Exam writing accommodations
 - Quiet or isolated setting
 - Extra time to write exams
 - Audio format of exams
 - Access to computer for written exams
- Advanced access to Power-Point presentations
- Ability to record lectures
- Academic Strategist support
- Assistive technology training and support
- Classroom accommodations
 - Please note that this is not an exhaustive list

Accessibility Services Staff

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403-529-3824

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Accessibility Services Assistant
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Roles and Responsibilities

While it is the responsibility of all members of the College community to ensure that the principles and spirit of this policy are upheld, there are some specific roles that should be detailed.

The Accessibility Services Coordinator will act as the primary contact for students with disabilities. The Coordinator will coordinate all policy-related and procedural issues. The Coordinator may also assist students who do not have disability-related documentation with finding an appropriate professional in the community to confirm a disability. The Coordinator will assist students with:

- Planning for reasonable accommodations
- Advising regarding disability-related academic matters

Program Coordinators, Deans and Instructors will act in accordance with the policy.

All College Staff and Community Members will be expected to respect the spirit and the letter of the policy.

Students with disabilities will act in accordance with the policy and are responsible to self-identify and to provide documentation confirming a disability if seeking accommodations and support.

Funding for Students with Disabilities

If you are funded through Canada Student Loans, you ***may*** be eligible to access Canada Student Grants for students with permanent disabilities.

The key is to APPLY EARLY! Starting this process two months prior to starting studies is highly recommended. Be aware of the steps you need to take and the documents you will be required to submit. The earlier you start this process, the better your chances of receiving your funding before you start school.

In addition to the available types of Post-Secondary funding, as a student with a permanent disability, you may be eligible to receive the following funding:

- **Canada Student Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities** up to \$2,800 per year (for education and living costs) and/or
- **Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Persons with Permanent Disabilities** (For disability related equipment and services) - up to \$20,000 per year.

To learn more about Grants for Students with a Permanent Disability, consult the following link:

<https://studentaid.alberta.ca/policy/student-aid-policy-manual/permanent-disability/grants-for-students-with-a-permanent-disability/>

- Please note that the above link is for students who are accessing an **Alberta Student Loan**. Students from all Canadian provinces are eligible to apply for these grants. Please check the Student Aid website for all other provinces to access the required documents.

A Schedule 4 is required to apply for the disability grants. This document is updated each academic year (usually in June). Ensure that the form indicates the 2023 – 24 academic year. Please consult the following link to access the eligibility requirements for these government grants.

<https://studentaid.alberta.ca/media/hcklrqbg/grant-post-secondary-students-disabilities-schedule4.pdf>

You may be required to submit a Disability Verification form

<https://studentaid.alberta.ca/media/mcyoagqc/disability-verification.pdf>

To obtain funding for disability-related accommodations, contact the Accessibility Services Coordinator at least 3 months in advance of the start of an academic semester.

Arranging for Accommodations

Registering with Accessibility Services

1. If you are a student with a disability, contact the Accessibility Services Coordinator via email at twatkins@mhc.ab.ca
2. Provide medical documentation, a Psycho-Educational Assessment, or other documentation of your disability(s) from a qualified professional confirming;
 - a diagnosis,
 - permanency of disability,
 - an explanation of how your disability(s) interfere with your learning
 - recommendations for academic supports.
3. Be aware of timelines for applying for **government grants** (approval can take up to 8 weeks).
4. Be aware of timelines for **alternate (audio) format of textbooks**. Students must purchase the hard copies of textbooks and provide our Assistive Technologist with the receipts before the audio version can be accessed from the publisher.
5. Be aware of timelines for **exam accommodations**. Students must schedule all quizzes and exams with the Accessibility Services Office according to the timeline on the exam scheduling chart found on page 10 of this handbook. Failure to do this **will result in the accommodation being denied for that exam.**
6. **Letters of Introduction (LOI)** will be emailed to your “mymhc” email account at the beginning of each semester. These letters outline what academic accommodations you have been approved for in the classroom. The most common being exam accommodations. For **each class**, students must:
 - a. Complete the required information at the top of the letter
 - b. Email the completed Letter of Introduction to EACH instructor and cc the Accessibility Services Assistant (Sharon Frederick) at sfrederick@mhc.ab.ca
 - c. A signed copy must be emailed to the Accessibility Services Assistant before exam accommodations can be accessed.
 - i. ***Email the Letters of Introduction to instructors within the first two weeks of the commencement of classes or within two weeks of receiving the accommodations for each class you are registered in.***

- ii. ***Instructors cannot follow through with exam accommodations until they receive and review the Letter of Introduction.***
- 7. **Meet with your instructors within the first two weeks** of classes during the instructor's office hours that are listed on the course outline. Introduce yourself, and discuss how your disability or condition affects your studies and the accommodation(s) that may be necessary.
- 8. **Activate your student email account. All correspondence from the Accessibility Services Office will occur via the Medicine Hat College student email account.** Notices, updates, requests, etc. will come from the Accessibility Services Office through your student email account.

Ongoing Arrangements

- Contact the Accessibility Services Coordinator when needed (at least once per academic semester). Sending an email to twatkins@mhc.ab.ca will result in the quickest response.
- As needed, contact the Accessibility Services Coordinator to discuss your progress as well as any revisions necessary in your current accommodations and supports.
- If you have arranged for academic accommodations, email the Letters of Introduction to each instructor within the first two weeks of the commencement of classes. Email a signed copy to the Accessibility Services Office.
- Contact the Accessibility Services Coordinator if you have any concerns or you are facing any barriers to your academic success.
- Students requesting accommodations midway through an academic term will be assisted on an individual basis, as resources permit.

Accommodations at Medicine Hat College

1. Exam Accommodations

Exam accommodations are individualized supports that must be supported by documentation. Exam accommodations may include:

- Isolated Separate and Private Location (limited)*
- Quiet Distraction Controlled Location*
- Extra time to write exams
- Audio format / reading and dictation software
- Access to computer

Students must schedule all quizzes and exams with the Accessibilities Services Office according to the timelines provided in the exam scheduling chart below. Students must complete and submit this exam scheduling for each quiz and exam. <https://forms.office.com/r/4YaX504htg>

Failure to do this **will result in the accommodation being denied for that exam.** Students who do not schedule tests according to the timelines indicated in the chart below will write in the classroom on the assigned date and time without accommodations.

Minimum booking times for exams

You must schedule with Accessibility Services AND notify your instructor by 4:00 pm on:	If you want to write a test on:
Wednesday	Monday
Thursday	Tuesday
Friday	Wednesday
Monday	Thursday
Tuesday	Friday
Wednesday	Saturday

Ensure that you email a Letter of Introduction for each course that has exams. The Accessibility Services Office must have these letters, electronically signed by the student, on file before any exams can be scheduled.

Scheduling in at the Accessibility Services Office for all the exams that are listed on the Course Outlines for the semester is encouraged. Booking the exams early ensures that you will have a space and that the exam will be ready for you. We receive numerous requests, and our spaces fill quickly. However, **you still must provide your instructors with advance notice for each exam, according to the exam scheduling chart found on page 10 of this handbook.**

Exams will take place in one of the testing centres on the 3rd floor of the B-wing. When you come to write your exam, you will need phot ID. All phones and electronic devices (such as smart watches, fitness trackers, etc), as well as hats, jackets and bulky clothing must be kept in one of the “cubbies.” We recommend not bringing these items to the testing centres.

Exams are written during the scheduled class time unless there is a conflict. For instance, students are not expected to miss other classes to access the extra time that has been approved. If this occurs, negotiate an alternate time to complete the exam with your instructor. The Accessibility Services office will not allow students to complete an exam at an alternate time without written permission from the instructor.

Please recognize that other institutions require a minimum of 3 - 7 business days’ notice for the exam accommodation process.

Separate and Private Location. Distraction Controlled Location. What’s the Difference?

The separate and private (isolated) locations for exams may be described as an enclosed room. Each room has a computer with assistive technologies, as well as lots of desk space for written exams. These rooms are equipped with a window in the door, and a camera in the room to ensure academic integrity and for ease of supervision of exams. Our centre has 9 separate and private (isolated) testing rooms. This accommodation is for students that require technologies that are located within our testing rooms and may cause distraction for others. Additionally, students that require a private location without distraction due to their condition and have supporting documentation, would be provided with this accommodation. ***Please note, that even with this accommodation, we may not always be able to provide a separate and private (isolated) location due to space constraints.*** In these cases, students may have to write in a distraction controlled location but will receive all other exam accommodations.

Our distraction controlled (quiet) locations are housed in the Academic Resource Centre. During midterm and final exams, other areas may be accessed as well. Typically, students will experience a smaller group of students than they would in the classroom. Another bonus is that the other students in the room are often not

writing the same exam. For many students, this relieves some anxiety in regard to people leaving early. Our distraction controlled (quiet) locations are supplied with ear plugs, cardboard barriers and students are spaced out throughout the room. This accommodation is provided to students that require less distraction, but do not necessarily require a private room.

2. Academic Coaching

Information on this service can be found by accessing the following link:

[Academic Coaching \(mhc.ab.ca\)](http://mhc.ab.ca/academic-coaching)

3. Tutoring

The accessibility tutoring service is available to students who are registered with Accessibility Services and need intensive and timely support. Our tutor can help students with a variety of courses and subjects, such as math, physics, humanities and trades. To schedule an appointment, please contact Jian Gao at 403-504-3653 or via email at jgao@mhc.ab.ca

4. Alternate Format of Materials

Students must provide receipts of their textbooks to the Assistive Technologist, Jian Gao. Jian will request a PDF of the textbook from the publisher on behalf of the student. Publishers under Copyright Law require official receipts of textbooks. Please contact Jian Gao at 403-504-3653 or via email at jgao@mhc.ab.ca

5. Assistive Technology Software

The Read and Write software is available to all students who are registered at Medicine Hat College. The software can be accessed and downloaded by clicking on the following link: [Accessibility & Tutoring Services \(mhc.ab.ca\)](http://mhc.ab.ca/accessibility-tutoring-services)

6. Classroom Support

Some students with disabilities require in-class aides. This may mean the use of assistive devices (ex. recorder, fm system), or the use of an interpreter, etc.

- Please note that if the disability-related documentation that you provide recommends that you **record lectures**, students **must sign a recording agreement** before this accommodation can be accessed.
- The recording agreement must be provided to the instructor of each class that you wish to record at the beginning of each semester.
- The recording agreement must be signed by the student and the instructor and must be returned to the Accessibility Services Office.

The Accessibility Services Coordinator and the instructor work together with the student to coordinate classroom support.

Accessible Facilities

MHC is widely accessible to students with physical disabilities and is continuously working towards removing any barriers that are identified. The following is a list of some of the accessibility features on campus:

Cafeteria

- Accessible through cashier area

Chair Lift

- Located inside G-wing door, closest to East parking lot, it provides access to gymnasium, and requires assistance of equipment room staff

Doors

- Several automated entrance doors, including main entrance

Computer labs

- Several accessible computer labs on campus

Elevators

- Three elevators for student use

Accessible Parking

- Located near main entrances in several locations
- Located in East, North and South lots



Lockers

- May be adapted to suit physical accessibility needs upon request through see Students' Association

Student Residence

- Three units customized (and adaptable) for students with mobility impairments or sensory impairments (total of seven beds available)

Washroom facilities

- Accessible washrooms available in several locations

Courtesy Phone with Volume Control

- Located in L wing hallway

Pay Phone with Volume Control

- Located across from Crave

Other Services/Contacts on Campus

Academic Resource Centre (3rd Floor, B-wing)

- Tutoring
- Peer tutoring
- Exam proctoring
- Isolated room for exams

Student Services (Main Floor C-wing, Academic Advising Desk)

- Academic advising
- Personal counselling
- Career counselling
- Writing support

Appendices

The following letters and information forms are updated on a continual basis, therefore some differences may exist between the forms included in this student handout and the forms you receive from the Accessibility Services Office.

Appendix A - Checklist



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ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES CHECK LIST

When applying to Medicine Hat College/before your first semester:

4months before classes begin:

- ❑ Contact an Academic Advisor in Student Services to obtain assistance with program planning and course selection
- ❑ Contact the Accessibility Services Coordinator via email at twatkins@mhc.ab.ca
- ❑ Provide medical documentation, a Psych-Educational Assessment, or other documentation of your disability(s) from a qualified professional. Documentation must include an explanation of how the disability interferes with your studies (i.e. concentration, memory, ability to pay attention, etc.) as well as recommendations of academic accommodations or supports to assist you in your studies. These include:
 - Academic Strategies
 - Assistive Technologies
 - Alternative format of textbooks
 - Exam Accommodations (i.e. extra time, isolated setting, computer)
 - Exam in audio format
 - Tutoring
 - Advanced access to power-point presentations
 - Ability to record lectures
 - Other
- ❑ Participate in the process of determining reasonable and appropriate accommodations for your program of study
- ❑ Sign a “Student Information Request” form so that the Accessibility Services Coordinator can communicate with the appropriate personnel to set up your services
- ❑ Complete documentation for Canada Study Grant funding as recommended by the Accessibility Services Coordinator. Considerations for this funding is only available to students who apply for an Alberta Student loan. All other provinces have this funding as well.
- ❑ Begin Alternate Format of printed materials before semester begins. You are responsible for confirming your textbooks with your instructor and purchasing them at the bookstore.

In the first two weeks of the semester:

- If academic accommodations have been approved for you by the Accessibility Services Coordinator, follow these steps:
 - Access the Letters of Introduction from the “mymhc” email account. The letters will be sent by the Accessibility Services Assistant, Sharon Frederick.
 - Email the Letters of Introduction to each of your instructors
 - After discussing the requested accommodations with them, the letters must be signed by the student.
 - Email the signed forms to the Accessibility Services Office as soon as possible. ***Exam accommodations cannot be accessed until these signed forms are returned.***

Ongoing Arrangements

- Contact the Accessibility Services Coordinator when needed (at least once per academic semester). Sending an email to twatkins@mhc.ab.ca will result in the quickest response.
- As needed, contact the Accessibility Services Coordinator to discuss your progress as well as any revisions necessary in your current accommodations and supports.
- If you have arranged for academic accommodations, email the Letters of Introduction to each instructor within the first two weeks of the commencement of classes. Email a signed copy to the Accessibility Services Office.
- Contact the Accessibility Services Coordinator if you have any concerns or you are facing any barriers to your academic success.
- Students requesting accommodations midway through an academic term will be assisted on an individual basis, as resources permit.



MEDICINE HAT COLLEGE

Accessibility Services Office

299 College Drive SE • Medicine Hat • Alberta • T1A 3Y6
Telephone: 403-529-3824 or 403- 529-4865 • Fax: 403-504-3680

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Today's Date

Semester: Click or tap here to enter text.

Instructor: Click or tap here to enter text.

Course: Click or tap here to enter text.

Section: Click or tap here to enter text.

This is to confirm that **Student name** ID **ID number**
is registered with the Accessibility Services Office at Medicine Hat College.

The *Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act* establishes a duty to accommodate persons with disabilities. Guided by the mandate of the Medicine Hat College's *Policy for Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities* the Accessibility Services Office provides academic accommodations to assist students with disabilities in achieving their academic goals. We offer to act as a liaison between students and instructors regarding accommodations.

The required disability-related documentation provided by the student recommends specific academic accommodations identified below, in accordance with his/her distinct needs and in a manner consistent with academic principles.

Accommodations required for this student are:

- Digital recorder/Advance access to power points
- Exam Accommodations¹

¹ Exam Accommodations

Students are responsible to email instructors with their request to use the approved exam accommodations prior to each exam according to the timelines on the exam scheduling chart on page 2 of this letter.

- Time and a half for exams
- Double time for exams
- Exams in an isolated setting
- Exams in a quiet setting
- Dictation software
- Alternate format (e.g., large print)
- Audio version of exam/Reading software to hear exam, please contact Jian Gao at JGao@mhc.ab.ca.

Students must complete and submit the exam scheduling form for each exam.

***The link to access this form can be found in the email with the subject title, "Letter of Introduction," from the accessibility@mhc.ab.ca email address.

If students do not schedule the test/exam according to the timelines indicated in the chart below, they will write in the classroom on the assigned date and time without accommodations.

Minimum booking times for exams

You must schedule with Accessibility Services AND notify your instructor by 4:00 pm on:	If you want to write a test on:
Wednesday	Monday
Thursday	Tuesday
Friday	Wednesday
Monday	Thursday
Tuesday	Friday
Wednesday	Saturday

Instructors

A hard copy of the exam must be sent to the Academic Resources Centre (third floor of the B wing) unless the exam is online. The student has been asked to speak to you about this request. If necessary, the student will discuss with you in greater detail their academic needs.

When possible, students will begin the exam at the same time as the class is scheduled. When a conflict occurs, arrangements will be made, in consultation with the instructor, for the student to write at an alternate time.

Thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Tara Watkins at 403-529-3824 or Sharon Frederick at 403-529-4865.

Sincerely,



Sharon Frederick for Tara Watkins
Accessibility Services Coordinator

Student: I acknowledge my responsibilities to receive my approved exam accommodations.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Click or tap to enter a date.

Student's Signature

Date