

## **Learner Accommodation Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

Bow Valley College strives to provide a respectful, inclusive, barrier-free learning environment and ensures fair and equitable access to programs and services to learners, while maintaining established academic and college standards.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to reflect the mission and values of Bow Valley College and the commitment to a learning environment free of discrimination in accordance with legislation and through communication of the shared responsibilities of the College and learners.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to learners and is to be followed by all learners, employees and representatives of the college. This policy applies to all campuses, course/program delivery modalities, activities, services and facilities and may include, but is not limited to:

- course work, including exams, course loads, practica and clinical placements
- campus services
- learner services
- physical facilities

### **Principal Objectives**

1. Accommodating learners is a shared responsibility and a collaborative process between learners and the Bow Valley College.
2. Learners are responsible to identify when they require accommodations on legally protected grounds through the processes established and maintained by the College.
3. The College has the responsibility to ensure that the Learner Accommodation Policy and Procedures are made available and accessible to learners and employees and are reviewed and maintained in accordance with policy review timelines as well as changes in legislation.
4. Accommodations may be provided:
  - on an individual or group basis, or
  - through the use of universal design/universal learning design principles.
5. Accommodation does not require lowering academic or non-academic standards and does not relieve the learner of the responsibility to develop the essential skills and competencies expected of all learners.
6. The College maintains the right to review or rescind accommodations where there may be evidence that the accommodation is not appropriate or where there is an undue hardship to the College.
7. Learner privacy is protected throughout the process of accommodation in accordance with applicable policy and legislation.
8. While reasonable efforts will be made to grant a timely response for requests for accommodation under protected grounds, accommodation is not an absolute right and must be balanced with the rights

of others. The College will not normally consider a form of accommodation that would cause undue hardship, seriously disadvantage others, compromise safety or interfere with the College's ability to fulfill its obligations to other learners

9. Learners may appeal accommodation decisions through the Learner Appeals Policy.

## **Compliance**

Employees, contractors, and learners are responsible for knowing, understanding, and complying with Bow Valley College policies, procedures, and any other attached documentation that relate to their position, employment, or enrolment at the College.

## **Definitions**

**Accommodation** is the process of making alterations to the delivery of services so that those services become accessible to more people, including persons with disabilities. They can be provided to individuals, groups or provided through universal design practices. Examples of accommodations include but are not restricted to:

- Absence from a class, lab, or other instructional/course activity
- Alternative demonstration of admissions requirement
- Appropriate furniture
- Assistive technology
- Automatic doors
- Braille indicators on doors, elevators, stairwells
- Communication Access Real-Time (CART) or other transcription
- Deaf Interpreter
- Exam accommodations
- Extra time on tests or assignments
- Intervenors
- Modified course load
- Note Takers
- Oral interpreters
- Readers
- Religious clothing/attire/objects
- Scribes
- Service animals
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Universal design/universal learning design
- Use of preferred name

**Employees** A person who is currently employed by the College, hired to perform services.

**Learners** A person who is currently registered as a learner at the College whether or not for credit. For the purposes of this document, "learner" shall be used synonymously for applicants, and learners, unless otherwise noted.

**Legally protected grounds** refer to Alberta human rights legislation that prohibits discrimination in the provision of goods, services, accommodation or facilities customarily available to the public on the basis of specifically articulated protected grounds. Refer to Alberta human rights legislation for the list of legally protected grounds.

**Privacy:** According to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the College has a legal obligation to maintain confidential records regarding accommodations for learners unless: 1) the learner gives written consent to release specific information 2) there is danger of imminent harm to oneself or others 3) the information is ordered released by the Courts or a law enforcement agency. When a learner gives consent for information to be disclosed, it must be disclosed for the purposes to which the learner agrees.

**Representatives of the College** include employees, as well as advisory or other committee members, or members of the Board of Governors.

**Standards** are established rules and practices that determine how to run the College, including policies, procedures, and management of facilities; and control the way services, programs, and courses are provided. Examples include but are not limited to: facility standards such as lighting, flooring, furniture and academic standards such as evaluations, examinations, pass/fail standards, admission and graduation requirements

**Undue hardship** occurs if accommodation would create onerous conditions for an employer or service provider. Examples include compromising safety standards, or failing to meet established necessary requirements and essential elements of a course or program.

**Universal Design** involves designing products, spaces, activities and services so that they can be accessed by the as many people as possible, thereby minimizing the need for individual accommodation. Universal design has been established for facility/building design and has also been extended to the learning design environment.

**DATA SHEET**

**Accountable Officer**

The Vice-President, Learner and College Services, is responsible for the policy oversight, and compliance.

**Responsible Officer**

The Director, Learner Success Services is responsible for the content development and implementation of the policy. This officer would be considered policy owner for purposes of operationalizing the policy. Questions regarding this policy should be addressed to the Responsible Officer.

**Approval**

See “Development Framework” for approvers of policy, procedures, and guidelines.

**Contact Area**

Learner Success Services

**Relevant Dates**

<b>Approved</b>	<b>January 27, 2016</b>
<b>Effective</b>	<b>May 1, 2016</b>
<b>Next Review</b>	<b>January 2021</b>
<b>Modification History</b>	<b>Policy name change from “Academic Accommodations and Supports for Learners with Disabilities” to “Learner Accommodation” – Academic Council January 14, 2016, BOG January 27, 2016</b>

**Associated Policy (ies)**

Policies, listed in alphabetical order, that are associated to this policy and that a reader of this policy should be aware of:

- Academic Continuance and Graduation Policy #500-1-5
- Admissions Policy #500-1-2
- Code of Conduct – Learner#500-1-1
- Code of Conduct Employee #200-1-1
- Distributed Learning Policy #500-2-7
- Distributed Learning Procedure #500-2-7
- Grading Policy #500-1-6
- Information Security Policy #300-2-11
- Information Management Policy #300-2-9
- Learner Records & Information - Collection, Access & Waivers #200-1-9
- Learner Appeals #500-1-2
- Privacy and Access Policy #300-2-10
- Protected Disclosure #200-1-6

**Directly Related Procedure(s)**

Accommodations for Learners with Disabilities Procedure#500-1-4

Accommodation of Religious, Aboriginal and Spiritual Observance for Learners Procedure #500-1-4

**Directly Related Guideline(s) (if any)**

**Related Legislation**

*Alberta Human Rights Act*

*Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*

*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

*Health Information Act*

**Attachments (Optional)**