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## Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Policy No.:	4501
Category:	Student Services
Approving Body:	Education Council, Board of Governors
Executive Division:	Student Services
Department Responsible:	Student Services
Current Approved Date:	2005 Feb 01

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### Policy Statement

BCIT provides reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities, including reasonable educational, technological, and physical accommodation, in order to assist them in accessing BCIT services, programs, and facilities.

### Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- establish a process by which students with disabilities may request accommodation
- establish principles to guide BCIT in providing reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities
- outline the duties and responsibilities of BCIT personnel in providing reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities

This Policy applies to requests for accommodation for a disability made by students of BCIT in relation to services, programs, or facilities provided or made available to them by BCIT in their capacity as students.

This Policy also applies to requests for accommodation for a disability made by prospective students. For that purpose, every reference in the Policy (including related Procedure 4501-PR1) to a "student" or "students" should be considered to apply to a prospective student or students, as the context may require.

For greater certainty, this Policy does not apply to requests for accommodation by anyone who

- A. is not a student or a prospective student, or
- B. seeks accommodation in relation to employment or prospective employment with BCIT.

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### Application of This Policy

This Policy applies to students and prospective students with disabilities, and to BCIT administrators, faculty, instructors, and staff.

### Related Documents and Legislation

BCIT Policies:  
 5003, Admissions  
 5101, Student Regulations  
 6700, BCIT Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP)

*Human Rights Code* of British Columbia

### Definitions

**Student:** an individual enrolled in a BCIT course or program.

**Prospective student:** an individual who is not a student who

- A. applies for admission to BCIT,
- B. writes a test or examination offered or administered by BCIT, or
- C. meets with a vocational rehabilitation specialist or learning specialist at BCIT's Disability Resource Centre (DRC), in relation to admission to or attendance at BCIT.

**Disability:** a significant and persistent physical, mental, or learning impairment which results in a student experiencing functional restrictions on or limitations in the ability to

- A. receive instruction in the way or ways it is usually presented or provided,
- B. access or use instructional materials in the manner they are usually presented or provided,

- C. demonstrate knowledge or skills in the manner they are usually evaluated, or
- D. access BCIT facilities.

**Accommodation:** An accommodation could potentially involve one or more of the following measures designed to meet the particular needs of a student who has sought accommodation for a disability:

- A. adaptation to or modification of the manner of instruction or presentation of materials in a BCIT course or program;
- B. adaptation to or modification of the manner of evaluation or examination in a BCIT course or program, or a test or examination offered or administered by BCIT;
- C. provision of support services, such as sign language or oral interpreters, electronic note takers, taped lectures, alternate format textbooks, adaptive technology such as large print programs or print-to-voice scanners, or customized examination formats;
- D. relocation of classes or other services provided by BCIT, or, if reasonable in the circumstances, alteration of the physical environment on a BCIT campus;
- E. other reasonable measures consistent with this Policy.

## Requests for Accommodation

A student with a disability is not required to disclose the disability to BCIT (unless, because of the nature of the activities engaged in by participants in a particular course or program, disclosure would reasonably be required to avoid jeopardizing the health or safety of anyone).

But, a student seeking accommodation under this Policy must make a request to the Disability Resource Centre (DRC) for accommodation in accordance with the procedures described in Procedure 4501-PR1, Requests for Accommodation (the "Procedure"). The request must be supported by current and sufficiently detailed documentation, as set out below.

### 1. Required Documentation

Students requesting accommodation are expected to provide current and sufficiently detailed documentation and information to the DRC, which must confirm the nature, severity, and prognosis of their disability, and its functional impact in BCIT's learning environment.

Documentation and information should be provided from a physician, psychologist, audiologist, occupational therapist, or other qualified clinician with appropriate training, experience, and expertise, as determined by the DRC. In general, such documentation and information should not be more than three years old, and should include the documentation and information specified above (including any relevant diagnosis of a disability, and information about its prognosis and functional impact), and any other documentation or information requested by the DRC.

A diagnosis of disability, in and of itself, is usually insufficient to support a request for accommodation, and should be accompanied by the additional documentation and information specified above. Similarly, an unsupported recommendation from a physician or other clinician that accommodation be provided to a student is usually insufficient to support a request for accommodation—a recommendation should be accompanied by other supporting documentation and information, which will be individually and independently assessed by the DRC.

It should also be noted that evidence of a previous accommodation by BCIT is usually insufficient to support a request for a current or future accommodation, as each request will be individually and independently assessed on the basis of current information and documentation.

The student is responsible for

- A. obtaining documentation and providing information in support of an accommodation request, including any documentation and information requested by the DRC,
- B. providing any consent required by a third party, so as to permit the disclosure of such documentation and information to the DRC, and
- C. bearing the cost of obtaining and providing such documentation and information to the DRC.

### **Assessment of Request**

Once the DRC is satisfied a student has provided sufficient supporting documentation and information, the DRC will consult with the student, and (as provided in Part 3 of the Procedure) the applicable Associate Dean, to identify the types of accommodation which would be reasonable. This consultation will take into account the functional impact of the student's disability and the student's particular needs, as well as the educational standards and core requirements of the applicable course or program.

The DRC will consider what, if any, form of accommodation to recommend, having regard to all relevant circumstances, with reference to the following guiding principles:

- A. accommodation must be reasonable, with reference to the nature and functional impact of the student's disability, the student's particular needs, and the time required to respond to the student's request and/or implement the accommodation;
- B. accommodation must not pose a risk to the health or safety of anyone;
- C. accommodation must not impose an unreasonable cost on BCIT, or otherwise unreasonably affect BCIT's operations or its ability to provide educational services to its students;
- D. a student who is given accommodation should meet the same or functionally equivalent admission requirements and course prerequisites as other students;
- E. a student who is given accommodation should be able to demonstrate acquisition and mastery of the body of knowledge or skills ordinarily required for passing a course and/or completing a program;
- F. accommodation provided by BCIT must be consistent with any applicable requirements established by third parties with which BCIT is required to comply, except where a third party has approved an exception from or change to such a requirement;
- G. as each individual student's circumstances are unique, reasonable forms of accommodation may be different for different students.

Based on the foregoing assessment, the DRC may

- A. prepare an Individual Accommodation Plan outlining the recommended accommodation, which could also require the student to provide updated documentation or information on an ongoing or periodic basis, and/or require ongoing or periodic assessment and monitoring of the student's needs and academic progress,
- B. take other appropriate steps to provide or facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodation to the student without establishing an Individual Accommodation Plan, where the DRC considers it appropriate and feasible to do so, or

- C. if reasonable accommodation is not possible, recommend to the student alternative programs, courses, and educational opportunities.

An Individual Accommodation Plan takes effect once it has been agreed to by the student and the DRC, and the applicable Associate Dean has been informed about it. The Plan may later be modified by the DRC, in consultation with the student, and, as provided in the Procedure, the applicable Associate Dean.

### **Review of Assessment**

A student may, in a timely manner (as set out in the Procedure), ask the Director of Student Services (the "Director") to review the DRC's assessment of the student's request for accommodation, including any recommendations made or other steps taken by the DRC in response to the request.

After considering the student's request in accordance with the Procedure, the Director may

- A. confirm the DRC's assessment, or
- B. recommend that the DRC reconsider and/or make changes to its assessment.

### **Review of Implementation**

A student may, in a timely manner (as set out in the Procedure), ask the Director to review the implementation, by BCIT administrators, faculty, instructors, and staff, of the DRC's recommendations, based on its assessment of the student's request for accommodation (including a review of the implementation of the requirements of an Individual Accommodation Plan or other recommendations made by the DRC).

After considering the student's request in accordance with the Procedure, the Director may

- A. confirm that the DRC's recommendations have been or are being appropriately implemented, or
- B. recommend or direct, in consultation with the applicable Associate Dean, that the involved BCIT personnel take any action the Director considers necessary to implement the DRC's recommendations.

## **Requirements Established by Third Parties**

Certain BCIT programs are subject to requirements established by third parties over which BCIT has no control, including but not limited to requirements established by:

- A. the federal or provincial government;
- B. regulatory agencies with applicable jurisdiction over BCIT;
- C. industry partners providing placements for BCIT students within their workplaces;
- D. hospitals or other clinical agencies providing practicum sites for BCIT students;
- E. employers engaging BCIT to provide industry training to their employees;
- F. school districts providing industry training programs for secondary school students in partnership with BCIT;
- G. other post-secondary educational institutions offering programs jointly with BCIT.

A student seeking a form of accommodation involving an exception from such a requirement should make a request for accommodation directly to the third party involved. Where appropriate, the DRC may assist the student in making such a request.

A student who requests accommodation for a disability from a third party may also make a request to the DRC for accommodation, in accordance with this Policy, at the same time as, or at any time after, the request to the third party. In considering that request, the DRC:

- A. will consider what, if any, accommodation could reasonably be provided to the student by BCIT that would be consistent with the requirements established by the third party,
- B. may consult with the third party about coordinating any accommodation which may be provided to the student by the third party and/or BCIT, and
- C. may defer making any recommendation about what, if any, accommodation could reasonably be provided by BCIT until after the third party has made a decision on the student's request for accommodation.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

The provision of reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities requires cooperation and collaboration among students, administrators, faculty, instructors, and staff, and involves certain mutual responsibilities.

To facilitate accommodation, BCIT has established the DRC for the purpose of coordinating the resources required to accommodate students with disabilities, in accordance with this Policy.

### **Students**

A student who seeks accommodation for a disability is required to comply with this Policy and the procedures established under it. In particular, the student must:

- A. make their request for accommodation to the DRC in a timely manner;
- B. provide current supporting documentation and information to the DRC, as described in this Policy, including any documentation or information requested by the DRC, and bear the cost of obtaining and providing such documentation and information;
- C. provide any consent required by a third party, so as to permit the disclosure of documentation and information to the DRC, as described in this Policy, including any documentation and information requested by the DRC;
- D. sign and comply with a disclosure agreement, as described in the Procedure;
- E. if appropriate, receive or be receiving appropriate treatment for, or remediation of, the disability for which the student seeks accommodation (e.g., wearing prescribed eyeglasses or hearing aids) in order to minimize the functional impact of the disability in BCIT's learning environment;
- F. cooperate with the DRC, so it can properly assess the student's request for accommodation and identify the form(s) of accommodation, if any, that would be reasonable in the circumstances;
- G. cooperate with BCIT administrators, faculty, instructors, and staff in implementing any Individual Accommodation Plan established in accordance with this Policy, including complying with any requirements or conditions in the Plan (subject to the student's ability to request a review under the Policy (Requests for Accommodation - Parts 3 and 4).

### **BCIT Administrators, Faculty, Instructors, and Staff**

BCIT administrators, faculty, instructors, and staff are responsible for complying with BCIT's responsibilities under this Policy, including:

- A. providing reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities, including reasonable educational, technological, and physical accommodation, in accordance with this Policy;

## Duties and Responsibilities

- B. informing any student who claims to have a disability, or requests accommodation for a disability, about this Policy and the DRC;
- C. assisting the DRC in its assessment of a student's request for accommodation, including providing any information requested by the DRC (with the student's consent where required);
- D. complying with any disclosure agreement entered into between a student and BCIT under the Procedure;
- E. keeping confidential any personal information provided by a student in connection with an accommodation request, except
  1. as provided in the disclosure agreement,
  2. as provided in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* of British Columbia, and/or
  3. as the student may otherwise agree;
- F. facilitating the implementation of any Individual Accommodation Plan prepared and approved in accordance with this Policy, including observing the requirements of the Plan;
- G. complying with any recommendations or directions made by the Director after he or she conducts a review under Part 3 or 4 of this Policy.

## Procedures Associated With This Policy

Procedure 4501-PR1, Requests for Accommodation

## Forms Associated With This Policy

See Procedure 5401-PR1 for list of forms.

## Special Situations

None

## Amendment History

1. Created 1993 Nov 30
2. Revision 1 1997 Jan 08
3. Revision 2 2005 Feb 01
4. Revision 3 (template only) 2009 Feb 01

## Scheduled Review Date

2012 Feb 01