



**BRITISH COLUMBIA POST-SECONDARY COMPUTER-AIDED NOTE-TAKING  
Guidelines/Terms of Reference (May 2014)**

The following are Guidelines for the provision of computer-aided note-taking services at Post-Secondary institutions in British Columbia. This document is meant to facilitate an on-going dialogue of collaborative decision-making between students, note-takers and institutional Disability Services. Post-Secondary Communication Access Services is available for consultation on issues connected to hearing loss and service provision.

\*\*\* "Computer-aided note-taker" refers to individuals who are hired to take notes using a computer for a student with a hearing loss. Typically computer-aided note-takers are used when transcribers and real-time captioners are not available. Computer-aided note-takers provide a concise summary of the classroom lecture, discussion, meeting or event, in a style which matches the student's preference for point form, summary or a more comprehensive style. Computer-aided note-taking service is not comparable to Typewell transcription or real-time captioning service.

**A) Students' Responsibilities**

Post-Secondary institutions agree that the following are the responsibilities of a student in relation to computer-aided note-taking services.

Eligibility Criteria:

Eligibility for note-taking services is governed by individual Post-Secondary policies. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the policies of the institution they plan to attend and for complying with any procedural rules set out by those institutions. In addition, to be eligible for the provision of note-taking services at Post-Secondary institutions, a student must:

- Provide documentation that, at a minimum, demonstrates the need for note-taking services based on the level/degree of hearing loss.
- Be registered at a public Post-Secondary institution.
- Demonstrate sufficient literacy to benefit from note-taking.



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A student who does not provide the necessary information required by an institution in a timely manner may risk a delay in the provision of services.

Establishment of Services:

To facilitate service provision, the student should:

- Meet with Disability Services to discuss note-taking requirements two months in advance of class start date(s).
- Meet deadlines for priority registration, if available.
- Notify Disability Services of program, schedule and anticipated service needs at the time of admission to help ensure an appropriately qualified note-taker will be available.
- Notify Disability Services of any changes to his/her schedule.
- Introduce himself or herself to the instructor and review the services which will be required.
- Discuss communication preferences with the note-taker.
- Notify Disability Services if service is not meeting his/her needs.
- Request note-taking services through Disability Services for out-of-class activities such as meetings with instructors, group meetings, etc. indicating date, time, location and nature of activity. As much lead time as possible should be provided.

Class Preparation and Class Time

The student should also:

- At the beginning of the term establish an optimal way to maintain contact with the note-taker, including providing an email address for notes and a cell phone number for texting.
- Ensure that his/her email account has sufficient space for receiving transcripts.



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- Take responsibility for immediately notifying Disability Services and the note-taker about note receipt issues.
  - Advise the note-taker when notes are not understood, or are insufficient.
  - Ask the instructor to explain points from the lecture rather than requesting clarification regarding course content from the note-taker.
  - Provide Disability Services a list of required class texts and instructor contact information.
  - Ensure the note-taker has received the syllabus, and preparation material for class presentations, lectures and assignments.
  - Work with the note-taker and instructor on communication strategies for technical and other specialized language components.
  - Refrain from distributing or publishing any notes received from the note-taker.
  - Refrain from private conversations with the note-taker during service provision.

### Attendance

Service providers will begin note-taking upon the arrival of the student.

The student should:

- Contact the note-taker and Disability Services with as much notice as possible, preferably not less than 24 hours in advance, when she or he expects to be late, sick or unable to attend class, the class has been cancelled, or the room location has been changed. If the student has not notified the note-taker and does not attend class, the note-taker will wait for a student 15 minutes for a one-hour class and 30 minutes for a class longer than one hour.
- Meet with Disability Services to discuss service delivery if he or she has cancelled note-taking services without 24 hours notice two or more times in accordance with institute, department or program policies.



- Contact Disability Services immediately before deciding to withdraw from a course or no longer attending a course for which note-taking services were being provided.

#### Monitoring

The student needs to:

- Complete a feedback form on note-taking services when requested.
- Contact Disability Services when matters related to note-taking need resolution.

#### **B) Post-Secondary Institutions' Responsibilities**

Post-Secondary institutions agree that the following are their responsibilities in relation to computer-aided note-taking services.

#### Services:

Where such services are deemed warranted by Disability Services, and can be provided without undue hardship, institutions will make reasonable attempts to provide some level of note-taking services for:

- Classes: full-time, part-time and continuing education;
- Appointments on campus (related to educational programming);
- Labs and seminars;
- Exams, class related meetings (e.g., appointments with instructors, group project meetings);
- Special events at the college/institute which are sponsored by the institution;
- Institutionally-based services;
- Extra-curricular institutional activities as appropriate.

The level of note-taking services provided will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

#### Establishing Services:

- Inform students about note-taking services and their responsibilities.



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- Assess each assignment to determine the need for additional note-takers or other educational support services. This assessment will include consideration of physical demands, length and complexity of the assignment, etc. Discussion may occur with note-takers, instructors, students and others as necessary.
  - Reassess service provision should the conditions of the class assignment change (e.g., physical demands, length and complexity of the assignment).
  - Determine prep time with Disability Services, note-taker and student. Preparation time may vary significantly depending on the assignment, note-taker experience, etc.
  - Co-ordinate the payment of note-takers.

#### Note-takers:

- Provide note-takers with relevant institutional policies and procedures, including reporting lines within Disability Services.
- Ensure that note-takers have access to the instructors' names and course outlines, preferably before the course begins. Videos, textbooks/course materials and safety equipment will be provided as necessary and as available.

#### Instructors:

- Explain the role of the note-taker to the students' instructors at the beginning of the term.
- Before commencement of class, send an information package to the instructor that:
  - identifies the student(s),
  - explains the note-taking service and the role of the note-taker,
  - includes tips on effective communication,
  - explains that having class hand-outs in advance assists the note-taker,
  - assures the instructor that lecture notes are an access tool and will not be made available to individuals other than the student receiving the service.
- Encourage instructors to provide a break in their class schedule to accommodate note-takers whenever possible.



- If requested, provide instructors with copies of notes on a case-by-case basis.

Monitoring:

- Share feedback with the note-taker regarding service delivery, with the student's written permission in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.
- Develop a monitoring process for note-taking services.
- Report as required regarding service delivery.

Re-assignment:

- Reassign note-takers, if possible, to other related duties when an existing assignment is cancelled as long as the note-taker is qualified to perform such an assignment.

**C) Computer-aided Note-taker's Responsibilities**

Post-Secondary institutions and note-takers agree that the following are the responsibilities of a note-taker in relation to note-taking services:

Student Contact:

At the beginning of the term, establish an optimal way to maintain contact with the student including an email address for notes and a cell phone number.

Class Preparation:

The note-taker will:

- Become familiar with the course material using the syllabus, textbooks and other materials provided by Disability Services.
- Share word lists with other note-takers, transcribers, and interpreters, as appropriate.
- Consult with the student regarding preferred seating arrangements for the class.



- Begin note-taking upon the arrival of the student.

Attendance:

The note-taker will:

- Notify the student and Disability Services when late, sick or unable to attend, with as much notice as possible and preferably not less than 24 hours in advance, to facilitate hiring a substitute.
- Wait 15 minutes for a student to arrive for a one-hour class and 30 minutes for a class longer than one hour unless previous notification has been given to the note-taker by the student.
- Contact Disability Services when note-taking services are not required as scheduled.

Equipment:

If the note-taker is providing his or her own equipment, he or she will:

- Provide all necessary equipment, including communication cables, extension cords, tape, power bar, etc.

If the note-taker is using institutional equipment he or she will:

- Follow institutional procedures for pick-up and return of equipment.
- Immediately notify the appropriate department of any equipment problems as soon as identified.
- Ensure the equipment is safely monitored while not in active use (e.g., during class breaks).

Notes:

The note-taker will:



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- Provide unedited notes at the end of each class, unless the note-taker has been instructed to provide edited notes in which case they should generally be provided within 24 hours of the class.
  - Provide notes only to the student, and to Disability Services if requested.

Professionalism:

The note-taker will:

- Abide by the policies and procedures of the institution, including reporting lines within Disability Services.
- Refrain from discussing the student's disability with instructors or other students.
- Direct any student/faculty concerns to Disability Services.
- Report any concerns to Disability Services when they arise.
- In consultation with Disability Services, review feedback from the student and instructors regarding the communication process in the classroom and adjust services accordingly.
- Treat as confidential each note-taking assignment and refrain from revealing information from the assignment.
- Schedule preparation time within the contracted class time, as much as possible. For example, note-takers can utilize time when students are working independently for preparation.
- Balance the note-taking role with the goal of maximizing student independence.
- Maintain and upgrade the skills necessary to effectively meet the expectations of the position.
- Participate as a member of the student's Educational Team in order to maximize educational success; directing students to Disability Services should problems arise.

Re-assignment:





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- Accept reassignment of note-taking or related duties when an existing assignment is cancelled as long as the note-taker is qualified to perform such an assignment.

I agree to the above responsibilities:

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Student Date

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Note-taker Date

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Coordinator/Advisor Date