

Accessing Support – Information for Post-Secondary (College/University)



Ask yourself these questions first

- I have an identified need (communication, intellectual, medical and/or physical)
- I have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and use student support services at my school
- I know my academic strengths and weaknesses
- I can describe my need/disability in detail to teachers and professors
- I am taking high school courses that will get me into college/university and meet program requirements
- I know the kinds of accommodations that could be available to me at college/university
- I have had meetings with my guidance teacher/resource teacher (SERT) and discussed what I need to do to prepare for post-secondary school



If you think you **MAY** require additional supports (like extra time, alternate location or alternative formats of tests, texts, etc.,) then there are some things **YOU** need to do.

In your **graduating year (or earlier if possible)** contact the **support service department** of the college or university where you are planning to apply. It may be called *Office of Special Needs, Disability Office*, or some other name, but EVERY post-secondary institution in Ontario has one. Call or email, and see if you can make an appointment for a **Pre-Admission meeting** (meeting, phone conversation, or email contact).

Name of College/University and Program	Contact phone number or email address	Date of Meeting (if required)

**Upon acceptance, you will need to contact the support service department again to complete paperwork to receive and access supports. They will be able to help guide you through the process.



Information to gather

At the **Pre-Admission or admission meeting** (either in person, over the phone, or via email) you should discuss, among other things, the following:

Your strengths

Your challenges/ areas you need support in

The type of supports you use in high school (use your IEP as a reference)

What accommodations/supports would you like the college/university provide you? (look at your current IEP for ideas)

What type of documentation may be needed to get the support?

Documents (you may not need all)	Have it	Need it	Do Not Need
Psycho-educational assessment (may need to have it re-done if out of date)			
Copy of IEP (Individual Education Plan) from high school			
Medical Note			
Other:			

Other 'information':

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Applying

University Application Deadline: _____	College Application Deadline: _____
Applications for University are all submitted on-line through http://www.ouac.on.ca/ . This site may be used to apply for admission to undergraduate study for entry points in the current academic year.	Applications are submitted online through http://www.ontariocolleges.ca/ontcol/home/apply.html
You will require your OUAC Reference Number and PIN/password – see your guidance counsellor for this- to access your application, to review or change anything. After you start your application you will be given a reference number . You will also see offers and respond to offers through the website so keep that number and password safe.	You need to know your OEN (Ontario Student Enrollment Number) to apply to College. (Your OEN is on your report card or credit counselling summary)



Financial Assistance/Support/Scholarships & Bursaries

Student Awards <http://www.studentawards.com/>

Scholarship Canada <http://www.scholarshipscanada.com/>

OSAP (Ontario Student Assistance Program) <https://osap.gov.on.ca/OSAPSecurityWeb/public/login.xhtml>

OSAP is Ontario's flagship student support program, offering a mix of grants and loans to thousands of students each year.

Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD) <https://osap.gov.on.ca/OSAPPortal/en/A-ZListofAid/>

Full-time and part-time students with either permanent or temporary disabilities who have disability-related educational costs for services or equipment that are not covered by another agency or service and are required for postsecondary participation. (Up to \$2,000 per academic year.)

Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities http://www.canlearn.ca/eng/loans_grants/grants/disabilities.shtml (Up to \$8,000 per academic year)

You are eligible if you:

- apply and qualify for a Canada Student Loan; are enrolled in a full-time or part-time program (minimum 32 weeks) at a designated post-secondary institution;
- meet the criteria for students with permanent disabilities; and include one of the following with your loan application as proof of your disability: a medical certificate, a psycho-educational assessment, or documentation proving receipt of federal or provincial disability assistance.

Sample assistance opportunities (there are others too!)

- Disability Awards Canada <http://www.disabilityawards.ca/>
- Justin Eves Foundation <http://www.justinevesfoundation.com/>
- Learning Disabilities Association <http://www.ldao.ca/ldao-services/ldao-scholarships-bursaries/>
- National Directory of Awards for Students with Disabilities <http://www.neads.ca/en/about/projects/ete2/scholarship/holly.php>



Preparation Opportunities

Many colleges and universities offer opportunities to experience readiness programs to help with the transition. Ask the support service department at your post-secondary institution if they have something available.

Examples:

York University offers **PROJECT ADVANCE**, which is open to **students who will be attending ANY college or university program** and is a resident of Ontario. <http://lds.info.yorku.ca/project-advance-2/> Topics include:

- self-advocacy training
- reading and writing strategies for university level materials
- computer skills and adaptive technologies
- study and note-taking skills
- test-taking and memory strategies
- time and stress management

Conestoga College offers **PASS (Post-Secondary Accommodations, Supports, and Strategies)** which gives accepted students to Conestoga a chance to become familiar with the college while learning skills that will help students feel college ready. <http://www.conestogac.on.ca/accessibility-services/pass.jsp>

University of Waterloo offers **OPEN DOORS TRANSITION PROGRAM**- an opportunity to attend a transition program designed for newly registered students to the University of Waterloo with learning disabilities. It is held each summer to prepare the students for fall. <https://uwaterloo.ca/disability-services/future-students/transition-programs/open-doors-transition-program>



Self- Advocacy---YOU need to do it!

Self-Advocacy is the development of **specific skills and understandings** that enable children and adults **to explain** their specific needs to others and **to cope positively** with the attitudes of peers, parents, teachers and employers.

It means:

- **Advocacy Is STUDENT-BASED**
- Knowing yourself and your learning needs
- Knowing how to use your areas of strength
- Knowing how to explain your needs so that others will understand
- Knowing your rights to accommodations
- Knowing what accommodations are helpful and why
- Knowing how the system works and about support system