

Post-Secondary Education Resources for Students

Post-Secondary schools in BC have developed policies and procedures for assisting students with medical, physical, and mental disabilities. It is recommended to review the specific policies of the school you are planning to attend. The University of British Columbia (UBC) will be used as an example here. UBC has developed policy for the academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the BC Human Rights Code and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom.

The University of BC's policy defines that those persons with a disability:

- Have a significant and persistent mobility, sensory, learning, or other physical or mental health impairment which may be permanent or temporary; AND
- Experience functional restrictions or limitations of their ability to perform the range of life's activities; AND
- May experience attitudinal and/or environmental barriers that hamper their full and self-directed participation in life.

Policies developed for colleges and universities are aimed at reducing or removing educational-related barriers students may experience in the post-secondary setting. Examples of support might be more time granted for exams, or having a scribe take notes in class. Contact your school's Disability Resource Centre to find out what type of supports are available.

To be eligible to receive academic accommodations, students must tell the school about their disability or health condition. It is recommended that students identify themselves to the school at the time they receive their acceptance letter.

Post-secondary schools require information in writing to outline the student's disability as well as define how it limits the student in their school functioning. Be sure to check with the school you are attending for what paperwork they need from you. If you need your doctors to fill out forms, this might take some time. Be sure to plan well in advance so that services are in place for the start of the school term.

From: The University of British Columbia Board of Governors. Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. Obtained online from: 1 on July 25, 2008.

Student Loans and Financial Assistance

Covering the cost of post-secondary education can be a challenge for young adults. The cost for each student will vary widely depending on whether or not they move away from home, if their parents will help with costs, if they have to pay on their own, if they take full-time or part-time classes and if they are able to have a job while attending school.

Students have many costs, including tuition, books, food, transportation, housing and entertainment. Many students will need financial help to pay for all these items. Students can access help by applying for the following:

- Student loans – in BC, students can apply for StudentAid BC which is the program of student loans from the BC provincial government and Canada Student Loans which is the program of student loans from the federal government. These loans require repayment when the student has finished their studies. However, if student becomes permanently disabled during the lifetime of their student loan, they can apply to have the loan forgiven in full.
- Bursaries and Grants – these are sums of money based on financial need and other criteria. These do not have to be repaid.
- Scholarships – These are awarded to students based on criteria such as academic achievement or community involvement. These do not have to be repaid.
- Check with your school, community and CF clinic to see if you are eligible to apply for any grants, bursaries or scholarships. Students are encouraged to take the time and apply for these programs.

BC and Canada student loans also have programs and grants to assist students of low-income families. In addition, there are several programs to assist students with how to pay back their student loans or loan forgiveness. Further information about loans and application forms for student loans can be obtained online at: www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaid.bc/.

Financial Programs for Students with Disabilities

StudentAid BC and Canada Student Loans both have several financial aid programs for students with disabilities. For access to these financial aid programs, a student must have a documented disability defined as

a functional limitation caused by a physical or mental impairment that restricts the ability of a person to perform the daily activities necessary to participate in studies at a post-secondary level or in the labour force and that is expected to remain for the person's expected natural life.

If a student qualifies, they may be granted funding for education related services or adaptive equipment. The website below has links to detailed information on these programs. As well, the website for the BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development has links to student loan information.

From: Government of British Columbia; StudentAid BC – Program for Students with Permanent Disabilities. Obtained online from:
www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaidbc/specialprograms/permanentdisabilities.htm
on July 25, 2008.

Scholarship, Student Loan and Educational websites:

BC Ministry of Advanced Education website which includes a link for students to information on their policies and programs: www.gov.bc.ca/aved

BC Government Student Loan Programs can be found at:
www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaidbc/

Government of Canada site providing info on preparing for post-secondary education, student loans, future planning, grants, bursaries, and scholarships:
www.canlearn.ca/eng/index.shtml

Canada Benefits website. Click through to either the “I am...A student” or “I am...A person with a disability” and search by province. www.canadabenefits.gc.ca/

Canadian Schools Directory for trade schools, colleges and universities can be found at: www.trade-schools.ca/

Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada provides an index of Canadian post-secondary institutions:
http://www.aucc.ca/can_uni/our_universities/index_e.html

Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada provides up to 10 scholarships worth \$5000 per year for students with disabilities:
www.aucc.ca/scholarships/open/aucc_disabled_e.html

National Education Association of Disabled Students - Financial Aid Directory:
www.neads.ca/en/norc/funding/contents.php

Student Awards Scholarship Search – A website available to all Canadian students. The registration process takes approximately twenty minutes. Once completed, the site will match you with bursaries and scholarships that suit your individual needs. For more information visit: www.studentawards.com

DO-IT (Disabilities, opportunities, Internetworking and Technology). A project of the University of Washington, Washington State, DO-IT provides resources and links to assist people with disabilities in university, college and careers. Resources include topics such as Preparing for College: An online tutorial for students:
www.washington.edu/doi

Career Planning and Vocational Websites:

Career planning website: www.jobfutures.ca.

Career planning website: www.youth.gc.ca. This site provides information for youth on jobs, education, money, health & wellness, arts & culture. This site also includes a webzine for and by youth.

Job search website: www.monster.ca is a popular Canadian job search engine.

Job search website: www.workopolis.com is also a popular Canadian job search engine.

Career e-Planning Manual. This is a website by the University of Waterloo that guides the student through career planning. The site has been developed so that the student can use it independently or with a guidance counsellor, teacher or parent.
www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca.