



Instructor FAQs on Accommodation

What is an accommodation?

An accommodation is a legally entitled modification to practice, policy or curriculum for the purposes of equitable access for students with disabilities.

What is the difference between an accommodation and a concession?

Accommodations differ from Academic Concessions. UBC has unique legal obligations to students with disabilities than it does not have to students requesting flexibility for temporary illness, injury or personal circumstances. Academic Concessions are addressed via the Academic Concession Policy, while accommodations are determined under LR7

Concession	Accommodation
Not legally necessary	Legal obligation
Decisions determined by faculty (faculty members, advising office or faculty leadership)	Decisions determined by CFA
Academic Concession Policy	Dictated by Policy LR7
For any student (including CFA registrants) needing flexibility for temporary illness or injury, personal circumstances, or hardships.	For students who have registered with the CFA, demonstrated need, and meet the definition of disability/ on-going medical condition as per LR7

Who Can Support Me in Making my Courses More Accessible?

If you're interested in improving the accessibility in your course design, the Centre for Teaching and Learning Technology offers resources on:

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Accessible curriculum and teaching practices

How Will I Know If a Student Has an Accommodation?

When a student is entitled to an accommodation, you will be notified by an email from info.accessibility@ubc.ca with a link to the student's **Letter of Accommodation** in your ClockWork portal. The letter includes:

- Specific accommodations
- Student's Accessibility Advisor contact info

Note: For legal purposes, notifications are sent individually. They may arrive throughout the term, as students are registering across the term with the CfA and have choice around when to activate their letter.

Can I Discuss Accommodations with Students?

It depends. Here's a guide to help you navigate appropriate approaches.

Best Practices	Discriminatory or Legally Precarious Practices
Direct your questions, including possible alternative solutions to an accommodation, to the student's Accessibility Advisor, listed on the Letter of Accommodation	Ask a student questions about the accommodation itself or propose alternative solutions to the student.
If a student needs to communicate with you about an accommodation need (eg. I have extensions on assignments and I need to use that this week), you are welcome to acknowledge their circumstances and knowledge of the accommodation and explore a reasonable plan with the student.	Draw attention to or single out a student for their registration status with the CfA or as a student who has an accommodation.
If a student requests modifications or exceptions to classroom policy or practice beyond what is on their letter of accommodation or for reasons unrelated to disability, you can respond as you would to any other concession request from a student.	Complain or air personal frustrations with accommodating a student in front of the student and/or other students.

I'm Uncomfortable Being Audio-Recorded. Do I Still Have to Implement This Accommodation?

Typically, yes. We know this can be really uncomfortable and vulnerable for anyone who is being audio-recorded. However, it is a form of accommodation that is easy and exceptionally effective for reducing significant access barriers for students with a range of functional limitations. Because students are entitled to accommodations that lower barriers and reflect the advances in assistive technology, it is an increasingly common form of accommodation across Canada.

A student's need to audio record classes because of their disability doesn't usually infringe on an instructor's intellectual property rights or their academic freedom. Personal recordings for disability related reasons do not ordinarily raise privacy concerns. It is a common and widely established form of accommodation across post-secondary institutions nationally and internationally. There can be some partial exceptions, so please see our audio recording FAQs on our website for more information on this accommodation.

For concerns about the impact of audio-recording on instructor human rights or well-being, please seek guidance from faculty supervisors or the Equity and Inclusion Office.

If a student is asking for accommodations beyond those listed on the Letter of Accommodation, do instructors have to provide them?

No. You are only required to implement the accommodation(s) listed on the Letter of Accommodation. Additional requests may be treated as academic concessions at your discretion.

If a student finds their CfA accommodation inadequate, please refer them back to their Accessibility Advisor for further discussion.

Why can't the CfA oversee missed exams or tests for students who don't have disabilities but had to miss them for other reasons, like temporary illness or injury?

The CfA Exam Centre handles approximately 35,000 exams annually for students with disabilities. Due to limited resources, it cannot support exams for students without registered accommodations.

I would like to discuss my concerns that this accommodation undermines the essential outcomes or academic skills outlined on my syllabus. Who should I contact?

If you believe an accommodation undermines essential course outcomes, contact the Accessibility Advisor listed on the student's Letter of Accommodation. They can discuss:

- Undue hardship
- Academic integrity concerns