What We Do

Version 3

Accessible Learning Services (ALS) is responsible for the management of academic accommodations for all students with disabilities. To accomplish this ALS

- Utilizes an Accessibility framework grounded in legislation

- Applies a strength-based approach to supports and services

- Engages in collaborative conversations with students and faculty

- Promotes a student-centred service design

- Respects confidentiality and existing privacy legislation

Accessibility Framework

Seneca Polytechnic is dedicated to ensuring accessibility and accommodation for students with disabilities, and the processes are developed based on key pieces of legislation:

Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC): This legislation prohibits discrimination on various grounds, including disability. It requires institutions like Seneca Polytechnic to provide equal opportunities and reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities to ensure they have equal access to services and education.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA): AODA is designed to improve accessibility for people with disabilities across various sectors, including education. It mandates that organizations, including colleges, must establish accessibility standards and policies to identify, remove, and prevent barriers that may impede access for individuals with disabilities.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA): FIPPA governs access to information held by public institutions, including colleges. While its primary focus is on transparency and privacy, it's important to ensure that students' personal information is protected while providing necessary accommodations.

Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU): This ministry plays a regulatory role in higher education in Ontario. Complying with MCU requirements ensures that Seneca Polytechnic aligns with provincial education standards while maintaining a commitment to accessibility and accommodation.

Strength Based Framework

Respect for Student Autonomy: Allowing students to choose whether to disclose their disability diagnosis respects their autonomy and privacy. This creates a more trusting and open environment where students can feel comfortable discussing their needs.

Strengths-Based Approach: Embracing a strengths-based approach recognizes the unique abilities and talents that individuals with disabilities bring to the college community. It shifts the focus from deficits to potential, fostering a more positive and empowering atmosphere.

Functional Assessment: Conducting functional assessments to understand a student's strengths and challenges is a proactive way to determine accommodation needs. It provides a clear and individualized understanding of how a disability may impact a student's college experience.

Individualized Accommodations: Using functional assessments to inform accommodation decisions ensures that supports are tailored to each student's specific needs. This personalized approach maximizes the effectiveness of accommodations.

Collaborative

Partnership Model: Viewing the relationship between ALS, the program area, and the student as a partnership emphasizes shared responsibility for academic access. This approach promotes a sense of collaboration and teamwork.

Student-Centered Approach: Placing the student at the center of this partnership aligns with the principles of student success. It ensures that the student's needs, preferences, and goals are central to the decision-making process.

Effective Communication: Effective communication and collaboration are essential in this partnership. Ensuring that all stakeholders are informed and engaged in the process can lead to more successful outcomes.

Student Centered Design

Ease of Access: Placing a strong emphasis on ease of access to services is crucial for ensuring that students with disabilities can readily access the accommodations and support

they need to succeed academically.

Timely Support: Recognizing the importance of providing support in a timely manner is essential. Timely interventions can make a significant difference in a student's academic journey and overall experience.

Student-Driven Supports: Empowering students to drive the support process ensures that their needs and preferences are at the forefront. This approach helps students take ownership of their educational experience.

Confidentiality

Confidential Service: Ensuring that ALS is a confidential service underscores the commitment to protecting students' privacy and confidentiality. This is especially important when dealing with sensitive information related to disabilities.

Student Autonomy: Allowing students the autonomy to decide with whom they want to share their Accommodation Letter and related information respects their rights and preferences. It empowers them to control their own privacy.

Compliance with Privacy Legislation (FIPPA): Adhering to privacy legislation in Ontario (FIPPA) is essential for maintaining legal and ethical standards when handling student documentation and records. It ensures that privacy and data protection laws are followed.

External Consent: Offering students the option to provide external consent for involving family members or community support in their academic journey is meant to be a considerate and flexible approach. It recognizes that students may benefit from additional support networks.

Data Security: Controlling, storing, and accessing student documentation in accordance with privacy legislation ensures that sensitive information is secure and protected from unauthorized access.