

## **Post-Secondary Documentation Requirements for Accommodations, Individualized Programming and/or Funding**

**A: Common Understanding Agreed Upon by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD), the Department of Advanced Education and Skills, Memorial University, Marine Institute, Grenfell Institute, and College of the North Atlantic:**

**A.1 For exceptionalities diagnosed by Guidance Counsellors or Educational Psychologists** (i.e. Specific Learning Disorder or Intellectual Disability): It is recommended that students going on to post-secondary have a comprehensive assessment that is completed within the last 3-5 years.

**a) 'Within the last 5 years' requirement:**

- This is a requirement for federal funding through Student Aid Grants for Students with Permanent Disabilities.
- It is also generally expected in order to receive accommodations at College of the North Atlantic.
- To receive accommodations at Memorial, Grenfell and Marine Institute there is no such requirement, however, it is encouraged.
- All parties feel that **best practice is that the comprehensive assessment is completed within the last 3-5 years** in case there is a delay between the end of high school and entry to post-secondary (from waitlists for entry to programs and access to funding, etc.).

**b) What documentation is required?**

- The EECD's definition of Comprehensive Assessment, which is included on the final page of this document, meets assessment-related documentation requirements:
  - for Advanced Education and Skills Student Aid Grants for Students with Permanent Disabilities & Grants for High-Need Students with Permanent Disabilities
  - to receive accommodations at College of the North Atlantic, Memorial, Grenfell and Marine Institute.
- As outlined in the EECD's definition of comprehensive assessment, the assessment should reference previous comprehensive assessments and confirm the exceptionality. This may or may not require the use of standardized assessment tools; as per EECD's guidelines, this decision is left to the professional discretion of the assessor.
- In order to meet post-secondary documentation requirements for funding or accommodations, the assessment must include recent achievement information pertinent to the exceptionality.

- There may be other forms required by post-secondary, such as the Verification of Permanent Disability form.  
([www.aes.gov.nl.ca/studentaid/disabilities/index.html#forms](http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/studentaid/disabilities/index.html#forms)).
  - For students with Learning Disabilities/Specific Learning Disorder or Intellectual Disabilities, it is recommended that the Verification of Permanent Disability form be completed by the high school guidance counsellor or educational psychologist during the student's last year of high school. This may be done as part of the student's 'exit assessment'. An exit assessment is a comprehensive assessment for post-secondary purposes.
- CNA, Memorial, Marine Institute and Grenfell also strongly encourage students to submit their Transition Plan inclusive of their Record of Accommodations or IEP.

#### **A.2. For students with exceptionalities diagnosed by medical professionals**

- There is no 'within the last 5 years' requirement for medical documentation.
- A comprehensive assessment (EECD's definition) is required within K-12 to inform programming. This should be provided to the student for post-secondary purposes. It should include recent information on student achievement pertinent to the exceptionality. Student achievement refers to a range of assessment options from classroom based tests and assignments to standardized achievement measures. The information referenced in the comprehensive assessment is at the discretion of the assessor.
- There may be other forms required such as the Verification of Permanent Disability ([www.aes.gov.nl.ca/studentaid/disabilities/index.html#forms](http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/studentaid/disabilities/index.html#forms)).
  - This form will likely have to be filled out by a medical professional, but there may be exceptions; assessors within K-12 should check the Verification of Permanent Disability form to verify this.
  - Comprehensive assessment for post-secondary purposes.
- CNA, Memorial, Marine Institute and Grenfell also strongly encourage students to submit their Transition Plan inclusive of their Record of Accommodations or IEP.

### **B: Specific Documentation Requirements by Agency**

#### **B.1 Advanced Education and Skills (Canada Students Loans – Student Aid Grants for Students with Permanent Disabilities):**

The Student Aid program provides additional benefits to assist eligible students with permanent disabilities with accessing and successfully completing a post-secondary education. This funding includes Canada Student Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities and Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Students with Permanent Disabilities. To access these funding students:

- Complete an application for student financial assistance and indicate they are applying as a student with a permanent disability.
- Submit a Verification of Permanent Disability form
  - For students with specific learning disorder or intellectual disability, it is recommended that the Verification of Permanent Disability form be completed by the high school guidance counsellor or educational psychologist during the

student's last year of high school. This may be done as part of the student's 'exit' assessment. An 'exit' assessment is a comprehensive assessment for post-secondary purposes.

- For students with disabilities diagnosed by professionals outside education, this form would be completed by applicable professional.
- If applicable, submit proof of Specific Learning Disorder in the form of a copy of your Psycho-Educational Assessment (or a comprehensive educational assessment) completed within the last 5 years or at the age of 18 or older.
  - The EECD's definition of comprehensive assessment meets this requirement.
  - This assessment must be completed by a registered psychologist or a guidance counselor with graduate level assessment experience and training.
- For the Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Students with Permanent Disabilities a separate application form must also be submitted.
- Further information and application forms can be found at <http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/studentaid/disabilities/index.html>.

## **B.2 Advanced Education and Skills (Grant for High-Need Students with Permanent Disabilities):**

- Effective 2016-17, the LMAPD Post-Secondary Training Services Program for students with permanent disabilities will be phased out. It has been replaced by the **Grant for High Need Students with Permanent Disabilities**.
- All students currently receiving LMAPD funding will continue to receive this funding provided they do not delay or withdraw from their studies.
- For all other students, the Grant for High Need Students with Permanent Disabilities provides assistance to cover education-related costs associated with a permanent disability over the amount available from the Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Students with Permanent Disabilities. To be considered for this grant, you must submit the Application for Grants for Services and Equipment for Students with Permanent Disabilities and you will be automatically assessed. Further information can be found at: <http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/studentaid/disabilities/index.html>.
- For documentation requirements see B.1 above.

## **B.3 Memorial University, Marine Institute & Grenfell Institute:**

- The EECD's definition of comprehensive assessment meets Memorial University's documentation requirements.
- Memorial University, Marine Institute & Grenfell Institute has recently updated their assessment policy and documentation requirements. Part of their assessment policy is a "Procedure for Documentation Regarding a Student's Accommodation Request", available at <http://www.mun.ca/policy/site/procedure.php?id=381> . Some points covered in this document include:
  - Memorial does not have a requirement that the assessment must be completed within the past 5 years - the 5 year criterion is the purview of federal guidelines.
  - Documentation should include sufficient information about the nature of the disability, along with an explanation of the functional impact of the disability on

the pursuit of post-secondary education. Where possible, the documentation should give explicit recommendations for remedial and/or coping strategies that will assist the student in his or her pursuit of a course, program, or participation in a University-sponsored event or activity.

- For students who have a stable condition and a history of accommodation, no further documentation may be required.
- When a student's functional abilities have shown significant change (i.e., either an improvement or deterioration of status has taken place or is expected to take place) or when the accommodation requests have changed significantly over the course of studies (e.g., from first to second year), more recent information may be required.
- Documentation can be completed by/obtained from qualified clinicians, consultants, medical doctors, psychologists, audiologists, rehabilitation counselors, or other professionals who have specific training, designation, expertise, and/or experience and who are considered by the University qualified to assess the nature of the disability/disabilities for which accommodation is being requested.

#### **B.4 College of the North Atlantic:**

- The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's definition of comprehensive assessment meets College of the North Atlantic's documentation requirements.
- Documentation must be completed by the appropriate qualified medical assessor and/or educational assessor, according to the nature of the disability. Requirements are listed according to disability. For example,
  - Specific Learning Disorder: Documentation must be completed by a Registered Psychologist or a Guidance Counsellor. In addition, a current (within 5 years) Comprehensive Assessment is required.
  - Intellectual Disability: Documentation must be completed by a Registered Psychologist or a Guidance Counsellor. In addition, a current (within 5 years) Comprehensive Assessment is required.
  - Speech and/or Language Disorder: Documentation must be completed by a Speech Language Pathologist. Please submit a current (within 5 years) Comprehensive Assessment, if available.
- All disabilities: Although an ISSP/IEP/ Record of Accommodations alone is not sufficient to qualify for Disability Services, it is strongly encouraged that one be submitted.
- Further information on the College of the North Atlantic's documentation policy can be found at <http://www.cna.nl.ca/student-support/Disability-Services.aspx>

#### **B.5 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development**

Students with exceptionalities require a comprehensive assessment to inform Program Planning Team decisions, which may include the implementation of accommodations, modified prescribed programming, and/or an alternate program, course or curriculum.

- A comprehensive assessment provides the assessor and/or the assessment team the information needed to describe the student's strengths and challenges, and identify the

exceptionality, where present. The information gathered will inform the programming decisions made by the program planning team.

- A comprehensive assessment report summarizing the process and the findings of the assessment will always be completed to inform programming decisions. While comprehensive assessments are a team process, a registered psychologist or a guidance counselor with graduate level assessment experience and training serves as the lead assessor and is responsible for the comprehensive assessment report.
- Reassessment is required if the Program Planning Team feels that significant changes are required to a student's programming.
- What is required to be completed for a reassessment is determined by the assessment team, based on information received through the referral process.
- Please refer the EECD's definition of Comprehensive Assessment, which is included below, for further information.

### **C: Definition of Comprehensive Assessment (EECD)**

A comprehensive assessment is required to inform program planning team decisions. These decisions may include the implementation of accommodations, modified prescribed programming, and/or an alternate program, course or curriculum. The purpose of a comprehensive assessment is to:

1. Answer the referral question in a valid and reliable manner;
2. Determine or confirm whether a student's difficulties are the result of an exceptionality; and
3. Provide clarity on how a student's exceptionality impacts programming.

A comprehensive assessment will look different depending on the exceptionality being considered and the data already available. A comprehensive assessment will include:

- a review of the cumulative and confidential files
  - previous formal and informal assessment results
  - pre-referral intervention strategies
  - academic history
- interview information (family, educators, etc.)
  - emotional/behavioural development, learning style, social development, etc.)
  - family history
  - cultural implications
  - developmental milestones
  - medical history
  - observation of student in multiple settings

A comprehensive assessment may also include:

- speech-language assessment information
- assessment information from the instructional resource teacher
- formal assessment of cognitive ability
- formal assessment of achievement

- formal and informal assessment of:
  - learning style
  - memory
  - communication
  - information processing
  - behavior
  - emotional development
  - etc.

A comprehensive assessment will provide the assessor and/or the assessment team, the information needed to describe the student's strengths and challenges, and identify the exceptionality, where present. The information gathered will inform the programming decisions made by the program planning team.

In the case where an exceptionality is identified by a medical professional, the programming needs of the student will be determined by the program planning team after the comprehensive assessment has been completed. (Consultation with medical specialists is important in determining the student's strengths and needs; however specialists outside of the program planning team do not determine a student's educational plan.)

Comprehensive assessments which do not require the use of psycho-educational tools can be processed more quickly, enabling the program planning team to make programming decisions in a timely manner.

A written report (not computer generated) summarizing the process and the findings of the assessment will always be completed to inform programming decisions.