



Disability Services Office (DSO)

Handbook for Policies and Procedures

(Updated January 2019)

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Section I: Introduction to Centenary University's Disability Services Office

Mission Statement

The mission of the Disability Services Office (DSO) is to provide access to Centenary University's facilities and programs through a range of reasonable accommodations and support services to identified members of the community that experience disability(ies). Based on nationally regarded best practices, the Disability Services Office seeks to foster independence and to develop the self-advocacy of students with disabilities. In addition, the office strives to serve as a liaison and resource to the members of the Centenary University community regarding disability issues.

Office Hours

Monday through Thursday 8:30am – 6:00pm, Friday 8:30am – 4:30pm

Other appointment times available upon request.

Location

The Academic Success Center is located in the Harris & Betts Smith Learning Center (also known as the "Library Annex").

Access Information

There are a number of designated handicapped parking spaces directly adjacent to the Harris and Betts Smith Learning Center as well as a suitable ramp leading to the main doors. Unfortunately, neither the building doors nor the Academic Success Center Office Suite doors are equipped yet with automatic door openers, however assistance can be provided by dialing 908-852-1400, extension 2168.

Contact information

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Rights and Responsibilities

The Disability Services Office (DSO)

The Disability Services Office has the right to:

- ✓ Request and receive current disability documentation that supports requests for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- ✓ Deny a request for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services if the documentation demonstrates that the request is not warranted or the student fails to provide appropriate documentation;
- ✓ Select among equally effective accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- ✓ Refuse accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services that impose a fundamental alteration of a University program or activity or presents an undue financial burden on the university

The Disability Services Office has the responsibility to:

- ✓ Provide information to students with disabilities in accessible formats upon request;
- ✓ Ensure that courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities are available and usable in the most integrated and appropriate settings;
- ✓ Review Application for Accommodations and Services to determine eligibility for services and nature of accommodations;
- ✓ Provide or arrange reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and auxiliary aids and services;
- ✓ Maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication, and to disclose such information only when permitted by law;
- ✓ Serve as a liaison between students and faculty;
- ✓ Serve as a resource on disability issues for the Centenary campus community.

Faculty

Faculty members have the right to:

- ✓ Identify and establish standards for courses and academic programs;
- ✓ Verify through the Disability Services Office the eligibility for and nature of accommodations before provision of accommodations occurs;
- ✓ Request assistance and resources from the Disability Services Office.

Faculty members are responsible for:

- ✓ Evaluating students solely on the basis of their academic performance;
- ✓ Working with the student and the Disability Services Office to ensure the provision of reasonable accommodations;
- ✓ Fostering an accessible learning environment to all learners;
- ✓ Addressing concerns about disability accommodations with the Disability Services Office.

Students

Students with disabilities at Centenary University have the right to:

- ✓ Equal access to University offered courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities;
- ✓ Equal opportunity to learn;
- ✓ Request reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- ✓ Information in accessible formats.

Students with disabilities have the responsibility to:

- ✓ Meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities;
- ✓ Identify themselves as individuals with disabilities when requesting accommodations and seek information, counsel, and assistance as necessary;
- ✓ Document their disability according to established guidelines and demonstrate how disability substantially limits their participation in courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities;
- ✓ Follow published procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services.

Students are advised to:

- ✓ Meet with each of their professors to discuss the testing and academic accommodations for each class;
- ✓ Self-disclose their disability status to faculty and staff when appropriate;
- ✓ Exercise self-advocacy to meet their disability related needs.

Relevant Guiding Legislation

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973-Section 504:

Provides a 'right of access' statute to people with disabilities. Section 504 provides persons with disabilities the right of access into, or to derive benefits from, any program or activity receiving federal financial funding.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states in part that "no otherwise qualified handicapped individual...shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

The ADA and ADAAA:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 is civil rights legislation that affects millions of Americans with Disabilities. At its inception, it was believed that this federal law would provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. The ADA was regarded as the most sweeping civil rights legislation since The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and was intended to protect the civil rights of people with disabilities by ensuring equal access to employment, state and local government agencies, transportation, public and private facilities, and telecommunications.

On September 25, 2008, the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) was signed into law as a means to make important changes to the definition of the term "disability" by rejecting the holdings in several Supreme Court decisions and portions of EEOC's ADA regulations. The Act emphasizes that the definition of disability should be construed in favor of broad coverage of individuals to the maximum extent permitted by the terms of the ADA and generally shall not require extensive analysis. The effect of these changes is to make it easier for an individual seeking protection under the ADA to establish that he or she has a disability within the meaning of the ADA. The Act retains the ADA's basic definition of "disability" as an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment. However, it changes the way that the statutory terms should be interpreted. Most significantly, the ADAAA¹:

- Directs EEOC to revise the portion of its regulations that defines the term "substantially limits";
- Expands the definition of "major life activities" by including two non-exhaustive lists:
 1. The first list includes many activities that the EEOC has recognized (e.g., walking) as well as activities that EEOC has not specifically recognized (e.g., reading, bending, and communicating);
 2. The second list includes major bodily functions (e.g., "functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, respiratory, neurological, brain, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions");

¹ DBTAC: Southeast ADA Center (2009). ADA amendments act of 2008 summary and resources. Retrieved on January 11, 2011 from http://sedbtac.org/ada/publications/adaaa_resources.doc.

- States that mitigating measures other than "ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses" shall not be considered in assessing whether an individual has a disability;
- Clarifies that an impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active;
- Provides that an individual subjected to an action prohibited by the ADA (e.g., failure to hire) because of an actual or perceived impairment will meet the "regarded as" definition of disability, unless the impairment is transitory and minor;
- Provides that individuals covered only under the "regarded as" prong are not entitled to reasonable accommodation; and emphasizes that the definition of "disability" should be interpreted broadly.

Disabled Individual:

The ADA, ADA Amendments Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 define a "disabled individual" as anyone who:

1. has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, or working; or
2. has a history or record of such impairment; or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment.

Section II: The Provision of Reasonable Accommodations

Defining Reasonable Accommodations

- Reasonable accommodations are appropriate adjustments to programs, policy and practice that make aspects of the college experience accessible and provide equal opportunities to Centenary University students with disabilities. An equal opportunity means a chance to attain the same level of performance or to enjoy equal benefits and privileges as are available to a similarly situated student without disabilities.
- An accommodation is not reasonable if it:
 - Poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others.
 - Substantially changes essential components of course curriculum.
 - Poses an undue financial or administrative burden on the university.
- Students are not charged for the cost incurred in providing reasonable accommodations, including auxiliary aids and services (e.g., sign language interpreters, CART, C-Print, note-taking services, text conversion to alternative accessible formats, audio or video tapes, etc.).
- To determine reasonable accommodations, the DSO may seek information from appropriate university personnel regarding essential standards for courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities. The director makes the final determinations of reasonable accommodations in collaboration with the student and faculty as warranted.
- Reasonable accommodations are determined by examining:
 1. Environmental barriers limiting curricular, facility, or programmatic access;
 2. The objective and subjective impact that the substantiated disability has on the student;
 3. Whether or not the student has access to the course, program, service, activity, or facility without an accommodation;
 4. The range of possible accommodations that might remove the barriers;
 5. Whether or not essential elements of the course, program, service, activity, or facility are compromised by the accommodations.

Examples of Reasonable Accommodations

Examples of some of the most frequently requested accommodations include:

- Extended time for quizzes and exams
- Distraction-reduced environment for exams
- Note-taking services
- Permission to tape record lectures
- Classroom materials and textbooks in alternative formats

Special Information Relating to Spell-Check Devices and Calculators as Reasonable Accommodations

Spell-Check Devices:

The DSO will only approve use of a **spell-check device** as a reasonable accommodation for an exam if:

1. Students' educational/psychological documentation indicates specific disability that impairs spelling ability **and**
2. The ability to spell words accurately is not the essential component that the exam is designed to assess (to be determined by the professor and/or the academic department).

Calculators:

The DSO will only approve the use of a calculator as a reasonable accommodation for an exam if:

1. Students' educational/psychological documentation indicates specific disability that impairs arithmetic comprehension or computation **and**
2. The ability to add, subtract, multiply, or divide accurately is not the essential component that the exam is designed to assess (to be determined by the professor and/or the academic department).

Special Circumstances Related to Spell-Check Devices and Calculators

Spell-check devices and calculators can certainly be helpful to everyone - both people with and without disabilities. However, the use of these tools is considered **a reasonable accommodation only under very specific circumstances**. While each request for accommodations is assessed on a case-by-case basis, it is important to note that these accommodations may not be granted in specific courses or specific assessments where use of these devices represents a fundamental alteration of essential curriculum components.

When Might Accommodation Requests Be Denied?

The University provides accommodations unless they fall under one of the following four categories:

Fundamental Alteration

Accommodation Request is Not Supported

Undue Hardship

Personal Service

Fundamental Alteration

If an accommodation reduces the academic standards of the University, its schools, departments, or courses, the University denies the accommodation because it is unreasonable. Academic standards are essential for every student. It is unreasonable to alter these fundamental standards with an accommodation.

Accommodation Request is Not Supported

An accommodation must be designed to both provide access to the University's programs and minimize the impact of the disability. In some cases, the requested accommodation cannot be substantiated as 'minimizing the impact of the disability' based upon a review of the submitted documentation and/or the subjective experience of the student. The accommodation is denied in these cases since the removal of a barrier is not warranted or necessary when compared to the limitations imposed by the disability.

Undue Hardship

If an accommodation costs too much or is impossible to administer, the University denies the accommodation because it is unreasonable. An unjustifiable financial burden will have an adverse effect on the entire University system. An undue administrative burden occurs when the University does not have the time or ability to respond to a request.

Personal Service

If a request for an accommodation falls under the definition of a personal service, the University denies the request because it is unreasonable. Personal services are those that a person with a disability must use regardless of attendance at the University. In addition, personal services are those for which no correlation between the disability's functional limitation and program access can be established.

Notification of Denial for Accommodations

If a student is found to be not eligible for one or more requested accommodations, a letter will be sent to the student stating the specific denied accommodation and the reason for denial. Denial of a requested accommodation will also be indicated on the *Accommodation Review Form* signed by both student and DSO staff person. Refer to Section VII for the appeals process.

Procedure for Registering with DSO and Requesting Reasonable Accommodations

1. Complete the Application for Accommodations & Services and/or the Application for Intensive Support.
2. Submit documentation pertaining to and substantiating the impact of the declared disability (greater detail relating to documentation guidelines may be found in Section III of this manual).
3. Respond to any requests for interview from the Director of Disability Services or their designee.
 - Students with disabilities possess unique knowledge of their individual disabilities. Students should be prepared in the interview with the DSO staff to discuss the functional challenges they face and, if applicable, what has or has not worked for them in the past.
4. DSO staff will review all pertinent information and compose a Letter of Accommodation stipulating the accommodations that the particular student is eligible for based upon the impact of their disability.
5. Students should allow at least two weeks for the Disability Services Office to review all requests for accommodations and issue accommodation letters.
6. The DSO staff will contact you to inform you of the accommodations that have been approved. Notification will be sent to your Centenary email address, unless determined in a face-to-face meeting.
7. The DSO staff will compose your Letter of Accommodation(s) stipulating the accommodations that you are eligible for based upon the impact of your disability.
 - You should allow at least two weeks for the Disability Services Office to review all requests for accommodations and issue Letter(s) of Accommodation. Timely submission allows us to work with you in planning effective academic accommodations.
8. The DSO will notify you that your Letter(s) of Accommodation are available for pick-up.
9. You should make arrangements to pick-up your Letter(s) of Accommodation as soon as possible in order to distribute them to each of your professors from which you would like to receive accommodations.

If you require assistance with the accommodation process, please inform the Director of Disability Services.

Section III: Documentation

General Guidelines for Disability Documentation

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as well as the Americans with Disabilities Restoration Act allows colleges and universities to require disability documentation to verify the need for accommodations. What constitutes acceptable documentation is often an area of uncertainty for those preparing students for higher education. Because of this, the Disability Services Office (DSO) at Centenary University, in accordance with the standards established by the Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), has adopted the following guidelines to serve as a resource to potential students, Guidance Counselors, Child Study Teams and other interested parties as they prepare students with disabilities for the transition to higher education. These guidelines focus on identifying the components of disability documentation that are particularly useful in developing appropriate accommodation plans. The major components of quality documentation are:

1. Documentation should be up-to-date

Documentation should be recent in order to assess the current impact on academic functioning. The level of currency required for disability documentation varies dependent on condition, but in most cases should be less than 3 years old and consist of adult-normed evaluations.

While relatively recent documentation is recommended in most circumstances, common sense and discretion in accepting older documentation of conditions that are permanent or non-varying is exercised. Likewise, changing conditions and/or changes in how the condition impacts the individual brought on by growth and development may warrant more frequent updates in order to provide an accurate picture. It is important to remember that documentation is not time-bound; the need for recent documentation depends on the facts and circumstances of the individual's condition.

2. The credentials of the evaluator(s)

The best quality documentation is provided by a licensed or otherwise properly credentialed professional who has undergone appropriate and comprehensive training, has relevant experience, and has no personal relationship with the individual being evaluated. It is expected that the credentials of the person making the diagnosis correlate to the condition being reported (e.g., an orthopedic limitation might be documented by a physician, but not a licensed psychologist).

3. A diagnostic statement identifying the disability

Quality documentation includes a clear diagnostic statement that describes how the condition was diagnosed, provides information on the functional impact, and details the typical progression or prognosis of the condition. While diagnostic codes from the Diagnostic Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM) or the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) of the World

Health Organization are helpful in providing this information, a full clinical description will also convey the necessary information.

4. A description of the diagnostic methodology used

Quality documentation includes a description of the diagnostic criteria, evaluation methods, procedures, tests and dates of administration, as well as a clinical narrative, observation, and specific results. Where appropriate to the nature of the disability, having both summary data and specific test scores (with the norming population identified) within the report is recommended.

Diagnostic methods that are congruent with the particular disability and current professional practices in the field are recommended. Methods may include formal instruments, medical examinations, structured interview protocols, performance observations and unstructured interviews. If results from informal, non-standardized or less common methods of evaluation are reported, an explanation of their role and significance in the diagnostic process will strengthen their value in providing useful information.

5. A description of the current functional limitations

Information on how the disabling condition(s) currently impacts the individual provides useful information for both establishing a disability and identifying possible accommodations. A combination of the results of formal evaluation procedures, clinical narrative, and the individual's self-report is the most comprehensive approach to fully documenting impact. The best quality documentation is thorough enough to demonstrate whether and how a major life activity is substantially limited by providing a clear sense of the severity, frequency and pervasiveness of the condition(s).

6. A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability

It is helpful when documentation provides information on expected changes in the functional impact of the disability over time and context. Information on the cyclical or episodic nature of the disability and known or suspected environmental triggers to episodes provides opportunities to anticipate and plan for varying functional impacts. If the condition is not stable, information on interventions (including the individual's own strategies) for exacerbations and recommended timelines for re-evaluation are most helpful.

7. A description of current and past accommodations, services and/or medications

The most comprehensive documentation will include a description of both current and past medications, auxiliary aids, assistive devices, support services, and accommodations, including their effectiveness in ameliorating functional impacts of the disability. A discussion of any significant side effects from current medications or services that may impact physical, perceptual, behavioral or cognitive performance is helpful when included in the report. While accommodations provided in another setting are not binding on the current institution, they may provide insight in making current decisions.

8. Recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support services

Recommendations from professionals with a history of working with the individual provide valuable information for review and the planning process. It is most helpful when recommended accommodations and strategies are logically related to functional limitations; if connections are not obvious, a clear explanation of their relationship can be useful in decision-making. While the post-secondary institution has no obligation to provide or adopt recommendations made by outside entities, those that are congruent with the programs, services, and benefits offered by the university or program may be appropriate. When recommendations go beyond equitable and inclusive services and benefits, they may still be useful in suggesting alternative accommodations and/or services.

9. Documentation should be comprehensive, contain a diagnostic statement identifying the disability, and establish clear evidence of a significant impact on academic functioning.

Documentation should be relevant to requested accommodations.

If you would like guidelines on specific conditions, contact the Disability Services Office (DSO@centenaryuniversity.edu or 908-842-1400, ext. 2168) and we can offer additional clarification.

Incomplete Documentation or Inadequate Documentation

If the original documentation is incomplete or inadequate to determine the extent of the disability or reasonable accommodation(s), Centenary University has the discretion to require additional documentation. The Centenary DSO also reserves the right to grant or deny “provisional accommodations” pending receipt of any incomplete documentation.

Procedure for Requesting Letters of Accommodation After Accommodation Plans Have Been Established

Students that wish to receive Letters of Accommodation for each semester after registration with the DSO is complete should reflect upon their current accommodation plan in order to ascertain its effectiveness and suitability in minimizing the impact of their disability. The student should then adhere to the following procedure to obtain Accommodation Letters for the new semester:

1. Consult with a member of the DSO staff if changes to the plan are warranted.
2. If the student feels that the previous accommodation plan is suitable, they can simply fill out a Request for Accommodation Letters form as well as any applicable forms that are necessary for coordinating specific accommodations as outlined in Section IV (Request for Note-Taking Services, Request for Classroom Materials in Alternative Formats, etc.) and submit them to the Disability Services Office.
3. Letters of Accommodation are generally available for pick up and student distribution to professors within 48 hours of submission of Request for Accommodation Letters form in the Disability Services Office.

Changes in Your Accommodations Needs

Students are entitled to request additional accommodations or academic adjustments during the course of the semester, or at any time during their tenure at Centenary University. Students are also entitled to request modifications to the nature of the accommodations. Students must work with the Disability Services Office to determine the appropriate changes to accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services. The office should be contacted at earliest indication of emerging accommodation needs. Students must allow at least two weeks for the coordination and provision of new accommodations or modifications to existing accommodations.

It must be noted that Centenary University and the Disability Services Office reserve the right to deny requests for services or accommodations while the receipt of appropriate disability documentation is pending.

Maintenance of Documentation

The Centenary University DSO maintains a file containing all submitted documentation for a matriculated student throughout the student's tenure at Centenary University. When a student separates from the university, the file will be placed in an electronic archive for 7 years. After 7 years, the archived file will be destroyed.

Given limitations for storage of such files as well as the student's potential need for the documentation in the future, it is preferable that separating students make arrangements to pick up their documentation from the DSO prior to separation from the university. Students will be asked to sign a Release of Documentation form upon receipt of their documentation.

Documentation that is submitted in support of a student's application for the DSO's Special Programs will be maintained for a period of one academic year. If the candidate does not matriculate to Centenary University by the conclusion of the following year, the documentation will be destroyed.

Students are entitled to one copy of their documentation at no expense. Additional copies will be assessed a nominal fee. Students may request a copy of their documentation by emailing dso@centenaryuniversity.edu or by calling 908-852-1400, ext. 2168. Email requests for documentation must come directly from the individual who is requesting their file. Files will not be released to anyone, including parents, but the student or former student.

Section IV: Using Accommodations and Disability Services at Centenary University

The majority of accommodations at Centenary University are provided and/or coordinated through the Disability Services Office. In order to ensure that accommodations are provided in a timely and effective manner, specific procedures have been developed for the most common accommodative practices. Students should adhere to these procedures to request and utilize their accommodations. Students should discuss the process for coordinating non-standard accommodations (those not specifically discussed in this section), with a member of the DSO staff.

Testing Accommodations

Accommodative testing allows the student to take his/her exams in an alternative environment, or in an alternative format. Accommodative testing does not alter the content of the exam. Students with disabilities are held to the course requirements and the university's academic standards.

Procedure for Scheduling Testing Accommodations

1. Request and receive approval for testing accommodations.
2. Review and sign the Testing Accommodations Agreement, which outlines the student's responsibilities for each examination.
3. Schedule exam(s) through online booking site one week prior to the exam date at which time the DSO will contact the professor to complete the process and confirm all details provided by the student. Students are shown and provided with instructions for scheduling exams through online booking site. This process is required of all incoming freshman.
4. Current junior and senior students have the option to return a completed Release of Exam form to the DSO for each exam in which accommodations are requested **no later than three days prior to the examination date**. The Release of Exam form must be completed by the student and the professor. This option will eventually be replaced by scheduling exams through the online booking site.
5. An email will be sent to the student confirming the appointment.

Scheduling a Day and Time for the Exam

This generally should be the same day/time that the rest of the class is scheduled to take the exam unless a mitigating circumstance (such as a class immediately following the exam time which would preclude the student from the accommodation of extended time) occurs. In these situations, the student should collaborate with the DSO staff and the professor to work out an appropriate alternative. Please email DSO@centenaryuniversity.edu should this situation present itself. If the exam is re-scheduled by the professor, notify the DSO to re-schedule.

Day of Exam Instructions

- Report to the DSO Testing Coordinator at the scheduled time of exam. Any unexcused lateness will result in a reduction in the total amount of time allotted to complete the exam.

- Surrender to the proctor all materials that have not been approved by the professor on the Release of Exam form (backpacks, note-cards, cell phones, etc.).
- Review format of the examination with the proctor.
- Ask questions directly to the proctor. If proctor is unable to answer questions, the staff will arrange for you to ask questions of your professor (when possible).
- Take examination according to approved testing accommodations.
- Return completed exam to proctor. All scrap paper and worksheets must be returned with the exam.
- Notify DSO if lateness will occur or if unable to take scheduled examination.
Makeup exams will only be given with permission of the instructor.

Testing and Academic Integrity

Students registered with the DSO are expected to uphold all of the university's academic integrity policies and abide by the student Academic Code of Conduct. The DSO is committed to upholding these policies. Any actions that compromise academic integrity or Centenary University's Academic Code of Conduct will be referred to the professor for which the exam is being proctored. It is at the professor's discretion how to adjudicate the incident. This may include a referral to the Academic Review Board for appropriate disciplinary action. Furthermore, students who engage in acts of academic dishonesty while receiving testing accommodations through the DSO risk being subjected to special test scheduling criteria in order to ensure that a one-to-one proctor can be present.

In order to ensure the integrity of all exams and protect the reputations of students who utilize testing accommodations, the following activities may also be considered cheating:

- Possession and use of any non-approved material or device (course notes, cell phone, note-cards etc.)
- Leaving the testing location without approval
- Speaking with others besides the proctor, professor, or other official member of Centenary University or the DSO staff

If a student is found to be in violation of the academic code of conduct and/or the additional provisions, the exam will be stopped and returned to the professor with a note explaining the circumstances involved to necessitate the discontinuation of proctoring. The Academic Review Board will also be notified of the incident.

Note-Taking Services

Note-taking is provided as a means to accommodate students who, due to the impact of their disability, might otherwise miss recording important information in their notes. Notes for individual classes are generally provided in electronic format and are sent to the individual student through the department's e-mail account, dso@centenaryuniversity.edu. Provision of note-taking services is not a substitution for attending class and does not excuse a student from taking their own class notes or otherwise actively participating in the class.

Procedure for receiving note-taking services

1. Following approval of note-taking as a substantiated aspect of an accommodation plan, students should specifically request notes for each class in which they would like to utilize this accommodation by completing the Request for Note-Takers Form. This step should be completed each semester.
2. Students must inform the DSO of any changes to their class schedule in order to be correctly accommodated.
3. Students and professors reserve the right to monitor the quality of notes. If a student is not satisfied with the note-taking services, they should contact the DSO immediately, preferably in writing. When appropriate, the DSO will arrange for a different note-taker.
4. The DSO may ask the student's professors to assist in identifying students who would make good note-takers.
5. It is the note-taker's responsibility to obtain notes if he/she is unable to attend class so there is no gap in service.
6. Except under special circumstances, note-taking services are not a substitute for class attendance. Note-taking services are not provided when the student is not in class.

Course Materials in Alternative Formats

Course materials (including textbooks) are provided to assist students that, due to the impact of their disability, find it difficult or impossible to access the material in standard formats. Every attempt is made to provide these materials in a format that is preferred by the student; however in some cases the preferred format may not be readily available. In these cases the primary objective is to provide materials in the most accessible format for the students.

Procedure for Requesting Course Materials in Alternative Formats

Students who require their textbooks and other course materials in alternative or audio formats as an accommodation must adhere to the following procedures.

1. Students should complete the Request for Alternative Format Form as soon as they receive the details of their needed materials for the semester. Late notification will result in a delay in the acquisition of materials. Students must provide the title, author, edition, and ISBN number of text which they are requesting in an alternative format.
2. Students must purchase all textbooks that are requested in alternative format and must furnish proof of ownership before alternative format materials will be released to the student.

3. When materials arrive, the DSO will notify you via the method indicated on the form. Materials are available for pickup Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm or by appointment. Materials **will not** be mailed to students home.
4. Students eligible for audio books are set up with an account through Learning Ally upon completing a Request for Audio Books Form.

In some circumstances when audio books are unavailable through typical sources, attempts will be made to provide alternative formats through the other emerging technologies. The publisher may also be contacted to provide assistance in identifying a suitable resource.

Books, university publications and class materials are available in alternative formats (such as large print, audio format or in Braille) upon request.

Sign Language Interpreters/Captioning/CCTV/VRS

Sign language interpreting services and captioning services can be arranged for students with a diagnosed hearing impairment. Students must adhere to the following protocols in order to receive these services:

1. At the time of university registration, notify the DSO of interpreting or captioning needs for university classes or university activities by completing a Request for Deaf or Hearing Impaired Services form.
2. Students must notify the DSO of any class scheduling changes, including room location changes, course selection changes, or of class time changes.

When a student who utilizes interpreters or captioning services is unable to attend class due to illness or other reasons, they must notify the DSO at least 24 hours in advance. This advance notice is required to cancel interpreting and captioning services without a penalty. Students who develop a pattern of missing classes without notifying the DSO may be held responsible for interpreting/captioning costs.

Adaptive or Assistive Technology

Assistive technology (AT) is any item, piece of equipment, or product system used to increase, maintain, or improve access for individuals with disabilities. The Disability Services Office has an ever-changing variety of software and hardware that is available for loan to eligible students to assist them in mitigating the impact of their disability. Students should make an appointment with a member of the DSO staff in order to ascertain which types of technology are suitable for their individual needs.

Once specific AT components are identified that are believed to be potentially beneficial to minimizing the impact of the student's disability, the student should complete the AT Borrowing Contract. Arrangements will be made to provide the student with established components in accordance with standard equipment loan procedures. The following general policies guide the loaning of the DSO equipment to students:

- ❖ Use the borrowed materials for educational and accessibility purposes only
- ❖ Items are for personal use only and may not be shared with others

- ❖ Immediately report any damaged or lost materials to the Disability Services Office; whether or not you are responsible for the damage
- ❖ Loans are for a pre-determined time period and must be returned or renewed on or before the agreed upon date

Assistive technology is a rapidly evolving field, with innovative AT solutions constantly emerging. In the effort to provide students with the most effective AT solutions, Centenary University is committed to consistently upgrading its AT resources. Please periodically check with the DSO to learn about its latest improvements to Centenary University's AT resources.

Section V: Campus Accessibility Needs

Classrooms

The DSO arranges for classroom relocation for students with disabilities when appropriate.

Students must:

- Notify the DSO of their classroom accessibility needs at the time of registration.
- Students must provide information regarding their limitations with:
 - Desks
 - Seating
 - Stairs and/or elevators
 - Specific buildings on campus
- Once the accommodation is approved the DSO will then coordinate with the Registrar's office to ensure classrooms are in accessible locations.

Attending Campus Events

Accommodations for campus events are coordinated primarily by the department sponsoring the event with assistance provided by the DSO. Students must notify the sponsoring department of accommodation needed to attend the event (examples: sign language interpreters for a theatrical production or accessible transportation for off-campus trip sponsored by Centenary University).

Housing and Residence Halls

Basic Procedure to receive Housing Accommodation(s)

Complete the Application for Housing Accommodations and Services. This can be picked up at the Disability Services Office or you can email dso@centenaryuniversity.edu to get a copy.

Submit the application and any other supporting documentation that verifies functional limitations imposed by the disability(ies) that you identified in the application. If you need additional guidance regarding documentation guidelines, reach out to the Disability Services Office or refer to the Documentation Guidelines posted on the Disability Services Office website <http://www.centenaryuniversity.edu/academics/disability-services/>.

The Housing Accommodations Committee will review your application and documentation and a representative from the Disability Services Office will discuss your disability-related accommodation needs with you.

The DSO will contact you to inform you of the accommodation(s) that have been approved. Notification will be sent to your Centenary email address.

*Note: You must pay your housing deposit and complete necessary paperwork for housing selection with the Office of Residence Life.

Contact information for the Disability Services Office

E-Mail: dso@centenaryuniversity.edu

Phone: 908-852-1400 x2168 Fax: 908-979-4277

Policies for General Housing Accommodations

Policy for Single Room Housing Requests

Living within a community and sharing space is an accepted part of the college learning experience. Therefore, accommodation requests for a single room will be granted only when this is a necessity based on a student's disability(ies). Students making the request for a single room based on their disability will work through the Disability Services Office (DSO). Students must submit documentation from a licensed professional that supports the need for a single room. The Housing Accommodation Committee, made up of representatives from the DSO and Residence Life, with a representative from the Wellness Center, when needed, will review submitted documentation to determine if it is sufficient to support that the typical adjustments to having a roommate are not possible due to the student's disability.

Submission of a housing accommodation request does not guarantee availability of housing. The University strives to find the most appropriate housing for students with accommodation needs. However, due to the limited size of the campus and number of housing options, timely submission of paperwork is essential. Should a student be placed in a single room as an accommodation, the student will be charged the traditional double room occupancy rate. This should be reflected on the student's bill.

A returning student who has been approved for specific housing accommodation(s) is not required to participate in the Housing Selection process, but will need to complete the online Point Tally and online Returner Application for a Single Room and also inform the Disability Services Office of their intent to maintain their current accommodation approximately two weeks prior to the housing selection deadline. Upon receipt of the student's response that they plan to continue using their accommodation, the representative from the DSO office will offer the student available times to come in and choose their room with representative from Residence Life and the DSO. At this time the student should indicate their building preference. The student's indicated housing preference as well as the student's earned housing points will be considered when offering room placements to the student. Please note that, if a student's preference is a campus apartment building, the student will not be able to select their apartment-mates.

Roommate conflicts are not sufficient cause for the request of a single room. When a roommate conflict is the prevailing concern, the student must first attempt to resolve the conflict through mediation involving Residential Life staff, counseling and other services offered by the University. If there is sufficient documentation to prove that a single is necessary, all other options are completely exhausted and a room is available, the student will be granted the single room as an accommodation but continue to be charged the double occupancy rate.

Exceptions to the General Criteria:

Any student with a disability who chooses to self-select through the Housing Selection process will pay the full amount of the room they select and forfeit their accommodation for that housing period.

Deadlines:

Incoming Students: Must submit their application and documentation to the Disability Services Office by **June 30th**. Requests will be granted in the order they are received. Therefore, early submission is strongly recommended to increase the likelihood that the accommodation will be granted. That said, even for late submissions, Centenary University is committed to making every effort to accommodate based on the residential space available on campus at the time of submission.

Current Students: Must inform the Disability Services Office of intent to continue with a single room for the following year, approximately two weeks prior to Housing Selection. An email will be sent to current students detailing a specific response date. The Housing packet sent by Residence Life will also have this information.

Policy for Housing Requests that Require a Specific Type of Residence

An accommodation request for a specific type of residence will be granted only upon necessity based on a student's disability(ies). Students making a disability-related request for a limited share bathroom, access to a kitchen, etc. will work through the Disability Services Office (DSO). Students must submit documentation from a licensed professional that supports the need for this specific type of housing. The Housing Accommodation Committee, made up of representatives from the DSO and Residence Life, with a representative from the Wellness Center, when needed, will review submitted documentation to determine if it is sufficient to support that the typical adjustments to traditional housing are not possible due to the student's disability.

Submission of a housing accommodation request does not guarantee availability of housing. The University strives to find the most appropriate housing for students with accommodation needs. However, due to the limited size of the campus and number of housing options timely submission of paperwork is essential. Should a student be placed in a specific location or room as an accommodation, the student will be charged the traditional double room occupancy rate. This should be reflected on the student's bill.

A returning student who has been approved for specific housing accommodation(s) is not required to participate in the Housing Selection process, but will need to complete the online Point Tally and online Returner Application for a Single Room and also inform the Disability Services Office of their intent to maintain their current accommodation approximately two weeks prior to the housing selection deadline. Upon receipt of the student's response that they plan to continue using their accommodation, the representative from the DSO will offer the student available times to come in and choose their room with representative from Residence Life and the DSO. At this time the student should indicate their building preference. The student's indicated housing preference as well as the student's earned housing points will be considered when offering room placements to the student. Please note that, if a student's preference is a campus apartment building, the student will not be able to select their apartment-mates.

Exceptions to the General Criteria:

Any student with a disability who chooses to self-select through the Housing Selection process will pay the full amount of the room they select and forfeit their accommodation for that housing period.

If the accommodation need can be met in any building on campus (for example, a first floor room) then the student will be charged for the location that the student has selected.

Deadlines:

Incoming Students: Must submit their application and documentation to the Disability Services Office by **June 30th**. Requests will be granted in the order they are received. Therefore, early submission is strongly recommended to increase the likelihood that an accommodation will be granted. That said, even for late submissions, Centenary University is committed to making every effort to accommodate based on the residential space available on campus at the time of submission.

Current Students: Must inform the Disability Services Office of their intent to continue with your special location request for the following year, approximately two weeks prior to Housing Selection. An email will be sent out to current students detailing a specific response date. The Housing packet sent by Residence Life will also have this information.

Policy for Air Conditioning

An accommodation request for an air conditioner will be granted only when this is a necessity based upon a student's disability(ies). Students making the request for an air conditioner based on their disability will work through the Disability Services Office (DSO). Students must submit documentation from a licensed professional that supports the need for air conditioning. The Housing Accommodation Committee, made up of representatives from the DSO and Residence Life, with a representative from the Wellness Center, when needed, will review submitted documentation to determine if it is sufficient to support the need for this accommodation. Submission of a request does not guarantee that it will be granted. The University strives to find the most appropriate housing for students with accommodation needs but due to the limited number of available air conditioner units and spaces on campus with central air conditioning, timely submission of paperwork is essential.

Air conditioning units will be provided by the University to students with an approved accommodation of air conditioning. Therefore, there is no need for students to bring a unit at move in.

Deadlines:

Incoming Students: Must submit their application and documentation to the Disability Services Office by **June 30th**. Requests will be granted in the order they are received. Therefore, early submission is strongly recommended to increase the likelihood that an accommodation will be granted. That said, even for late submissions, Centenary University is committed to making every effort to accommodate based on the availability of housing with the electrical abilities to install air conditioning units and housing with central air conditioning.

Current Students: Once a student has completed the Housing Selection process, the student must inform Disability Services of their housing placement. If the student has been placed in middle campus, an air conditioning unit will be installed in the student's room prior to their return for the fall semester. If the student is placed in the apartments, then the student will not need an air conditioning unit since the apartments have central air conditioning. Please inform the Disability Services Office of this prior to May 15th.

Other Requests

Any accommodation request will be granted only when this is a necessity based on a student's disability(ies). Students making a request based on their disability will work through the Disability Services Office (DSO).

If a student's request requires an installation, the procedure will follow that of the air conditioner request.

For information regarding Service and Assistance Animals please see the policies posted in the Disability Services Handbook or request a copy from the Disability Services Office.

For anything not covered, contact the Disability Services office for more information.

Deadlines:

Incoming Students: Must submit their application and documentation to the Disability Services Office by **June 30th**. Requests will be granted in the order they are received. Therefore, early submission is strongly recommended to increase the likelihood that an accommodation will be granted. That said, even for late submissions, Centenary University is committed to making every effort to accommodate based on availability.

Current Students: Follow the deadlines for the most similar request above or contact the Disability Services Office for more information. Please note that the Disability Services Office does send reminder emails when students need to confirm accommodation requests, so it is important that students regularly check their email.

Emotional Support Animal Policy for Residence Halls

Overview

Centenary University acknowledges that emotional support animals (ESA) can play an important role for some individuals with disabilities. The University will reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities to have emotional support animals in their residence if there is a documented need for such an accommodation. In order to ensure the health and safety of Centenary University students, faculty, and staff, as well as the ESA, only ESAs that meet the criteria described in this policy will be exempt from the rules that typically prohibit animals from living in the Residence Halls. Students must comply with the *Emotional Support Animal Policy* of the University.

Emotional support animals provide therapeutic support to individuals with an identified disability to ameliorate symptoms or effects of that disability. ESAs are not required to be trained to assist an individual with specific tasks or activities of daily living and can be species other than dogs or miniature horses. Therefore they are not considered Service Animals and do not qualify for legal protection under ADA. Service animals, as defined by the ADA, are limited to dogs and miniature horses. Under the Fair Housing Act (FHA), an emotional support animal may be viewed as a reasonable housing accommodation. Every attempt will be made by the University to ensure University policies adjust as changes in the laws may occur. Requests for an ESA are reviewed on a case by case basis.

ESAs cannot be kept in university residence halls without prior approval from the Disability Services Office.

Emotional Support Animal Determination Process

A request for an ESA as a housing accommodation must be initiated with the Disability Services Office.

- 1.) Student must submit an Application for FHA Housing Protection and documentation from a qualified external, licensed medical professional that substantiates a relevant disability and identifies specific impacts that are related to the disability. Documentation must describe criteria used to assess the impact of the disability. This documentation should make a clear case for the necessity of a specific ESA in alleviating the impact of diagnosed disabilities and the necessity of the emotional support animal to allow the student equal access to residence living and programs at the University. Documentation must be submitted at least 3 weeks in advance of bringing the animal to campus to process the application.
- 2.) Application and documentation is reviewed by the Housing Accommodations Committee comprised of Disability Services and Residence Life staff.
- 3.) In considering whether an ESA is a reasonable accommodation or when making housing assignments for individuals with ESAs, the Housing Accommodations Committee will take into account the following factors:
 - A. Suitability of proposed animal for the university environment including:
 - Is the animal's crate or enclosure size feasible for available assigned housing space? *Crate/enclosure must fit in double occupancy rooms*

as small as 10'6"W x 14'6"L without unduly intruding upon living space. Typically the maximum crate/enclosure size is medium.

- Does the animal's presence impact another individual in the housing space (e.g. serious allergies)?
 - Does the animal's presence otherwise violate other resident's rights to peace and quiet?
 - Is the animal housebroken?
 - Are the animal's required vaccinations up to date?
 - Does the animal exhibit or has exhibited dangerous or aggressive behavior?
 - Does the animal cause or has it caused damage to housing beyond reasonable wear and tear?
- B. Evidence of consistent, significant impact of disability within the University environment.
- C. Evidence that proposed emotional support animal would be beneficial in alleviating the impact of that stated disability.
- 4) The request for an ESA is rejected, approved, or pending. The DSO will notify the applicant via email
- 5) Students with approved requests must complete the following steps :
- Submit the Emotional Support Animal Registration Form and submit to the Disability Services Office within 6 weeks from date of acceptance.
 - Review and sign the Emotional Support Animal Owner's Statement in presence of a DSO staff member
 - Submit documentation of the ESA's current vaccinations and a health statement from a licensed veterinarian dated within one year of application.
 - Request roommate(s) to send an email to Disability Services Office indicating their knowledge and acceptance of residing with the ESA.
- 6) An approved emotional support animal may then be brought to campus in defined locations only. Pending requests must meet the conditions outlined via e-mail within 3 weeks or the application will be rejected.
- 7) Rejected requests may go to the appeal process. Appeals should be submitted to the Dean of Students who will determine the best course of action to address the concern.

Responsibilities of Owners Using Emotional Support Animals in Housing

Local Mandates

- The ESA must meet the codes/regulations of local and state ordinances and laws.
- The owner is responsible for ensuring that the ESA meets these mandates.
- If an ESA must be licensed, according to local and/or state mandates, then proof of licensing must be provided to the Disability Services Office as part of the

application process. For information about Hackettstown policies please contact the Animal Control Officer at (908) 625-0106

Health

- The ESA must be properly groomed and in good health. Measures must be taken at all times for flea, tick, odor control, etc. If fleas or ticks are discovered during a housing inspection, the student will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment
- Documentation of vaccination records dated within the past year are due at time of submitting Application for FHA Housing Protection requesting an ESA. The University reserves the right to request an updated verification at any time during the ESA's residency.
- The ESA should be bathed on a regular basis. ESAs cannot be bathed in residence hall facilities.

General Responsibilities

- Owner must register approved ESA with the Disability Services Office by completing the Emotional Support Animal Registration Form and Emotional Support Animal Owner's Statement and providing all necessary documentation.
- Care, feeding and supervision of the ESA are the sole responsibility of the owner.
- The ESA must not be left alone overnight or in the care of another student/individual.
- The owner will develop an emergency plan for the ESA in case of an evacuation of the building during his/her absence or if they must travel without notice.
- If traveling without notice and the owner is unable to bring the ESA, he/she should have a kennel or off campus location to bring the ESA
- Owner is responsible for any damage caused by his or her ESA and must take precautions to prevent damage or injury. The owner is responsible for any expenses above and beyond a normal cleaning or repairs that are assessed after the owner vacates the residence.
 - ✓ Note – all damage caused by urine, feces or physical damage to beds, furniture and floor finishing will be charged. This could include fees to replace furniture or the entire apartment's carpet.
- An ESA must be contained within the private and common residential area (i.e., room, apartment, and suite) at all times unless transported by leash or carrier by owner.
- The owner must notify the Disability Services Office and Residence Life in writing if the ESA is no longer necessary or no longer residing on campus.
- The owner is financially responsible for the actions/behavior of the ESA (property damage, bites, scratches, running away, etc.). It is in the owner's

interest to consider obtaining renter's and/or liability insurance to provide coverage for any damages to university property or persons as a result of the ESA.

- ESA waste must be placed in a sturdy plastic bag, tied securely, and disposed of in outside trash receptacles on a regular basis.
- The owner is responsible for controlling animal related odor in the dormitory room and in the immediate vicinity of the room.
- Owner must request and ensure that current roommates/apartment-mates email Disability Services Office informing that they are willing to live in the room/apartment with the ESA.
 - ✓ If roommates/apartment mates are unwilling to live with ESA then Residence Life Office will work with the student(s) to determine appropriate housing solutions. This may mean that the student with the ESA will need to change rooms.
- If an ESA should pass away, it is the owner's responsibility to remove the animal from campus on that same day. The animal cannot be buried or stored on campus.
 - ✓ Hackettstown Animal Hospital has storage and cremation options. They can be contacted at 908.852.3166.

Restricted Areas

- An ESA is permitted only within the student's on-campus housing assignment.
- An ESA must be kept enclosed in a cage/crate when the owner is not present.

Conflicting Health Needs/Concerns

- Other students with animal allergies or medical concerns regarding the ESA should direct their concerns to the Disability Services Office and provide documentation to the Disability Services Office.
- If there is a conflicting health need or concern within a residence hall that cannot be resolved, Residence Life and the Disability Services Office will collaborate on a solution.
- An ESA cannot be removed from campus solely because individuals claim allergies or fear of animals.

Removal of Approved Emotional Support Animals

- The University's Residence Life staff has the right to inspect the living space to investigate complaints or concerns and/or to confirm the student's compliance with the *Emotional Support Animal Policy*.

An ESA may be excluded from the University for the following:

- Unruly or disruptive behaviors.
- Owner does not follow through with proper care and grooming of animal (illness of animal, poor hygiene, evidence of fleas or ticks, excessive animal odor).
- Animal exhibits aggressive behaviors.
- Animal causes damage to property.
- Animal has consistent accidents outside of its cage.
- If an ESA is excluded from campus, alternative accommodations will be reviewed with the student and the Disability Services Office.
- If an ESA is unduly disruptive or poses an immediate threat to others, the student will be asked to remove the ESA from University property. In such a case the ESA will be removed within 24 hours of the University's request.

Centenary University reserves the right to amend this policy as circumstances require.

Service Animals Policy

Service Animal Overview

Centenary University acknowledges that Service Animals play an important role in fostering the independence of some individuals with disabilities. The University will reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities to be accompanied by their Service Animals in campus facilities where animals are typically prohibited on campus. In order to ensure the health and safety of Centenary University students, faculty, and staff, as well as the Service Animals, only Service Animals will be exempt from the rules that typically prohibit animals on campus.

Students and campus personnel should not attempt to pet, feed, or distract Service Animals, as they are working companions.

Students and campus personnel should not prevent a Service Animal from accompanying its handler, except where specifically prohibited. Specific locations, such as, the cafeteria kitchen where food preparation is occurring, may prohibit a Service Animal due to health and safety restrictions. If it is determined an area is unsafe, reasonable accommodations will be provided to ensure equal access to the student needing such areas.

Service Animals Policy

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Service Animals are permitted in University facilities. A Service Animal means a dog (in some cases a miniature horse) trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Examples of the functions of Services Animals include, but are not limited to: guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting

individuals with impaired hearing, pulling a wheelchair, providing physical support, providing minimal rescue or non-violent protection work, preventing impulsive/destructive behavior, assisting during a seizure, etc. Emotional Support Animals are not Service Animals and are not covered under the ADA, therefore the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort or companionships does not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition. For more information on emotional support animals, please refer to the Emotional Support Animal section of this handbook.

To work on campus, a Service Animal must be specifically trained to perform a service function. Furthermore, the Service Animal should wear a harness, cape, identification tag or other gear that clearly identifies its working status. Although not required, this is in the best interest of the student and the animal.

Service Animals whose behavior pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others may be excluded regardless of training or certification. Actions that pose a direct threat include but are not limited to; barking, growling, jumping and biting.

Service Animals are meant to assist the handler with daily functions and therefore must be with the handler at all times (with brief exceptions for personal care activities, in which the Service Animal must be kept in a kennel or cage in the student's Residence Hall Room). Service Animals that are being left alone or in the care of another person may be excluded from the University.

Service Animals are the responsibility of the handler. All care, feeding, disposing of waste and supervision of the animal are the responsibility of the handler.

The handler is also responsible for:

- Any damage caused by his/her animal and must take precautions to prevent damage.
- Measures should be taken to prevent flea and tick infestations, such as Frontline or other equivalent medications. Should an infestation occur the handler will be charged cleaning and replacement costs.
- Maintaining a clean and odor-free living environment.
- Any expenses above and beyond a normal cleaning or repairs that are assessed after the handler vacates the residence.

Further Requirements for Public Behavior of Service Animals:

Each handler is expected to maintain appropriate behavior of the animal as follows:

- Animal must not initiate contact/approach people, dining tables, or the personal belongings of others.
- Animal must be harnessed or leashed while on campus and in campus buildings, unless the harness or leash interfere with the service animals work or the person's disability prevents use of these devices.
- Animal must not display behaviors or noises that are disruptive to others.
- Animal must not block an aisle or passageway.
- Animal must be trained not to be attracted to food that may be in close proximity.

A Service Animal may be excluded from the University for the following reasons:

- Unruly or disruptive behaviors (ex. barking, growling, jumping on people). If disruptive behavior occurs repeatedly, the handler may be prohibited from bringing the animal to University facilities until it is demonstrated that the handler has taken steps to alleviate such behaviors.
- Handler does not follow through with proper care and grooming of animal (illness of animal, poor hygiene, evidence of fleas or ticks).
- Animal exhibits aggressive behaviors.
- Damage to property.
- Animal has consistent accidents in buildings due to not being housebroken.

If a Service Animal is excluded from campus, alternative accommodations will be reviewed with the student and the DSO.

Students must comply with the Service Animal Policy of the University. Centenary University reserves the right to amend this policy as circumstances require and laws are adjusted.

Section VI: Advocacy

Talking to Your Professors

Although there are more students with disabilities in postsecondary education today than ever before, it is very possible that there are situations in which the university instructors have had little prior experience with students with disabilities. Also, the student may have difficulty self-advocating or expressing their needs.

The DSO recommends the following strategies to use when talking to your professors for the first time about your disability and need for accommodations:

- Be prepared! Practice what you are going to say and be prepared to discuss your abilities, your disabilities, and the accommodations you are requesting. Bring your accommodation letter from the DSO with you.
- Don't procrastinate! Make an appointment to talk with your instructor(s) within the first two weeks of each semester. Adjustments and accommodations need to be planned as early as possible, especially when it involves testing accommodations.
- Take it with you! Bring your Accommodation Letter from the DSO. Remember the Accommodation Letter verifies your need for accommodations and your registration with the DSO. YOU must request these letters at the beginning of each semester.
- Problems? When problems arise, contact the Director of Disability Services as soon as possible. In most situations, you and the instructor will work out the provision of accommodations in a way that is agreeable to all parties involved. If you have difficulties working this out, contact the DSO.

10 Tips for Self-Advocacy

1. Know and understand your rights and responsibilities.
2. Ask questions whenever you need clarification.
3. Repeat a question until it is satisfactorily answered.
4. Keep a "paper trail" of all written communication regarding your education. It is appropriate to request copies of all records and documentation.
5. Remember that you are an equal partner in your education.
6. Let people know that you intend to work to resolve issues.
7. Learn all you can about your disability: needs, strengths, and weaknesses.
8. Know what resources are available to you and use them.
9. Know who the key contacts are. Find the appropriate person to best help you.
10. Praise and thank people when appropriate.

Section VII: Confidentiality, Appeals, and Grievance Procedures

Policy on Confidentiality

General Rule

The Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) regulates disclosure of disability documentation and records maintained by the DSO. The DSO requires prior written consent by the student before the DSO may release disability documentation or records to any third party.

Exception to the Rule

Under FERPA, the DSO is permitted to release information to any school official who has a "legitimate educational interest."

What does this mean?

Professors or other school officials, such as tutors, may request information about the impact of a student's disability on their ability to learn. The DSO will only share information with other school officials when appropriate and will carefully balance a student's request for confidentiality and the request for additional, relevant information about the student. The DSO seeks to preserve the student's wish to keep their disability information and status confidential.

Other Students' Rights under FERPA

FERPA also allows students to inspect and review their files maintained by the DSO. Students have the right to challenge any information contained in the files that is incorrect or misleading and request an amendment to this misinformation.

Appeals Process and Grievance Procedures for Alleged Discrimination

Centenary University has adopted the following appeals process and grievance procedure to address complaints of disability discrimination, retaliation, harassment or failure to provide a reasonable accommodation:

1. Any aggrieved individual ("Complainant") may file a complaint in writing, containing the name and address of the person filing the complaint and describing the discriminatory act;
2. The complaint shall be filed in the office of the Director of Disability Services within 30 days after the complainant becomes aware of the allegedly discriminatory act. Should the Director be a party to the complaint, the complaint should be filed in the Human Resources Office with the Director of Human Resources/Section 504 Coordinator who will inform the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Chief Academic Officer;

3. The Director of Disability Services will investigate the allegations in the complaint. The Director of Human Resources/Section 504 Coordinator may assist in the investigation as necessary. Should the Director of Disability Services be a party to the complaint, the complaint will be investigated by the Director of Human Resources/Section 504 Coordinator;
4. All interested persons and their representatives shall be afforded the opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the investigation. Such evidence shall be submitted to the Director of Disability Services during the course of the investigation;
5. The Director of Disability Services shall issue a written decision determining the validity of the allegations and distribute copies of the decision to the interested parties no later than 45 days after the filing of the complaint. If the decision cannot reasonably be issued within 45 days because unusual or complex circumstances exist, then the Director of Disability Services shall alert the parties of the same;
6. The Director of Disability Services shall implement all appropriate remedial steps necessary to address any findings of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or failure to accommodate;
7. Should the Complainant choose to appeal the DSO Director's decision; the appeal shall be made in writing within 30 days of the date of receipt of the decision; appeal shall be submitted to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for any academic grievances or the Vice President of Student Life for any housing grievances and shall demonstrate that (1) there is new evidence; or (2) the investigation or decision exhibited prejudice or other unfair treatment;
8. The Vice President for Academic Affairs or Vice President for Student Life will render a final written decision and distribute copies of the same to interested parties, including the Director of Disability Services, within 60 days of the filing of the appeal. If the decision cannot reasonably be issued within 60 days because unusual or complex circumstances exist, then the Vice President of Academic Affairs or Vice President for Academic Affairs will alert the parties of the same.

Alternative Remedies

An individual claiming discrimination, harassment or retaliation may also file a complaint with:

Linda Colon, Regional Manager
Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Jacob Javits Federal Building
26 Federal Plaza - Suite 3312
New York, NY 10278
Voice Phone (212)264-3313
FAX (212)264-3039
TDD (212)264-2355
Email: ocrmail@hhs.gov

Section VIII: Special Programs

Project ABLE

Description

Project ABLE is an educationally based, comprehensive learning support program designed specifically for students with diagnosis that affect learning.

The purpose of the program is to provide a "bridge" between the structured and sometimes modified secondary-school setting to the predominantly self-directed university environment. This is accomplished through the creation and implementation of a student-centered success plan developed collaboratively with a Learning Support Specialist that includes the use of accommodations and services.

Project ABLE emphasizes personal responsibility, self-advocacy, independence, remediation of study skills and techniques, development of self-help skills, and personal reflection.

Project ABLE Services include individual weekly meetings with a Learning Support Specialist, seminars/activities, access to professional tutors trained in disability issues, interpersonal skills support group, close academic monitoring, and disability issues counseling.

Enrollment

Students interested in the Project ABLE program should apply by using the Application for Intensive Support Services after being accepted into Centenary. Their application should then be sent to the Disability Services Office with documentation of a disability which affects learning. The director will request additional documentation as needed. Consideration for the Project ABLE program is based on a thorough review of all educational records. Documentation will be reviewed only by the DSO staff.

Fees

The fee for the program is determined by the University's Senior Administration and Board of Trustees on an annual basis. The fee is assessed on a per semester basis until a student formally withdraws from the program.

Failure to utilize services or cooperate with program staff, policies, or procedures does not warrant a refund of the program fee.

Withdrawal

A Project ABLE participant may "opt out" or "withdraw" from the program during the time period at the conclusion of a given semester until the end of the standard 'add/drop' period at the beginning of the next semester. The Disability Services Office notifies program participants via email near the completion of the fall and spring semesters to remind them of the opportunity to withdraw from the program. Students may withdraw from Project ABLE in the following ways:

- ❖ Check the appropriate box on the notification letter, sign, and date it and return it to the DSO by e-mail dso@centenaryuniversity.edu, Fax 908-979-4277, or mail 400 Jefferson Street, Hackettstown, NJ 07840
- ❖ Send an e-mail to any DSO staff member (you must request a read receipt to ensure that the message is received)
- ❖ Sign a statement of withdrawal in the DSO Office.

A student is automatically re-enrolled in the program if no notice of intent to withdraw is received before the stated deadline. A student may re-enroll themselves in the program after a withdrawal at any point during the tenure at Centenary University as an undergraduate student.

STEP Ahead

Description

The STEP Ahead Program at Centenary University is an intense four-week residential pre-entrance program held during Summer Session II for incoming Freshman enrolled in Project ABLE. It is designed to enhance the development of a student's self-advocacy, independence, interpersonal and academic skills.

The primary goal of the STEP Ahead Program is to appropriately prepare the student for college level work. Enrollment is limited to 12-15 students who have specific learning disabilities that affect academics and whose educational background indicates a need for basic skills remediation, developmental education, or specialized supported challenges designed to address academic, social, and/or emotional concerns. Admission to the program is limited to those students who have been accepted for and intend to enroll at Centenary University in the fall semester.

STEP Ahead presents the opportunity to earn credits toward graduation, develop the skills needed to succeed at the post-secondary level, interact with members of the faculty, experience living and studying on campus, remediate areas of weakness and hone strengthen and familiarize oneself with campus resources and offices.

STEP Ahead offers the ability to create a personalized success plan, a professional student-centered staff, appropriate college level and developmental coursework, specific seminars and activities, access to professional tutors trained in disability issues, and an opportunity to realize one's true potential.

Enrollment

Candidates for enrollment into the STEP Ahead program are identified thorough evaluation of the educational records that have been supplied for consideration for admission to the Project ABLE program. Candidates are invited to be considered for inclusion in the program after a review of educational records indicates strong potential as well as a need for further preparation for college level work. STEP Ahead candidates may be offered an interview with a member of the DSO staff in order to discuss their educational background and to ascertain their suitability for inclusion in the program.

Fees

The fee for the program is determined by the University's Senior Administration and Board of Trustees on an annual basis. The fee for the program includes all instruction, academic support, trips, housing, and meals. The fee generally does not include textbooks or other personal materials.

Section IX: Resources

This list of clickable resources is provided as a starting point to gaining more information on a variety of topics. This list is by no means intended to be an exhaustive listing of all available resources, but rather offers a plethora of reputable resources for learning more about living with a disability.

General Disability

- [Association of Higher Education and Disability \(AHEAD\)](#)
- [HEATH Resource Center](#)
- [The US Government's Clearinghouse for Disability Information](#)
- U.S. Department of Education Publication: ["Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities"](#)

ADHD/ADD

- [C.H.A.D.D.](#)
- [National Attention Deficit Disorder Association](#)
- [National Center for Learning Disabilities \(NCLD\)](#)
- [One ADD Place](#)

Asperger's Syndrome/Autism

- [Autism Speaks](#)
- [Autism Society](#)
- [Asperger Autism Spectrum Education Network \(ASPEN\)](#)

Chronic Health

- [Health Information Resources](#)
- [Coping with Chronic Illness](#)

Hearing Impairments

- [The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association \(ASHA\)](#)
- [Communication Access Network](#)
- [National Association for the Deaf](#)
- [Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services- Hearing Loss](#)

Jobs/Employment

- [The Campaign for Disability Employment](#)

Learning Disabilities

- [C.H.A.D.D.](#)
- [International Dyslexia Association](#)
- [LD OnLine](#)
- [Learning Disabilities Association of America](#)
- [National Center for Learning Disabilities \(NCLD\)](#)
- [Bookshare](#)

Mobility Impairments

- [Mobility International USA](#)
- [Free Booklet from The United Spinal Association: Taking Action](#)

Support

- [Dawn Center for Independent Living](#)
- [New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation](#)
- [Warren County Self-Help Groups](#)

Speech Impairments

- [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association](#)
- [National Aphasia Association](#)
- [The Stuttering Foundation](#)

Visual Impairments

- [American Council of the Blind](#)
- [Learning Ally](#)
- [National Federation of the Blind](#)