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# Disability Certification, Accommodation and Support – Students

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## Policy Statement

The University of Vermont is committed to providing an educational atmosphere and experience that is accessible to all qualified students, including students with disabilities. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794 (Section 504), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. 12131 (the ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008, (the ADAA), prohibit institutions such as the University of Vermont from discriminating against qualified students with disabilities and require that reasonable and effective academic accommodations be provided to such students. It is, therefore, the policy of the University of Vermont not to discriminate against students with disabilities in any program or activity of the University for which the student is qualified, and to provide reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to such students with due regard for the integrity of academic programs.

## Reason for the Policy

This policy establishes that the University of Vermont does not discriminate against qualified students with disabilities and that the University is committed to working with such students to provide reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access to programs of the University and to support the student's success in their educational programs. This policy further establishes that the Student Accessibility Office ("SAS") is the University office responsible for providing students with information on how to obtain certification of a disability and how to seek reasonable accommodation(s) for a disability.

## Applicability of the Policy

This policy applies to any qualified student seeking accommodation for a disability at the University of Vermont<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> This policy addresses accommodations for students related to their academic program and other programs offered to students of the University. Students seeking reasonable accommodation related to employment at the University should refer to the Disability and Accommodation Policy for Employees,

## Policy Elaboration

See Procedures

## Definitions

*Disability:* A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment.

*Qualified Individual With a Disability:* An individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable accommodations, meets the academic requirements and technical standards of behavior and performance required of all students.

*Reasonable Accommodation:* A reasonable accommodation is one that will allow a student with a disability to have an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, a service, program or activity of the University without an undue administrative or financial burden to the University. Reasonable accommodations may include adjustment to activities, space or the physical plant of the University. Reasonable accommodations may also include appropriate academic adjustments. Academic adjustments that lower or substantially alter the technical standards or essential academic requirements or elements of a program, course or curriculum are not “reasonable accommodations.” Accommodations that pose a direct threat to the health or safety of the student or others are not “reasonable accommodations.”

## Procedures

Students who wish to be considered for a reasonable accommodation for a disability must contact the SAS Office. Faculty or staff approached by a student asserting the need for an accommodation must refer the student to the SAS Office for initial certification of whether the student has a disability and to initiate the process of determining potential reasonable accommodations. Procedures applicable to students requesting accommodation for a disability may be found at: <http://www.uvm.edu/access/>

Documentation of disability furnished by the student will be kept confidential and will be shared with University personnel only with permission of the student, except as is otherwise required by law. If the documentation provided is determined to be insufficient by the staff of the Certifying Office, the Certifying Office reserves the right to request additional documentation considered reasonably necessary to determine appropriate and effective accommodations on the college level.

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<http://www.uvm.edu/policies/hr/disabilityemployee.pdf> Students needing assistance or modifications to course requirements, residential housing or other programs of the University as a result of temporary physical limitations due to illness or injury should refer to information available on the website for the Center for Health and Well-Being [http://www.uvm.edu/~chwb/health/?Page=mobility\\_issues.html&SM=adminmenu.html](http://www.uvm.edu/~chwb/health/?Page=mobility_issues.html&SM=adminmenu.html)

After a student is certified as having a disability, if there is disagreement on what accommodations may be reasonable, the University will engage with the student in an interactive process to make a decision on appropriate and reasonable accommodations.

If a student believes that they have been discriminated against at the University because he or she has a disability, is perceived as having a disability, or is affiliated with an individual with a disability, the student should contact the Office of Affirmative Action Equal Opportunity for further information, assistance or to make a complaint. Procedures for filing a complaint and for investigation of complaints may be found at: <http://www.uvm.edu/~aaeo/>

## Forms

Disability Verification Form – Attention Deficit Disorder

<http://www.uvm.edu/access/docguidelines/Disability-Verification-for-Students-with-Attention-Deficit-Disorders-Form.pdf>

Disability Verification Form – Psychiatric Conditions

<http://www.uvm.edu/access/docguidelines/Disability-Verification-for-Students-with-Psychological-Disabilities-Form.pdf>

Disability Verification Form – Sensory Disabilities/Systemic or Chronic Illnesses/Other Disabilities

<http://www.uvm.edu/access/docguidelines/Disability-Verification-for-Students-with-Chronic-Health-Disabilities-Form.pdf>

Disability Verification Form – Residential Life

<http://www.uvm.edu/access/docguidelines/Disability-Verification-for-Students-with-Chronic-Health-Disabilities-Form.pdf>

Request for Emotional Support Animal (ESA)

[http://www.uvm.edu/access/docguidelines/ESA\\_Form.pdf](http://www.uvm.edu/access/docguidelines/ESA_Form.pdf)

## Contacts

Questions related to the daily operational interpretation of this policy should be directed to:

SAS Director (for students requesting accommodations)

A-170 Living Learning Center

University of Vermont

Burlington, Vermont 05405

(802) 656-7753

Director of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity (for discrimination concerns)

428 Waterman Building

University of Vermont

Burlington, Vermont 05405

(802) 656-3368

The Vice Provost for Student Affairs is the University official responsible for the interpretation and administration of this policy.

## **Related Documents/Policies**

Disability Accommodation for Employees and Applicants for Employment Policy

<http://www.uvm.edu/policies/hr/disabilityemployee.pdf>

Equal Opportunity in Educational Programs and Activities and Non-Harassment Policy

<http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/equaledu.pdf>

Service and Comfort Animals Procedure

<http://www.uvm.edu/policies/facil/serviceanimal.pdf>

## **Effective Date**

Approved by the President August 21, 2015