

## Job Description

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<b>Job Title:</b>	Associate Director Academic Accommodation
<b>Department:</b>	AccessAbility Services
<b>Reports To:</b>	Director, AccessAbility Services
<b>Jobs Reporting:</b>	Accommodation Consultants, Lead Consultant, Clinical Record Evaluators
<b>Salary Grade:</b>	USG 12
<b>Effective Date:</b>	December 2023

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### **Primary Purpose**

The Associate Director Academic Accommodation reports to the Director, AccessAbility Services, and is part of the senior leadership team accountable for strategic leadership, effective management, successful implementation, and coordination of professional, ethical, efficient, effective and student-centered triage, intake and on-going accommodation support to students registered with AccessAbility Services. The incumbent is a subject matter expert on academic accommodations for university students with disabilities, accountable for defining and determining the threshold of the University's duty to accommodate and supporting faculty in upholding it in accordance with Ontario Human Rights Code (the Code) and supporting regulations. The Associate Director is responsible for providing clinical oversight, supervision, and direction to the student accommodation planning and consulting team, responsible for designing and implementing academic accommodations (both undergraduate and graduate), petition support; work placement support; and clinical record evaluation for students with permanent, temporary, and suspected disabilities. The incumbent is responsible for ensuring accommodation and service procedures provide a supportive experience for students with disabilities, ensuring effective student engagement strategies to deliver student-centric programming based on the unique needs throughout all stages of their education from pre-arrival through to graduate school. The incumbent is responsible for ensuring accommodation and service procedures are developed in accordance with Ministry requirements, human rights law, privacy standards, University policies and industry standards of practice. As the clinical lead for the office, the incumbent will offer sound guidance and support to campus partners, including faculty, Chairs, and Associate Deans, related to accommodating students with disabilities, particularly, managing complex cases, petitions, and other exemptions on the grounds of disability.

### **Key Accountabilities**

#### **Provides strategic leadership and direction to the Student Accommodation Planning and Consulting Team**

- Provide direction, strategies, management, structure and process for the assessment, planning, and provision of facilities, services, programs and initiatives in support of the planning, delivery and facilitation of academic accommodations to students with disabilities, disabling conditions and/or those impacted by trauma registered with AccessAbility Services.
- Contributes to a strategic and coordinated approach between the two main units within AccessAbility Services: The Student Accommodation Services team that develops and delivers student accommodation services, and the incumbent's Student Accommodation Planning and Consulting Team that designs and directs the accommodation plan that not only upholds but defines and determines the threshold of the University's legal duty to accommodate.
- Develops strategies and mechanisms for engaging students and guiding them through accommodation registration, planning, and delivery in an efficient, effective and supportive manner.

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- Functions as an “optimizer” with a focus on maximizing efficiencies without compromising quality and timely delivery of supports to students.
- Ensures integration and coordination of any new programs and services with those currently offered by AAS and campus partners.
- Contributes to strategic development and delivery of processes and services that ensure professional, ethical, efficient, effective and student-centered approaches are provided to students registered with AccessAbility Services.
- Offers sound clinical guidance and support to campus partners, including faculty, Chairs, and Associate Deans, including vetting documentation and offering advice on outcomes for student petitions, grievances, misconduct, and other complex matters.
- Offers clinical guidance to campus partners to determine whether students with disabilities are eligible for funding opportunities, accommodations, and exemptions on the grounds of disability under the Code. This involves working collaboratively with campus partners, including the Registrar’s Office, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs, and Waterloo Housing and Residences.

**Provides Leadership and support for strategic planning, policy development, financial administration and resources allocation in conjunction with the senior leadership team.**

- Assists in the overall management of AccessAbility Services by participating in the decision-making process of the other units reporting to the Director, AccessAbility Services.
- Provides leadership and support for AccessAbility Services’ strategic planning, policy development, financial administration and resource allocation in conjunction with the senior leadership team.
- Establishes objectives and performance expectations in alignment with the overall objectives and direction of AccessAbility Services’ and strategically plans for continuous improvement.
- Provides the Director with timely and accurate information for the continuous improvement of services, and to assist with program evaluation and department decision-making related to supporting accommodations.
- Provides advice and input to the Director, AccessAbility Services regarding the overall expenditures and maintenance of the AAS budget.
- In the absence of the Director, AAS and other senior leadership, acts on their behalf to oversee and run the AAS team and provide direction with respect to project and team member responsibilities.

### **Clinical Lead for Developing and Facilitating Accommodation Plans for Students with Complex Disabilities**

- As clinical lead, this position has final determination of the student accommodation plan particularly when determining the plan based on competing sources of information such as discrepancies between the clinical documentation, clinical interview, and a student's self-report.
- Assesses medical documentation and utilizes judgement, Ministry requirements, provincial legislation, and standards of practice, to design appropriate and individualized academic accommodation plans for students with complex needs (e.g., Litigious cases, complex mental health disabilities).
- Conducts bio-psycho-social interviews with students to determine how their functional limitations influence an academic need for accommodation.
- Ongoing clinical assessments of students identified with complex needs to determine changes in their condition and/or accommodations (such as academic recovery planning) as well any identification of any internal/external supports.
- In litigious situations, reviews case notes, service chronologies, and medical documentation to provide clinical opinion as to whether student was appropriately accommodated.
- Counselling students on academic accommodations as it relates to their disability.
- Screening for suspected disabilities (e.g., learning disabilities, mental health disabilities, ADHD) and making referrals to appropriate services for the purpose of accommodation planning, as needed.

### **Strategic Consultation, Client Support and Collaboration with Key Partners**

- Develops and maintains productive relationships with faculty, staff, student government and other campus partners to enable the transferring of ideas, skills, and/or resources to support the mandate of accommodating students with disabilities, conditions, and/or trauma.
- Manages collaboration and partnerships with services and departments on campus with the goal of enhancing and streamlining student service offerings, including but not limited to the Student Success Office, the Registrar, Centre for Extended Learning, Centre for Teaching Excellence, the Library, Athletics, Campus Wellness, Print + Retail Solutions, etc.
- Engages campus partners in meaningful conversations about the actions that contribute to the success, retention and engagement of students with disabilities, mitigating risk in regard to the University's Legal Duty to Accommodate as defined by Ontario Human Rights Code.
- Represents AAS at committees and meetings as required.
- Consults with academic units and support service units (e.g., faculties, Registrar, Centre for Extended Learning) to coordinate and implement individual student accommodations, and to offer guidance and advice regarding student specific issues as they arise.
- As clinical lead for the office, contributes expertise at case consults and other collaborative meetings that support a specific students' holistic health and provides seamless service provision. This involves working closely with campus partners including Counselling Services, Health Services, Human Rights Equity and Inclusion, Writing and Communications Centre, and the Student Success office.

### **Promotes Compliance with the Duty to Accommodate, as per the Ontario Human Rights Code**

- Provides risk mitigation through targeted advice, recommendations, and guidance to faculty members and relevant staff/administrators as it pertains to accommodating students with disabilities registered with AccessAbility Services, as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Commission and as per the Code.
- Offers guidance and support to faculty members (and relevant staff/administrators) seeking to balance their duty to accommodate with academic integrity, helping them negotiate and modify accommodations as needed so that they accommodate to the point of undue hardship.

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- Provides consultation to students, faculty, and University partners when a student case is escalated in as per the “Accommodation Dispute Process” noted in the Student Academic Accommodation Guidelines, where they aim to uphold legal compliance.  
Maintains up-to-date working knowledge of the Code and supporting regulations as it pertains to the University’s duty to accommodate students with disabilities.

### **Maintains a strong understanding of current trends and best practices around the experiences of students with disabilities, conditions, and/or trauma in higher education.**

- Actively seeks to understand and responds to the unique needs of UWaterloo students with disabilities particularly in the areas of academic accommodation, student transition, student engagement, student retention and student development.
- Committed to best clinical practice regarding academic accommodations and disabilities and remains current with research, ethical considerations, and evidence-based practice
- As part of the senior leadership team, works to summarize and disseminate key research related to the impact of disability, conditions, and/or trauma on post-secondary education, the student experiences, factors that contribute to student success and university readiness, best practices at other institutions, developing and delivering intentional and engaging accommodation-based programs for students. Uses data to support faculty and staff training as appropriate that help provide a meaningful, relevant and engaging experience in support of the University duty to accommodate, and strategic goal of creating a vibrant student experience.  
Maintains working knowledge of disability legislation as it pertains to the fulfilment of the University’s duty to accommodate as determined by the Ontario Human Rights Code and Ministry guidelines.

### **Human Resource Management, Financial Resource, Reporting, and Assessment**

- Exceptional leadership and management of student accommodation planning and consulting staff including hiring, staff performance management, professional development, salary administration, priority setting, strategic planning and ensuring the effective delivery and assessment of services.
- Establishes team objectives and performance expectations in alignment with the overall objectives and direction of AccessAbility Services and strategically plans for continuous improvement.
- Ensures resources are utilized optimally, through effective processes, task delegation, coordination and collaborative communication.
- Exercises skill in managing people and providing them with a productive and positive team-oriented work environment.
- Responsible for providing financial and programming reports to the Director, AccessAbility Services.

### **Management of Programs and Services**

- Provides strategic leadership and direction for the design, coordination and implementation of comprehensive academic accommodation programs and services.
- Ensures programs and services maintain quality and champions student-centric guiding principles.
- Ensures resources are utilized optimally, through effective processes, task delegation, coordination and collaborative communication.

### **Managing Sensitive Materials**

- Assists in developing protocols and procedures that ensures access to secure documents are controlled appropriately.
- Assists in developing protocols and procedures that ensures data accuracy and document integrity.
- Appropriately uses and maintains confidential health and education records in accordance with University policy and relevant Privacy legislation (PHIPA).

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- Effectively uses systems and technology to accurately and efficiently manage student medical information.
- Directs the return of clinical records to the intended party in a secure manner (appropriate storage and movement confidential documents) when needed.
- Ensures data accuracy and document integrity.
- Understands and commits to maintaining appropriate standards of confidentiality and security of materials.
- Collaborates with the University's Privacy Office in the event of a privacy breach

*\*All employees of the University are expected to follow University and departmental health and safety policy, procedures and work practices at all times. Employees are also responsible for the completion of all health and safety training, as assigned. Employees with staff supervision and/or management responsibilities will ensure that assigned staff abide by the above, and actively identify, assess and correct health and safety hazards, as required.*

### **Required Qualifications**

#### **Education**

- Master's or Doctorate degree in Rehabilitative Health Sciences, Education, Psychology or Social Work.
- Individual must be registered with a professional college/Society recognized in Ontario

#### **Experience**

- Experience reviewing medical documentation, psycho-educational assessments, and habilitative documentation and test results from registered health professionals to determine a support plan.
- Progressive management experience
- Demonstrated leadership in strategic and tactical thinking, innovating, weighing risks and applying sound judgement to decision making
- Experience and ability to lead a multi-disciplinary and clinical team including registered health professionals is an asset
- Experiencing managing a budget
- Experience working in a postsecondary institution or student-focused environment is preferred

#### **Knowledge/Skills/Abilities**

- Advanced knowledge of privacy regulations.
- Advanced knowledge of the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to the duty to accommodate, and accompanying Ontario Human Rights Commissions' policy papers related to accommodating university students with disabilities.
- Advanced knowledge of the Registered Health Professionals Act (1991) and/or the Social Work and Social Service Work Act (1998) and control acts.
- Advanced knowledge of how the symptoms or functional limitations of a disability interferes with an individual's daily functioning. Familiarity with the implications of specific disabilities at the post- secondary level.
- Excellent communication (oral and written) skills. Specifically, an ability to communicate clearly, effectively, and appropriately with various stakeholders in a variety of formats.
- Experience and ability to negotiate and mediate between diverse stakeholders with diplomacy is required.

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- Superior organizational, problem-solving and interpersonal skills is required.
- Proven ability to provide solution-focused interventions.
- Proven ability to work independently and as a team member in a busy and interdisciplinary environment.
- Proven ability to multi-task and manage competing deadlines and priorities.
- Experience and/or training in supporting individuals in crisis and securing appropriate support.
- Awareness of various technical communication methods, web-related communication tools and operational/ strategic knowledge of information systems is preferred.
- Experience working with databases and systems that supports the work of this unit is an asset.

### Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Able to build collaborative working relationships across the university campus. Teamwork skills are crucial as is consensus building and strategic leadership. Internally, this position interacts regularly with cross-campus units including Registrar's office, Counselling Services, Health Services, Residence/Housing, Centre for Extended Learning, Centre for Teaching Excellence, and the six faculty units including Associate Deans and Department Chairs. Externally, this position interacts with other University/Collage disability offices, and vendors. As part of the senior leadership team, this position works closely with all staff within the department.
- **Level of Responsibility:** This role reports to the Director of AccessAbility Services. The Associate Director position is responsible for overseeing the complex execution and implementation of all disability-related accommodations for students at the University of Waterloo. The Associate Director oversees the clinical team of consultants and is the authority on disability-related accommodation plans developed in AccessAbility Services. The Manager is the subject matter expert on all matters of disability accommodations within the University. The incumbent has extensive knowledge related to the Ontario Human Rights Commission and its regulations as it relates to accommodations in the academic environment. The incumbent uses understandable legal and institutional context when advising students and members of the University to ensure the more relevant guidance. The Associate Director Academic Accommodation mitigates risk to the University, by the duty to accommodate is being applied appropriately in the academic setting. The incumbent exercises discretionary authority to provide advice, guidance and solutions to issues and concerns raised by members of the University community, often with little lead time. As a regulated clinician, the manager is responsible for providing clinical direction to the Accommodational Consultants related to complex cases. This incumbent works directly with students with legal and/or medical complex needs. The incumbent has a high degree of access to confidential materials, and as a result is responsible for the secure and confidential management of student medical documentation.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** The Associate Director provides direct leadership and guidance to the clinical team of consultants and has final decision-making authority for designing and implementing accommodation plans, particularly when specific components are disputed by the student, staff, faculty or external partner (ex. Physician). These decisions have significant impacts on the student's academic career, the reputation of AccessAbility Services' office and the broader university, as well as mitigating legal risk for the University by ensuring the duty to accommodate through the Ontario Human Right's Code is being facilitated. In addition to direct clinical work, the Associate frequently makes decisions in collaboration with other members of the senior leadership team about the strategic priorities relating to AAS and initiatives relating to enhancing the delivery of services to students with disabilities. He/she determines the optimum course of action to solve problems and to exert a positive

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influence on other stakeholders on behalf of AAS. Expected to consult with the Director, AccessAbility Services for decision making outside of normal conditions (ex. legal concerns).

- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** This role in an office setting involves minimal physical demands and moderate sensory effort resulting in slight fatigue, strain, or risk of injury. Exposure to a fast-paced service oriented environment.
- **Working Environment:** Involves moderate physical or psychological risk resulting from unavoidable exposure to hazardous, disagreeable or uncomfortable environmental conditions. This is due to higher than typical exposure to emotionally disturbing interactions with verbally and physically aggressive individuals, some dealing with a mental health crisis (including suicidal ideation and immediate risk of harm to self and others). This position requires evening and weekend work for special events and exams throughout the year. The Manager Student Services will be on-call after hours Monday to Friday until 10:00PM throughout the year to provide emergency support.