

# Test Accommodation Policy

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**TOUCI ISTONE**  
INSTITUTE  
COMPETENCY EVALUATION EXPERTS

**ASSESSMENT  
PROGRAM**

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## Main Purpose

With respect to its examination process, it is Touchstone Institute's policy to provide reasonable testing accommodations for candidates with documented disabilities. Reasonable accommodation refers to any adjustment to the examination materials or testing environment that permits a qualified applicant with a disability to perform, without undue hardship to the institution providing accommodation. Documented disabilities are those for which there is a diagnosis by a qualified professional.

The purpose of the accommodations is to provide equity, not advantage. Any requested modification that would substantially alter essential elements of the examination cannot not be granted. As a general principle, it is desirable to retain as much of the original examination materials and testing environment and make the accommodation specific to the disability or disabilities in question.

There are many different types of disabilities and many kinds of accommodations. Most individuals with disabilities fall into one of the following categories

## Categories of disabilities that may be granted accommodation

- Learning Disabilities
- Auditory Impairment
- Mobility Impairment
- Visual Impairment
- Mental Illness or psychological disability
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) & Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Brain or head Injury
- Medical Conditions
- Other disabilities

## Accommodations that may be granted to individuals

- Extended Testing Time
- Additional Rest Breaks
- Sign Language interpreter (for spoken directions only)
- Large Print
- Large-Print Answer Sheet
- Low-Noise Testing Environments
- Wheelchair-Friendly Testing Room
- Examinations that are Individually Proctored
- Allowing Assistive Devices or Adaptive Equipment

## Accommodations Procedure

It is recognized that no single type of test accommodation may be adequate or appropriate for all individuals with any given type of disability.

Test takers with disabilities may be able to test under standard conditions if Touchstone Institute determines that only minor adjustments to the testing environment are required. (e.g., wheelchair access, large-print test book, etc). For example, if a test taker uses a large-print version of a reading comprehension test and requires no extended test time, the test could be administered under standard conditions.

## The Legal Framework

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982*, and the *Ontario Human Rights Code (revised 1990)* are major pieces of legislation guaranteeing equal opportunity and freedom from discrimination because of disability. In accordance with the law, Touchstone Institute recognizes the legal obligation to institute policies and procedures that provide equal opportunity and safeguard against discrimination on the basis of disability.

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982, Section 15(1)*, guarantees that:

*Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race...or mental or physical disability.*

The *Ontario Human Rights Code (revised, 1990)*, guarantees every person:

*Equal treatment with respect to service, goods and facilities without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, or handicap.*

The *Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, (AODA)* is legislation that focuses on the core principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity for all individuals. Under this Act, the government of Ontario has developed mandatory accessibility standards that will identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living, and applies to both public and private sector organizations across Ontario.

## Documentation Criteria

A key aspect of accommodations is documentation. Documentation on file for the applicant should:

- Describe the specific accommodations requested
- Clearly state the diagnosed disability or disabilities
- Describe the functional limitations resulting from the disability or disabilities
- Be current – i.e., completed within the last 5 years for LD, last 6 months for psychiatric disabilities, or last 3 years for ADHD and all other disabilities (NOTE: this requirement does not apply to physical or sensory disabilities of a permanent or unchanging nature)
- Include complete educational, developmental, and medical history relevant to the disability for which testing accommodations are being requested
- Include a list of all test instruments used in the evaluation report and relevant subtest scores used to document the stated disability (this requirement does not apply to physical or sensory disabilities of a permanent or unchanged nature)
- Adequately support each of the requested testing accommodation(s)
- Be typed or printed on official letterhead and be signed by an evaluator qualified to make the diagnosis (include information about license or certification and area of specialization)

The type of documentation and the qualifications required of the professional will depend on the disability or disabilities documented. In the case of learning disabilities, such assessment will usually be made by psychologists, psychological associates, or psychoeducational consultants. Self-diagnosis is not sufficient or appropriate in supporting a request for accommodation. Individuals with undiagnosed disabilities are strongly encouraged to seek out an appropriate diagnosis of their disability.

Documentation and identification may come from a variety of professionals including: physicians, medical specialists, psychologists, psychiatrists, speech/language pathologists, case managers with insurance companies, community agencies, and Workplace Safety and Insurance Board representatives.

For instance, “not doing well on multiple-choice tests” is not a disability per se, and accommodations cannot be provided based on such requests. There are many different kinds of disabilities that may impact one’s ability to perform on multiple-choice tests. Each of these disabilities might well require a different form of accommodation. The key here is to get a diagnosis of the disability which then can be used to provide an effective accommodation.

## Procedures for Requesting Accommodations

1. The request for accommodations must be made no later than at the time of registration.
2. It is strongly recommended that individuals with disabilities who would be requesting more extensive or individualized accommodations get in touch with Touchstones Touchstone Institute as early as possible.
3. By their very nature, accommodations are often individualized. In response to a request for accommodation, and considering all available resources, Touchstone Institute will develop a specific accommodation that it deems reasonable and effective. Touchstone endeavors to respond within two weeks to requests for accommodation, nonetheless, in more complex cases it may take more time to develop an effective accommodation.
4. Touchstone Institute has the right to select specific adaptive equipment and support services it provides, as long as they are reasonable and effective.

## Confidentiality

It is understood that information about disabilities is personal and highly sensitive. It is also the case that effective accommodation often involves the coordination of different organizations and individuals (diagnosing professionals, test centers, Touchstone Institute, proctors, etc.)

In matters relating to accommodations and requests for accommodations, Touchstone Institute is guided by the following guidelines:

1. Touchstone Institute will obtain explicit written consent of the individual requesting accommodation to share any personal information with any external organization, agency, or individual.
2. In working with any external organization, agency, or individual, Touchstone Institute will only share the information that is necessary to provide effective accommodation.
3. Documentation regarding accommodations or requests for accommodations will only be available to Touchstone Institute staff.
4. There will be no indication in the record of examination results that accommodations were provided to the individual.

# REQUEST FOR TEST ACCOMMODATION FORM

Test accommodations will only be considered once the completed form and supporting documentation has been submitted.

First Name:	
Last (Legal) Name:	
Today's Date:	
Test Date:	

## Supporting Documentation Checklist

- A detailed personal statement describing the disability or accessibility requirement, with a description of its severity, and justification for the requested accommodations.
- A complete and comprehensible medial and/or psychological or psychoeducational evaluation on office letterhead, from a qualified professional for evaluating the disability or accessibility requirement, describing both the condition and its severity, including:
  - A description of the functional limitations stemming from the stated disabilities
  - Specific recommendations for testing accommodations, including an explanation of why the specific requirements are needed, including the use of any assistive devices or equipment intended to reduce the impact of the identified functional limitations
  - If required under the policy, a written confirmation from a qualified professional that the disability is still actively being managed is required
- Copies of supporting documentation or if copies are not available, a current letter on official letterhead stating details of previously granted accommodations provided by a university and medical program such as:
  - The student accessibility/disability services office at the university;
  - The undergraduate educational program office of a previously attended university

Email completed form and all supporting documentation to [info@tsin.ca](mailto:info@tsin.ca)