

April 5, 2007

Guidance Counsellor/Special Educator

Re: Requirements to Implement Disability Accommodations

I'm writing to you to clarify the documentation required at Cambrian College for students with exceptionalities to begin receiving services.

At many, but not all, colleges and universities, the receipt of a current IEP or IPRC that states the accommodations that have been helpful in secondary school as well as a diagnosis (or at least the identification) permits us the legal evidence to begin temporary and limited accommodations that may include extra time for tests, permission to use a digital recorder for class notes, access to assistive technology in our lab and access to the Learning strategy services.

If there is no formal assessment diagnosing a learning disability, or if the assessment was done in elementary school, we may also refer a student to the Northern Ontario Assessment & Resource Centre (NOARC/CERNO) for a psychoeducational assessment if the secondary school information suggests the presence of a learning disability. Because of scheduling and demand at peak times such as the fall, this may take several months to get completed.

If there is a learning disability diagnosed, the student may be entitled to: the OSAP grant for persons with a disability who qualify for OSAP (currently \$2,000 upon registration), the Bursary for Students with Disabilities valued at up to \$10,000 for disability related products and services, reader/scribe on tests, use of calculator/spellchecker for tests, general accommodations for high stakes testing such as entrance testing or professional exams. These accommodations, financial support and services are generally only available for students who are clearly diagnosed with a learning disability by a qualified professional within the past few years.

You should also tell parents and students that the assessment at NOARC can begin to be scheduled upon acceptance at a northern college or university – in fact, we're scheduling students now for the spring/summer so they will be ready for the fall.

If they are attending another institution, they should make contact with that Disability Office as soon as possible to establish the supports they may need. Some universities may require an assessment within the past 2-3 years and this may vary depending on the program the student chooses.

I've included a package of information about the services at Cambrian College including our orientation sessions to promote successful transitions, our specialized programs and

our Transition Planner. We also have a special parent seminar May 4th to help parents become familiar with the demands of college life on the student with disabilities.

Please feel free to pass along information to parents. Many parents and students are unaware that the OSR does not follow them to postsecondary and that they need to bring the documentation to us personally.

We look forward to planning for your graduates' success!

Susan Alcorn MacKay, Director
Disability Services &
The Northern Ontario Assessment & Resource Centre

Contacts:

Email Disability Services at Cambrian College
disabiltyservices@Cambrianc.on.ca

The Glenn Crombie Centre web page
<http://homepages.Cambrianc.on.ca/gcc/>

The Northern Ontario Assessment & Resource Centre web page
<http://www.noarc-cerno.ca/>

The College committee on Disability Issues web page
<http://www.disabilityissues.ca>

The Inter-University Disability Issues Association
<http://idia.mcmaster.ca/>