

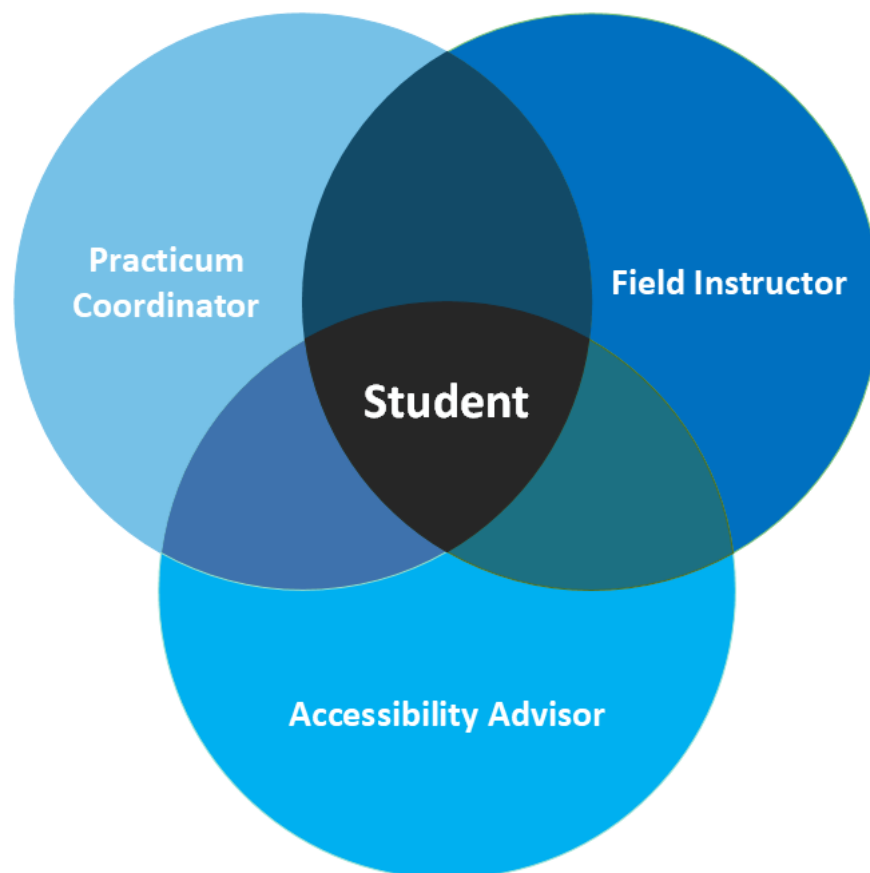


Practicum Accommodations Guide FIFSW

Last updated October 2022

Purpose

This guide is for staff, field instructors, and field-faculty liaisons within the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work (FIFSW) to support and facilitate the accommodations process for students with disabilities. As outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), and, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC), students may be living with physical, sensory, mental health, cognitive, and/or learning disabilities. FIFSW is committed to providing accommodation to support students with disabilities and removing barriers to experiential learning.



Guiding Principles

1. **The practicum accommodations process is a shared responsibility between the student, the Practicum Office, Field Instructors, the Faculty field liaisons, and Accessibility Services.** This process first requires students to register with Accessibility Services. Students can register with Accessibility Services as soon as they accept their offer of admission and should be encouraged to register early. More information about the registration process can be found on [Accessibility Services' website](#). Some accommodations may need to be known prior to the matching process. FIFSW will make reasonable attempts to accommodate a student regardless of timing, however, some accommodations may not be possible.
2. **FIFSW is committed to creating and facilitating equitable access to practicum placements.** Disability related barriers may impact student's access to practicums. Accommodations can help remove these barriers. All students must meet the minimum program requirements and essential competencies. This can be achieved while accessing accommodations.
3. **All possible accommodations will be considered up to the point of [undue hardship](#).** This includes concerns around safety to self and/or others, cost, and academic integrity/core competencies of the program. FIFSW remains aware of the [duty to accommodate](#) outlined by the OHRC. Accessibility Services should be consulted if there are any questions or concerns around undue hardship to the University or the practicum site.
4. **Privacy and confidentiality of the student is considered a top priority.** FIFSW will only share information about accommodations with those directly involved in the accommodations process. As per [Accessibility Services statement of confidentiality on use and disclosure of personal information](#), student information is only shared on an "as needed basis". No disability information (i.e., diagnosis) is shared with FIFSW, only the information that is needed to support the student in facilitating appropriate accommodations will be shared.
5. **Communication between students, staff, field instructors, and field-faculty liaisons is an important and necessary aspect of the accommodations process.** Accommodations may need to be adjusted once the student is in the placement if something is not working or they run into an unanticipated barrier. Students should be encouraged to talk to their Accessibility Advisor with any accommodation-related concerns.

Process – Steps and Responsibilities

- **Responsible** – the role responsible for executing, documenting, and communicating results for the next step
- **Consulted** – the role(s) that need to be consulted if/as needed for information on requirements and competencies
- **Informed** – the role(s) that need to be informed when a decision is made and executed

Steps	Student	Accessibility Advisor	Practicum Coordinator	Field Instructors	Assistant Dean, Field Education
1. Register with Accessibility Services	Responsible	-	-	-	-
2. Assess practicum accommodation needs	Consulted	Responsible	Consulted*	-	Consulted*
3. Write and send practicum letter	Informed	Responsible			
4. Receive and distribute practicum letter as needed	Consulted and Informed	Consulted	Responsible		
5. Apply and secure a practicum placement	Responsible	Consulted*	Consulted*		Consulted*
6. Communicate accommodation needs to field instructor	Responsible**	Informed	Responsible**	Informed	
7. Implement accommodations	Consulted, Informed, and Responsible	Informed	Informed	Responsible	
8. Monitor, evaluate, communicate, and remediate as necessary	Responsible	Responsible	Responsible	Responsible	Responsible

*If there are complex accommodation requests

**Students may request support from Practicum Coordinators with communicating their accommodations

Process - Description of Steps

Step One: Register with Accessibility Services

- Students should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible, registration information can be found on [Accessibility Services website](https://accessibility.services@utoronto.ca). Students can also contact accessibility.services@utoronto.ca or 416-978-8060. FIFSW will communicate information to students about how to register and any relevant deadlines for registration or letters of accommodation (I.e., for practicums).
- Students will need to provide medical documentation from a registered practitioner with an appropriate scope of practice to diagnose the disability. Documentation should outline relevant functional limitations, barriers, and severity. With the exception of a few diagnoses (I.e., Learning disabilities), the [Certificate of Disability](#) is the documentation that is required.
- Students should be advised to review the [Accessibility Services Graduate and Professional Student Handbook](#) and [Ontario's Guide to your Rights and Responsibilities under the Human Rights Code](#).

Step Two: Assess Practicum Accommodation Needs

- Students participate in a preliminary interview with an assigned Accessibility Advisor to complete a full assessment of practicum accommodation needs. This may need to be a follow up appointment after an intake.
- During the assessment, the Accessibility Advisor:
 - Reviews documentation to verify presence of a disability on behalf of the University
 - Formulates a preliminary accommodation plan through a review of documentation and a discussion with the student around functional limitations
 - If necessary, the Accessibility Advisor consults with the Practicum Coordinator to discuss the demands of the practicum and any complex accommodation needs. The Assistant Dean, Field Education may also be consulted as needed.
 - Decides on appropriate accommodations that will enable the student to meet practicum requirements

Step Three: Write and Send Practicum Letter

- Accessibility Advisors will document the accommodations required for the student to meet practicum requirements. The Advisor will review the [Notification of How your Information will be Used form](#) with the student as information may be shared with partners involved in the practicum accommodations process.
- Accessibility Advisors will send the practicum accommodations letter to the Practicum Coordinator at practicum.fsw@utoronto.ca copying the student on the email. This letter will specify if there are any specific accommodations that should be considered before the matching process begins (i.e., student needs to be within 30 minutes of their residence, the site needs to be wheelchair accessible, etc.).
- Accessibility Services can support faculty and staff to assess and meet legal obligations for providing practicum accommodations.

Step Four: Receive and Distribute Practicum Letter as needed

- Practicum Coordinators will receive the accommodation letter and contact the Accessibility Advisor if further clarification is needed.
- Practicum Coordinators will request an appointment with the student to review accommodations, privacy, what information will be shared, and discuss preferences for sharing the letter.
- Students may decide they want to send the letter to the Field Instructor themselves or wait until a later date.
- If students request Practicum Coordinators to send their letter, this can be done with verbal consent.

Step Five: Select and Secure a Practicum Placement

- Students self- select appropriate practicums using the Practicum Administration System.
- Practicum Coordinators and Accessibility Advisors may be asked for support during this process.

Step Six: Communicate Accommodation needs to Field Instructor

- Student or Practicum Coordinator (as agreed in step four) shares the practicum accommodation letter with the Field Instructor.

Step Seven: Implement Practicum Accommodations

- Field Instructors review the practicum accommodations and meet with the student prior to the start of their practicum to clarify accommodation requirements and establish mutual expectations.
- The Field Instructor can consult with the Practicum Coordinator and the Assistant Dean, Field Education, as needed. The Accessibility Advisor can also be used as a resource if there are further questions and/or concerns.
- The Field Instructor implements the agreed upon accommodations. The [Information for Faculty and Academic Staff on Effective Accommodations for Placements, and Practicums](#) handbook can be used for further learning on implementing accommodations.
- Faculty Field Liaisons may be expected to implement accommodations upon request for any work needed outside of the practicum (I.e., a student may need an extension on a learning contract deadline).

Step Eight: Monitor, Evaluate, Communicate, and Remediate as necessary

- Students are expected to notify their Field Faculty Liaison and/or Accessibility Advisor as soon as possible if there are issues regarding accommodations, learning, and performance.
 - Students should notify their Accessibility Advisor if new disability related impacts emerge that warrant modifying the practicum accommodation plan. If students first approach their Faculty Liaison or Practicum Coordinator, they should be directed to their Accessibility Advisor.
- Field Instructors are expected to notify the student and/or Faculty Field Liaison as soon as possible if there are any concerns regarding the student's accommodations and performance.
 - If the Field Instructor raises concerns about performance, or the student reports new disability related impacts, the Accessibility Advisor must re-evaluate and assess whether the accommodation plan needs to be modified.



Responding to Needs that Emerge During a Practicum

Student needs may change throughout a practicum. This can be a change in the pre-existing disability related impacts or something new. Students who are not registered with Accessibility Services may also need to register due to impacts either were not an issue or did not start until they were already in their practicum. The student, Practicum Coordinator, and Field Liaison all have responsibilities when this occurs:

Student	Field Instructor	Practicum Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact Accessibility Advisor as soon as possible to discuss modified or new accommodations. Students who are not yet registered need to register with Accessibility Services.• Notify Field Liaison that they have a new or modified accommodation need and they are working with Accessibility Services.• Notify Practicum Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask the student if they have a new or changed accommodation need without asking for disability specific information (I.e., diagnosis).• Encourage the student to meet with their Accessibility Advisor to assess the need for a new or modified accommodation plan• Notify the Practicum Coordinator• Implement new or modified accommodations recommended by the Accessibility Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirm the Accessibility Services Advisor is assessing the need for a new or modified accommodation plan• Confirm the Field Liaison will be implementing the new or modified accommodation plan• Check-in with the student to ensure they are comfortable with their new or modified accommodation plan and how their accommodations are being implemented.