

Accessibility Resources Center (ARC)

Faculty FAQ

1. How will I know if a student has approved accommodations?

Faculty get an email notification that an Accommodation Letter has been received. Start at OneLogin, click the Accommodate (Faculty) tile and new Accommodation Letters will appear on your home screen. You can also view all students in your course and any approved accommodations: Courses & Exams > Click on a course title > Enrolled Students.

2. What if I know a student has had accommodations in the past, but I haven't received an Accommodation Letter this semester?

Students need to activate their accommodations each new semester by completing a Semester Request in Accommodate, which generates the Accommodation Letter for faculty. A student may have forgotten this step if you haven't seen a new Accommodation Letter for them. You can refer students to ARC for help if needed.

3. A student asked for disability-related accommodations. What should I do?

If you haven't received an Accommodation Letter for the student, please do not arrange accommodations with the student yourself. Refer the student to the Accessibility Resources Center.

4. How do I know a student actually has a disability and needs the accommodations?

Ask the student if they already have an Accommodation Letter. If so, the student is registered with ARC and has provided documentation of a disability. During that process, ARC meets with students to determine reasonable accommodations. Students are entitled to those accommodations, provided they do not fundamentally alter an essential component of your course. For reasons of confidentiality, the nature and specifics of the disability are not disclosed to faculty. Please, do not ask students for documentation of a disability.

5. How late in the semester can a student get accommodations?

Students can request accommodations at any point during the semester. Semester Requests open two weeks prior to the start of the semester. Accommodations must be provided once faculty receive an Accommodation Letter, however, accommodations are not retroactive and will not be applied retroactively to previous coursework.

6. What does "reasonable accommodation" mean?

A reasonable accommodation is an adjustment designed to mitigate the impact of a student's disability without compromising the integrity of an academic course or program. Reasonable accommodations may include: assistive technology, auxiliary aids such as sign language interpreters, modification of course policies, or testing accommodations. Providing reasonable accommodations allows students with disabilities to have equal access to education and services at the College. Students with disabilities are required to meet the same academic and technical standards as their non-disabled peers, using reasonable accommodations.

7. What if I disagree about an accommodations provided on an Accommodation Letter or think it doesn't apply to my course?

Please reach out to ARC staff if you think an approved accommodation fundamentally alters an essential element of your course. Accommodations should not lower academic standards. Students with disabilities may demonstrate mastery of content in a different way, or on a different timeline than other students, but the standard of work should be the same for all students. Some accommodations may not be needed in a particular course due to universal course design or other circumstances. Please consult with ARC to confirm that an accommodation does not apply.

8. Do I have to allow students to use technology even if I have a "No Laptop" policy?

Yes. A student may have an approved accommodation to use technology such as using a laptop for notetaking, use of a notetaking software, or recording lectures (not discussions). If a student has this accommodation, ARC has determined that it is a reasonable accommodation and necessary for equal access.

9. A student has Time Extensions on Assignments and/or Disability Related Absences as an accommodation. Do I have to change my attendance policy or give extensions?

Yes, you may need to make reasonable adjustments to your course attendance and deadline policies. A student may have one or both accommodations when they have a condition that can cause episodic flare-ups. This accommodation does not require extensions on all assignments or unlimited absences. ARC will work with you and the student to determine what are reasonable modifications to your policies that maintain academic standards while allowing equal access for the student.

10. A student says they are taking an exam in the ARC. What should I do?

When a student makes an exam appointment through Accommodate, faculty get a notification email. Go to Accommodate (Faculty) and look for "Test Room Bookings to Review" on your home screen to upload exams and complete exam instructions. It is vital for ARC to have your exam instructions to ensure exam integrity. Please complete the exam instructions online even if you plan to drop off a paper copy of an exam in our office. If you don't see the student's name, they have not made a testing appointment through ARC. Please refer the student to ARC or remind them to make a testing appointment.

11. A student is struggling in my class and I suspect they may have a disability. What can I do?

Talk privately with the student to discuss your observations. The student may reveal they have a disability. If this is the case, refer the student to ARC. If the student doesn't say anything about disability, feel free to share about all the academic supports available at MassBay and include the services ARC provides.

12. A student with a disability is not passing my class. Can I fail this student?

Yes. All students, including disabled students, must meet the standards of the course. Talk to the student about their progress in the course, and share the available academic support services, including coaching through the ARC. The referral form is on the ARC webpage under Resources for Faculty/Staff.

13. A student with a disability is frequently disruptive in class. What can I do?

All students, regardless of disability status, must comply with the Code of Conduct. Speak to the student to share your concerns. If the issue persists, consult with ARC and/or make a Conduct referral.