

STUDENT LEARNING SERVICES

Student Handbook
2020-2021





WELCOME!

Student Learning Services (SLS) welcomes you to Portage College! We are happy that you have chosen Portage College as your educational institution and hope your time with us will be enjoyable and rewarding. It is our commitment to assist you to be successful.

SLS has prepared this handbook to help you navigate our various services, whether you are a student seeking occasional tips and supports to be successful, you have a temporary challenge or barrier to your learning, or if you are a student with a documented disability and are eligible for specific accommodations. SLS is here to help you make the most of your educational journey.

Accommodations for students with disabilities or learning challenges are intended to help remove barriers to learning. All accommodations are determined on an individual basis, and are founded on shared responsibility between the student and Portage College.

Please note that Portage College Student Learning Services are provided at no cost to students. Any costs associated with assistive technology may be offset by funding options available. Ask us for more information.

All services for students are private and confidential, and will not be stated on your transcript of marks. Assessment records are stored in confidence within the SLS office with restricted access.

We welcome your questions and comments. Please visit our SLS offices for more information.



Contact Us

Contact us today for more information or to schedule an appointment at any of our campus locations.

Toll-free all locations: [1-866-623-5551](tel:1-866-623-5551), ext. 5758



Where is my SLS Centre?

Every Portage College campus has Student Learning Services support available.

Lac La Biche Region

At the Lac La Biche Campus, SLS is located on the lower level. SLS supports are available to students at the Boyle and Goodfish Lake campus locations.

Contact:

Geraldine Hagen, Learning Facilitator

Email: geraldine.hagen@portagecollege.ca

Phone: 780-623-5758

Kerriane Tynan, Learning Assistant

Email: kerriane.tynan@portagecollege.ca

Phone: 780-623-5569

Cold Lake Region

The Cold Lake Campus, located in the Cold Lake Energy Centre, offers SLS support on the first floor, through the main office.

Contact:

Learning Facilitator

Phone: 780-639-7108

St. Paul Region

At the St. Paul Campus, SLS is located in an office just off the common area. Frog Lake has SLS services, which are supported by the St. Paul Region.

Contact:

Patricia Amyotte, Learning Facilitator

Email: patricia.amyotte@portagecollege.ca

Phone: 780-645-5223

Am I Eligible for Services?

Student Learning Services offers a variety of supports for students. All students are encouraged to participate in our open workshops and sessions to gain valuable techniques that make life as a student a little easier. Students with a documented disability, or those who suspect a significant challenge to their learning, may be eligible for additional accommodations. Portage College is committed to providing learning environments that are inclusive of all learning styles and needs.

Kick Start Sessions

These sessions are presented at the beginning of the school year to prepare new students for the unique environment of post-secondary education. Topics include:

- Time Management Skills
- Study Skills
- Note Taking
- Exam Preparation
- ... and much more!

Tutoring

Tutoring sessions vary according to each Campus location, please check with Student Learning Services at the campus you are attending.

Learning Cafés

These workshops are offered by the Learning Commons throughout the year for students on a variety of topics, which include:

- Birch Bark Card Making
- Work/Life of School/Life Balance
- Healthy Living
- Writing a Paper
- APA Style Writing

Temporary Supports

Students may experience a temporary illness, injury, or impairment that affects their ability to fully engage with their learning environment (for instance, a broken arm could impact the ability to type or take notes, and temporary exam accommodations may be required). Students experiencing a temporary barrier to their learning are advised to consult with their Instructor, Coordinator or SLS staff about potential supports.

Admissions Process

Students with disabilities who are applying to Portage College must meet standard admission requirements and follow typical admission procedures. Students who know that they have a disability and may require accommodations are encouraged to self-identify early with their Student Advisor so supports can be arranged as soon as possible. Students who suspect a barrier to their learning are encouraged to speak with their Student Advisor, Instructor, Coordinator or SLS staff for more information on the referral process and/or learning support.

Assessment process

Students who have documentation of their disability will be asked to provide this to SLS staff during the intake process. Appropriate accommodations will be based on the recommendations found in this documentation. All documentation is confidential under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP). Information will not be provided to third parties without student consent.

How do I get documentation?

A *psychoeducational assessment* is completed by a registered psychologist to determine whether or not a learning disability is present, the functional impact it has on the student and his or her learning, and recommendations for suitable accommodations that will assist the student in their program of study. If you do not already have documentation, a Learning Facilitator can assist you with the referral process.

A *medical assessment* is completed by a medical doctor to determine if there are any conditions (physical or otherwise) present that may impact a student's learning ability, and can include recommendations for accommodations. Please see a Learning Facilitator for a form to be filled out by a doctor if accommodations or supports are requested.

Accommodations

The Alberta Human Rights Commission requires all post-secondary institution to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities to help them succeed in the educational institution. The key document, *Duty to Accommodate Students with Disabilities in Post-Secondary Educational Institutions*, states:

Accommodation is the process of making alterations to the delivery of services so that those services become accessible to more people, including persons with disabilities. Accommodation has allowed many talented persons with disabilities to make major contributions to life in Canada and around the world.

Accommodation does not:

1. *Require that post-secondary institutions lower academic or non-academic standards to accommodate students with disabilities.*
2. *Relieve the student of the responsibility to develop the essential skills and competencies expected of all students.*

— Alberta Human Rights Commission, 2013, p. 3

What accommodations can I expect?

Accommodations for students with a disability vary on an individual basis. These accommodations consider a student's unique strengths, barriers and needs. Examples of accommodations that may be considered include:

- Individual Learning Assessments
- Instruction in Effective Learning Strategies
- Reading and Writing Enhancement Programs
- Individual Educational Assistance
- Innovative Learning Technology and Equipment
- Classroom Supports and Accommodations
- Exam Accommodations
- Alternate Formatting of Materials
- Reduced Course Load
- Assistance for students with English as an additional language

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all members of Portage College community to ensure that all students have the opportunity to participate equally in the post-secondary environment. There are specific roles and responsibilities for students, college faculty and staff.

Portage College Staff/Faculty

All staff and faculty are required to maintain confidentiality.

STUDENT ADVISORS

Responsible for assisting new students with the application and admissions process, which may include the disclosure of a disability. Refer students to SLS staff when a disability is identified or suspected.

STUDENT LEARNING SERVICES SUPERVISOR

Responsible for ensuring the appropriate services are available to support students to become independent lifelong learners.

LEARNING ASSISTANTS/FACILITATORS

Responsible for conducting intake interviews, developing and facilitating Individual Education Plans, workshops and Schedule 4 funding. Working with drop-in students to share learning strategies and techniques.

INSTRUCTORS/COORDINATORS

Responsible for identifying and assisting students experiencing learning difficulties in a timely manner, referring and/or suggesting to students who continue to struggle with course work to access Student Learning Services. Work with SLS to provide, encourage, and support students to become independent learners.

Portage College Students

Students are responsible for the following:

- Discuss learning issues with instructors and/or SLS staff as soon as possible
- Access learning opportunities and supports offered by SLS
- Decide as early as possible whether or not to disclose a disability, or suspected disability, in order to access accommodations and services
- Review Portage College's guideline for accommodating students with disabilities
- Consider the impact of your disability on your learning, and identify accommodation options that would be helpful for your specific needs
- Provide required documentation of the disability and its functional impact
- Participate in the development and coordination of learning plans and Individual Educational Plans when experiencing learning difficulties
- In the absence of documentation, be actively engaged in the intake and assessment process
- Follow SLS's established procedures for accessing accommodations and services
- Work with instructors to ensure accommodations on special provisions are provided
- Attend all scheduled appointments with SLS staff or notify in advance of absence
- Fill out and provide necessary forms in a timely manner (e.g. exam form for exam accommodations)
- Keep a written record of the efforts made to receive accommodations

Resources

There are infinite resources and supports available to students online to help you develop skills for navigating the postsecondary learning environment, and your particular program demands. Here we have included a sample of some SLS's top choices for learning resources. Check out even more by visiting www.portagecollege.ca.

Resources (cont'd.)

Websites

LYNDA.COM — Portage College holds a subscription to Lynda.com so students have free access to the extensive online resources offered by this educational site. Learn how to use Microsoft Office, write an essay using APA style, balance school and life, improve your communication skills, and so much more! To login, simply:

1. Got to www.lynda.com and click login and create a profile.
2. Fill the first name and last name field, use college email address on the username field and assign a password for the account.
3. Login and enjoy the tutorials!

KHANACADEMY.ORG — This website offers online tutorials on an incredible variety of topics, including videos and brief activities to engage learners. Get help with math, science, history and more. Access is free.

SMARTHINKING.COM — Online tutoring is at your fingertips! Access Smarthinking through your student Moodle page, and you can quickly be in contact with a tutor who will help you with writing skills, math, science, business, and more. This service is provided free to students through a subscription held by Portage College.

Software

READ & WRITE GOLD — This software is available to all Portage College students and can be accessed through Moodle. This software offers reading, writing and studying help for all students.

Smartphone Apps

MY STUDY LIFE — Get organized with this app to track your classes and homework.

QUIZLET — Make flash cards on your phone, or search among existing sets made by others.

DRAGON DICTATION — Speak into your phone to discover how to spell a tough word.

STUDENT LEARNING SERVICES

Supporting Your Success

Questions?

Call us toll-free at **1-866-623-5551, ext. 5758**

All individual services provided are confidential.



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