

It's about belonging...



Spencer J. Harrison, 1999

Your

Post-secondary

Transition

Planner

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Planning for your Future

Post-secondary education requires careful planning for any student wishing to continue their studies after high school. Choosing a school that simply has a certain program is not enough; a number of factors should be given careful deliberation as they could affect your academic performance. A few considerations are listed below:

- ↪ Curriculum
- ↪ Research Funding, Scholarships & Bursaries
- ↪ Institutional Initiatives & Development
- ↪ Student Retention
- ↪ Post Grad Employment
- ↪ Teacher Student Ratio
- ↪ Atmosphere & Location
- ↪ Learning Environment
- ↪ Modern Equipment & Technology
- ↪ Quality of Student Services & Supports

The quality of student services and supports offered requires close attention, especially if a student has any special needs. Consequently, due to the increased number of diagnosed learning disabilities across the board, this guide has been designed to help learning disabled students research and decide on an appropriate post-secondary institution suited for them.



Valuable Information Ahead

The main areas to consider when making the decision to continue your studies at the post-secondary level of study:

- **Know your own unique learning style, strengths, and weaknesses.**
This understanding often begins with a clear diagnosis of your learning disability. Such a diagnosis can only be gained through a complete psycho-educational assessment at an age when your current cognitive and academic levels can be measured. Through this process you can gain insight into your learning style, and you are given recommendations for developing and/or adapting strategies to improve your learning ability.
- **Identify the supports which you will need to obtain at post-secondary level in order to adapt your style to that educational system.**
It is important that you contact the Colleges or universities that you are considering in order to ask questions about the support systems that you need to help you with your academic and lifestyle needs. Knowing what they offer is important because it is at this point in your life that you are changing your support system probably for the first time. Often this change reduces the support available to you.

- ➔ Prepare for the increased academic demands of the post-secondary environment.

At the post-secondary level there are more demands in reading, writing, thought processes, independent workload, and the pace of that workload than at the high school level. Some students become overwhelmed when they find that the strategies which served them so well during their high school studies are no longer as effective with their college or university studies. Understanding these increased academic demands and possible adaptations to your existing strategies will provide you with a better opportunity for you to be successful at the post-secondary level.

The Psycho-Educational Assessment

A learning disability is diagnosed under current Ontario regulations by a Registered Psychologist or a Psychological Associate. Diagnosis is achieved using a formal battery of tests generally referred to as a psycho-educational assessment. This formal assessment and the result summarized in a report are the foundation upon which support services are put into place at the post-secondary level.

If you have never undergone a psycho-educational assessment BUT may suspect a learning disability, it is important to ask the perspective colleges or universities if psycho-educational assessments are offered by the school to determine a learning disability.

If you have undergone a psychological assessment, please provide the following information regarding your learning disability:

Date of last formal assessment: _____

Name of assessing Psychologist/Psychological Associate: _____

The Diagnostic statement from your assessment and reports (please leave blank if a diagnostic statement cannot be easily identified): _____

If possible, please attach a copy of the latest assessment report.

Description of Your Individual Learning Style

In your own words, try to describe your individual learning style. By listing your strengths and weaknesses, learning strategies can then be identified according to how you apply your strengths or by what adaptations or accommodations you use to compensate for your weaknesses.

My strengths: _____

How I use my strengths: _____

My weaknesses: _____

Adaptations/Accommodations that work for me: _____

Questions I Need to Ask

Create a list of questions you may want to ask prospective college or university contacts about the support and services you will need.

School: _____ Person to Contact: _____

Questions to ask: _____

School: _____ Person to Contact: _____

Questions to ask: _____

School: _____ Person to Contact: _____

Questions to Ask: _____

Student's Individual Academic Profile

This section should be completed by a high school teacher and/or resource person who is most familiar with your academic history and any accommodations or interventions that work for you.

Date of Last IPRC: _____

Student's learning strengths and aptitudes: _____

Teaching and learning strategies that work well for this student: _____

Specific areas of difficulty: _____

Teaching and learning strategies that do not work well for this student: _____

Academic accommodations provided: _____

Has this student had instruction in any of the following academic techniques?

- Note Taking
- Time Management
- Test Taking Strategies
- Effective Reading and Listening
- Essay Research and Writing Techniques
- Use of Computers
- Use of Adaptive Technology (e.g. tape recorders, spell checker, organizer, etcetera)
- Other (please specify): _____

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

School Telephone Number: _____

Special education designate(s):

(Please Print Name)

(Signature)

(Please Print Name)

(Signature)

Date: _____

Transition Planning Checklist

- I have a copy of my most recent IPRC report.
- I have a copy of my most recent Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- I have a copy of my psycho-educational assessment.
- I have a copy of my transcript.
- I have all the relevant medical information I need to share (e.g. medications I am taking).
- I have made contact with the Special Needs Office/Disability Office at the institutions I am considering.

CHOICE #1

School Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Contact Person: _____

CHOICE #2

School Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Contact Person: _____

CHOICE #3

School Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Contact Person: _____

- I have prepared a set of questions to ask regarding accommodations for my specific learning disability at these institutions.
- I have visited the campuses I wish to attend (either electronically or in person).
- I have completed the **Individual Learning Style** pages of this transition planner.
- I have had someone at my current school that completed the **Individual Academic Profile** pages of this planner.

****NOTE:** Your transition experience will be much easier if you complete all sections of this planner AND bring it (and all supporting documentation) with you as you meet with the resource person(s) at the college or university of your choice.

Working with you to support your success for tomorrow!