**Office of Disability Services**

Department of Student Success

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**MISSION**

The mission of the Office of Disability Services at Richard Bland College is to encourage self-advocacy with all students who self-identify as a student with a disability, promote the student to take educational ownership, and to use their skills to empower themselves as productive members of the college community.

**RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE POLICIES AND**

 **PROCEDURES** **FOR DISABILITY SERVICES**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Revised 1992) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protect the rights of people with disabilities as it establishes the foundation for equal opportunity and access by assuring that students have the same opportunities to achieve and to become successful in the postsecondary learning environment.

The ADA regulations define a person with a disability as anyone who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. Moreover, people included are those with visible disabilities (e.g., persons who are blind, deaf, or use a wheel chair) and with invisible disabilities (e.g., psychological challenges, learning disabilities), or chronic health impairment. A person is considered to have a disability if she/he has documentation of their condition or is regarded as having an impairment.

The requirements of the ADA regulations do not require Richard Bland College to lower its academic standards or adjust the content in any of the courses that are offered as part of its curriculum. The regulations also do not require academic modifications and accommodations to be unduly burdensome or done at the expense of the standards of the College.

The following list includes, but is not limited to, the conditions that are considered as disabling to individuals.

* Dyslexia
* Muscular Dystrophy
* Multiple Sclerosis
* Mental or Emotional Disorders
* Attention Deficit Disorder
* Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder
* Cerebral Palsy
* Epilepsy
* Orthopedic impairments
* Speech, visual, or hearing impairments

Richard Bland College of William and Mary is committed to providing equal educational opportunity and full participation for persons with disabilities. It is the College’s policy that no qualified person with a disability be excluded from participating in any campus program or benefiting from any RBC activities. A person who has a disability must have equal access to programs, opportunities, and activities at Richard Bland College.

Individuals seeking academic accommodations or modifications should contact the disability services provider for RBC students at 804-862-6235. Any grievance involving disabilities services should be addressed as outlined in the grievance procedures. See below for grievance procedure.

Richard Bland College has the right to maintain and require academic standards in its degree programs. The College requests that students with disabilities provide valid and relevant documentation completed by an appropriate professional source having verified the disability and the need for accommodative services. The disability services provider may discuss a student’s need for reasonable accommodations with a professional after obtaining a signed consent from the student, which authorizes such a discussion.

The College also has the right to provide reasonable accommodation(s) to students on a case-by-case basis or deny a request for accommodative services if the documentation is invalid. A document cannot be verified if it fails to identify a specific disability or verify the need for requested services. The students are responsible for submitting all documentations to the College in a timely manner.

**HOW TO OBTAIN ACCOMMODATIVE SERVICES AT RBC**

Admitted Richard Bland College students should:

1.Submit their documentation(s) of their disability to the ADA Coordinator via the following link: <https://richardblandcollege.formstack.com/forms/disability_services_application>

2. Once all documentation is submitted you will be contacted to schedule an appointment for accommodative services within five (5) working days. All documentation should be submitted four (4) weeks prior to the start of the intended semester, if possible.

3. Bring all documentation to the appointment, which should include the student’s most recent psychoeducational evaluation with adult norm scores and their most recent IEP or 504 plan and any medical or other documentation that support their request for accommodations.

4. During the meeting, the disability services provider will advise the student of the accommodations he/she is eligible for according to the documentation provided and the interview

**STEPS AFTER REGISTERING FOR DISABILITY SERVICES**

1. Retrieve your Letters of Accommodations (LOA) from the Office of Disability Services.

2. Take your LOA to each of your instructors and present it to them during office hours. Have the instructor sign the receipt portion of the LOA and leave them with the top half of the letter, which lists your eligible accommodations.

3. Once all of your LOA receipts are signed by your instructors, return them to the Office of Disability Services. This is to be completed each semester.

**WHAT IS THE PROCESS TO RECEIVE MY LOA EACH SEMESTER?**

Once you have been assigned accommodations, each following semester you will receive your LOA through your Statesmen email address. You are still obligated to obtain signatures from instructors and return your receipts to the Office of Disability Services.

**ACCOMMODATIVE SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Academic accommodations and disability support services are provided upon the recommendation of the disabilities services provider on campus. Students must submit the proper documentation(s) to the disability services provider before the accommodations are determined. The professional will explain the purpose and nature of the accommodations to the student.

**Academic Accommodations** and **Disability Support Services** are the two ways in which students with disabilities at Richard Bland College are supported. Accommodations are not to be used as tools to remediate the student’s learning process or lower the standards or performance for learning-disabled students.

**Academic Accommodations** may include, but are not limited to the following:

**Classroom**

* Tape recorded lectures
* Note taker
* Seating location
* Copy of lecture notes
* Type of seating (table, table and chair)
* Use of computer
* Interpreter
* Dictionary
* Tutoring

**Further Accommodations**

* Speller and/or calculator
* Research/Library assistance
* Calculator
* Lighting
* Brailler

**Exams/quizzes/assignments**

* Separate testing space
* Use of computer
* Extended time
* Reader/Scribe
* Alternate format of tests/quizzes

 Faculty members are expected to arrange and mutually agree on a time and place for the aforementioned academic adjustment.

**Disability Support Services** are designed to provide students equal access in the educational environment. Appropriate services may include, but are not limited to:

* Disability Management/ Educational Access Plan
* Assistance in compensatory academic strategies
* Disability related counseling
* Referral to faculty and staff
* Referrals to community agencies
* Career Counseling
* Transfer Counseling

### PREPARING FOR ADMISSIONS INTO RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE

Many students will face the eventuality of transitioning from high school to college. This experience has been formalized through the Individual Education Plan (IEP) or other transition plans supported by the Individual Education Act (IDEA). These plans highlight the student’s disabilities with the appropriate accommodations. Also outlined are the specific courses for the student to take, high school plans and the connections with relevant agencies in the community (i.e., Vocational Rehabilitation Services). Many graduating students participate in their transitioning process.

Once deciding to apply to Richard Bland College, students should begin to think about some important issues related to their disabilities, such as those listed below.

**Provide updated testing documentation (if applicable)**

It is the responsibility of the student to obtain up-to-date psychoeducational test scores (with adult norm scores) prior to entering college. This informs on where the student is as a first-semester or transfer college student. Students should see their special education case manager and school counselor to obtain this test prior to the final semester of their senior year in order to allow time to schedule this test.

**Self-advocacy**

Self-advocacy skills are essential to the overall success of the student. Students who are interested in Richard Bland College are encouraged to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and be able to explain their abilities and learning styles to individuals seeking to assist them. Self-advocacy skills for students include, but are not limited to the following: articulating academic needs, taking personal responsibility for their education, understanding their particular disability, and being aware of their learning style(s) or learning preference(s).

**High school courses**

Taking high school courses that are designed to prepare students for college is important. If appropriate, students may wish to take computer science and/or foreign language.

**Increase knowledge of individual rights and ADA regulations**

Along with familiarizing themselves with the ADA regulations, students should join a national organization, such as American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), the National Disability Rights Network, or Disability Law Center of Virginia. Several of these groups are willing to provide students literature on ADA legislation and will assist in developing effective academic compensatory strategies on the college level.

**Consider internships, a part-time job, or community service**

These experiences help students develop skills necessary to succeed in practically any environment.

**Understand the college application process**

Students should become familiar with the Richard Bland College’s application process. The college application process should begin as early as possible. Prospective students may visit the College’s admission page to obtain information regarding the application packet and deadlines.

**Get to know the student disability services provider and the College’s obligations to disability services**

Prospective students are encouraged to visit the service provider before or after submitting their applications for admission.

**Enroll in ESE 101**

Taking this first-year experience course during the first semester of college is beneficial academically and socially. Richard Bland College offers the **Exceptional Student Experience 101 (ESE 101)** **course** to assist students in their transition to college by focusing on the areas of studying, test taking, writing and research, campus resources, and organizational skills. Students taking this course will engage in assessing and deploying their own learning style and preferred modes of understanding the course content. They will learn effective problem-solving skills and develop an awareness of the relationship between education, identity, and developmental tasks in learning and cognition. This course is an elective and will satisfy graduation requirements.

**Contact the local Vocational Rehabilitation Agency**

Many students have benefited from this option as it offers a variety of services to eligible students with learning disabilities. Individuals should visit <http://www.vadsa.org/> for a list of available services in Virginia.

### TRANSFER STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students transferring to Richard Bland College should contact the disability services provider at 804-862-6235.

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

Richard Bland College has adopted an internal grievance procedure providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by the U.S. Department of Justice regulations implementing Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Title II states, in part, that “no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of such disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination” in programs or activities sponsored by a public entity. Complaints should be submitted using the Student Complaint Procedure found the RBC Student Handbook (<https://www.rbc.edu/student-handbook/>).