

Students with Disabilities Policy & Procedure

Athena Career Academy is committed to providing equal access to academically qualified students with disabilities. The program director reviews the needs of the otherwise qualified students who have verifiable learning disabilities. Requested accommodations must be reasonable, and students should not assume that they will receive the same services which they may have received at a previous location. Athena Career Academy does not offer a specialized curriculum for these individuals, nor do they offer special advisors. Every effort will be made to ensure that identified students have access to tools and resources that help them to demonstrate mastery of program content. Available services and resources will vary depending upon the nature of the disability. Examples of accommodations could include but are not limited to, preferential seating in class, extended time, calculator or computer accommodations, taped lectures.

Accommodations Request Process

The following identify the appropriate steps required to receive special accommodations for a disability. These steps include providing documentation of the disability, establishing appropriate accommodations, and implementing and communicating accommodations.

Documentation

In order to be eligible for reasonable accommodations, the student must provide current (within the past three years) documentation of the disability and its impact on the student's performance. In addition, the student must complete an Accommodation Request Form. This documentation will be reviewed by the program director and must include the following criteria:

- a) Diagnostic statement identifying the disability, date of the current diagnostic evaluation, and the date of the original diagnosis
- b) Description of the diagnostic test used
- c) Description of the disability's impact on performance
- d) Treatments, medications, assistive devices currently prescribed
- e) Explanation of the expected progression or stability of the disability
- f) Credentials of the diagnosing professional

In the event the documentation is inadequate or incomplete, Athena Career Academy reserves the right to deny accommodation until all of the necessary documentation is received. Final determination of appropriate accommodations will be determined in accordance with the mandates of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as court and Department of Education/Office of Civil Rights rulings related to these two laws. Documentation of a disability does not guarantee accommodations and services.

Establishing Appropriate Accommodations

Once all documentation is received, the program director, in collaboration with faculty members and/or administrative staff, will determine the reasonable accommodations available. The program director will meet with the student to establish the details of the accommodating plan. This plan may be altered at any point during the student's enrollment based upon the changing needs/requirements of the disability. It is the student's responsibility to keep the program director informed of changes or additional information relevant to the accommodation plan.

Communicating about Accommodations

It is the student's responsibility to share the accommodations letter with relevant faculty or school personnel. Students experiencing difficulty communicating and/or implementing their accommodation plan should contact the program director, who will help resolve any issues.

Appealing an Accommodation Request

Otherwise qualified students who request accommodation, according to the school's published procedures for a documented disability, and who believe that reasonable accommodation(s) has been denied, may submit a written appeal of the denial to the program director. The written appeal must be submitted within five (5) school days of the alleged denial and identify the following: the date the accommodation(s) request in question was made, identification of the student's disability, the accommodation(s) sought, and copies of the Accommodation Request and Accommodation Plan forms verifying the current accommodation plan.

The student also must attach any additional documentation regarding the disability that the program director should review. Within five (5) school days of his/her review, the program director will inform the student as to whether the proper accommodation procedures have been followed. During the course of the appeal process, and if all preliminary procedures to request accommodations have been followed by the student, the school will continue to provide the reasonable accommodation(s) offered at the accommodation conference with the student and outlined in the accommodation plan form. The decision of the program director will be considered final. The student's filing of an appeal according to this procedure does not mean that the student gives up his/her right to pursue other appeal processes through outside regulatory agencies.

Rights and Responsibilities Relating to Students with Disabilities

I. Athena personnel maintain the following rights and responsibilities:

A. Establish and maintain the academic and technical standards for the courses, programs, and activities offered, and evaluate students using those standards

B. Evaluate students on the basis of their abilities, not disabilities

- C. Provide reasonable accommodations for otherwise qualified students with disabilities
 - D. Maintain the confidentiality of student records, except where permitted or required by law
 - E. Request students to identify a disability and request accommodation in a timely manner
 - F. Confirm a student's disability status by requesting and receiving current, relevant documentation to support a request for accommodation
 - G. Deny a request for accommodation if the student fails to provide the requested documentation, or if the documentation establishes that the accommodation is not warranted
 - H. Determine the appropriate standards for construction and maintenance of its facilities
 - I. Select reasonable accommodations to be provided from among equally effective accommodations.
 - J. Refuse unreasonable accommodations, service requests, and/or facility-related barrier removal requests that pose a threat to health and safety and/or fundamentally alter a course, program, or activity of the school
- II. Otherwise qualified students with disabilities have the following rights and responsibilities:
- A. Meet the academic and technical standards for the courses, programs and activities in which they wish to participate.
 - B. Provide timely notice to the program director when an accommodation is needed
 - C. Provide documentation of one's disability and the impact of the disability on the student's participation in a course, program or activity.
 - D. Follow all required procedures to obtain reasonable accommodations from the school.
 - E. Participate full or equally in the school's courses, programs or activities with reasonable accommodations.
 - F. Expect confidentiality with regard to records, including those related to disability.

Upon enrollment, Athena Career Academy expects that all students will demonstrate the ability to meet and/or exceed the academic standards required for program completion.

Confidentiality of Disability Information

Disability information does not become a part of a student's permanent educational record. Disability information will be maintained in the student's academic file and will only be provided with a written release signed and dated by the student. Students who receive special accommodations do so with the understanding that a certain degree of disclosure with the relevant faculty and/or staff is required to effectively carryout the accommodations.