



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

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Reasonable Academic Accommodation Analysis Process

What is the purpose of the academic and housing accommodation process?

The disability accommodation process at UCF is designed to prevent discrimination based on disability and ensure students have equal access and opportunity relative to their nondisabled peers. Unlike the K–12 model, which may adjust standards to promote academic success, the college process centers on access and not guaranteed outcomes or specific accommodations.

How are reasonable academic and housing accommodation decisions made?

SAS engages in an individualized, interactive process to assess how requested accommodations may support equal access and prevent discrimination in academic and housing contexts. The focus is on removing college-created barriers, not guaranteeing outcomes. Each request is evaluated case-by-case, with decisions typically made within ten days of receiving all necessary information.

We rely on the following information to make informed decisions:

- Student narrative/history
- Third-party documentation from a qualified medical/health/counseling provider (with extent of documentation needed varied by the situation)
- Consultation with other members of the campus community, such as professors or UCF housing staff (as necessary)

What is the role of third-party documentation in determining reasonable accommodations?

While third-party documentation may confirm a disability, it does not determine the reasonableness of accommodations. SAS considers medical input as part of a broader evaluation, but recommendations from providers are not binding. Accommodations aimed primarily at enhancing academic success, rather than ensuring equal access, may be redirected to other campus resources.

Students benefit from providing (or may need to provide) SAS third-party documentation for two reasons:

- 1) To establish that a student has a disability.
- 2) To provide information to help us understand how and why a requested academic or housing accommodation may be reasonable, logical, and necessary to ensure nondiscrimination and equitable access relative to the disability.
 - This information generally comes from an explanation of the functional limitations and impacts of the disability relative to the academic and/or housing context.

Documentation that includes any of the following points, though not exhaustive in scope, may be helpful in our analysis:

Academic Accommodations

- Describe how the disability functionally impacts specific academic tasks (e.g., need for extended exam time).
- Provide objective data and professional analysis supporting the necessity of the accommodation for equal access.
- Include relevant history illustrating how the disability affects academic experiences (e.g., testing, reading).

Housing Accommodations

- Explain how the disability affects the student's ability to access or participate in campus housing.
- Provide objective data and professional recommendations supporting the need for on-campus housing or specific housing modifications to ensure equal access.

What factors are considered when determining if an accommodation is reasonable?

SAS prioritizes equity by facilitating accommodations that ensure access without altering essential academic or campus outcomes. Students with disabilities are held to the same academic standards and expectations as their peers. Accommodations believed to reduce these standards are less likely to be approved. The interactive process may include consultation with faculty or others to determine reasonable access, which can be achieved through accommodations or inclusive design. Each request undergoes a structured review, and an appeal process is available for students who disagree with the initial decision.

Reasonable accommodations are most frequently provided when the accommodation would:

- Ensure meaningful access and equal opportunity to participate, receive information, demonstrate knowledge, and achieve alongside nondisabled students without lowering academic standards and expectations.
- Directly address disability-related barriers that exist within the academic, housing, or campus environment.
- Logically and effectively remove the identified barriers.
- Not fundamentally alter the degree, course, or experience expectations, learning outcomes, or technical standards
- Address housing needs that cannot be met through personal strategies, advanced preparation, experiential practice, counseling/coaching/professional guidance, adjustment to expectations and routines, or implementation of other strategies that any student who lives on or off campus must consider and incorporate to continue to be successful UCF students.

When are academic accommodations potentially not reasonable?

Accommodations will not be approved if they:

- Lower academic standards or essential learning objectives.
- Eliminate required skill acquisition or prevent accurate assessment of learning.
- Reduce expectations common to all college students (e.g., participation, time management, content mastery).
- Fundamentally alter the nature of a program.
- Removing or waiving acquisition of a skill that is directly related to the health and safety of others.

- Pose health or safety risks to the student or others.
- Aim to enhance success without addressing an access barrier.
- Address challenges that can be managed through personal strategies or general student support (time management, reduced course load, different study strategies, etc.).

At times, an accommodation may be deemed reasonable for disability reasons but is not reasonable within the context of a specific academic experience after further analysis due to one or more of the above-listed factors.

What types of UCF housing accommodations exist?

The four broad types of housing accommodation categories include:

- **Floorplan Accommodations** – Accommodation considerations for students who have a confirmed UCF housing agreement and will be (or have been) assigned a space on campus (such as physical accessibility features, strobe light fire alarm, and private bedroom or bathroom).
- **Service Animal:** Service animal means any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.
- **Emotional Support Animal (ESA):** An ESA is an animal that provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability.
- **Lottery Exemption or Waitlist Priority Placement:** A lottery exemption means SAS will consider whether a student should bypass the standard housing lottery due to disability-related access needs. If approved, the student will receive a housing assignment for the next academic year. A waitlist priority accommodation allows SAS to consider placing a student at the top of the waitlist due to disability-related access needs. Approval does not guarantee housing, but gives priority if space becomes available.

Is a student with a disability guaranteed to live on campus while at UCF?

UCF does not require students to live on campus, and housing is not guaranteed for most students. Most on-campus housing is reserved for incoming first-year students, with limited availability for returning and transfer students. Students should plan to live off campus for part or all of their time at UCF and prepare accordingly.

Returning and transfer students may enter a housing lottery for the following academic year. Those not selected may join a waitlist and be offered a space if one becomes available.

More information on the lottery and waitlist can be found here:

<https://www.housing.ucf.edu/apply/returning/#options>

When are housing accommodations not reasonable?

A housing accommodation is generally not provided for the following reasons:

- To ensure academic success (accommodations support access, not outcomes)
- To secure a quiet study space (available at the UCF library)
- To increase comfort or alleviate discomfort, such as avoiding typical roommate challenges or conflicts
- To provide privacy for virtual appointments
- As a substitute for developing skills needed to live on campus (through trial-and-error, counseling, life coaching, UCF resources, such as Counseling and Psychological Services or UCF Center for Autism and Related Disabilities, or other strategies).
- To serve as an alternative to the student developing the skills, abilities, and practices necessary to effectively live off campus should space no longer be guaranteed
- As part of a treatment or medical plan
- To ease academic scheduling (e.g., avoiding commute or shuttle planning)
- Due to discomfort or uncertainty with off-campus living logistics
- Concerns about living independently for the first time
- For perceived safety or proximity to campus services (e.g., Health Services, UCF Police)
- Due to limited transportation options
- Due to financial concerns (whether related to disability or not)

At times, an accommodation may be deemed reasonable for disability reasons, but is not reasonable or immediately doable within the context of a specific housing experience after further analysis with Housing and Residence Life. SAS will attempt to identify other reasonable accommodations if possible. A requested accommodation may be unreasonable or not immediately doable if:

- All rooms meeting the accommodation request are already assigned for the given semester
- Implementation would pose an undue financial or administrative burden
- Implementation would fundamentally alter university housing policies
- Facilitation poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others, self, or UCF property