



3.10 IEP Adaptations and Modifications

ADAPTATIONS

In BC policy, all students should have equitable access to learning, opportunities for achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their educational programs. Adaptations are teaching and assessment strategies especially designed to accommodate a student's needs so he or she can achieve the learning outcomes of the subject or course and to demonstrate mastery of concepts. Essentially, adaptations are "best practice" in teaching. A student working on learning outcomes of any grade or course level may be supported through use of adaptations. Adaptations do not represent unfair advantages to students. In fact, the opposite could be true. If appropriate adaptations are not used, students could be unfairly penalized for having learning differences, creating serious negative impacts to their achievement and self-concept.

(POLICY DOCUMENT: SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES:

http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/special_ed.htm)

Examples of Adaptations

Accommodations in the form of adaptations occur when teachers differentiate instruction, assessment, and materials in order to create a flexible learning environment. For example, a student could be working on below grade level learning outcomes in Language Arts and at grade level in all other subjects or courses, some of which require reading materials at the lower reading level.

Adaptations include, but are not limited to:

- Audio recordings, electronic texts, or a peer helper to assist with assigned readings.
- Access to a computer for written assignments (e.g., use of word prediction software, spell-checker, idea generator).
- Alternatives to written assignments to demonstrate knowledge and understanding.
- Advance organizers/graphic organizers to assist with following classroom presentations.
- Extended time to complete assignments or tests.
- Support to develop and practice study skills, for example, in a learning assistance block.
- Use of computer software which provides text to speech/speech to text capabilities.
- Pre-teaching key vocabulary or concepts; multiple exposure to materials.
- Working on provincial learning outcomes from a lower grade level.



Best practice in teaching suggests that a record of successful adaptations for any student should be kept within a student's file to both document current practice and support future instructional needs. In the case of a student with special needs who has an Inclusive Education Plan (IEP) or an English Language Learner (ELL) student who has an Annual Instructional Plan, successful adaptations are recorded in these plans to document how the student is being supported currently and also so other teachers will know what works well for that student.

For students with special needs, adaptations that are used for tests and exams must be included in their IEPs in order for them to be considered for adaptations to the provincial exam conditions (adjudication).

Students whose education programs include adaptations will generally be working toward graduating with a Dogwood Diploma.

Grading and Reporting When There Are Adaptations

Grading for students who have been provided with adaptations should be in relation to the outcomes of the curriculum. If the learning outcomes that a student is working toward are from the curriculum of a grade level lower than the current grade placement, this should be indicated in the IEP or learning plan and in the body of the student's progress report. Further information on this subject is available in the Ministry document:

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS: POLICY AND PRACTICE:

http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reportcards/09_report_student_prog.pdf

MODIFICATIONS

This section may not apply to students in ELL programs unless they are also identified as a student with special needs as determined by Ministry and district processes.

Accommodations in the form of modifications are instructional and assessment related decisions made to accommodate a student's educational needs that consist of individualized learning goals and outcomes which are different than learning outcomes of a course or subject.

When To Use Modifications

The decision to use modifications should be based on the same principle as adaptations—that all students must have equitable access to learning, opportunities for achievement, and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their educational programs. Before modifying the outcomes for a student, schools should review all instructional interventions tried and consider assessment information, utilizing a process that is ongoing and consultative—similar to IEP development practices overall.



Modifications should be considered for those students whose special needs are such that they are unable to access the curriculum (i.e., students with limited awareness of their surroundings, students with fragile mental/physical health, students who have profound medical and cognitive disabilities). Using the strategy of modifications for students not identified as special needs is not permitted.

A formal decision that an overall program is modified does not occur until Grade 10. The decision to provide modifications, particularly at the secondary school level, will result in students earning a School Completion Certificate upon leaving school rather than credits toward graduation or a Dogwood Diploma. Therefore, the critical decision of whether a student's education program should include modifications should not be made in isolation by a single classroom teacher. The decision should be carefully and thoughtfully made, in consultation with parents/guardians, school administration, and/or instructional support personnel. This decision should address longer term educational, career and life goals of students and encompass plans for attaining these goals. This decision must be documented in the student's special education file. Further information can be found under School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) [Administrative Procedure 3402 - School Completion \(Evergreen\) Certificate](#).

Grading and Reporting When There Are Modifications

Progress reports to parents for students with special needs who are working toward individualized outcomes or goals in an IEP rather than the outcomes of the curriculum for that subject or course may be done using structured written comments or letter grades. The most appropriate form of reporting for the student should be determined collaboratively at the school level. If letter grades are used when modifications have been made, the body of the student progress report should state that the evaluation is in relation to the individualized outcomes or goals and not in relation to learning outcomes for the subject or course. The specific IEP outcomes or goals evaluated should be included in the student progress report.

INFORMATION TAKEN FROM THE B.C. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, [A GUIDE TO ADAPTATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS \(August 2009\)](#)
