

Student Transitions: Trends, The New TRG & Access to Assessments

Alison Parker
RARC Lunch and Learn Series
July 2026



Regional Assessment Resource Centre:

Lunch and Learn Series

Summer 2026



Free to join. No registration required.

**From Policy to Practice: Key Takeaways from
Sari Springer and the RARC Workshop**

Thursday, June 18th | 12pm to 1pm

**Student Transitions: Trends, The New TRG &
Access to Assessments**

Thursday, July 23rd | 12pm to 1pm

Tricky Accommodations Issues

Thursday, August 20th | 12pm to 1pm

Join via Zoom:

Meeting Link: [https://zoom.us/j/96958555398?
pwd=dpPJc4nOIWr9o3PuxrlocD1piSW9ZD.1](https://zoom.us/j/96958555398?pwd=dpPJc4nOIWr9o3PuxrlocD1piSW9ZD.1)

Meeting ID: 969 5855 5398

Passcode: 729155



Contact RARC



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Regional Assessment Resource Centre (RARC)

www.queensu.ca/rarc

Our vision is to enable students with neurodevelopmental disabilities to thrive in post-secondary education.

Services provided under 4 pillars:



Transition



Research



Training



Assessment

Transition Trends



High numbers of incoming PS students identified as having a disability

- Large increases in students with diagnoses of:
 - ADHD
 - ASD
 - Mental health diagnoses
- Increasing workloads for Accessibility Advisors
 - Impacts timeliness of appts at peak times
 - Impacts amount of time that can be spent with each student

Some PSIs have innovated their intake processes - TMU's Express Registration

Students do not always have comprehensive documentation

- Different documentation expectations at high school
- Health care practitioners may not have expertise in functional impairments in PS
- Cost and time barriers to obtaining documentation
- Documentation policies are not consistent across different PSIs

Developing documentation guidelines and publishing on your website can help standardize the process (example: [U of T LD & ADHD Documentation Guidelines](#)).

RARC assessments reduce cost/time barriers, and ensure practitioners have appropriate training.

Overaccommodation in high school

Policies, goals and guidelines are different in high school

- Limited in the documentation they can require - may not have information on functional impairments
- Focus is on success and granting credits
- Language like 'so they can reach their potential'
- Modifications presented as accommodation (unlimited time, open book tests, rewriting exams, etc.)

In the work we're doing with school boards, we are starting to see movement and push for change to reduce overaccommodation.

The more PS institutions work with school boards on transition planning and events, the more success we've seen.

Unrealistic accommodation expectations from incoming PS students

- Misunderstanding of legislation at the PS level
- Overaccommodation (and modification) at high school level
- Fear of failure, pressure of obtaining post-sec degree

Is it possible to get ahead of this, so that students know what to expect and what's reasonable?

- Transition programming - learn what to expect
- Institution policies posted on website
 - Essential requirements of programs/courses

Parental involvement

- Lots of parent involvement in getting students registered and set up with accommodations
- Parents don't always understand the rules around consent and privacy now that their children are 18
- Students may not have well-developed self-advocacy or independence skills
- Parents may overstep

Some schools are implementing clear rules for parents: [Laurier Communication Protocol for Parents and Supporters](#)

Low study and learning skills

- Many students have not developed strong studying and learning skills at high school (time management, meeting deadlines, testing under time pressure)
- High school policies limit penalties on students for lateness, overaccommodation can impede development of these skills
- Students may attribute skill deficits to disability-related impairments

PS students need access to learning strategists, workshops, group sessions to improve their skills.

Trouble engaging students during transition

- Challenges in connecting with students/families in early stages (they don't know what they don't know)
- Waiting until fall (or later) to register with Accessibility Services
- Reluctance to use Learning Strategies support
- Transition programs - low registration or engagement

What incentives or processes have worked for you?

What other trends are you seeing?



The NEW Transition Resource Guide



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[Apprenticeship and Trades](#) ▾

[Community](#) ▾

[Post-Secondary Education](#) ▾

[Workplace](#) ▾

[Resources](#)

[About](#)

Welcome to your next step

The Transition Resource Guide is here to support students with disabilities in Ontario as they explore different pathways for life after high school.



Transition Resource Guide (TRG)

The Transition Resource Guide is a comprehensive resource designed to support students with disabilities as they prepare for life beyond high school.

It is intended to help students build the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to successfully transition into a range of post-secondary pathways:

- Apprenticeships and the Skilled Trades
- Community
- Post-secondary Education
- Workplace

www.transitionresourceguide.ca

Transition Resource Guide (TRG)

During the last year the TRG has had a big expansion (with funding from MEDU) to include new pathways and resources for students, families and teachers.

We worked to focus on key elements to transition:

- **Start early:** Exploration and learning about what to expect
- **Individualized goals:** What are your strengths and interests, what skills will you need
- **Partnerships:** Try it out, connect with others
- **Skill building:** Start early and get prepared

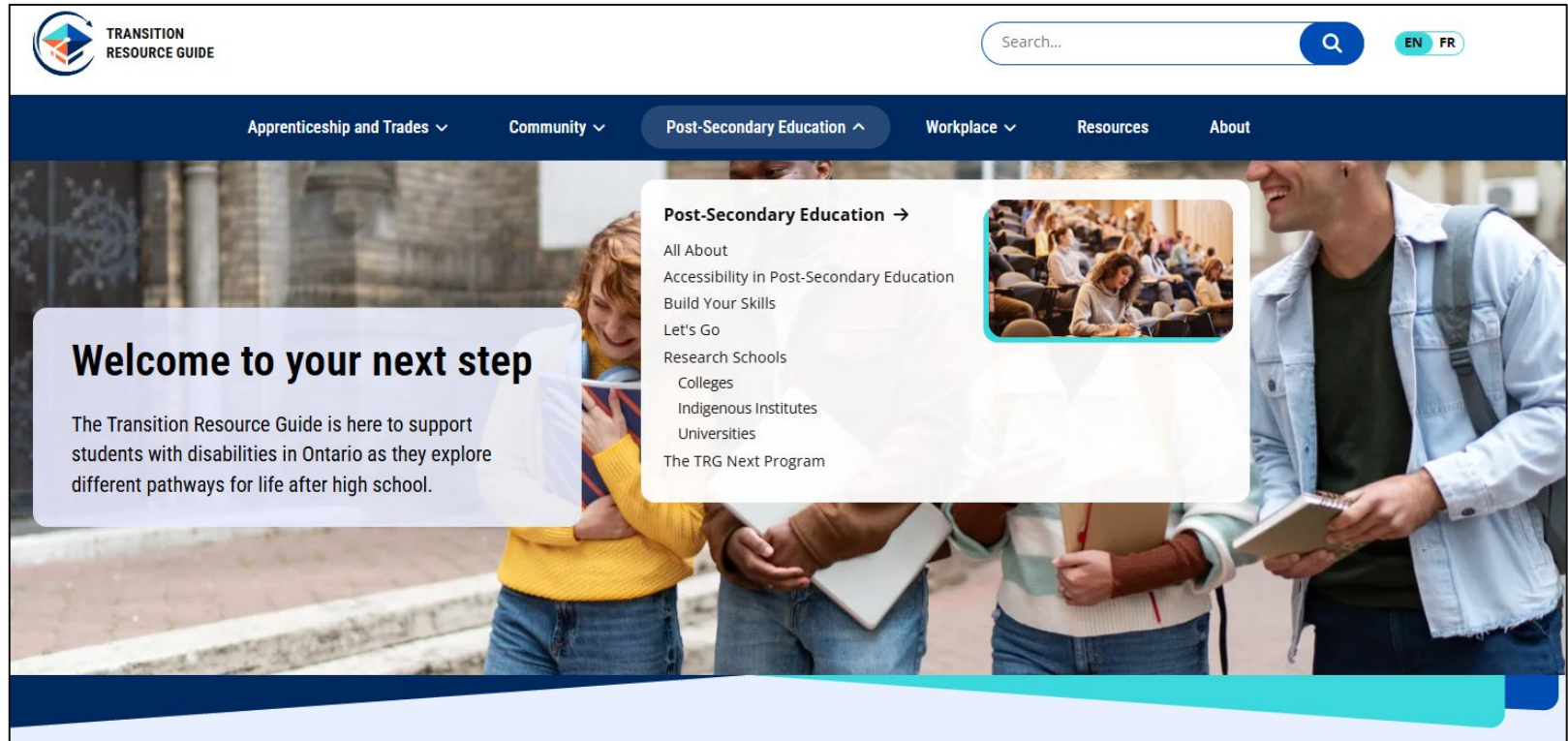
Post-Secondary Content

- All About Post-Secondary Education
 - Types of programs and degrees/diplomas
 - Finding the right program for you
- Accessibility in Post-Secondary Education
 - What are my rights?
 - Changes from high school
 - Requesting accommodations
 - Self-understanding and self-advocacy
- Build Your Skills
 - What are your strengths and challenges?
 - Preparation and skill development
- Let's Go
 - Registering with Accessibility Services
 - Financial Aid
 - Life at Post-Secondary

Post-Secondary Content

- Research Schools
 - Explore supports and services at post-secondary institutions in Ontario → Currently being updated!
- TRG Next
 - TRG Next is a free, bilingual, online post-secondary preparation program designed to help students transition successfully into their first year of post-secondary education.
 - Four modules: Preparing for Change, Academics at Post-Secondary, Learning Skills, Thriving on Campus
- Resources (worksheets and more)
 - Post-Secondary Readiness Worksheet
 - Skill Building Worksheet
 - Student and Family Transition Planning Checklist
 - Tips for Your Intake Meeting

Transition Resource Guide (TRG)



www.transitionresourceguide.ca

Transition Resource Guide (TRG)

[Home](#) / [Post-Secondary Education](#) / [Accessibility in Post-Secondary Education](#)

Accessibility in Post-Secondary Education

Just like any other pathway, there are a lot of individuals with disabilities who enroll in post-secondary education. In this section, you will learn how disability may impact your post-secondary education, what accommodations and supports may be available to you, and how to prepare for the transition from secondary to post-secondary education.



[On this page](#) ↓

[Navigating Post-Secondary](#) [What Are My Rights?](#) [Changes from High School](#) [Requesting Accommodations](#) [Residence and Campus Accessibility](#) [Self-Understanding and Self-Advocacy](#)

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Transition Resource Guide (TRG)

Changes from High School

If you have a disability that impacts you while learning, you can request accommodations at post-secondary. However, the process for requesting accommodations and what accommodations you may have access to is different at college and university than it was in high school, so it's important to understand what to expect and how to prepare.

Key things to know:

- ✓ **Individual Education Plans (IEPs) do not continue after high school.** IEPs only apply in elementary and secondary school, and post-secondary institutions use their own processes to decide how accommodations are provided.
- ✓ To access post-secondary accommodations, you must have a **diagnosed disability** and **disability-related functional impairments** that affect your ability to participate in your learning. Not everyone who had an IEP or received support in high school has a formal diagnosis. If you're unsure, consider talking with a healthcare provider or reviewing your documentation (such as your IEP).
- ✓ You will need to provide **up-to-date documentation** of your disability (according to your institution's documentation requirements). Depending on your disability and the documentation you already have, you may need to obtain updated documentation.
- ✓ It's quite possible that you will receive **reduced accommodations** at post-secondary than what you received in high school, as the legislation, process, and goals are different in the post-secondary environment compared to high school.
- ✓ Accessing accommodations and disability-related supports in post-secondary education, is largely a **student-driven process**. You will need to reach out to your institution's Accessibility Services office to register and set up accommodations. This may be quite different from your experiences in high school, especially if your caregivers and/or teachers arranged your Individual Education Plan (IEP) and accommodations without much of your involvement.

The Accessibility Services Office

Publicly funded post-secondary institutions will have an Accessibility Services (AS) office, with accessibility advisors who determine and coordinate academic supports and accommodations to students with disabilities.

In order to request support and accommodations, students must:

- **Self-identify.** In post-secondary education, it is the student's responsibility to self-identify as a student with a disability and to register with the Accessibility Services office in order to receive accommodations.
- **Reach out and register with the Accessibility Services office.** To find out the specific name and website for your institution, visit [Research Schools](#). You are encouraged to do this early, in the summer prior to entering your first year of studies.
- **Provide appropriate documentation of their disability.** This typically includes documentation (e.g., Psychoeducational Assessment Report, Disability Verification Form) from a health care provider which indicates your diagnosed disability as well as the functional disability-related impairments anticipated in the post-secondary environment.
- **Follow the rules and guidelines** set out by the accommodations advisor, such as attending appointments and completing required paperwork.

It can take **several weeks** to get an appointment and set up your accommodations for post-secondary, and even longer if you need to obtain new documentation. To make sure your accommodations are determined and set up before your first day of class - be sure to reach out and **register early!** Many institutions offer intake meetings over the summer for incoming students, allowing you to get registered and organized before your first semester starts. Once you've accepted an offer of admission and have a **student number and email**, you should reach out to your Accessibility Services office. **Remember, that is a student-driven process.** You (not your parent, family members, or teachers) will need to register with the Accessibility Services office to arrange your accommodations.

[Collapse all](#) / [Expand all](#)

Documentation Requirements



Types of Accommodations



Other Support Services



www.transitionresourceguide.ca



TRG Next: Online Prep Course

TRG Next

Starting post-secondary is a big leap! TRG Next makes sure you're prepared. Build the skills, confidence, and strategies you need to put you on the path to success.



Your Transition Prep Course

TRG Next is a free, online post-secondary preparation program designed to help students transition successfully into their first year of college or university. The course is all about building the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to thrive in a post-secondary environment—especially for students with disabilities who may face unique challenges along the way. Each module has a companion workbook and activities to complete that allow students to self-reflect, practice necessary skills, and explore information about their post-secondary school.

Through four comprehensive modules, students are guided through what to expect and develop strategies for success. From understanding new responsibilities and navigating accommodations, to strengthening study strategies and building independence, TRG Next empowers students to feel informed, supported, and ready to begin their first semester with confidence.

Click the links below to explore the modules and get started!

www.transitionresourceguide.ca/post-secondary-education/trg-next

RARC's Transition Program

- On-Line to Success: a transition program for Grade 12 students across Ontario with LD, ADHD, ASD, or mental health disorders
 - Self-understanding and self-advocacy
 - Accommodations and supports at post-secondary
 - Researching your school
 - Learning strategies and AT
- Fully online, asynchronous course
- Cohorts in second semester (February start) and summer (July start)
- Two options for Opening Day (program kick-off)
 - In-person in Kingston (February cohort)
 - Virtual online (February and July cohorts)
- Piloting this year: assessment incentive for students who complete the course (\$1000 assessment)

Want to build your own transition program?

We have one available! **EYES-ON-PSE: Equipping Yourself for Educational Success in Ontario's Post-Secondary Education** is available to any secondary or post-secondary school in Ontario.

- A large [online curriculum library](#) for post-secondary institutions or secondary schools to draw from and build their own transition program
- Fully editable and customizable
- Available in English and French
- Based in Desire2Learn - can be transferred to other LMS platforms (moodle, blackboard, etc.)

Other Transition Projects

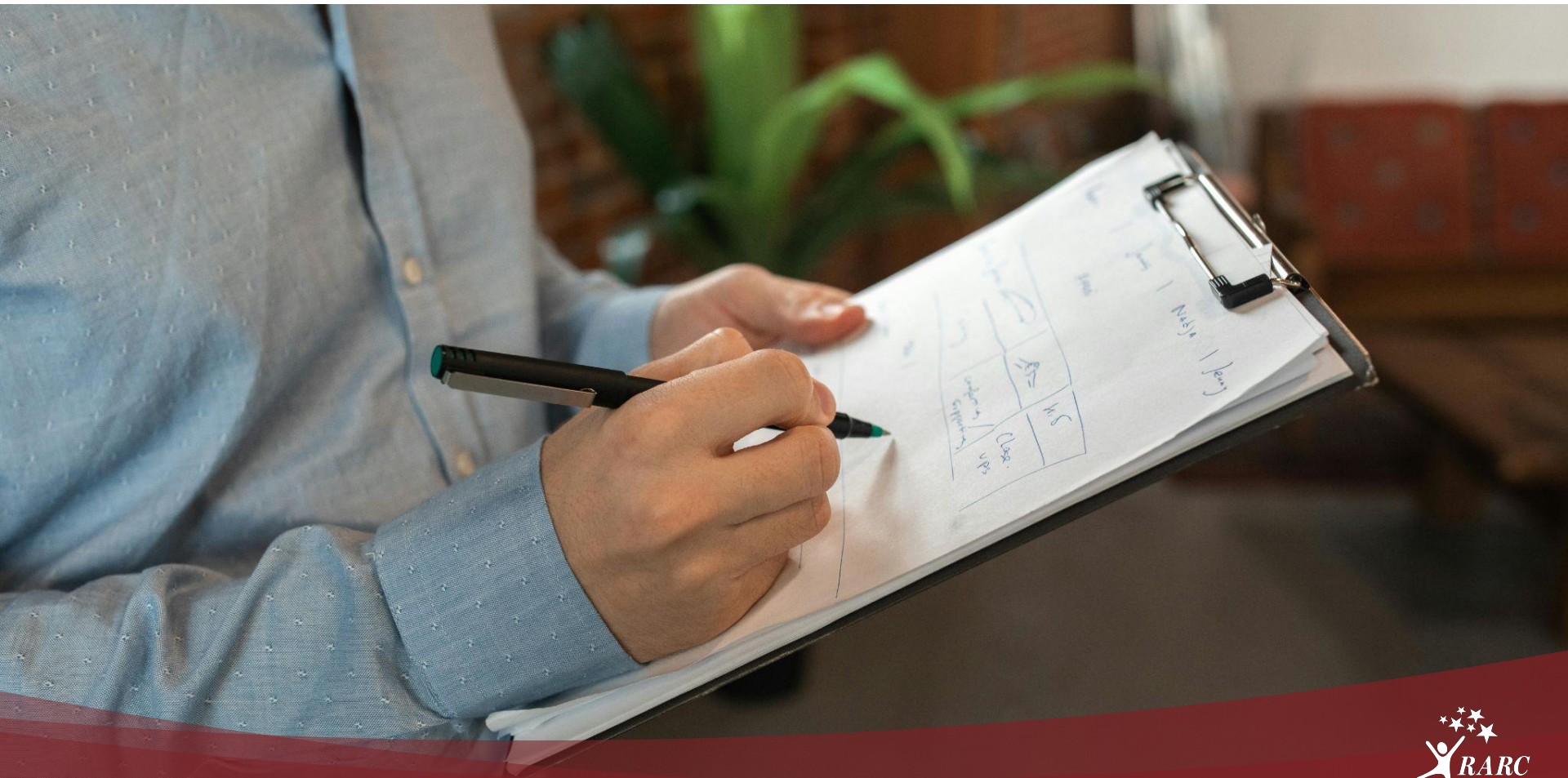
- We host a virtual [Transition to Post-Secondary night](#) every fall
- We've been to lots of transition fairs, presented to many schools boards and at conferences, sharing about RARC & TRG
- We have a Transition Advisory Board that meets virtually 1-2 times a year. If you're interested to learn more and possibly join our board, please complete our [Expression of Interest form](#).

Help spread the word!



- If you're going to a transition-related event
 - We can send flyers or other merch
 - If the timing is right, we can give virtual presentations
 - For large-scale events, we may be able to attend in person
- School boards or other groups can request training or presentations for virtual or in-person events: [Transition Team Service Request Form](#)
- If you have students or families who might be interested in any of our programs, they can visit our website queensu.ca/rarc/transitions or email us at rarc.transitions@queensu.ca.

Access to Assessments



Referrals

The purpose of a RARC assessment is for Accessibility Services advisors to be able to make informed and evidence-based decisions on appropriate academic accommodations for students.

To be eligible for an assessment, students must:

- Be accepted to or attending a post-secondary institution
- Have a documented or suspected neurodevelopmental disorder
- Have evidence of historical and current academic impairment (grades consistently at a C or lower when no accommodations are provided)

Referrals

Assessments are conducted in a number of ways, by:

- RARC staff on-site in Kingston
- RARC staff who travel off-site to post-secondary institutions
- Our MAT team of psychologists, who assess out of their office, or occasionally travel to post-secondary campuses

Last year we received a little under 300 referrals for our southern Ontario catchment area - this is fairly consistent with our post-COVID years.

Increasing Access

To increase access to assessments during the summer, we're expanding our referral process:

- We are accepting self-referrals for incoming PS students with a previous diagnosis and out-of-date documentation
 - Students are directed to connect with Accessibility Services at the same time, to start their registration process and ask any questions about funding or BSWD
- We are piloting discounted assessments (\$1000) for students who finish our OLTS transition program

Increasing Access

Our goal is to help students get documentation they need early, so that they're ready to go when classes start.

By linking an assessment to the OLTS program, we're also trying to draw students further into the transition process - to engage and prepare for post-secondary!

As we increase summer access to assessments - we are working with students who may not be living near their post-secondary campus. We may ask to use your campus space to test non-students who live in your city, if they're not able to travel to their own campus during the summer (and vice versa - your future students may be being tested on another campus).

Other questions or suggestions about transition and support?



Connect with RARC on Social Media!



Facebook: [RegionalAssessmentResourceCentre](#)

Instagram: [@regionalassessmentresourcectr](#)



Facebook: [TransitionResourceGuide](#)

Instagram: [@transitionresourceguide](#)



Thank you!

Connect with RARC:



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