



# Self-Advocacy Toolkit

CAREER RESOURCES  
FOR LEARNERS WITH  
DISABILITIES  
Humber Advising &  
Career Services

## HOW TO WRITE A PERSONAL ACCESS / NEEDS STATEMENT

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Personal Access / Needs Statements help you communicate **what conditions support your success**—without sharing private or medical details. These statements focus on your **strengths, needs, and preferred working/learning conditions**, allowing you to advocate clearly and respectfully. Each statement ends with a **collaborative question** to keep the conversation open and supportive.

### Step 1. Follow this FORMULA.

Each part helps you explain what you need in a positive, solution-focused way:

- **[Start with a strength or need]**  
*What helps you work or learn effectively? (e.g., “I stay focused best...”)*
- **[Follow with a specific request or suggestion]**  
*Name the condition that supports you (e.g., “...when tasks are provided in writing”).*
- **[End with a collaborative question]**  
*Invite problem-solving together (e.g., “Would it be possible to...?”)*

Highlight these stems for clarity across all examples:

I ... / when ... / Would it be possible...?

### Step 2. Review this EXAMPLE of the Formula

- **I** stay organized
- **when** tasks are broken down into steps.
- **Would it be possible** to receive project outlines in that format?

### Step 3. Use this TEMPLATE to create your Personal Access / Needs Statement

1. I \_\_\_\_\_
2. **when** \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Would / Could / Is it possible to** \_\_\_\_\_?

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## Step 4. Review the examples provided for ideas.

Four examples have been provided for:

- **Current Students**
- **Summer Jobs**
- **WIL Placements**
- **First Jobs**

Feel free to borrow wording or combine ideas to fit your own style and needs.

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## Step 5. Write your Personal Access / Needs Statement

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## EXAMPLES

Each example follows the same pattern:

I [strength or need] → when [request or suggestion].

Would / Could / Is it be possible to [collaborative question]?

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## CURRENT STUDENTS

### Focus & Concentration

I stay focused better

when I have uninterrupted work time.

Would it be possible to build that into my schedule?

### Information Processing

I absorb information best

when I can review it in writing.

Would it be possible to receive notes or summaries in advance?

### Communication

I communicate most clearly

when I have time to prepare my thoughts.

Would it be possible to receive discussion questions ahead of class?

### Group Work

I contribute more effectively

when roles are clearly defined.

Would it be possible to assign specific tasks for each group member?

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## SUMMER JOBS

### Administrative Assistant

I stay organized and focused

when I work from a quiet space.

Would it be possible to use a low-distraction desk area?

### Customer Service Representative

I communicate most clearly

when I can prepare responses ahead of time.

Would it be possible to receive common customer questions in advance?

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## Food Service Worker

I perform best

when tasks are clearly outlined.

Would it be possible to receive a written checklist for each shift?

## Retail Associate

I stay focused

when I have uninterrupted time for restocking or tasks.

Would it be possible to schedule these duties during slower hours?

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## WIL PLACEMENTS

### Medical Office Assistant

I stay organized

when I use written checklists.

Would it be possible to receive a daily task list?

### Human Resources Intern

I communicate most clearly

when I can review materials beforehand.

Would it be possible to receive agendas or documents in advance?

### Student Services Assistant

I stay focused

when I work in a low-distraction environment.

Would it be possible to use a quieter space for administrative tasks?

### IT Support Intern

I troubleshoot more effectively

when I follow step-by-step guides.

Would it be possible to access written troubleshooting procedures?

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## FIRST JOB

### Paralegal

I stay organized

when I use written checklists for case preparation.

Would it be possible to receive a daily task list?

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## Accounting Assistant

I complete tasks efficiently  
when I work in a quiet area.

Would it be possible to use a workspace away from high-traffic areas?

## Software Developer

I troubleshoot more effectively  
when I have uninterrupted coding time.

Would it be possible to block off focused development hours?

## Public Health Outreach Coordinator

I communicate most clearly  
when I can rehearse presentations ahead of time.

Would it be possible to preview materials before events?

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