

Flex Plan Instructions

Completing a Flex Plan

A Flex Plan is only applicable to specific accommodations and utilized when the terms of the accommodation must be course-specific. The Flex Plan is initiated by a faculty member and establishes how flexibility or *consideration* will be implemented relative to a specific course. Each Flex Plan-eligible accommodation will pre-specify terms as a benchmark for establishing what additional flexibility can be offered.

When applicable, the prompt to complete a Flex Plan will be listed in a student's disability notification letter under the respective accommodation description. Instructors will complete one Flex Plan per course that will apply to all students with applicable accommodations in that course.

Faculty are encouraged to complete plans as soon as possible to ensure that reasonable flexibility meets the needs of their specific course. **To ensure the provision of reasonable accommodations, DRS reserves the right to implement a Flex Plan with default parameters for flexibility on an instructor's behalf when an instructor does not complete a plan in a timely manner.** Several email reminders will always precede this action step, providing faculty with sufficient time to complete the plans independently. DRS recognizes that relatively more time may be needed to complete plans at the start of the term.

Please consult the Questions for Thought that follow the step-by-step instructions below, when determining reasonable flexibility or "consideration" in a course.

1. To complete the Flex Plan, access the [DRS Instructor Portal](#)
2. Select **Continue to View Student Accommodations**
3. Select **Flex Plan** from the left navigation pane under Home. This page will list your course sections that include students with accommodations that require completion of a Flex Plan. Please note that this page may update to include additional sections as your students request their disability notification letters.
 - a. Flex Plans with the status *Not Initiated* require instructor attention and completion. Flex Plans will go on to have one of three statuses:
 - i. *Not Initiated* – Instructor has not yet initiated the plan and must take this step in order for the accommodation to take effect.
 - ii. *Waiting for Staff Review* – the instructor has started the Flex Plan and is awaiting initial review from DRS before being released to a student.
 - iii. *Completed* – the Flex Plan has been reviewed by DRS and released to students with applicable accommodations in the course.

4. From here, instructors can choose to complete Flex Plans individually for each course section they teach, or they can create or “bulk specify” a Flex Plan for multiple courses. DRS encourages bulk specifying a Flex Plan for multiple courses when it is appropriate to designate the same flexibility and parameters for several sections or unique courses.
 - a. **To Specify a Flex Plan for Multiple Courses:**
 - i. Under *Step 1: Select Courses (for Bulk Specify)*, check the boxes to the left of each applicable section you wish to select. Instructors can select all or some of their course sections.
 - ii. Then, under *Step 2: Select Available Options*, click **Specify Flex Plan for Multiple Courses**
 - iii. Review the courses you selected under *Student Request- Course Information* and then proceed to populate answers for each question under the *List of Questions*.
 - iv. To submit the populated plan, select **Initiate and Request Review** under *Form Submission*.
 - b. **To Complete a Flex Plan for a Single Course Section:**
 - i. Under *Step 1: Select Courses (for Bulk Specify)*, identify the appropriate course section and select **View** to the left of the course information.
 - ii. Review the course you selected under *Student Request- Course Information* and then proceed to populate answers for each question under the *List of Questions*.
 - iii. To submit the plan, **select Initiate and Request Review** under *Form Submission*.
 - c. **To Copy an existing (‘Completed’) Flex Plan over to a new (‘Not Initiated’) Flex Plan:**
 - i. Additional Flex Plan(s) may populate on the DRS Instructor Portal when a student requests a Flex Plan-applicable accommodation in a course/section for the first time. You may wish to copy language from an existing plan to a new one that is not yet initiated. For this, you can use the *Copy To* feature:
 - ii. Navigate to the [DRS Instructor Portal](#)
 - iii. Select **Continue to View Student Accommodations**
 - iv. Select **Flex Plan** from the left navigation under *Home*.
 - v. From your list of Flex Plans, find the plan you wish to copy, one with the status, Completed, and select **View**.
 - vi. Locate the *Copy To* feature under *Options* and select the course that should receive the copy of the existing plan.
 - vii. Select **Copy Flex Plan**
5. Once a Flex Plan is submitted by an instructor, it will receive an initial review by DRS. Instructors will be notified via email if any changes are requested or if the plan has been statused as “Completed,” releasing it to students with applicable accommodations in the course(s).
6. Though Flex Plans are completed by course, Disability Specialists may reach out when student-specific inquiries arise in relation to a Flex Plan.

Questions for Thought When Determining Reasonable Course Flexibility or “Consideration”

For absences, please examine the role of attendance and participation in your course and the circumstances when absence would fundamentally alter the nature of the course, interfere with essential standards of the course, and/or compromise expectations of the student’s performance/work. Consider the following when completing the plan below.

- How do instructors and students interact in the classroom?
- Are student contributions crucial to learning?
- What alternatives exist for student in-class contributions?
- Is student participation essential for learning in this course?
- Does a student's absence significantly impact their own and others' educational experience?
- Is instructional content exclusively available during class time?
- Can course content be supplemented for students when absent?

For assignment deadlines, please examine the role of timely completion of work in your course and the circumstances when late submission of work would fundamentally alter the nature of the course, interfere with essential standards of the course, and/or compromise expectations of the student’s performance/work. Consider the following when completing the plan below.

- What are the essential requirements of this course?
- Would extending deadline(s) fundamentally change the course?
- What does the syllabus state regarding late work and/or deadlines?
- Is timely completion of assignments a primary mode of learning in this course?
- Is timely assignment submission a key part of the learning process?
- How much does a student's failure to submit assignments on time impact their own and others' educational experience?

Please contact DRS at 412-648-7890 or drsrecep@pitt.edu if you have questions or would like assistance completing the Flex Plan.