

## Things you always wanted to know about accessibility but didn't dare to ask students with disabilities

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### Aim of the Study

To describe the experience of interaction for students with disabilities who study at an online university in Canada.

### Methods

Descriptive phenomenology with 15 participants with various disabilities; 9F/6M; average age 48; 6 graduate & 9 undergraduate students.

Students with disabilities believe that having access to online higher education that is free of attitudinal, administrative, technological, curricular, & financial barriers is their right. Access to learning & assistive technologies & accommodations are prerequisites but not a guarantee that online learning is accessible to disabled students.

<https://atdistance.wordpress.com/>

### Results

Experience of studying online for university students with disabilities was a continuum & complex interplay of core elements:

- having access,
- working harder,
- being supported, belonging, &
- becoming.

### Conclusions

Experiences were mostly positive, but each student had at least one negative experience. Accessibility was inconsistent calling for reframing accessibility & making changes at service, instructional, policy, & administrative levels.

