



## Appendix B: Return to Learn Strategies Approaches

COGNITIVE DIFFICULTIES		
Post-Concussion Symptoms	Impact on Student's Learning	Potential Strategies and/or Approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headache and Fatigue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficulty concentrating, paying attention or multitasking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure instructions are clear (e.g., simplify directions, have the student repeat directions back to the teacher)</li> <li>allow the student to have frequent breaks, or return to school gradually (e.g., 1-2 hours, half-days, late starts)</li> <li>keep distractions to a minimum (e.g., move the student away from bright lights or noisy areas)</li> <li>limit materials on the student's desk or in their work area to avoid distractions</li> <li>provide alternative assessment opportunities (e.g., give tests orally, allow the student to dictate responses to tests or assignments, provide access to technology)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficulty remembering or processing speed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficulty retaining new information, remembering instructions, accessing learned information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide a daily organizer and prioritize tasks</li> <li>provide visual aids/cues and/or advance organizers (e.g., visual cueing, non-verbal signs)</li> <li>divide larger assignments/assessments into smaller tasks</li> <li>provide the student with a copy of class notes</li> <li>provide access to technology</li> <li>repeat instructions</li> <li>provide alternative methods for the student to demonstrate mastery</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficulty paying attention/concentrating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited/short-term focus on schoolwork</li> <li>Difficulty maintaining a regular academic workload or keeping pace with work demands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>coordinate assignments and projects among all teachers</li> <li>use a planner/organizer to manage and record daily/weekly homework and assignments</li> <li>reduce and/or prioritize homework, assignments and projects</li> <li>extend deadlines or break down tasks</li> <li>facilitate the use of a peer note taker</li> <li>provide alternate assignments and/or tests</li> <li>check frequently for comprehension</li> <li>consider limiting tests to one per day and student may need extra time or a quiet environment</li> </ul>

EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES		
Post-Concussion Symptoms	Impact on Student's Learning	Potential Strategies and/or Approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anxiety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decreased attention/concentration</li> <li>Overexertion to avoid falling behind</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>inform the student of any changes in the daily timetable/schedule</li> <li>adjust the student's timetable/schedule as needed to avoid fatigue (e.g., 1-2 hours/periods, half-days, full-days)</li> <li>build in more frequent breaks during the school day</li> <li>provide the student with preparation time to respond to questions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irritable or Frustrated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inappropriate or impulsive behaviour during class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>encourage teachers to use consistent strategies and approaches</li> <li>acknowledge and empathize with the student's frustration, anger or emotional outburst if and as they occur</li> <li>reinforce positive behaviour</li> <li>provide structure and consistency on a daily basis</li> <li>prepare the student for change and transitions</li> <li>set reasonable expectations</li> <li>anticipate and remove the student from a problem situation (without characterizing it as punishment)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Light/noise sensitivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficulties working in classroom environment (e.g., lights, noise, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>arrange strategic seating (e.g., move the student away from window or talkative peers, proximity to the teacher or peer support, quiet setting)</li> <li>where possible provide access to special lighting (e.g., task lighting, darker room)</li> <li>minimize background noise</li> <li>provide alternative settings (e.g., alternative work space, study carrel)</li> <li>avoid noisy crowded environments such as assemblies and hallways during high traffic times</li> <li>allow the student to eat lunch in a quiet area with a few friends</li> <li>where possible provide ear plugs/headphones, sunglasses</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depression/Withdrawal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Withdrawal from participation in school activities or friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>build time into class/school day for socialization with peers</li> <li>partner student with a "buddy" for assignments or activities</li> </ul>

Reproduced and adapted with permission from Ophea, [Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines, 2019].