Return to Learn Protocol in the Classroom

Included below are strategies and guidelines to support concussed students returning to the classroom and academic work.

The student may return to class but is on reduced academic work and no laptop:
- Break down assignments into small, manageable chunks that can be completed in 30 minutes or less. Then provide a break before moving onto the next task.
- Issue short and concise written instructions or have the student write instructions down in a step-by-step sequence. Have student repeat directions.
- Allow ‘think time’ when asking student to verbally respond.
- Have the student sit with a ‘buddy’.
- Move the student’s seat to the front of the room so that he may be better observed and less easily distracted.
- Work on one task at a time.
- Encourage student to take frequent breaks.

The student may need help keeping up with learning:
- Provide class notes to the student.
- Allow the use of fact sheets on tests to reduce the demand on memory.
- Use multiple-choice and open-book tests (rather than short answer or essay) to minimize demand on memory.
- Provide visual cues and graphic organizers.
- Identify most important concepts for students to learn.
- Student may tire easily, especially as the day/week goes on.
- Help the student devise ways to memorize information (mnemonic devices, association, rehearsal, repetition, etc.)

The student may need help with organization and planning:
- Encourage and assist the use of a planner to keep track of assignments, test and due dates.
- Use diagrams, time lines and charts to organize information and projects.
- Use ‘to-do’ lists and checklists.
- Check the student’s comprehension of directions or instructions and allow the student to restate the information in his own words.

The student has returned to class but has sensitivities to light and noise:
- Allow student to wear sunglasses
- Provide quiet space for lunch
- Provide preferential seating
- Excuse the student from loud activities

The Centre for Learning may suggest:
- One-on-one peer tutoring or tutoring sessions.
- Oral examinations
- Testing accommodations, quiet location, rest breaks, extra time
- Class notes
- Modified workload, tests or program (possible exemption from routine work and tests)