

Documentation Guidelines

Disability Services uses documentation of disability to 1) establish whether an individual is a person with a disability and 2) provide a rationale for identifying and implementing reasonable accommodations. Documentation should be sent directly to Disability Services and not included with the application for admission. If documentation submitted is deemed inadequate or incomplete to determine the extent of the disability and/or reasonable accommodations, additional documentation may be requested at the discretion of the Disability Services Coordinator. The student is responsible for any costs associated with obtaining documentation.

Disability Services has incorporated the Association of Higher Education and Disability's (AHEAD) "Seven Elements of Quality Disability Documentation (2004) and "Sources and Forms of Documentation" (2012) in its criteria for documentation guidelines.

Formal evaluation procedures, clinical narratives, and the individual's self-report will be used to determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

Disability Documentation Should Include:

1. **A clear diagnostic statement** that describes the specific condition. Dates of the original and current diagnostic evaluations need to be included.

Documentation for psychological disorders must include a specific diagnosis based on DSM-V or ICD-10 diagnostic criteria.

2. **A description of the diagnostic methodology**, criteria, evaluation methods, tests, assessments, clinical narrative, observations, and specific results, along with dates administered, that are congruent with the particular disability. Tests used should be current and appropriate for the age of the student at the time of registration.

Documentation for learning disabilities must include scores and interpretation of norm-referenced assessments of aptitude, achievement, and, when possible, information processing.

Documentation for ADHD must include scores and interpretation of norm-referenced behavioral rating scales.

3. **A description of the current functional limitations and how those limitations affect the student in a major life activity.** A "functional limitation" is defined as an adverse effect on a major life activity caused by the disability. Functional limitations should be described in terms of how significantly the activity is affected by the disability, the frequency with which the activity is affected, and how pervasive the disability is in the performance of the major life activity. For example, if the student is applying for classroom accommodations, documentation should address limitations related to the academic environment.
4. **A description of current and past accommodations, services, and/or medications and their effectiveness** in relation to the functional impact of the disability. Information about any significant side effects from current treatment or medication and its effect on physical, perceptual, behavioral, and cognitive performance is helpful.
5. **A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability** including the expected changes over time, information on the cyclical or episodic nature of the disability and any known suspected environmental triggers.

6. **The credentials of the evaluator/provider** relevant to the diagnosed disability. The professional should be licensed or otherwise properly credentialed, have appropriate and comprehensive training, relevant experience, and have no personal relationship with the individual being evaluated or diagnosed. Documentation from professionals who render a diagnosis outside of their area of expertise will not be considered in support of an accommodation. Comprehensive documentation may include reports from several professionals or a team. Evaluations and diagnoses from family members, even when the family member is a qualified professional, will not be accepted.

Although not required, professionals are invited to make **recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or support services** and a rationale related to the functional limitation(s). However, Disability Services is under no obligation to provide or adopt recommendations made by outside entities. A prior history of an accommodation, without a demonstration of a current need, does not in and of itself warrant the provision of a like accommodation.