

Learning Disorders

Documentation Requirements

Documentation submitted to the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) should provide sufficient information to support an individualized review of the student's request for accommodations. Documentation should be prepared by a qualified licensed or otherwise appropriately credentialed professional with expertise in the diagnosed condition.

Qualified Professional

Documentation should:

- Be current, dated within 3 years.
- Be completed by a professional qualified to diagnose and treat the condition within their scope of practice.
- Include the evaluator's name, professional title, credentials, licensure (when applicable), signature, and date of evaluation.
- Evaluations and diagnoses need to be completed by an impartial provider(s). Evaluations and diagnoses from family members, even when the family member is a qualified professional, will not be accepted for professional and ethical reasons.

Current Documentation

Documentation should reflect the student's current level of functioning when the condition or its functional impact may change over time. While recent documentation is generally preferred, documentation will not be rejected solely because of its age. The relevance, completeness, and current applicability of the information will be considered during the individualized review process. Additional information may be requested if the documentation does not adequately describe the student's current functional limitations or support the requested accommodations.

Comprehensive Documentation

Documentation should include, when applicable:

- A current diagnosis based on accepted clinical standards.
- A relevant history of the condition, including onset and duration, when appropriate.

- A description of the current functional limitations resulting from disability, particularly those affecting one or more major life activities and the educational environment.
- Information regarding current treatment, medications, assistive technology, or other supports, if applicable.
- A description of any assessments, evaluations, or clinical methods used to support the diagnosis.
- Recommendations for accommodations, when provided, that clearly explain the relationship between the student's disability-related functional limitations and the requested accommodations.

Functional Limitations and Accommodation Requests

Documentation should clearly describe how the disability substantially limits the student's functioning in the academic, clinical, residential, or university environment, as applicable. Recommendations should be directly related to the documented functional limitations. A diagnosis alone does not automatically qualify a student for accommodations, and a history of previously approved accommodations does not, by itself, establish eligibility for accommodations in higher education.

Necessary Components

A comprehensive evaluation should include the following, as applicable:

- **A clear diagnosis** of a Specific Learning Disorder (SLD) based on current accepted clinical standards, including:
 - The specific area(s) of impairment (e.g., reading, written expression, mathematics, oral language, or other academic skill areas)
 - Date of diagnosis and history of the condition, when available
 - Relevant developmental, educational, and academic history
- **A summary of the assessment procedures, evaluation methods, and diagnostic instruments** used to establish the diagnosis, including:
 - Cognitive and academic achievement assessments
 - Processing measures, when applicable
 - Standardized test results, including standard scores and/or percentile ranks
 - Other objective measures used to support the diagnosis

- **A description of the student's current academic and functional limitations**, including the impact of the learning disability on:
 - Reading
 - Written language
 - Mathematics
 - Oral communication
 - Learning efficiency and information processing
 - Memory, attention, organization, or executive functioning, when applicable
 - Academic performance and participation in the postsecondary environment
- **Relevant historical and educational information**, including:
 - Previous evaluations
 - Academic records and achievement history
 - Prior interventions, specialized instruction, tutoring, or academic support services
 - Previous accommodations received in secondary education, postsecondary education, or employment settings
- **A comprehensive discussion of evaluation results**, including:
 - The student's cognitive strengths and areas of difficulty
 - Academic achievement strengths and areas of impairment
 - A description of the relationship between assessment findings and the diagnosed learning disability
 - Evidence demonstrating that the disability currently impacts educational functioning
- **A discussion of alternative explanations**, when appropriate, including consideration of factors such as:
 - Educational history
 - Language background
 - Cultural factors
 - Other disabilities or conditions that may affect academic performance

- **Relevant treatment, supports, and interventions**, when applicable, including:
 - Academic interventions
 - Assistive technology
 - Educational strategies
 - Other services or supports currently utilized
- **Recommendations for accommodations**, when provided, that clearly explain the relationship between the documented functional limitations and the requested accommodations.

Discussion of Evaluation Results

Evaluation results should summarize the student's current academic functioning and clearly explain how the documented learning disability affects participation in the postsecondary educational environment.

Documentation should include:

- Results of cognitive, processing, and academic achievement assessments, when administered.
- Standard scores, percentile ranks, and relevant interpretation of assessment results.
- A description of current strengths and functional limitations related to academic performance.
- Evidence that the learning disability substantially limits one or more major life activities related to learning or academic access.
- An explanation of how the documented functional limitations support the requested accommodations.