

Learning Disability Documentation Guidelines

Purpose: The purpose of these guidelines is to identify minimum standards and to provide specific examples of the types of documentation that are required by the Special Services Department to document a learning disability.

Individual Education Plans (IEP):

IEPs are useful, but do not always provide sufficient documentation to establish the rationale for accommodation(s). The following guidelines provide a framework for the documentation that is needed to document a learning disability and substantiate accommodations.

Comprehensive Testing:

Testing must be comprehensive. It is not acceptable to administer only one test for the purpose of diagnosis or establishing that substantial limitation in a major life activity currently exists in individuals with a previous diagnosis of a learning disability. Tests used to document eligibility must be technically sound (i.e., statistically reliable and valid) and standardized for use with an adult population.

Minimally, domains to be addressed must include (but are not limited to):

- Aptitude
 - Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale - Revised (WAIS-R) or WAIS-III with subtest scores is the preferred instrument.
 - Woodcock-Johnson Psycho Educational Battery - Revised: Tests of Cognitive Ability or the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale: Fourth Edition are acceptable.
 - The Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (KBIT) is not a comprehensive measure and therefore is not suitable.
- Achievement: Current levels of functioning in reading, mathematics, and written language are required.
 - Woodcock-Johnson Psycho educational Battery - Revised: Tests of Achievement
 - Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)
 - Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK)
 - Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA)
 - Specific achievement tests such as the Test of Written Language – 3 (TOWL-3), Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests - Revised, and the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test. The Wide Range Achievement Test – 3 (WRAT-3) and the Mini-Battery of Achievement (MBA) are not comprehensive measures of achievement and therefore are not suitable.
- Information Processing: Specific areas of information processing must be assessed. For example: short- and long-term memory, sequential memory, auditory and visual perception/processing, processing speed.
 - Information from subtests on the WAIS-R (or WAIS-III), the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability, or the Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude-Adult (DTLA-A), as well as other instruments relevant to the present learning problem(s) may be used to address these areas.

Current Testing:

Testing must be current. In most cases, this means testing has been conducted within the past three years, but the College may require more recent testing in certain circumstances. The provision of all reasonable accommodations and services is based upon assessment of the current impact of the student's disabilities on his/her academic performance; therefore, it is in the student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation.

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Clear and Specific Evidence of Learning Disability:

There must be clear and specific evidence and identification of a learning disability. Individual "learning styles" and "learning differences" in and of themselves do not constitute a learning disability.

Provide Test Score:

Actual test scores must be provided. Standard scores are required; percentiles and grade equivalents are not acceptable unless standard scores are also included. This is important since certain College policies and procedures (e.g., petitioning for permission to substitute courses) require actual data to substantiate eligibility.

Interpretation of Results:

In addition to actual test scores, interpretation of results is required. Test protocol sheets or scores alone are not sufficient.

Assessments Conducted by Qualified Professionals:

Professionals conducting assessment and rendering diagnoses of learning disabilities must be qualified to do so. Trained, certified and/or licensed school psychologists, neuropsychologists, clinical psychologists, learning disabilities specialists, and other professionals with training and experience relevant to adults and their evaluation are typically involved in the process of assessment.

Diagnostic Report Standards:

Diagnostic reports must include the names, titles, and professional credentials (e.g., licensed psychologist) of the evaluator(s) as well as the date(s) of testing. All reports must be typed; handwritten scores or summary sheets are not acceptable.

Written Summary of Background Information:

A written summary of background information about the student's relevant educational, medical, and family histories that relate to the learning disability must be included.

Accommodation:

Any recommendation for accommodation(s) should be based on objective evidence of a substantial limitation to learning supported by specific test results or clinical observations. Reports should establish the rationale for the recommended accommodation(s) using test data to document the need.

A description of any accommodation and/or auxiliary aid used at the secondary or postsecondary level should be discussed. Include information about the specific conditions under which the accommodation was used (e.g., standardized testing, final exams) and whether or not it benefited the student.