



University of San Diego

Disability Services

University of San Diego
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Guidelines

In order to ensure the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodation and services to students with disabilities, students must provide current documentation of their disability. Current indicates that any and all scores derived from testing must reflect adult normative data AND/OR that any impact that is a direct result of the stated disability is defined in terms of how it affects the student TODAY. The documentation must include:

- A clear diagnostic statement of the disability
- A description of the manner in which the disability limits the student in a specified major life activity **and** the severity of the limitation
- Test results (if applicable) that include the name of the test, each subtest administered, the standard score and percentile ranking for each subtest, and all composite scores.
- Recommendations for accommodations, along with an explicit rationale for each.

The student must provide this information to Disability Services before accommodation requests can be implemented. Please note that documentation that does not conform to the standards, as outlined, will not be accepted.

Physical, Sensory, and/or Health-related Disabilities: Required Documentation

In order to ensure the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodations and services to students with disabilities, students must provide current documentation of their disability. Disability diagnosis categories include:

1. Orthopedic disabilities
2. Blind or visual impairment
3. Deaf or hard-of-hearing/other hearing impairment
4. Traumatic brain injury
5. Other health-related/systemic disabilities

The diagnostic report must include:

1. A clear disability diagnosis, including a clinical history that establishes the date of diagnosis, last contact with the student, and any secondary conditions that may be present.
2. Procedures used to diagnose the disability.
3. Description of any medical and/or behavioral symptoms associated with the disability.
4. Discussion of medications, dosage, frequency, and any adverse side effects that the student has experienced that are attributable to their use.
5. A clear statement specifying functional manifestations (i.e., substantial limitations to one or more major life activities and degree of severity) due to disability and/or medications for which the student may require accommodations.
6. Recommendations for accommodations, including rationale. If the accommodation recommendations are specific to limitations in learning (e.g., reading, mathematics, written expression) an appropriate psycho-educational or neuropsychological evaluation must be administered to document ability/achievement discrepancies.

Specific Learning Disabilities: Required Documentation

Disability Services will accept diagnoses of specific learning disabilities that are based on appropriate, comprehensive psycho-educational evaluations that are no more than three years old and that reflect **adult normative data**. The assessment must be administered by a trained and qualified (i.e., certified and/or licensed) professional (e.g., psychologist, school psychologist, neuropsychologist, educational diagnostician) who has had direct experience with adolescents and adults with learning disabilities.

An appropriate psycho-educational evaluation must include comprehensive measures in each of the following areas:

1. Aptitude (the evaluation must contain a complete intellectual assessment, with all subtests and standard scores reported).
2. Academic achievement (the evaluation must contain a comprehensive achievement battery with all subtests and standard scores reported). The test battery should include current levels of functioning in the relevant areas, such as reading (decoding and comprehension), mathematics, and oral and/or written expression.
3. Information processing (the evaluation should assess specific information processing areas such as short- and long-term memories, sequential memory, auditory and visual perception/processing, processing speed, executive function and motor ability).

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): Required Documentation

Disability Services will accept current (no more than three years old and reflecting **adult normative data**) diagnoses of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) that are based on appropriate diagnostic evaluations administered by trained and qualified (i.e., certified or licensed) professionals (e.g., psychiatrists, psychologists, or neuropsychologists). The diagnostic report must include:

1. Diagnostic interview addressing relevant historical information, past and current academic achievement, age of initial diagnosis,

discussion of medication, history and effectiveness of accommodations in past educational settings.

2. Procedures used to diagnose the disability (include a list of all instruments used in the assessment).
3. Discussion of testing results and behavior, including the symptoms that meet the criteria diagnosis. If the student was evaluated while on medication, please indicate the effect this may have had on performance.
4. DSM-IV diagnosis (include all five axes).
5. Diagnostic summary statement that includes the following information:
 - a) Clear and direct statement that ADHD does or does not exist, including a rule-out of alternative explanations for behaviors. Terms such as “appears”, “suggests”, “has problems with”, in the diagnostic summary statement do not support a conclusive diagnosis.
 - b) Clear statement specifying the substantial limitations of one or more major life activities and the degree of severity. If the limitations are in learning (e.g., reading, mathematics, written expression), an appropriate psycho-educational evaluation must be administered to document ability.
 - c) Recommendation regarding medications.
 - d) Recommendations for accommodations, including rationale.

Psychiatric/Psychological Disabilities: Required Documentation

Disability Services will accept current (no more than six months old) diagnoses of psychiatric/psychological disabilities that are based on appropriate diagnostic evaluations (e.g., psychological, psychoeducational) completed by trained and qualified (i.e., licensed or certified) professionals (e.g., psychologists, psychiatrists, neuropsychologists, school psychologists, certified professional counselors, or licensed clinical social workers).

Please refer to the following web site for specific requirements:

<http://www.ets.org/distest/psyplcy.html>

The diagnostic report must include the following:

1. Clinical interview, relevant historical information, age of initial diagnosis, duration of the disorder, discussion of medications, review of past and current academic achievement, and a history of disability accommodations and their effectiveness.
2. Procedures used to diagnose the disability (include a list of all instruments used in the assessment and test scores, as applicable).
3. Discussion of the assessment results.
4. DSM-IV diagnosis (include all five axes).
5. Diagnostic summary statement that includes the following:
 - a) Clear statement that a disability does or does not exist. Terms such as “appears”, “probable”, “suggests”, in the diagnostic summary statement do not support a conclusive diagnosis.
 - b) Clear statement specifying the substantial limitations to one or more major life activities. If the limitations are in learning (e.g., reading, mathematics, written expression), an appropriate psychoeducational evaluations must be administered to document ability/achievement discrepancies.
 - c) Discussion of medications and their impact on academic functioning (e.g., concentration, attention, sedation).
 - d) Recommendations for essential accommodations relative to the diagnosed disability, including rationale.
 - e) Duration for essential accommodations should be provided based on current assessment.
 - f) Recommendation regarding re-evaluation to determine on-going need for disability accommodations (e.g., one semester, one year, two years).

Students with Temporary Disabilities

1. Specification of the nature of the condition and why it is a disability;
2. Date of last contact with student (should be within 60 days);
3. Assessment of current level of disability and description of the student's functional limitations in a college/university setting (i.e., how does the impairment significantly limit a major life activity in an educational setting);
4. Recommendations regarding effective accommodations to equalize the student's educational opportunities at the post-secondary level.

Documentation of Medical Disability

Professional Qualifications of the Evaluator:

1. The physician's license number certifying his or her status as a practicing medical doctor (M.D.) or doctor of osteopathy (D.O.) and any additional information about specialty credentials should be contained in, or accompany, the report. The physician must hold qualifications that are recognized by the State as affirming his or her eligibility to render a medical diagnosis.

Diagnostic and Treatment Information:

2. The report should describe the type and severity of the individual's symptoms at the time of first diagnosis and state the approximate date of their onset. It should describe the subsequent progress and treatment of the condition.
3. The report should contain a description of type and severity of the individual's **current** condition and how it impacts general functioning.
4. The report should detail any currently prescribed or recommended treatment, care, or assistive devices. Examples include: medical treatment, physical therapy or other therapies, dietary requirements, mobility devices or other assistive devices, and full or part-time attendant care (PLEASE NOTE: USD is **not** responsible for the provision of personal attendant care).

Current Functional Impact of the Disability:

5. The report should describe the manner and level of severity with which the disability **currently** impacts general functioning.
6. The report should describe the manner and level of severity with which the disability **currently** impacts academic functioning, e.g., reading, memorizing, writing, notetaking, test-taking, etc.
7. The report should indicate any types of activity that might be a typical part of a college program that are specifically contraindicated by the student's disability.

Recommendations for the Student's College Program:

8. The report should contain recommendations for specific reasonable accommodations that are needed to address the **current** and **substantial impact** of the disability on the student's academic functioning.
9. The report should contain recommendations for **reasonable** accommodations pertaining to the individual's campus board, room, or transportation needs.