

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY**

W A S H I N G T O N , D C

OFFICE OF STUDENT DISABILITY SUPPORT**DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR REQUESTING
DISABILITY-RELATED ACCOMMODATIONS
Learning Disabilities**

The Office of Student Disability Support (OSDS) provides reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities to ensure equal access to educational programs and services at American University (AU). Reasonable accommodations are determined in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008. Under the law, a disability is defined as an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life functions. To request accommodations, students must register with the OSDS, which includes providing clinical documentation that meets the guidelines below.

To verify the disability and its severity, and to determine appropriate accommodations, the OSDS reviews clinical documentation, the student's self-report, and the program requirements for which the student is enrolled. All documentation is reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and accommodations are determined through an interactive process. Submitting evidence of a diagnosis alone may not meet the standard of a disabling condition or be sufficient to warrant accommodations. All accommodation recommendations must be logically related to the student's functional limitations based on evidence from the clinical evaluation.

Students may submit their Individualized Educational Program (IEP), 504 plans, and/or history of services that were previously received as supplemental information; however, these documents alone are not adequate forms of documentation.

Professionals Who Can Provide Clinical Documentation

- Professionals with comprehensive training and experience in the relevant specialty and hold appropriate licensure and/or certification. Appropriately qualified professionals typically include psychologists, neuropsychologists, school psychologists, and neurologists
- The provider must be familiar with the history and functional limitations of the student's condition and provide detailed information about the substantial nature and level of the impairment and its impact on major life functions
- The documentation provided cannot be from a family member or someone with a personal relationship with the student or student's family

Recency of Documentation

- Documentation must reflect the status of the student's current functional limitations and demonstrate their need for accommodations in the higher education environment
- Typically, psychoeducational or neuropsychological evaluations must be completed within the last five years and assessed using adult norms

The nature of the diagnosis will inform the OSDS's decision to request updated documentation throughout the student's enrollment at AU. The OSDS reserves the right to request updated documentation and/or additional documentation to support specific accommodations.

Documentation Guidelines

Documentation must be in English, typed on official letterhead, dated and signed with the credentials of the professional providing documentation. Documentation must also include:

- A specific diagnosis, including DSM-5 or ICD Diagnosis (text and code) and information concerning co-morbidity
 - The diagnosis must be based on evidence that does not rely solely on self-reporting by the candidate.
- Comprehensive psychoeducational or neuropsychological evaluation assessed using adult norms
 - Domains evaluated should include
 - Cognitive Testing - The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-5 (WAIS-5) is preferred
 - Information Processing
 - Achievement Testing - Full achievement testing in reading, written language, and mathematics. Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement or the Weschler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT) are preferred.
- The formal report should include:
 - Reason(s) for referral for testing and a description of the presenting problem(s)
 - Developmental history, relevant medical history, and relevant family history
 - Educational history, including results of previous testing, academic performance and prior use of accommodations, if applicable
 - Psychosocial history
 - Current and relevant past prescribed medication(s) that may impact the student's learning
 - Include if the student was on medication(s) during testing
 - A list of all test batteries administered, raw and scaled scores from all assessments, and a summary of the results.
 - Clinical observations during the test administration
 - A discussion of any dual diagnoses or co-morbid conditions
 - The rationale for recommended accommodation(s) that is logically related to the functional limitation(s) based on evidence from the clinical evaluation
 - Alternative explanations for the test findings should be discussed and ruled out

If the documentation that has been submitted does not contain sufficient information to determine appropriate accommodations, the student will be contacted.

Final decision of appropriate accommodations will be determined by the Office of Student Disability Support.