

NYU Moses Center for Students with Disabilities
Learning Disability Documentation Guidelines

(Revised August 2006)

Students with a learning disability who are requesting accommodations or services are required to provide appropriate and current documentation of their disability. The determination of reasonable accommodations is based on a student's status as an otherwise qualified individual with a disability and the impact of the student's functional limitations on his or her performance in a university academic environment.

- **Testing must be current and valid.** Testing must have been conducted within the past 5 years. In this way, accommodation plans can be based on accurate information about a student's current functioning. Tests must be reliable, valid, and standardized for use with an adult population.
- **Testing must include educational, developmental, and medical history.** The evaluator must investigate and discuss educational, developmental, and medical history relevant to the disability.
- **Evaluation must describe co-existing conditions.** The evaluator must investigate and discuss dual diagnoses, as well as the possibility of diagnostic alternatives such as co-existing mood, behavioral, neurological, and/or personality disorders which may confound a diagnosis of a specific learning disability.
- **Evidence of a substantial limitation to academic functioning must be provided** (e.g., how the disability is likely to affect performance in a postsecondary setting). The psycho-educational or neuropsychological evaluation must specify the criteria for diagnosis. The following areas must be assessed:
 - **Aptitude:** The Weschler Adult Intelligence Scale –III (WAIS – III) with subtest scores is recommended as a standardized measure of overall intelligence. Other measurements such as Woodcock-Johnson-III: Tests of Cognitive Ability and the Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test are acceptable. Measurement of aptitude is only one component of a full documentation report.
 - **Achievement:** A comprehensive academic achievement battery is essential (with subset scores reported). Current levels of academic functioning in relevant areas such as reading (decoding and comprehension), mathematics, and oral and written language are required. **Suggested** instruments include, but are not limited to:
 - The Woodcock-Johnson III: Tests of Achievement; Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK) or
 - A combination of tests in specific skill areas such as the Test of Written Language, the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test-Revised and the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics test
 - **Information Processing:** Other areas of information processing such as short and long-term memory, visual and auditory processing, and processing speed may also warrant evaluation as indicated by the other tests mentioned above.
- **Evaluation must describe specific recommended accommodations in the current or anticipated academic setting.** Evaluation must indicate why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of learning disability are mediated by the accommodations.
- **The testing must provide clear and specific diagnosis of a learning disability.** A diagnosis of a specific learning disability via the criteria of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual-IV is required. Terms such as learning problems, differences, weaknesses, or deficiencies are not the equivalent of a diagnosed learning disability.
- **Testing must be performed by a qualified evaluator.** Clinical psychologists, neuropsychologists, psychiatrists, and medical doctors trained in evaluating psycho-educational and/or neuropsychological evaluations would be considered qualified. Information about their professional credentials including licensing and certification and their areas of specialization must be clearly indicated on the report.

If you have any questions, please contact the NYU Moses Center at (212) 998-4980

NYU Moses Center for Students with Disabilities
Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Documentation Guidelines
(Revised August 2006)

Students with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder who are requesting accommodations or services are required to provide appropriate and current documentation of their disability. The determination of reasonable accommodations and services is based upon assessment of the impact of the student's disabilities on his or her academic performance in a university environment.

- **Testing must be current and valid.** Testing must have been conducted within the past three years. In this way, accommodation plans can be based on accurate information about a student's current functioning. Test must be reliable, valid, and standardized for use with an adult population.
- **Testing must include educational, developmental, and medical history.** The evaluator must investigate and discuss educational, developmental, and medical history relevant to the disability.
- **Documentation should be comprehensive.** This includes a clinical summary of objective and historical information establishing symptomology indicative of ADHD throughout childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. All diagnostic reports should be accompanied by an analysis of educational functioning. Neuropsychological or psycho-educational assessment is important in determining the current impact of the disorder on the individual's ability to function in academic settings. At a minimum, the evaluation should include an assessment of academic aptitude (e.g.: Weschler Adult Intelligence Scale – III), academic achievement (Woodcock Johnson-III: Tests of Achievement), as well as the student's processing strengths and weaknesses. Checklists and surveys may provide useful information but are not adequate as sole ADHD diagnostic criteria.
- **Evidence of a substantial limitation to academic functioning must be provided. Testing must also specify the criteria for the diagnosis and provide an interpretive summary.**
 - Demonstration of the evaluator's having ruled out alternative explanations for inattentiveness, impulsivity, and/or hyperactivity as a result of psychological or medical disorders or non-cognitive factors.
 - Indication of how patterns of inattentiveness, impulsivity, and/or hyperactivity across the life span and across settings are used to determine the presence of ADHD.
 - Indication of whether or not the student was evaluated while on medication and whether or not there is positive response to the prescribed treatment.
 - Indication and discussion of the substantial limitation to learning presented by ADHD and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested.
- **Evaluation must describe specific recommended accommodations in the current or anticipated academic setting.** Evaluation must indicate why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of ADHD are mediated by the accommodations.
- **The testing must provide clear and specific diagnosis of ADHD.** A diagnostic report should include a review and discussion of the DSM-IV criteria for ADHD. The diagnostician should use direct language in the diagnosis of ADHD, avoiding the use of terms such as "suggests", "is indicative of", or "attention problems". Medication by itself does not confirm a diagnosis, nor does the use of medication in and of itself either support or negate the need for accommodations.
- **A qualified evaluator must perform testing.** Evaluators must have training in differential diagnosis and the full range of psychiatric disorders. The name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification as well as the area of specialization, employment, and state or province in which the individual practices would be clearly stated. Clinical psychologists, neuropsychologists, psychiatrists, and other relevantly trained medical doctors would be considered qualified.

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