

LEARNING DISABILITY

Documentation Guidelines for a Learning Disability *DISABILITY SERVICES for STUDENTS at The Cove* Cedarville University

Disability Services provides services to qualified students with learning disabilities. Professionals conducting assessment and rendering diagnoses of specific learning disabilities (SLD) must be qualified. The qualified professional needs to hold a degree in a field related to the diagnosis of SLD and have diagnostic experience with adults and late adolescents. Recommended professionals may include certified and/or licensed psychologists, learning disabilities specialists and educational therapists with the above characteristics. The professionals must be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

Documentation must be typed or printed on official letterhead, dated and signed by the professional evaluator with information regarding licensure and/or certification indicating the area of specialization.

The following documentation guidelines are provided in the interest of assuring that the documentation demonstrates the disability *substantially limits* a major life activity, *including learning*, is appropriate to verify eligibility, and supports the request for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services. It is in the student's best interest to provide appropriate documentation of adult level functioning to serve as a basis for decision-making about a student's need for accommodations in an academically competitive environment. Recommended documentation should include:

1. A comprehensive psycho-educational test battery which includes measures of Aptitude, Achievement, and Information Processing in the areas of reading, mathematics and written language.
2. A narrative summary, including all standardized scores (subtest as well as overall scores), which supports the diagnosis.
3. The most recent Comprehensive Evaluation (i.e. Multi-factored Evaluation) and Individual Educational Program (IEP) and the original eligibility evaluation and/or any other MFE's with the results of a psycho-educational test battery (if providing information from a public school). These documents alone may or may not provide adequate information to document the learning disability.
4. Documentation for eligibility should reflect the *current impact* the learning disability has on the student's functioning, (the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the particular diagnosis, the current status of the student and the student's specific request for accommodations).
5. Assessments for adults are preferred. Assessments should not be assessments for children, but rather tests that are designed for adults, i.e. WAIS-III rather than WISC-III.

6. A clear statement that a learning disability is present along with the rationale for the diagnosis. Note: Individual "learning deficits," "learning styles," and "learning differences," do not, in or of themselves, constitute a learning disability.
7. A statement of the functional impact or limitations of the disability on learning or other major life activities and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning environment for which accommodations are being requested.
8. Written verification from previous college, if applicable. Transfer students are encouraged to provide written verification from the previously attended school, which includes the dates served and the accommodations used.

Documentation accepted at Cedarville University might not be accepted by other institutions, agencies and/or programs (e.g. testing agencies, licensure exams, certification programs). Please check with the specific institutions and/or programs to determine their documentation requirements.

NOTE: Disability Services maintains disability files and diagnostic testing information for seven years after the student graduates, transfers, or leaves the university. After that time, the confidential files are destroyed. If a student does not attend Cedarville University but has submitted documentation, the files will be destroyed after two years. Consequently, students should keep a copy of their diagnostic information.

Resource

A good resource for recommendations on finding and selecting a qualified professional for assessment purposes as well as a list of tests appropriate for assessing adolescents and adults with learning disabilities is found at the Educational Testing Service, ETS, website:

<http://www.ets.org/portal/site/ets/menuitem.c988ba0e5dd572bada20bc47c3921509/?vgnextoid=5d77dec2c5555010VgnVCM10000022f95190RCRD&vgnnextchannel=fbc7be3a864f4010VgnVCM10000022f95190RCRD>

Documentation can be delivered personally, by mail or fax to:

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