

## Vanderbilt University - Learning Disability Documentation Guidelines

Students requesting accommodation on the basis of a specific learning disability must provide documentation performed and signed by a professional who has undergone comprehensive training and has relevant experience in differential diagnosis of a full range of cognitive and psychiatric disabilities (e.g., licensed clinical psychologists, educational psychologists and neuropsychologists). This documentation must include, but is not restricted to, the following:

- **A Diagnostic Interview:** A diagnostic interview including a description of the presenting problem(s); relevant developmental, medical, psycho-social and employment histories; family history (including primary language of the home and the student's current level of English fluency); and a discussion of co-morbidity where indicated.
- **An Assessment:** A Neuropsychological or a psychoeducational evaluation is required. It must include the current impact of the disorder on the individual's ability to function in an academic setting and have been administered within the past five years. Such data should include subtest and standard scores. Identifying a discrepancy between or among test scores is not sufficient to warrant the diagnosis of a learning disability or establish eligibility for accommodation. Evidence must establish a clear link between specific deficit areas and the functional limitations experienced by the individual.
- For the evaluation to illustrate a substantial limitation to learning, the comprehensive assessment battery must assess the following domains:
  - (A) Aptitude/Cognitive Ability
  - (B) Academic Achievement
  - (C) Information Processing
- **Clinical Summary:** The clinical summary must indicate a specific Learning Disability diagnosis per the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual IV (DSM-IV), the substantial limitations to major life activities posed by the specified learning disability, description of the extent to which these limitations impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested, suggestions how the specific effects of the learning disability may be accommodated, and a clear statement of how the effects of the learning disability can be mediated by the recommended accommodations.
- **Currency:** To establish the need for accommodation, documentation must reflect the current impact of the learning disability. In general, this means testing should have been conducted within the past three years for a high school student and within the past five years for an adult.
- **Assessments used for Adolescents and Adults with Learning Disabilities:**  
Psychoeducational or neuropsychological testing
  - **Aptitude**
    - Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – III (WAIS-III)
    - Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery – Revised; Tests of Cognitive Ability
    - Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test (KAIT)
  - **Academic Achievement**
    - Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults
    - Stanford Test of Academic Skills
    - Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery – Revised: Tests of Achievement
    - Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)

- **Or specific achievement tests such as:**
  - Nelson-Denny Reading Skills Test
  - Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test
  - Test of Written Language – 3 (TOWL-3)
  - Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests – Revised
  
- **Information Processing**
  - Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude-3 (DTLA-3)
  - Information from subtests on WAIS-R or Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery- Revised: Tests of Cognitive Ability, as well as other relevant instruments
  
- **Behavior through Rating Scales (that are used in conjunction with other tests listed above). Rating scales include:**
  - Wender Utah Rating Scale
  - Brown Attention-Activation Disorder Scale
  - Beck Anxiety Inventory
  - Hamilton's Depression Rating Scale
  - Conners Teacher Rating Scale (ages 3-17)
  - Conners Parent Rating Scale (ages 3-17)

*Copies of an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan alone are not acceptable documentation. Prior accommodations in an educational setting do not necessarily warrant the provision of current accommodations.*

#### **Submission of Documentation and Questions**

Documentation should be mailed to the Disability Program Coordinator, Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Disability Services Department, Vanderbilt University, PMB 401809, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, TN 37240-1809 or fax to (615) 343-0671. Questions should be directed to (615) 322-4705.

#### **Accommodations and Services**

The final determination of appropriate accommodations, auxiliary aids and services rest with Vanderbilt University's Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, & Disability Services Department's Disability Services Program, in consultation with individual academic and non-academic programs.

#### **Confidentiality**

All information obtained in diagnostic and medical records will be maintained and used in accordance with applicable confidentiality requirements.