

REQUIRED INFORMATION DOCUMENTATION OF LEARNING DISABILITIES

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, individuals with Learning Disabilities are guaranteed certain protections and rights to accommodations based upon documentation. The documentation must indicate that the disability substantially limits some major life activity, including learning. The following guidelines were developed by the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), and are provided in the interest of assuring that documentation is appropriate to verify eligibility and to support requests for accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids.

In order for students with a Specific Learning Disability to receive services from the Center for Student Success at Malone University, documentation that meets state and federal standards indicating the presence of a Learning Disability is required. The student must contact their LD teacher, school psychologist or private psychologist to arrange to have copies of one of the following submitted to the Center for Student Success:

BOTH:

_____ 1. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) from Grade 12 identifying the student as being served for a specific learning disability.

_____ 2. A Multi-Factored Psychoeducational Assessment completed by psychologist or school psychologist during Grades 10, 11, or 12. This assessment must indicate that the student has a diagnosed Learning Disability and is receiving services for the disability. Please see the Guidelines for Documentation of Specific Learning Disabilities for more information regarding the Psychoeducational Assessment.

OR:

_____ 3. Students who do not have recent documentation from high school may submit data from a Psychoeducational Assessment with a private psychologist or school psychologist, stating the presence of a specific Learning Disability.

THE NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL OR PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL EVALUATION

The neuropsychological or psychoeducational evaluation for the diagnosis of a specific Learning Disability must be submitted on letterhead of the qualified professional, and it must provide clear and specific evidence of a Learning Disability. It is not acceptable to administer one test, nor is it acceptable to base a diagnosis on only one of the several subtests. Evidence of a substantial limitation to learning or other major life activity must be provided. Specifically, the evaluation must adhere to the following criteria:

1. Testing must be current (within the past 3-5 years).
2. Testing must indicate a specific diagnosis from the DSM-IV. **Please note that individual "learning styles", "learning differences", and "academic problems" in and of themselves do not constitute a Learning Disability. The nature and the severity of the disability must be supported by the psychoeducational assessment.
3. Actual test scores must be provided. (Standard scores for all normed measures or percentiles are acceptable, grade equivalents are not unless standard scores/percentiles are also included.)
4. Test scores must show evidence of significant discrepancies and intra-individual differences.
5. A description of requested accommodations including the rationale must be provided.
6. A qualified professional must conduct the evaluation. They must indicate licensure or certification on the assessment.

MINIMALLY, DOMAINS TO BE ADDRESSED MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

A. Aptitude

A complete aptitude battery is required with all subtests and standard scores. An adult level battery should be administered, if appropriate. This should include one of the following:

- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-version III (WAIS-III) (the preferred Instrument).
- Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-Revised: Test of Cognitive Ability
Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale: Fourth Edition

B. Achievement

A complete aptitude battery is required with all subtests and standard scores. This battery may include current levels of academic functioning in Reading (decoding and comprehension), Mathematics, and Written Language. Acceptable instruments include, but are not limited to:

- Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-Revised: Tests of Achievement
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)
- Stanford Test of Academic Skill (TASK)
- Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA)
- Or, specific achievement tests such as the Test of Written Language-2 (TOWL-2), Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests-Revised; or the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test

C. Information Processing

Specific areas of information processing (i.e. short- and long-term memory; sequential memory; auditory and visual perception/processing; processing speed; executive functioning; motor ability) must be assessed. Acceptable instruments include but are not limited to:

- Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude-3 (DTLA-3)
- Information from subtests of the WAIS-III, or the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability
- Other instruments relevant to the presenting learning problem

Notes on the Clinical Summary

A well-written diagnostic summary based on a comprehensive evaluation process is a necessary component of the report. Assessment instruments and the data they provide do not diagnose; rather, they provide important elements that must be integrated by the evaluator with background information, observations of the client during the testing situation, and the current context. It is essential, therefore, that professional judgment be utilized in the development of a clinical summary. The clinical summary should include:

1. demonstration of the evaluator's having ruled out alternative explanations for academic problems as a result of poor education, poor motivation and/or study skills, emotional problems, attention problems and cultural/language differences;
2. indication of how patterns in the student's cognitive ability, achievement and information processing reflect the presence of a learning disability;
3. indication of the substantial limitation to learning or other major life activity presented by the learning disability and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested; and
4. indication as to why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of the specific disability are accommodated.

These guidelines are designed to assist individuals who have documented Learning Disabilities in receiving reasonable accommodations under the law. By providing a current and comprehensive battery of tests, which support the requests for accommodation on the basis of substantial limitation to learning, each individual will be provided an opportunity to demonstrate his/her abilities at the post-secondary, graduate and professional level as well as with testing and licensing agencies. Please feel free to contact our office if you need any clarification of these guidelines.

Please forward all documentation to:
Center for Student Success
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2600 Cleveland Ave. NW
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