RIVIER UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES
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# Documentation Guidelines

The Office of Disability Services requires that students who are requesting accommodations provide appropriate documentation of their disability and need for accommodation. Provided here are general guidelines for proving appropriate, current, and comprehensive documentation. Because all documentation is reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and the determination of eligibility and appropriate accommodations is an individualized process, we encourage students to contact the Office of Disability Services so we can review your particular case.

**Documentation must come from a licensed professional**

- Documentation should be provided by a licensed or otherwise properly credentialed professional appropriate to, and qualified to diagnose your particular type of disability.
- Examples include but are not limited to: M.D., ophthalmologist, audiologist, psychologist, psychiatrist, learning disability specialist, or neuropsychologist)

**Documentation should be current**

- Students with learning disabilities should provide documentation acquired within the past 5 years.
- Students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) should provide documentation acquired within the past 3 years.
- Students with psychiatric disabilities (e.g., anxiety, mood, or schizophrenia disorders), cognitive disabilities (e.g., traumatic brain injury), medical disabilities or other treatments should provide documentation acquired within the past year.

**Older documentation may be acceptable if**

- Documentation indicates that the student's condition is stable and is unlikely to change over time.
- The student was an adult at the time of the evaluation.
- The student has a long history of receiving accommodations or services in school or in another post-secondary institution.
- The original testing used measures that were normed on adult populations.

**Documentation should be comprehensive**

- Disability documentation **must**:
  - Verify the nature and extent of the impairment.
  - Address the need for the student's specific accommodation requests.
  - Address the student's current level of functioning in an educational setting.

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**Comprehensive documentation should include the following**

- Which major life activity the disability affects and specifically how the disability affects the student in relation to the demands of an educational setting (i.e. learning, campus life, academic activities).
- A diagnosis of the disability or condition, description of the functional impact of the disability, explanation of any limitations the student may have, and a prognosis; especially for the duration of the time the student will be attending college.
- Relevant academic, intellectual, medical, and/or neurological testing.
- If applicable, information about how medications affect your ability to sleep, attend class, concentrate, etc.
- A description of both current and past auxiliary aids, assistive devices, support services, and accommodations, including their effectiveness in the educational setting.
- Recommendations from professionals with a history of working with the student.

**Your documentation should indicate the accommodations that are appropriate for your particular disability**

- If you request accommodations that are not substantiated in your documentation, we may request additional documentation that indicates that the accommodation you are requesting is reasonable.
- If you sign an Information Release form, we may be able to obtain the additional information we need.
- If further testing is needed, you are responsible for scheduling and paying for the testing.

**IEP & 504 Plans**

- School plans such as an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Summary of Performance (SOP), or Section 504 Plan are useful in providing valuable information we can use to help determine accommodations.
- However, **without supporting documentation provided by a licensed professional, they are not considered adequate documentation**.

**Provisional Accommodations**

- If a student has been diagnosed with a learning disability and it is evident that they would benefit from accommodations, but they have not provided thorough documentation, they may receive services on a provisional basis for one semester.
- Provisional services are granted on a case-by-case basis.