

Evaluator's Qualifications

The following professionals are considered qualified to submit documentation, provided they have comprehensive training and relevant experience in assessing learning or emotional disabilities or ADD/ADHD in adolescents and adults: clinical psychologists, educational psychologists, school psychologists, and neuropsychologists.

Reports from the professional should be submitted on letterhead and include the following:

- Name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator
- Information about license or certification as well as the area of specialization
- State/province in which the individual practices

II. Documentation: Age and Contents

The provision of reasonable accommodations is based upon assessment of the current impact of the student's disability on his or her academic performance. Therefore, documentation should **not be more than three years old**.

Evaluations must include age-appropriate instruments and norms.

Documentation must be based on a comprehensive psychoeducational assessment and should include a detailed description of the following:

A. Specific Diagnosis

The report must include a specific diagnosis based on the current DSM diagnostic criteria. Individual "learning styles," or "test difficulty or anxiety" generally do not constitute a learning disability. Evaluators are encouraged to use direct language and to avoid indirect expressions such as "suggests," "is indicative of," or "is consistent with."

B. Diagnostic Interview

The report should provide a summary of the diagnostic interview that includes: a description of the presenting problem(s); developmental history; academic history, including results of prior standardized testing; reports of classroom performance; relevant family history; relevant psychosocial history; and a discussion of any pre-existing or co-existing diagnoses.

C. Assessment

Objective evidence of a substantial limitation to learning must be provided. The domains to be addressed must include the following:

1. Aptitude/Cognitive Ability

A complete intellectual assessment with all subtests and standard scores reported is essential.

2. Academic Achievement

A comprehensive academic achievement battery is essential, with all subtests and standard scores reported for those subtests administered. The battery must include current levels of functioning in relevant areas such as reading (decoding and comprehension), mathematics, and oral and written language.

3. Cognitive and Information Processing

Specific areas of information processing (e.g., short and long memory; sequential memory; auditory and visual perception/processing; processing speed; executive functioning; motor ability) should be addressed.

The particular profile of the student's strengths and weaknesses should reflect the functional limitations that necessitate the recommended accommodations.

Other assessment measures, such as classroom tests and informal assessment procedures or observations may be helpful in determining performance across a variety of domains. Other formal assessment measures may be integrated with the above instruments to help differentiate the LD from coexisting neurological and/or psychiatric disorders (i.e., to establish a differential diagnosis). In addition to standardized tests, it is also useful to include informal observations of the student during test administration.

D. Clinical Summary

The report should include an interpretive summary that indicates:

- That the evaluator ruled out alternative explanations for academic problems as a result of poor education, poor motivation and/or study skills, emotional problems, problems with attention, and cultural/language differences.

- How patterns in the student's cognitive ability, achievement, and information processing reflect the presence of a learning disability.
- The substantial limitation to learning or other major life activity presented by the learning disability and degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested.

III. Specific Accommodation Recommendations

The documentation must contain specific recommendations for accommodations that are tied to the current functional limitations of the student. Each accommodation recommended by the evaluator must include a rationale. Recommended accommodations should be pertinent to the anticipated academic environment.