

Center for Disability & Access
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Center for Disability & Access (CDA) – Documentation Guidelines

University of Utah students requesting accommodations and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 must provide information and documentation of a disability and of the need for disability-related accommodations.

Documentation submitted to the Center for Disability & Access (CDA) must indicate that a specific condition exists and that the condition substantially limits one or more [major life activity](#) (e.g. walking, seeing, speaking, hearing, breathing, learning, etc.). A diagnosis of a condition alone does not automatically qualify a student for accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The documentation should demonstrate that the condition rises to the level of a disability.

At minimum, documentation should include the following components:

- **Format** – Documentation should be typed/printed on letterhead, dated, and signed with name, title, and professional credentials.
- **Qualifications** – Documentation should be completed by a licensed provider (e.g. physician, psychologist, psychiatrist, clinical social worker, therapist, audiologist, ophthalmologist or other relevantly trained professional who is licensed and qualified to make the diagnoses).
- **Diagnosis** – Documentation should include the conditions and diagnoses, how they were assessed, and include the most recent treatment dates.
- **History and Prognosis** – Provide a summary of the history, prognosis, and expected duration of the condition(s), and if applicable, include details about the episodic nature of the condition(s).
- **Impact and Limitations** – **Focus on and provide details specific to the student about the current impact of the conditions, including the severity, frequency, and duration of symptoms.** Documentation should also include information about the limitations caused by the student’s condition(s) and effect on academic functioning and major life activities ([ADA Major Life Activities](#)).
- **Suggested Accommodations** – Documentation may include suggested accommodations and should provide a rationale as to why they would be needed.

For many conditions, licensed professionals may complete the **CDA disability verification form**. **However, additional documentation beyond the verification form or information listed above may be required depending upon the specific condition and accommodations requested.**

For the conditions noted in the following table, CDA would expect to receive the following additional documentation:

<p>ADHD</p>	<p>A psycho-educational evaluation, neuropsychological evaluation, or other objective testing measures <u>may</u> be required depending upon the accommodations that are requested. If additional information is required, the student’s CDA advisor will let the student know what additional documentation would be needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assessment should consist of more than a subjective evaluation or self-report by the student, and should have been completed or updated recently to help in determining the current impact of the condition. • The assessment should include objective test measures which assess inattention, hyperactivity, impulsivity, executive functioning, working memory and/or information processing as appropriate, and should list the tests completed and results including standard scores and percentiles (see examples of common testing measures below). • The report should summarize the findings, provide the diagnosis, and describe the effect, impact, and limitations on learning and major life activities.
<p>Learning Disabilities</p>	<p>A psycho-educational evaluation or neuropsychological evaluation is <u>required</u> and essential in determining the impact of the condition on learning and academics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluations should be recent (typically completed within the past three to five years) and should be based on adult normed measures to determine the current impact of the condition and to approve accommodations. However, applications for accommodations are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and childhood evaluations, and secondary school IEP’s or 504 plans are also helpful in determining services. • The assessment should list the specific aptitude, cognitive ability, academic achievement, and information processing tests or measures used and include the results of the testing with all subtests, standard scores, and percentiles (see examples of common testing measures below). • The report should summarize the findings, provide the diagnosis, and describe the effect, impact, and limitations on learning and major life activities.
<p>Traumatic Brain Injuries</p>	<p>A neuropsychological evaluation or psycho-educational evaluation <u>may</u> be required depending upon the accommodations requested and should have been completed recently. However, older documentation will be considered depending upon the stability of the condition and current impact of the injury.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluations should include objective testing measures which assess learning, cognitive and academic abilities, memory, processing speed, and executive functioning and include the results of the testing with all subtests, standard scores, and percentiles (see examples of common testing measures below). • The report should summarize the findings, provide the diagnosis, and describe the effect, impact, and limitations on learning and major life activities.

Additional Notes:

- The Center for Disability & Access (CDA) is the designated office at the University of Utah which evaluates disability documentation for students and determines eligibility for accommodations. Each student's documentation and accommodation requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and the CDA case management team determines what reasonable accommodations would be approved.
- Documentation for students who are Deaf, hard of hearing, blind, low vision, or who have physical conditions that are readily apparent and easily identifiable may not need to provide additional documentation when the requested accommodations are directly tied to the apparent impact.
- Documentation related to psychological or psychiatric conditions is encouraged to be provided by a licensed mental health provider. Although a primary care professional may be aware of the conditions and impact, the student is best served by connection to and assessment by a professional specializing in mental health.
- Documentation of a student's disability provided to CDA is covered by the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#). All information related to a disability or accommodations is treated as confidential and may only be disclosed with the student's consent to school officials with a legitimate educational reason to assist in providing accommodations. Disability documentation is maintained separately from a student's general academic records and is not included on a transcript, diploma, etc.
- **Reasonable accommodations are based upon the current impact of the student's disability, and documentation should be recent to address the student's current level of functioning and need for accommodations.**
- Students who are experiencing a temporary physical/medical condition or disability are encouraged to contact our office so that CDA may determine if support can be put into place, and when documentation may be necessary.
- Documentation may be provided from more than one source when a clinical team approach consists of a variety of educational, medical, or counseling professionals has been used.
- An Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan alone is typically insufficient documentation to qualify for accommodations.
- Diagnoses documented by family members will not be accepted due to professional and ethical considerations.
- Once a student has completed the intake process and submitted documentation, CDA will review the student's application for accommodations. Following review, the student's CDA advisor will follow up with the student to discuss their eligibility status and if any additional documentation might be needed.
- Students should contact their CDA advisor directly with any questions they may have about these guidelines and their CDA advisor can provide additional guidance and details about the documentation requested and the process to be eligible for accommodations.
- **These documentation guidelines apply to student accommodation requests at the University of Utah only and do not apply to other educational institutions, outside agencies, professional licensing exams, or high-stakes testing such as the GRE, MCAT, LSAT, etc.**

Testing and assessment measures commonly used in psycho-educational and neuropsychological evaluations: (Not intended as a complete or comprehensive list.)

- General Cognitive/Intellectual Ability – Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS-IV), Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC-IV), Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability (WJC-IV), Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test (KTEA-II), and Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test (SB-V).

- Academic Achievement – Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement (WJA-IV), Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT-III), Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA), Test of Written Language (TOWL-3), and Nelson-Denny Reading Skills Test.
- Information Processing and Memory – Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning (WRAML-2), Wechsler Memory Scale, Delis-Kaplan Executive Function System, and Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP-2).
- Attention and Focus – Conners Continuous Performance Test and Test of Variables of Attention (TOVA).