

## Specific Learning Disability Documentation Guidelines

Providing academic accommodations to students who have a learning disability is most accurate when we have information about how the student qualified for the diagnosis and the nature of their specific academic challenges. This information is typically available in a standard testing battery. Students requesting accommodation on the basis of a specific learning disability must provide documentation from 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., psychologist).

A comprehensive testing battery typically contains the following elements. The clinician completing the report may select tests other than those listed in the following example if they provide a rationale for the tests selected. An IEP or 504 plan is typically inadequate in this regard.

1. A diagnostic interview – the interview must include a description of the presenting problem(s), developmental, medical, psycho-social, and employment histories, family history, and a discussion of comorbidity where indicated;
2. An assessment – for the neurological or psychological evaluation to illustrate a substantial limitation to learning, the comprehensive assessment battery must contain the following domains:
  - a) Aptitude/cognitive ability – an assessment of global intellectual functioning as measured by the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-IV (WAIS-IV) or the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC-III) with all subtests, standard scores, and index scores;
  - b) Academic achievement – a comprehensive achievement battery (e.g., Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery – III: Tests of Achievement), with subtest and standard scores, indicating current level of functioning in the academic areas of reading, math, oral and written language; and
  - c) Information processing – a comprehensive battery (e.g., Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-III: Tests of Cognitive Abilities), with subtest and standard scores, which addresses the specific areas of short and long-term memory, sequential memory, auditory and visual perception, processing speed, executive functioning, and motor ability.
3. A specific diagnosis which conforms to the criteria for the specific learning disability, as stated in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*.
4. A clinical summary which:
  - a) Indicates the substantial limitations to major life activities posed by the specified learning disability;
  - b) Describes the extent to which these limitations impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested;
  - c) Suggests how the specific effects of the learning disability may be accommodated; and
  - d) States how the effects of the learning disability are mediated by the recommended accommodations.

Testing must have been administered using adult norms **or** have occurred within the last 5 years.

Please contact Student Disability Resources for guidance if you are updating a previous testing battery.