

Student Disability Services Guidelines for Documentation

Student Disability Services (SDS) promotes an academic experience for students with disabilities that is fully inclusive and accessible. It is the responsibility of the student to provide objective evidence (documentation) which verifies that the student's condition meets the definition of a disability as defined by applicable laws (such as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008).

For the purpose of providing accommodations, disability documentation must both establish disability and provide adequate information on the functional impact of the disability so that effective accommodations can be identified. In the context of postsecondary education, documentation should provide a decision-maker with a basic understanding of the individual's disability and enough information to anticipate how the *current impact* of the disability is expected to interact with the institution's courses, testing methods, program requirements, etc.

Federal Law requires that students with disabilities be considered on an individual, case-by-case basis. Criteria for the source, scope and content of the documentation differs by disability type. Quality disability documentation should contain the following elements:

1. The **evaluator's name**, address, telephone number (in the event our department needs to contact the evaluator), and **professional** credential relevant to the diagnosis (i.e. MD, Ph.D., LPC, LP, LSSP, etc.).
2. A **clear diagnostic statement** identifying the disability, including level of severity.
3. A description of the **diagnostic methodology used**. Quality documentation includes a description of the diagnostic criteria, evaluation methods, procedures, tests and dates of administration, as well as a clinical narrative, observation, and specific test results.
4. A description of the **student's current functional limitations or symptoms** as they are directly related to the diagnostic statement and an explanation of why they necessitate any accommodations.
5. A description of the **expected progression or stability of the disability**.
6. A description of **current and past accommodations, services and/or medications**.
7. If provided, **any recommendations for accommodations**, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support services included **must be supported by the documentation**.
8. Depending on the nature of the disability, documentation should be current, **within 1-5 years**.
9. The documentation must be **on letterhead, typed, dated, and signed**.

Thank you for your assistance in helping us provide quality services and academic accommodations to our students with disabilities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at (903) 886-5150. Documentation should be submitted online through the AIM database or via email at StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Documentation will be reviewed in the order that it was received. Please submit documentation at least 10 business days prior to the date that services are requested to start. Accommodations are not retroactive.

These guidelines are modeled after "The Use and Purpose of Documentation" as published by the Association for Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) retrieved at: <https://www.ahead.org/resources/best-practices-resources/use>