

Documentation Guidelines for a Learning Disability

The guidelines below are provided to facilitate the process of obtaining the necessary documentation to validate the existence of a learning disability. Students requesting disability related services are required to provide their evaluator with a copy of these guidelines. Davidson County Community College or the evaluator cannot be held responsible for the documentation not being acceptable to validate the existence of the disability if the student fails to give the evaluator a copy of these guidelines.

Acceptable documentation should include:

1. Current Impact - Documentation must be up-to-date and evaluations must be administered using adult based norms. Child-Based norms are not acceptable and cannot be used to determine appropriate accommodations and services. NOTE: Documentation validating a history of having received services based on a disability is (in some cases) sufficient to establish eligibility for services on a one-semester-basis, while updated documentation is being secured.
2. The evaluation must be performed by a qualified evaluator: clinical or educational psychologists known to specialize in learning disabilities. Information about their professional credentials, including licensing and certification, and their areas of specialization must be clearly stated in the report. Assessment from a physician, general practitioner, physician assistant, or registered nurse does not suffice. (Documentation by family members, immediate or otherwise, is **not** acceptable.)
3. Testing must involve a comprehensive psycho-educational evaluation. The following must be assessed:
 - a. **Aptitude:** The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale with subtest scores is a preferred instrument. The Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery Test of Cognitive Ability* or the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale are acceptable.
 - b. **Achievement:** Assessment of academic ability in the areas of reading, writing, and math is required. Suggested instruments include: Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery Tests of Achievement; Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK), or other specific achievement tests such as The Test of Written Language (TOWL), Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests, or the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test. The Wide Range Achievement Test is not suitable as a sole measure of achievement.
 - c. **Information Processing:** Specific areas of information (e.g., short and long term memory; sequential memory; auditory and visual perception/processing; processing speed) must be assessed. Use of subtest scores from the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, or the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery Test of Cognitive Ability is acceptable. (*Current edition to date of the evaluation) NOTE: Standard scores and/or percentiles should be provided for all normal measurements. Grade equivalents are not acceptable unless standard score and percentiles are also included. Dates of testing must be included in the report.
4. Test results must contain a clear diagnostic statement indicating a diagnosis of a learning disability. Terms such as "learning problems," "learning differences," "weaknesses," etc. are not the equivalent of a learning disability.
5. Testing must include information about the functional limitations of the student. Assessment should indicate how the student's disability may affect his/her current participation in courses, programs, services, or any other activity of the college. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations are very helpful. These suggestions should be linked to the impact of the disability.