

## Guidelines for Documentation of a Cognitive Disorder

### Learning Disorder (LD), Autism Spectrum, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), etc.

#### THE BASICS:

Students seeking support services from the Student Disability Access Center (SDAC) for a diagnosed learning disorder (LD) or documented academic impairment due to Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) must submit documentation that verifies their eligibility for reasonable disability accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as Amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The preferred documentation is a recent comprehensive psycho-educational evaluation conducted by a qualified diagnostician.

#### IF YOU HAVE A PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORT:

1. The evaluation must be by a qualified clinician licensed or certified by the state in which the evaluation was done.
2. The assessment should be reasonably current. As a university student you are an adult; the evaluation should have been done at a time when you would have been reasonably able to think and process information like an adult. In other words we can typically use an evaluation done when you were in high school; but not one from when you were in elementary school. Even if you were an adult at the time of the prior evaluation, there is an upper limit, an evaluation over ten years old would not be considered current. You may hear 5 years as a general guideline and that is a reasonable suggestion, but it isn't necessarily a rule. Please confer with your SDAC advisor if you have any questions.
3. Disability accommodations are based on evidence of specific disability in a qualified student. There should be clear evidence linking a recommended accommodation to a specific functional limitation compared to the average population.
4. We recommend that the evaluation include a review of academic history, diagnostic interview and administration of standard published individually administered measures of Aptitude, Achievement, and Information Processing (such as memory, auditory and visual process, and processing speed).
5. The report must include a **specific diagnosis** supported by the test data, history, and clinical observations.
6. The report must follow standard professional format including being dated and signed (hand or electronically); using a narrative format; and clearly indicating the identifying information, credentials and contact information of the person(s) conducting the evaluation.

**IF YOU HAD ACCOMMODATIONS IN YOUR PRIOR SCHOOL BUT DON'T HAVE A CURRENT OR COMPLETE PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORT:**

Send us what you have (IEPs, 504 Plans, accommodation information from another school, etc.). We may grant provisional accommodations to allow time to obtain a comprehensive psycho-educational evaluation. If you have an old or incomplete psycho-educational evaluation, we can work with you to provide targeted testing to update the documentation.

**IF YOU HAVE NO HISTORY OF PRIOR ACCOMMODATIONS, BUT ARE CONCERNED THAT YOU MAY HAVE SOME LEARNING DISORDER:**

Please make an appointment to speak to an SDAC Advisor so that we can review your situation and decide what would be the best action to take. We can provide screening services for any concerned student to help make a more informed decision before seeking a comprehensive psycho-educational evaluation.

All documentation submitted for consideration to SDAC is treated as personal and confidential; following federal guidelines under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). When submitting documentation, **please include a copy of any available releases** allowing communication between the SDAC and the clinician. Documentation can be uploaded when you [apply for services](#), or you can send it to:

Student Disability Access Center  
University of Virginia  
P.O. Box 800760  
Charlottesville, VA 22908  
Fax: 434-243-5188  
Phone: (434) 243-5180  
Email: [sdac@virginia.edu](mailto:sdac@virginia.edu)