

Criteria for Documentation: Learning Disability

I. Purpose

Documentation must provide Accessible Education Services (AES) with sufficient information about the student and the functional impact of their disability, in order to determine student's eligibility for disability accommodations and to assist with the interactive accommodation process.

II. Definition of Disability

The legal definition of disability includes two elements: (1) a physical or mental impairment which (2) substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of the person in question. Major life activities include but are not limited to: walking, breathing, seeing, hearing, thinking, performing manual tasks, caring for one's self, learning, bodily systems such as immune function, and working. Thus, disability has both diagnostic and functional elements, and **BOTH of these elements must be explicitly documented for effective interactive accommodation determination.**

III. General Requirements

1. *Documentation Must:*

- Be sufficiently current to provide relevant information (generally, adult-normed assessments completed within the past three to five years).
- Be prepared by a person who is not a family member of the student and who is qualified by professional training and practice to diagnose learning disabilities. Examples may include an educational psychologist, a psychologist specializing in learning disability, or an M.A.-level learning specialist with training and experience administering psychoeducational assessments.
- Be typed on letterhead of either the practitioner or the agency hosting the practice.

2. *Specific Requirements:*

A. **Comprehensive Evaluation to include:**

- Comprehensive measure of cognitive ability, such as latest editions of WAIS or WJPEB-TCA;
- Measures of processing ability;
- Measures of academic skill levels, such as latest editions of WJPEB: Tests of Achievement, WIAT, Nelson-Denny, etc.

B. An Evaluation Report that includes:

- All **scores** of the tests administered and other measures that were used, such as informal assessment procedures, interviewing, or observation;
- Relevant **educational history** of the student, including previously utilized academic accommodations;
- **Clear and specific evidence that a learning disability does or does not exist**, based upon evaluator's analysis of the assessment results, including: a) Intracognitive and/or cognitive achievement discrepancies, and b) other possible causes for the discrepancies or the functional impairment must be ruled out;
- **A description of the functional impact** of the diagnosed learning disability upon the student in the post-secondary educational setting, including recommendations for accommodations, supported by specific test results, clinical observations, and/or clearly stated rationale.

IV. Procedure

The documentation submitted by the student and/or the evaluator will be reviewed by Accessible Education Services (AES). In addition to the evaluation report, information relating to the student's educational history may be gathered by AES staff. This information, along with data from all other collected documentation, will be utilized to inform the interactive accommodation process.

Thank you for your assistance.