



CENTER FOR STUDENT ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Learning Disabilities (LD) Documentation Guidelines for the Diagnosing Professional

INTRODUCTION

It is the responsibility of each student requesting services from the University of Tulsa to provide a comprehensive written evaluation of his/her learning disabilities. Any correspondence regarding the appropriateness or comprehensiveness of the submitted documentation will be sent to the student. It is the student's responsibility to obtain additional information or clarification, if requested by the Eligibility Committee.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with verified disabilities who are otherwise qualified to attend the University are protected from discrimination and assured equal access to educational programs. In order to establish that an individual with a disability is qualified for accommodations under the ADA, the documentation of the disability must indicate whether the disabling condition substantially limits a major life activity including learning (e.g., significantly slower reading speed).

These guidelines are designed to: 1) validate a learning disability, 2) determine its impact on the student's educational performance, 3) identify the need for accommodations, and 4) develop the appropriate accommodations to be provided.

HOW A LEARNING DISABILITY IS DEFINED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA

Learning disabilities involve difficulties in processing specific tasks such as reading, listening, writing, spelling and mathematics. Consistent with the standards used by the State of Oklahoma, the University compares students' achievement in these academic tasks with measured academic ability (IQ) using results of those standardized tests considered to be the most reliable measures available. Information-processing deficits are not necessarily associated with specific academic tasks. Therefore, information-processing deficits, in the absence of an IQ/achievement discrepancy, or low overall achievement levels, are **not** sufficient to qualify as a learning disability.

DIAGNOSING PROFESSIONAL'S CREDENTIALS

The following professionals are considered qualified to evaluate and diagnose learning disabilities as long as they are able to provide a comprehensive psychoeducational evaluation (one which includes tests of aptitude and achievement):

- certified school psychologist;
- licensed psychologist or neuropsychologist who has training in educational testing;
- educational diagnostician/specialist working in conjunction with a licensed psychologist.

THE REPORT

The specific reporting format is left to the professional, but the required components must be clearly presented and easily discernable. Regardless of the format used, all assessment reports must include the following information:

- the student's presenting concerns;
- the student's history (developmental, family, medical, psychological, educational, employment);
- the student's psychoeducational assessment;
- the student's psychosocial functioning;
- summary of findings and recommendations.

In cases where evaluation or updating of current documentation is required to determine a current need for services, students will be asked to provide additional documentation. A copy of the original diagnostic documentation should be included with the current documentation, if it is available.

The report is to be submitted on professional letterhead and must include the diagnosing professional's signature, a list of appropriate certifications, and licensing information.

If the above information is assembled by a multidisciplinary team, all components of the evaluation including psychological, educational and social reports should be included with the summary report of the group. A school plan (e.g., Individual Education Plan [IEP], 504 Plan, or Transition Plan) alone is not sufficient documentation to establish a student's eligibility for accommodations and/or services. However, these plans provide important information concerning the student's history of receiving services and must accompany the professional's report (unless they were not developed). In cases where no IEP, 504 Plan, or Transition Report was developed, a letter must be sent from the school indicating the type of academic accommodations that were provided.

Diagnosing professionals are required to use tests that are the most reliable measures of aptitude and achievement. The tests should be administered in their entirety, with clear justification of any change from standard administration (e.g., prorating scores on an IQ test). It is important that documentation highlight the component areas of the academic tasks of reading (comprehension and decoding), listening, writing (content and mechanics of grammar and

spelling), or mathematics (calculation and applied problems). Since time can be an important factor for some students, please indicate the importance of time with regard to performance.

Tests of Aptitude & Achievement

Tests considered appropriate for assessing adolescents and adults are provided in the following list. It is not intended to be definitive or exhaustive.

Aptitude

- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Revised (WAIS-III)
- Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery – Revised: Tests of Cognitive Ability
- Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test
- Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale (4th ed.)
- Wide Range Intelligence Test (WRIT)
- Differential Ability Scales (DAS)

Achievement

- Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA)
- Stanford Test of Academic Skills
- Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery – Revised: Tests of Achievement
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)
- Nelson-Denny Reading Skills Test
- Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test
- Test of Written Language – 3 (TOWL-3)
- Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests – Revised

SENDING THE REPORT

Completed reports must be sent directly from the service provider and faxed to the Center for Student Academic Support at 918-631-3459 or sent to:

University of Tulsa
Center for Student Academic Support
Attn: Dr. Jane Corso
600 S College Ave.
Tulsa, Ok 74104