

OBERLIN

COLLEGE & CONSERVATORY

Center for Student Success - Disability Resources

Elements of Quality Documentation

To provide accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the ADA, it is recommended that students discuss their individual situation and provide a history of the impact of the disorder and requested accommodations to Disability Resources staff. Depending on each situation, students may be asked to provide additional information, such as a supplemental report of their disability. Following are standard guidelines for documentation within those reports.

The best quality documentation comes from an appropriately licensed or otherwise credentialed professional who has undergone appropriate training, has relevant experience, and has no personal relationship with the individual being evaluated. A quality report provides information about a student's disability-related needs/functional limitations and recommended accommodations. As a diagnosis in and of itself does not necessarily provide information about a specific need for accommodation, quality documentation should provide a clear rationale for any requested accommodations based on the student's current level of functioning.

Specific guidelines for quality documentation are as follows:

- Letters should be typed on letterhead, signed and dated and include the name, title, credentials, state and license number of the professional.
- Letters should include a clear diagnostic statement identifying the disability and a description of the diagnostic methodology being used. Where appropriate to the nature of the disability, both summative data and specific test scores (with the norming population identified) are recommended.
- Letters should include a description of the functional limitations impacting the student and a statement of the level of impairment to major life activity in terms of the severity, frequency and pervasiveness of the condition(s).
- Letters should include a description of the expected progression or stability of the disability (i.e., any expected changes in the functional impact of the disability over time and context).
- Letters should include a description of current and past accommodations and/or services. While these are not binding on the current institution, they may provide insight for current planning purposes.
- A recommendation for current accommodations and a rationale as to how these are logically related to functional limitations/student needs. Recommendations from professionals with a history of working with the student may provide valuable information.

If the student will need accommodations for an exam administered by Education Testing Service (ETS), such as the Praxis exams or GRE, the student will need to submit current and complete documentation to ETS directly. Please note that approval for accommodations at Oberlin does not guarantee accommodations for an ETS exam as ETS Disability Services independently makes those determinations.