
Disability Documentation Guidelines

The primary reasons for obtaining and reviewing third party documentation is to: (a) gather information from qualified professionals; (b) consider all available information and materials; (c) determine functional limitations; and (d) identify reasonable services and accommodations.

1. A Qualified Professional Must Conduct the Evaluation.

- Qualified clinicians are licensed, non-familial, follow established practices in the field, and are most often physicians, licensed psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, or licensed therapists. The professional conducting the assessments and rendering diagnoses must have comprehensive training regarding the specific disability being addressed.
- The name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator should be included on letterhead, typed in English, dated, and signed.

2. Documentation Should Provide a Clear Statement of the Diagnosis.

- In most cases, this requires utilizing the current version of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) or the APA's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).

3. Documentation Should Reflect Current Functional Limitations.

- Documentation should address the frequency, severity, and/or duration of current impairments or restrictions and their impact to the student's ability to function in the academic environment (e.g., classroom lectures and discussions, lab activities, or test-taking situations).

4. DSS Will Consider the Totality of Information

- The student's self-report of how they are limited by their impairment, including their experience of disability, barriers, and effective/ineffective accommodations.
- Corroborating documentation from external sources that reflect education and accommodations history and third-party observations (e.g., reports and assessments created by health care providers or school psychologists).

Although a history of accommodations bears some weight, without demonstration of current need a disability does not, by itself, warrant the provision of similar accommodations. It is possible for a student to have a qualified disability but not qualify for any accommodations because there is no evidence of educational limitations due to disability. It will rest upon the DSS to make the final determination regarding which accommodation(s) are appropriate to the academic environment at Cal State Fullerton.