

Guide for Students

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The Role of Disability Services (DS):

- Assists the University in compliance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- Assists the University community in understanding the effects of disabilities and in eliminating the physical, technical, attitudinal and programmatic barriers that limit the range of opportunities for students with disabilities.
- Reviews documentation and provides individuals with reasonable accommodations.
- Maintains and protects the confidentiality of individual records as required by law.

Services Available:

- Interpretation and maintenance of confidential documentation of disability.
- Authorization of accommodations based on **documentation of disability**.
- Assistance with classroom accommodations such as note taking, readers, scribes, sign interpreters, and testing accommodations.
- Priority registration and course substitutions, where applicable.
- Academic, career, and short-term counseling
- Liaison with faculty

Requesting Services:

- **New students** should meet with the disability coordinator for an Intake Interview at least two weeks prior to the requested start of accommodations to ensure timely services.
- **Returning students** who have already completed an Intake Interview are required to see the coordinator each semester to ensure timely service.
- **Request sign language interpreters** by calling the appropriate school's coordinator at least three weeks ahead of time.
- **Request recorded** texts at least six weeks before the semester begins.

If these deadlines are not met, support services may be delayed, possibly until the next semester.

Establishing Eligibility for Services:

- The student must request and submit the appropriate documentation as outlined in the Documentation Guidelines from a qualified professional to verify the presence and impact of the disability on the educational setting.
- The documentation and supporting materials will be reviewed to verify its recency, the presence of a disability, and the need for accommodations.
- Individuals pay any cost of professional verification.

Documentation Guidelines:

- **Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD/ADHD)**
- **Blindness/Low Vision**
- **Deaf/Hard of Hearing**
- **Learning Disabilities**
- **Medical Disabilities/Physical Disabilities**
- **Psychological Disabilities/Psychiatric Disabilities**

A list of local resources for students with learning disabilities and/or ADD/ADHD is available from the **Director, ADA Compliance and Disability Services**, or DS office on your campus. Several of the resources offer testing for students who wish to be diagnosed or need updated documentation.

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders Documentation Guidelines

The following guidelines are taken from the Consortium on ADHD, copyright 1998.

Evaluator's Qualifications:

Professionals conducting assessments and rendering diagnoses of ADHD must have training in differential diagnosis and the full range of psychiatric disorders. The following professionals would generally be considered qualified to evaluate and diagnose ADHD provided they have comprehensive training in the differential diagnosis of ADHD and direct experience with an adolescent or adult ADHD population:

- Clinical psychologists
- Neuropsychologists
- Psychiatrists

It is not considered appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their families. Documentation from a family member will not be accepted.

Reports from a professional should be submitted on letterhead and include the following:

- Name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator
- Information about license or certification as well as the area of specialization
- Number of years employed in current field
- State/province in which the individual practices

Documentation:

The provision of all reasonable accommodations and services is based upon assessment of the impact of the student's disabilities on his or her academic performance at a given time in the student's life. Therefore, it is in the student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation relevant to the student's learning environment. Documentation should be recent-**within the last three years**.

A. Evidence of Early Impairment

Because ADHD is, by definition, first exhibited in childhood and manifests itself in more than one setting, historical and academic information must be gathered from the evaluator.

B. Evidence of Current Impairment

Diagnostic assessment should consist of more than a self-report; history of attentional symptoms, including evidence of ongoing impulsive/hyperactive or inattentive behavior that has significantly impaired functioning over time is critical in the diagnosis of ADHD.

C. Alternative Diagnoses and/or Explanations

Diagnostic assessment should examine the possibility of co-existing diagnoses. This process should explore possible alternative diagnoses including medical and psychiatric disorders as well as educational and cultural factors, which impact the individual and may result in behaviors mimicking ADHD.

D. Diagnostic Testing

Neuropsychological or **psychoeducational** assessment is critical in determining the current impact of the disorder on the individual's ability to function in a school setting. Assessment must include standardized measures for inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity as delineated in the DSM-IV.

E. Diagnostic Report & Summary

The diagnostic report must be a comprehensive interpretive summary synthesizing the evaluator's judgment for the diagnosis of ADHD. The report must include the following:

- All quantitative information in standard scores and/or percentiles; all relevant developmental, medical, psychosocial, behavioral, academic, and medication information.
- A specific diagnosis of ADHD based on the DSM-IV criteria. The report must identify the substantial limitation of a major life function presented by the ADHD.
- Specific recommendations for accommodations. Accommodations must be based on significant functional limitations and must be supported by the diagnostic assessment.

Blindness or Low Vision Documentation Guidelines

(The following guidelines were developed with the assistance of the Association on Higher Education and Disability and the Colorado University Disability Services office)

Evaluator's Qualifications:

Ophthalmologists are the primary professionals involved in diagnosis and medical treatment of individuals who are blind or experience low vision. Optometrists provide information regarding the measurement of visual acuity as well as tracking and fusion difficulties.

It is not considered appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their families. Documentation from a family member will not be accepted.

Reports from the professional should be submitted on letterhead and include the following:

- Name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator
- Information about license or certification as well as the area of specialization
- Number of years employed in current field
- State/province in which the individual practices

Documentation:

Documentation should include the following:

1. A clear statement of vision related disability with supporting numerical description. The age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student, and the student's request for accommodations.
2. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis and a summary of evaluation results including standardized scores.
3. Present symptoms that meet the criteria for diagnosis.
4. Medical information relating to the student's needs and the status of the individual's vision (static or changing) and its impact on the demands of the academic program.
5. Narrative or descriptive text providing both quantitative and qualitative information about the student's abilities that might be helpful in understanding the student's profile, including the use of corrective lenses and ongoing visual therapy (if appropriate).
6. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations that might be appropriate at the postsecondary level.

Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing Documentation Guidelines

(The following guidelines were developed with the assistance of the Association on Higher Education and Disability and the Colorado University Disability Services office)

Evaluator's Qualifications:

The evaluator of a deaf or hard-of-hearing individual should be an audiologist.

It is not considered appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their families. Documentation from a family member will not be accepted.

Reports from the professional should be submitted on letterhead and include the following:

- Name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator
- Information about license or certification as well as the area of specialization
- Number of years employed in current field
- State/province in which the individual practices

Documentation:

Documentation should include the following:

1. A clear statement of deafness or hearing loss with an audiogram that has been completed within the last three years.
2. A summary of assessment procedures used to make the evaluation and a narrative summary of results.
3. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations that might be appropriate at the postsecondary level including types of interpreting services.

Head Injuries/Traumatic Brain Injuries Documentation Guidelines

(The following guidelines were developed with the assistance of the Association on Higher Education and Disability and the Colorado University Disability Services office)

Evaluator's Qualifications:

Head injury or traumatic brain injuries are considered medical or clinical diagnoses. Individuals qualified to render a diagnosis for these disorders are practitioners who have been trained in the assessment of head injury or traumatic brain injury. Recommended practitioners may include physicians; neurologists; licensed clinical, rehabilitation, or school psychologists and neuropsychologists and psychiatrists.

It is not considered appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their families. Documentation from a family member will not be accepted.

Reports from the professional should be submitted on letterhead and include the following:

- Name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator
- Information about license or certification as well as the area of specialization
- Number of years employed in current field
- State/province in which the individual practices

Documentation:

Documentation should include the following:

1. A clear statement of the head injury or traumatic brain injury and the probable site of lesion.
2. Documentation for eligibility should be current, and should include information about condition, the current status of the student, and the student's specific request for accommodations.
3. A summary of cognitive and achievement measures including standardized scores or percentiles used to make the diagnosis.
4. A summary of present residual symptoms that meet the criteria for diagnosis.
5. Medical information relating to student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment.
6. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations that might be appropriate at the postsecondary level.

Learning Disabilities Documentation Guidelines

The following guidelines are taken from the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), copyright 1997, Columbus, OH

Evaluator's Qualifications:

Professionals conducting assessments, rendering diagnoses of learning disabilities (LD), and making recommendations for appropriate accommodations must be qualified to do so. The following professionals would be qualified to evaluate specific learning disabilities provided they have additional training and experience in the assessment of learning problems in adults.

- Clinical or educational psychologists
- School psychologists
- Neuropsychologists
- Learning disability specialists

It is not considered appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their families. Documentation from a family member will not be accepted.

Reports from the professional should be submitted on letterhead and include the following:

- Name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator
- Information about license or certification as well as the area of specialization
- Number of years employed in current field
- State/province in which the individual practices

Documentation:

The provision of all reasonable accommodations and services is based upon assessment of the impact of the student's disabilities on his or her academic performance. Therefore, it is in the student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation (**preferably within the past 4 years**) relevant to the student learning environment.

The Diagnostic Report

Diagnosis

The report must include a **clear statement** of the learning disability, and the rationale for this diagnosis as supported by the current diagnostic battery. Individual "learning styles," "learning differences," "academic problems," and "test difficulty or anxiety" **do not** constitute a learning disability. If the data indicate that a learning disability is not present, the evaluator should state that conclusion in the report. The diagnosis should include a DSM IV diagnosis.

Test Scores

Standard scores and/or percentiles should be provided for all normed measures. The data should logically reflect a substantial limitation to learning for which the student is requesting the accommodation. The particular profile of the student's strengths and weaknesses must be shown to relate to functional limitations that may necessitate accommodations.

The tests used should be reliable, valid, and standardized for use with an adolescent/adult population. The test findings should document both the nature and severity of the learning disability.

Diagnostic Interview

The diagnostician, using professional judgment as to areas are relevant to the question of determining a student's current eligibility for accommodation(s), must provide a summary that includes description of the presenting problem(s); developmental history; medical history, including the absence of a medical basis for the present symptoms; academic history including results of prior standardized testing; reports of classroom performance; relevant family history, including primary language of the home and the student's current fluency of English; relevant psychosocial history; relevant history; a discussion of dual diagnosis, alternative or co-existing mood, behavioral, neurological, and/or personality disorders along with any history of relevant medication use that may affect the individual's and exploration of possible alternatives that may mimic a learning disability when, in fact, one is not present.

Assessment

The neuropsychological or psycho-educational evaluation for the _____ of a specific learning disability must provide clear and specific evidence that a learning disability does or does not exist. Assessment, and any resulting diagnosis, must consist of and be based on a comprehensive assessment battery that does not rely on any one test or subtest.

Objective evidence of a substantial limitation to learning must be provided. The domains to be addressed must include the following:

- 1. Aptitude/Cognitive Ability**

A complete intellectual assessment with all subtests and standard scores reported is essential.

- 2. Academic Achievement**

A comprehensive academic achievement battery is essential, all subtests and standard scores reported for those subtests administered. The battery must include current levels of functioning in relevant areas such as reading (decoding and comprehension), mathematics, and oral and written language.

- 3. Information Processing**

Specific areas of information processing (e.g., short and long memory; sequential memory; auditory and visual perception/processing; processing speed; executive functioning; motor ability) should be addressed.

Other assessment measures, such as classroom tests and informal assessment procedures or observations, may be helpful in determining performance across a variety of domains. Other formal assessment measures may be integrated with the above instruments to help rule in or rule out the learning disability to differentiate it from coexisting neurological and/or psychiatric disorders (i.e., to establish a differential diagnosis). In addition to standardized tests, it is also very useful to include informal observations of the student during test administration.

Clinical Summary

A well-written diagnostic summary should indicate:

- That the evaluator ruled out alternative explanations for academic problems as a result of poor education, poor motivation and/or study skills, emotional problems, attentional problems, and cultural/language differences.
- How patterns in the student's cognitive ability, achievement, and information processing reflect the presence of a learning disability.
- The substantial limitation to learning or other major life activity presented by the learning disability and degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested.
- Why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of the specific disability are accommodated.

Physical Disabilities and Medical Disabilities

(The following guidelines were developed with the assistance of the Association on Higher Education and Disability and the Colorado University Disability Services office)

Evaluator's Qualifications:

Any physical disability (include but not limited to mobility impairments, multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injuries, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, cancer, AIDS, chemical sensitivities, and spina bifida) are considered to be in the medical domain and require the expertise of a physician, including a neurologist, psychiatrist or other medical specialist with experience and expertise in the area for which accommodations are being requested.

It is not considered appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their families. Documentation from a family member will not be accepted.

Reports from the professional should be submitted on letterhead and include the following:

- Name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator
- Information about license or certification as well as the area of specialization
- Number of years employed in current field
- State/province in which the individual practices

Documentation:

The provision of all reasonable accommodations and services is based upon assessment of the impact of the student's disabilities on his or her academic performance at a given time in the student's life. Therefore, it is in the student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation relevant to the student's learning environment. The age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's request for accommodations.

Documentation should include the following:

1. A clear statement of the medical diagnosis of the physical disability or medical illness.
2. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis, including evaluation results and standardized scores if applicable.
3. A description of present symptoms that meet the criteria for diagnosis.
4. Medical information relating to the student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment.

Suggestions of reasonable accommodations that might be appropriate at the postsecondary level. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis.

Psychiatric/Psychological Disabilities Documentation Guidelines

(The following guidelines were developed with the assistance of the Association on Higher Education and Disability and the Colorado University Disability Services office)

Evaluator's Qualifications:

A diagnosis by a licensed mental health professional including licensed clinical social workers, licensed professional counselor, psychologists, psychiatrists, and neurologists is required and must include the license number. Psychiatric and psychological disabilities include but are not limited to depressive disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, bipolar disorder, and disassociative disorders.

It is not considered appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their families. Documentation from a family member will not be accepted.

Reports from the professional should be submitted on letterhead and include the following:

- Name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator
- Information about license or certification as well as the area of specialization
- Number of years employed in current field
- State/province in which the individual practices

Documentation:

The provision of all reasonable accommodations and services is based upon assessment of the impact of the student's disabilities on his or her academic performance at a given time in the student's life. Therefore, it is in the student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation relevant to the student's learning environment. The age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's request for accommodations.

Documentation should include the following:

1. A clear statement of the disability, including the DSM-IV diagnosis and a summary of present symptoms.
2. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis and a summary of evaluation results, including standardized or percentile scores.
3. Medical information relating to the student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment.
4. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations that might be appropriate at the postsecondary level.

Rights and Responsibilities

<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/cguide.htm>

Additional Resources

- **Applying to Johns Hopkins University:** New **students with disabilities**, follow the application process for all new JHU college students: Contact Admissions **at the appropriate school** for Application, Catalog, and Course Schedule, via the web site: <http://webapps.jhu.edu/jhuniverse/admissions/>
- **Financial Aid:** Financial Aid information and application forms are available through the Johns Hopkins Financial Aid Office.
http://webapps.jhu.edu/jhuniverse/admissions/financial_aid/
- **Resident Life:** The two year residence requirement for freshmen and sophomores at JHU (Homewood) is viewed as critical to a students' college education. What impact does this illness have on the patient's ability to live in a traditional or suite-style residence hall, with a roommate. Contact Tracey Angel, Director of Housing and Conference Services (Homewood), <http://www.jhu.edu/~hds/house/>. For other divisions, please contact that school directly.
- **Assistive Technology:** The Krieger Computer Lab provides training and assistance for students with disabilities on the Homewood campus and includes a Kurzweil 1000, Kurzweil 3000, screen reading software, writing software, dictation software and zoomtext. <http://www.jhu.edu/KriegerLab>.

Questions and Answers for Students with Disabilities:

1. **Is there a special Admissions process for students with disabilities?** Students should follow the same application process as any other student. However, the decision regarding disclosure of the disability at the time of application is up to the student. If a student chooses to disclose, it may be done in a number of ways. Some students choose to write about the disability, while others submit documentation along with the application.
2. **What type of documentation do I need?** There are specific guidelines concerning documentation that students need to follow depending on the disability. What is important to consider is that the documentation needs to be current, needs to show significant impact on at least one major life activity such as seeing, walking, hearing, thinking, learning etc., and needs to have a diagnosis. In addition, there should be suggestions for accommodations. There should also be a report and summary of the findings.
3. **What types of accommodations does your school provide for students with disabilities?** Each student with a disability is invited to meet with a coordinator of disability services from his/her individual campus. At that time documentation is reviewed and accommodations are determined based on the disability and need. Some standard accommodations include brailled or recorded materials, sign language interpreters, note taking services, reading services, extra time on exams, physical access, assistive technology. Additional accommodations and services will be determined based on individual need.
4. **What other services are available?** It is important to ask either your advisor or the disability coordinator from your campus about other support services. Some campuses provide tutoring, study skills assistance, mentoring, and special advising for students with disabilities. In addition, some students can benefit from counseling support or the health center. Again, it is important to ask about the availability and location of these services to your program.
5. **Does your school give unlimited time on exams?** No, we do not give unlimited time on exams. However, based on the disability and the need for exam accommodations, extra time may be appropriate. The amount of time is typically 1½ times but some students may receive double time depending on the situation.
6. **How do I get a note taker?** Note taking may be considered a reasonable accommodation. See the disability coordinator on your particular campus to see if you are eligible for this accommodation. Usually, note takers are paid and are other students who are in your classes. What is important is to start this service as early as possible in the semester so as to not get behind.
7. **What do I do if I have special housing needs?** It is important to identify these needs to the Associate Director of Student Housing as soon as possible. Limited alternative living facilities are available but it is important to discuss this with the Associate Director. It will be necessary to provide documentation and evidence of the need for alternative housing before any decision is made.

8. **Is assistive technology available at your school?** Yes, assistive technology is available through the Krieger Lab (www.jhu.edu/krieger.lab). Contact the Senior User Support Coordinator, 410-516-2924 for an evaluation and discussion of need.
9. **If one of my accommodations is a recorded textbook, where do I go to get these books?** Johns Hopkins University uses Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic as its' primary source for recorded materials. However, if the materials are not available through this source, then materials are recorded in house. Four track tape recorders are loaned to the student free of charge although students are encouraged to purchase their own. Again, it is important to register as soon as possible with the coordinator of disability services on your campus so that this service can be implemented by the beginning of a semester. Without notice ahead of time a delay may occur in the recording and distribution of the materials.
10. **Are services available for graduate students, medical students or post-doc students?** Yes, services are available for any qualified individual with a disability. All students are eligible for services again depending on the documentation and need.
11. **What if I need a sign language interpreter?** It is important to request interpreting services in a timely manner. Typically, Johns Hopkins University contracts out for an interpreters and since there are a number of universities within this area many are using the same agencies. Contact the coordinator of disability services on the individual campus as early as possible.
12. **Can I take a reduced course load?** For some students with disabilities this is a suggested accommodation. It is important to discuss this with the advisor and the coordinator of disability services for appropriate advice.