

Guidelines for Documentation of Disability

General Documentation Guidelines:

A. Qualifications of the Evaluator

A qualified professional with training and experience relevant to the diagnosed disability must complete the documentation provided. Physical disabilities are most often verified by physicians, psychological and emotional disabilities by psychologists or psychiatrists, and learning disabilities by psychologists or educational diagnosticians. This professional should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

B. Documentation of the Disability

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 a 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.

For disabilities that may change substantially with time, such as learning or psychological disabilities, evaluations should be recent. In order to demonstrate the current impact of the disability and to identify appropriate accommodations, learning disability documentation less than three years old is required and documentation of psychological disabilities may need to be even more recent. For other disabilities, documentation that is older than three years may be considered if the diagnosis is not affected by maturation, time, or coping strategies.

The Coordinator of Disability Services may request additional information or updated evaluations, at the student's expense, if necessary to make a decision about eligibility or appropriate accommodations. The Coordinator of Disability Services does not conduct disability evaluations but can refer students to off-campus professionals who do.

C. Format of the Documentation

All documentation must be submitted in writing. The documentation should be submitted on the professional's letterhead and be dated and signed.

The documentation must be comprehensive, including (when appropriate) history, diagnostic interviews, test results (including standardized test scores when available), differential diagnosis, and details regarding the student's functional limitations. Strengths, weaknesses, and deficits should be specifically discussed. Clear documentation of deficit areas is necessary in order for colleges to provide appropriate accommodations.

Physical Disability/Chronic Illness

Students registering with the Office of Disability Services at John Brown University on the basis of a diagnosed Physical Disability or Chronic Illness are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

A diagnosis of a Physical Disability should include:

1. Disability diagnosis including
 - a thorough description of the disabling condition
 - the date of diagnosis
 - the date of onset
 - prognosis.

Information concerning onset and prognosis is important in determining appropriate accommodations.

2. A statement of prescribed medications and dosage including monitoring schedule, if appropriate for the disability.
3. A schedule for on-going therapy, if appropriate for the disability.
4. A clear statement of how the Physical Disability and/or the medication impacts adult functioning (specifically learning and the college classroom).
5. Name, credentials, and license number of the evaluator.

Learning Disability

Students registering with the Office of Disability Services at John Brown University on the basis of a diagnosed Learning Disability are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

A diagnosis of a Learning Disability should include:

1. Domains addressed for Learning Disability assessment must include:
 - Ability Test – (preferred instruments: the age appropriate Wechsler intelligence scale and/or Woodcock Johnson Test of Cognitive Ability – Revised.
 - Achievement Test – (preferred instruments: Wechsler Individual Achievement Test -- 2nd Edition and/or Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery – Revised. Note: the Wide Range Achievement Test – Revised (WRAT-R) is not acceptable as the sole measure of achievement)
 - Tests of social and emotional adjustment
 - All test scores and data should be included.
2. Clear and specific statement of how the disability substantially impairs adult functioning (specifically learning and the college classroom) supported by the information in the evaluation.

3. The discrepancy (using Full Scale scores and Standard Achievement Scores) between ability and achievement should be specifically shown as validation of the type of learning disability. The definition of Learning Disability and the specific categories found in the DSM-IV should be used to state the diagnosis.
4. Name, credential, and license number of the evaluator.

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD/ADHD)

Students registering with the Office of Disability Services at John Brown University on the basis of a diagnosed Attention Deficit Disorder are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

A diagnosis of Attention Deficit Disorder should include:

1. A medical, family, and school history documenting the age of onset.
2. Clear evidence of interference with developmentally appropriate social, academic, and/or occupational functioning.
3. Interviews or rating scales completed by others who can comment on the person's behavior, such as a parent, friend, or spouse.
4. Screening for Learning Disability (ability and achievement – see Learning Disability documentation for specific information)
5. Tests of social and emotional adjustment (e.g. depression scales).
6. A statement of prescribed medications and dosage including monitoring schedule, if appropriate for the ADD/ADHD.
7. A schedule for on-going therapy, if appropriate.
8. Clear and specific statement of how the ADD/ADHD and/or the medication substantially impairs adult functioning (specifically learning and the college classroom) supported by the information in the evaluation.
9. The definition of ADD/ADHD and the specific categories found in the DSM-IV should be used to state the diagnosis.
10. Name, credentials, and license number of the evaluator.

Psychological/Psychiatric Disability

Students registering with the Office of Disability Services at John Brown University on the basis of a diagnosed Psychological, Emotional, or Psychiatric Disability are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

A Diagnosis of a Psychological/Psychiatric Disability should include:

1. A multi-axial diagnosis based on the DSM-IV.
2. A current diagnosis – if testing is used in the diagnosis, please include
 - The name of the instrument
 - The administration date

- All scores.
3. A statement of prescribed medications and dosage, if appropriate to the disability.
 4. A schedule for on-going therapy.
 5. A clear and specific statement of how the Psychological, Emotional, or Psychiatric Disability and/or the medication impacts adult functioning (specifically learning and the college classroom).
 6. Name, credentials, and license number of the evaluator.