

Student Disability Services

Guidelines for Submitting Documentation

In order to consider academic and programmatic adjustments, The New School needs documentation from a qualified clinician that includes the following:

1. A diagnosis of the disability or disabilities;
2. A list of functional limitations the student will experience in an academic environment; and
3. Possible appropriate academic accommodations.

The documentation should also include the following: the credentials of the diagnosing professional(s); the date of the most current diagnostic evaluation; and the date of the original diagnosis. Additional information that could prove helpful includes the following: any treatments, medications, assistive devices and services currently prescribed; and a description of the expected prognosis or stability of the impact of the disability over time.

It is important to note that test and evaluation results as well as diagnostic labels are not, in and of themselves, sufficient in terms of accommodation requests. A clinician's evaluative summary of these test/evaluation results that includes the information listed above is needed. A qualified clinician is considered a professional with credentials that would be generally accepted as appropriate to diagnose the disability. It is recommended that you speak with your doctor or practitioner to create documentation that appropriately explains the nature of your disability in such a way that the Student Disability Services office can make necessary and suitable accommodations for you.

In all cases, documentation must be recent enough to describe the current status of the disability. Documentation should not be older than one year unless otherwise stated in these guidelines. Older documentation will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Also, statements from other schools as to what accommodations were provided are, in and of themselves, not sufficient for services and will not be accepted as official documentation.

Documentation received will be treated as confidential and will not become part of a student's permanent record. Information provided will be shared within the University on a need-to-know basis and with the sole intent of providing related services to the student. In some cases, such as the diagnosis of an unfamiliar disease, the documentation may be referred to a physician in the Student Health Services Center for review.

Documentation should be sent directly to the Student Disability Services (SDS) office. Phone calls and e-mails will not be accepted as documentation of a disability.

Students are strongly encouraged to obtain updated documentation at the start of each academic year when reasonable. The University (SDS) reserves the right to ask for updated documentation prior to providing accommodations.

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All documentation should follow the guidelines stated previously. Additional information is given for specific disabilities as follows:

Learning Disabilities and/or Dyslexia

- Testing should be recent (within the past three years). Older documentation will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Testing must provide clear and specific diagnosis of a learning disability.
- Testing must be comprehensive in terms of measuring aptitude, academic achievement, and information processing.
- The tests used should be reliable, valid, and standardized for use with an adolescent/adult population.
- A diagnostic summary is needed that interprets the evaluation results to show what specific accommodations are needed and why based on the listed functional limitations of the student.
- Test scores and data must be included.
- Diagnostic reports must include the names and titles of the evaluators as well as the date(s) of testing.
- A school plan such as an IEP (Individualized Education Program) or 504 Plan, as well as a statement of previous accommodations provided, are in and of themselves insufficient documentation but may be included as part of a more comprehensive assessment battery.

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and Related Disorders

- Testing should be recent (within the past year). Older documentation will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- A clear and specific diagnosis of ADHD and/or related conditions must be provided.
- A diagnostic report is needed that includes a review and discussion of the diagnoses and the tests, questionnaires, interviews, and/or observations used to identify the disorder.
- A summary of how the disorder limits academic functioning with a list of and rationale for recommended academic accommodations. This summary should include information regarding the onset, longevity, and severity of the symptoms.
- A qualified evaluator such as a clinical psychologist, a neuropsychologist, or a psychiatrist must provide the diagnosis and evaluative summary.

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Orthopedic and Chronic Illnesses

Documentation must be from a licensed physician or other licensed professional qualified to diagnose the condition. A diagnosis, a list of functional limitations, and a list of possible accommodations with rationales must be provided. Any information concerning prognosis that is deemed important should be included.

Psychological/Psychiatric Conditions

Diagnosis must coincide with current DSM IV requirements and include the student's current level of functioning. Documentation must be from a licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, or other qualified licensed professional. A list of functional limitations and accommodations with rationales must be provided.

Hearing Loss/Deafness

The preferred form of documentation is an audiogram by a licensed audiologist and any supporting medical documentation. A summary must be provided that includes the student's functional limitations and recommended academic accommodations including the need for adaptive equipment and interpreting services. A statement as to the student's preferred means of communication (Ex: American Sign Language; Signed English) should be included.

Visual Impairments

Documentation must be from an ophthalmologist and include specific visual acuity representations for each eye and a specific diagnosis, including a statement of legal blindness if appropriate. A summary should be provided that includes the student's functional limitations and recommended academic accommodations including the need for adaptive equipment. A statement as to the student's preferred method of obtaining academic material (Ex: books in alternate format; Braille; enlarged text) should be included.

Temporary Disabilities

Students who develop a medical condition or injury that is considered temporary yet disabling, will be provided with the same level of attention and consideration as students with more permanent disabilities. Documentation should include the expected date that the condition will no longer be disabling, or the date of the next medical evaluation. The University (SDS) reserves the right to obtain updated documentation as deemed appropriate.

Disabilities Not Otherwise Specified

Students with disabilities not covered in this section should contact their designated administrator if additional information is needed. Consultations with a medical provider/documentation source are possible with written and signed permission from the student. Consultations will be for clarification of required documentation and/or requested accommodations only. Phone conversations from physicians and other evaluators cannot take the place of needed documentation.

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Contact Information

The following individuals have been designated the administrators responsible for helping students with disabilities obtain information as to related services at the University and to assist students in obtaining academic and programmatic accommodations.

Jason Luchs
79 5th Avenue, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10003
(212) 229-5626 ext. 3135

Tom McDonald
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