



**Cleveland State**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
Counseling and Career Services  
Student Center • RM 118  
3535 Adkisson Drive • Cleveland, TN 37320  
Phone: (423) 478-6217

# Documentation Guidelines and Resources for Disabilities Requiring a Psycho-Educational Evaluation

(Including but not limited to:  
Learning Disabilities, ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorders, etc.)

These guidelines are provided in the interest of assuring that documentation is appropriate to verify eligibility and to support requests for accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids. They are consistent with current national standards for post-secondary education.

It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation to Disability Support Services and to bear the associated costs involved (please see resources attached). This office acknowledges that once a person is diagnosed as having a qualified disability under the American with Disabilities Act, the disability is normally viewed as life-long. Although the disability will continue, the severity of the condition may change over time. Therefore, the evaluation must present a current picture of how the student performs, which generally should have been completed over the last three years. Because the provision of accommodations and services is based on the current impact of the student's disability on learning in the college setting, it is in the student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation.

## I. Qualifications of the Evaluator

Professionals conducting assessments, rendering diagnoses of learning disabilities, etc., and making recommendations for appropriate accommodations must be qualified to do so. The following professionals would generally be considered qualified to evaluate specific learning disabilities provided that they have additional training and experience in the assessment of learning issues in adolescents and adults: a licensed psychiatrist, clinical or educational psychologist, school psychologist, neuropsychologist, or other qualified and licensed mental health professional. Use of diagnostic terminology indicating a learning disability by someone whose training and experience are not in these fields is not acceptable. All reports should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed and otherwise legible. It is not considered appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their families.

## II. Documentation should contain the following:

### Diagnostic Interview

An evaluation should include the summary of a diagnostic interview, containing a description of the presenting problems, developmental, medical, psycho-social and employment histories; family history, academic history and a discussion of co-morbid conditions where indicated.

### Assessment

The evaluation must provide clear and specific evidence that a disability does or does not exist. Assessment and diagnosis should be based on a comprehensive assessment battery which does not rely on any one test or subtest. A substantial limitation to learning or other major life activity must be provided. Tests should be reliable, valid and standardized for use with an adolescent/adult population. A list of commonly used tests is included in the Appendix. The following domains must be addressed:

1. **Aptitude.** A complete intellectual assessment with subtest and standard scores reported.
2. **Academic Achievement.** A comprehensive academic achievement battery is necessary with all subtests and standard scores reported for those subtests administered. The battery should include current levels of academic functioning in reading (*decoding and comprehension*), mathematics, and oral and written language.
3. **Information Processing.** Specific areas of information processing (*e.g., short-and long-term memory, sequential memory, auditory and visual perception/processing, processing speed, executive functioning and motor ability*) should be assessed.
4. **Other.** Other standard and formal assessment measures may be integrated with the above to help support a diagnosis such as rating scales with ADHD which quantify the nature of the impairment. Testing must be current, generally within the last three (3) years. An Individual Educational Plan (IEP) alone is not acceptable documentation. Reports must include the date(s) of testing.

### Specific Diagnosis

There must be clear and specific evidence of a disability. Individual "learning styles," "learning differences," "academic problems" and "test difficulty or anxiety," in and of themselves, do not constitute a learning disability. The diagnostician should use direct language and avoid terms such as, "suggests" or "is indicative of." If the data indicate that a learning disability is not present, the evaluator should state that conclusion in the report. Include the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) or Diagnostic Statistical Manual(DSM) codes, the date of the most recent evaluation, or the dates of evaluations performed by referring professionals. If the most recent evaluation was not a full evaluation, indicate when the last full evaluation was conducted.

### Test Scores

Standard and/or percentile scores should be provided for all normed measures. Grade equivalents are not useful unless standard and percentiles are included. The profile of the student's strengths and weaknesses should logically relate to accommodation requests.

## Clinical Summary

A clinical summary should be included with the following information:

1. Demonstration that the evaluator ruled out alternative explanations for academic problems.
2. Indication of how patterns of the student's ability, achievement and processing show the presence of a learning disability.
3. Indication of the substantial limitation to learning or other major life activity presented by the learning disability and the degree to which it impacts the individual.
4. Indication of why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of the specific disability are accommodated. A record of prior accommodations or auxiliary aids should be provided, if available.

## III. Recommendations for Accommodations

The diagnostic report should include specific recommendations for accommodations, as well as an explanation as to why each accommodation is recommended. Recommendations should be supported with specific test results or clinical observations.

If accommodations are not clearly identified in the report, Disability Support Services will seek clarification or more information.

Disability Support Services will make the final determination for providing appropriate and reasonable accommodations.

## Appendix

### Tests for Assessing Adolescents and Adults

**Aptitude:** Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-IV (WAIS-IV), Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-educational Battery-Revised: Test of Cognitive Ability, Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test (KAIT), Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale (4th ed.)

*\*The Slosson Intelligence Test-Revised and the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test are primarily screening devices which are not comprehensive enough to provide the kind of information necessary to make accommodation decisions.*

**Academic Achievement:** Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA), Stanford Test of Academic Skills, Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-educational Battery-Revised: Test of Achievement, Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT), or specific achievement tests such as: Nelson-Denny Reading Skills Test, Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test, Test of Written Language-3 (TOWL-3), Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests-Revised

Specific achievement tests are useful instruments when administered under standardized conditions and interpreted within the context of other diagnostic information. The Wide Range Achievement Test-4 (WRAT-4) is not a comprehensive measure of achievement and is not useful as the sole measure of achievement.

Information Processing acceptable instruments include the Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude-3 (DTLA-3), the Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude-Adult (DTLA-A), information from subtests on WAIS-IV, Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-educational Battery-Revised: Test of Cognitive Ability, as well as other relevant instruments.

**ADHD Rating Scales:** Wender Utah, Brown Attention-Activation Disorder Scale, Beck Anxiety Inventory, Hamilton's Depression Rating Scale, Conners Teacher and Parent Rating Scale.

## Psycho-educational Testing Resources

Students needing a current psycho-educational evaluation for documenting a disability at Cleveland State Community College should be aware of the following information:

- Cleveland State does not conduct or pay for an evaluation to document a student's current disability and functional limitations related to a need for an academic accommodation.
- Persons who are seeking evaluations for use as documentation of disabilities for purposes of accommodation are advised to take the Guidelines attached to the agency or professional providing the testing to make sure the evaluation meets those guidelines.

The Department of Education Office for Civil Rights recommends that if a student with a disability is eligible for services through the state Vocational Rehabilitation Services program, he or she may qualify for an evaluation at no cost. Students can locate their Vocational Rehabilitation office by going to <http://www.tn.gov/humanserv/rehab/vrs.html> and clicking on the Find Our Offices tab. The contact number for Cleveland is (423) 478-0330.

The University of Tennessee in Knoxville has a program that provide psycho-educational evaluations for documenting a disability on a sliding fee scale.

- KCLASS Center, The University of Tennessee. Sliding fee scale available. Contact: Dr. Brian Wilhoit (865) 974-6177

Persons seeking psycho-educational testing in order to meet Cleveland State Guidelines for documentation may want to check with their health insurance provider to see if psycho-educational testing is covered under the mental health portion of their health insurance. Please find below a brief list of some available resources for private pay testing. This list is for informational purposes. CSCC does not endorse or recommend any specific practitioner.

George N. Fincher, Ed.D  
6290 Vance Road  
Chattanooga, TN 37421  
(423) 899-7244

William Wray, Ph.D  
Advance Resources Group  
325 Market Street, Suite 305  
Chattanooga, TN 37402  
(423) 267-2134

Mary Lauterbach, Ph.D  
2775 Executive Park Place, Suite 1  
Cleveland, TN 37311  
(423) 479-1171

Dr. Tom Biller  
Health Mangement Services  
2292 Chambliss Ave NW Suite C-1  
Cleveland Professional Building  
Cleveland, TN 37311  
(423) 479-5672