

# Documentation Guidelines

Students who are seeking academic accommodations through the Student Support Center at Southern Virginia University will need to submit documentation to verify disability eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Protection from disability discrimination under these statutes is based upon substantiation of a disability that **substantially limits a major life activity**.

In order to provide students with disabilities equally effective, meaningful access to the university's programs and services, Southern Virginia University encourages students to refer to the information below to assist in obtaining reasonable accommodations. Appropriate documentation will contribute to our understanding the disability and the impact it has on the student in the college environment.

## What kind of documentation is acceptable?

The following guidance is provided in the interest of assuring that documentation is appropriate to verify eligibility and requests for reasonable accommodations and/or assistive technology on the basis of a disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities. The Director of Student Support Services is available to consult with diagnosticians, parents and students regarding this guidance. Ideally, quality documentation is:

1. **Conducted by qualified and/or credentialed professionals**, who have no personal relationship with the student, and whose credentials match the disability being evaluated (i.e., a medical condition is documented by a physician, a psychological condition is documented by a psychologist...)
2. **Clear**, and contains a specific diagnostic statement, which describes the *current, functional impact on a major life activity*. A DSM code is preferable.
3. **Comprehensive**, and includes a description of diagnostic criteria, evaluation methods, procedures, dates of testing, and includes the names, data and results of formal instruments, i.e., aptitude testing (such as the WAIS), achievement testing (such as the Woodcock Johnson), and behavioral testing (such as the BASC).
4. **Current**, and contains information about *current functional limitations*, and how it impacts the individual in an academic setting. Recent documentation from assessments done during or since the senior year of high school using adult norms are preferable and may be required; Older documentation can inform us of how permanent or invariable conditions may impact the individual.
5. **Thorough and extensive**, and contains information about how the condition may change over time, and in various environments, i.e. climate/weather changes, times of the day, and within social and academic contexts. A summary of the effectiveness and impact-across physical, social, cognitive settings—of medications, interventions and/or treatments, is also important.
6. **Detailed**, and gives a historically relevant description of past services, interventions, and accommodations, with rationales for each.
7. **Indicatory**, giving explicit recommendations, made by a credentialed professional, for accommodations, services, and strategies.