

Disability Resource Center

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Guidelines for Documentation of Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Each student requesting accommodations through the Disability Resource Center is required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA). As defined by Section 504 and the ADA, an individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity, including learning. Academic adjustments and other accommodations are implemented to provide equal access to college programs and services.

In order to establish eligibility as an individual with a disability, the student must submit documentation that is comprehensive, clearly specifies the presence of a disability, and is appropriate to the post-secondary setting.

Any specific recommendations for accommodations must be based on significant functional limitations and must be supported by the diagnostic assessment. Accommodations and academic adjustments cannot be implemented until the student's documentation meets these criteria. Prior history of having received an accommodation does not, in and of itself, warrant or guarantee its continued provision. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan is not sufficient documentation of a disability.

Documentation for Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) must be from an appropriate professional with comprehensive training in differential diagnosis as well as direct experience working with adolescents and adults with ADD/ADHD. Professionals considered qualified to evaluate and diagnose ADD/ADHD include clinical psychologists, neuropsychologists, psychiatrists, and other relevantly trained medical doctors, such as neurologists. The diagnostic report should be typed and submitted on official letterhead with name, title, professional credentials, address, and phone/fax numbers of the evaluator. The documentation must include:

- A specific diagnosis of ADD or ADHD based on DSM-IV diagnostic criteria, date of the current diagnostic evaluation, and the date of the original diagnosis.
- Evidence of current impairment. An assessment of the individual's presenting symptoms and evidence of current hyperactive or inattentive behaviors that significantly impair functioning must be provided.
- Relevant developmental, medical and medication history, a thorough academic history, and a review of prior psycho-educational test reports to determine whether a pattern of strengths or weaknesses is supportive of attention or learning problems should be included.
- A summary of relevant assessment data that supports or refutes a diagnosis of ADD/ADHD. Diagnostic assessment must consist of more than a self-report. Possible data sources include results from the Continuous Performance Test, the T.O.V.A., Trail Making Test, or a neuropsychological evaluation. Assessments such as checklists and rating scales are valuable, but should not be used as the sole criterion for a diagnosis of ADD/ADHD.
- Evidence of alternative diagnoses or explanations being ruled out. The documentation must investigate and discuss the possibility of dual diagnoses and alternative or coexisting mood, behavioral, neurological, and/or personality disorders that may confound the ADD/ADHD diagnosis.
- Neurological or psycho-educational assessment may be necessary in order to determine the current impact of the disorder on the individual's ability to function in an academic setting and to establish eligibility for classroom accommodations, including alternative testing, note-takers, etc. Such data should include subtest and standard scores.
- An indication of whether or not the student was evaluated while on medication and the degree to which the prescribed treatment reduces the level or degree of impairment.
- A clinical summary which: (a) indicates the substantial limitation to a major life activity posed by the disability, (b) describes the extent to which these limitations would impact the student in an academic setting, (c) suggests how the specific effects of the disability may be accommodated, and (d) states how the effects of the ADD/ADHD are mediated by the recommended accommodations.