

## Guidelines for Documentation of Learning Disabilities

Spartanburg Methodist College is committed to ensuring equal access for persons with disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students who wish to obtain accommodations for a disability must submit documentation of the disability to the Accessibility Resources (AR) office. It is the responsibility of the student with a disability to obtain and pay for this documentation.

The purpose of the documentation is twofold. First, it must establish that the student is a person with a disability. The documentation must also provide a rationale for authorizing reasonable accommodations. Accommodations assist with providing equal access for the student with a disability.

Accommodations should be appropriate to a student's current level of functioning. In general, the evaluation should be conducted within *three to five years* of the date of request for services. Exceptions may be made in the case of a disability of a permanent and unchanging nature. If the disability is less stable, more frequent updates may be required. Although the underlying processes involved in learning disabilities may be life long, there may be changes in functioning within an academic setting over time. As a general rule, it is appropriate to re-evaluate these conditions periodically in order to adjust the accommodations to current needs.

Documentation for learning disabilities must meet the following criteria. **Please note that a 504 Plan or an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) does not generally provide enough information to meet these documentation guidelines. It will be accepted as supplemental information.**

### Criteria for Documentation

- Documentation should reflect the student's current level of functioning and should generally be no more than three to five years old.
- Documentation should be provided by a professional (e.g., psychologist, neuropsychologist, or psychoeducational specialist) who is qualified to diagnose the type of condition for which accommodation is being requested. The practitioner should not be related to the person being evaluated.
- Reports should be typed on letterhead, dated, and signed by the evaluator. Documentation on prescription pads will not be accepted.
- Documentation must include a clearly stated diagnosis of the disabling condition.
- Documentation must include a detailed description of the tests or procedures used to establish the diagnosis.
- Documentation must include a psychoeducational evaluation that demonstrates current substantial limitations in learning. The evaluation should include:
  - a summary of a comprehensive diagnostic interview, including a history of relevant medical, developmental, and educational events
  - comprehensive assessments of
    - general intellectual ability (IQ)
    - specific components of information processing
    - academic achievement

- Screening instruments are not acceptable as the sole measure used in any area.
- Test results should include all standard scores obtained and results for all subtests.
- Report should provide evidence that the evaluator has ruled out alternative explanations such as poor motivation, inadequate study skills, ineffective instruction, cultural or language barriers, etc.
- Documentation must include a clear description of the functional limitations resulting from the learning disability, as well as a description of the impact of medications or other treatments prescribed.
- Documentation should include recommendations concerning accommodations needed in an academic setting.

**All documentation should be sent to:**

Accessibility Resources  
Spartanburg Methodist College, 1000 Powell Mill Rd, Spartanburg, SC 29301  
Fax: 864-582-4359 or  
Email: [disabilityservices@smcsc.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@smcsc.edu)