



## **Learning Disorders Documentation Guidelines**

For Accessible Educational Services to determine reasonable accommodations for Learning Disorders, the documentation submitted must include the information outlined below. This guideline provides information on the required components of professionally prepared documentation such as: diagnostic statements; diagnostic methodology; current functioning and impairment; qualified professionals; duration, progression, and stability of the condition. Documentation must also adhere to the [AES General Documentation Guidelines](#). AES staff will review all requests for reasonable accommodations on a case-by-case basis and through the interactive process make the determination of whether the information submitted for the requested reasonable accommodations are supported.

### **Diagnosis of Learning Disorder (s)**

Evaluators providing documentation to Indiana University Bloomington should utilize the definition and diagnostic criteria for Learning Disorders from the current version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. A specific diagnosis (*Reading Disorder, Disorder of Written Expression, Mathematics Disorder, Learning Disorder Not Otherwise Specified, etc.*) must be included in the report.

Individual “learning styles,” “learning differences,” “academic problems,” and “test difficulty or anxiety,” in and of themselves, do not constitute a learning disorder. It is important to rule out alternative explanations for problems in learning such as emotional, attentional, or motivational problems that may be interfering with learning but do not constitute a learning disorder. The diagnostician is encouraged to use direct language in the diagnosis and documentation of a learning disorder, avoiding the use of terms such as “suggest” or “is indicative of.”

### **Documentation Guidelines for Learning Disorders**

Accessible Educational Services uses as a reference the “Policy Statement for Documentation of a Learning Disability in Adolescents and Adults,” published by the Educational Testing Service: [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org).

Evaluators are encouraged to remain cognizant of the following points:

- A full psycho-educational battery (series of tests) is required to meet the guidelines for Learning Disorders. A battery includes measures of aptitude tests (IQ) and achievement.
- Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 plans alone are not sufficient documentation; however, they may provide useful information about services previously provided to the student, and therefore may be submitted with the comprehensive report.
- Psycho-educational testing must be recent to accurately describe a student’s current functional limitations and need for academic adjustments, accommodation and/or services.
- Professionals conducting assessment and rendering a diagnosis of a Learning Disorder must be licensed professionals such as clinical psychologists, school psychologists, or learning disorder specialists. It is not appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their family or others with whom they have personal or business relationships.

### **Diagnostic Tools**

Diagnostic reports for Learning Disorders must include the names, titles, and professional credentials of the evaluator(s) and include the signature of the professional(s) and the date(s) of testing. Reports must be typed and submitted on professional letterhead. Specific reporting format is left to the professional, but the required components must be clearly presented and easily discernable. Handwritten scores are not acceptable.

**Assessment reports must include all the information (A through E) listed below:**

- A. **Diagnostic Interview-** Including relevant academic history and learning processes in elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education; a description of the presenting problem (s); developmental, family, medical, and psychological history; prior academic accommodations; statement articulating the impact of the impairment on one or more major life activities.
- B. **Intelligence/Aptitude Tests-** A complete intellectual assessment with all subtests, cluster scores, standard scores, and percentiles reported is required.
  1. Examples of acceptable aptitude tests include the current versions of: The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, The Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability, and DAS-Nagleri.
- C. **Academic Achievement-** A comprehensive academic achievement battery is required. Subtests cluster scores, standard scores, and percentiles must be reported. The battery must include current levels of academic functioning including reading (decoding and comprehension), oral and written language, mathematics, and other relevant areas.
  1. Examples of acceptable achievement tests include the current adult versions of: the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho educational Battery, The Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, or the Scholastic Abilities Tests for Adults (SATA)
  2. Examples of specific achievement tests (which could be submitted in addition to the achievement tests listed above) include: Nelson-Denny Reading Skills Test, Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test, Test of Written Language (TOWL), Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests
- D. **Information Processing-** Specific areas of information processing (Short- and long-term memory, sequential memory, auditory and visual perception/processing, processing speed, executive functioning and motor ability) should be assessed.
  1. Examples include: Wechsler Memory Scale – III (WMS-III); the Boston Naming Test; the Test of Adolescent/Adult Word Finding; the Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude – Adult (DTLA-A); information from subtests on WAIS or the Woodcock-Johnson: Tests of Cognitive Ability
- E. **Summary-** A well-written interpretative summary based on a comprehensive evaluative process is required and should include:
  1. Demonstration of the evaluator’s having ruled out alternative explanations for academic problems because of poor education, poor motivation and/or study skills, emotional problems, attentional problems and cultural/language differences.
  2. Indication of how patterns in the student’s cognitive ability, achievement and information processing reflect the presence of a learning disorder.
  3. A discussion of how these patterns significantly impair the student’s functioning in a classroom is necessary to determine eligibility for services. Specific functional limitations of the student being evaluated must be included for AES to fully evaluate the necessity of accommodations.
  4. Specific recommendations for academic adjustments, auxiliary aids and/or services that are realistic for a post-secondary institution.
  5. Evaluator’s signature and credentials.

Completed documentation should be faxed or mailed via the information found in the footer below.