

Requirements for Documenting a Learning Disability

Documentation of a learning disability requires a comprehensive and specialized assessment. Following are the criteria the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) uses when evaluating the quality of an assessment report diagnosing a specific learning disability.

- A clinical interview
- An assessments of aptitude (The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, with subtest scores is the preferred instrument, but the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery: Test of Cognitive Ability or the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale are also acceptable).
- An assessment of academic achievement in reading, math, and writing (acceptable instruments include the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery: Tests of Achievement with fluency measures; Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK); Scholastic Ability Test for Adults (SATA); Wechsler Individual Achievement Test with reading rate; and if applicable, additional supplemental tests such as the Test of Written Language-IV (TOWL-IV); Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests; or the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test. The Wide Range Achievement Test is not a comprehensive measure of achievement and therefore is not suitable.
- A statement about the student's information processing abilities (i.e., short and long term memory, sequential memory, auditory and visual perception/processing, processing speed, executive functioning, and motor ability).
- A clear statement about whether or not there is evidence that a learning disability exists.
 - If the data do not support the presence of a learning disability, the evaluator must state that conclusion in the report.
 - If there is a diagnosis of a specific learning disability, the formal diagnostic term must be used. Terms such as "learning difficulties," "learning differences," "slow reader," or "test anxiety," are not equivalent to a diagnosis of a learning disability.
- If there is a diagnosis of a specific learning disability, please recommend accommodations based upon the applicant's current level of functioning. The documentation should include specific recommendations for accommodations that are *appropriate at the postsecondary educational setting*, as well as an explanation of why each accommodation is recommended. Where possible, the evaluator should link suggested accommodations to specific academic task demands.
- The comprehensive assessment should be from within the past five years and with adult-referenced norms. The Barry OAS acknowledges that once a person is diagnosed as having a learning disability, the disability is lifelong. However, the severity and manifestations of a learning disability may change over time. Therefore, accommodations and should be based on an assessment of the *current* impact of the individual's disability on academic performance.
- The final report must be on letterhead. Please also sign the report and provide your license number.