Documentation Guidelines for Academic Accommodations

Stanford students requesting academic accommodations in order to ameliorate barriers in the postsecondary educational environment must submit documentation concerning their disability. Documentation is evaluated by professional staff and used to both verify disability and complement self-report of lived experience while determining appropriate academic accommodations. All student cases are assessed individually.

Students who have readily observable disabilities (e.g., those using a wheelchair, white cane, or in a cast or sling) may not need to submit documentation.

Those whose disabilities are diagnosable only through extensive psychoeducational testing (e.g., learning disorders) may be made eligible for accommodations while at Stanford despite their documentation being out of a typical range of recency. In these cases, students should work with their disability advisers directly to discuss updating documentation for the purposes of qualifying for accommodations on high stakes testing such as graduate entry or licensure exams. Each institution and testing agency maintains its own documentation guidelines and requirements.

Professionals who can provide documentation

- Professionals preparing and providing documentation must have comprehensive training and experience in the relevant specialty and hold appropriate licensure and/or certification.
- Documentation from a family member or someone with a personal relationship with the student (although they may be qualified by training and licensure) will not be accepted.
- Documentation must be in English, typed on official letterhead with the title and credentials (including licensure information) of the professional writing the report, dated, and signed.

Requested contents of documentation

1. Summary of the professional relationship to the student, including duration of time providing care, identification of assessment instruments, testing procedures, or other methods of evaluation.
2. Current disability, including diagnosis and diagnostic code(s).
3. Relevant medical, developmental, cognitive, and/or psychosocial history.
4. Severity of the condition and, if applicable, prognosis or expected duration of disability.
5. Information regarding treatment plan, necessary elements of daily living, disability management, medication and possible side-effects.
6. Description of the current functional limitations experienced as a result of the condition. This should address the student’s disability experience in such a way that adequately illustrates substantial limitations on one or more life activities in an academic setting.
7. Recommended accommodations and rationale that directly ties the accommodation(s) need to the functional limitations of the disability.