



## **The Office of Accessibility and Disability Resources Documentation Guidelines**

### **Individual Review**

Each situation must be considered individually. An individualized assessment is necessary to establish the existence of impairment and explore the nature of the functional limitation.

There is no one-to-one correspondence of disability to accommodations.

- Opinions of qualified professionals irrelevant field;
  - Please note: opinions or reports from qualified professionals who have individually and personally evaluated the student are entitled to more weight than those who have never evaluated or met the student;
- Results of tests, evaluations, etc. . . .
- Past history of diagnosis and/or treatment for the medical condition;
- Observations and assessments of educators;
- Past history of accommodations, particularly the requested accommodation, as reflected in IEP's and/or 504 Plans, participation in Special Education programs, receipt of academic adjustments, auxiliary aids and accommodations in a post-secondary setting;
- The nature and circumstances of the student's performance in similar situations; and
- The student's statements and/or behavior concerning the disability.

The University of Toledo Office of Accessibility and Disability Resources will also consider the unique characteristics of the course, program, or technical standards in order to determine whether or not a specific accommodation is reasonable. A clear understanding of how the disability impacts the student and establishes the reasonableness\* of the accommodation. Course modifications or auxiliary aids or services that are ineffective or constitute a fundamental alteration will not be reasonable and therefore will not meet the ADA and Section 504's minimal standards.

### **Commonsense Standard**

No specific language, tests, or diagnostic labels are required. Clinicians' training or philosophical approach may result in the use of euphemistic phrases rather than specific diagnostic labels.

Therefore, reports that do not include a specific diagnosis should not be interpreted to suggest that a disability does not exist. The question is, “Would an informed and reasonable person conclude from the available evidence that a disability is likely and the requested accommodation is warranted?”

Documentation should include enough information or data of a substantive nature to permit a meaningful review of the student’s request for accommodations. Additional documentation may be needed to fully understand the functional limitations of a disability; the barriers a student may face in a post-secondary academic environment; and the connection between the impact of the disability, the described barrier, and the requested accommodation.

### **Current and Relevant Information**

Disability documentation should be current and relevant but not necessarily ‘recent’. Disabilities are typically stable lifelong conditions. Therefore, historic information, supplemented by interview or self-report, is often sufficient to describe how the condition impacts the student at the current time and in the current circumstances. Determining accommodations in distinctly new contexts may require more focused information to illustrate a connection between the impact of the disability, the described barrier, and the requested accommodation.

### **Request for Additional Information**

If the documentation submitted insufficiently explains the functional limitations and barriers in an academic environment to establish support for a particular modification, academic adjustment, auxiliary aid and/or service; additional documentation may be needed. If additional documentation is needed; the student will be asked to provide additional documentation.

\*As is common practice, the term ‘accommodation’ is used throughout this document as synonymous with the modification of policies, practices, and procedures; the provision of auxiliary aids and services; academic adjustments and modifications to the environment intended to remove barriers to equivalent access.

The Office of Accessibility and Disability Resources reserves the right to refuse altered documents. This form can be made in an alternative format upon request.

Material has been adopted from Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) Guidance on Documentation Practices and Salome Heyward and Associates.