Documentation Guidelines for Students with Specific Disabilities

Documentation supporting the need for accommodation of permanent disabilities must be current, i.e. within the last three years. The following descriptions serve as a guide only - for a more comprehensive overview please refer to our website at the following address:

http://students.sfu.ca/disabilityaccess/documentation/index.html

**Students with a Visual Impairment**

*Appropriate Professional:* Ophthalmologist

*Documentation should include the following:*

- a) the amount of residual vision present (e.g., visual acuity, colour vision deficits) and whether the disability is stable, progressive, or fluctuating
- b) the impact of the impairment on the student’s functioning in a university environment (e.g., the need for large print or special lighting)

**Students with a Hearing Impairment**

*Appropriate Professional:* Certified Audiologist

*Documentation should include the following:*

- a) an audiogram
- b) a statement of the amount of hearing loss (e.g., hearing acuity) and whether the disability is stable, progressive or fluctuating
- c) a statement of the impact of the impairment on the student’s functioning in a university environment (e.g., the need for assistive listening devices, interpreters)

**Students with a Chronic Physical Health Disability (not including a visual or auditory impairment)**

*Appropriate Professional:* Physician

*Documentation should include the following:*

- a) a clear statement of the diagnosis and a summary of present symptoms
- b) a statement indicating whether the disability is permanent/on-going or if the disability needs to be reassessed periodically (specify time period if possible)
c) medical information relating to the effect of the disability on the student’s ability to meet the demands of a university environment (including the impact of medication or other treatment on performance)

**Students with a Temporary Physical Health Disability**

*Appropriate Professional:* Physician

*Documentation should include the following:*

a) a clear statement of the diagnosis and a summary of present symptoms  
b) a statement specifying the time period of the temporary illness or disability  
c) medical information relating to the effect of the disability on the student’s ability to meet the demands of a university environment (including the impact of medication or other treatment on performance)

**Students with a Mental Health Disability**

*Appropriate Professional:* Registered Psychologist with clinical designation  
Psychiatrist  
Physician

*Documentation should include the following:*

a) a clear statement of the disability, along with the DSM-IV diagnosis and summary of present symptoms  
b) plans for ongoing support and monitoring  
c) medical information relating to the effect of the disability on the student’s ability to meet the demands of a university environment (including the impact of medication or other treatment on performance)

**Students with a Neurological Disability**

*Appropriate Professional:* Neurologist  
Neuropsychologist  
Registered Psychologist with clinical designation  
Psychiatrist  
Physician

*Documentation should include the following:*

a) a clear statement of the disability, along with the DSM-IV diagnosis (if applicable) and summary of present symptoms  
b) plans for ongoing support and monitoring
c) medical information relating to the effect of the disability on the student’s ability to meet the demands of a university environment (including the impact of medication or other treatment on performance)

d) a psychoeducational assessment may also be required

Students with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Appropriate Professional: Registered Psychologist with clinical designation
Physiatrist
Physician with specialized training

Documentation must follow the Consortium of ADHD Documentation Guidelines, and should also include the following:

a) a clear statement of the disability, along with the DSM-IV diagnosis and summary of present symptoms
b) medical information relating to the effect of the disability on the student’s ability to meet the demands of a university environment (including the impact of medication or other treatment on performance)
c) if a learning disability or other disability is co-existing, and the student wishes accommodations for these disabilities, then the criteria for documentation of the additional disabilities must also be met

Students with a Learning Disability

In most cases, documentation of the need for accommodations must be current (within the last three years). Please feel free to contact the CSD for any questions in this regard.

Appropriate Professional: Registered Psychologist
Certified School Psychologist

Please note: Certified School Psychologists conducting LD assessments outside of their employment role/situation (e.g. private practice) will not be recognized as having met criteria for qualified assessors.

Documentation should include the following:

a) the name and credentials of the evaluator as well as the date(s) of testing

b) a clear statement that a learning disability / disorder is present (according to DSM-IV criteria) along with the rationale for the diagnosis based on a discrepancy model
Please note:
- individual “learning deficits’, ‘learning difficulties’, ‘learning differences’, and ‘learning styles’ do not, in and of themselves, constitute a learning disability

- In accordance with The Ministry of Advanced Education, Student Services Branch policy, a learning disability assessment must identify a discrepancy of 2 standard deviations between academic achievement and Full Scale IQ, or a smaller discrepancy between achievement and Full Scale IQ [i.e., between 1 and 2 standard deviations] in cases where an individual’s performance may have been compromised by an associated disorder in cognitive processing, a co-morbid mental disorder or general medical condition.

c) evidence of comprehensive testing (with age appropriate norms) and all test scores

Domains to be addressed include:
- intellectual potential as measured by a cognitive battery
- receptive language (reading, listening)
- expressive language (speaking, writing, spelling)
- language processing (thinking, conceptualizing, integration)
- mathematical computation
- information processing (short-term and sequential memory, attention, visual and auditory processing, fine-motor and gross-motor functioning, processing speed)
- personality (screen out problems due to anxiety, depression or psychiatric disorders)
- test behaviour and learning styles

Please note: test scores should be reported as standard scores or percentiles; grade equivalents are not acceptable

d) A comprehensive diagnostic interview that includes academic, developmental, family, and psychosocial history

e) A statement of the strengths and weaknesses that will affect the student’s ability to meet the demands of a university education

*NOTE: Students who suspect they will require the services of an external or government agency should contact the CSD Learning Specialist prior to arranging for documentation, as documentation needs may be different from the guidelines provided.