



# UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND

## Disability Services (DS)

### GUIDELINES FOR DOCUMENTATION OF MEDICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITIES

The following are guidelines for the documentation of medical and mental health disabilities. These guidelines have been developed to provide necessary information to Disability Services when arranging appropriate accommodations:

1. To provide accommodations to students with medical or mental health disabilities, the University of New England (UNE) requires that a student provide verification of his/her disability prior to or at the time services are requested.
2. Students with disabilities must provide evidence of both a disorder and related **current, significant, functional limitations** to become eligible for accommodations. Designed to provide equal access, accommodations are provided only in response to the functional limitations of a disability. *Accommodations do not include interventions, which are remedial, needed for personal study and care, or designed to ensure desired outcomes.*
3. Telephone calls, medical records and brief letters, which document past or ongoing treatment, are not sufficient.
  - a. Presenting diagnosis (es) utilizing diagnostic categorization or classification of the ICD or DSM IV. Diagnosis should indicate primary, secondary, etc., and significant findings, particularly in respect to the presenting diagnosis.
  - b. Date of the examination/assessment/evaluation was performed for the presenting diagnosis, or if following the student for an extended time, date of onset of an evaluation of the condition that is recent enough to demonstrate the student's current level of functioning.
  - c. If a temporary condition, what is the expected length of time to recover?
  - d. Tests, methodology used to determine disability.
  - e. Identify the current functional limitations, if any, on the student's physical, perceptual, emotional and cognitive performance in activities such as mobility, activities of daily living, dietary, academics, and housing conditions/arrangements.
  - f. Describe any treatments, medications, assistive devices or services the student currently is using. Note their effectiveness and any side effects that may impact the student's physical, perceptual, interpersonal or cognitive performance.

- g. Recommendations for academic and non-academic accommodations; explain the relationship between the student's functional limitations and the recommendations.
  - h. List the credentials (certification, licensure and/or training) of the diagnosing professional(s).
4. Each recommended accommodation should include a rationale. The diagnostic report should include specific recommendations for accommodations that are realistic and that UNE can reasonably provide. A detailed explanation should be provided as to why each accommodation is recommended and should be correlated with specific functional limitations determined through interview, observation and/or testing. A school plan such as an IEP is insufficient documentation in of itself but can be included as part of a more comprehensive evaluation report. A prior history of accommodations without clear demonstration of current impact does not warrant the provisions of like accommodations. The determination of reasonable accommodations for a disabled student at UNE rests with the DS staff working in collaboration with the individual with the disability.

All documentation will remain confidential except as required by law. Documentation should be submitted by the evaluator directly to:

University of New England  
Disability Services (DS)  
716 Stevens Avenue  
Portland, ME 04103  
Phone: (207) 221-4418  
Fax: (207) 523-1919

These guidelines were taken from the following article: John, Kenneth B. (Franklin & Marshall College), Webb, Richard E. (Haverford College): Psychological Disabilities: Guidelines for Documentation (In preparation), Consortium on ADHD Documentation, Brinckerhoff et al., 1998