

## **Learning Disabilities (LD)**

To ensure the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodations, students requesting services must provide appropriate disability documentation. In the case of a learning disability, testing must identify a significant discrepancy between ability and academic achievement or an intra-cognitive discrepancy not attributable to other disabling conditions or to environmental deprivation. In addition, the assessment should measure the student's specific strengths and weaknesses and report how the student's disability has interfered with educational achievement. Recommendations regarding services and/or accommodations are helpful, as appropriate accommodations will be determined, in part, using the specific information provided in the evaluation report. The following three guidelines should be kept in mind when submitting documentation of a Learning Disability:

1. *Testing must be comprehensive. More than one assessment device should be administered for the purpose of diagnosis. For all testing instruments, subtest scores should be reported, along with standard scores and/or percentile ranks. Testing must address, at the minimum, the following three domains:*

### **APTITUDE:**

Appropriate individually administered aptitude/ability tests include:

- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Revised (WAIS-R)
- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-III (WAIS-III)
- Woodcock/Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-Revised, Tests of Cognitive Ability
- Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test
- Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale (4 Edition)

Note: The Slosson Intelligence Test-Revised, The Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test and other instruments used primarily for screening are not acceptable for our purposes.

### **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT:**

Appropriate individually administered academic achievement tests include:

- Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA)
- Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK)
- Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-Revised, Tests of Achievement
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)
- Nelson-Denny Reading Skills Test
- Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test
- Test of Written Language-3 (TOWL-3)
- Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests-Revised

Note: The Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) is not a comprehensive measure of achievement and is, therefore, not suitable for our purposes.

### **INFORMATION PROCESSING:**

Specific areas of information processing (e.g. short and Long-term memory, sequential memory, auditory and visual perception/processing, processing speed) must be assessed. Use of subtests from the WAIS-111 or the WJ-Cog is acceptable. In addition, the Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude and/or other relevant tests may be used.

Note: If you are experiencing difficulties learning a foreign language, inclusion of the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) in the assessment process would be very helpful but is not required.

2. *Documentation must be current and include a clear diagnostic statement.*

In most cases, testing within three years is considered appropriate. For adult learners returning to school after an extended time, this criterion may be flexible. Please contact Disability Services staff with questions regarding documentation dates. It should be noted that "individual learning styles", "learning differences" and "relative weaknesses" do not, by themselves, constitute a learning disability.

3. *Professionals must be qualified.*

Individuals conducting assessments and rendering diagnoses of learning disabilities must be qualified to do so. Experience working with an adult population is essential. Diagnostic reports must include the names, titles and license numbers of the evaluators, as well as the dates of testing.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS**

For assistance in finding a qualified professional you may wish to speak with Disability Services staff or, if you are a high school student, with your School Psychologist or High School Counselor.

In selecting a qualified professional, ask about his or her credentials. You may also wish to ask about your evaluator's experience working with adults with disabilities.

Take a copy of these guidelines with you when you meet with the evaluator. Encourage him or her to clarify any questions they may have with Disability Services staff.

Be prepared to be forthright, thorough and honest with the evaluator and know that professionals must maintain confidentiality with respect to your records and testing information.

As a follow-up to the assessment, request a copy of the evaluation report and the opportunity to discuss results and recommendations with the evaluator. Ask for any additional information or resources that you may need. Keep your evaluation report in a file with other important personal records.

If you were identified as having a disability and received services in high school, a copy of your most recent Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan would be helpful to send to Disability Support Services along with your most recent testing. It should be noted that a prior history of accommodations does not, in and of itself, warrant the provision of similar accommodations.