

**The Office of Accessibility Resources (OAR)**

135 Killian Annex, Cullowhee, NC 28723

Phone: (828) 227-3886 | Fax: (828) 227-7320 | [accessibility@wcu.edu](mailto:accessibility@wcu.edu)

|

**Documentation Guidelines**

To ensure the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodations, a student must submit their current documentation of a disability. Documentation must validate the presence of a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disability Act. With respect to the individual, the definition of a person with a disability includes (1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; (2) a record of such an impairment; or (3) being regarded as having such an impairment. Documentation helps establish if the student meets the definition of a person with a disability and should describe functional limitations to support the need for, and reasonableness of specific accommodations. All documentation is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Documentation of a disability should include:

* The contact information and licenses/credentials of a third-party professional who has relevant experience and expertise in the area for which accommodations are being requested.
* A clearly stated diagnosis or diagnostic statement that identifies the disability with information that describes how the condition was diagnosed, notes the functional impact, and details the typical progression or prognosis.
* Identify the session(s) of the evaluation and the length of time if the individual has been in treatment for the specified disability.
* Contain the full name and birthdate of the person being evaluated.
* Be up to date and not exceed five years.
* Include a description of the person's current functional limitations in an academic and/or environmental setting.
* For some disabilities, include the description of the type(s) of evaluation and diagnostic methods as this may help the student access additional accommodations not directly affiliated with the university.
* Present itself on a letterhead with the date, name, and signature of the licensed professional making the diagnosis.

**If the student is having difficulty obtaining their documentation, or if the university needs additional information, the OAR may provide the supplemental “Documentation of Disability” form**.

Other points to remember concerning your documentation:

* The provision of reasonable accommodations is based upon the current impact of the disability; therefore, it is in the student’s interest to provide the best, most recent documentation.
* Keep in mind that evaluations conducted in childhood may not be sufficient for an adult college student.
* The OAR does not pay for, nor provide testing, evaluations, and/or diagnosis.
* It is helpful when the documentation addresses the student’s ability to function in an academic environment and may include recommendations for accommodations.
* WCU is not obligated to approve every accommodation as recommended by evaluators.
* All accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis and in consideration of that student's unique situation.
* Individualized Education Programs (IEP) or 504 Plans do not alone constitute documentation of disability but is often helpful and may be included in a student's overall assessment.
* A physician's prescription pad note is not acceptable as documentation of disability.
* The OAR does not obtain information regarding a student's disability through the admissions process.

3/27/19