

# General Documentation Guidelines

The laws guiding eligibility for accommodations in grades K-12 and post-secondary educational settings differ. Current documentation (generally within one to five years depending on the nature of the disability and the requested accommodation), including recommendations which correspond with the demands of college, will help to support your transition to Bowdoin and/or will help us to understand the barriers you encounter in accessing your education in order to better inform what accommodations you may need and qualify for. The documentation should address how your impairment presents a substantial limitation to learning or another major life activity.

If documentation is not current or sufficiently comprehensive, the College may require an updated evaluation, the cost of which will need to be covered by the student. Please contact our office if you have questions about the currency of your particular evaluative information as these are general guidelines and we review each student's situation on a case-by-case basis. In some cases, we may only need an update of earlier documentation.

Documentation needs to be completed by a qualified, licensed professional (outside of Bowdoin College) who has no personal relationship with the student and submitted on the evaluator's letterhead. For students seeking accommodations based upon learning disabilities, attention deficit disorders, psychological disorders and/or autism spectrum disorders, the evaluation needs to be conducted by a professional with training and experience in the assessment of adolescents and adults.

Documentation needs to describe the impairment/condition/illness and how it functionally limits your participation in the Bowdoin College experience. For students seeking accommodation based upon a learning disability and/or attention deficit disorder, the documentation needs to include the results of comprehensive testing, including standardized, professionally acknowledged measures for adolescent and adult assessment.

Documentation should include recommended accommodations for college level participation. Each recommended accommodation should include a rationale that correlates with particular functional limitations which are supported by specific assessment results, clinical observations or some other professional measure. Students should understand that we will consider all recommendations but that the College will ultimately determine what accommodations are appropriate and necessary.

Major life activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, writing, concentrating, thinking, communicating, interacting with others, working and the operation of a major bodily function. The following list may not include all possible examples of disability and appropriate documentation guidance.

<b>Disability</b>	<b>General Currency</b>	<b>Elements of Documentation</b>
ADD/ADHD	Within 3 years	Diagnosis aligned with DSM-V criteria; evidence of early impairment in more than one setting; rule out other diagnoses; summary of neuropsychological or psychoeducational assessments to determine current functional limitations pertaining to an educational setting; effectiveness and/or side effects of medications.
Autism spectrum disorder/Asperger's syndrome	Within 5 years	Description of the specific symptoms and their impact on academic, social, behavioral and emotional functioning. The diagnosis should be based upon a comprehensive clinical interview and, where clinically appropriate, psychological testing.
Chronic illness and physical impairment	Varies with condition	Documentation will vary based on the diagnosis, which would include conditions such as asthma, arthritis, diabetes, fibromyalgia, eating disorders, allergies, migraine headaches, multiple sclerosis and mobility impairments.
Learning Disability	Within 5 years	Assessment must be comprehensive and address intellectual functioning/aptitude, preferably the WAIS 5, with standard scores; achievement – current levels in reading, math and written language (acceptable instruments include the Woodcock Johnson Psychoeducational Battery IV, Wechsler Individual Achievement Test or others); and information processing utilizing subtests from the WAIS 5, WJ IV or others. Individual “learning styles,” “learning differences,” or “academic problems” and “test difficulty or anxiety” do not constitute a learning disability.
Psychological disorder	Generally within one year	Discussion of dual diagnosis; current diagnosis (DSM-V TR) indicates the nature, frequency, severity of symptoms - diagnosis without an explicit listing of current symptoms is not sufficient; prescribed medications, efficacy, including any possible medication side effects.
Visual <b>or</b> Hearing impairment	Variable: Is condition static or changing?	Ocular assessment/evaluation; assistive technology evaluation recommended. Audiological evaluation or audiogram administered by a licensed audiologist; interpretation of the functional implications.

Contact the Student Accessibility Office at (207) 798-4187 if you have questions.

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