

**Disability Services
Hamline University**

GUIDELINES FOR DOCUMENTATION OF A SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY

Support services and accommodations for students with learning disabilities are provided through the Disability Services office for those students who meet eligibility requirements under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Documentation is needed to determine eligibility. Hamline University does not provide diagnostic services. The following guidelines are provided to ensure that diagnostic criteria are complete and adequate for establishing and providing appropriate support services and/or accommodations related to a disability.

Diagnostician Guidelines

The assessment and diagnosis of specific learning disabilities must be conducted by a qualified professional (licensed psychologist and/or school psychologist trained in learning disability assessment, learning disabilities specialist/diagnostician, or educational therapist). This type of evaluation can be done by appropriate public school personnel and/or individuals in private practice. Some hospitals, universities, and advocacy organizations also provide this type of evaluation service.

Diagnostic Evaluation Report Guidelines

The written diagnostic evaluation report ordinarily will include the following information:

- **Diagnosis.** A clear statement of opinion which identifies the specific learning disability and grounds for the diagnosis should be included in the report.
- **Tests Administered and Test Scores.** Names of the tests used in making the diagnosis and specific test scores from these tests should be included in the report. Derived scores are helpful in understanding the rationale behind the diagnosis and in recommending appropriate support services.
- **Descriptive Written Report.** Reports should include a written evaluation beyond that which is provided on a typical I.E.P. and should provide qualitative information about the student's abilities which might be helpful in understanding the overall profile of that student.
- **Recommendations/Accommodations.** Recommendations ordinarily will include *specific* suggestions for reasonable academic-related support services and/or accommodations appropriate to the post-secondary level. These recommendations should be based on the diagnostic evaluation results and should be supported by the diagnosis. When appropriate, additional recommendations for specific learning strategies, academic support services, and any other suggested support procedures should also be included.
- **Evaluator/Diagnostician Identifying Information.** Diagnostic reports should include the name, title, address and phone number of the evaluator and the date of testing.

Diagnostic Testing Guidelines

Appropriate diagnostic testing should be:

- **Current.** Diagnostic assessment and/or re-evaluation ordinarily will have been completed within the past five years.
- **Comprehensive.** The assessment should include a battery of more than one test and/or subtests within a diagnostic testing instrument.
- **Aptitude/Cognitive Ability Measurement.** An assessment of general cognitive ability using a nationally normed instrument with adequate reliability and validity should be included in the report.
- **Achievement Measurement.** An assessment of the basic skills areas of reading, written language, and math using a nationally normed instrument with adequate reliability and validity should be included in the report.

Special Circumstances

If the learning specialist/diagnostician finds special facts or circumstances apply to an individual student that make traditional testing or evaluation standards inapplicable, they are encouraged to advise Hamline University by providing a complete narrative summary or report.