

Documentation Guidelines for Students Requesting Accommodations

A student requesting reasonable accommodations must provide appropriate documentation. These Guidelines are provided in the interest of ensuring that documentation of a disability supports requests for reasonable accommodations. Staff from SAS are available to consult with students and Qualified Professionals, as defined below, regarding these Guidelines.

RMU does not provide or pay for services required to meet these documentation requirements. In order to ensure that aids or adjustments support the student's current needs, students are asked to provide **documentation that is no more than three years old** for disabilities that are non-obvious in nature. This may require that students undergo a reevaluation if their previous evaluation was more than three years ago. A student need only be reevaluated for her/his previously diagnosed disability. The issue of whether reevaluation is required is left to the discretion of the student's Qualified Professional. If the student's Qualified Professional determines that reevaluation is not necessary, the Qualified Professional should write to SAS stating the reasons for that determination.

a. Minimum Documentation Guidelines

- i. All documentation must be current and provide a diagnosis by a licensed professional, qualified in the appropriate specialty area (a "Qualified Professional").
- ii. Documentation should be accompanied by the "RMU Accommodations Questionnaire" to ensure that important areas of documentation are fully addressed.
- iii. Documentation reports must be on professional letterhead, typed, dated, and signed.
- iv. Documentation should disclose the nature of the student's disability and the functional limitations resulting from the disability, as well as recommended accommodations.

Note: A prior history of an accommodation, without a demonstration of a current need, does not in and of itself warrant the provision of a similar accommodation. Each accommodation recommended by a Qualified Professional should include a rationale. If an accommodation is not clearly identified in the diagnostic report, the Qualified Professional may be asked for clarification.

- v. While Qualified Professionals may suggest specific accommodations, SAS uses a reasonable process to determine what aids or adjustments are necessary and appropriate under the circumstances.
 - vi. The Qualified Professional must be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.
- b. Learning Disabilities** - Evaluation of a learning disability should be made by a Qualified Professional who has comprehensive training and direct experience with the adolescent and adult populations with learning disabilities. For example, the following professions would generally be considered qualified to evaluate specific learning disabilities, provided that they have additional training and experience in the assessment of learning disabilities in adolescents and adults: clinical or educational psychologists; school psychologists;

neuropsychologists; learning disabilities specialists; and medical doctors.

Documentation of a learning disability should be in the form of a letter, typed on the Qualified Professional's official letterhead and signed by the Qualified Professional, and must include information meeting the Minimum Documentation Guidelines set forth in Section (a) of this Part, above.

- c. **Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder** - Students that are requesting aids or adjustments because of an ADD/ADHD diagnosis are required to submit documentation to enable SAS to determine whether their diagnosis meets the legal definition of disability. A diagnosis of ADD/ADHD does not automatically qualify a student for academic accommodations under the law. To receive reasonable academic accommodations, the student must provide current documentation from a psychiatrist, psychologist, or other Qualified Professional indicating that the disability substantially limits some major life activity, including learning. Students who were diagnosed and did not receive continuous medical or educational support may be required to have a comprehensive evaluation to determine whether academic accommodations are appropriate.

Documentation of an ADD/ADHD diagnosis should be in the form of a letter, typed on the Qualified Professional's official letterhead and signed by the Qualified Professional, and must include information meeting the Minimum Documentation Guidelines set forth in Section (a) of this Part, above.

- d. **Psychological Disabilities** - Psychological disabilities should be verified by documentation of a licensed mental health practitioner. Documentation should be in the form of a letter, typed on the Qualified Professional's official letterhead and signed by the Qualified Professional, and must include information meeting the Minimum Documentation Guidelines set forth in Section (a) of this Part, above.
- e. **Physical Disabilities** - Physical disabilities should be verified by documentation of a medical doctor or other Qualified Professional. Documentation of a physical disability should be in the form of a letter, typed on the Qualified Professional's official letterhead and signed by the Qualified Professional, and must include information meeting the Minimum Documentation Guidelines set forth in Section (a) of this Part, above.