

Documentary Evidence Guidelines for Students with Disabilities and Long Term Medical Conditions

These guidelines are designed to help students and relevant La Trobe University staff to understand what is required to establish appropriate support for students.

The provision of all support services, facilities and accommodations is based on a documented assessment of the impact of the student's disability, mental health issue or long term medical condition on academic performance.

Appropriate documentation (in conjunction with an interview with the Disability Liaison Officer) will assist the student and La Trobe University to determine what support services, facilities and teaching, learning and assessment options are reasonable.

Documentation must meet the following criteria to be accepted:

- Current: that is, in most cases, no more than three years old.
- An original or certified copy, written or typed on letterhead, dated, signed and otherwise legible.
- Provided by a clearly identified, qualified professional who has comprehensive training and direct experience in the field of disability or health referred to and who is not related to the student.
- Comprehensive: that is it includes the name, nature and degree of impairment; the time of onset, expected duration and/or prognosis of the condition.
- Provide a full assessment of the impacts in relation to academic performance in the student's proposed course of study e.g., reading, memorising, writing, notetaking, test taking, communication etc.
- Recommendations for accommodations where appropriate must be substantiated by evidence.

Learning Disability assessments must:

- Provide evidence of adult learning assessment conducted by a qualified professional such as an educational or neuropsychologist using reliable, valid and standardised tests.
- Provide a report of the assessment which includes a well written summary and information (with standard scores or percentiles) about the student's:
 - aptitude or complete intellectual assessment
 - academic achievement in areas of reading, mathematics and receptive and expressive oral and written language, including phonemic, syntactic and semantic abilities
 - information processing including short and long term memory, sequential memory, auditory and visual perception, processing speed, executive functioning and motor ability
 - other informal measures such as case history, observations, questionnaires, error analyses.
- Express the assessment in direct language (terms such as 'as indicative of..' or 'suggests..' are not acceptable). It must refer specifically to 'learning disability' ('learning difficulties' will not suffice).
- Include recommendations for accommodations substantiated by evidence.

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) must:

- Provide clear evidence of a diagnosis of ADD or ADHD based on the criteria published in the DSM 1V (American Psychiatric Association, 1994) which results in functional limitations in a learning environment. The report must describe the student's present

symptoms including evidence of ongoing impulsive/hyperactive or inattention behaviors that significantly impair functioning in two or more settings at the time they were referred for the current evaluation.

- Describe how the condition impacts on an educational/university setting e.g. notetaking, test-taking, communication. Evidence for each impact should be provided.

Hearing/Deafness assessments must include:

- An audiogram;
- A written report by a audiologist including history of the hearing impairment, duration of impairment, degree of difficulty in oral communication and any relevant information on communicating in an academic environment.
- The use and effects of hearing aids, other technology or therapy in improving communication.
- The current impact of the hearing loss in an educational/university setting e.g. notetaking, test-taking, one-to-one and general communication.

Vision Impairment assessments must include:

- The type and severity of the visual loss, the approximate date of their onset and the subsequent progress and treatment of the condition.
- A description of the extent of visual fields and the degree of visual acuity.
- Any currently prescribed or recommended treatment, care, or assistive devices.
- The manner and level of severity with which the disability currently impacts academic functioning, e.g., reading, memorising, writing, notetaking, test taking, communication.

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