

Learning Disabilities

Cedar Crest College provides reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. In order to provide the most appropriate accommodations, documentation of the student's condition/disability is necessary.

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of a specific *Learning Disability* should provide documentation from a professional who has undergone comprehensive training and has relevant experience with conducting psycho-educational assessments with adolescents or adults (e.g., clinical or educational psychologists, school psychologists, neuropsychologists, learning disabilities specialists). **Documentation in the form of a narrative report (typed on letterhead, dated and signed by the qualified professional, including license number when applicable) should include, but not be limited to including, the following:**

- Pertinent background information, including a description of the presenting problem(s); any significant developmental, medical, psychosocial and employment histories; family history (including primary language of the home and the student's current level of English fluency); and a discussion of co-morbidity where indicated.
- A complete assessment of intellectual functioning/aptitude, preferably, but not limited to the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-III (WAIS-III) with standard and scaled scores, including subtest scores. The Woodcock-Johnson III: Tests of Cognitive Ability or the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale: Fifth Edition is also acceptable. The Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (KBIT2), the Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence (WASI) and the Slosson Intelligence Test - Revised are NOT comprehensive measures and therefore are not suitable for use in the initial diagnosis of a learning disability.
- A comprehensive academic achievement battery that measures current levels of functioning in reading (decoding and comprehension), mathematics and oral and written language (e.g., Woodcock-Johnson III: Tests of Achievement, Wechsler Individual Achievement Test II (WIAT II), Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK), Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA), or specific achievement tests - Test of Written Language-3 (TOWL-3), Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests-Revised/NU, Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test, Nelson-Denny). All standard scores, standard deviations and percentiles must be reported for those subtests administered. The Wide Range Achievement Test-3 (WRAT-3) and the Wide Range Achievement Test-4 are NOT comprehensive measures of achievement and are therefore not suitable unless combined with other measures as appropriate. Test selection must be guided by the age of the student and the test norms.
- An assessment of specific areas of information processing (e.g., short- and long-term memory, sequential memory, sequential and simultaneous processing, auditory and visual perception/processing, processing speed, working memory, motor ability). Information from subtests on the WAIS-III, the WJIII Tests of Cognitive Ability, or the Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude - Adult (DTLA-A), as well as other instruments relevant to the presenting learning problem(s) may be used to address these areas.

- Other assessment measures such as non-standard measures and informal assessment procedures or observations may be helpful in determining performance across a variety of domains. Formal assessment instruments may be integrated with these types of measures to help determine a learning disability and differentiate it from co-existing neurological and/or psychiatric disorders (i.e., to establish a differential diagnosis). In addition to standardized tests, it is also very useful to include informal observations of the student during the test administration.
- A diagnosis of a specific learning disability. Individual "learning styles," "learning differences," "academic problems," and "test difficulty or anxiety," in and of themselves, do not constitute a learning disability. It is important for the evaluator to demonstrate that alternative explanations for academic problems as a result of poor education, poor motivation and/or study skills, emotional problems, attentional problems and cultural/language issues that may be interfering with learning but do not constitute a learning disability have been ruled out.
- An indication of how patterns in the student's cognitive ability, achievement and information processing indicate the presence of a learning disability.
- An integrated summary that:
 - Indicates the substantial limitations to major life activities (e.g., learning, reading, thinking) posed by the specified learning disability;
 - Describes the extent to which these limitations impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested;
 - Suggests how the specific effects of the learning disability may be accommodated; and
 - States how the effects of the learning disability are mediated by the recommended accommodations.