

## **Documentation Criteria for Permanent Accommodations Communications Disorders**

In order to establish disability status and eligibility for disability services, institutions of the University System of Georgia require documentation from a qualified evaluator that attests to the presence of a disabling condition as defined by the ADA and demonstrates substantial limitations impacting performance in the academic environment when compared to most people in the general population.

Communication disorders is a general term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in language, speech and, communication. This includes difficulties in receptive and expressive language, including the production of sounds, articulation and fluency deficits, difficulty in the acquisition and production of language across modalities (i.e., spoken, written), and difficulties in the social use of verbal and nonverbal communication.

Specific documentation guidelines for Communication Disorders include the following:

- Evaluators must be licensed qualified professionals whose training and credentials are consistent with expertise in the disability for which they provide documentation.
- Evaluators may not be friends or family members of the student.
- A diagnostic statement based on the most current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) and/or International Classification of Diseases (ICD) should be included.
- Evaluators should demonstrate how the assessment results meet diagnostic criteria.
- The progression of the condition should be detailed if its impact on the student's functioning is expected to change over time.
- The substantial limitation in a major life activity should be described.
- Any accommodation recommendations made must be supported by a rationale that explains the necessity based on the student's measured impairments and current substantial limitations.
- Documentation of accommodations approved in the past is encouraged but does not guarantee approval at the postsecondary level.
- Identifying information includes the names, signatures, titles, identifying credentials (e.g., license numbers), and contact information of evaluating professionals.
- Dates of evaluations must be included.
- Documentation should reflect data collected within the past three years at the time of request for services.
- Evaluation/Assessment of the following diagnostic criteria is required and evaluation results should include:
  - Developmental history of the communication difficulties in early childhood, unless acquired later in life, in which the resulting event and disorder history should be documented.
  - A summary of present symptoms which meet the criteria for diagnosis of a communication disorder.
  - Treatments, medications, accommodations/auxiliary aids, services currently prescribed or in use.
- Objective (quantitative and qualitative) evidence that symptoms are associated with significant functional impairment in the academic setting. Suggested sources for evidence of academic functional impairment include the results of a comprehensive psycho-educational evaluation, speech/language evaluation, neurological report, physical evaluation report, and/or school records.

Adapted from USG Policy for Disability Documentation:

[https://www.usg.edu/academic\\_affairs\\_handbook/section3/handbook/C793/#pappendix\\_d\\_disability\\_documentation](https://www.usg.edu/academic_affairs_handbook/section3/handbook/C793/#pappendix_d_disability_documentation)