

Documentation Criteria for Permanent Accommodations Blind or Visual Impairments

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.

Visual impairments are disorders in the function of the eyes that have not been adequately corrected by medical or surgical intervention, therapy, or conventional eyewear. Individuals with visual disorders may not have any usable vision or the vision may be significantly limited.

Specific documentation requirements for visual 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.
- 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, unless the evaluator is unable to do so due to school system regulations.
- Evaluators should demonstrate how the assessment results meet diagnostic criteria.
- Quantitative and qualitative information should be used to demonstrate that the difficulties are substantially limiting when compared to most people in the general population.
- 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 three years of the request for services unless the condition is of a permanent and non-varying nature. However, if additional accommodations are requested due to changes in functional limitations, updated documentation may be requested.
- Description of the history, current symptoms, and severity of the disorder, (e.g., ocular report).
- Description of the expected progression or stability of the disorder.
- Description of the current functional limitations impacting the student in the academic setting.

Adapted from USG Policy for Disability Documentation:

https://www.usg.edu/academic_affairs_handbook/section3/handbook/C793/#pappendix_d_disability_documentation