

## Documentation Criteria for Permanent Accommodations Psychological 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.

Many different psychological disorders can interfere with cognitive, emotional, and social functioning and may negatively impact a student's ability to function in an academic environment. Some individuals experience significant disruptions in mood, thinking, and behavioral regulation that are secondary to a psychological disorder. The symptoms and associated impairment may be either chronic or episodic. Complete descriptions and diagnostic criteria for psychological disorders are available in the current version of the DSM or ICD. **Test anxiety by itself is not considered a psychological disorder.**

Specific documentation guidelines for psychological 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 substantial limitation in a major life activity should be described.
- Quantitative and qualitative information should be used to demonstrate that the difficulties are substantially limiting when compared to most people in the general population.
- Evidence that the difficulties are substantially limiting to the student in the academic environment should be presented.
- 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 at the time of request for services; however, more recent documentation may be required by a disability service provider on a case-by-case basis.
- Description of history, current symptoms, and severity of the disorder.
- Additional descriptions of (1) the expected progression, duration, and stability of the condition and (2) relevant side effects of medications are strongly encouraged.
- Description of current functional limitations impacting academic performance resulting from the disorder.

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)