



SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Documentation Guidelines

In order to receive services and accommodations at Southwestern Adventist University, you must provide a current copy of documentation of your disability to the Director of Students with Disabilities. You can not receive accommodations until you provide appropriate documentation to the Director of Students with Disabilities

What follows are the guidelines that specify the procedures to be followed and the information that must be contained in all documentation of a student's Attention Deficit Disorder. Specific format is left to the professional; however, all reports must include information about the student's presenting concerns, history (developmental, family, medical, psychological functioning and a summary/recommendation.

The following documentation guidelines are provided to help the evaluating professional document findings in a manner that meets requirements of the American's with Disabilities Act and supports the request for accommodations, including academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids.

I. A Qualified Professional Must Conduct the Evaluation

The following professionals would generally be considered qualified to evaluate and diagnose ADHD provided they have comprehensive training in the differential diagnosis of ADHD and direct experience with an adolescent or adult ADHD population: psychologists, neuropsychologists, psychiatrists, and other relevantly trained medical doctors. It may be appropriate to use a clinical team approach consisting of a variety of educational, medical, and counseling professionals with training in the evaluation of ADHD in adolescents and adults. The name, title, professional credentials of the evaluator including information about license or certification as well as the area of specialization, employment, and state or province in which the individual practices should be clearly stated in the documentation. All reports should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed, and otherwise legible.

II. Documentation Must Be Current

Because the provision of all reasonable accommodations and services is based upon the assessment of the current impact of the disability on academic performance, it is in a student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation. Southwestern requests that the diagnostic evaluation have been completed within the past three years.

III. Documentation Necessary to Substantiate the Diagnosis Must Be Comprehensive

A. Evidence of Early Impairment

The following should be included in a comprehensive assessment: clinical summary of objective historical information, establishing symptomology indicative of ADHD throughout childhood, adolescence, and adulthood as garnered from transcripts, report cards, teacher comments, tutoring evaluations, and past psycho-educational testing; and third party interviews when available.

B. Evidence of Current Impairment

In addition to providing evidence of a childhood history of an impairment, the following areas must be investigated:

1. Statement of Presenting Problem

A history of the individual's presenting attentional symptoms should be provided, including evidence of ongoing impulsive/hyperactive or inattentive behaviors that significantly impair functioning in two or more settings.

2. Diagnostic Interview

The information collected for the summary of the diagnostic interview should consist of more than self-report, as information from third party sources is critical in the diagnosis of ADHD. The diagnostic interview with information from a variety of sources should include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- a. History of presenting Attention symptoms
- b. Developmental history
- c. Family history for presence of ADHD and other educational, learning, physical, or psychological difficulties deemed relevant.
- d. Relevant medical and medication history
- e. Relevant psychosocial history and relevant interventions
- f. A thorough academic history of elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education
- g. A review of prior psycho-educational test reports
- h. Relevant employment history
- i. Description of current functional limitations pertaining to an educational setting
- j. Relevant history of prior therapy

C. Alternative Diagnoses or Explanations Should Be Ruled Out

The evaluator must investigate and discuss the possibility of dual diagnoses and alternative or coexisting mood, behavioral, neurological, and/or personality disorders that may confound the diagnosis of ADHD.

D. Relevant Testing Information Must Be Provided

Neuropsychological or psycho-educational assessment is important in determining the current impact of the disorder on an individual's ability to function in academically related settings.

E. Identification of DSM-IV Criteria

A diagnostic report should include a review and discussion of the DSM-IV criteria for ADHD both currently and retrospectively and specify which symptoms are present.

F. Documentation Must Include a Specific Diagnosis

The report must include a specific diagnosis of ADHD based on the DSM-IV diagnostic criteria. The Diagnostician should use direct language in the diagnosis of ADHD, avoiding the use of such terms as “suggests,” “is indicative of,” or “attention problems.”

G. An Interpretive Summary Must Be Provided

A well-written interpretative summary based on a comprehensive evaluative process is a necessary component of the documentation. It is essential that professional judgment be utilized in the development of a summary which must include:

1. Demonstration of the evaluator’s having ruled out alternative explanations for inattentiveness, impulsivity, and/or hyperactivity as a result of psychological or medical disorders or non-cognitive factors.
2. Indication of how patterns of inattentiveness, impulsivity, and/or hyperactivity across the life span and across settings are used to determine the presence of ADHD.
3. Indication of whether or not the candidate was evaluated while on medication, and whether or not the prescribed treatment produced a positive response.
4. Indication and discussion of the substantial limitation to learning presented by the ADHD and the degree to which it affects the individual.
5. Indication as to why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of ADHD symptoms, as designated by the DSM-IV, are mediated by the accommodations.

IV. Each Accommodation Recommended by the Evaluator Must Include a Rationale

The evaluator must describe the impact, if any, of the diagnosed ADHD on a specific major life activity as well as the degree of impact on the individual. The diagnostic report must include *specific recommendations for accommodations that are realistic and postsecondary institutions*, examining, certifying, and licensing agencies can reasonably provide.

V. Confidentiality

The Director of Students with Disabilities will maintain confidentiality of the evaluation and will not release any part of the documentation without the student’s informed consent or under compulsion of legal process.

Guidelines condensed from the *Policy Statement for Documentation of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder in Adolescents and Adults* retrieved from Educational Testing Services Web site. For a detailed copy of these guidelines see www.ets.org.