

STUDENT ACCESS CENTER

Guidelines for Providing Documentation of Physical and Mental Health Disabilities

These Guidelines may be used to document a disability related to a student's physical or mental health condition, including but not limited to:

- Food Allergies
- Chronic health conditions (e.g., asthma, arthritis, diabetes, Crohn's disease, epilepsy, etc.)
- Visual Impairments
- Hearing Impairments
- Mobility impairments
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Bipolar disorder
- Eating disorder
- Posttraumatic stress disorder

The following guidelines are designed to provide students and professional diagnosticians with a common understanding of the components of documentation necessary to validate the existence of a disability, its impact on the individual's educational performance, and accommodations that may be necessary for equal access in the post-secondary setting.

Documentation is required to provide adequate information that establishes the presence of a disability and the functional impact on major life activities, along with justification of the need for requested accommodations. Documentation must be recent to accurately describe the current effects on the student. If documentation is inadequate in scope or content, and does not support the presence of a disability and need for accommodation, Disability Services may require additional information.

The professional providing documentation for the student must be qualified to diagnose the disability and recommend appropriate accommodations. The name, title, and professional credentials of the provider, including information about license or certification, area of specialization, and state in which the individual practices, must be clearly stated in the documentation. It is not appropriate for professionals to provide documentation for members of their families. All submitted documents should be on letterhead, typed, dated, signed, and otherwise legible. Telephone calls, medical records, and brief letters are not sufficient.

A diagnosis alone will not necessarily establish disability status or warrant accommodations under state and federal laws. Accommodations must be necessary, reasonable, and appropriate. A clear link between the student's functional limitations and the requested accommodations is important.

It is strongly recommended that documentation include the following, as relevant to the student's individual situation:

- 1) Presenting diagnosis is necessary and diagnostic categorization or classification of the ICD or DSM is preferred. Diagnosis should indicate primary, secondary, etc., and significant findings.
- 2) Date the examination/assessment/evaluation was performed for the presenting diagnosis, or if following the student for an extended time, date of the onset and of an evaluation that is recent enough to demonstrate the student's current level of functioning.
- 3) Tests and methodology used to determine disability.
- 4) If condition is temporary, information related to the expected period of recovery.
- 5) Identify the current functional limitations, if any, on the student's physical, perceptual, emotional, and cognitive performance in activities such as mobility, activities of daily living, academics, and housing conditions/arrangements.
- 6) Describe any treatments, medications, assistive devices or services the student is currently using. Note their effectiveness and any side effects that may impact the student's physical, perceptual, interpersonal or cognitive performance.
- 7) Recommendations for academic and/or non-academic accommodations; explain the relationship between the student's functional limitations and the recommendations.

Important notes:

- Accommodations are meant to offset the impact of the disabling condition and do not include interventions that are remedial; needed for personal study or care; or designed to ensure desired outcomes.
- Self-report, self-assessment, or brief screening tools alone are not sufficient sources of documentation of a disability.

All documentation, which will remain confidential under the scope of the pertinent laws regarding post-secondary education, can be submitted via ground mail, email, or fax:

For students taking classes on the **Biddeford Campus**:

Student Access Center
University of New England
11 Hills Beach Road
Biddeford, ME 04005
Fax: 207-602-5971
Email: bcstudentaccess@une.edu
Attn: Student Access Coordinator

For students taking classes on the **Portland Campus or Online**:

Student Access Center
University of New England
716 Stevens Avenue
Portland, ME 04103
Fax: 207-523-1919
Email: pcstudentaccess@une.edu
Attn: Student Access Coordinator

Additional documentation guidelines can be found at:

une.edu/student-access-center/request-for-accommodations