



## Documentation Guidelines for Disabling Conditions Due to Chronic Physical/ Mental Health Conditions

Students with disabilities may qualify for reasonable accommodation pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. To qualify for such consideration, students need to establish that they have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities in comparison to most people in the general population.

Documentation is used to establish disability status and to assist the Accessibility Services Office (ASO) in determining necessary and appropriate reasonable accommodations and modifications in your course(s) or program.

We obtain information from three sources:

1. A qualified licensed clinician
2. Your experiences with the condition through the intake form and a welcome meeting
3. Our professional judgement and knowledge of our educational environment

For learners diagnosed with chronic physical and/or mental health conditions, clinical documentation can be obtained in two ways, either through a letter from a current, licensed, treating clinician that contains the information listed below, or, through the completion of a Provider Verification form. The Provider Verification form must be completed by the treating licensed provider and be complete for this to serve as documentation.

**Documentation is provided by a clinician qualified to diagnose in the appropriate area of specialization.** Use of diagnostic terminology indicating a specific disorder by someone whose training and experience are not in relevant fields is inappropriate. It is not appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their own families. All reports must be on letterhead, typed, signed, dated, and preferably in English.



**Documentation is comprehensive and is based on a current evaluation:**

1. A statement of the presenting problem and appropriate diagnosis. (Diagnosis must conform to current version DSM, or ICD.)
2. Developmental history of the condition including the level of severity.
3. A description of the functional limitations resulting from the condition. (Please include any available test results or diagnostic interview findings, including measures of hearing and vision, if applicable.)
4. Prognosis of the condition over time.
5. A description of current treatments, assistive devices, therapies and their effectiveness, and medications including any adverse side effects that impact your academic work.
6. Recommendations for accommodations that the clinician believes are *necessary* and would positively improve each functional impact of the condition.

Typically, the disabling condition has been present for six months or more. If the condition is considered permanent and unchanging (e.g., hearing loss, visual impairments) please provide the most recent evaluation with a physician statement.

Documentation that does not meet these guidelines will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the ASO at Harvard University Division of Continuing Education at (617) 998-9640 with any questions.