



University of Charleston – Documentation Guidelines

The University of Charleston is committed to achieving equal educational opportunity and full participation for persons with disabilities.

The Office of Disability and Accessibility Services (within the Academic Success Center) works to ensure that enrolled students receive reasonable accommodations for documented disabilities in compliance with provisions of the Fair Housing Act, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment of 2008.

Accommodations are determined based on the specific limitations of the disability. The purpose of documentation may be to substantiate a disability and its severity, to demonstrate the impact of the disability in higher education and to help the University understand what accommodations would be most appropriate.

Documentation can be required for Assistance Animals (as defined by the Fair Housing Act) including Emotional Support Animals. However, inquiries for Service Animals (as defined by the ADA) must be limited to asking two questions: (a) is the animal a service animal required because of a disability, and (b) what work or task has the animal been trained to perform.

When considering accommodation requests, the University of Charleston follows the documentation guidance of AHEAD (Association on Higher Education and Disability), available at:

https://edgecastcdn.net/006FDC/AU/PDF/AHEAD_Supporting-Accommodation-Requests%5B2%5D.pdf.

Documentation should be completed by an appropriate credentialed professional, such as health care providers, school psychologists, licensed counselors, etc. on their official letterhead or the Verification Form. When needed, documentation can be supplemented with medical reports, psychoeducational testing, IEP's and 504 Plans, or other relevant documents. Diagnoses of Learning Disabilities should be accompanied by copies of the psychoeducational assessment.

Documentation should address the following:

- A diagnosis of the current disability
- The date of the diagnosis
- How the diagnosis was reached (names of relevant test results)
- The severity and functional limitations of the disability and a description of the current impact as it relates to meeting the various demands of higher education (academically, socially, emotionally, physically, medically)
- Expected progression or stability
- Notation of any medical equipment that is required
- Notation of medications, if any, and potential impact on learning and/or side effects



- Possible recommendations, based on functional limitations for post-secondary education, to ameliorate the limitations
- For convenience, DAS provides a Verification Form that providers may use

Documentation will be kept confidential. Limited information, when needed for legitimate educational interest, is released and/or discussed on a need-to-know basis and is subject to FERPA guidelines. Outside the FERPA guidelines, no information will be released and/or discussed without consent from the individual.

The Disability & Accessibility Services Coordinator will keep a student's disability and accommodation related records for five years from the last date a student was enrolled at the University.