

## **HARFORD COMMUNITY COLLEGE GUIDELINES FOR DOCUMENTATION OF COGNITIVE/INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES**

The student named below has applied for services from Harford Community College's Disability and Student Intervention Services. In order to be able to determine eligibility and what, if any accommodations are warranted, documentation or additional documentation is needed.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, individuals with disabilities are protected from discrimination and may be entitled to reasonable accommodations. To establish that an individual is covered under the law, documentation must indicate that a specific disability exists and that the identified disability limits one or more major life activities (e.g. learning). *A diagnosis of a disorder in and of itself does not automatically qualify an individual for accommodations.* The documentation must also support the request for accommodations and explain how the disability impacts learning.

The guidelines below will assist student/parent/caregiver obtain specific evaluation reports of Cognitive/Intellectual Disabilities, or seek evaluation to determine Cognitive/Intellectual Disabilities. Please follow them carefully.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR DOCUMENTATION OF COGNITIVE/INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES**

- 1) The evaluation must be performed by a professional who is certified or licensed in the area of adults with learning disabilities (e.g., School Psychologist, Educational Diagnostician or Psychologist). In addition, the report must be printed on professional stationary and a signature from the professional must be included at the end of the documentation.
- 2) A clinical diagnosis is not synonymous with a disability. The documentation must include the student's specific current functional impairment(s) and describe how the condition substantially limits a major life activity in order for Harford Community College to fully evaluate the necessity for any of the following: academic adjustments, auxiliary aids, and/or auxiliary services.
- 3) Information from diagnostic interview: history of presenting symptoms, developmental history, family history, psychosocial history, academic history, prior psycho-educational test reports and history of academic adjustments.
- 4) Individuals who are 17 years of age or older must be tested with diagnostic instruments normed for adults.

***The evaluation must include the test scores from at least one test from EACH of the following categories:***

- I. **APTITUDE:** Assessment of the capacity to learn is needed.
  - The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS) with subtest scores; or
  - The Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery: Tests of Cognitive Ability; or
  - Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale; or
  - Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test; or
  - The Differential Ability Scales (DAS); or
  - The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC)-may be acceptable if recently administered.

Harford Community College  
Disability and Student Intervention Services  
[www.harford.edu/dsis](http://www.harford.edu/dsis)

Effective Revision Date: 6/9/2021

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- II. INFORMATION PROCESSING:** Specific areas of information processing (e.g., short and long term memory; sequential memory; auditory and visual perception/processing; processing speed; processing auditory and phonological information, executive functioning, motor ability) must be assessed.
- The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS) with subtest scores; or
  - The Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery: Tests of Cognitive Ability; or
  - Test of Adolescent Language (TOAL); or
  - Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude-4 (if recently administered)
- III. ACHIEVEMENT:** Current levels of functioning in reading, mathematics and written language are required.
- Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery: Tests of Achievement; or
  - Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK) Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults; or
  - Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT); or
  - Specific achievement tests such as the Test of Written Language (TOWL), Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests-Revised, or the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test.
  - The Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT)-is not a comprehensive measure of achievement and therefore is not suitable for this category
- IV. ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR:** If the student has an intellectual disability, then adaptive behavior must be assessed.
- Vineland Adaptive Behavior (VABS); or
  - Adaptive Behavior Assessment System (ABAS); or
  - AAMD Adaptive Behavior Scales; or
  - Vineland Social Maturity Scale; or
  - Fairview Developmental Scale; or
  - Callier-Azusa Scale; or
  - Alpern Bolls Assessment Scale; or
  - Other standardized test that assesses the following areas: Communication, Daily Living Skills, Socialization, and Motor Skills

***The Test Report must include:***

- I. A written narrative of test results.** Please state specific cognitive processing strengths, weaknesses, and deficits. Please discuss the following processing areas:
- a. Visual spatial abilities
  - b. Memory (auditory and visual; short-term and long-term)
  - c. Fine motor/dexterity (speed/sequence of motor patterns)
  - d. Executive functions (verbal and nonverbal reasoning)
  - e. Selective attention/perception (auditory and visual)
  - f. A well-written interpretative summary based on a comprehensive evaluative process is required.
- II. If oral language skills are assessed please discuss formal instruments or informal analysis of a language sample used.**
- III. Social-emotional assessment is required.** Formal assessment instruments and/or clinical interview are appropriate. If applicable, a mental health diagnosis should be clearly stated.

**IV. Conclusion** –includes a brief summary of test results, background history and test observations. The conclusion should clearly explain how the condition causes significant impairment in one or more major life activity. It should also include a detailed explanation of how the disorder limits the student’s functioning in an educational setting for learning or taking tests.

**V. The recommendation section** should include recommendations for accommodations in an educational setting (e.g., extended time because of focusing difficulties, etc.) and indicate the reason these accommodations are warranted if the current treatments are successful. It is helpful if accommodations and strategies are logically related to functional limitations. If connections are not obvious, a clear explanation of their relationship would be helpful. Please note: In reviewing the accommodation requested by the student or recommended by an evaluator, the DSIS office may find that the accommodation is not appropriate given the requirements of a course or program. DSIS may propose an alternative accommodation that would be appropriate for the student, but which neither the student nor evaluator has requested.

**Documentation can be returned to DSIS office by mail, email or fax to:**

Harford Community College  
Disability and Student Support Services  
401 Thomas Run Road  
Bel Air, Maryland 21015  
Attn: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: 443.412.2200  
[disabilitysupport@harford.edu](mailto:disabilitysupport@harford.edu)