

Documentation Guidelines for Students with Physical Disabilities

I. Must Be a Covered Disability

- A. To establish that an individual is covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), documentation must indicate that a specific impairment exists and that the identified impairment *substantially limits* one or more major life activities.
- B. The official source designed to outline the criteria used in making these diagnoses is the *International Classification of Diseases Manual, Tenth Revision (ICD-10)*.
- C. Documentation must be comprehensive in order to avoid unnecessary delays in decision-making related to the provision of accommodations, to establish the nature of the disorder, and to determine how the impairment affects a student's ability to access the programs, activities, and services offered by Berklee.
- D. A diagnosis in and of itself does not automatically warrant approval of requested accommodations.

II. Documentation Requirements

- A. **A Qualified Professional Must Conduct the Evaluation.**
 - 1. Professionals conducting evaluations, rendering diagnoses, and making recommendations for accommodations must be qualified to do so. Generally, medical doctors and nurse practitioners are considered qualified. The name, title, and credentials of the qualified professional writing the report should be included. Information about license or certification should also be clearly stated in the documentation. All reports should be in English, typed or printed on professional letterhead, dated, and signed.
 - 2. Diagnoses of physical disabilities documented by family members will not be accepted.
 - 3. The currency of the documentation will depend on the nature of the impairment and the requested accommodation. For example, a student who uses a wheelchair and needs no specific accommodations beyond priority registration would not likely need to provide current documentation.

B. A Specific Request for Accommodations with Accompanying Rationale Must Be Provided.

The evaluator must describe the degree of impact of the diagnosed physical disability on a specific major life activity, as well as the degree of impact on the individual. A link must be established between the requested accommodations and the functional limitations of the individual that are pertinent to the academic situation. Accordingly, the evaluator should establish how the assessment results require a specific recommended accommodation in order for the student to access the campus' programs, activities, and services.

A diagnosis in and of itself does not automatically warrant approval of requested accommodations.