

ELIGIBILITY ISSUES

What Is the Definition of a Student with a Disability?

"A student having a disability is defined as one whose educational performance is affected by mobility, visual, acoustical, mental health, speech, orthopedic, or alcohol/substance abuse impairments, learning disability, traumatic brain injury, or other health impairment."

Source: Johanna Duncan-Poitier Deputy Commissioner, ORIS New York Education Department Office of Higher Education (2005).

Seeking Permanent for Special Services

1. Students must be registered with the Office of Special Services and have provided documentation of an official assessment that provides the identified disability, from a professional individual or assessment center. The documentation presented by the student must be appropriate in order to verify eligibility and to request reasonable and appropriate accommodations. Please note the following:

- a. Documentation *must* be within the past 3 years for acceptance.
- b. Documentation *must* contain current medical records, diagnosis, and a doctor's letter.
- c. Documentation *must* include government-issued identification, such as birth certificate, social security card, driver's license, etc.

2. Based on documentation, students receive individualized accommodations such as extra time on tests, note-takers, use of assistive technology, enlarged print, interpreting services, etc.

3. Students who are registered with the Office of Special Services must present their professors/instructors with a letter of introduction at the beginning of *each* semester if they want to receive support services.

4. Each time there is a test, the student is responsible for coming to the OSS a week in advance and obtaining a blue form to inform the professor that they need to receive accommodation testing arrangements at OSS. The professor must email or send a copy of the test to OSS.

5. Students requesting personal counseling generally have their own therapist/psychologist. The Office of Special Services is available to support students while in an academic setting by helping with time-management skills; liaison with other campus offices, professors, and faculty; and guiding them through school-related problems.

6. Students on probation are requested to meet with their OSS Counselor no less than five times a semester.

Temporary Disability Services

If I Have a Temporary Disability, Will I Be Eligible for Short-term Services?

There are two types of Temporary Disability status. The first is when a student brings in an old assessment that is more than 3 years old, but that identifies the student as having a disability.

Such a student is placed on temporary status. While on temporary status, the student will receive all accommodations and supportive services they require. Their names also will be placed on a list for the QC Neuropsychological Testing Center to be called in within a few weeks to be assessed (at a minimal fee). The temporary status is only for one semester. Should the student choose not to be tested, and not present an updated document for the disability, the temporary status will end.

The second type of Temporary Disability status for an individual, for the purpose of determining "ADA eligibility" will be subject to the same standards as those with permanent disabilities. Certification of eligibility in such cases will be subject to a specific disability. A temporary disability is usually a physical disability, and the accommodation is usually extended time for testing.

Third type of Temporary Disability is a pregnant woman. Please note that pregnancy is not a disability, however, if the woman is suffer a risk situation then she is placed in a temporary Disability list to receive services addressing her disabling needs. Such as parking closer to the buildings, attendance waiver.

Note: Pregnancy is *not* a disability, as it does not affect nor stop the mental learning process.

Attendance Accommodations

In severe cases, with the approval of the Director of the Office of Special Services and the professors involved, students whose disabilities affect their attendance (such as a brain trauma injury, or mobility impairment, and other medical conditions) have the right to continue to attend Queens College through a Home Attendance Medical (HAM) waiver. If the student applies for the special permission, it must be for all the courses within the same semester, not one or two courses. In case of a setback in health, a student may stay at home for the duration of the class and receive the classwork through faxes and emails from the professors and/or the OSS. The professor and the student must come to an agreement to work together through the emails, faxes, and blackboard in order for the student to complete the course. The professor is to provide the notes and work of the class. The student is responsible to complete and return all the work on a timely manner, according to the professors set schedule.

In order to qualify for this service a student must submit an *official* letter from a hospital or doctor identifying the disorder, the need for bed rest, and the length of time needed for recovery, if any. A student cannot extend this past one semester.

Identification of Disabilities

The information in the following pages consists of resources and identifies characteristics required in an official assessment of a student with disabilities. There are four overall areas of disability: Psychological Disability factors, Learning Disability factors, Physical Disability factors, and Attention Disorders. The following are the criteria and stipulations for obtaining official documentation that identifies a student's disability through (when appropriate) a battery of assessments and the findings of those assessments.

1. Psychological Disability

The student must provide a recent statement from a **licensed mental health practitioner** (psychologist, psychiatrist, LCSW) with the following information:

- DSM IV diagnosis;
- medications and side effects;
- history of disability, including date of onset;
- the functional limitations resulting from the disability;
- recommended accommodations; and/or
- clinical summary with prognosis.

2. Learning Disability

The student must provide documentation from a **qualified licensed professional** (clinical or educational psychologist, school psychologist, neuropsychologist, learning disabilities specialist, medical doctor) with training and experience in the assessment of learning problems in adolescents and adults. The documentation should disclose:

- the nature of the individual's disability;
- the functional limitations resulting from the disability;
- the specific diagnosis;
- the clinical summary with suggested accommodations; and/or
- the names of the testing instruments used for testing and testing results, including:
 - (a) a diagnostic interview;
 - (b) assessment of aptitude;
 - (c) assessment of academic achievement; and/or
 - (d) a test of information processing.

3. Physical Disability

For students with visible disabilities (e.g., students with mobility impairments), the student should provide documentation from a **licensed medical professional** (or interview with a Disabilities Services Provider, depending upon the circumstances). The documentation should disclose:

- the nature of the individual's disability;
- the functional limitations resulting from the disability;
- the prognosis, when appropriate;
- any recommended accommodation(s).

For students with nonvisible physical disabilities, the individual should provide current documentation from a **licensed medical professional** which discloses the same parameters noted previously for Visible Impairment:

- the nature of the individual's disability;
- the functional limitations resulting from the disability;
- the prognosis, when appropriate;
- any recommended accommodation(s).

For students with vision or hearing impairments, the individual should provide current documentation from a **qualified medical professional**. The documentation should disclose:

- the functional limitations resulting from the disability;
- the prognosis, when appropriate;
- the extent of visual or hearing acuity;
- any recommended accommodations.

4. Attention Disorders (ADD and ADHD)

The student must provide documentation from a **qualified licensed professional** (clinical or educational psychologist, school psychologist, neuropsychologist, learning disabilities specialist, medical doctor) with training and experience in the assessment of learning problems

in adolescents and adults. The documentation should disclose:

- the nature of the individual's disability;
- the functional limitations resulting from the disability;

- recommended accommodations;
- diagnosis by licensed clinician; and/or
- the names of the testing instruments and the testing results, including:
 - (a) a diagnostic interview;
 - (b) testing, as determined by the interview;
 - (c) the specific diagnosis;
 - (d) a clinical summary, with suggested accommodation(s); and/or
 - (e) functional limitations, if any.