



# PHYSICAL DISABILITIES & CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS

## Documentation Guidelines for Evaluators

For GED Testing Service® Test Accommodations (Reasonable Adjustments)

### Introduction

GED Testing Service is committed to ensuring access to the test for all individuals with disabilities. GED Testing Service provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations to individuals with documented disabilities who demonstrate a need for accommodations.

### Purpose of Accommodations

The following technical information is provided for the evaluators who prepare documentation for candidates as part of their request for test accommodations. Candidates requesting test accommodations are asked to share these guidelines with their evaluator so that appropriate documentation can be assembled to support the request for test accommodations.

Requests for test accommodations are inherently individualized and need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Consequently, no single type of accommodation (i.e., extra time) would necessarily be appropriate for all individuals with disabilities or even with the same diagnosis or disability. Moreover, simply demonstrating that an individual meets diagnostic criteria for a particular disorder does not mean that the person needs or is automatically entitled to accommodations.

The purpose of accommodations is to ensure that candidates can take the test in an accessible manner. However, accommodations are not a guarantee of improved performance or test completion.

Recommended accommodations should be related to the identified *functional limitations* that the specific candidate experiences due to the diagnosed disability so that the impairment is mitigated by the requested auxiliary aid or adjustment to the testing format. For example, a functional limitation might be mobility, resulting in wheelchair use. An appropriate accommodation might be a height-adjustable computer workstation. **In all events, it is essential that the documentation provide a clear explanation of the current functional limitation(s) and rationale for the requested accommodation.**

### Detailed Documentation Requirements

Candidates who are requesting accommodations based on a diagnosis of a physical disability or chronic health condition are generally expected to provide a report from a current, comprehensive medical evaluation. The diagnosis and recommended accommodations should be based on consideration of the examinee's relevant history, levels of current functioning, clinical judgment, and optionally, objective test results.

**Note that meeting diagnostic criteria for a particular disorder does not necessarily mean that the individual will be found to be *disabled* for the purpose of needing or being eligible to receive testing accommodations.**

**The evaluation should:**

1. Be performed by a qualified evaluator (see Note #1 below)
2. Be current (< 1 year; see Note #2 below)

**The detailed letter or report should:**

1. Include identifying information:
  - a. The first page of the detailed letter or report should be printed on the evaluator's letterhead, and should provide relevant identifying information, including the examinee's name, date of birth, the examination dates, age at the time of testing or medical consultation, and grade and school (if applicable).
  - b. The last page of the report should be signed by the evaluator.
2. Include a comprehensive history:
  - a. age that symptoms of the disorder first appeared
  - b. relevant educational history
  - c. relevant psychosocial history
  - d. relevant medical history
  - e. history of intervention attempts and results
  - f. history of the condition
  - g. history of the *impact* of the condition
3. Include a detailed discussion of the current treatments (e.g., medications) and their effectiveness, current test results, and the current impact of the disorder on academic performance, employment (if relevant), and other relevant activities.
4. Include a diagnosis using globally accepted standards (e.g., DSM, ICD).
5. Include a discussion of the expected duration and prognosis of the condition.
6. Include specific recommendations for accommodations relating to the candidate's functional limitations (e.g., "Breaks").
7. Include a specific rationale for each recommended accommodation.

## NOTES:

1. A qualified professional should evaluate the person who is requesting accommodations. In general, an individual is deemed to be qualified to assess for a physical or health-related disability if s/he has had extensive graduate-level training in the area of medical assessment of adults, and is appropriately credentialed. In most cases, the evaluator should be a physician, physician assistant, or nurse-practitioner. The name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator should be clearly stated in the documentation. GEDTS® reserves the right to request evidence from an evaluator of their professional qualifications. Formal assessment by family members, even if otherwise qualified, will not be accepted.
2. Currency: Because the provision of reasonable accommodations is based on assessment of the *current impact* and *current functional limitations* caused by the applicant's disability, GEDTS requires current documentation. **The documentation provided should be no older than one (1) year prior to the anticipated test date.**

*NOTE: In situations where an individual has two or more disorders, such as a visual impairment and a learning disability, the diagnostic report should clearly describe the unique impact of each disorder, and documentation guidelines should be addressed for each disorder.*