

General Documentation Guidelines

The Office of Accessibility Services and Accommodations has adapted its documentation requirements from the [Association on Higher Education and Disability \(AHEAD\) documentation guidance](#).

It is the student's responsibility to self-identify as having a disability and to provide documentation of their disability. The acceptable documentation to substantiate the presence of a student's disability are as follows:

- **Student self-report:** One of the vital components of documenting a disability is the student narrative. This information is important when determining how a student's disability affects their learning.
- **Observation and interaction:** ASA Office staff can use observations of students' language, performance, and strategies used to validate student narratives and self-reports. ASA Office staff members can also evaluate the effectiveness of previously implemented accommodations and strategies used by the student.
- **Information from external/third parties:** Educational or medical records that substantiate the presence of a disability and the impact on a student. Types of acceptable documentation may include, but are not limited to, psychological evaluations, psychoeducational assessments, medical evaluations, diagnosis letters, and neuropsychological evaluations. In addition, a record of past accommodations may be acceptable, such as a 504 Plan or an Individualized Education Plan from secondary school. For graduate students, a formal letter from a disability professional indicating accommodations used in undergraduate may be accepted as well.

If the documentation submitted does not provide enough information to make a determination, the ASA staff have discretion to request an additional meeting with the student and/or additional documentation. Students are responsible for obtaining this documentation.

Additional Information

- Accommodation decisions are made through an interactive and individualized review of all relevant information. Each student's situation is considered on a case-by-case basis to better understand how a disability or condition affects access to academic programs, services, and activities.

- In some circumstances, such as when a disability is readily apparent, third-party documentation may not be necessary. These situations are reviewed individually.
- ASA strives to maintain a non-burdensome and accessible process. When students experience difficulty obtaining documentation, staff may work with them to explore available options, including the temporary provision of accommodations when appropriate. Students will sign a contract to provide documentation to the office of ASA in these situations.
- While documentation may not always contain every element described above, more detailed information generally supports a clearer understanding of the student's needs and assists in identifying effective accommodations.
- Please note that St. Bonaventure University is not obligated to implement or replicate accommodations or recommendations made by outside entities. Final determinations regarding accommodations are made by the University based on an individualized review and institutional standards.