



<b>Policy Title:</b>	<b>Student Accommodations</b>
<b>Policy Number:</b>	STUD-324
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<b>Policies Superseded:</b>	1873; STUD-173
<b>Policy Management Area(s):</b>	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

## **SUMMARY:**

This policy states the rights and responsibilities for students, both undergraduate and graduate who need an accommodation.

## **POLICY**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Students with disabilities are an essential part of the campus community and contribute significantly to Coastal Carolina University (“the University” or “CCU”) through their talents, abilities and skills. The University is therefore committed to assuring that students with disabilities can fully participate in University life and that its programs, activities, and services are accessible and consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) of 1991, as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The University facilitates accessibility by providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations and services to students who have a documented disability.

Accessibility and Disability Services (“ADS”) is the office on campus that is responsible for addressing the needs of undergraduate and graduate students with disabilities. This policy describes the process for registering a disability with ADS and for requesting accommodations and services.

Students who have questions regarding the process for requesting accommodations or about the documentation necessary to support their requests are encouraged to contact ADS.

### **II. REGISTRATION AND DOCUMENTATION**

In order for ADS to consider requests for reasonable accommodations, students should submit the documentation discussed within this section of the policy to ADS at least 14 calendar days prior to the start of the course or the exam for which the student seeks accommodations. Accommodations and modifications received in high school or at another post-secondary

institution will not automatically transfer to CCU. Instead, it is necessary for students to register with the University by submitting the following documentation:

- A. Registration form, which must be completed personally by the student.
- B. Current documentation prepared by a medical professional or health care provider that describes the student's or applicant's diagnosis, the functional limitations this diagnosis causes, and the accommodations or services necessary to address the diagnosis.
- C. Historical documentation, if applicable, regarding accommodations the student has previously received to address the disability, including but not limited to an Individualized Education Plan ("IEP"), Summary of Performance ("SOP"), or a 504 Plan.

Following receipt of this information, ADS may recommend that the student submit further documentation or information to support the accommodations request, and/or ADS may request the opportunity to speak personally with the student or provider to obtain additional information.

Students may use the registration form and submit documentation at any time to initiate the registration process and to request accommodations, but accommodations cannot be provided retroactively. For example, ADS generally cannot provide accommodations for an examination if a student requests accommodations only after the student takes the examination.

Documentation must clearly articulate how the student's disability or chronic medical condition substantially limits one or more major life activities and how the accommodations requested will help mitigate this effect. ADS utilizes flexibility and discretion in determining how recent documentation must be, especially for conditions that are permanent or non-varying. Changing conditions or changes in how a condition affects the individual may warrant more frequent updates. Documentation from the student's current or most recent level of education (e.g., undergraduate, graduate, secondary) is most helpful. Older documentation may be acceptable for conditions that are stable over time or where the documentation contains a sufficient description of the student's or applicant's limitations and mitigating effects of accommodations.

Please also note that ADS will not interpret a diagnosis or infer the current impact or functional limitations described in the documentation. It is important that the provider address functional limitations and not simply provide a diagnostic code. Because they typically include only information about a student's or applicant's prior accommodations rather than specific information about the student's limitations, the following materials, standing alone without explicit reference to the effect of a diagnosis upon current functioning, are generally insufficient for determining a student's or applicant's eligibility for disability accommodations:

- A. Medical records, medical chart notes, or prescription pad notations.
- B. High school IEPs, SOPs, or 504 Plans.
- C. Disability-related documents prepared for other agencies (e.g., Social Security Administration documentation, Department of Veterans Affairs records).

Adequate and sufficient documentation generally includes a psychological/psycho-educational evaluation or a letter from a medical/mental health provider which addresses the areas described below.

- A. **Qualifications of provider.** Documentation must be provided on the clinician's office or practice letterhead and must be dated and signed by a professional who is licensed or certified in the area for which the diagnosis is made. The letter must include the provider's name, title, and license/certification credentials. The provider may not be a member of the student's or applicant's family or otherwise have a close personal relationship to the student or applicant.
- B. **Diagnosis and history.** Documentation must include a diagnostic statement identifying the disability and ideally the ICD or DSM classification along with any relevant personal, psychosocial, medical, developmental, and educational history.
- C. **Description of diagnostic methodology.** Documentation must include a full description of the diagnostic methodology used, including data and measurements from appropriate evaluation instruments. The results obtained should draw a direct link from the diagnosis to the functional limitations of the disability. For cognitive disorders, evaluations should use adult norms.
- D. **Current impact and functional limitations.** Documentation must include a clear description of the current impact and functional limitations of the condition pertaining to the academic, workplace, or residential settings. The provider should describe whether symptoms are constant or episodic, as well as the frequency and/or duration of those symptoms. The provider should also specify any treatments, medications, services, or assistive technology that has been prescribed or that is in use and also describe their mediating effects and potential side effects.
- E. **Recommendations.** Documentation may include the provider's accommodation recommendations, which if given should be directly linked to the impact or functional limitations associated with the disability or to medications or treatments prescribed to control symptoms. Please note that ADS welcomes and considers accommodation recommendations from medical professionals but that ADS will make the ultimate determination regarding reasonable and appropriate accommodations.

### III. DOCUMENTATION REVIEW AND DECISION PROCESS

Upon receiving a student's request for accommodations, ADS will determine whether the student is eligible to receive such an accommodation based upon the documentation submitted to ADS, as described in section II., above.

ADS can assist with accommodations and services that assure equal access to academic programs, University facilities, and co- and extra-curricular activities.

ADS determines accommodations on a case-by-case basis following a careful and thorough review of the information and documentation submitted by the student or applicant. It is the student's responsibility to initiate and engage in the interactive process. ADS does not determine or implement accommodations solely based on the receipt of disability documentation.

Please be advised that ADS provides reasonable accommodations that are intended to promote equal access to University programs, services, and activities. These accommodations are not instituted for the purpose of guaranteeing academic success.

If ADS determines that the student is eligible to receive an accommodation, ADS will engage the student and the relevant University officials (e.g., course instructors) in a detailed discussion to determine whether the accommodation is reasonable based on the documentation provided or whether the accommodation would constitute a fundamental alteration of the academic program. Should ADS find that the particular accommodations requested by the student would constitute a fundamental alteration, ADS will facilitate a meaningful and informed process with respect to the provision of accommodations (i.e., through an interactive and collaborative process between the University and the student) which will be completed in a timely manner. Specifically, ADS will clearly communicate the reasons for its decision to the student and provide the student with a reasonable opportunity to respond and provide additional documentation that would address the concerns identified. If ADS continues to believe the requested accommodation is a fundamental alteration, ADS will engage the student in an interactive and collaborative process to determine if alternate accommodations are appropriate.

ADS will not provide accommodations that fundamentally alter academic standards or that fundamentally alter requirements essential to an academic program, activity, technical standard, or professional or licensing requirement. ADS will also not provide accommodations that would result in undue hardship based upon the nature, cost, or effect of the accommodation or that would jeopardize the health or safety of others. Finally, ADS does not provide personal aids or devices or specialized transportation as reasonable accommodations for a disability.

Once ADS has determined appropriate and reasonable accommodations for a student, the student may then distribute notices provided by ADS to the student's instructors regarding the accommodations the student has been granted. ADS will provide accommodation notices for each course based on the student's request, which must be made or renewed each semester.

#### IV. INFORMATION FOR GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

Graduate and professional students with disabilities may face new and challenging experiences they have not previously encountered during their undergraduate career, such as:

- A. Licensure or certification requirements;
- B. Technical or occupational standards;
- C. Clinical, shelf, or comprehensive exams;
- D. Placement, clinical, practicum, internship, externship, or rotation experiences; or
- E. Research requiring extensive written work product (e.g., thesis, dissertation) which, additionally, must be defended before an academic panel.

These unique requirements and academic components may necessitate an evaluation of whether the student's existing accommodations are sufficient to assist the student. Students can initiate this evaluation by completing the registration form.

#### V. INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS FOR ADMISSIONS

Applicants to an academic program may voluntarily disclose information in their application materials about a disability or medical condition that has affected their prior academic performance, but they are never required to do so. Providing this information in admissions application materials is not sufficient to register a disability with the University or to request accommodations. Instead, applicants must specifically register with ADS as discussed above.

Additionally, admissions staff members will not forward information or documentation about an applicant's disability to ADS. Consequently, applicants must separately submit any relevant information or documentation about a disability directly to ADS.

Please be advised that ADS does not have the ability to waive or adjust programmatic admissions requirements, including mandatory admissions testing (e.g., the Scholastic Aptitude Test ("SAT"), the American College Testing ("ACT") exam, the Graduate Record Examinations ("GRE"), the Graduate Management Admission Test ("GMAT")). If, however, a student has identified with ADS, ADS can, at the student's request, assist by providing documentation to the particular testing organization to support a student's request for accommodations. Please note that the requisite standards specific testing organizations apply to determine reasonable accommodations may differ from the standards upon which ADS relies.

## VI. GRIEVENCE PROCESS

Any University students, staff, faculty, community members, patrons, and visitors who believe they have been subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability or has been denied access or accommodations required by law shall have the right to invoke the Informal ADA Grievance Policy.