

# DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR LEARNING AND COGNITIVE DISORDERS

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** We understand that each person is unique, and we will be as flexible as we can when making accommodations decisions, while still being fair to other test takers and to the organizations that depend on the reliability and validity of GMAT® exam scores. To help us understand your unique history and current needs, it will help us to be able to review the background information requested below. You may provide this information to us in the form of a personal statement, or if you prefer, you may refer to other sources such as a professional report for this information. This is intended as an opportunity for you to share information in your own perspective, so please do not be concerned regarding formatting or other technical aspects of the information we are requesting. If we feel that clarification is needed, we will let you know.

- Describe how your learning disorder is impacting you at present when you study, when you take exams, and, in particular, when you take GMAT® practice exams.
- Describe how your learning disorder has impacted you in work settings. It will be helpful for you to state what your job titles have been, what duties you performed in your jobs, and how your learning disorder has affected your ability to carry out your duties. Also describe any accommodations, supports, and coping strategies you have used in work settings to manage your learning disorder. We understand that some persons may choose not to reveal to an employer the fact that they have a learning disorder. Nonetheless, it will be important for you to tell us about your work and how your learning disorder has affected your ability to meet occupational demands. If you have never held a job, you may simply state this.
- Tell us when you were diagnosed with a learning disorder. If your learning disorder was not diagnosed until recently, tell us why you think your learning disorder went undiagnosed for so long.

- Tell us if you received any formal or informal accommodations in school prior to college and during college. If so, tell us exactly what accommodations you had (e.g., if you were given extra time on exams, how much extra time?) and when these accommodations were in place.
- Tell us about your school performance from the early grades through college, to the best of your recollection. Tell us if you were placed in regular classrooms, in advanced classes, or in special education classes prior to college. Tell us what you remember about the marks you earned and whether you ever repeated any grades.
- Tell us whether you have taken any of the following exams: PSAT, SAT, ACT, TOEFL, and/or the GRE. For each of these exams that you have taken, tell us what accommodations you had (e.g., if you were given extra time, state how much extra time). Tell us what your percentile scores were on each section of each exam, to the best of your recollection. If possible, provide a copy of your score reports for these exams.
- Tell us what languages you spoke growing up and what languages you speak on a regular basis at present. Tell us how often you had lectures, textbooks, and written assignments in English during high school and college, and tell us what languages you have used on a regular basis in your work.

**PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT:** We will also need to be able to review the results of an assessment performed by a licensed clinical or educational psychologist or other comparably trained expert that captures the nature and severity of your learning disorder and its impact on tasks of clear relevance to the demands of the GMAT exam. Ideally, this assessment would have been completed when you were at least 16 years of age and would be no more than 5 years old, so that we can understand the current impact of your learning disorder.

- Your evaluation should include a clear DSM-IV, DSM-V, or ICD-10 diagnosis along with a detailed description of the impact your learning disorder has had on your academic and occupational functioning over time.
- Because learning disorders are developmental in nature, your evaluator should place your current functioning within the context of your history, making specific reference to your grades, academic supports and accommodations, and any previous test results, from the early grades through the present.

- Your evaluation should include standardized academic tasks that are similar to the demands of the GMAT® exam. Ideally, your assessment would include both brief timed academic tasks (for example, the WJ-III Academic Fluency tests) and lengthier, more complex timed academic tasks (for example, the Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults or the Nelson-Denny Reading Test). Ideally, these tests should be scored using age-based norms. If age-based norms are not available for a given test, results should be presented as grade equivalent scores if possible.
- Your evaluation should include at least an abbreviated I.Q. test in order to place your other test results in a meaningful context.
- Ideally, performance-based measures of cognitive skills underlying reading would be included (e.g., measures of phonologic processing and/or rapid naming are often useful when assessing learning disorders).
- If English is not your first language, your assessment would ideally be completed in your first language, and your evaluator should make a statement to this effect.
- Note that the GMAT® does not require test takers to read material aloud or to process spoken information. GMAT® exam responses are not scored for spelling. The GMAT® is also administered entirely by computer and does not require significant amounts of handwriting.

Once we are able to review all of the above, we may request additional information.

You may wish to share these guidelines with a clinical evaluator or an educational professional who knows you well to assist you in preparing appropriate materials and completing appropriate updated testing if necessary.

All documentation needs to be submitted to us in English. If materials need to be translated, you should employ a professional translator and you should include a statement or certificate indicating the qualifications of the professional translator. All documents submitted to us become the property of GMAC® and cannot be returned to you.

