



Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that: "No otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States...shall, solely by reason of...disability, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."<sup>1</sup>

We are mandated by law to provide equal access to students with disabilities. The Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services will review the student's documentation, interview the student, and determine appropriate accommodations according to the functionality of the student's disability.

In order to verify eligibility for services and to fully evaluate requests for accommodations, The Student Disabilities Office requires documentation from a qualified diagnostician or treating health care provider that the individual has a disability in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the B.C. Human Rights Code. To be "qualified", diagnosticians or health care providers must be licensed professionals whose credentials demonstrate expertise in the type of disability evaluation provided.

Documentation should include evaluative data identifying the current functional limitations of the disability which support the need for accommodations. If the data provided is insufficient to support the accommodation request, further information may be requested. Cost and responsibility for providing the evaluation are borne by the student. Documentation will remain in a private confidential file in the Student Disabilities Office. The Student Disabilities Office is available to consult with the diagnostician regarding these guidelines.

Since the documentation is used for determining reasonable accommodations, it is in a student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation. This serves as the basis for decision making about a student's need for accommodations in an academically competitive environment. Academic testing should be done at the adult level and all testing should demonstrate the student's current level of functioning. The student's individual development, the typical progression or stability of the disability, and changes in the student's environment are all factors in this determination.

<sup>1</sup> *Section 504: The Law & Its Impact on Postsecondary Education*, HEATH Resource Center, American Council of Education



Types of documentation that may be helpful to include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Educational, psychological, or medical records;
- Reports and assessments conducted by healthcare providers, clinical psychologists, licensed social workers, or school psychologists;
- Documents that outline use of academic accommodations such as an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504 Plan, and psychoeducational evaluations.

#### **Guidelines for Documentation**

- Documentation must be prepared by a professional who is licensed to practice within a field directly related to and associated with the student's condition. The professional should not be related to the student.
- Documentation must be printed on official stationery and include the printed name, contact information, and signature of the provider.
- A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to determine the diagnoses must be included. It is acceptable for a student with ADHD or ADD to submit a summary from a physician who has been treating the student.
- Finally, documentation must describe functional limitations caused by the condition, clearly demonstrating the severity, frequency, and pervasiveness of each. In addition, it must provide a clear relationship between the limitations and specific major life activity or activities.