Learning and Other Cognitive Disorders
Documentation Guidelines for Evaluators
For GED® Test Accommodations

Introduction

Welcome to the GED® testing program!

GED Testing Service is committed to ensuring access to the GED® test for all individuals with disabilities and supports the intention of the Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAAA).

GED Testing Service provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations to individuals with documented disabilities who demonstrate a need for accommodations. For example, applicants may request someone to record answers, a separate testing room, extra testing time, or presentation of the material in large print.

Evaluators' Role

The following technical information is provided for the evaluators who prepare documentation for GED® candidates as part of their request for GED® test accommodations. GED® 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. Moreover, simply demonstrating that an individual meets diagnostic criteria for a particular disorder does not mean that the person is automatically entitled to accommodations.

The purpose of accommodations is to provide GED® candidates with an opportunity to have full access to the test. However, accommodations are not a guarantee of improved performance or test completion.

Specific accommodations should be related to the identified *functional limitations* so that the impairment is mitigated by the requested auxiliary aid or adjustment to the testing format. For example, a functional limitation might be impaired vision which prevents the individual from viewing the test in the standard font size. An appropriate accommodation might be a large-print test booklet. It is essential that the documentation provide a clear explanation of the current functional limitation and a rationale for the requested accommodation.

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Detailed Documentation Requirements

All GED® candidates who are requesting accommodations based on a diagnosis of a learning disability must provide a report of a current, comprehensive psychoeducational or neuropsychological evaluation. The diagnosis of a learning disability and recommended accommodations must be based on the aggregate of relevant history, test results, and level of current functioning, along with clinical judgment.

Note that meeting diagnostic criteria for a particular disorder does not necessarily mean that the individual will be found to be *disabled* as defined by the ADA Amendments Act.

The evaluation must:

1. Be performed by a qualified evaluator (see Note #1 below)
2. Be current (<5 years; see Note #2 below)
3. Include objective tests that are designed and normed for use with adults
4. Include objective tests that are the most recent edition and that are scored using the most current normative data

The diagnostic report must:

1. Include identifying information:
    a. The first page of the report should be printed on the evaluator's letterhead, and should provide relevant identifying information, including the examinee's name, date of birth, the testing dates, age at the time of testing, 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. educational history
    b. psychosocial history
    c. relevant medical history
    d. history of the condition
    e. history of the *impact* of the condition (not just past use of accommodations)
    f. summary of *previous* psychoeducational test results (if any)
3. Include relevant behavioral observations during testing
4. Include <u>age-based</u> Standard scores and equivalent percentiles for each test and subtest that was administered.
5. Include information about the <u>current impact</u> of the disorder on academic performance, employment (if relevant), and other daily activities
6. Include information about the candidate's native language (if English is not the candidate's native language, then see Note #3 below).

Specific components of the psychoeducational evaluation that must be included:

1. IQ battery (see Note #4 below)
2. A comprehensive achievement battery: tests in each academic area (reading, written language, and math); see Appendix B for a list of acceptable tests in each of these areas. Although not required, we strongly recommend administering timed as well as untimed tests in each academic area, especially if extra testing time on the GED® test is being requested.

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3. Consideration of alternative explanations for the condition, such as emotional functioning or ESL factors, and evidence that these can be ruled out as contributing to the person's condition
4. A specific diagnosis, generally based on accepted DSM-IV-TR diagnostic criteria, and clear evidence that all of the diagnostic criteria have been met
5. Specific recommendations for accommodations that have a basis in objective evidence (see Note #5 below)
6. A specific rationale for each recommended accommodation

Analysis and integration of relevant data: The report must demonstrate:

1. A clear pattern of deficits, not just one or two isolated low test scores
2. Evidence that the evaluator integrated current test results with clinical observations, previous test results (if any), historical evidence, and concurrent evidence, in the process of reaching a diagnostic formulation. Note that if there are large discrepancies between previous test results and current test results, this must be explained.

NOTES:

1. A qualified professional must administer the tests in the evaluation. An individual is deemed to be qualified to conduct a neuropsychological or psychoeducational evaluation if s/he has had extensive graduate-level training in the area of assessment of learning disabilities with adults. This usually includes formal education and training in the history, nature, identification, and remediation of learning disabilities. The name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator must be clearly stated in the documentation, along with evidence of formal training and experience in the identification of learning disabilities. The evaluator should be prepared, if asked, to provide evidence of comprehensive training and direct experience in the diagnosis and treatment of adults with learning disabilities. GED Testing Service reserves the right to request evidence from an evaluator of their professional qualifications. Note that simply having a particular degree or license does not automatically mean that the evaluator has had sufficient formal training and expertise in learning disabilities. Psychoeducational testing administered by family members, even if otherwise qualified, will not be accepted.

If a graduate-trainee is conducting some or all of the evaluation, for example as part of a university-based assessment practicum, we will consider the results if both the clinician and the faculty supervisor sign the written report. GED Testing Service reserves the right to contact the faculty supervisor and/or the graduate trainee/clinician to inquire about the level of supervision during the assessment.

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, GED Testing Service requires a current report of psychoeducational assessment. The psychoeducational evaluation must have been administered no more than five (5) years prior to the anticipated GED® test date.

3. *If the test-taker's native language is NOT English*: The following information should be included in the diagnostic report:

- The report specifies when the candidate first learned English
- The report specifies the candidate's current level of proficiency with oral as well as written English

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- The report includes a statement that English-as-a-second-language (ESL) factors are not primarily responsible for the person's current academic difficulties
- The report includes information about how the learning disability impacted language development in the person's native language.

4. A comprehensive measure of intelligence must be included. Abbreviated IQ batteries (e.g., WASI) or IQ screening measures (e.g., K-BIT) are not acceptable. See Appendix A for a list of acceptable measure of intelligence.

5. Examples of specific recommendations for accommodations may include 25% extra time, one extra 10-minute break for each test-section, or use of a large-print test booklet. Non-specific recommendations such as "extra time" or "the maximum allowable time" are not acceptable. Note that the purpose of extra time is not to ensure that the candidate finishes the GED® test (many non-disabled test-takers do not finish the GED® test).

NOTE: In situations where an individual is thought to have two or more disorders, such as a learning disability and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), the diagnostic report must clearly describe the unique impact of each disorder, and Documentation Requirements must be met for each disorder.

APPENDIX A: Acceptable measures of intelligence

Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test (KAIT)
Reynolds Intellectual Assessment Scales (RIAS)
Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales-5th ed. (SB-5)
Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-III (WAIS-III) *[only if administered on or before December 31, 2010]*
Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-IV (WAIS-IV)
Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-IV (WISC-IV)
Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-III General Intellectual Ability (WJ-III GIA)

APPENDIX B: Acceptable measures of academic achievement

Certain portions of the following test batteries may be used as part of a comprehensive psychoeducational evaluation; following this alphabetical list of test-batteries is a list of acceptable subtests:

Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (Level AR)
Gray Oral Reading Test-4 (GORT-4)
Kaufman Tests of Educational Achievement-II (KTEA-II)
Nelson-Denny Reading Test (Forms G or H)
Peabody Individual Achievement Test-R/NU (PIAT-R/NU)
Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults
Test of Adolescent & Adult Language-4 (TOAL-4)
Test of Written Language-4 (TOWL-4)
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test-II or III (WIAT-II or WIAT-III)
Wide Range Achievement Test-4 (WRAT-4)
Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-III (WJ-III) Tests of Achievement

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Measures of Academic Achievement: Acceptable subtests

Reading Achievement (untimed)

WJ-III Letter-Word Identification ____
WJ-III Passage Comprehension ____
WJ-III Word Attack ____
WIAT-II / WIAT-III Word Reading ____
WIAT-II / WIAT-III Pseudoword Decoding ____
WIAT-II / WIAT-III Reading Comprehension ____
PIAT-R/NU Reading Recognition ____
PIAT-R/NU Reading Comprehension ____
WRAT-4 Reading ____
KTEA-II Letter & Word Recognition ____
KTEA-II Reading Comprehension ____
KTEA-II Nonsense Word Decoding ____

Reading Achievement (timed)

WJ-III Reading Fluency ____
Nelson-Denny Vocabulary ____
Nelson-Denny Comprehension ____
SATA Reading Vocabulary ____
SATA Reading Comprehension ____
Gates-MacGinitie Reading Vocabulary ____
Gates-MacGinitie Reading Comprehension ____
GORT-4 Oral Reading Quotient
(test-takers <18 years old only) ____
KTEA-II Word Recognition Fluency ____

Written Language Achievement (untimed)

WJ-III Writing Samples ____
WJ-III Editing ____
WIAT-II Written Expression ____
WIAT-III Sentence Composition ____
WIAT-III Essay Composition ____
TOAL-4 Written Language Composite ____
PIAT-R/NU Written Expression ____
KTEA-II Written Expression ____

Written Language Achievement (timed)

SATA Writing Composition ____
WJ-III Writing Fluency ____
TOWL-4 Spontaneous Writing Composite ____

Mathematics Achievement (untimed)

WJ-III Calculation ____
WJ-III Applied Problems ____
WJ-III Quantitative Concepts ____
WIAT-II Math Reasoning ____
WIAT-III Math Problem Solving ____

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WIAT-III Numerical Operations ____
PIAT-R/NU Mathematics ____
KTEA-II Math Computation ____
KTEA-II Math Concepts & Applications ____

Mathematics Achievement (timed)

WJ-III Math Fluency ____
SATA Math Calculation ____
SATA Math Application ____
WRAT-4 Math Computation ____

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