

Connecticut College
Office of Student Accessibility Services
Documentation Guidelines

Blind or Visually Impaired

Important note to students who had an IEP or 504 in high school:

*Please note that there are differences between the laws that govern accommodations in K-12 Education, which emphasize student success, and those that apply to postsecondary education, which emphasize equal access to educational opportunities. Because of these differences, you may not qualify for the same accommodations you received in the past in a different educational setting. Additionally, because of these differences, **an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan are not sufficient documentation of a disability or the need for accommodations in higher education.***

Students are required to submit documentation by an appropriate qualified professional who verifies the presence of a condition that rises to the level of a disability and confirms the need for reasonable accommodations based on the diagnosed condition. The diagnostician involved in the evaluation must be a licensed or otherwise properly credentialed professional who is qualified/certified to evaluate and diagnose the disability, familiar with the challenges and functional requirements of a college environment, and an impartial evaluator or diagnostician who is **not** a family member **nor** in a dual relationship with the student.

1. The evaluating professional will need to provide a Diagnostic Report:

- Typed on letterhead
- Includes the date(s) of assessment and date of report
- Signature of the evaluating professional, their name, title, and professional credentials
- The standard for documentation currency is dependent upon the nature of the disabling condition, the current status of the condition, and the student's request for accommodations

2. The Diagnostic Report must also include the information listed below:

- **Diagnosis** -The evaluation must include a clear, diagnostic statement identifying the vision-related disability with supporting detailed descriptions and objective data. If

the condition that leads to the loss of vision is progressive, Student Accessibility Services will ask for documentation that is current, within the last year.

- **Assessment** - The evaluation must contain information about the assessment procedures and evaluation instruments that were used to make the diagnosis as well as a summary of the evaluation results including standardized scores, if applicable.
- **Current Status** - The evaluation should contain narrative or descriptive text providing both quantitative and qualitative information about the student's abilities that might be helpful in understanding the student's profile, including the use of corrective lenses and ongoing visual therapy (if appropriate).
 - Visual acuity
 - Tracking and fusion difficulties
 - Eye movement disorders
 - Inefficiency in using both eyes together
 - Misalignment of the eyes
 - Focusing problems
 - Visual sensory disorders
 - Motor integration
 - Visual acuity with and without correction
 - Expected progression or stability of disability over time
 - ***Attach relevant tests***
- **Impact or functional limitation**
 - Current, functional limitations of the condition in an academic setting
- **Treatment/Therapy**
 - Information regarding appropriate treatment (i.e. corrective lenses or ongoing visual therapy)
 - Status of corrective lenses (glasses and/or contact lenses and any other devices)
 - Treatment
 - Medications being used and side effects of medications
 - Accommodations/auxiliary aids, and services currently prescribed or in use as related to the functional limitations previously stated.
- **Suggestions or recommendations** - The evaluation should include recommendations for reasonable accommodations that might be appropriate at the postsecondary level. These recommendations should be directly supported by the diagnosis and the significant impact/functional limitations of the disorder.