



ROCHESTER —COLLEGE—

Rochester College Students with Disability Accommodation Policy

Procedures and Forms

Updated January 2016

All requests for accommodations must be submitted to Caitlin Bechard. Accommodations will not be established prior to a student speaking with and submitting appropriate documentation to Caitlin Bechard.

Contact Information:

Caitlin Bechard
Rochester College
ACE, Utley
800 West Avon Road
Rochester Hills, MI 48307

Academic Center for Excellence Director
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Rochester College Students with Disability Accommodation Policy

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 Rochester College provides reasonable accommodation(s) to qualified students with disabilities.

A qualified student with a disability is a person who meets the academic and nonacademic admission criteria essential to participate in the program in question and who, with or without reasonable accommodation(s), can perform the essential functions of the program or course requirements.

Human Resources and Academic Support facilitate reasonable accommodation(s) and support services for qualified students with a properly documented disability. A disability is a physical or mental impairment substantially limiting one or more major life activities. Written documentation, current within three years, from an appropriate professional is required.

Admission Process

The Rochester College admissions process is necessarily a competitive and selective one. A student's high school record (course difficulty and performance) and test scores are important elements in admissions decisions, but other accomplishments and personal qualities are also relevant since the College seeks a diverse body of students.

Rochester College considers the admission applications of persons with disabilities under the same criteria as all other applications. Applicants are not required to disclose a disability during the application process; however, if an applicant's disability had a significant impact on his/her high school academic performance or experience, the applicant may provide appropriate documentation to the admissions office if he/she wants the impact of the disability to be taken into consideration.

Guidelines for Documentation of a Specific Learning Disability

The student bears the responsibility to request accommodation(s) and provide documentation of his/her disability including **a specific diagnosis** with evidence to support and identify specific limitations. After acceptance to Rochester College or immediately following an injury or a diagnosis of a disorder, the student should contact the Accommodation Officer to report the disability as soon as possible. Reporting the disability to any other representative of the College will not initiate the official procedure needed to establish eligibility for support services.

Documentation must be current (within the last three years; however, exceptions are sometimes necessary depending upon the individual case) and in writing from a licensed/certified professional and must provide the following information:

- Date of evaluation.
- Diagnosis - specific with International Classification of Diseases (ICD) classification.
- Method of the evaluation/examination.
- Specific limitation with respect to the disability's current impact in the College and educational environment.
- Medication - expectation in results of functioning, or cognitive impairment.

Documentation must be based on an evaluation from appropriately credentialed professional.

Examples:

- A physical condition diagnosed by a physician, ophthalmologist, audiologist, physical therapist, etc.
- A learning disability diagnosis from a professional who is trained and qualified to evaluate specific learning disabilities in adolescents and adults: psychologists, learning disabilities specialists, medical doctors, etc.
- An emotional illness diagnosed by a psychologist, psychiatrist, or other qualified licensed mental health provider.

Documentation should be current within three years; however, exceptions are sometimes necessary depending upon the individual case. In some situations, Rochester College requests verification every twelve months. Up-to-date information which outlines the student's present level of functioning is often essential in assessing the current need for specific accommodation(s).

Students seeking support services from Rochester College on the basis of a diagnosed specific learning disability are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Rochester College determines protection under these civil rights statutes on a case-by-case basis and accommodation(s) are based upon documentation of a learning disability that **currently and substantially limits** some major life activity including learning.

The following guidelines are provided to assure documentation is appropriate to verify eligibility and to support requests for reasonable accommodation(s), academic adjustments, and/or

auxiliary aids. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list or to restrict assessment in other pertinent and helpful areas such as vocational interests and aptitudes.

- Testing must be comprehensive. It is not acceptable to administer only one test for the purpose of diagnosis or establishing that substantial limitation in a major life activity currently exists in individuals with a previous diagnosis of a learning disability. Minimally, domains to be addressed must include (but are not limited to):
 - Aptitude
 - Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale - Revised (WAIS-R) or WAIS-III with subtest scores is the preferred instrument.
 - Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery - Revised: Tests of Cognitive Ability or the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale: Fourth Edition are acceptable.
 - The Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (KBIT) is not a comprehensive measure and therefore is not suitable.
 - Achievement: Current levels of functioning in reading, mathematics, and written language are required.
 - Woodcock-Johnson Psycho educational Battery - Revised: Tests of Achievement
 - Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)
 - Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK)
 - Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults (SATA)
 - Specific achievement tests such as the Test of Written Language - 3 (TOWL-3), Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests - Revised, and the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test. The Wide Range Achievement Test - 3 (WRAT-3) and the Mini-Battery of Achievement (MBA) are not comprehensive measures of achievement and therefore are not suitable.
 - Information Processing: Specific areas of information processing must be assessed. For example: short- and long-term memory, sequential memory, auditory and visual perception/processing, processing speed.
 - Information from subtests on the WAIS-R (or WAIS-III), the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability, or the Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude-Adult (DTLA-A), as well as other instruments relevant to the present learning problem(s) may be used to address these areas.
- Testing must be current. In most cases, this means testing has been conducted within the past three years, but the College may require more recent testing in certain circumstances. The provision of all reasonable accommodations and services is based upon assessment of the current impact of the student's disabilities on his/her academic performance; therefore, it is in the student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation.

- There must be clear and specific evidence and identification of a learning disability. Individual "learning styles" and "learning differences" in and of themselves do not constitute a learning disability.
- Actual test scores must be provided. Standard scores are required; percentiles and grade equivalents are not acceptable unless standard scores are also included. This is important since certain College policies and procedures (e.g., petitioning for permission to substitute courses) require actual data to substantiate eligibility.
- In addition to actual test scores, interpretation of results is required. Test protocol sheets or scores alone are not sufficient.
- Professionals conducting assessment and rendering diagnoses of learning disabilities must be qualified to do so. Trained, certified and/or licensed school psychologists, neuropsychologists, clinical psychologists, learning disabilities specialists, and other professionals with training and experience relevant to adults and their evaluation are typically involved in the process of assessment.
- Tests used to document eligibility must be technically sound (i.e., statistically reliable and valid) and standardized for use with an adult population.
- Diagnostic reports must include the names, titles, and professional credentials (e.g., licensed psychologist) of the evaluator(s) as well as the date(s) of testing. All reports must be typed; handwritten scores or summary sheets are not acceptable.
- A written summary of background information about the student's relevant educational, medical, and family histories that relate to the learning disability must be included.
- Any recommendation for accommodation(s) should be based on objective evidence of a substantial limitation to learning supported by specific test results or clinical observations. Reports should establish the rationale for the recommended accommodation(s) using test data to document the need.
- A description of any accommodation and/or auxiliary aid used at the secondary or postsecondary level should be discussed. Include information about the specific conditions under which the accommodation was used (e.g., standardized testing, final exams) and whether or not it benefited the student.
- Individual Education Programs (IEPs) are useful, but are not in and of themselves, sufficient documentation to establish the rationale for accommodation(s).

Procedure for Academic Accommodation

Rochester College is committed to treating all individuals within the college, including those with disabilities, in a fair and equitable manner. Furthermore, it is the policy and practice of the college to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation

Act of 1973. Under these laws, no otherwise qualified individual with a disability will be denied access to or participation in services, programs and activities of Rochester College.

Reasonable accommodations are developed on an individual basis, based on the documentation provided as well as collaboration with the student. Accommodations give access to programs but do not guarantee success in meeting program requirements. If an individual with a disability cannot meet the fundamental requirements of the academic program in which he or she is enrolled, even with reasonable accommodation(s), then he/she is not "otherwise qualified" to participate in the program. There is no charge for any accommodation. In instances where comparable access can be obtained from any one of several accommodations, the College reserves the right to select the accommodation method to be used.

Rochester College does not provide or pay for personal services. "Personal services" are services and/or equipment the individual with a disability would need even if he/she were not enrolled (hearing aids, personal/care attendants, etc.).

A student establishes eligibility for services by submitting the appropriate written documentation to the Accommodation Officer. Reasonable accommodations are determined by the diagnostic data and recommendations contained within the documentation. When a student with a disability enrolls in courses, the following sequence of events should occur:

1. If a student with a properly documented disability feels he/she may wish to request accommodation(s), he/she must give written permission for the Accommodation Officer to inform instructors the individual is a student with a properly documented disability. The student must request accommodation(s) **every semester** in which he/she is enrolled; this may be done via email to the Accommodation Officer. The instructor will receive written notification from the Accommodation Officer. Due to confidentiality concerns specific information about the disability is not included. Instead, the letter notifies the instructor the student has a disability that needs to be accommodated. The letter of notification will delineate accommodation(s) that have been discussed and approved.
2. It is the student's responsibility to request accommodation(s) from individual professors. The student should schedule an appointment with each professor to discuss accommodation(s) he/she needs as well as to verify the professor has received the accommodation letter. Professors often report they receive a letter from the Accommodation Officer but the student does not follow up to request the accommodation(s). This sometimes happens because a student feels he/she will not require an accommodation in a particular course due to the manner in which material is presented, the means of evaluation, etc. It is always within the student's rights to refuse to request accommodation(s); however, a professor is not liable if the student fails to make timely arrangements for the accommodation and then performs poorly in the course.
3. The professor is only required to make available the accommodation(s) delineated within the letter of notification issued by the Accommodation Office. If, as the semester progresses, the student feels additional accommodation(s) is/are warranted, the student

must initiate a discussion with the Accommodation Officer via phone at (248) 218-2174 or email at cbechard@rc.edu.

4. Discussing accommodation(s) with professors is an important step toward self-advocacy but is often an intimidating experience for students. Students needing assistance with this step should contact the Accommodation Officer at extension 2174.
5. If a problem develops, immediately notify the Accommodation Officer at extension 2174. Unless otherwise notified, the assumption will be made the semester is progressing properly.
6. If a student has questions or concerns, contact the Accommodation Officer at extension 2174.
7. Communication is done via the Rochester College email system. It is essential for the student to check his/her Rochester College email account on a daily basis.

Rights and Responsibilities

Rochester College through its Accommodation Officer has the *right* to:

- Maintain the College's academic standards.
- Request current documentation from a student, completed by an appropriate professional source to verify the need for reasonable accommodation(s), academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids.
- Discuss a student's need for reasonable accommodation(s), academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids with the professional source of his/her documentation. The student's signed consent will authorize such discussion.
- Select among equally effective and appropriate accommodations, adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids in consultation with the student with a disability.
- Deny a request for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids if the documentation does not identify a specific disability, the documentation fails to verify the need for the requested services, or the documentation is not provided in a timely manner.
- Refuse to provide an accommodation, adjustment, and/or auxiliary aids that is inappropriate or unreasonable including any that:
 - Pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others.
 - Constitute a substantial change or alteration to an essential element of a course or program.
 - Pose undue financial or administrative burden on the College.

Rochester College through its Accommodation Officer has the *responsibility* to:

- Ensure College courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities, when viewed in their entirety, are offered in the most integrated and appropriate settings.
- Provide information regarding policies and procedures to students with disabilities and assure its availability in accessible formats upon request.
- Evaluate students on their abilities not their disabilities.

- Provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids for students with disabilities upon a timely request from the student.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication concerning students with disabilities except where disclosure is required by law or authorized by the student.

Students with disabilities at Rochester College have the *right to*:

- Equal access to courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities available through the College.
- Reasonable and appropriate accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids determined on an individualized basis.
- Appropriate confidentiality of all information pertaining to his/her disability as well as the choice of to whom their disability is disclosed, except as required by law.
- Information reasonably available in accessible formats.

Students with disabilities at Rochester College have the *responsibility to*:

- Contact the Accommodation Officer well in advance of the beginning of each semester so the appropriate accommodation(s) can be made in a timely manner. Students are strongly encouraged to make this contact at least 30 days in advance of the beginning of the semester, but no later than 2 weeks before the semester begins.
- If necessary, provide the Accommodation Officer with appropriate medical, psychological, psycho educational or neuropsychological documentation indicating the student's disability and suggested accommodation(s). Prior establishment of documentation usually does not require additional documentation in subsequent semesters.
- Provide signed consent authorizing the Accommodation Officer to discuss his/her need for reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids with the professional source of his/her documentation.
- Meet with the faculty member or professor at the beginning of each semester to discuss the accommodation letter from the Accommodation Officer.
- If the student fails to comply, he/she will receive a written reminder of responsibilities in order to stress the importance of these requirements.

Responsibilities of the faculty member include:

- Discuss with the Accommodation Officer any concerns related to the accommodation(s) or arrangement(s) requested by the student during their initial contact.
- Determine the conditions under which the exam is to be administered (e.g., open book, use of notes, computer with word processing including spell check, formula sheet, calculator, scrap paper, dictionary).
- Provide appropriate accommodation(s), either personally or by making arrangements with the Accommodation Officer.
- Assure timely delivery of the exam along with all necessary instructions and materials for proper administration if a student's exam is to be administered outside of class. The faculty member may also make arrangements with the student for the delivery and return of the exam.
- Assure the confidentiality of information regarding students with disabilities.

Accommodation Advisory Committee

If a specific accommodation request requires conflict resolution, the Accommodation Officer and the Rochester College Students with Disability Accommodation Policy are the official College agents in such matters. Students must provide relevant documentation of the disability from an appropriate professional source in order to verify eligibility for accommodation(s). This documentation is confidential and shared with College personnel on a need-to-know basis only.

Rochester College has established an Accommodation Advisory Committee under the jurisdiction of the College's chief academic officer. The purpose of this Committee is to assist the chief academic officer in resolving disagreements that arise concerning specific requests for academic accommodations on a case-by-case basis. The Committee serves as a resource for all College entities including faculty, academic administrators, and students for a final review of disagreements concerning specific academic accommodation requests.

Members of the Accommodation Advisory Committee will include the following:

- The Committee will be chaired by the chief academic officer or a designee.
- Faculty chairperson or designated representative of the Department offering the course(s) in which the accommodation is requested.
- The Accommodation Officer.
- Dean of Students or a representative from Student Life appointed by the Dean of Students.
- Psychology department chair or faculty representative at large appointed by the chief academic officer.

Conflict Resolution Procedure

1. The student requests accommodation(s) and provides supporting documentation to the Accommodation Officer according to College guidelines.
2. In instances where there is disagreement concerning the appropriateness of the requested accommodation, the student, instructor teaching the course for which the accommodation has been requested, and Accommodation Officer will make every effort to resolve the disagreement in a timely manner.
3. If agreement cannot be reached, the student, instructor, or College administrative staff may file a petition with the chief academic officer who would have responsibility for convening the Accommodation Advisory Committee.
4. The Committee reviews the petition and any additional relevant information from College personnel in order to render a decision within ten (10) days from the date of the petition. The decision of this Committee is final.
5. While a petition is under review by the Accommodation Advisory Committee, the instructor should provide reasonable accommodations.
6. The decision of the Committee will be communicated through the Accommodation Officer.



Academic Center for Excellence
800 West Avon Road
Rochester Hills, MI 48307

AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Dear _____
(PRINT NAME of PHYSICIAN/PSYCHOLOGIST)

I, _____
(PRINT FULL NAME of STUDENT)

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

the undersigned, do hereby give my permission for the release to Rochester College Academic Center for Excellence, information in your possession, which attests to the existence of a severe and chronic disabling condition. The said condition may impede educational goal's attainment unless support services are provided.

The authorized release of information is to include the following:

1. Specific diagnosis(es) utilizing diagnostic categorization or classification of the ICD or DSM IV. Diagnoses should indicate primary, secondary, etc. and significant findings particularly in respect to presenting problems.
2. Date the examination/assessment/evaluation was performed.
3. Identify limitations in function or performance in activities such as: mobility, self-care, note-taking, laboratory assignment, and testing/examinations, housing conditions/arrangements. Is this condition permanent or temporary?
4. Is/was medication prescribed? Frequency? Are any physical and/or cognitive processes affected by the medication? If so, how?

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____



Academic Center for Excellence
800 West Avon Road
Rochester Hills, MI 48307

The Academic Center for Excellence is responsible for assuring programs and facilities of Rochester College are accessible to disabled students. These services are designed to meet the individual needs of the students.

If you have a disability/chronic medical condition, you are encouraged to complete this form and return it directly to the Academic Center for Excellence. Upon receipt of this form, a request will be made for current documentation from your primary care physician or other professional care provider about the disability and the functional limitation it imposes while you are at Rochester College. The documentation will remain confidential and will be used to determine the need for accommodation(s).

If you have questions regarding your eligibility, please refer to the back of this form.



Date: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Type of Disability: _____

Is this Disability: Permanent _____ Temporary _____

Are you a client of a state/federal rehabilitation agency (e.g., Vocational Rehabilitation, Services for the Blind, Veteran's Administration, etc.)? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, which agency? _____

Mailing address: _____

Telephone number: _____

(continued on next page)

Nature of Disability

- a. Hearing Impairment
 - b. Visual Impairment
 - c. Paraplegia
 - d. Quadriplegia
 - e. Amputation
 - f. Arthritis
 - g. Hemophilia
 - h. Epilepsy/Seizure Disorder
 - i. Diabetes
 - j. Cardiovascular Disease
 - k. Psychological/Psychiatric Disorder
 - l. Traumatic Brain Injury
 - m. Other (please specify)
-
-

Limitation

- a. Reading
- b. Talking
- c. Understanding Spoken Language
- d. Walking
- e. Climbing Stairs
- f. Arm/Hand Movement
- g. Participation in Athletics
- h. Other (please list)

Please return this form to:

Caitlin Bechard
Rochester College
ACE, Utley
800 West Avon Road
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