

Guidelines for Documenting Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

1.) **A Qualified Evaluator.** Professionals conducting evaluations or assessments, diagnosing Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and making recommendations for appropriate and reasonable academic accommodations must be qualified and licensed to do so. They may be individuals or serve as a member of a diagnostic team, as a multi-disciplinary approach is often crucial for diagnosis and treatment of those with ASD. The documentation must meet the following criteria:

- include evaluator's name, title, professional credentials, license and/or certification number
- be presented on the professional's letterhead, typed, dated, signed, and legible
- the evaluator may not be an immediate family member.

2.) **Current Documentation.** Reasonable accommodations are based on the current impact of a disability; therefore, it is of utmost importance for psychological documentation to address an individual's current level of functioning and present need for accommodations. The documentation may need to be updated so that we can best accommodate the student. If your medical document is older than 5 years old, please have a qualified evaluator as listed above, complete the **DRC 102 General Medical and/or Mental Health Documentation Form** and submit it with your most current evaluation, as stated below.

3.) Comprehensive Documentation.

The documentation **must** include:

- A **clear** diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder based on *DSM-IV*, *DSM-V* or ICD-10 criteria, including:
 - a **clearly stated** diagnosis, subtype if applicable, and diagnostic code,
 - a list of the diagnostic criteria as the basis for the diagnosis,
 - a description of how the diagnosis substantially impacts a major life activity/activities,
 - **CANNOT INCLUDE** wording such as "seems to indicate" or "suggests."
- A description of current and past treatments, therapeutic techniques, assistive devices or software, medications, etc. used to manage the impact of ASD.
- Appropriate, specific recommendations for academic accommodations including:
 - detailed explanation as to why each accommodation is recommended,
 - a correlation to previously discussed functional limitation in life activity.
- A discussion of any of the following, as applicable:

- history of presenting symptoms and evidence of impairment in early childhood
- relevant developmental, historical, familial, and psycho-social information
- evidence of current functional impairment, particularly in an academic environment (e.g., the impact on study skills, note-taking, test-taking, and organizational skills).
- severity of symptoms
- co-existing conditions, if any.
- Suggestions of reasonable accommodation(s), which might be appropriate at the post-secondary level, are encouraged. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis.

4.) **Psychological Instruments.** Though not explicitly required, psychological instruments may be useful in helping the evaluator render a more accurate diagnosis and, therefore, better recommendations for accommodation. Such tests might include/ address: cognition, executive functioning, expressive and receptive language and communication, personality, behavior, sensory-motor integration, attention, memory, learning, visual-perceptive motor skills, and academic achievement. If such tests are used, they should be submitted with the evaluation.

5.) **Supporting Documentation.** The qualified evaluator's report, while necessary, is by no means the only documentation we can use to better understand and accommodate the student with ASD. Other helpful documents may include records of accommodations from previous institutions, high school 504 plans or IEPs, and previous psycho-educational evaluations. Please see the **DRC 102 General Medical and/or Mental Health Documentation Form**, should you wish to add this to your supporting documentation.

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*Please note the on-campus DRC office is currently closed. Students must submit documentation as an attachment to drc@emich.edu prior to their scheduled appointment. Please visit the [DRC website](#) for additional information.