



11.20.2017

Disability Services Office (DSO)

Handbook for Policies and Procedures

(Updated July 2017)

Table of Contents

Section I: Introduction to Centenary University’s Disability Services Office	- 4 -
Mission Statement.....	- 4 -
Contact information	- 4 -
Full-Time DSO Staff.....	- 5 -
Rights and Responsibilities.....	- 6 -
Relevant Guiding Legislation	- 8 -
The Rehabilitation Act of 1973-Section 504:	- 8 -
The ADA and ADAAA:	- 8 -
Section II: The Provision of Reasonable Accommodations	- 10 -
Defining Reasonable Accommodations.....	- 10 -
Procedure for Registering with DSO and Requesting Reasonable Accommodations..	- 11 -
Procedure for Requesting Letters of Accommodation After Accommodation Plans Have Been Established.....	- 12 -
Special Information Relating to Spell-Check Devices and Calculators as Reasonable Accommodations	- 13 -
Notification of Denial for Accommodations	- 15 -
Section III: Documentation.....	- 15 -
General Guidelines for Disability Documentation	- 16 -
Guidelines for Documentation of Learning Disabilities	- 20 -
Guidelines for Documentation of Psychiatric Disabilities / Psychological Disorders .	- 21 -
Guidelines for Documentation of Physical Disabilities,.....	- 22 -
Neurological Conditions, or Mobility Impairments.....	- 22 -
Guidelines for Documentation of Sensory Impairments	- 23 -
Guidelines for Documentation of Substance Abuse Disorders.....	- 24 -
Guidelines for Documentation of ADD and ADHD.....	- 25 -
Guidelines for Documentation of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)	- 26 -
Guidelines for Documentation for Chronic Medical and Other Conditions.....	- 27 -
Guidelines for Documentation of Autism Spectrum Disorder	- 28 -
Section IV: Using Accommodations and Disability Services at Centenary University-	29 -
Testing Accommodations	- 29 -
Procedure for Scheduling Testing Accommodations	- 29 -
Note-taking Services.....	- 30 -
Procedure for receiving note-taking services.....	- 30 -
Course Materials in Alternative Formats	- 31 -
Procedure for Requesting Course Materials in Alternative Formats	- 31 -
Sign Language Interpreters/Captioning/CCTV/VRS	- 32 -
Adaptive or Assistive Technology.....	- 32 -
Section V: Campus Accessibility Needs.....	- 33 -

Service Animal Policy - 36 -

Assistance Animal Policy - 37 -

Section VI: Advocacy - 38 -

Talking to Your Professors - 38 -

10 Tips for Self-Advocacy - 39 -

Section VII: Confidentiality, Appeals, and Grievance Procedures..... - 40 -

Policy on Confidentiality - 40 -

Alternative Remedies - 41 -

Section VIII: Special Programs - 41 -

Project ABLE..... - 42 -

STEP Ahead..... - 43 -

Section IX: Resources..... - 45 -

Appendix..... - 47 -

DSO Forms - 47 -

Section I: Introduction to Centenary University's Disability Services Office

Mission Statement

The mission of the Disability Services Office (DSO) is to provide access to Centenary University's facilities and programs through a range of reasonable accommodations and support services to identified members of the community that experience disability(ies). Based on nationally regarded best practices, the Disability Services Office seeks to foster independence and to develop the self-advocacy of students with disabilities. In addition, the office strives to serve as a liaison and resource to the members of the Centenary University community regarding disability issues.

Office Hours

Monday through Friday 8:30am – 4:30pm

Other appointment times available upon request.

Location

The Academic Success Center is located in the Harris & Betts Smith Learning Center (also known as the "Library Annex").

Access Information

There are a number of designated handicapped parking spaces directly adjacent to the Harris and Betts Smith Learning Center as well as a suitable ramp leading to the main doors. Unfortunately, neither the building doors nor the Academic Success Center Office Suite doors are equipped yet with automatic door openers, however assistance can be provided by dialing 908-852-1400, extension 2168.

Contact information

E-Mail: dso@centenaryuniversity.edu

Phone: 908-852-1400 x2168

Fax: 908-979-4277

Full-Time DSO Staff

Director of Disability Services

Michelle Meyer, MA

908-852-1400, x2251

meyerm02@centenaryuniversity.edu

Disability Accommodations Coordinator

Mary Ann Raimond, MS, MA

908-852-1400, x2051

raimondm@centenaryuniversity.edu

Learning Support Specialist

Marcella Griffith, M.Ed.

908-852-1400, x2152

griffithm@centenaryuniversity.edu

Learning Support Specialist

Jessica Jackson, MSW, LCSW

908-852-1400, x2432

jacksonj04@centenaryuniversity.edu

Administrative Coordinator

Jill Gerlach

908-852-1400, x2168

gerlachj@centenaryuniversity.edu

Part-Time DSO Staff

Learning Support Specialist

Maureen Fallon, MSP, CCC

908-852-1400, x2429

fallonm@centenaryuniversity.edu

Rights and Responsibilities

The Disability Services Office (DSO)

The Disability Services Office has the right to:

- ✓ Request and receive current disability documentation that supports requests for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- ✓ Deny a request for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services if the documentation demonstrates that the request is not warranted or the student fails to provide appropriate documentation;
- ✓ Select among equally effective accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- ✓ Refuse accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services that impose a fundamental alteration of a University program or activity.

The Disability Services Office has the responsibility to:

- ✓ Provide information to students with disabilities in accessible formats upon request;
- ✓ Ensure that courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities are available and usable in the most integrated and appropriate settings;
- ✓ Review Application for Accommodations and Services to determine eligibility for services and nature of accommodations;
- ✓ Provide or arrange reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and auxiliary aids and services;
- ✓ Maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication, and to disclose such information only when permitted by law;
- ✓ Serve as a liaison between students and faculty;
- ✓ Serve as a resource on disability issues for the Centenary campus community.

Faculty

Faculty members have the right to:

- ✓ Identify and establish standards for courses and academic programs;
- ✓ Verify through the Disability Services Office the eligibility for and nature of accommodations before provision of accommodations occurs;
- ✓ Request assistance and resources from the Disability Services Office.

Faculty members are responsible for:

- ✓ Evaluating students solely on the basis of their academic performance;
- ✓ Working with the student and the Disability Services Office to ensure the provision of reasonable accommodations;
- ✓ Fostering an accessible learning environment to all learners;
- ✓ Addressing concerns about disability accommodations with the Disability Services Office.

Students

Students with disabilities at Centenary University have the right to:

- ✓ Equal access to courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities offered through the University;
- ✓ Equal opportunity to learn;
- ✓ Request reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- ✓ Information in accessible formats.

Students with disabilities have the responsibility to:

- ✓ Meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities;
- ✓ Identify themselves as individuals with disabilities when requesting accommodations and seek information, counsel, and assistance as necessary;
- ✓ Document their disability according to established guidelines and demonstrate how disability substantially limits their participation in courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities;
- ✓ Follow published procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services.

Students are advised to:

- ✓ Meet with each of their professors to discuss the testing and academic accommodations that they anticipate needing for each class;
- ✓ Self-disclose their disability status to faculty and staff when appropriate;
- ✓ Exercise self-advocacy to meet their disability related needs.

Relevant Guiding Legislation

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973-Section 504:

Provides a 'right of access' statute to people with disabilities. Section 504 provides persons with disabilities the right of access into, or to derive benefits from, any program or activity receiving federal financial funding.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states in part that "no otherwise qualified handicapped individual...shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

The ADA and ADAAA:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 is civil rights legislation that affects millions of Americans with Disabilities. At its inception, it was believed that this federal law would provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. The ADA was regarded as the most sweeping civil rights legislation since The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and was intended to protect the civil rights of people with disabilities by ensuring equal access to employment, state and local government agencies, transportation, public and private facilities, and telecommunications.

On September 25, 2008, the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) was signed into law as a means to reject several Supreme Court decisions as well as portions of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) ADA regulations that served to weaken the intent of the legislation. The Act retains the ADA's basic definition of "disability" as an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment. However, it changes the way that the statutory terms should be interpreted. Most significantly, the ADAAA¹:

- Directs EEOC to revise the portion of its regulations that defines the term "substantially limits";
- Expands the definition of "major life activities" by including two non-exhaustive lists:
 1. The first list includes many activities that the EEOC has recognized (e.g., walking) as well as activities that EEOC has not specifically recognized (e.g., reading, bending, and communicating);
 2. The second list includes major bodily functions (e.g., "functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, respiratory, neurological, brain, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions");
- States that mitigating measures other than "ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses" shall not be considered in assessing whether an individual has a

¹ DBTAC: Southeast ADA Center (2009). ADA amendments act of 2008 summary and resources. Retrieved on January 11, 2011 from http://sedbtac.org/ada/publications/adaaa_resources.doc.

- disability;
- Clarifies that an impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active;
 - Provides that an individual subjected to an action prohibited by the ADA (e.g., failure to hire) because of an actual or perceived impairment will meet the "regarded as" definition of disability, unless the impairment is transitory and minor;
 - Provides that individuals covered only under the "regarded as" prong are not entitled to reasonable accommodation; and emphasizes that the definition of "disability" should be interpreted broadly.

Disabled Individual:

The ADA, ADA Amendments Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 define a "disabled individual" as anyone who:

1. has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, or working; or
2. has a record of such impairment; or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment.

Section II: The Provision of Reasonable Accommodations

Defining Reasonable Accommodations

- Reasonable accommodations are appropriate adjustments to programs, policy, and practice that make aspects of the college experience accessible and provide equal opportunities to Centenary University students with disabilities. An equal opportunity means a chance to attain the same level of performance or to enjoy equal benefits and privileges as are available to a similarly situated student without disabilities. Reasonable accommodations do not fundamentally alter the major curriculum components of a specific course.
- Students are not charged for the cost incurred in providing reasonable accommodations, including auxiliary aids and services (e.g., sign language interpreters, note-taking services, text conversion to alternative accessible formats, audio or video tapes, etc.)
- To determine reasonable accommodations, DSO may seek information from appropriate university personnel regarding essential standards for courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities. The director makes the final determinations of reasonable accommodations in collaboration with the student and faculty as warranted.
- Reasonable accommodations are determined by examining:
 1. Environmental barriers limiting curricular, facility, or programmatic access;
 2. The objective and subjective impact that the substantiated disability has on the student;
 3. Whether or not the student has access to the course, program, service, activity, or facility without an accommodation;
 4. The range of possible accommodations that might remove the barriers;
 5. Whether or not essential elements of the course, program, service, activity, or facility are compromised by the accommodations.

Procedure for Registering with DSO and Requesting Reasonable Accommodations

1. Complete the Application for Accommodations and/or the Application for Intensive Support.
2. Submit documentation pertaining to and substantiating the impact of the declared disability (greater detail relating to documentation guidelines may be found in [Section III](#) of this manual).
3. Respond to requests for interview from the Director of Disability Services or his/her designee.
 - Students with disabilities possess unique knowledge of their individual disabilities. Students should be prepared in the interview with DSO staff to discuss the functional challenges they face and, if applicable, what has or has not worked for them in the past.
4. DSO staff will review all pertinent information and compose a Letter of Accommodation stipulating the accommodations that the particular student is eligible for based upon the impact of their disability.
 - Students should allow at least two weeks for the Disability Services Office to review all requests for accommodations and issue accommodation letters.
5. DSO will notify the student that their Letters of Accommodation are available for pick-up.
6. Students should make arrangements to pick-up their Letter(s) of Accommodation as soon as possible in order to distribute them to each of their professors from which they would like to receive accommodations.

Procedure for Requesting Letters of Accommodation After Accommodation Plans Have Been Established

Students that wish to receive Letters of Accommodation for each subsequent semester after registration with DSO is complete should reflect upon their current accommodation plan in order to ascertain its effectiveness and suitability in minimizing the impact of their disability. The student should then adhere to the following procedure to obtain Accommodation Letters for the new semester:

1. Consult with a member of the DSO Staff if changes to the plan are warranted.
2. If the student feels that the previous accommodation plan is suitable, they can simply fill out a Request for Accommodation Letters form as well as any applicable forms that are necessary for coordinating specific accommodations [as outlined in Section IV \(Request for Note-Taking Services, Request for Classroom Materials in Alternative Formats, Etc.\)](#) and submit them to the Disability Services Office.
3. Letters of Accommodation are generally available for pick up and student distribution to professors within 48 hours of submission of [Request for Accommodation Letters form](#) in the Disability Services Office.

Changes in Your Accommodations Needs

- Students are entitled to request additional accommodations or academic adjustments during the course of the semester, or at any time during their tenure at Centenary University. Students are also entitled to request modifications to the nature of the accommodations. Students must work with the Disability Services Office to determine the appropriate changes to accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services. The office should be contacted at earliest indication of emerging accommodation needs. Students must allow at least two weeks for the coordination and provision of new accommodations or modifications to existing accommodations.

It must be noted that Centenary University and the Disability Services Office reserve the right to deny requests for services or accommodations while the receipt of appropriate disability documentation is pending.

Examples of Reasonable Accommodations

- Examples of some of the most frequently requested accommodations include:
 - Extended time for quizzes and exams
 - Distraction-reduced environment for exams
 - Note-taking services
 - Permission to tape record lectures
 - Classroom materials and textbooks in alternative formats

Special Information Relating to Spell-Check Devices and Calculators as Reasonable Accommodations

Spell-check devices and calculators can certainly be helpful to everyone - both people with and without disabilities. However, the use of these tools is considered **a reasonable accommodation only under very specific circumstances**. While each request for accommodation is assessed on a case-by-case basis, it is important to note that the Centenary University Mathematics and Natural Sciences Department generally asserts that the use of calculators in College Math (MTH 1000) represents a fundamental alteration of essential curriculum components and as such is not an approved accommodation for this course only.

Spell-Check Devices:

DSO will only approve use of a **spell-check device** as a reasonable accommodation for an exam if:

1. Students' disability documentation indicates specific cognitive difficulties that would cause them problems with spelling **and**
2. The ability to spell words accurately is not considered an important part of what an exam is designed to test - as determined by the professor and/or the academic department.

Calculators:

DSO will only approve the use of a calculator as a reasonable accommodation for an exam if:

1. Students' disability documentation indicates specific cognitive difficulties that would cause them problems with arithmetic comprehension or computation **and**
2. The ability to add, subtract, multiply, or divide accurately is not considered an important part of what an exam is designed to test as determined by the professor and/or the academic department.

It is important to note:

1. Given these very specific conditions, it is entirely possible for use of a spell checker or calculator to be allowable for some exams, and not allowable for others.
2. DSO will consider requests for use of a calculator and a spell-checker on a case-by-case basis.
3. DSO will not approve use of these tools as reasonable accommodations when using them provides students with an unfair advantage or undermines academic standards.

When are accommodation requests denied?

The University provides accommodations unless they fall under one of the following four categories:

Fundamental Alteration

Accommodation Request is Not Supported

Undue Hardship

Personal Service

Fundamental Alteration

If an accommodation reduces the academic standards of the University, its schools, departments, or courses, the University denies the accommodation because it is unreasonable. Academic standards are essential for every student. It is unreasonable to alter these fundamental standards with an accommodation.

Accommodation Request is Not Supported

An accommodation must be designed to both provide access to the University's programs and minimize the impact of the disability. In some cases, the requested accommodation cannot be substantiated as 'minimizing the impact of the disability' based upon a review of the submitted documentation and/or the subjective experience of the student. The accommodation is denied in these cases since the removal of a barrier is not warranted or necessary when compared to the limitations imposed by the disability.

Undue Hardship

If an accommodation costs too much or is impossible to administer, the University denies the accommodation because it is unreasonable. An unjustifiable financial burden will have an adverse effect on the entire University system. An undue administrative burden occurs when the University does not have the time or ability to respond to a request.

Personal Service

If a request for an accommodation falls under the definition of a personal service, the University denies the request because it is unreasonable. Personal services are those that a person with a disability must use regardless of attendance at the University. In addition, personal services are those for which no correlation between the disability's functional limitation and program access can be established.

Notification of Denial for Accommodations

If a student is found to be not eligible for one or more requested accommodations, a letter will be sent to the student stating the specific denied accommodation and the reason for denial.

General Guidelines for Disability Documentation

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as well as the Americans with Disabilities Restoration Act allows colleges and universities to require disability documentation to verify the need for accommodations. What constitutes acceptable documentation is often an area of uncertainty for those preparing students for higher education. Because of this, the Disability Services Office (DSO) at Centenary University, in accordance with the standards established by the Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), has adopted the following guidelines to serve as a resource to potential students, Guidance Counselors, Child Study Teams and other interested parties as they prepare students with disabilities for the transition to higher education. These guidelines focus on identifying the components of disability documentation that are particularly useful in developing appropriate accommodation plans. The major components of quality documentation are:

1. Documentation should be up-to-date

Documentation should be recent in order to assess the current impact on academic functioning. The level of currency required for disability documentation varies dependent on condition (please see specific criteria), but in most cases should be less than 3 years old and consist of adult-normed evaluations.

While relatively recent documentation is recommended in most circumstances, common sense and discretion in accepting older documentation of conditions that are permanent or non-varying is exercised. Likewise, changing conditions and/or changes in how the condition impacts the individual brought on by growth and development may warrant more frequent updates in order to provide an accurate picture. It is important to remember that documentation is not time-bound; the need for recent documentation depends on the facts and circumstances of the individual's condition.

2. The credentials of the evaluator(s)

The best quality documentation is provided by a licensed or otherwise properly credentialed professional who has undergone appropriate and comprehensive training, has relevant experience, and has no personal relationship with the individual being evaluated. It is expected that the credentials of the person making the diagnosis correlate to the condition being reported (e.g., an orthopedic limitation might be documented by a physician, but not a licensed psychologist).

- **A diagnostic statement identifying the disability**

Quality documentation includes a clear diagnostic statement that describes how the condition was diagnosed, provides information on the functional impact, and details the typical progression or prognosis of the condition. While diagnostic codes from the Diagnostic Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM) or the

International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) of the World Health Organization are helpful in providing this information, a full clinical description will also convey the necessary information.

- **A description of the diagnostic methodology used**

Quality documentation includes a description of the diagnostic criteria, evaluation methods, procedures, tests and dates of administration, as well as a clinical narrative, observation, and specific results. Where appropriate to the nature of the disability, having both summary data and specific test scores (with the norming population identified) within the report is recommended.

Diagnostic methods that are congruent with the particular disability and current professional practices in the field are recommended. Methods may include formal instruments, medical examinations, structured interview protocols, performance observations and unstructured interviews. If results from informal, non-standardized or less common methods of evaluation are reported, an explanation of their role and significance in the diagnostic process will strengthen their value in providing useful information.

- **A description of the current functional limitations**

Information on how the disabling condition(s) currently impacts the individual provides useful information for both establishing a disability and identifying possible accommodations. A combination of the results of formal evaluation procedures, clinical narrative, and the individual's self-report is the most comprehensive approach to fully documenting impact. The best quality documentation is thorough enough to demonstrate whether and how a major life activity is substantially limited by providing a clear sense of the severity, frequency and pervasiveness of the condition(s).

- **A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability**

It is helpful when documentation provides information on expected changes in the functional impact of the disability over time and context. Information on the cyclical or episodic nature of the disability and known or suspected environmental triggers to episodes provides opportunities to anticipate and plan for varying functional impacts. If the condition is not stable, information on interventions (including the individual's own strategies) for exacerbations and recommended timelines for re-evaluation are most helpful.

- **A description of current and past accommodations, services and/or medications**

The most comprehensive documentation will include a description of both current and past medications, auxiliary aids, assistive devices, support services, and accommodations, including their effectiveness in ameliorating functional impacts of the disability. A discussion of any significant side effects from current medications or services that may impact physical, perceptual, behavioral or cognitive performance is helpful when included in the report. While accommodations provided in another setting are not binding on the current institution, they may provide insight in making current decisions.

- **Recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support services**

Recommendations from professionals with a history of working with the individual provide valuable information for review and the planning process. It is most helpful when recommended accommodations and strategies are logically related to functional limitations; if connections are not obvious, a clear explanation of their relationship can be useful in decision-making. While the post-secondary institution has no obligation to provide or adopt recommendations made by outside entities, those that are congruent with the programs, services, and benefits offered by the university or program may be appropriate. When recommendations go beyond equitable and inclusive services and benefits, they may still be useful in suggesting alternative accommodations and/or services.

- **Documentation should be comprehensive, contain a diagnostic statement identifying the disability, and establish clear evidence of a significant impact on academic functioning.**

Documentation should be relevant to requested accommodations.

Incomplete Documentation

If the original documentation is incomplete or inadequate to determine the extent of the disability or reasonable accommodation(s), Centenary University has the discretion to require additional documentation. Centenary DSO also reserves the right to grant or deny “provisional accommodations” pending receipt of any incomplete documentation.

Maintenance of Documentation

Centenary University DSO maintains a file containing all submitted documentation for a matriculated student throughout the student's tenure at Centenary University. When a student separates from the university, the file will be placed in an electronic archive for 7 years. After 7 years, the archived file will be destroyed.

Given limitations for storage of such files as well as the student's potential need for the documentation in the future, it is preferable that separating students make arrangements to pick up their documentation from DSO prior to separation from the university. Upon receipt of their documentation they will be asked to sign a Release of Documentation.

Documentation that is submitted in support of a student's application for DSO's Special Programs will be maintained for a period of one academic year. If the candidate does not matriculate to Centenary University by the conclusion of the following year, the documentation will be destroyed.

Students are entitled to one copy of their documentation at no expense. Additional copies will be assessed a nominal fee.

Guidelines for Documentation of Learning Disabilities

The diagnosis of Learning Disabilities is generally the result of extensive evaluation. Because of the provision of accommodations is heavily influenced by the outcome of such evaluations, most documentation for consideration should involve a comprehensive psycho-educational evaluation. The following areas should be assessed:

Aptitude: The Weschler Adult Intelligence Scale Revised (WAIS-R), or newer, with subtest scores is the preferred instrument. The Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery Revised: Tests of Cognitive Ability or the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale: Fourth Edition is acceptable. The WISC-R is only acceptable if completed before the candidate's 16th birthday and is still within the three year time frame.

Achievement: Assessment of academic ability in the areas of reading, writing, and math is required. Suggested instruments include: Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery Revised: Tests of Achievement; Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK), or other specific achievement such as The Test of Written Language-2 (TOWL), Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests Revised, or the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test. The Wide Range Achievement Test is NOT a comprehensive measure of achievement and therefore, is not suitable as a sole measure of achievement. Raw data as well as percentile results should be included.

Information Processing: Specific areas of information processing (e.g., short and long term memory; sequential memory; auditory and visual perception/processing; processing speed) must be assessed. Use of the subtests from the WAIS-R or the Woodcock Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability is also acceptable.

1. Testing should be current: administered within the past three years or after age 18.
2. Testing must be performed by a qualified evaluator: clinical or educational psychologists, learning disabilities specialists, or physicians known to specialize in learning disabilities. Information about their professional credentials, including licensing and certification, and their areas of specialization must be clearly stated in the report.
3. Dates of testing must be included in the report.
4. Testing must include information about the functional limitations of the student. Assessments should indicate how the student's disability may affect his/her current participation in courses, programs, services, or any other activity of the university.

Guidelines for Documentation of Psychiatric Disabilities / Psychological Disorders

Psychiatric disability / psychological disorder documentation must include all of the following elements:

1. A specific diagnosis should be stated as well as the rationale that was utilized to determine the stated diagnosis. The documentation should not merely refer to symptoms and will preferably correspond to a specific DSM category.
2. Documentation should include any counseling, specific therapies, current prescribed medications and any side-effects that would compromise academic functioning.
3. Documentation should specify how an individual's psychological disorder impacts upon his or her performance in the academic context.
4. Documentation should recommend academic adjustments.
5. Documentation should be no more than one year old.

Guidelines for Documentation of Physical Disabilities, Neurological Conditions, or Mobility Impairments

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of mobility, systemic, or disease-related disabilities must provide documentation consisting of:

- An identification of the disabling condition(s).
- An assessment of the functionally limiting manifestations of the condition(s) relevant to academic functioning or participation in any aspect of college life. All assessments must be performed by licensed medical professionals qualified to diagnose and treat the condition.

Guidelines for Documentation of Sensory Impairments Hearing Impairments and Deafness

Students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing must provide documentation consisting of:

- An audiological evaluation and/or audiogram; **and**
- An interpretation of the functional implications of the diagnostic data.
- All documentation should be current, i.e. within the last three years.

Visual Impairments and Blindness

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of low vision or blindness must provide documentation consisting of:

- An ocular assessment or evaluation from an ophthalmologist, or a low-vision evaluation of residual visual function, where appropriate; **and**
- An assessment of functionally limiting manifestations of the disabling condition.
- All documentation should be current, i.e. within the last three years.

Speech Impairments

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of a speech/language disability must provide documentation consisting of:

- A clearly written statement of the disability diagnosed by a qualified professional trained in this area (e.g., physician, speech/language pathologist, neurologist, etc.); **and**
- A summary of the various evaluation tools used in determining the specific disability; **and**
- A summary of present symptoms and how these symptoms affect the student's functioning, specifically in relation to the postsecondary environment.
- All documentation should be current, i.e. within the last three years.

Guidelines for Documentation of Substance Abuse Disorders

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of a substance abuse disorder must provide documentation consisting of:

- Verification of completion or current participation in substance/alcohol abuse program that specifies the nature of the addiction, the treatment course, and plans for continued treatment. The documentation should indicate the side effects of any medications.
- Substance abuse documentation from a medical or other licensed professional, such as a psychologist.
- All documentation should be current, i.e. within the last six months.

Guidelines for Documentation of ADD and ADHD

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) must provide documentation by a professional who has undergone comprehensive training and has relevant experience in differential diagnosis and the full range of psychiatric disorders - e.g., licensed clinical psychologist, neurophysiologist, psychiatrist, and other relevantly trained medical doctors. The documentation must include:

- Evidence of early impairment- the condition must have been exhibited in childhood in more than one setting.
- Evidence of current impairment- a history of the individual's presenting attentional symptoms and evidence of current impulsive/hyperactive or inattentive behaviors.
- A comprehensive Neuropsychological or Psycho-Educational assessment in order to determine the current impact of the disorder on the individual's ability to function in an academic setting.
- A clinical summary which: (a) indicates the substantial limitations to major life activities posed by the disability, (b) describes the extent to which these limitations would impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested.
- Documentation should be no more than two years old.

Guidelines for Documentation of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of a traumatic brain injury (TBI) must provide documentation by a neurophysiologist/neurologist and should include the following:

- A thorough neuropsychological evaluation which includes assessment of the areas of attention, visual perception/visual reasoning, language, academic skills, memory/learning, executive functioning, sensory, motor, and emotional status.
- Evidence of current impairment. A history of individual's presenting symptoms and evidence of behaviors that significantly impairs functioning.
- A clinical summary which: (a) indicates the substantial limitations to major life activities posed by the disability, (b) describes the extent to which these limitations would impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested.
- All evaluations were performed within the last three years.

Guidelines for Documentation for Chronic Medical and Other Conditions

Nonspecific disabling injuries include but are not limited to all chronic health conditions (asthma, diabetes, sickle cell anemia, etc.), orthopedic injuries or impairments or any other condition which substantially limits a student's participation academically.

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of other nonspecific disabling injuries and conditions must provide documentation consisting of:

- Documentation from Licensed Physician or other licensed medical professional describing the nature of the condition including information pertaining to the history, expected course of treatment, and limitations resulting from condition or treatments.
- Documentation must be **recent** in order to assess the current impact on academic functioning. The age of acceptable documentation required is assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Director of Disability Services.
- Documentation must be comprehensive and establish clear evidence of a significant impact on academic functioning.
- Documentation must be relevant to requested accommodations.

Guidelines for Documentation of Autism Spectrum Disorder

In order to be considered a valid measure of functioning, all assessments must be provided by a licensed professional qualified to make the evaluation. This can include a developmental pediatrician, developmental medical doctor, or a Neuropsychiatrist/ psychologist. Assessment from a general practitioner typically does not suffice.

Aptitude: The Weschler Adult Intelligence Scale Revised (WAIS-R) with subtest scores is the preferred instrument. The Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery Revised: Tests of Cognitive Ability or the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale: Fourth Edition is acceptable.

Achievement: Assessment of academic ability in the areas of reading, writing, and math is required. Suggested instruments include: Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery Revised: Tests of Achievement; Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK), or other specific achievement such as The Test of Written Language-2 (TOWL), Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests Revised, or the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test. The Wide Range Achievement Test is NOT a comprehensive measure of achievement and therefore, is not suitable as a sole measure of achievement

Information Processing: Specific areas of information processing (e.g., short and long term memory; sequential memory; auditory and visual perception/processing; processing speed) must be assessed. Use of the subtests from the WAIS-R or the Woodcock Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability is acceptable.

1. A specific diagnosis resulting from a comprehensive neuropsychological examination. This should not merely refer to symptoms and should correspond to a specific DSM category.
2. A current evaluation of social/emotional functioning if this information is not contained in neuropsychological evaluation, then by a separate evaluator.
3. All evaluations were performed within the last three years.

Section IV: Using Accommodations and Disability Services at Centenary University

The majority of accommodations at Centenary University are provided and/or coordinated through the Disability Services Office. In order to ensure that accommodations are provided in a timely and effective manner, specific procedures have been developed for the most common accommodative practices. Students should adhere to these procedures to request and utilize their accommodations. Students should discuss the process for coordinating non-standard accommodations (those not specifically discussed in this section), with a member of the DSO Staff.

Testing Accommodations

Accommodative testing allows the student to take his/her exams in an alternative environment, or in an alternative format. Accommodative testing does not alter the content of the exam. Students with disabilities are held to the course requirements and university's academic standards.

Procedure for Scheduling Testing Accommodations

1. Request and receive approval for testing accommodations.
2. Review and sign the [Testing Accommodations Agreement](#), which outlines the student's responsibilities for each examination.
3. Return a completed [Release of Exam form](#) to DSO for each exam in which accommodations are requested **no later than three days prior to the examination date.**
4. Schedule day and time for exam. This generally should be the same day/time that the rest of the class is scheduled to take the exam unless a mitigating circumstance (such as a class immediately following the exam time which would preclude the student from the accommodation of extended time) occurs. In these situations, the student should collaborate with DSO staff and the professor to work out an appropriate alternative. Please see the DSO Administrative Coordinator should this situation present itself. If the exam is re-scheduled by the professor, notify DSO to reschedule.

Day of Exam Instructions

- Report to DSO Administrative Coordinator at the scheduled time of exam. Any unexcused lateness will result in a reduction in the total amount of time allotted to complete the exam.
- Surrender to the proctor all materials that have not been approved by the professor on the Release of Exam form (backpacks, note-cards, cell phones, Mp3 players, etc.).
- Review format of the examination with the proctor.
- Ask questions directly to proctor. If proctor is unable to answer questions, the staff will arrange for you to ask questions of your professor (when possible).
- Take examination according to approved testing accommodations.
- Return completed exam to proctor. All scrap paper and worksheets must be returned with the exam.

Testing and Academic Integrity

Students registered with the DSO are expected to uphold all of the university's academic integrity policies and abide by the student Academic Code of Conduct. DSO is committed to upholding these policies. Any actions that compromise academic integrity or Centenary University's Academic Code of Conduct will be referred to the professor for which the exam is being proctored. It is at the professor's discretion how to adjudicate the incident. This may include a referral to the Academic Review Board for appropriate disciplinary action. Furthermore, students who engage in acts of academic dishonesty while receiving testing accommodations through the DSO risk being subjected to special test scheduling criteria in order to ensure that a one to one proctor can be present.

In order to ensure the integrity of all exams and protect the reputations of students who utilize testing accommodations, the following activities may also be considered cheating:

- Possession and use of any non-approved material or device (course notes, cell phone, Mp3 player, etc)
- Leaving the testing location without approval
- Speaking with others besides the proctor, professor, or other official member of the Centenary University or DSO Staff

If a student is found to be in violation of the academic code of conduct and/or the additional provisions, the exam will be stopped and returned to the professor with a note explaining the circumstances involved to necessitate the discontinuation of proctoring. The Academic Review Board will also be notified of the incident.

Note-taking Services

Note-taking is provided as a means to accommodate students who, due to the impact of their disability, might otherwise miss recording important information in their notes. Notes for individual classes are generally provided in electronic format and are sent to the individual student through the departments e-mail account, dso@centenaryuniversity.edu. In some cases in which it is not practical for notes to be provided in electronic format, photocopies are placed in a file near the copier in the Academic Success Center. Provision of note-taking services is not a substitution for attending class and does not excuse a student from taking their own class notes or otherwise actively participating in the class.

Procedure for receiving note-taking services

1. Following approval of note-taking as a substantiated aspect of an accommodation plan, students should specifically request notes for each class in which they would like to utilize this accommodation by completing the [Request for Note-Takers](#) Form. This step should be completed each semester.
2. Students must inform DSO of any changes to their class schedule in order to be correctly accommodated.

3. Students and professors reserve the right to monitor the quality of notes. If a student is not satisfied with the note-taking services, they should contact DSO immediately, preferably in writing. When appropriate, DSO will arrange for a different note-taker.
4. Students may be asked to assist in identifying students who would make good note-takers and recommend them to their learning specialist or DSO.
5. It is the note-taker's responsibility to obtain notes if he/she is unable to attend class so there is no gap in service.
6. Except under special circumstances, note-taking services are not a substitute for class attendance. Note-taking services are not provided when the student is not in class.

Course Materials in Alternative Formats

Course materials (including textbooks) are provided to assist students that, due to the impact of their disability, find it difficult or impossible to access the material in standard formats. Every attempt is made to provide these materials in a format that is preferred by the student; however in some cases the preferred format may not be readily available. In these cases the primary objective is to provide materials in the most accessible format for the students.

Procedure for Requesting Course Materials in Alternative Formats

Students who require their textbooks and other course materials in alternative or audio formats as an accommodation must adhere to the following procedures.

1. Students should complete the [Request for Alternative Format Form](#) as soon as they receive the details of their needed materials for the semester. Late notification will result in a delay in the acquisition of materials. Students must provide the title, author, edition, and ISBN number of text which they are requesting in an alternative format.
2. Students must purchase all textbooks that are requested in alternative format and must furnish proof of ownership before alternative format materials will be released to the student.
3. When materials arrive, DSO will notify you via the method indicated on the form. Materials are available for pickup Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm or by appointment. Materials **will not** be mailed to students home.
4. Any borrowed playing devices (mp3 players, Daisy readers, etc.) **must** be returned at the end of each semester to the DSO. A 'hold' may be placed on the student's account for any outstanding equipment.
5. Students eligible for audio books are set up with an account through Learning Ally upon completing a [Request for Audio Books Form](#).

In some circumstances when audio books are unavailable through typical sources, attempts will be made to provide alternative formats through the use of Scan & Read software or other emerging technologies. The publisher may also be contacted to provide assistance in identifying a suitable resource.

Books, university publications and class materials are available in alternative formats (such as large print, audio format or in Braille) upon request.

Sign Language Interpreters/Captioning/CCTV/VRS

Sign language interpreting services are arranged for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Students must adhere to the following protocols in order to receive interpreting services:

1. Notify DSO **at the time of registration** of interpreting needs or interpreters to be assigned to their classes by completing a Request for [Sign-Language Interpreting Services Form](#)
2. Students must notify DSO of class scheduling changes, including room location changes, course selection changes, or of class time changes.

When a student who utilizes interpreters is unable to attend class due to illness or other reasons, they must notify DSO at least **24 hours** in advance. At least 24 hours advance notice is required to cancel interpreting services without a penalty. Students who develop a pattern of missing classes without notifying DSO may be held responsible for interpreting costs.

Adaptive or Assistive Technology

Assistive technology (AT) is any item, piece of equipment, or product system used to increase, maintain, or improve access for individuals with disabilities. The Disability Services Office has access to an ever-changing variety of software and hardware that is available to loan to eligible students to assist them in mitigating the impact of their disability. Students should make an appointment with a member of the DSO staff in order to ascertain what types of technology are suitable for their individual needs.

Once specific AT components are identified that are believed to be potentially beneficial to minimizing the impact of the student's disability, the student should complete the [AT Borrowing Contract](#). Arrangements will be made to provide the student with established components in accordance with standard equipment loan procedures. The following general policies guide the loaning of DSO equipment to students:

- ❖ Use the borrowed materials for educational and accessibility purposes only
- ❖ Items are for personal use only and may not be shared with others
- ❖ Immediately report any damage or loss material to the Disability Services Office; whether or not you are responsible for the damage
- ❖ Loans are for a pre-determined time period and must be returned or

renewed on or before the agreed upon date
Assistive technology is a rapidly evolving field, with innovative AT solutions constantly emerging. In the effort to provide students with the most effective AT solutions, Centenary University is committed to consistently upgrading its AT resources. Please periodically check with DSO to learn about its latest improvements to Centenary University's AT resources.

Section V: Campus Accessibility Needs

Classrooms

DSO arranges for classroom relocation for students with disabilities when appropriate.

Students must:

- Notify DSO of their classroom accessibility needs at the time of registration.
- Students must provide information regarding their limitations with:
 - Desks
 - Seating
 - Stairs and/or elevators
 - Specific buildings on campus

Housing and Residence Halls

DSO is the designated office to collect documentation and will interpret this documentation with representatives from Residence Life and the Wellness Center to determine the need for accommodation(s) within Centenary University's Residence Halls. Documentation of a condition warranting and accommodation should adhere to the guidelines and standards outlined in Section III of this manual. Once documentation has been reviewed an eligibility decision will be made and the student will be notified of this decision by DSO. Students requesting housing accommodations should complete an [Application for Housing Accommodations](#).

The Centenary University Residence Life Department administers and coordinates the policies and procedures relating to accommodation within residence halls.

Common residential accommodations that are available at Centenary University include provision of a single room, permission to install an air conditioning unit, or housing in proximity to certain facilities or services. Specific policies and procedures related to the provision of accommodations in the residence hall are available through the Office of Residence Life.

Attending Campus Events

Accommodations for campus events are coordinated primarily by the department sponsoring the event with assistance provided by DSO. Students must notify the sponsoring department of accommodation needed to attend the event (examples: sign language interpreters for a theatrical production or accessible transportation for off-campus trip sponsored by Centenary University.)

Service Animals Policy

Service Animal Overview

Centenary University acknowledges that Service Animals play an important role in fostering the independence of some individuals with disabilities. The University will reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities to be accompanied by their Service Animals in campus facilities where animals are typically prohibited on campus. In order to ensure the health and safety of Centenary University students, faculty, and staff, as well as the Service Animals, only Service Animals will be exempt from the rules that typically prohibit animals on campus.

Students and campus personnel should not attempt to pet, feed, or distract Service Animals, as they are working companions.

Students and campus personnel should not prevent a Service Animal from accompanying its handler, except where specifically prohibited. Specific locations, such as, the cafeteria kitchen where food preparation is occurring, may prohibit a Service Animal due to health and safety restrictions. If it is determined an area is unsafe, reasonable accommodations will be provided to ensure equal access to the student needing such areas.

Service Animals Policy

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Service Animals are permitted in University facilities. A Service Animal means a dog (in some cases a miniature horse) trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Examples of the functions of Services Animals include, but are not limited to: guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing, pulling a wheelchair, providing physical support, providing minimal rescue or non-violent protection work, preventing impulsive/destructive behavior, assisting during a seizure, etc. Assistance Animals are not Service Animals and are not covered under the ADA, therefore the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort or companionships does not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition. For more information on assistance animals, please refer to the Disability Services Handbook at

<http://www.centenarycollege.edu/cms/en/academic-services/disabilities-services-office/>.

To work on campus, a Service Animal must be specifically trained to perform a service function.

Furthermore, the Service Animal should wear a harness, cape, identification tag or other gear that clearly identifies its working status. Although not required, this is in the best interest of the student and the animal.

Service Animals whose behavior pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others may be excluded regardless of training or certification. Actions that pose a direct threat include but are not limited to; barking, growling, jumping and biting.

Service Animals are meant to assist the handler with daily functions and therefore must be with the handler at all times (with brief exceptions for personal care activities, in which the Service Animal must be kept in a kennel or cage in the student's Residence Hall Room). Service Animals that are being left alone or in the care of another person may be excluded from the University.

Service Animals are the responsibility of the handler. All care, feeding, disposing of waste and supervision of the animal are the responsibility of the handler.

The handler is also responsible for:

- Any damage caused by his/her animal and must take precautions to prevent damage.
- Measures should be taken to prevent flea and tick infestations, such as Frontline or other equivalent medications. Should an infestation occur the handler will be charged cleaning and replacement costs.
- Maintaining a clean and odor-free living environment.
- Any expenses above and beyond a normal cleaning or repairs that are assessed after the handler vacates the residence.

Further Requirements for Public Behavior of Service Animals

Each handler is expected to maintain appropriate behavior of the animal as follows:

- Animal must not initiate contact/approach people, dining tables, or the personal belongings of others.
- Animal must be harnessed or leashed while on campus and in campus buildings, unless the harness or leash interfere with the service animals work or the person's disability prevents use of these devices.
- Animal must not display behaviors or noises that are disruptive to others.
- Animal must not block an aisle or passageway.
- Animal must be trained not to be attracted to food that may be in close proximity.

A Service Animal may be excluded from the University for the following reasons:

- Unruly or disruptive behaviors (ex. barking, growling, jumping on people). If disruptive behavior occurs repeatedly, the handler may be prohibited from bringing the animal to University facilities until it is demonstrated that the handler has taken steps to alleviate such behaviors.
- Handler does not follow through with proper care and grooming of animal (illness of animal, poor hygiene, evidence of fleas or ticks).
- Animal exhibits aggressive behaviors.
- Damage to property.
- Animal has consistent accidents in buildings due to not being housebroken.

If a Service Animal is excluded from campus, alternative accommodations will be reviewed with the student and DSO.

Students must comply with the Service Animal Policy of the University. Centenary University reserves the right to amend this policy as circumstances require and laws are adjusted.

Assistance Animal Policy

Overview

Centenary University acknowledges that Assistance Animals can play an important role for some individuals with disabilities. The University will reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities to have Assistance Animals in their Residence if there is a documented need for such an accommodation. In order to ensure the health and safety of Centenary University students, faculty, and staff, as well as the Assistance Animals, only Assistance Animals that meet the criteria described in this policy will be exempt from the rules that typically prohibit animals from living in the Residence Halls. Students must comply with the Assistance Animal Policy of the University. Centenary University reserves the right to amend this policy as circumstances require.

Assistance Animals provide therapeutic support to individuals with an identified disability to ameliorate symptoms or effects of that disability. Assistance Animals are not required to be trained to assist an individual with specific tasks or activities of daily living and can be species other than dogs or miniature horses. Therefore they are not considered Service Animals and do not qualify for legal protection under ADA. Service animals, as defined by the ADA, are limited to dogs and miniature horses. For more information on service animals, please refer to the Disability Services Handbook at

<http://www.centenarycollege.edu/cms/en/academic-services/disabilities-services-office/>.

Under the Fair Housing Act (FHA), an Assistance Animal may be viewed as a reasonable accommodation. Every attempt will be made by the University to ensure University policies adjust as changes in the laws may occur. Requests for Assistance Animals are reviewed on a case by case basis. Assistant Animals cannot be brought into university residence halls without prior approval from the Disability Services Office.

Assistance Animal Disability Determination Process

Students who express intent to have an Assistance Animal on campus should be directed to the Disability Services Office (DSO). The student and Director of the Disability Services Office will begin the Assistance Animal Disability Determination Process as follows:

- 1.) Student must submit an Application for Housing Accommodations requesting an Assistance Animal and documentation from a qualified external licensed medical professional that substantiates a relevant disability and identifies specific impacts that are related to the disability. Documentation must describe criteria used to assess the impact of the disability. This documentation should make a clear case for the necessity of a specific Assistance Animal in alleviating the impacts of diagnosed disabilities and the necessity of the Assistance Animal for the student to have equal access to programs at the University. Documentation must be submitted at least 2 weeks in advance of bringing the animal to campus to process the application.
- 2.) Student must submit documentation of the Assistance Animal's current vaccinations and a health statement from a licensed veterinarian dated within one year of application.
- 3.) Information is reviewed by the Disability Services Office and Residence Life and is rejected, approved, or pending. Applicant is notified via email.
- 4.) Request is provisionally approved or provisionally rejected on the basis of:

- Suitability of proposed animal for the University environment.
 - Evidence of consistent, significant impact of disability within the University environment.
 - Evidence that proposed Assistance Animal would be beneficial in alleviating the impact of that stated disability.
- 5.) Rejected requests may go to the appeal process (see Grievance Procedures). Approved requests must complete the Assistance Animal Registration Form and Owner Statement Form and submit it to the Disability Services Office within 6 weeks from date of acceptance.
- 6.) Approved Assistance Animals may then be brought to campus in defined locations only. Pending requests must meet the conditions outlined via e-mail within 3 weeks or application will be rejected.

Responsibilities of Owners Using Assistance Animals in Housing

Local Mandates

- All animals must meet the codes/regulations of local and state ordinances and laws.
- The owner is responsible for ensuring that the assistance animal meets these mandates.
- If an animal must be licensed, according to local and/or state mandates, then proof of licensing must be provided to the Disability Services Office as part of the application process. For information about Hackettstown policies you can contact the Animal Control Officer at (908)625-0106

Section VI: Advocacy

Talking to Your Professors

Although there are more students with disabilities in postsecondary education today than ever before, it is very possible that there are situations in which the university instructors have had little prior experience with students with disabilities. Also, the student may have difficulty advocating for himself/herself or to express his/her needs.

DSO recommends the following strategies to use when talking to your professors for the first time about your disability and need for accommodations:

- Be prepared! Practice what you are going to say and be prepared to discuss your abilities (and your disabilities) as well as accommodations you are requesting. Bring your accommodation letter from DSO with you.
- Don't procrastinate! Make an appointment to talk with your instructor(s) within the first two weeks of each semester. Adjustments and accommodations need to be planned as early as possible, especially when it involves testing accommodations.
- Take it with you! Bring your Accommodation Letter from DSO. Remember the Accommodation Letter verifies your need for accommodations and your registration with DSO. YOU must request these letters at the beginning of each semester.
- Problems? When problems arise, contact the Director of DSO as soon as possible. In most situations, you and the instructor will work out the provision of accommodations in a way that is agreeable to all parties involved. If you have difficulties working this out, contact the DSO.

10 Tips for Self-Advocacy

1. Know and understand your rights and responsibilities.
2. Ask questions whenever you need clarification.
3. Repeat a question until it is satisfactorily answered.
4. Keep a "paper trail" of all written communication regarding your education. It is appropriate to request copies of all records and documentation.
5. Remember that you are an equal partner in your education.
6. Let people know that you intend to work to resolve issues.
7. Learn all you can about your disability: needs, strengths, and weaknesses.
8. Know what resources are available and use them.
9. Know who the key people are. Find the right person with whom to talk, and try all avenues.
10. Praise and thank people when appropriate.

Section VII: Confidentiality, Appeals, and Grievance Procedures

Policy on Confidentiality

General Rule

The Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) regulates disclosure of disability documentation and records maintained by DSO. DSO requires prior written consent by the student before DSO may release disability documentation or records to any third party.

Exception to the Rule

Under FERPA, DSO is permitted to release information to any school official who has a "legitimate educational interest."

What does this mean?

Professors or other school officials, such as tutors, may request information about the impact of a student's disability on their ability to learn. DSO will only share information with other school officials when appropriate and will carefully balance a student's request for confidentiality and the request for additional, relevant information about the student. DSO seeks to preserve the student's wish to keep their disability information and status confidential.

Other Students' Rights under FERPA

FERPA also allows students to inspect and review their files maintained by DSO. Students have the right to challenge any information contained in the files that is incorrect or misleading and request an amendment to this misinformation.

Appeals Process and Grievance Procedures for Alleged Discrimination

Centenary University has adopted the following appeals process and grievance procedure to address complaints of disability discrimination, retaliation, harassment or failure to provide a reasonable accommodation:

1. Any aggrieved individual ("Complainant") may file a complaint in writing, containing the name and address of the person filing the complaint and describing the discriminatory act;
2. The complaint shall be filed in the office of the Director of Disability Services within 30 days after the complainant becomes aware of the allegedly discriminatory act. Should the Director be a party to the complaint, the complaint should be filed in the Human Resources Office with the Director of Human Resources/Section 504 Coordinator who will inform the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Chief Academic Officer;

3. The Director of DSO will investigate the allegations in the complaint. The Director of Human Resources/Section 504 Coordinator may assist in the investigation as necessary. Should the Director of DSO be a party to the complaint, the complaint will be investigated by the Director of Human Resources/Section 504 Coordinator;
4. All interested persons and their representatives shall be afforded the opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the investigation. Such evidence shall be submitted to the Director of DSO during the course of the investigation;
5. The Director of DSO shall issue a written decision determining the validity of the allegations and distribute copies of the decision to the interested parties no later than 45 days after the filing of the complaint. If the decision cannot reasonably be issued within 45 days because unusual or complex circumstances exist, then the Director of DSO shall alert the parties of the same.
6. The Director of DSO shall implement all appropriate remedial steps necessary to address any findings of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or failure to accommodate;
7. Should the Complainant choose to appeal the Director of DSO's decision, the appeal shall be made in writing within 30 days of the date of receipt of the decision;
8. appeal shall be submitted to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and shall demonstrate that (1) there is new evidence; or (2) the investigation or decision exhibited prejudice or other unfair treatment;
9. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will render a final written decision and distribute copies of the same to interested parties, including the Director of Disability Services, within 60 days of the filing of the appeal. If the decision cannot reasonably be issued within 60 days because unusual or complex circumstances exist, then the Vice President of Academic Affairs will alert the parties of the same.

Alternative Remedies

An individual claiming discrimination, harassment or retaliation may also file a complaint with:

Linda Colon, Regional Manager
Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Jacob Javits Federal Building
26 Federal Plaza - Suite 3312
New York, NY 10278
Voice Phone (212)264-3313
FAX (212)264-3039
TDD (212)264-2355
Email: ocrmail@hhs.gov

Section VIII: Special Programs

Project ABLE

Description

Project ABLE is an educationally based, comprehensive learning support program designed specifically for students with psychological, learning, and neurological differences.

The purpose of the program is to provide a "bridge" between the structured and sometimes modified secondary-school setting to the predominantly self-directed university environment. This is accomplished through the creation and implementation of a student-centered success plan developed collaboratively with a Learning Support Specialist that includes the use of accommodations and services.

Project ABLE participants are entitled to a variety of academic and therapeutic supports that expand the degree of support the university is able to offer to students with disabilities beyond the basic level, legally mandated accommodations.

Enrollment

Students interested in the Project ABLE program should apply by using the Application for Intensive Support Services. Their application should then be sent to the Disability Services Office with documentation of a disability which affects learning. The director will request additional documentation as needed. Consideration for the Project ABLE program is based on a thorough review of all educational records. Documentation will be reviewed only by the DSO staff and may be utilized to assess suitability for admission only when the candidate does not meet otherwise qualified status.

In the case of a student who is not otherwise qualified for regular admission to Centenary University, special consideration may be extended to those students whose educational profile is compatible with the established Centenary University curriculum. Such students must commit to full and active participation in the Project ABLE program for their first semester and must agree to the conditions set forth in an offer of provisional admission to Centenary University. These provisions may include enrolling in Project ABLE and/or the STEP Ahead, Summer Developmental Program.

Fees

The fee for the program is determined by the University's Senior Administration and Board of Trustees on an annual basis. The fee is assessed on a per semester basis until a student formally withdraws from the program.

Failure to utilize services or cooperate with program staff, policies, or procedures does not warrant a refund of the program fee.

Withdrawal

A Project ABLE participant may "opt out" or "withdraw" from the program during the time period at the conclusion of a given semester until the end of the standard 'add/drop' period at the beginning of the next semester. The Disability Services Office notifies program participants via email near the completion of the fall and spring semesters to remind them of the opportunity to withdraw from the program. Students may withdraw from Project ABLE in the following ways:

- ❖ Check the appropriate box on the notification letter, sign, and date it and return it to the DSO by e-mail dso@centenaryuniversity.edu, Fax 908-979-4277, or mail 400 Jefferson Street, Hackettstown, NJ 07840
- ❖ Send an e-mail to any DSO Staff Member (you must request a read receipt to ensure that the message is received)
- ❖ Sign a statement of withdrawal in the DSO Office.

A student is automatically re-enrolled in the program if no notice of intent to withdraw is received before the stated deadline. A student may re-enroll themselves in the program after a withdrawal at any point during the tenure at Centenary University as an undergraduate student.

STEP Ahead

Description

The STEP Ahead Program at Centenary University is an intense four-week residential pre-entrance program held from late June to late July. It is designed to enhance the development of a student's self-advocacy, independence, interpersonal and academic skills.

The primary goal of the STEP Ahead Program is to appropriately prepare the student for college level work. Enrollment is limited to 12-15 students who have specific learning disabilities and whose educational background indicates a need for basic skills remediation, developmental education, or specialized supported challenges designed to address academic, social, and/or emotional concerns.

Enrollment

Candidates for enrollment into the STEP Ahead program are identified through evaluation of the educational records that have been supplied for consideration for admission to the Project ABLE program. Candidates are invited to be considered for inclusion in the program after a review of educational records indicates strong potential as well as a need for further preparation for college

level work. STEP Ahead candidates may be offered an interview with a member of the DSO staff in order to discuss their educational background and to ascertain their suitability for inclusion in the program. STEP Ahead is an opportunity for those students that are not otherwise qualified for admission to Centenary University to gain admission to the University by successfully completing the program. There are two potential levels of consideration for STEP Ahead candidates:

STEP Ahead recommended: These are students that are believed to be minimally academically prepared, but have exceeded expectations with regard to achievement in one or more areas such as SATs, GPA, leadership skills. These students may be required to enroll in Project ABLE for their first semester, whether or not they decide to enroll in STEP Ahead.

STEP Ahead required: This designation is utilized when a review of educational records reveal marginal preparation for college level work to the point that an offer of admission cannot be offered without specific remediation. These students will also be required to enroll in Project ABLE for their first semester. While these candidates exhibit potential to achieve success, such success will depend heavily upon the candidate's ability to achieve a successful transition and appropriately utilize offered supports. It is believed that participation and successful completion of the STEP Ahead program for these candidates will improve the candidate's ability to be successful at Centenary University and alleviate any questions related to the candidate's preparation, achievement, and/or manifestations of disability.

Note: Those candidates that, prior to being interviewed by DSO Staff, are being considered as recommended for STEP Ahead and do not respond to requests for interviews within 30 days, may be offered admission to the university with the requirement of enrolling in STEP Ahead. Those candidates that, prior to being interviewed by DSO Staff, are being considered from the basis of STEP Ahead being mandatory will be denied admission if they do not respond to requests for interviews within 30 days.

Fees

The fee for the program is determined by the University's Senior Administration and Board of Trustees on an annual basis. The fee for the program includes all instruction, academic support, trips, housing, and meals. The fee generally does not include textbooks or other personal materials.

Section IX: Resources

This list of clickable resources is provided as a starting point to gaining more information on a variety of topics. This list is by no means intended to be an exhaustive listing of all available resources, but rather offers a plethora of reputable resources for learning more about living with a disability.

General Disability

- [Association of Higher Education and Disability \(AHEAD\)](#)
- [HEATH Resource Center](#)
- [The US Government's Clearinghouse for Disability Information](#)
- U.S. Department of Education Publication: ["Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities"](#)

ADHD/ADD

- [C.H.A.D.D.](#)
- [National Attention Deficit Disorder Association](#)
- [National Center for Learning Disabilities \(NCLD\)](#)
- [One ADD Place](#)

Asperger's Syndrome/Autism

- [Autism Speaks](#)
- [Autism Society](#)
- [Asperger Autism Spectrum Education Network \(ASPEN\)](#)

Chronic Health

- [Health Information Resources \(Toll-Free Numbers\)](#)
- [Coping with Chronic Illness](#)

Hearing Impairments

- [The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association \(ASHA\)](#)
- [Communication Access Network](#)
- [Deaf Community Resources](#)
- [Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services- Hearing Loss](#)

Jobs/Employment

- [An Annotated Listing of a Variety of Employment Resources](#)
- [The Campaign for Disability Employment](#)

Learning Disabilities

- [C.H.A.D.D.](#)
- [International Dyslexia Association](#)
- [LD OnLine](#)
- [Learning Disabilities Association of America](#)
- [National Center for Learning Disabilities \(NCLD\)](#)
- [Bookshare](#)

Mobility Impairments

- [Mobility International USA](#)
- [Free Booklet from The United Spinal Association: Taking Action](#)

Support

- [Dawn Center for Independent Living](#)
- [New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation](#)
- [Warren County Self-Help Groups](#)

Speech Impairments

- [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association](#)
- [National Aphasia Association](#)
- [The Stuttering Foundation](#)

Visual Impairments

- [American Council of the Blind](#)
- [Learning Ally](#)
- [National Federation of the Blind](#)

Appendix

DSO Forms

[Accommodation Letter Request Form](#)

[Application for Accommodations](#)

[Adaptive Technology Borrowing Contract](#)

[Consent for Release of Information](#)

[Declaration of Disability](#)

[Release of Exam Form](#)

[Request for Alternative Format Materials](#)

[Request for Deaf or Hearing Impaired Services](#)

[Request for Note-Taking Services](#)

[Testing Accommodations Agreement](#)

[Request for Audio Books](#)

[Application for Housing Accommodations](#)