

Learning Disability Verification for Students

The University of Montana Western assures program access by students with learning disabilities. Otherwise qualified students may request an auxiliary aid or service, academic adjustment, and/or other accommodation from Montana Western due to a learning disability. Before accommodations are granted, Montana Western requires comprehensive documentation of a disability and its impact on learning.

In order to consider the provision of reasonable accommodations for students with a learning disability, University policy requires that current and comprehensive verification of the learning disability and its impact on learning be provided by a qualified professional. The qualified professional's statement must be within 3 to 5 years prior to the date of the most recent request from Montana Western. The professional(s) conducting the assessment and rendering the diagnosis must be qualified to do so. A qualified professional includes a certified/licensed school or other psychologist, learning disability specialist, speech and language pathologist, or psychiatrist. Diagnoses documented by family members will not be accepted.

The documentation provided must include information that diagnoses the learning disability, describes the learning disability in an educational setting, and indicates the severity and longevity of the condition, and offers recommendations for necessary and appropriate auxiliary aids or services, academic adjustments or other accommodations. Montana Western includes information gathered in conversation with the student when making determinations and recommendations for reasonable accommodations.

The University of Montana Western adheres to the civil rights definition of disability. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, an individual with a disability means any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. "Major life activities" includes performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, sitting, standing, lifting, working, and interacting with others. Disability alone isn't enough to mandate accommodations. Students must provide evidence that the disability causes a functional limitation which impacts access to University programs.

The checklist below is intended to assist students and professionals in gathering sufficient documentation for submission to Montana Western.

Checklist for Documentation of a Learning Disability

To facilitate the gathering of such critical information, please provide a comprehensive diagnostic report that responds to the following checklist, along with your written authorization to contact the diagnostician, to the Dean of Students, Nicole Hazelbaker at:

Student Affairs Office
750 E. Cornell ST.
Dillon, MT 59725

The phone number at Student Affairs is 406-683-7565.

The diagnostic report must contain:

- Specific diagnosis and date of onset; and
- Severity of the disability: Mild, moderate, or severe; and
- Date of diagnosis and date of last contact with student; and
- List of standardized tests or other measures used to assess the following: Aptitude, achievement, and information processing; and

- Summary of the student's educational, medical, and family history that may relate to the learning disability (must demonstrate that difficulties are not the result of sensory impairment, serious emotional disturbance, cultural differences, or insufficient instruction); and
- Summary of how the diagnosis was reached, including description of which learning disability definition was used for the diagnosis, and description of how the learning disability substantially limits a major life activity; and
- List of the functional limitations caused by the learning disability which may affect programs in higher education; and
- Recommendations for necessary and appropriate accommodations to equalize the student's educational opportunities at the University of Montana Western such as auxiliary aids and services, academic adjustments, and other reasonable program modifications; and
- Other information relevant to this student's academic adjustment; and
- Signature and contact information of diagnostician including mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address.