

## Documentation Guidelines for Autism Spectrum Disorder Quick Reference Guide

ETS is committed to serving test takers with disabilities or health-related needs by providing services and reasonable accommodations that are appropriate given the purpose of the test. This abbreviated version of our documentation guidelines for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is provided as a quick reference. For full details, please review the “*ETS Policy Statement for Documentation of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Adolescents and Adults*” at <http://www.ets.org/disabilities/documentation/>.

Documentation must:

▶ **Be completed by a qualified evaluator**

Qualified evaluators are defined as those licensed individuals who are competent to evaluate and diagnose ASD or who may serve as members of the diagnostic team. See section I of the policy statement.

▶ **Include test taker’s identifying information**

Include the test taker’s identifying information including age at the time of their evaluation. In addition, the name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator should be included on letterhead, typed in English, dated and signed. The qualified professional’s training, expertise in the diagnosis of ASD, and appropriate licensure/certification are also essential. See section I of the policy statement.

▶ **Be current**

Documentation needs to be within the last five years. See section 3 of the policy statement. A documentation update for ASD is a brief report or a narrative by a qualified professional that includes a summary of the previous disability documentation findings as well as additional clinical and observational data to establish the candidate’s current need for the requested testing accommodations. See section III of the policy statement.

▶ **Include a comprehensive history**

Include a comprehensive history of presenting problems associated with the disability as well as information on the test taker’s medical, developmental, educational, employment and family history. This should also include the date of diagnosis, duration, and severity of the disorder. See section II, A of the policy statement.

▶ **Include relevant observations of behavior during testing**

Behavioral observations, combined with the clinician’s professional judgment and expertise, are often critical in helping to formulate a diagnostic impression. This may include the test taker’s level of motivation, cooperation, anxiety level and attentiveness during diagnostic testing. See section II, A of the policy statement.

▶ **Include relevant testing domains**

ETS acknowledges that a multi-disciplinary assessment approach is often critical for the diagnosis and treatment of the individual with ASD. Assessment domains may include any of the following: cognitive, expressive and receptive language, psychiatric and/or behavioral, and academic achievement. See section IV (Relevant Testing Domains) of the policy statement. See (Appendix III) for a full list of tests for assessing adolescents and adults with autism spectrum disorder.

▶ **Include all test scores as standard scores and/or percentiles using adult measures**

See section IV of the policy statement.

- ▶ **Provide specific diagnosis/diagnoses**  
The report must include a diagnosis, or diagnoses, of ASD as stipulated in the DSM-5 or the ICD-10 and any co-morbid conditions, preferably with the accompanying numerical code(s). See section II, B of the policy statement.
- ▶ **Discuss the current impact of the disorder on academic performance, employment, and other daily activities**  
Include additional sources of information such as school-based records (e.g., IEP, Section 504 Plan, Summary of Performance) or other related documents regarding the test taker's history, eligibility for services, and/or history of accommodations use in school and/or employment. See section IV of the policy statement.
- ▶ **Include specific recommendations with a rationale based on objective evidence**  
Establish a link between the requested accommodations and the functional impact of the diagnosed disability that is pertinent to the anticipated testing situation. See section V of the policy statement.
- ▶ **Include an interpretative summary**  
The interpretative summary at the end of the report is useful because many of the core features of ASD are not captured easily in test scores. The evaluator should rule out, to the extent possible, other diagnoses that may affect the expression of an autism spectrum disorder. See section II, B of the policy statement. See section IV of the policy statement.
- ▶ **When applicable, include additional sources of information**  
Other sources of documentation can be used to corroborate symptoms of the disorder and support the need for the requested accommodation(s). This can include a detailed letter from a college disability services provider, a vocational rehabilitation counselor, or a human resources professional describing current limitations and use of accommodations. In addition, a personal statement from the test taker in his/ her words explaining academic difficulties and coping strategies may also be helpful. See section VI of the policy statement.

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