

Tips for Disability Service Professionals



ETS receives more than 15,000 requests for accommodations from individuals with disabilities each year for our graduate and professional tests.

Testing agencies such as ETS are responsible for providing access to these tests for test takers with disabilities, along with reasonable accommodations to ensure fairness for all test takers.

The ETS Office of Disability Policy (ODP) offers the following guidelines to help disability service professionals as they assist individuals with disabilities in submitting their requests for testing accommodations. Familiarity with our accommodations request guidelines and procedures is the best way for service professionals to prevent unnecessary delays in the process.

For the ETS Documentation Guidelines for specific disabilities, such as learning disabilities (LD), ADHD, traumatic brain injuries, intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, psychiatric disabilities and physical disabilities, consult the ETS website at www.ets.org/disabilities.

How you can assist test takers

- Advise test takers to plan ahead since the application review process can take approximately six weeks. Test takers should register for accommodations well in advance of needing test scores.
- Review ETS procedures and documentation criteria at www.ets.org/disabilities.
- Inform test takers they may submit verification of testing accommodation approval from ETS or another standardized testing agency (e.g., ACT®, SAT®, GMAT®, LSAT®, and/or MCAT®, etc.) without submitting further documentation if requesting accommodations that were previously approved.
- When appropriate, complete a Certification of Eligibility: Accommodations History form (COE) based on ETS's disability documentation criteria. Test takers should NOT submit disability documentation if they can use the COE as a shortcut for approval.
- If a test taker receives a letter from ETS Disability Services, assist them in gaining a better understanding of what additional information is being requested.
- Encourage test takers to review [Tips for Test Takers](#) and to submit a [Personal Statement](#).



Shortcut to accommodation approval

When test takers can use previously approved accommodations from ETS and/or another testing agency

Verification of prior accommodation approval from ETS or another testing agency may be used as a shortcut to approval if the test taker requests the same accommodations as previously approved by ETS or another testing agency. In these cases, do not send disability documentation. Test takers should submit verification of approval from the other testing agency. For example, a letter of approval from ACT, SAT, GMAT, LSAT, and/or MCAT, etc. which specifies the test taker's previously approved accommodations.

Here are some examples of scenarios where the COE can be submitted without documentation:

- Test takers with LD, ADHD, TBI, ASD, psychiatric disabilities, and/or physical disabilities requesting 50% or less extended time and/or extra break time.
- Test takers who are deaf or hard of hearing and are requesting only 50% or less extended test time, breaks, and/or a sign language interpreter, or oral interpreter for spoken directions.
- Test takers who are blind or legally blind and are requesting only a subset of the following: screen magnification, selectable background and foreground colors, braille, braille slate and stylus, Perkins Brailler® (for note taking only), large print (test book and/or answer sheet), screen reader (GRE® General Test only), audio recording, scribe, or 50% or less extended time and/or extra breaks (100% extended test time when also requesting braille, reader, audio or screen reader).

When test takers can use the Certification of Eligibility: Accommodations History Form (COE)

The COE provides verification of an individual's history of accommodations use in college or the workplace. In some cases, the COE also serves as a shortcut for approval of specific accommodations. All test takers are encouraged to submit the COE to verify their history of accommodations either in college or in the workplace. The COE may only be used as a shortcut if the documentation on file with the disability service professional meets ETS's criteria. When the COE is used in this way, documentation of the disability should not be sent to ETS.

If the COE is used appropriately and according to ETS's instructions, a test taker can expect a response from ETS in approximately 2–3 weeks rather than the 4–6 weeks typically required for a full documentation review.

If test takers are eligible for the shortcut and submit documentation in addition to the valid COE, the process may be delayed.

The COE may be signed by an authorized person in the Office of Disability Services at an institution of higher education, a human resources representative at a place of employment or a vocational rehabilitation counselor. Forms completed and signed by a member of the applicant's family, or by the licensed and/or certified professional who diagnosed the disability, will not be considered.

When you sign the COE, you are verifying that the documentation on file in your office meets all of our criteria.



Writing letters of support

Disability service professionals on college and university campuses have the opportunity to engage with test takers and learn about them and their need for accommodations. ETS, however, engages in the interactive process with its thousands of test takers with disabilities worldwide only through their documentation. ETS, therefore, depends on documentation to make decisions about reasonable testing accommodations. You may further assist test takers in obtaining accommodations for ETS tests by writing a letter of support that goes above and beyond the information provided on the COE.

The following includes some questions you may address in your letter of support:

- What was the test taker's history of accommodation use before college?
- What was the disability-related rationale for each of the approved accommodations?
- What did you observe about this test taker during your intake interview that supports the need for testing accommodations?
- Has the test taker used testing accommodations consistently or are the accommodations used only for a specific type of test (e.g., essay tests)?
- If the test taker was granted accommodations, did they consistently renew their accommodations?

Personal statement from test takers

Test takers are strongly encouraged to write personal statements to support their requests for accommodations. A personal statement may include the following information:

- A description of the nature of the disability and how it may impact them during a high-stakes test and/or in an academic setting.
- A disability-related rationale for each of the requested accommodations.
- A discussion of how the accommodations have helped in the past (if previously used in college or the workplace).
- If applicable, reasons why the requested accommodations were not previously used in college or the workplace but are currently being requested.



For more information, contact us:

Website — ets.org/disabilities

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