

Assistive Technology Proficiency and Need for Accommodation

Post-secondary educational settings have an obligation to abide by laws that protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination and to provide availability of accommodations to offer equitable education considering the impact of the disability. Transitioning students from K-12 education who use assistive technology may have particular difficulties when faced with a higher education environment that requires that the individual have established skills to self-advocate and disclose their disability, their need for accommodation and the inclusion of assistive technology devices and services in being successful in the postsecondary educational environment. The QIAT-PS collaboration has developed a number of tools that can be utilized to help document important information and create data for making decisions that can assist the individual with assistive technology in demonstrating successful implementation of their devices in their post secondary educational experiences.

The use of disability documentation for post secondary educational settings provides two basic purposes. The first is to establish protections from discrimination for people with disabilities. The second is to determine accommodations to which an individual may be entitled. These accommodations may include modification to policy, procedure or practice and provide for auxiliary aids and services that are designed to provide equal access to programs and services for qualified individuals. Accommodations are reasonable when they do not fundamentally alter the nature of the program or service and do not represent an undue financial or administrative burden.

The following tool was designed to assist staff in post secondary educational settings in assessing, developing, implementing and evaluating the need for assistive technology accommodation and integrate it into professional practice. Assistive technology resources vary greatly in higher education settings, but this tool can assist support services or disability services staff in their planning for students with disabilities and assistive technology needs.

**Post Secondary Education Setting
Questions Concerning Assistive Technology Proficiency and Need for Accommodation**

- What is your disability and how does it affect your educational and social performance? (Note: This should be established in part by documentation by an appropriately licensed or credentialed professional. Documentation should include a clear diagnostic statement with the criteria for determination and methods. The documentation should include information on functional impact and the progression or prognosis of the disability. Sources for this information may include formal evaluation, clinical narratives and the individual's self report.)

- What functional limitations on your educational performance are associated with your disability?
 - A. Study skills and general academic
 - B. Reading
 - C. Writing
 - D. Mathematics
 - E. Public Speaking
 - F. Accessibility to Common Education Materials
 - G. Technology Skills
 - H. Physical Well Being
 - I. Social Skills
 - J. Team Work
 - K. Hearing
 - L. Vision
 - M. Communication
 - N. Positioning and Mobility
 - O. Leadership
 - P. Excessive Fatigue
 - Q. Personal Orientation and Mobility

- Please share your current and historical use of educational services and/or supports, assistive technology, adaptive services and additional resources that help you perform at your best in educational activities.

- Do you own your own assistive technology?

- How many credit hours will you be taking?

- What are your goals for attending college?

- Have you researched and become familiar with the support services and recommended procedures for accessing them through the college's web site or other marketing and procedural documentation?

- What supports do you feel that you need to succeed in college/post-secondary education?
- Please describe what kinds of tasks you currently do with assistive technology and where you use it.
- What do you feel are your strengths and weakness?
- Have you read and become familiar with the procedures for requesting reasonable accommodations for your college?
 - What is your preferred way to learn?
 - A. Visual
 - B. Read/Write
 - C. Aural
 - D. Kinesthetic
 - E. Multimodal
- Are you familiar with your legal rights for accessible and equitable education and are you familiar with the University procedures to access these services (including grievance/complaints)?
- How do you access and send e-mail or other forms of telecommunications?
- What types of additional training or assistive technology do you think might improve your educational performance?

References

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