

The Office of Academic and Accessibility Resources (OAAR) provides academic assistance for all students at Palm Beach Atlantic University, including equal access for students with disabilities. Students with documented disabilities such as Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, hearing impairments, learning disabilities, medical/health conditions, physical/mobility issues, psychological disabilities, speech impairments, visual impairments, and other disabilities may be eligible to receive accommodations. The following is a brief overview of the process to register with our office and receive accommodations for such disabilities.

1. Go to <https://pba.medicatconnect.com> and login with your PBA username and password. Navigate to *Forms* in the menu, then scroll down to the Disability Services section and complete the application package which consists of:
 - a. Application for Disability Services
 - b. Authorized Release Form
 - c. Confidentiality Form
2. Navigate to *Upload* in the menu and upload your supporting document (including documentation from your Clinician). **Acceptable documentation is detailed on the next page.** All information is kept confidential. Sensitive information will not be released unless in accordance with federal and state laws.
3. After uploading your documents, please email Academic_support@pba.edu to let us know you are ready to proceed with accommodations. Your documents will be processed by a disability services provider. Our staff may request an intake conversation once all the documents have been processed. (This process may take up to two-weeks).
4. After reviewing the submitted forms, the disability services provider will create a Student Access Plan detailing your accommodations. The access plan and other instructions will be sent to you on Medicat, and a notification will be sent to your PBA email. It is the responsibility of the student to provide each instructor with a copy and to discuss how the accommodations will be implemented. This should be done by the end of the first week of class. While open communication with faculty and staff is encouraged, students are not obligated to divulge the nature of their disability with the faculty member.

The following is a list of possible accommodations, though not all will be applicable to every disability:

- Extended time, alternative testing formats, scribes/readers
- Noise reduced testing environment
- Audio recording of class lectures; volunteer note takers
- Use of assistive technology (Kurzweil/Dragon) or other auxiliary aids (e.g. laptop, iPad)
- Early class registration
- Reduced course-load
- Sign-language interpreters
- Others (based on your academic and non-academic needs)

After registering with our office, continuing to receive disability accommodations will be an automatic process—new access plans will be accessible in Medicat before the beginning of each semester. It is preferred that students provide any updated information regarding the student’s disability to the Office of Academic and Accessibility Resources in a timely fashion, as some support services may require 1-2 weeks advance due to necessary faculty input.

4.1 Documentation as Eligibility for Accommodation

Documentation that legitimizes a student's request for accommodation must be written on **official letter head and come from an appropriate professional/specialist**. Such professionals may be a psychologist, psychiatrist, allergist, medical doctor, or learning disabled specialist. Diagnosticians must be impartial and not a family member of the student. Specific documentation requirements are detailed the Disability Services Guidebook but, in general, documentation should include the following:

- A statement of the functional impact or limitations of the disability on learning or other major life activities and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested.
- Testing that is comprehensive, including a measure of both aptitude and academic achievement in the areas of reading, mathematics, and written language.
- Documentation for eligibility reflecting the current impact the learning disability has on the student's functioning.
- A clear statement that a learning disability is present along with the rationale for this diagnosis
- A narrative summary, including all scores (standard and percentile) supporting the diagnosis.
- A statement of strengths and needs that will impact the student's ability to meet the demands of the university environment
- Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if co-existing learning disabilities or other disabling conditions are indicated.

An IEP or 504 Plan from the student's high school is not an acceptable document for disability accommodations in the college environment. Medical documentation or other forms of evaluation is what our office requires to determine what accommodations are necessary for access. This should be submitted with the application package. Additionally, self-diagnosis is not considered a legitimate premise for requesting accommodations.

Dietary Concerns

The above listed requirements for accommodations are also directed to students who suffer from food allergies or have special dietary concerns. **In such cases, official medical documentation from a qualified or licensed nutritionist, health specialist, or medical doctor is required. Such documents should include the list of the foods to which the student is allergic and what may be included in the student's diet.**

PBA observes the evaluation criteria for various disabilities as recommended by AHEAD (Association on Higher Education and Disability).

All relevant documents must be submitted **at least two weeks** before the official first day of classes. Documents can be completed and uploaded to our online portal at <https://pba.medicatconnect.com>, faxed (561) 803-2574, emailed academic_support@pba.edu or mailed to Office of Academic and Accessibility Resources, P.O. Box 24708, Palm Beach Atlantic University, West Palm Beach, FL 33416.