

Step 1: Timeline for UVM Students Seeking USMLE Accommodations (updated 6/22/20)

Students who wait to declare their intent to apply for accommodations risk not receiving a decision in time to take the February exam. This can result in a delay in the start of clerkship or even put their medical curriculum on hold for a year.

March

- Find current information about the exam accommodation request process (<https://www.usmle.org/test-accommodations/>)
- Make a list of what historical documentation you need to gather; Neuropsychological evaluations or assessments should be no more than five years old from the date of the evaluation's completion. Please visit our [webpage](#) for local resources if an updated evaluation is needed.

April/May

- Locate the documentation requirements for making your request
- Contact Student Accessibility Services or your assigned Accessibility Specialist at 802-656-7753 to discuss any questions you have regarding your application.

June

- Begin drafting your personal statement
- Continue gathering documentation or have a re-evaluation completed
- Get your USMLE ID # (<https://apps.nbme.org/nlesweb/#/authenticate>)

July/August

- Proofread your personal statement:
 - *Note: It is not advisable for someone to heavily edit your grammar or language, particularly if your request is related to a learning disability or ADHD*

September

- Register for exam...send the resulting form to OMSE to sign off on and send to NBME
- Mail, fax or e-mail (as a pdf) your completed request form and supporting documents to the address below at the same time you submit your Step examination application.

Disability Services-National Board of Medical Examiners

3750 Market Street

Philadelphia, PA 19104-3190

Telephone: (215) 590-9700

Facsimile: (215) 590-9422

E-mail: disabilityservices@nbme.org

****It is recommended that you send all materials tracked and with a return receipt or signature required to ensure that you know when the materials have arrived. Please be sure to maintain a copy of your materials.***

- Identify several preferred testing centers

ONCE YOUR APPROVAL IS RECEIVED

- Book your preferred testing location
- Confirm (by visiting or calling) that a record of your approved accommodation/personal item exemptions have been communicated to the testing site

- Information on the [USMLE](#)



USMLE Documentation Guidelines

Adapted from Meeks, L., & In Jain, N. R. (2016). *The guide to assisting students with disabilities: Equal access in health science and professional education*.

Summary of Documentation requirements

(for specific details refer to the links listed below)

- **Be current.** (Generally 6 months for psychological disabilities and 3 years for learning disabilities)
- **State a specific diagnosis of the disability.**
- **Describe**
 - specific diagnostic criteria
 - name the diagnostic tests
 - including date(s) of evaluation,
 - specific test results
 - detailed interpretation of the test results
 - describe in detail the individual's limitations due to the diagnosed disability
 - The current functional impact
- **Recommend specific accommodations**
 - detailed explanation of why they are needed
 - how they will reduce the impact of the identified functional limitations
- **establish the professional credentials of the evaluator**
 - including information about license or certification and specialization in the area of the diagnosis.

General USMLE Information:

<https://www.usmle.org/>

General Guidelines:

<http://www.usmle.org/test-accommodations/guidelines.html#guidelines-general>

ADHD:

<http://www.usmle.org/test-accommodations/guidelines.html#guidelines-adhd>

Learning Disability:

<http://www.usmle.org/test-accommodations/guidelines.html#guidelines-learning-disorders>

Vision:

<http://www.usmle.org/test-accommodations/guidelines.html#guidelines-vision>

Hearing:

<http://www.usmle.org/test-accommodations/guidelines.html#guidelines-hearing>

USMLE FAQ's Overview

Meeks, L., & In Jain, N. R. (2016). The guide to assisting students with disabilities: Equal access in health science and professional education.

How to submit application: Candidates are permitted to mail their requests to the address on the forms or to e-mail them with documentation submitted as PDF attachments (USMLE, 2014b, p. 7).

Required supporting documentation: Detailed evaluations from qualified professionals that provide a formal

- 1) diagnosis of the impairment,
- 2) a description of the diagnostic criteria and any tests used,
- 3) identification of each major life activity limited by the impairment,
- 4) recommended accommodation and why it is necessary (USMLE, 2014b).

Recentness of Documentation: In general, the USMLE expects documentation dated within the past 3 years (USMLE, 2014b).

Personal statement: Required documentation appears on page 1 of the application and the personal statement is listed first, ... "describing your disability and its impact on your daily life AND educational functioning" (USMLE, 2014b).

Scheduling the exam: Candidates will receive permission to schedule their exams, once applications are processed (USMLE, 2014b).

Time frames for submission of applications: Candidates must apply in advance for each Step or Step component (USMLE, 2014b). Candidates must select an eligibility period, once approved for testing (USMLE, 2015, p. 15).

Subsequent examinations: NBME permits an abbreviated form, "Subsequent Request for Test Accommodations," for candidates who were granted earlier Step exam accommodations, and requires no resubmission of documentation (USMLE, 2014b).

Notification: The NBME will e-mail candidates a confirmation of receipt of their requests within a few days of submission (USMLE, 2014b). Candidates should "allow at least 60 days for processing," and all notification will be made in writing (USMLE, 2014b).

Reconsideration (appeal of adverse decision): Candidates who consider their decision adverse (denied or provided alternative accommodation) may contact the NBME's disability services specialist by e-mail or telephone (USMLE, 2014b).

Personal item exemptions: Candidates with documented medical conditions who will need medicines or devices while testing can contact the "Personal Item Exception Coordinator" (USMLE, 2014b). Candidates requesting additional break time will apply to NBME's disability services (USMLE, 2014b).

USMLE Application Checklist:

Adapted from Meeks, L., & In Jain, N. R. (2016). *The guide to assisting students with disabilities: Equal access in health science and professional education*.

REQUIRED

- Personal Statement**
 - Official Standardized Test scores** (SAT, ACT, MCAT, GRE...)
 - Certification of Prior Test accommodations** (completed by Student Accessibility Specialist)
http://www.usmle.org/pdfs/test-accommodations/certification_prior_accommodation.pdf
 - Testing Accommodation Request Form**
<http://www.usmle.org/pdfs/test-accommodations/accom-request-form.pdf>
 - Current Documentation** (3 years for Learning related and 6 months for psychological related)
*see evaluation guidelines for more information:
<http://www.usmle.org/test-accommodations/guidelines.html#guidelines-general>
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OPTIONAL

- Historical evaluations (if none then show other indicators of disability impact earlier in life)
- Supplemental letters of support from previous instructors (confirming early presence of disability or active use of accommodations letter from OSME)
- Letters from doctors;
- Letters from previous institutions;
- Letters or proof of approval for accommodations on previous Undergraduate/graduate entrance MCAT GRE SAT ACT
- IEP/504
- Report cards with comments on behavioral patterns, inattentiveness, or need for extra supports
- Letter from SAS office confirming provided accommodations
- Letter from an employer providing further evidence of the effect of disability on learning or performance while on the job
- Transcripts from primary, secondary and/or college should be provided if the records *clearly show* the impact of disability on your grades.