

TRANSITIONING FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE

College is different from high school:

- A student has more responsibility for his/her education.
- Students spend less time in the classroom and more time learning independently.
- Students have less external structure.
- The law ensuring that the student's needs are met changes.

IDEA → ADA

- In high school, students are covered by IDEA, which provides a free and appropriate education to qualifying students and focuses on educational outcomes and success (remediation).
- In college, students are covered by Section 504 and ADA, which are civil rights laws that ensure opportunity, equal access, and prevent discrimination (accommodations).

All public schools provide essentially the same services. Colleges provide different levels of service. All colleges are required to provide accommodations; some colleges provide additional supports. Students need to know the level of support that they will need to succeed.

Eligibility and Postsecondary Educational Settings:

- Eligibility for services does not automatically transfer from high school to college.
- A person with a disability is defined as anyone who has a physical or emotional impairment (diagnosis) which substantially limits one or more major life activities.
- Eligibility in college is based upon functional limitations caused by the condition.
- A clinical diagnosis is not synonymous with a disability. Evidence sufficient to render a clinical diagnosis might not be adequate to determine that an individual is substantially limited in a major life activity.
- Some individuals who receive services in high school might not qualify for services in a post secondary setting. Other individuals who did not qualify for services in high school might qualify for services in a postsecondary setting.

Documentation:

- Documentation is provided by the student.
- Testing has to be relevant to the student's current situation.
- Neither high schools nor colleges are not required to provide the testing.
- The documentation should provide
 - ✓ a diagnosis,
 - ✓ functional limitations of a major life activity,
 - ✓ stability of the condition,
 - ✓ history,
 - ✓ specific needs,
 - ✓ and accommodations to meet those needs.

Typical Accommodations:

- Extended time for quizzes/exams
- Assistive technology for taking exams
- Note taking assistance
- Text books on tape or in alternate format
- Consideration given to modification of attendance requirements
- Consideration given to extensions on short-term assignments

Unacceptable accommodations:

- Modification of test items
- More tests covering less material
- Decreased course content
- Testing the same way the material was talked
- Any changes that alter essential elements of the course

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE

HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
School personnel must identify	Students must self identify
School personnel evaluate	Student obtains evaluation
Recommendations and accommodations shared with teachers	Student informs instructors of Accommodations; Instructors unaware of diagnosis
Each student receives a free appropriate public education	Each college determines what is reasonable
IEP determines academic requirements	Essential course requirements are not modified
Teachers must follow IEP	Programs and instructors help determine accommodations
IEPs and 504 plans follow the student	IEPs and 504 plans are not automatically accepted
Courses can be waived	Course substitutions and waiving courses are rare
Personal care aides provided	Personal care aides are not provided; however, they are allowed
Inappropriate behavior has to be evaluated and managed	Inappropriate behaviors not tolerated

***Source: Penn State Harrisburg, Office of Disability Services**