

Memory Aid Accommodation Guidelines

Introduction:

Memory Aid accommodation is an approved support measure for students with clinically assessed memory impairment that impacts their memory recall during exams and quizzes,

Under ADA standards and clinical best practices, this accommodation allows students to use a memory aid sheet during exams to help prompt their memory, without providing direct answers. It enables students to showcase their knowledge more effectively, aligning with ethical obligations to provide equitable access to education.

For faculty, students, and academic departments, Memory Aid ensures that students can participate fully in academic assessments without compromising academic integrity or lowering standards. This accommodation is grounded in a clinical understanding of memory impairments, highlighting the difference between spontaneous recall and cued recall. By facilitating this support, programs foster an inclusive learning environment where all students have the opportunity to succeed, ultimately enhancing educational outcomes and upholding legal and ethical responsibilities.

For students with challenges affecting memory, a memory aid may be an appropriate accommodation. This aid serves as a **memory prompt** rather than providing answers, allowing students to demonstrate their knowledge more effectively.

Students seeking this accommodation should provide **Supporting Documentation** that requires it to be verified and signed by a qualified licensed professional mental health care provider such as a Clinical Psychologist (PsyD, PhD), Psychiatrist (MD), LMFT, LPCC, LCSW, Licensed Educational Psychologist.

From a neuropsychological perspective, the results of clinical testing and assessment of low scores on measures of “working memory” and “auditory working memory” are not sufficient evidence to support the need for a memory aid accommodation.

- Working memory:
 - does not require actual storage of information.
- Auditory working memory:
 - does not require the transferal of temporarily held information into long-term storage.

Types of Memory Aid:

Two types of memory aids may be approved by SdRC as an accommodation:

- ***Cue Sheet:***
 - a document containing information that serves as “prompts” to help cue a student’s recall of previously learned information.
- ***Formula Sheet:***
 - Generally, they can be written or typed using a size 10 or 12 font on a large index card, OR up to one side of an 8 ½” x 11” sheet of paper.
 - A memory aid may or may not contain acronyms, short phrases, pictures, schematic diagrams or mind maps, names, definitions, tables, charts or key terms, and certain formulae.
 - A document containing formulae. *Formulae* refers to a set of rules or principles that are expressed using symbols, figures, or both.
 - Students are permitted a formula sheet only on exams or tests that test students on their use and application of the formula. Instructors may not permit students to use formula sheets on exams that evaluate students’ recall of formulae themselves.
- **Process:**
 - SDRC will email the Faculty Notification of Accommodations to the designated instructor regarding supporting a memory aid for quizzes, midterms, and final exams.
 - The instructor should contact SDRC if there are any concerns regarding this accommodation, specifically regarding accommodations during the short quizzes.
 - If the instructors believe this accommodation is not reasonable, they should contact the SdRC office for consultation.
 - Instructors are required to complete an Alternative Testing Agreement before SDRC can proctor an exam.

Students are responsible for:

- Learning the course material and identifying which areas need cues.
- Creating the memory aid following the guidelines.
- Styles of memory aids may vary and are at the discretion of the instructor.
 - Memory aids should adhere to the following:
 - **Should Not Include:**
 - Full course notes, definitions, specific examples, open textbooks, or exceed one page (single-sided). Include course notes, and lists of specific facts, details, concepts, or processes being tested;
 - Include complete terms and definitions;
 - Include specific examples of how formulas are used;
 - Include full course notes, copies of course slides, or all information from the course being evaluated;
 - Exceed one page (single-sided);
 - Include open textbooks;
 - Serve as a substitute for studying (a cue sheet will not help if a student has not studied the material).
 - **May Include:**
 - Acronyms, short phrases, diagrams, mind maps, key terms, or certain formulae.
- Submitting the aid to their instructor for approval at least **two business days** before the exam.

Instructors are responsible for:

- Reviewing the proposed memory aid and either approving it or providing feedback for revision.
- Sending the approved aid to the SDRC Testing Center for use during the exam.
- Contact the SDRC if they believe the aid compromises academic integrity or fundamentally alters course requirements.

Important Considerations

- A memory aid will be assessed, evaluated, and approved on a **case-by-case basis** and may be allowed for some exams but not others, depending on course content and Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) objectives and expectations.

- **Approval and Use**

Tips for Success:

- **For Students:**
 - The students are encouraged to plan ahead, review course materials, and discuss with their instructor what content is permissible on the memory aid.
- **For Instructors:**
 - The instructor will receive a “Faculty Notification of Accommodations” email from SDRC.
 - Please support students by clearly communicating test expectations and considering alternative assessment methods where possible.
 - Concerns about the accommodation's reasonableness should be directed to the SDRC.
 - If an accommodation dispute arises, it should be addressed following institutional guidelines and within ADA Standards, ethical, and legal parameters.
 - Memory aids will be collected after exams and returned to the instructor with the completed test in a sealed envelope.

For any concerns or clarifications, both students and faculty are encouraged to consult with the SDRC office to ensure fair and effective accommodation.

Good Luck!