

**Should I get a neuropsych evaluation?**

# A Guide by Williams DSU!

Neuropsych evaluations can provide you with a formal diagnosis of any neurological or mental conditions you'd like to have evaluated. If you're thinking of pursuing one at Williams, here's some info you should know:

## Pros:

- Documentation from doctors can validate your condition, if there are individuals/entities who refuse to recognize your disability
- Documentation can also officially back up accommodation requests, whether they are academic or housing accommodations (Note: you are able to request provisional accommodations if you don't get a diagnosis)
- Financial assistance is available through the College

## Cons:

Your diagnosis may be used against you in these cases. **To keep yourself safe, remember that you are not forced to reveal your diagnosis results to anyone, and have the right to maintain them (or any information about yourself) private.**

- If you're transgender, certain states are advancing transphobic and ableist legislation that prevent you from accessing HRT and gender-affirming care on the basis of autism diagnoses
- Autism/neurodivergence diagnosis have been used in certain countries (ie. Canada, Australia, and New Zealand) to reject immigration/citizenship applications

## Notes:

We cannot and do not give official medical or legal advice – only professionals such as doctors, mental health experts, (or those trained in psychology or therapy practices), and lawyers can do that. We write these tips from our experiences and readings as disabled students.

## Sources:

<https://19thnews.org/2023/05/trans-laws-autistic-youth-mental-health/>

<https://amnesty.sa.utoronto.ca/2023/04/06/dehumanization-archaic-immigration-policies-against-individuals-with-disabilities/>

**How do I get a neuropsych evaluation?**

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If you've decided on getting a neuropsych evaluation, here are some steps on requesting one and going through the evaluation process!

1. Meet with a staff member from the Office of Accessible Education ([oaestaff@williams.edu](mailto:oaestaff@williams.edu); in-person or online through Zoom). Let them know why you're seeking a neuropsych evaluation (such as to diagnose mental health or neurological conditions you believe you have, receive support for accommodations, etc).
2. You may first be referred to IWS for an evaluation and then to a psychologist's office to schedule your neuropsych evaluation. Details for psychologists in the area can be found [here](#).
3. A neuropsych assessment typically consists of three components:
  - An interview (can be conducted over Zoom)
  - A paperwork and questionnaire response section (can be done digitally and on your own)
  - An in-person testing session at the office.

You'll need to schedule a day and time for the interview and for the testing session.

Note: If you're struggling to fill out all the forms, let your psychologist know. They will inform you which forms are the most important for you to complete.

3. Await your psychologist's response to schedule a time to review your results. Evaluation of your testing takes about two months, but if they haven't contacted you by then, send them an email.

**Extra tips to  
make the  
process easier**

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A neuropsych evaluation can be intimidating if you don't know what to expect. Here are some additional tips to keep in mind as you begin the process and after you receive your report.

## **Getting started:**

1. You can begin this process over the summer! This helps save time and place you in line for testing, as there can be a long waiting list. If you are a senior, emphasize your year so you're able to receive the evaluation before you graduate.
2. It can be helpful to write up a list of things you want to say to your psychologist beforehand and either bring it with you to your appointment or send it to them beforehand and ask them to read it before or during your appointment.

## **After you receive your report:**

1. Give yourself some time to process. Consider talking it through with someone you trust.
2. Imposter syndrome is real and does not make your diagnosis/es any less valid.
3. Read up on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to get a better sense of your rights.
4. If applicable, apply for accommodations through the Office of Accessible Education (OAE) at Williams.
5. Consider signing up for DSU's mentoring program, where we will match you with a peer who has a disability.
6. Think about how and to whom you plan to disclose your disability(ies). It may be tempting to tell everyone you know, but this is generally not a good idea. Remember that even during accommodations meetings with professors, disclosure is strictly optional.