

ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY (ABI)

Brain injury can result from external trauma, such as a closed head or an object penetration injury, or internal trauma, such as a cerebral vascular accident or tumor. Additionally, individuals may acquire brain impairment as a result of neurological illnesses, such as epilepsy or multiple sclerosis. ABI can cause physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and vocational changes that can affect an individual for a short period of time or permanently. Depending on the location and extent of the injury, symptoms can vary widely. Understanding functional changes after an injury and resulting implications for education are more important than only knowing the cause or type of injury.

Specific documentation guidelines for ABI include the following:

- General documentation guidelines listed in [Appendix D of the Academic and Student Affairs Handbook](http://www.usg.edu/academic_affairs_handbook/section3/C793). (http://www.usg.edu/academic_affairs_handbook/section3/C793)
- Impairments following an acquired brain injury may change rapidly in the weeks and months after the injury, and a more stable picture of residual weaknesses may not be apparent for 1-2 years after an injury. Therefore, timeframes for currency of documentation may vary substantially, and additional documentation may be necessary to adequately assess the student's current accommodation needs.
- A diagnosis consistent with the most recent DSM/ICD, if appropriate.
- Documentation of the date or period of time of occurrence and diagnosis.
- Documentation of the nature of the neurological illness or traumatic event that resulted in brain injury.
- Objective (quantitative and qualitative) evidence that symptoms are associated with significant functional impairment in the academic setting. The functional impact of the brain injury must be documented by appropriate, objective measures (e.g., cognitive and academic skills, psychosocial-emotional functioning, and/or motor/sensory abilities) relevant to the academic environment.

Notably, in most cases, a concussion is a temporary condition that will require temporary accommodations for approximately one semester, as deemed appropriate by a qualified professional.