

ADHD Symptoms, Impairments and Accommodations in the Post-Secondary Environment

DSM-5 Symptom [ASRS-6 Q#]	DSM-5 Symptom	Possible Resulting Impairments in PSE	Possible Accommodations
INATTENTION			
1a ASRS-6 Q1 Trouble wrapping up details	Fails to give close attention to details OR makes careless mistakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulties with details in an essay, such as bibliography, checking sources & citations; forget to double check grammar, spelling, & references <input type="checkbox"/> Poor quality of work – inaccurate, careless mistakes <input type="checkbox"/> Poor time management so doesn't leave time to complete details or check for mistakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Allow to write exams on computer with spellcheck software <input type="checkbox"/> Work with Accessibility staff, coach, or supervisor to review assignment, check details, assist with time management & due dates <input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility in due dates – with opportunity to complete details & correct mistakes <input type="checkbox"/> Allow clarification of questions on an exam or test and clarification of an assignment
1b No ASRS-6 item	Difficulty sustaining attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulties remaining focused during lectures, conversations, or reading lengthy material <input type="checkbox"/> Day-dreaming or mind-wandering during lectures or reading text books <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty focusing on & completing large amounts of written work (essays, reports etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Gaps in learning due to inability to stay focused during lectures, Lab demonstrations etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Allow student to audiotape lectures, use audiotaped textbooks, receive notes & copies of PowerPoint presentations <input type="checkbox"/> Allow use of a note-taker <input type="checkbox"/> Use of computer for tests or exams <input type="checkbox"/> Allow testing/exams to be completed over several shorter sessions rather than one long session <input type="checkbox"/> No more than one exam per day <input type="checkbox"/> Substitute a non-compulsory subject <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced course load
1c No ASRS-6 item	Difficulties listening when spoken to directly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Mind often wanders when discussing something with peers; <input type="checkbox"/> Often misses social cues or key words during one-on-one or small group interactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of notes from class discussions & presentations <input type="checkbox"/> Work with Accessibility Staff to learn strategies for keeping mind on conversations, watching for social cues <input type="checkbox"/> Allow clarification of an assignment

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<p>1d No-ASRS-6 item</p>	<p>Difficulties following through on instructions AND fails to finish</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Begins but unable to remain focused to complete assignment or task, easily side-tracked <input type="checkbox"/> Moves from one incomplete assignment to another 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Work with Accessibility Staff, Coach, or Supervisor to chunk & review progress on assignments <input type="checkbox"/> Allow clarification of questions on an exam or test and clarification of an assignment <input type="checkbox"/> Substitute a non-compulsory subject <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced course load
<p>1e ASRS-6 Q2. Trouble getting things in order</p>	<p>Difficulty organizing tasks & activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to chunk assignments into manageable pieces – easily overwhelmed <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty organizing thoughts <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty sequencing or organizing steps in complex projects, creating an outline, or creating a schedule to finish projects. <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty getting things together for school, organizing things needed for day <input type="checkbox"/> Have to go over and over instructions and still cannot organize in my head what has to be done in what order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to access ‘prompt’ sheets with outline of steps, formulas etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Allow alternative methods of assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Allow clarification of questions on an exam or test and clarification of an assignment <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of organizational/planning software plus instruction & support in its use <input type="checkbox"/> Work with Accessibility Staff, Coach, Supervisor to help set up work plan, lists of essential items to bring to class & review steps
<p>1f ASRS-6 Q4. Delay getting started</p>	<p>Avoids, dislikes OR reluctant to engage in effortful tasks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Puts off starting assignment – procrastinates <input type="checkbox"/> Leaves assignments to the last minute then runs out of time to complete & hand in <input type="checkbox"/> Gets anxious about procrastinating <input type="checkbox"/> Overwhelmed and unable to identify how to start an assignment <input type="checkbox"/> Can’t get started and articulate ideas in my head on to paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Work with access staff, coach or supervisor to review assignments and discuss first steps, chunk assignments and review progress <input type="checkbox"/> Additional time for assignments if too many due at same time <input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility on due dates when load of assignments are overwhelming <input type="checkbox"/> Allow clarification of questions on an exam or test and clarification of an assignment <input type="checkbox"/> Substitute a non-compulsory subject <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced course load

<p>1g no ASRS-6 item</p>	<p>Often loses things necessary for tasks or activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Loses electronic organizers, laptop, books, papers, keys, phone, wallet <input type="checkbox"/> Loses things that are vital to completing assignments, duties, life activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of additional copies of course materials (Master Binder) <input type="checkbox"/> Work with Accessibility Staff, Coach, Supervisor to develop effective habits or strategies for keeping needed items in one place & how to retrace steps to remember where item was last used
<p>1h no ASRS_6 item</p>	<p>Easily distracted by extraneous stimuli</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Distracted in lectures by noise, visual distractors, movement of others <input type="checkbox"/> Daydreams or gets distracted by own thoughts when supposed to be listening <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to remain focused during academic or social activities <input type="checkbox"/> Misses educational information and instructions due to distractibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Allow to take tests/exams in quiet environment with few people <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of or Allow use of (noise-cancelling) headphones when working in distracting environments <input type="checkbox"/> Priority seating away from sources of distraction <input type="checkbox"/> Provide description of assignment in written format <input type="checkbox"/> Allow extended time on timed-tests (usually time and a half)
<p>1i ASRS-6 Q3 Difficulty remembering appointments</p>	<p>Often forgetful in daily activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Often misses classes, key appointments & due dates <input type="checkbox"/> Over-reliance on electronic reminders or on others to remind <input type="checkbox"/> Gets mixed up with days so ends up by missing class of other important appointments <input type="checkbox"/> Forgets to record appointment in electronic scheduler/iphone etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Forgets commitments resulting in difficulty sustaining work, social/friendship, academic activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of electronic organizers & visual reminders <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to access reminder sheets with steps, formulas etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Allow alternative methods of assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced course load <input type="checkbox"/> Permit prior course registration with someone from the disability center

DSM-5 Symptom [ASRS-6 Q#]	DSM-5 Symptom	Possible Resulting Impairments in PSE	Possible Accommodations
HYPERACTIVITY/ IMPULSIVITY			
2a ASRS-6 Q5 Fidgets or squirms	Often fidgets with or taps hands or feet OR squirms in seat	<input type="checkbox"/> Particularly when having to sit for several hours <input type="checkbox"/> Fidgets to the point of distracting others <input type="checkbox"/> Fidgets with objects, leg-jiggling, shifting positions frequently <input type="checkbox"/> Bites nails, cracks knuckles	<input type="checkbox"/> Permit preferred seating so squirming & shifting position will not distract others <input type="checkbox"/> Allow use of stress balls etc. to help control fidgetiness <input type="checkbox"/> Allow for more frequent breaks to stand & move around
2b No ASRS-6 item	Often leaves seat in situations when remaining seated is expected	<input type="checkbox"/> In lecture halls, class there is no room to move around so have to get up and leave class & walk around	<input type="checkbox"/> Allow student to stand at side or back of class <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of standing desk or allow to stand as needed
2e ASRS-6 Q6 Compelled to move or do things, overactive	Often 'on the go', acting as if 'driven like a motor'	<input type="checkbox"/> When working at desk or computer feels compelled to get up and move about <input type="checkbox"/> Get bursts of energy and just have to move around <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to function, remain still in quiet environment, such as exams, libraries, confined work spaces <input type="checkbox"/> Get anxious if cannot move around – compelled to move <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot shut off creative side, streams of ideas, so constantly writing notes or muttering, recording voice notes because cannot write as fast as thinks	<input type="checkbox"/> Provision of frequent breaks <input type="checkbox"/> Allow preferred seating so pacing or leaving area will not distract others <input type="checkbox"/> Allow controlled movement such as use of stress balls <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of standing/elevated desk <input type="checkbox"/> Allow for independent work so movement will not distract others <input type="checkbox"/> Work with Accessibility services to participate in mindfulness or meditation classes
2g, 2h, 2i No ASRS-6 item	Often blurts out, unable to await turn, interrupts or intrudes	<input type="checkbox"/> May be disruptive in class & annoy others <input type="checkbox"/> May become ostracized by instructors & peers	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructors to be notified to accommodate for disruptions <input type="checkbox"/> Allow to work independently – excuse from group work

Please Note: The possible accommodations included in this chart are based on expert consensus opinion,^{i, ii}. While certain accommodations are beneficial for some students with ADHD^{iii iv} the listed accommodations are not uniformly beneficial for all students with ADHD. Therefore, medical experts should use the charts as a tool to assess functional impairments while reviewing possible accommodations that would likely be helpful.

ⁱ Froelich & Brinkman 2017

ⁱⁱ Fabiano & Pylr 2018

ⁱⁱⁱ Jansen et al, 2017

^{iv} Lovett et al 2018

