



DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

drc@palomar.edu

760.744.1150, ext. 2375

What Does Memory Aid/Note Card Mean on a DRC Accommodation Letter? A Guide for Implementation for Students and Professors

Memory Aid/Note Card

A memory aid, or note card, is a testing accommodation used to support students who have documented challenges with memory. It is a tool used to trigger information that a student has studied but may have difficulty recalling due to cognitive processing deficits associated with memory and recall. The memory aid/note card allows the student to demonstrate knowledge of course material by helping prompt the student's memory, not by providing the answer. This accommodation is not intended to reduce academic requirements or alter the standards by which academic performance is assessed.

A proper memory aid/note card will not be useful to the student unless the student knows and understands how to use the information to which it refers. If the student doesn't understand the course material, a proper cue sheet will not help.

Disabilities that may affect memory include (but are not limited to):

- Acquired brain injury, Psychiatric disability, Specific learning disability, ADHD, or Medical conditions

How is an accommodation for a memory aid/note card determined and approved?

A student who requests a memory aid/note card must present documentation, from a qualified professional, which supports the need for this aid to the DRC. A DRC counselor will review the documentation and discuss the request for a memory aid/note card in depth with the student. Students are responsible for learning course material, for discerning which material may require cues or triggers, for developing the cues that will appear on the aid, and for securing the instructor's approval.

What does a memory aid/note card sheet look like?

Styles of memory aids/note cards may vary. Generally they can be hand written or typed on a large index card and up to one side of a letter-size page (8 1/2 x 11"). At the discretion of the instructor, a memory aid/note card may or may not include the use of: Acronyms, short phrases, pictures, schematic diagrams, formulas, names, definitions, tables, sample questions, and key terms/words charts.

Instructor Considerations

If remembering the information on the memory aid/note card is deemed to be an essential learning objective or outcome of the course, it should not be allowed. For example, if the learning objective or outcome of the course is to know the formula, it should not be allowed on the memory aid/note card; however, if the learning objective or outcome of the course is to demonstrate the ability to apply the formula, then it could be allowed on the memory aid/note card. **Memory aids/note cards must be reviewed and approved by the instructor** since the instructor decides the learning objectives or essential requirements of the course. Instructors can choose to remove memory triggers that are deemed to be essential learning

objectives for the course. Note: It is understood that some courses do not lend themselves to the use of memory aid/note cards.

What is the Process?

Student Responsibility:

1. Once a student has been approved for a memory aid/note card by a DRC counselor, the accommodation will be included on the student's DRC Authorized Accommodation Letter.
2. For each exam, the student prepares a memory aid/note card that is no larger than one single-sided, 8 ½"x11" page written by hand or 12 size font type, double spaced. An index card may be used instead, at the discretion of the instructor. Please note: a student with a visual impairment may need a larger memory aid/note card with the same number of characters in a larger font.
3. The student provides the memory aid/note card for editing and final approval, **at least 3 business days** prior to the test/exam, to the instructor. This means that the student will contact the instructor well in advance of the exam to confirm the due date for the memory aid/note card.

Instructor Responsibility:

- Ask the student for a copy of the DRC Authorized Accommodation Letter for your course. Look to see that "memory aid/note card" is an accommodation listed on the Letter. If it is not, explain this to the student and direct him/her to meet with their DRC counselor to discuss this accommodation request.
- In a confidential setting with the student or over the phone (if an online course), discuss the accommodation and required steps (see student responsibility section above)
- At least **two business days** prior to the test/exam, the instructor reviews the student's memory aid/note card chooses one of the following options:
 - Approve the memory aid/note card "as is"
 - Remove (if handwritten: delete, scratch out, or black out with a marker; if in a Word document: delete) information that the instructor has deemed inappropriate. If an item on the cue sheet provides a complete answer, rather than a trigger for an answer, the item must be removed.
 - Disallow the memory aid/note card entirely because the memory triggers on the memory aid/note card are deemed to be essential criteria or learning objectives for the course.
- If the memory aid/note card is approved by the instructor, the instructor signs the memory aid/note card and submits it along with the student's test directly to the DRC Testing Center via in person, blue envelope or e-mail to drcproctor@palomar.edu.
- Only the mutually agreed-upon memory aid/note card will be allowed with the test/exam at DRC's Testing Center. Students may not have access to other course materials at the DRC Testing Center, unless previously approved by the instructor.
- If the student arrives at the DRC Testing Center to test with a memory aid/note card not approved by the instructor, the memory aid/note card is not allowed. DRC staff will not contact the instructor on behalf of the student to request approval for a cue sheet. This is the responsibility of the student.
- Once the student completes the exam at DRC's Testing Center, the test and memory aid/note card will be returned to the instructor per the instructor's requested method of return.