



OFFICE OF
THE PROVOST

Student Access
& Accommodation

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Documentation Guidelines for Deaf/Hard of Hearing

In order for Student Access and Accommodation (SAA) to evaluate requests for accommodations and/ or auxiliary aids and to determine eligibility for services, appropriate disability related documentation is needed. The documentation submitted should include an evaluation by an appropriately licensed professional and should demonstrate the current impact of the disability as it relates to the accommodations requested. The documentation should also include a description of any and all relevant functional limitations.

Deaf or Hard of Hearing generally refers to a physical condition manifested by a lack of sensitivity to sound related to loudness. Hard of Hearing typically is categorized by the loss of hearing sensitivity, that is, how soft a listener can hear sounds. A hearing impairment can affect only one ear (unilateral) or both ears (bilateral). The severity of a hearing impairment can vary in degrees, including mild, moderate, severe, or profound. The configuration (shape) of hearing impairment reveals the hearing sensitivity for specific pitches across a frequency range.

A Qualified Professional Must Conduct the Evaluation

Professionals conducting assessments and rendering diagnoses and documentation must be qualified to do so. Typically, for this diagnosis, documentation would be provided by a licensed and certified audiologist or speech pathologist. Such documentation should be on letterhead and contain the professional's state license number, business location, contact information, and signature. The evaluator must be impartial and not related to the person being evaluated, their parents, or business partners.

The general guidelines listed below will assist you in working with your treating/diagnosing professional(s) to prepare the information needed to evaluate your request(s). If, after reading these guidelines and reviewing the disability-specific information provided below, you have any questions, feel free to call the office at **817-257-6567 (voice)** or via Relay Texas at **1-800-RELAY TX (735-2989)**.

Testing Must Be Current

In order to receive accommodations, documentation must be submitted in advance of need and must be current. Documentation validates the current functional limitations, which allows consideration for accommodation requests. In order for documentation to be current, one must focus upon the nature of the hearing loss. Thus, if the condition that leads to the loss of hearing is progressive, we may request documentation that is within the last two years. Documentation for non-progressive hearing impairments should be five years or less; however, we evaluate each request on an individualized case-by-case basis.

History of Accommodation

A high school plan such as an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a 504 plan, or history of accommodations provided at a

previous university is insufficient documentation in and of itself. However, **in addition to** current comprehensive documentation, it can be helpful in determining reasonable accommodations and services. SAA recommends providing this information when available. **A prior history of accommodations without demonstration of a current need does not in itself warrant the provision of like accommodations.**

Significant Functional Limitations

- Based on the most current DSM criteria, the documentation must substantiate that the disability **significantly limits** academic access.
- Functional limitations should be determined without consideration of mitigating measures (i.e. hearing aids). Requested accommodations must be relevant to a University setting with supporting rationale.
- Documentation and student narrative will be used to determine the presence of functional limitations.

Documentation should include, but is not limited to, the following:

- A clear statement of a hearing impairment with supporting data;
- Audiogram or speech language pathologist evaluation/assessment
- Certificate of deafness if appropriate
- Summary of present symptoms that meet the criteria for diagnosis of a hearing impairment;
- Medical information related to the student's needs, the status of the student's hearing (static or changing) and the impact on the demands of the academic and housing/residence life programs, including current functional limitations;
- Narrative or descriptive text providing both quantitative and qualitative information (i.e. audiogram) about the student's abilities helps to understand the student's profile, including the student's use of auxiliary aids and/or hearing aids (when appropriate).

Student Access and Accommodation will make the final determination as to whether appropriate and reasonable accommodations are warranted and can be provided to the individual. All documentation submitted to SAA is considered to be confidential under FERPA guidelines and as outlined by University policy.

Note to student: The Miller Speech & Hearing Clinic (MSHC) provides a variety of evaluation and therapy services for clients with Auditory Impairments. Contact 817.257.7620 for more information. MSHC does not file insurance but will give you documentation to submit to your insurance company.