



Accommodations and Resource Center (AARC) Documentation Guidelines

Deaf or Hard of Hearing Disabilities

Introduction

The Accommodations and Resource Center (AARC) at Western University of Health Sciences is committed to providing accommodations and services to qualified students and employees with disabilities in order to eliminate any disadvantages that may occur as a result of an individual's disability. In determining reasonable accommodations, AARC is guided by the federal definition of disability, which describes an individual with a disability as someone who has:

A physical or mental impairment that **substantially** limits one or more major life activities of such individual, a record of such impairment or is regarded as having such an impairment.

Any student or employee may request accommodations from AARC. In order to establish disability status and eligibility for specific accommodations, academic adjustments, ergonomic furniture/equipment and or auxiliary aids/services, AARC requires **current** and **comprehensive** documentation of the student's or employee's impairment(s). Disability documentation is reviewed by the Assistant Director AARC, and the determination of accommodations is made on a case-by-case basis based on the functional limitations of the disability. It is the student's and employee's responsibility to obtain and provide this information. If a student or employee cannot present current and comprehensive documentation, the Assistant Director may refer him/her to a qualified professional for assessment.

Disability documentation is credible evidence from a qualified practitioner that attests to the existence of a disability, the impact of the alleged disability on academic and job performance, and related competencies and recommendations for accommodations.

Guidelines for Disability Documentation

Physicians, including otorhinolaryngologists and otologists are qualified to provide diagnosis and treatment of hearing disorders. Audiologists may

also provide current audiograms. The diagnostician should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student or employee.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service providers in collaborating with each student or employee to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as the foundation that legitimizes a student's or employee's request for appropriate accommodations; therefore the following should be included:

1. A clear statement of deafness or hearing loss, with current audiogram that reflects the current impact of deafness or hearing loss on the student's or employee's functioning; (the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the condition, the current status of the student or employee, and the student's or employee's request for accommodations).
2. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis and a narrative summary of evaluation results, if appropriate.
3. Medical information relating to the student or employee needs and the status of the individual's hearing (static or changing) and its impact on the demands of the academic program or job performance.
4. A statement regarding the use of hearing aids (if appropriate).
5. Prior receipt of accommodations does not guarantee receipt of the same accommodations at Western University of Health Sciences.
6. Missing disability documentation information may result in a delay in reviewing a student's or employee's request for accommodations.
7. A statement of the functional impact or limitations of the disability on learning, working or other major life activity and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning or working context for which accommodations are being requested.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if coexisting learning disabilities or other disabling conditions are indicated. The student or employee and the Assistant Director, AARC collaborate regarding accommodations.