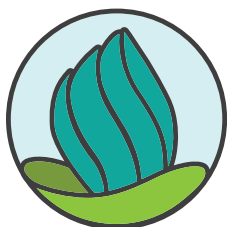


# Evaluation Tool

## for Serving Deaf Students



**NDC**  
National Deaf Center  
on Postsecondary Outcomes

# Overview

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Research suggests that a student is more likely to succeed if accessible systems are put into place prior to the student arriving at the institution<sup>1</sup>. Disability services personnel at higher education institutions have the ability to increase positive outcomes by designing accessible environments and creating a culture that meets the needs of deaf<sup>2</sup> students. This foundation is critical for deaf students who are transitioning from high school to community colleges, four-year universities, vocational training programs, and internships.<sup>3</sup> Disability services offices can benefit from conducting an internal assessment of policies, procedures, and other practices while managing accommodations for deaf students. The purpose of this guide is to help identify effectiveness, potential gaps, or areas in need of improvement to support accessible postsecondary environments for deaf students.

## Evaluating Accessibility

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This self-assessment tool is designed for your institution to evaluate whether your level of accessibility enables deaf students to participate in the college experience. As you go through this tool, there are opportunities to make notes for areas that need improvements. We recommend conducting an annual review of protocol and process, as well as collecting feedback from deaf students regarding access on campus.

An editable template is available at [nationaldeafcenter.org/dseval](https://nationaldeafcenter.org/dseval).

## Key Terminology

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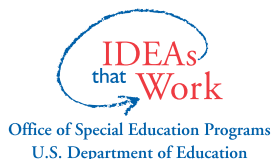
**Assistive listening systems:** Loop system, infrared, Roger Pen, FM/DM system

**Interpreters:** Sign language, oral, cued speech, tactile, pro-tactile

**Speech-to-text services:** Computer access realtime translation (CART), C-Print, TypeWell

**American Sign Language:** Abbreviated “ASL”

**Remote services:** When interpreters and speech-to-text professionals are not on location and provide services remotely via an internet connection





# Evaluation Tool for Serving Deaf Students

Answer each question using the rubric:

**Y** = Yes    **N** = No    **?** = *Don't know*

	Y	N	?
<b>Is information about registering with the disability services office for accommodations available to deaf students?</b>			
The information is presented in a simple, concise format.			
Information is available in multiple formats (e.g., printed text, video in ASL).			
Information includes documentation and forms required to make a request.			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Is the disability services office familiar with conducting intake appointments with a deaf student?</b>			
Staff are familiar with using a deaf student's audiogram or other supporting documentation to determine effective accommodations.			
Staff are prepared to ask guiding and follow-up questions to determine appropriate accommodations.			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Does the disability services office have experience working with deaf students?</b>			
Staff have experience with and knowledge of working with a range of deaf individuals.			
Staff have an overall understanding of 'effective communication' for deaf individuals.			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Is the disability services office familiar with coordinating interpreters for deaf students?</b>			
A system is in place for coordinating interpreting services.			
The office is familiar with a range of interpreting styles.			
A process for setting up remote interpreting services is in place.			
The office is familiar with minimum qualifications for interpreters.			
A protocol is in place for assigning interpreters to courses (e.g., letter to professor, access to prep information, policy or handbook for interpreters provided in advance or upon contract).			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Is the disability services office familiar with coordinating speech-to-text providers for deaf students?</b>			
A system is in place for coordinating speech-to-text services and equipment.			
The office is familiar with a range of speech-to-text services.			
A process for setting up remote speech-to-text services is in place.			
The office is familiar with minimum qualifications for speech-to-text providers.			
A protocol is in place for assigning speech-to-text providers to courses (e.g., letter to professor, access to prep information, policy or handbook for speech-to-text professionals provided in advance or upon contract).			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Are the buildings on campus equipped with Wi-Fi access for effective remote services?</b>			
There is high-speed internet with unlimited broadband coverage in all buildings.			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Is the disability services office familiar with coordinating assistive listening systems for deaf students?</b>			
The institution has at least two or more portable systems in working order.			
Devices are regularly checked for functionality.			
Students complete a borrower's agreement when they borrow a portable system.			
Disability services staff members are experienced in training students and instructors on how to use the equipment.			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Is the disability services office familiar with coordinating note takers for deaf students?</b>			
Note taker training is provided.			
There are instructions on how to recruit, train, and work with note takers.			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Is a protocol in place for students to request access services for academic needs outside of the classroom (e.g., tutoring, group work, meetings, field trips, required events)?</b>			
Information about making requests is shared with students upon registering with the disability services office.			
A protocol is in place for coordinating access services for these types of requests.			
A request form is available and easily accessible to students in a variety of formats.			
The form requests information needed to coordinate accommodations (e.g., date, start-end time, location, contact person, type of accommodation needed, timeline to submit request, information about the event and copies of materials such as presentation slides and scripts).			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Is a protocol in place for students to request access services for nonacademic needs (e.g., financial aid services, student health centers, multicultural centers, dorm or housing situations, student organizations)?</b>			
Information about making requests is shared with students upon registering with the disability services office.			
A protocol is in place for coordinating access services for these types of requests.			
A request form is available and easily accessible to students in a variety of formats.			
The form requests information needed to coordinate accommodations (e.g., date, start-end time, location, contact person, type of accommodation needed, timeline to submit request, information about the event and copies of materials such as presentation slides and scripts).			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Are faculty notified of a student's approved accommodations prior to the beginning of the semester?</b>			
Resources are provided to faculty to learn about the different types of accommodations.			
The notification includes information about the faculty's role in implementing classroom accommodations.			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Does the disability services office offer guidelines about the types of support available to deaf students?</b>			
Guidelines and policies are clear and concise.			
Information is provided in multiple formats (e.g., printed text, video in ASL).			
Guidelines are available in multiple places (e.g., on the website, in student handbooks) for students to access year-round.			
There is a clear policy with information on student absences and how to cancel services.			
Additional student responsibilities and expectations are outlined within guidelines.			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Are campus departments and units knowledgeable about submitting requests for accommodations?</b>			
The disability services office provides trainings and shares information regularly across campus.			
Instructions are available online.			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Is there a campus policy that requires all media (e.g., videos, websites, TV) to have captions available?</b>			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Is the process for submitting feedback about accommodations accessible to deaf students?</b>			
Students are notified of opportunities to submit feedback about their services.			
A feedback form is available online, in the office, and in other formats for students to complete at any time.			
Students have the opportunity to provide feedback in English or ASL.			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Does the disability services office have a plan in place when requests are submitted last minute or past deadline?</b>			
Procedures are outlined for short-notice requests.			
<b>Comments:</b>			

	Y	N	?
<b>Are online courses evaluated prior to the start of the course to ensure accessibility for deaf students?</b>			
Remote interpreters or speech-to-text service providers are identified and ready to be scheduled.			
All videos are captioned and transcripts are available for audio-only content.			
Faculty are aware of communication options when working with deaf students, even for online courses (e.g., email, telephone relay services).			
<b>Comments:</b>			

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Martin, N. (2006). Strategies which increase the likelihood of success at university of students with Asperger syndrome. *Good Autism Practice Journal* 7(Y), 51–60.
- <sup>2</sup> NDC is using the term *deaf* in an all-inclusive manner, to include people who may identify as deaf, deafblind, deafdisabled, hard of hearing, late-deafened, and hearing impaired. NDC recognizes that for many individuals, identity is fluid and can change over time or with setting. NDC has chosen to use one term, deaf, with the goal of recognizing experiences that are shared by individuals from diverse deaf communities while also honoring their differences.
- <sup>3</sup> Convertino, C. M., Marschark, M., Sapere, P., Sarchet, T., & Zupan, M. (2009). *Predicting academic success among deaf college students*. *Journal of deaf studies and deaf education*, 14(3), 324–343.

## Recommended Reading

Cawthon, S. W., Schoffstall, S. J., & Garberoglio, C. L. (2014). How ready are institutions for students who are deaf or hard of hearing? *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 22(13). doi:10.14507/epaa.v22n13.2014

Association on Higher Education and Disability. (n.d.). *AHEAD program standards and performance indicators*. Retrieved at [www.ahead.org/professional-resources/information-services-portal/data-collection-and-management/performance-indicators](http://www.ahead.org/professional-resources/information-services-portal/data-collection-and-management/performance-indicators)