

Effects of Accommodations on Test Scores for Deaf Students

RS
Research
Summarized

Summary of Cawthon et al., "Assessment Accommodations on Tests of Academic Achievement for Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing: A Qualitative Meta-Analysis of the Research Literature"¹

Why was this work done?

- Educational testing continues to shift toward two goals:
 - Standardized measurement of student academic progress
 - Inclusion of all students in testing
- Common accommodations allowed on state standardized assessments include extended time, separate room for administration of the test, read-aloud or signed test instructions, and read-aloud or signed test items (except for tests of reading ability).
- Deaf students have unique personal characteristics that influence their learning experiences.

How was this work done?

- Researchers reviewed the literature and identified 16 studies that analyzed the impact of factors related to performance of deaf students on academic assessments. Studies included a range of educational settings, content areas, and types of accommodations.
- Researchers also looked at the effects of accommodations on test scores, factors related to the test itself, and factors related to the students and their educational environment.

What did researchers find?

- There were not many significant differences between scores on tests taken with and without accommodations.
- Despite the importance of matching accommodations to individual student characteristics and needs, few studies disaggregated findings beyond broad categories such as deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing.
- There are complex intersections between student-level, test-level, and larger, policy-level factors that affect conclusions about accommodated test scores.

"The future of accommodations for students who are deaf will include changes to test formats such as computer-based and adaptive testing."

What do these results mean?

- Researchers and scholars need to know more about effects of accommodations for students who have co-occurring disabilities, the range of quality in ASL accommodations, and what kinds

¹Cawthon, S., & Leppo, R. (2013). Assessment Accommodations on Tests of Academic Achievement for Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing: A Qualitative Meta-Analysis of the Research Literature. *American Annals of the Deaf*, 158(3), 363–372.



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of decisions are made about student proficiency and achievement using accommodated test scores.

- Professionals need to know more about how packages of accommodations support learning.



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