
Accommodations and Modifications


Many students, with or without disabilities, need classroom adaptations, accommodations, and/or modifications to be successful in school. Adaptations, accommodations, and modifications need to be individualized for students, based upon their needs and strengths and are often written into an IEP or Section 504 plan.

Accommodations are the changes in how things are done in the school, classroom, or assessment, in order to provide the student with an equal opportunity to participate. The changes do not fundamentally or substantially alter or lower the school, district, or state standards. The student is learning the same material as other students. An accommodation might be having the teacher wear a microphone and the student wears a headset to help focus the sound. Accommodations can also include adaptations, or minor changes, to the curriculum or environment to help a student learn better, such as moving a highly distractible student to the front of the class or allowing a student to type rather than hand-write assignments.

Modifications fundamentally or substantially alter or lower the standards, requirements or expectations for the student. They change what the student is learning. Modifications could include adapted programming, content, or instruction, such as only completing half of the assigned math problems.

Accommodations and modifications apply to instruction in the general curriculum as well as to state and district assessments. In order for a student to be able to use accommodations in state and district assessments, the accommodations must be written in the student's plan, used in the classroom on a regular basis, and not fundamentally alter what the assessment seeks to measure.





Modifications or accommodations are most often made in the following areas:

- Scheduling - Examples include:
 - Giving the student extra time to complete assignments or tests
 - Breaking up testing over several days
 - Breaking assignments into segments of shorter tasks with frequent reminders
- Setting - For example:
 - Working in a small group
 - Working one-on-one with the teacher
 - Seating the student in an area free from distractions
 - Using mics and speakers in the class
 - Changing the behavior expected from the student in the classroom
- Materials - Examples might be:
 - Providing audiotaped lectures or books
 - Giving copies of teacher's lecture notes
 - Using large print books, Braille, or books on CD (digital text)
 - Using graphic organizers for note-taking
- Instruction - For example:
 - Reducing the difficulty of assignments
 - Reducing the reading level
 - Using a student/peer tutor
 - Reducing the amount of homework, school projects, or tests
 - Grade only completed work, or grade only on a Pass/Fail basis
- Student Response - May include:
 - Allowing answers to be given orally or dictated
 - Using a word processor for written work
 - Using sign language, a communication device, Braille, or native language if it is not English

Keep in mind, modifications and accommodations are meant to support individual students in their learning.



References:

- Center for Parent Information and Resources:
<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/accommodations/>
- Utah Parent Center:
www.utahparentcenter.org/publications/infosheets/general-info-sheets/educational-goal-setting/

Additional Resources:

- Smart Kids:
www.smartkidswithld.org/getting-help/the-abcs-of-ieps/examples-of-accommodations-modifications/
- Understood:
www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/treatments-approaches/educational-strategies/the-difference-between-accommodations-and-modifications
www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/treatments-approaches/educational-strategies/common-classroom-accommodations-and-modifications
- Utah Parent Center:
<https://utahparentcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/100-Effective-Accommodations-for-Students-with-Academic-or-Behavioral-Problems.pdf>