

EXTERNSHIP GUIDE

What is an externship? When, where, and how do I apply?



APPLY.



INTERVIEW.



ACCEPT!

A resource to help answer questions and provide doctoral students in audiology with recommendations on how to navigate the final year externship process.



The 2022-2023 SAA Education Committee gratefully acknowledges all the mentors, professors, and colleagues who have set forth the foundation for the content presented in this guide. Specifically, we recognize the contributions of the following people to this document:

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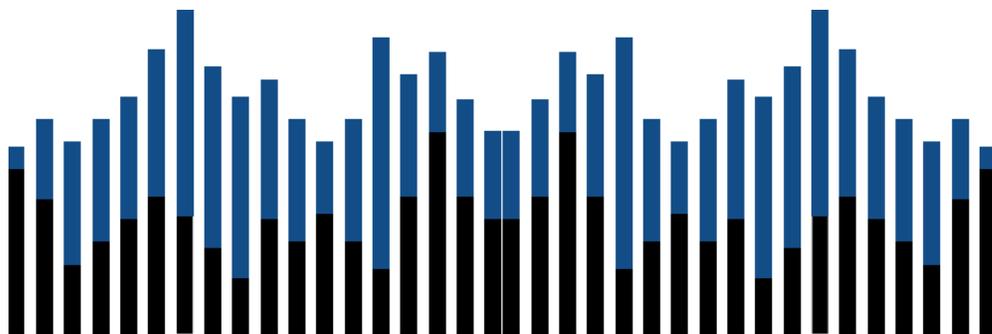
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1. Introduction

Congratulations! You are one step closer to completing your Clinical Doctorate in Audiology. Having completed the majority of the academic coursework and clinical placements required through your university program, you have acquired a vast range of knowledge and skills which are essential to practicing as a licensed audiologist. The next step before obtaining your degree is to begin the final year externship search and application process. We hope this guide provides you with an understanding of the externship process, information on navigating, searching, and applying for externship positions, and tips to make your experience as successful as possible.

What is an externship in the profession of audiology?

“Externships are long-term clinical training experiences that occur outside of the university. Students usually will have completed most, if not all, of their academic curriculum; however, they are still enrolled as students at the university. Accordingly, the university is still responsible for the student and should have an ongoing relationship with both the student and preceptor throughout the course of the externship in order to monitor student progress and intervene if problems arise.”

Newman, Craig W., Sharon A. Sandridge, and Sharon A. Lesner. “Becoming a Better Preceptor: Part 1: The Fundamentals.” *The Hearing Journal* 64, no. 5 (May 2011): 20. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.HJ.0000398147.18626.6b>.

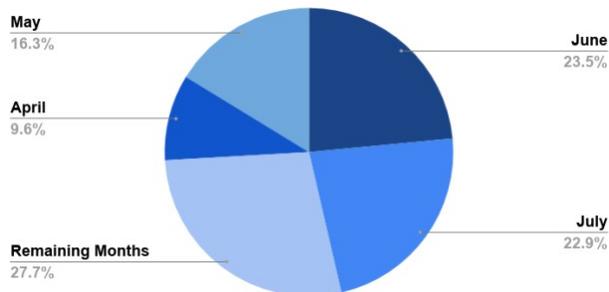
The externship marks the final year of supervised clinical experience for a doctoral student in audiology. In the externship year, AuD students integrate their working knowledge of all facets of the profession to provide audiological services rooted in evidence-based practice. This final year of clinical experience allows externs to diversify their knowledge, develop and strengthen their clinical skills, and work towards greater autonomy as clinicians.

However, the externship application process can be overwhelming for an AuD student. The process is similar to applying for a job. Additionally, every university program facilitates the externship process differently. Nearly all externship sites vary in the materials they require for their applications and their deadlines for submissions. Given all of these variables, the process of finding and applying to externships can be daunting but know that you are not alone. We have confidence that you will rise to the challenge! In addition to this packet, we encourage you to seek guidance from your peers, classmates, and additional resources through national SAA.

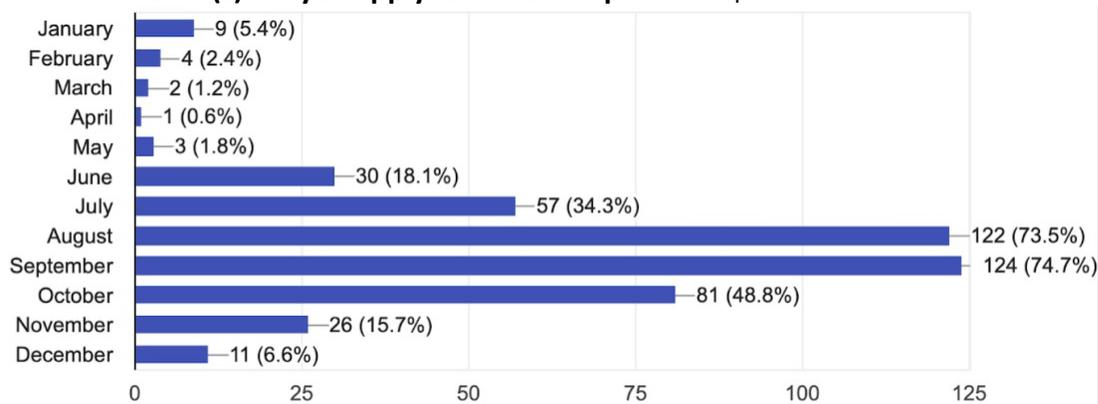
2. General Timeline

In April 2021, the Student Academy of Audiology (SAA) Education Committee surveyed 166 AuD students regarding the externship application timeline. A summary of the results is shown below. We hope this information provides an overview of when students should start preparing and applying for externships, interviewing, and accepting offers.

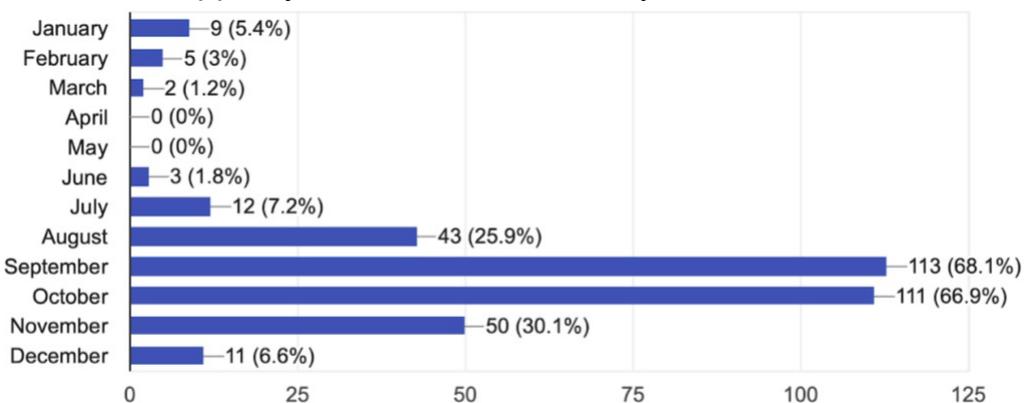
In which month did you start preparing for externships? 166 responses



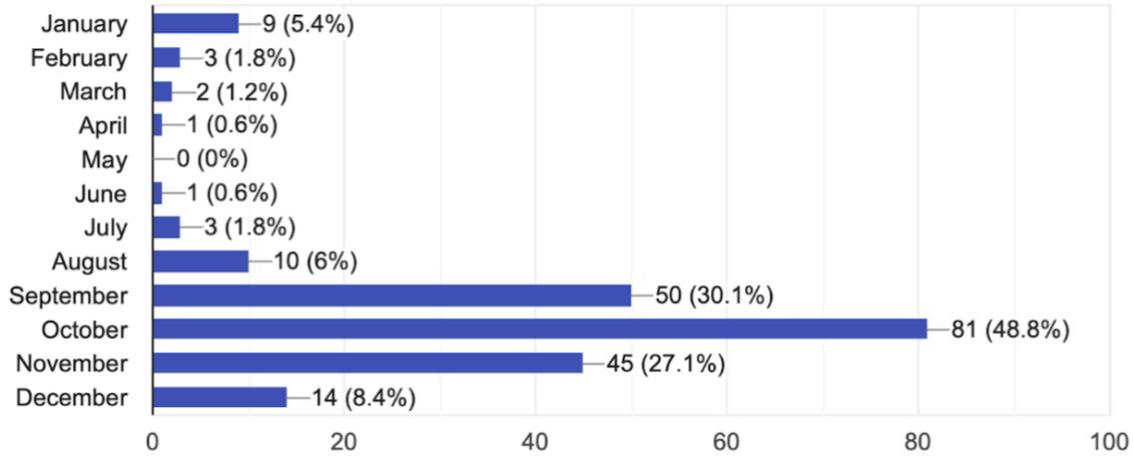
In which month(s) did you apply for externships? 166 responses



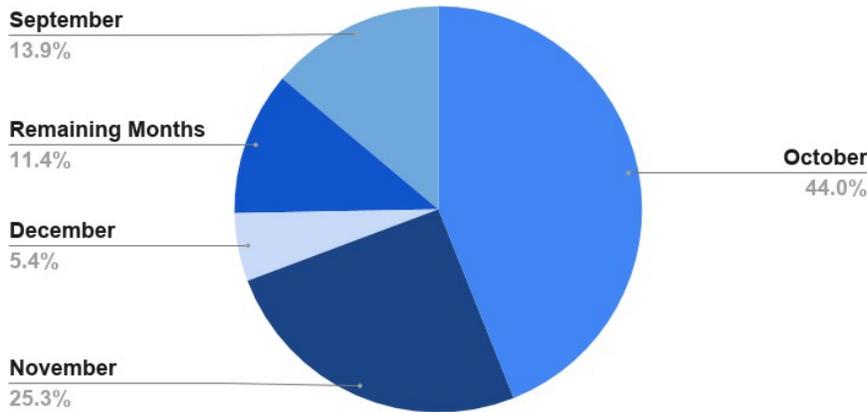
In which month(s) did you interview for externships? 166 responses



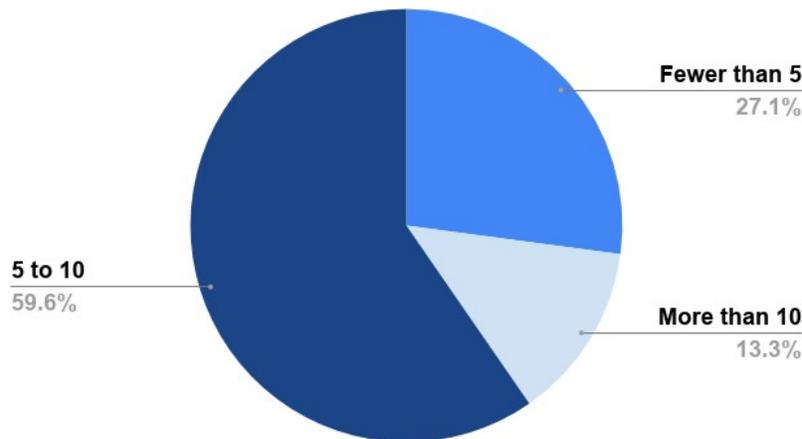
In which month(s) did you receive offer(s) for externships? 166 responses



In which month did you accept an offer for an externship? 166 responses



How many externships did you apply to? 166 responses



Summary of survey results:

The majority (72.3%) of students surveyed began preparing for the externship search (i.e., learning about the process, developing resume/CV) between April and July the year before their externship started. Almost three-fourths (73.5-74.7%) of students applied to sites during August and September. Over two-thirds (66.9-68.1%) reported having an interview during September and October. The majority (59.6%) of students submitted between five-ten applications throughout the externship search. Finally, respondents reported the highest volume of acceptances (83.2%) during the months of September, October, and November. Keep in mind that the externship process is expansive throughout the entire year and is ever-changing. We hope that you can use this data to prepare yourself as you embark upon this exciting journey to your final year!

ACEN timeline:

The Audiology Clinical Education Network (ACEN) offers a standardized timeline for application, interview, and offer and acceptance processes of the externship. Participating sites will follow the following timeline for the 2022-2023 application cycle:

- Friday, September 23, 2022 - Application Deadline
- Monday, September 26, 2022 - Interviews Begin
- Friday, October 21, 2022 - Interview Complete
- Monday, October 24, 2022 (11:00 am EST) - Offers extended
- Tuesday, October 25, 2022 (7:00 pm EST) - Response deadline
- Tuesday, October 25, 2022 (7:00 pm EST) - Subsequent offers begin

[Sites participating in the ACEN timeline](#) for the 2022-2023 application cycle may be reviewed here.

What can I do to prepare?

Before you start sorting through externship listings, think about what factors are most important to you in an externship. Here are some considerations as you determine what kind of externship you want, in no specific order.

- Populations served
- Clinical experiences
- Location(s)
- Finances
- Research opportunities

Once you've identified the key components that you are looking for in an externship, you can narrow your search to prioritize those factors.

Where can I look for externship listings?

- [HEARCareers](#)
- [Association of VA Audiologists](#)
- [ACEN participating sites](#)
- Your program - talk to your externship coordinator or program director
- Suggestions from peers or professors
- General internet search
- Facebook groups (e.g., [Audiology 4th Year Externships](#), note that additional groups may have been added since the creation of this document)
- LinkedIn or other career-based websites

However you conduct your search, develop a strategy to stay organized throughout the process. You may want to create a spreadsheet or keep a notebook of all the sites you are interested in. Write down each site's application deadline and required materials so you can plan out your time accordingly.

3. Letters of Recommendation

As you begin to identify where you will apply to externships, it is also important to consider who you will ask to write letters of recommendation. These letters provide placements with insight into your character and qualifications outside of a standard resume from an established professional. A strong letter will allow the reviewers to get to know you beyond your resume and interview, providing a more complete picture of who you are. It's normal to feel nervous before asking for a letter of recommendation. While it may feel uncomfortable at first, remember it is a normal part of the application process.

1) Choose who you want to write letters of recommendation for you.

The most effective recommendation letters will be from individuals who know you well and can speak about you on a personal level. In addition, individuals from specific clinical rotations or academic courses may be beneficial for certain externships. For example, a pediatric hospital may prefer recommendation letters from professionals who interacted with you in pediatric settings. Many externship sites provide specific guidelines. For example, a site may ask for two recommendations from clinical mentors and one letter from an academic mentor.

2) Prepare a resume or resume draft to share.

Make it easy for the person writing the recommendation letter to highlight your strengths and accomplishments! One way to do this is provide them with your resume and/or academic transcripts. Some highlights you may want to write down to share with them:

- Courses or clinical placements you had with them
- Examples of how you've demonstrated top attributes or strengths in work with them
- Top academic accomplishments
- Extracurricular activities
- Leadership and volunteer experiences
- Publications and/or presentations

It can feel awkward to brag about yourself but remember this is the time to show off your hard work!

3) Ask for your letter in person, if possible.

Contact your potential letter writer to schedule a meeting. Once a meeting is scheduled, prepare what you'll say ahead of time if it will help to calm your nerves. When you meet with them, explain what you're applying for and why you're asking them to recommend you. If asking in person is not possible, send a polite and detailed email.

Ask early! Be sure to ask well in advance of the deadline to allow mentors ample time to write and submit your recommendation letters. Faculty members and clinicians can get inundated with requests to write letters around the same time. Asking ahead of time will allow them to spend some time and attention on your letter. The following page provides two examples of requests for letters of recommendation.

Formal example:

Dear *[Recommender Name]*,

I hope all is well with you. I am in the process of applying to externships and I would like to ask if you are comfortable writing a letter of recommendation on my behalf. As my *[professor/supervisor/etc.]*, I believe you could illustrate and endorse *[list of skills or qualifications]* I've demonstrated during our time together.

I appreciate you considering my request. The first deadline for submitting my letter is *[insert date]*. I have attached an updated version of my resume and details on how to submit the letter. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time and support.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Informal example:

Dear *[Recommender Name]*,

I hope you are having a nice week so far! I am emailing you to ask if you would be willing to write letters of recommendation for some of the externship programs I apply to.

If you are willing, I would be happy to share more with you and keep you updated as I decide where to apply. The earliest deadline I have seen for a place I am interested in is *[date]*.

I appreciate you considering my request.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

4) Share a list with your letter writers with helpful information and deadlines.

Once an individual has agreed to write letters for you, it is helpful to provide them with detailed information about where you are applying and relevant deadlines. They may also request a draft of your cover letter or resume to learn more about your clinical goals. Below is an example spreadsheet you may want to recreate to share with them and a [similar version here](#).

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
	Completed	Name and full address of facility	Name and Credentials of person to send the letter to	Email of Person sending letter to	Preferred method of delivery	Deadline	Reference #1	Sent Date	Reference #2	Sent Date	Reference #3	Sent Date	Notes/Requests for letters	Website link / more info
1														
2														
3														
4		Site 1												
5														
6														
7														
8														
9		Site 2												
10														
11														
12														
13														
14		Site 3												
15														
16														

5) Follow up before the due date.

Consider setting a deadline prior to the externship sites' deadlines to ensure all information is gathered on time and to minimize room for potential error. Follow up with a polite reminder 1-2 weeks before your letters are due. This is a good opportunity to thank them again and offer to send any additional information they may need.

6) Share a final thank you.

Share a short thank you note to each mentor who wrote a letter of recommendation on your behalf. Express your appreciation for their support and be sure to update them with the good news once you've accepted an externship.

4. Resumes

Keeping your resume updated is one of the important ways to prepare yourself for the externship process. You'll discover externship sites have different deadlines for applications, so having your resume ready to send will allow you to apply to those early application deadlines. Consider the following as you develop and strengthen your resume:

DOs

- Ideally, one page in length (two pages max.)
- Use a legible font size and style (e.g., Arial, Calibri, Garamond, Times)
- Bullet key points and clinical skills
- Find a template you like and add your own experiences
- Have other people read your resume (friends, family, colleagues)
- Emphasize experiences most applicable to the site that you are applying to
- Customize your resume for each site

DON'Ts

- Provide lengthy descriptions of activities, experiences, and research
- Detail work experience unrelated to audiology or the externship site
- Include outdated or irrelevant experiences (e.g., high school extracurriculars)
- List out your graduate coursework
- Have any grammatical errors or typos - proofread multiple times!

The following pages consist of some sample resumes to provide you with an idea of formatting. Keep in mind that not everyone's resume is formatted in the same way, but the most important point to focus on is presenting your information as *clearly and concisely* as possible. Externship sites review numerous applications, so you want to ensure that you are using their time efficiently by succinctly highlighting your skills and experiences. For additional support, check with your university career services about resume workshops. Also, try reaching out to your program director or professors for suggestions on how to draft your resume.

The Academy offers a free review service for resumes, cover letters, and thank you notes specifically for SAA members, and we highly encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity! They typically review documents within 14 days, so remember to set aside time when using this membership service. Learn more about the Academy's resume review service [here](#).

NAME

Phone: xxx.xxx.xxx | xxx@gmail.com | City, State | [Linkedin.com/in/name](https://www.linkedin.com/in/name)

EDUCATION

XXX University | City, State

Month Year – Expected Month Year

Graduate Degree

XXX University | City, State

Month Year – Month Year

Undergraduate Degree

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Name of Clinical Site/Rotation(s)

Month Year – Month Year

Clinical Skills

- Hearing Aid Selection and Fitting
- Hearing Device Troubleshooting
- Real-Ear Verification
- Earmold Impressions
- Counseling and Case Management
- Report Writing
- Comprehensive Adult Audiologic Evaluation
- Assisted with Visual Reinforcement and Conditioned Play Audiometry

Aural Rehabilitation

Month Year – Month Year

- Educated participants about the auditory system, hearing devices, and communication strategies

Developmental Diagnostic Program

Month Year – Month Year

- Participated in a multidisciplinary evaluation involving various types of hearing, speech, and language screening measures for children 0-3 years of age

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

National Student Academy of Audiology

Education Committee Member

Month Year – Month Year

- Developed programming and materials to improve public awareness of audiology during National Audiology Awareness Month and the “Ask Me About Audiology” Campaign

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

XXX University

Month Year – Month Year

Capstone/ Study Title

Mentors: xxx

- Investigated [research question]
- Collected data, analyzed results, and produced [outcome of research project]

PUBLICATIONS

Last Name, First Initial. (Year). *Article title*. Journal. Retrieved from <http://url>

NAME

email | phone number | address

EDUCATION

School, City, State

Anticipated graduation

Doctor of Audiology

- GPA:

Undergraduate school, City, State

Month Year

Degree

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Graduate Student Clinician

Date Year – Date Year

School, City, State

- Acquired skills in adult and pediatric audiologic evaluation, clinical counseling, audiologic monitoring, intervention plans, auditory processing disorder evaluation, tinnitus evaluation, and sound sensitivity disorders
- Gained proficient skills with hearing assistive technology with all major manufacturers
- Completed outplacement rotation at X focused on Y
- Completed outplacement rotation at X focused on Y
- Completed outplacement rotation at X focused on Y

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant

Date Year – Date Year

School, Lab name, City, State

- Conducted research under supervision and mentorship of Dr. X
- Y
- Z

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Student Academy of Audiology, Position

Date Year – Date Year

School, City, State

- Elected to plan and coordinate community education and outreach events on audiology
- Created PowerPoint presentation on hearing loss and cognitive decline, PowerPoint presentation on noise-induced hearing loss and hearing protection, brochure on hearing loss prevention, and brochure on hearing aids

HONORS, AWARDS & GROUP MEMBERSHIP

- *Member*, State Speech-Language-Hearing Association Date Year – Date Year
- *Member*, Student Academy of Audiology Date Year – Date Year
- *Recipient*, Fellowship Date Year – Date Year

5. Cover Letters

Many externship sites require a cover letter or letter of intent in their application. The cover letter's purpose is to detail why you are interested in that particular externship site and expand upon the qualities that make you a strong candidate. Remember, keeping your sentences brief and straightforward will enhance the clarity of your writing. Here are some suggestions on how to construct your cover letter:

1. Research the Addressee

Do your research to ensure that you have the correct contact information and address for your cover letter. Most importantly, make sure that you address your reader with the proper credentials and avoid using "sir/madam". Some sites have intermediary staff members collect or review applications before being sent to the audiologist. Also, not every audiologist has their AuD. It is crucial that you accurately address who you are talking to convey the respect and attention that the recipient deserves.

2. Introduce Yourself

The cover letter provides you with an opportunity to convey your personality, showcase your qualifications, and explain your interest in the externship position. Start by introducing the basics: your name, what university program you attend, and your expected graduation date. Then, talk about why you are interested in that particular externship site. Are you interested in this type of work setting? Do they provide a wide range of clinical experiences? Do they provide experiences in any specialty areas in audiology? Finally, make a statement regarding why you are qualified for the position. Think of this as your thesis statement. Once you've set the stage, the rest of the letter provides support for why you are a strong candidate.

3. Expand Upon Your Qualifications

Now that you've introduced yourself, it's time to provide concrete examples of why you're the best fit for the position. Do you have a determined mindset? Are you highly

organized? Do you have extensive experience in a particular field? Are you a skillful researcher? When writing your cover letter, you should avoid repeating information from your resume. Instead, the experiences or information you provide in the cover letter should be an extension of your resume. Think of your cover letter as a supplement to your resume. If you were unable to squeeze in something on your resume, here is your opportunity to include that information. Whatever you choose to write about, try to relate how those skills or experiences can contribute to the externship site.

4. Provide Your Contact Information

Make it easy for the externship site to contact you. Yes, your resume has your contact information, but so should your cover letter. You can use the same page header on both your resume and cover letter or include this information in your concluding paragraph. Once you've summarized the main points presented in your cover letter, provide the best means for them to contact you so that you can further discuss the externship opportunity.

5. Thank the Reader

Remember that most externship sites are not being paid to precept students for a year, let alone have time allotted in their schedules to review applications. Exhibit your professionalism and sincere gratitude by thanking the reader for their time. This simple gesture will not go unnoticed.

Name
xxx.xxx.xxxx
xyz@gmail.com

Month Day, Year

Address Name, Credentials
Externship Site Name
Address

Dear X,

I am writing to express my interest in the externship position at your exceptional facility. I am a graduate student in audiology at XYZ University in City, State, who is very passionate about working with cochlear implant patients, being part of a multidisciplinary team, and advocating for our profession. As demonstrated by my leadership and clinical experiences, I have developed a diverse set of transferable skills and a determined mindset that I believe would make me an asset to your audiology department at Externship Site Name.

Throughout the past few years, I have diligently worked and balanced my graduate education while serving on a variety of student and professional organizational boards. These opportunities have challenged my ability to think critically and enhanced how I relay my thoughts to others in both a respectful and concise way. My experiences in these positions have also deepened my passion for the field of audiology and have equipped me with the tools to be forward-thinking in the comprehensive care of patients. With these skills, I feel confident in my ability to collaborate with colleagues, counsel patients, and be a voice for change in our profession.

Additionally, I have taken a strong initiative towards the development of my clinical skills. My background in working with adults showcases my ability to manage an entire case and facilitate efforts to enhance a patient's everyday communication through amplification and aural rehabilitation. Although I have not yet had a placement focused on serving the pediatric population, I have had the experience of working with children in a variety of settings. Last summer, I worked as a lead counselor for a ten-week speech therapy program and was responsible for planning play-based activities to develop social skills amongst children with a range of developmental disabilities. This experience has helped me learn how to engage with a diverse group of children with a range of developmental abilities, gauge their social and language abilities, and keep them interested in activities throughout an extended period. As a result, this experience has prepared me as I continue to develop my competency in performing diagnostic and rehabilitative services for children.

I am drawn to work under your supervision at Externship Site Name given the opportunity to provide a wide range of services in a dynamic and fast-paced setting. My inspiration to pursue audiology is deeply rooted in serving the cochlear implant population, which is why I'm specifically interested in the variety of implantable device services that are provided by your audiology department.

As demonstrated by my leadership and educational experiences, I believe that I possess the skills and dedication that would positively contribute to your audiology department at Externship Site Name. I am eager to discuss the position further and expand upon my qualifications for your externship opportunity. Please feel free to contact me at xxx.xxx.xxxx or xyz@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and commitment to advancing the education of future audiologists. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
Name

6. Interview Tips

Being extended an interview is a huge accomplishment and we want to ensure that you have all the tools necessary to impress your interviewers. Here are some quick tips on how to prepare for your interview.

Do Your Research

Conduct research on the facility *and* the people interviewing you. Take note of any similar clinical interests or experiences you share with your interviewers so you can make a point to discuss those during the interview. Focus on asking bigger picture questions (e.g., what clinical opportunities do you offer?) and reserve smaller, less important questions (e.g., stipends, vacation days) for either current externs or after an offer is extended. Some sites may offer you the opportunity to visit their clinic; if you are able, go for it! This will give you an idea of what that clinic is all about and how they operate.

Practice, Practice, Practice

Practice answering possible questions before the interview. Write down your responses and rehearse them aloud. A good technique is to use the STAR method: Situation (describe the situation), Task (explain the task you needed to complete), Action (describe the specific actions you took to complete the task), Result (close with the result of your actions). After preparing your questions, schedule a mock interview with a friend, family member, or through career services at your university. Try to schedule the mock interview with someone who doesn't know you personally. You know audiology, so prepare for soft-skill related questions and convey your answers concisely. Also, practice smiling! Even when you are on a phone call, oftentimes interviewers can tell if you're smiling.

Be Prepared

If you have a virtual interview, set up your computer at least 10-15 minutes early. Ensure that your internet connection is stable, your webcam is in a good position, and the audio is working properly. Face a window if you can to allow natural lighting to highlight your face. Ensure the space around you isn't cluttered. During the interview, make eye contact

with the camera instead of looking at yourself on the screen. Free your space from distractions and have a notebook ready to jot information down. It's a great idea to have your phone on hand (on silent, of course!) in case you have connectivity problems. You can use your phone as a personal hotspot for a stable connection or ask to continue your interview on the phone. Be prepared, as technology issues may arise.

If you have an interview in person, make sure to arrive a few minutes early. This may be the first time you will be going to the facility; account for traffic, finding the site, and navigating parking. Bring extra copies of your resume for the interviewers, along with one for yourself. They will likely have your application information but bringing your own copies will highlight your professionalism. Additionally, bring a notebook so that you can jot down important details about the externship. If you choose to do so, ask the interviewer if it's okay to take notes and be conscious of how often you look down at your notebook. Being mindful of your body language is really important during an interview, especially maintaining good eye contact. We know that nonverbal communication conveys a lot of information, so make sure that you are cognizant of your facial expressions, body movements, and posture. Above all, take a deep breath and relax right before the interview starts to get in the right headspace to answer questions.

Keep it Professional

An interview is not the time to stand out with your dress or makeup! Stay neutral and polished. Recommended attire includes black or gray suits, solid-colored shirts, sensible and comfortable shoes, minimal jewelry, and hair pulled from your face. Even if you have a virtual interview, dressing professionally will put you in the right mindset.

Be Confident in Yourself

Execute the interviews with the confidence of someone who already has the job! Go into it with the mindset that you are the best person for the position, because you are, and don't be afraid to tell them. Prepare examples that demonstrate how you are the most qualified candidate. Confidence is essential, but also make sure to be yourself. Ultimately,

you want to accept an externship where you fit in. Even though it is important that the site offers the clinical experiences that you want, it is just as important that the supervising audiologists have personalities that resonate with you. Remember, they're interviewing you, but you're also interviewing them.

Send a Thank You

Remember to formally thank your interviewers by sending a short email or even a 'thank you' card. This gesture speaks highly of your professionalism and emphasizes your gratitude for the time they dedicated to you. Most externship preceptors are not paid to take on a student, so it's important to acknowledge that you value their time. Keep the 'thank you' simple and concise!

7. Practice Questions

As previously mentioned, preparing and rehearsing your answers to practice questions will help to not only strengthen your ability to communicate with your interviewers, but also boost your confidence. Below are practice questions that SAA members have accumulated over the years. For additional preparation, we encourage you to ask your peers and professors for more questions.

General:

- What do you consider to be your strengths in audiology? Your weaknesses?
- What qualities did your best supervisors have?
- What is your favorite part of audiology? Your least favorite?
- Why do you want to be an audiologist?
- Tell us about your capstone project.
- How do you adapt to a fast-paced environment?
- Discuss the work you have done in XXX's lab (listed on resume).
- What do you like to do in your free time/hobbies?
- Are you comfortable working with multiple different clinicians and different teaching styles?
- How do you feel about working with other professionals, specifically an ENT?
- How do you handle stressful situations?
- How do you handle feedback and how do you respond to it? What style of feedback do you respond best to?
- What was the hardest class for you and why?
- How would your peers describe you?
- Tell me about your favorite and least favorite clinical placements.
- What courses interested you the most?
- What area of audiology do you plan to specialize in?
- Where do you see yourself in five years (geographical and type of practice)?
- What's your dream job?
- Do you work better alone or with a team?
- What area of audiology do you have the least experience with?

Situational:

- What would you do if a patient arrives late at the end of the day?
- How would you change your balance protocol if a patient had a conductive problem?
- How would you modify testing for a patient with dementia?

- What has been your most difficult case?
- What has been your most interesting case (or most memorable)?
- What would you do if a supervisor does something differently than you were taught?
- Tell us about a time when you went above and beyond what was necessary for a patient.
- Tell us about a challenging patient you had and how you handled it.
- Give us an example of when you made a mistake. How did you fix it?
- Give an example of a time you have been criticized at work by a supervisor. How did you react?
- Are you comfortable with counseling? Describe a specific situation.
- Describe a time where you may not have made the best decision and what you did to fix that?
- Tell us about a time when you received constructive criticism. Were you able to adjust your actions accordingly? How?
- Have you ever faced an ethical dilemma in a clinic, and if so, how did you handle it?
- What is your opinion on over-the-counter hearing aids?
- Describe a time you worked effectively and ineffectively.
- What has been your most rewarding moment in audiology so far?

Competency-based:

- Which hearing aid (and/or cochlear implant) companies are you most familiar with?
- What is the protocol for an ABR?
- What muscle is responsible for the acoustic reflex and what cranial nerve innervates it?
- If you have someone with a conductive hearing loss but normal tymps and reflexes, what might you suspect?
- What is the importance of RECDs on a pediatric patient and what would you do if you were unable to obtain RECDs on a pediatric patient?
- Who are other professionals that we typically refer to?
- Walk us through an initial appointment/rescreen of a failed hearing test at PCP.
- Walk us through a hearing aid fitting.
- What equipment are you familiar with?
- How would you differentiate between SSCD and otosclerosis (e.g., audiogram, VEMP results)?
- Clinically, what do you have the most experience in? What do you need more experience in?

Site-specific:

- What made you apply here for an externship placement?

- What makes you a good candidate/good fit for this placement?
- What do you hope to get out of your externship?
- Would you ever consider working here following your externship? Explain why we should hire you.
- Why are you interested in working here?

Questions to ask interviewers:

It is important to ask the interviewers questions. Asking questions demonstrates that you took the time to do your research and are interested in the position. It also provides you with the opportunity to gather more information about the site to ensure if it is the right fit for you.

Example questions to ask:

- What does a daily/weekly schedule look like at your clinic?
- Do you do real ear measurements?
- What is your typical patient population?
- What is the interaction like between ENT and audiology?
- What will extern responsibilities include?
- How much supervision should I expect to receive?
- What does interprofessional collaboration look like for an extern at your site?
- What are the strengths and areas of improvement of your clinic?
- How do you provide feedback? How often?
- Does your clinic offer the chance to observe or participate in intraoperative monitoring?
- Are there research opportunities available?
- How long are your appointments (e.g., hearing evaluation, hearing aid fitting, hearing aid evaluation) scheduled for?
- What are your expectations for the extern?
- What will your ideal candidate achieve within the first 30 days? Three months?
- Who will be the direct supervisor?
- What is the timeline and process for the final decisions about the position?
- Will I be able to attend any continuing education events?

8. Making a Final Decision

After months of preparation, you have an externship offer! First, take a step back and celebrate this significant milestone. You've worked hard, and this externship offer serves as a symbol of your accomplishments thus far. You also may receive multiple offers for externships and feel torn making your final decision. Make sure to follow up with your university's externship coordinator or program director; they are there to help and support you throughout the process. Before making your final decision, here are some questions to reflect on.

Why did I initially apply to this site?

Think back to what first drew you to apply for this externship. You've likely obtained a deeper understanding of what the site has to offer and have become acquainted with the audiologists. After completing the application and interview processes, the externship may differ from what you had initially expected. Ask yourself: *Does this externship feel like the right fit for me? Will I be comfortable working in this type of setting, living in this state, and working with these professionals for an entire year?*

What are the advantages and disadvantages of this site?

As you reflect on why you first applied to this externship, make sure to review the essential components you want or need in your final year. Weigh the pros and cons of this externship site over other sites you applied to. You may not get everything you want in an externship, so ensure that you will get the most critical factors. Above all, know that your externship is not going to define your entire audiology career. You can and will still seize additional opportunities as a working professional.

Am I waiting on other offers from other sites?

Because the timeline for applications varies per site, you may need to accept or decline an offer knowing that another offer may come your way. This timeline can be particularly stressful if you only have a few days to make your final decision. Don't hesitate to reach out to the other site and inquire about the status of their decision regarding your

application, that you have another offer on the table, and need to decide by X date. Have confidence in yourself when deciding because only you can determine whether the site is the right choice for you.

What do I do when accepting an offer?

- Follow your university program's recommendations—many programs require you to confer with your program director or externship coordinator prior to accepting an offer.
- Respond to the site with gratitude and excitement for your future experience!
- Ask the site if there are any tasks or paperwork you should begin completing before starting your externship.
- Withdraw your application from any additional sites you have applied to so that those professionals can save time reviewing applications.

What do I do when declining an offer?

- Follow your university program's recommendations— many programs require you to confer with your program director or externship coordinator before declining an offer.
- Respond with gratitude and professionalism.
- Thank the individual for their time spent interviewing you. You do not need to give them a reason why you're declining.

9. Final Thoughts

Congratulations! You have accepted your externship position and are probably wondering what happens next. Depending on when you've accepted an offer, it may be months until you begin your placement. It is typical not to have any additional communication with your externship site until much closer to your start date. Make sure you've discussed your official start date with your site, and don't hesitate to reach out with questions while waiting for your externship to start. Finally, consider asking your externship preceptor if they can share the current externs' contact information. The current extern will have a lot of information to share with you about the site, insider tips, apartment/house recommendations, etc.

In the meantime, start studying for the praxis. As discussed in [The SAA Blog](#), the Praxis® is the audiology licensure exam proctored through the Educational Testing Service (ETS®). The most recent version of the exam launched in 2020, so now there are two versions available: Praxis® Audiology I (5342) and Praxis® Audiology II (5343). Although it is recommended that you complete the latest version, check with your state's licensing agency to determine which exam you need to satisfy licensure requirements. The formatting for both exams is the same and consists of five different content categories: foundations of audiology, prevention and screening, assessment, intervention, professional and ethical responsibilities. Here are some steps you can take to prepare yourself to take the Praxis® exam.



Step 1: Familiarize Yourself with the Exam

- Review the five content areas.
- What are your areas of strength?
- Identify your areas of improvement to focus your studies.
- Check out these [study tips](#) from ETS® on how to be a better test-taker.



Step 2: Dedicate Time in Your Schedule to Study

- Develop a study group with your cohort.
- Set a goal for when to take the exam to keep you motivated.
- Organize your schedule and set time aside to study.
- Remember, studying for the Praxis® will also benefit you in preparing for externship interviews!



Step 3: Put Your Knowledge to the Test

- Utilize practice questions through ETS®: [Praxis® I](#) & [Praxis® II](#).
- If interested, an interactive practice test is also available for purchase through ETS.



Step 4: Getting Ready for Test Day

- Set aside your registration and ID the night before the test.
- Get a good night's sleep and eat a healthy breakfast.
- Put yourself in the right mindset.
- Be confident. You've got this!

References

<https://www.ets.org/praxis/prepare/tips/>

<https://www.ets.org/s/praxis/pdf/5342.pdf>

<https://www.ets.org/s/praxis/pdf/5343.pdf>

