



Borders College

BSL Action Plan - 2018-2024

BSL Action Plan

This BSL Action Plan is presented as a draft document. It has been written to support the BSL National Plan for Scotland which was published on 24 October 2017. The BSL National Plan has ten long-term goals. These goals represent our collective ambition for BSL in Scotland and underpin the Scottish Government's overall ambition; to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users* to live, work and visit. This draft document outlines Borders College's plans to achieve the aims of the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015. This draft Action Plan is subject to change.

Introduction

In light of the enactment of the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015, the Scottish Funding Council has committed to implementing the aims of the BSL Act within Scotland's colleges. The Act tasked the Scottish Government to write and publish a BSL National Plan for Scotland, from which listed authorities including Borders College will take guidance in order to write and publish their own Action Plans.

The British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 aims to:

- (i) Promote awareness and the use of BSL; and
- (ii) Improve access to services for Deaf and Deaf-blind people.

Therefore, Borders College will take measures to promote awareness of BSL and the use of BSL, and to develop access to its education and teaching services for Deaf and Deaf-blind persons.

British Sign Language is a recognised language of Scotland; the guidance to the Act acknowledges BSL as a minority language, which means that people whose first or preferred language is BSL may access information and services on the basis of their language, which prevents BSL users from having to declare themselves as disabled under the definition of the Equality Act 2010, where they do not perceive themselves to be disabled.

The guidance states that ... "The Bill does not go as far as imposing an explicit statutory requirement on authorities to provide British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters or translation services, nor does it require listed authorities to deliver specific services to BSL users or those wishing to learn BSL." ¹ The

¹ British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 [url] <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/11/introduction/enacted>

purpose of the Act is “...to promote the use of British Sign Language...”, therefore many proposed measures will emphasize the ambition of Borders College to promote awareness of BSL and the use of BSL, and to improve access to information, education and teaching services for BSL users.

** Wherever we refer to ‘BSL users*’ we mean D/deaf and/or Deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language.*

Analysis

From Scottish Parliament guidance on the British Sign Language Bill, it is noted that approximately 120 children are born in Scotland every year with a hearing impairment; and there are approximately 1,000 people under the age of 19 in Scotland who have a severe or profound hearing loss (Griffin, 2012).² Therefore, across Scotland, there will be a requirement from BSL users leaving school for support to ensure that they can access information and education at college.

From the 2011 Census, 12,533 people indicated that they used BSL at home – this figure equates to 0.23% of Scotland’s total population.³ Over time, an increase in the use of cochlear implants for children with severe/profound hearing loss may further reduce the number of people using BSL as a first language. However, Borders College anticipates an increase in demand for provision of information, teaching and education services to BSL users due to its efforts to achieve the aims of the BSL (Scotland) Act.

Consultation

In partnership with Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders, Borders College has actively engaged BSL users in developing and commenting on the early stages of draft action plans and we are committed to continued stakeholder engagement around:-

- a) shaping provision,
- b) implementing actions
- c) providing constructive feedback on progress
- d) developing further actions and future evaluation.

² Macpherson, S. (2015) ‘SPICe Briefing – British Sign Language (Scotland) Bill’, The Scottish Parliament [http://www.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefingsAndFactsheets/S4/SB_15-05_British_Sign_Language_Scotland_Bill.pdf], page 8

³ (Source: Bezuijen, J. (2016), ‘Deafness in Scotland’, Deaf Action [url] <http://www.deafaction.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Deafness-in-Scotland-A-recent-analysis.pdf> at page 10)

We will contribute to the national progress report in 2020.

As part of our consultation our draft plan and BSL translation, along with those of the Council and NHS, will be available to view and comment online from August (tbc) on the College website www.borderscollege.ac.uk A second consultation event will be held in September for members of the public to make further comment on the draft or they can contact the College directly – details below.

Contact

The lead officer for Borders College's BSL Action plan is Clare Nairn and can be contacted if there are in questions or comments in relation to the college's BSL Action Plan.

Clare Nairn
Head of Student Services
Borders College
Scottish Borders Campus
Galashiels
TD1 3HE
cnairn@borderscollege.ac.uk





**Across
our
services**

Across the Scottish public sector, information and services will be accessible to BSL users.

Aim

Action

Timescale

To increase awareness of BSL Scotland Act 2015 amongst college staff.

- Information to be disseminated through various College communication tools including staff newsletter, website, yammer, social media
- Examples of Best Practice to be delivered through internal communications/awareness sessions

From August 2018 and ongoing updates thereafter

To identify students who are BSL users at course application and enrolment stage

- Option available to indicate D/deaf and/or user of BSL when applicants complete College Application/Enrolment forms

From August 2018

To make the college more accessible to potential BSL students

- Promote the service offered by ContactSCOTLAND-BSL to support D/deaf students
- To facilitate one-to-one support for course, bursary or SAAS applications

From August 2018

To make the website accessible to BSL users

- ContactSCOTLAND-BSL logo to be added to the Contact Us section and main page of website
- BSL translations of key pages of website eg Welcome page, Student Support

By August 2018

By August 2019

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text-based course information to be available and presented in an optimal way for readers whose first language is not English. 	Currently available
To improve initial communication and information provision for BSL users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ContactSCOTLAND-BSL to be promoted to all front-line staff • Frontline staff and lecturers with D/deaf students to add the ContactSCOTLAND-BSL logo in to email signatures. • ContactSCOTLAND-BSL to be promoted and encouraged to be used by D/deaf students 	By December 2018
Increase awareness training for staff (and students) who may work with BSL users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D/deaf Awareness and Deaf Blind training to be made available to relevant frontline staff • Awareness training to be made available to lecturers with students who are BSL users • Option for deaf awareness to be delivered in classes with a D/deaf, BSL user student • Explore options for online deaf awareness training to be made available as part of mandatory CPD 	From August 2018 and as required
To build relationships with specialist external agencies to ensure the needs of the D/deaf community are understood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain contact and build relationships with support agencies and attend appropriate events/seminars/sector specific training as available e.g Deaf Action, BDA, deafscotland 	From August 2018

Review the College's BSL National Plan to ensure it is meeting the needs of our BSL user community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued consultation to be held with BSL students, support agencies and other key stakeholders 	From October 2019
To increase accessibility of BSL across the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to offer BSL classes within the community and evening class provision at Borders College 	Continue current provision
 Post-School Education	BSL users will be able to maximise their potential at school, will be supported to transition to post-school education if they wish to do so, and will receive the support they need to do well in their chosen subject(s)	
<u>Aim</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Timescale</u>
To support the transition of BSL users progressing to college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish link with local authority to identify BSL students progressing from school at an early stage Where requested, provide interpreting service at college information events One-to-one meeting with Learning Support Specialist/Adviser to discuss and agree on support needs before academic session begins considering not only communication support, but also literacy and study skills support, and appropriate assistive technology Opportunity to meet BSL user and support providers for familiarisation session before academic session begins 	From August 2018

<p>To make learning and teaching methods more accessible for students who are BSL users</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible develop videos used in learning and teaching to have subtitles or a transcript provided • Notes / teaching materials to be given in advance for interpreters to prepare • Glossaries of subject-specific vocabulary to be made available in advance to the BSL student and interpreter/s. • Prioritised reading lists, where appropriate, made available to students who may require more time to process written English. • Lecturers to be made aware of key information for creating an inclusive classroom e.g. awareness of: managing noise and turn-taking; where best to stand; optimal classroom layout; pacing of speech; working with communication professionals; and using wearable microphones. • Explore options for BSL students to complete coursework in modes other than written essays e.g. signed presentations; posters; infographics; video; animation (in accordance with exam bodies and required core competences). • Facilitate Alternative Assessment arrangements in accordance with exam body requirements 	<p>By August 2019</p>
<p>To ensure appropriate assistive technology is in place for students who are BSL users</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the service offered by ContactSCOTLAND-BSL and ensure hearing loops (mobile) to be available at all campus receptions and Student Services areas and staff are aware of how to operate • Explore use of radio aids to reduce the need for one-to-one support for users of hearing aids / cochlear implants 	<p>By August 2019</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve signage to indicate availability of hearing loops • Provide information in appropriate format about personal listening systems and routes through which these can be obtained e.g. DSA; NDCS extended loan scheme (for <25s). • Students who require support with using written English given information at needs assessment stage about assistive technology to support note taking, essay planning, spelling and word-choice e.g. Sonosent Audio Notetaker, mind mapping software; Texthelp Read and Write Gold; My study bar, Grammerly, Rewordify, Pen friend, Dragon dictate, Global Autocorrect. On-going training and support offered in college. • Potential assistive technologies are investigated and new technologies evaluated in partnership with students 	
Ensure support provided for students who are BSL users is appropriate and maintained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication support professionals/interpreters are included in College life and supported to continue their professional development • Good working practices are understood and observed e.g. regular breaks, professional standards • Provide opportunities that enables a student to raise concerns through the complaints procedure without needing to use the allocated communication support professional/interpreter to do so 	From October 2018



**Training,
Work and
Social
Security**

BSL users will be supported to develop the skills they need to become valued members of the Scottish workforce, so that they can fulfil their potential, and improve Scotland's economic performance. They will be provided with support to enable them to progress in their chosen career

Aim

Action

Timescale

Facilitate appropriate careers advice for students who are BSL users

- Appointments to be made available for all BSL users with SDS Careers Service
- Consult with Deaf Action (over 25) and Action on Hearing loss (under 25) for additional support which may be available

Raise awareness of the UK Governments 'Access to Work' scheme for students who are BSL users as part of any careers advice

- Make information regarding 'Access to Work' available to BSL users and signpost to DWP video relay advice pages https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xgWBXN5Bp_E
- Ensure front-line advisors are aware of available information and where to signpost for further help



**Health,
Mental
Health and
Wellbeing**

BSL users will have access to the information and services they need to live active, healthy lives, and to make informed choices at every stage of their lives

Aim

To work in partnership with our community agencies in developing student support services to ensure they are accessible to students who are BSL users

Action

- Give consideration to required adaptations to sessions for BSL users to meet their need and account for the longer communication times
- Liaise with community agencies to ensure suitably qualified interpreters and adaptations are available to support BSL user while accessing the service

Timescale

Begin developing from August 2018



Democracy

BSL users will be fully involved in democratic and public life in Scotland, as active and informed citizens, as voters, as elected politicians and as board members of our public bodies

Aim

To promote opportunities for students who are BSL users to become involved in representation, championing the student voice and actively involved in shaping learning and

Action

- Encourage and support BSL users to become members of the Students' Association and to campaign for elected posts
- Encourage and support BSL users to become class representatives

Timescale

From October 2018

student experience at Borders College		
--	--	--