

Dundee and Angus College

British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2018-2024

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SECTION 2:

Introduction

This is the BSL Plan for Dundee and Angus College, as required by the BSL (Scotland) Act. It sets out actions we will take over the period 2018-2024. It follows the BSL National Plan, published on 24 October 2017, which was developed through extensive engagement with Deaf and Deafblind BSL users and those who work with them. It is framed around the same long-term goals as the national plan, where these are relevant to the work of the college.

Dundee and Angus College is committed to ensure our Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing students and staff have an excellent experience.

Our Student Services Team and our People Team work alongside students and staff. The Student Services Team have contact with young people who use BSL while still at school to ensure a smooth transition to college. We have a Student Services officer- who has specific duties within their job role to work closely with all our BSL users to co-ordinate their package of support in College. We have a dedicated team of communication support workers (CSW) providing signing support to students on their courses. We also work closely with an agency that provides interpreters for times when our CSWs are not available. Support from Student Services, academic staff and CSWs are essential to ensure BSL users get the best experience and achieve their learning outcomes and career goals. Currently this Academic year we have 67 students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and we have 5 students who use BSL on a range of courses across different curriculum areas studying from SCQF Levels 3-10.

We are committed that our action plan responds to the needs of our students and staff who are BSL users and will be influenced by national guidance. We have well established processes for gathering student and staff feedback in a variety of meaningful ways. This feedback will shape the direction of our future developments. Our actions will be embedded into the work of our Equality and Diversity Committee and its related leadership group. This will allow the plan to be closely monitored and reviewed to ensure progress is made.

Dundee and Angus College will contribute to the National Progress Report in 2020.

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Our lead officer is:

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British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact me using ContactSCOTLAND-BSL.

<https://contactscotland-bsl.org/reg/>

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Our BSL plan can be accessed at –

<https://dundeeandangus.ac.uk/advice-support/bsl-action-plan/>

SECTION 3

Short summary of the plan:

Our Action Plan focuses on improving the experiences of our students, staff and stakeholders to ensure that our BSL users have equity of service and excellent experiences. We want to see positive outcomes for all our students and staff. Our plan is based around the key National themes:

- Family Support, Early learning and Childcare
- School Education
- Post-School Education
- Training, Work and Social Security
- Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Culture and the Arts
- Justice
- Democracy

We are committed to working towards the shared Scottish Government vision that Scotland be the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit.

Our key actions centre on

- Increasing awareness within the college of our plan and associated actions
- Establishing a shared student and staff Deaf group
- Continued access to CPD to increase the number of staff who are competent in BSL
- Development of our website to embed BSL content
- Continue to seek feedback of developments with BSL users on an individual and group basis.
- Review curriculum content for Early Education and Childcare courses

SECTION 4:

4.1: Across all our services

We share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

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

Our Actions

- We will continue to analyse the data we capture to ensure positive outcomes our students and staff who are BSL users. Data should not be looked at in isolation; alongside this will ensure that feedback continues to be valued and acted on.
- We will continue to ensure regular reviews take place for BSL users in relation to their learning and support at College. Line managers and our People Team would ensure an equivalent process for BSL users who are staff members.
- We will embed BSL content to our website to ensure that it is accessible and provides relevant and meaningful information. We have consulted current and past BSL users about this so have a clear plan of what they would like to see. This will cover all aspects of College life.
- We will continue to provide CSWs and Interpreters so BSL users can access all aspects of College including but not exclusive to learning and support opportunities and celebrations.

4.2: Post-School Education

We share the long-term goal for post- school education set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“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)”

Our Actions

We will continue to show our commitment to BSL users in their journey to College and throughout their stay with us. This will include:

By 2024 we will:

- Continue to develop our strong partnerships with schools and specialist agencies to ensure that school pupils have a smooth transition to College.
- To offer a booking service to open day communications so we can provide CSWs at Open Days.
- To continue to offer CSW support to access pre entry guidance and advice, on course support and pre exit guidance from college to their next destination.
- Promote the use of contactSCOTLAND-BSL across our campus Help Points and receptions.
- Store feedback from BSL users in one area to allow closer monitoring of development areas.
- To collect data on the numbers of staff who can use BSL and what level of qualification they hold.
- To increase the number of front facing staff in support services who are able to communicate through BSL.
- Continue to offer Introductory and level 1 BSL courses within our Curriculum to meet local needs.
- To include within our data collection, the specific courses that our BSL users are applying to and succeeding in.

4.3: Family Support, Early Learning and Childcare

We share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach will be fully embedded, with a D/deaf or Deafblind child and their family offered the right information and support at the right time to engage with BSL”

Our Actions

By 2023, we will:

- We will review the information available to parents who use BSL and our Nursery Service. With the addition of BSL to the Website this will include Helping Hands Nursery and their information.
- Review what specific learning materials/units in our Early Education courses cover the needs of Deaf/Deafblind children including BSL.
- We will continue to ensure that BSL users can access our Childcare Advisors for setting up their childcare for coming to college. This includes CSW support when meeting with the Child care Advisors.

4.4: School Education

We share the long-term goal for school education set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“Children and young people who use BSL will get the support they need at all stages of their learning, so that they can reach their full potential; parents who use BSL will have the same opportunities as other parents to be fully involved in their child’s education; and more pupils will be able to learn BSL at school”

Our Actions

By 2023, we will:

- Student Services staff will continue to be involved in Team Around the Child and transition meetings as appropriate to share information and offer appropriate support. This will allow the pupil’s needs at College to be identified early and a personalise plan put in place.
- Continue to access DSA for BSL users on HN and Degree level courses.
- Ensure that Interpreters are involved for parents who are BSL users to ensure they have the appropriate college related information they need to support their child/children.

4.5: Training, Work and Social Security

We share the long-term goal for training, work and social security set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“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”

Our Actions

By 2023, we will:

- Continue to offer pre exit guidance and involve local specialist employment agencies when a student is progressing in to employment.
- Ensure that students and staff are aware of the access to work scheme and what this could offer them.
- Monitor the progression of our students who are BSL users to ensure that they are achieving their career aspirations.
- Prospective staff can continue to state their need for BSL support at interview

4.6: Health (including social care), Mental Health and Wellbeing

We share the long-term goal for health, mental health and wellbeing set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“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”

Our Actions

By 2023, we will:

- Continue to ensure that CSWs are involved at all information and preparation for college events such as prepare me, induction and freshers' events. This allows BSL users to access all information that could assist them in their College experience.
- Information about support services is available through different accessible mediums such as our website, student portal, and one-to-one meetings.
- Staff and Student BSL users will continue to have access to counselling support if required.

4.7: Transport

We share the long-term goal for transport set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will have safe, fair and inclusive access to public transport and the systems that support all transport use in Scotland”

Our Actions

By 2023, we will:

- Ensure that students are aware of Scotland wide concessionary travel passes and have help to apply if this is appropriate.
- Continue to ensure that travel arrangements are discussed with Students at the pre entry stages to ensure no barriers are present.

4.8: Culture and the Arts

We share the long-term goal for culture and the arts set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland, an equal opportunity to enjoy and contribute to culture and the arts, and are encouraged to share BSL and Deaf Culture with the people of Scotland”

Our Actions

By 2023, we will:

- Consult with our Students and staff who are BSL users to see if they would like to see a BSL & Deaf Culture Event within our College calendar.
- Embed BSL content into our Student Association and Sports Union websites.

4.9: Justice

We share the long-term goal for justice set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will have fair and equal access to the civil, criminal and juvenile justice systems in Scotland”

Our Actions

By 2023, we will:

- Continue to have strong partnerships with Community Justice teams in our locality. This will allow us to raise any concerns of our BSL users of unequal access.

4.10: Democracy

We share the long-term goal for democracy set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“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”

Our Actions

By 2023, we will:

- Review the process we have for Student Association post holders, class representatives and College committees and working groups; to ensure this is reaching BSL users.
- Line managers would continue to discuss wider working groups as part of their role with all staff.

SECTION 5:

What happens next?

- We would be happy to receive any comments towards the plan by contacting our lead officer Sarah Thom. Contact details for Sarah are in the Introduction Section.
- Our plan will be published by October 2018 in English and BSL and will available on our website www.dundeeandangus.ac.uk
- Please contact Sarah Thom if you want to continue to be involved as we further develop and implement the actions in our plan.