



**north west**  
regional college

Derry~Londonderry • Limavady • Strabane  
Дerry~Лондондерри • Лимавади • Страбане

# Deaf Awareness

## Resource Pack



# **Content**

# **Page No**

1	College Commitment, Introduction, Monitoring	4
2	Definition of Deafness	5
3	Relay	8
4	Communication Professionals	11
5	Access to professional support	15
	• Process	15
	• Organisations providing support	16
6	ICT Support Systems	16
7	Portable Loop Systems	21
	• Portable Loop system Procedures	21
	• Loop systems available in the College campuses	22
8	Communication Tips	25
	• Communication Tips if you have a hearing loss	25
	• Communication Tips when speaking to someone with a hearing loss	26
	• Communication Tips for Lecturers of hearing impaired students	27
9	Classroom Strategies for Lecturers of Hearing Impaired Students	32

10	Reasonable Adjustments - Considerations	35
11	Use of Hearing Dogs	38
12	Access to Work (NI)	39
13	College Accessible Information Policy	42
14	Additional Support Organisations for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People	43

# **1 College Commitment**

The College is committed to providing the best possible service to deaf/hard of hearing students, potential students, customers and staff. However due to Covid-19, some services have not been possible.

## ***Introduction***

This Resource Pack has been developed to provide some guidance and information on services available for people with hearing loss. The content will be updated regularly to ensure it remains relevant. If you have hearing loss or if you are aware of a colleague or student that may be in need of support please refer to this pack for information on support available.

## ***Monitoring***

This Resource Pack will be monitored quarterly and formerly reviewed annually each year through the College's Equality Working Group.

## 2 Definition of Deafness

Any definition of "deaf" or "deafness" is subjective in nature therefore a specific definition is not provided within this document.

Any reference to "deaf", "deafness" or "people with hearing loss" throughout this document refers to the entire spectrum as referred to below.

### *List of Indicators/Spectrum of Differences*

First of all, there are three basic types of hearing losses that deaf and hard of hearing individuals 'have' rather than 'suffer'.

- **Conductive** hearing loss is caused by some form of damage to the outer and middle part of the ear; it usually can be treated. For example, ear infections. However, if the damage is too great to be treated, hearing aids are usually used to provide sound that is clear.
- **Sensorineural** hearing loss is caused by damage that is done to the inner ear, when some or most of hair cells in the cochlea die (depending upon the level of hearing loss); it is a permanent hearing loss.  
If a person has a sensorineural hearing loss, their hearing is distorted because the hair cells are not transmitting the sounds to the brain. Hence some of the message is gone. Hearing aids can only amplify sounds they can hear.
- **Mixed** hearing loss is a mixture of conductive and sensorineural hearing losses. It can be a conductive hearing

loss in one ear and a sensorineural hearing loss in the other ear or both losses in one or both ears.

Flexer, C. (1999). Facilitating hearing and listening in young children. Singular Publishing Group

There are also degrees of hearing loss which depend upon the intensity of sound.

- **Mild** hearing loss (35 to 54 dB) may mean missing at least 50% of classroom conversations, and exhibiting limited vocabulary and speech difficulties.
- **Moderate** hearing loss (55 to 69 dB) may only hear loud conversations, may have poorer speech, and language difficulties.
- **Severe** hearing loss (70 to 89 dB) may only hear environmental sounds, and have difficulty understanding consonant sounds.
- **Profound** hearing loss (90 dB and beyond) may sense but is not able to understand sounds and tones.

Moores, D. F. (1996). Educating the Deaf: Psychology, principles and practices. Houghton Mifflin

To understand what these hearing losses mean, see the table below for some relative examples of typical sound intensities:

## Intensity in Decibels(dB)

## Examples

140	Jet plane taking off about 100 feet away
130	Jackhammer
120	Rock and roll concert
110	Train
100	Lawnmower or Chain saw
90	Car horn honking
80	Telephone ringing
70	Dog barking
60	Vacuum cleaner
50	Conversations
40	Quiet radio
30	Watch ticking
20	Whisper
10	Leaves moving

### **3 How Relay UK works for business**

**(Relay UK)**

Relay UK is a relay service that enables people with little or no hearing, or people with speech difficulties, to communicate with hearing people over the phone.

It's like a 3-way call between a deaf or speech-impaired person, a hearing Relay Assistant, and you.

#### **Overview**

The deaf or speech-impaired person can either download the Relay UK app on their mobile, tablet, or computer or use a textphone.

They call your number using a prefix that connects them to Relay UK and a Relay Assistant – sitting in one of BT's relay centres – who speaks and listens to you and then types what you say for the deaf person to read on their screen.

They then type back or they can speak (as not all deaf people are speech-impaired too) for the Relay Assistant to read and speak to you.

It's an idea that's been around for years. Originally set up by the Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID), the modern twist is that the conversations can now be faster and more fluent. This is because the deaf person doesn't have to wait for you to finish speaking before they type to you.

Now when using the Relay UK app the experience is much closer to an actual speech conversation.

## **Can I still use my textphone?**

Not everyone wants to use a mobile, tablet, or computer to make their calls. If you want to carry on using your textphone (Minicom/Uniphone), that's fine.

You can still make calls in the usual way. All you need to do is dial 18001 followed by the phone number of the person you want to call

It really is that easy.

### **1 Dial 18001 followed by the phone number (including the dialling code).**

You'll see 'Relay UK ring ring' on your textphone screen. If your call is answered, you'll see:

1. 'Relay UK Answered, please wait for connection'
2. 'Relay UK Waiting for a free relay assistant'
3. 'Connected to Relay, please wait'

The Relay Assistant won't come on the call if it's not answered.

### **2 Type your conversation**

Once you're connected, you can type or speak your conversation. The Relay Assistant will type back anything the hearing person says.

### **3 Enjoy your chat**

The conversation will carry on this way until one of you ends the call.

## **How to answer a Relay UK call on your textphone**

It's the same as answering other calls on your textphone except you'll see some different messages.

The textphone rings or flashes. You'll see 'Relay UK. Waiting for a free relay assistant', or 'Relay UK. Connected text to text' if the call was made from a textphone or the Relay UK app.

If the call is from a hearing telephone user, you'll then see 'Connected to Relay, please wait'.

Once you're connected, carry on as normal.

For more information go to [www.relayuk.bt.com](http://www.relayuk.bt.com)

## **4 Communication Professionals**



### ***Using communication support***

If you are deaf or hard of hearing or if you are working with colleagues or students who are deaf or hard of hearing, it may be necessary on occasions to access support from Communication Professionals.

There is a range of communication support services available (see below). Consider a service that suits you and your communication needs. However it should be noted that some services may be difficult to access in this area.

- Sign Language Interpreters***

Sign language users in Northern Ireland are likely to either use British Sign Language (BSL) or Irish Sign Language (ISL). BSL/ISL interpreters help communication with people who are deaf and whose first or preferred language is BSL/ISL. They interpret from BSL/ISL to spoken or written English, or vice versa.

- Interpreters and Communicator Guides for people who are deafblind***

Interpreters and Communicator Guides help people who are deafblind and people who are hearing to communicate with

each other. They work with a range of communication methods, including:

- BSL/ISL;
- hands-on signing;
- the Block Alphabet;
- the Deafblind Manual Alphabet;
- speech-to-Braille.

Interpreters work in formal settings, such as training courses. Communicator Guides work more informally – for example, they could help you to write a letter or do an everyday activity such as shopping.

- ***Lipspeakers***

Lipspeakers work with people who prefer to communicate through lipreading and speech. You should be a confident lipreader with good English skills to use one. People who are deaf and people who are hearing can use lipspeakers to help them communicate with each other.

Lipspeakers:

- repeat what is said without using their voice, so that you can lipread them easily;
- produce the shape of words clearly, with the flow, rhythm and phrasing of speech;
- use natural gestures and facial expressions to help you follow what is being said;
- may also use fingerspelling if you ask them to.

- ***Speech-to-text reporters (STTRs)***

Speech-to-text reporting is suitable for people who have a hearing loss or who are deaf and comfortable reading English, often at high speed and sometimes for up to a couple of hours at a time. STTRs type words phonetically – how they sound rather than how they are spelled. These are then converted back into English on a computer screen.

- ***Electronic Notetakers***

Electronic Notetakers work with people who have a hearing loss, or who are deaf and comfortable reading English. They type a summary of what is being said on a laptop computer. You can then read this information on a screen in front of you. Electronic notetaking means you have fewer words to read compared with speech-to-text-reporting, and you won't get a full word-for-word report. If you wish to read everything that is said, you may prefer to use a Speech-To-Text Reporter.

- ***Manual notetakers***

Manual notetakers take handwritten notes in meetings, on courses and at other events for people who are deaf and comfortable reading English.

It's quite common to use an electronic or manual notetaker in combination with another communication service. For example, if you are watching a BSL/ISL Interpreter or a

Lipspeaker, it would be impossible for you to take notes and follow what is being said at the same time.

Electronic and Manual Notetakers may specialise in a particular field. If you are taking a science degree, for example, it's important that your notetaker knows something about the subject. If you have very specific needs, you may need to spend time finding the right notetaker to support you.

## 5 Access to professional support

### *Process*

If you require access to professional support you must ensure you follow the procedure below.

- When a need for communication support has been identified it is necessary to get approval to proceed from the budget holder in your Department.
- When approved by the Budget Holder you should access, by clicking [here](#) the National Registers of Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind people (NRCPD).
- Obtain the appropriate number of quotations (College procurement processes must be complied with).
- Confirm arrangements with the selected supplier who will forward a booking form for completion.
- Complete the booking form provided by supplier, and have it signed by the Budget Holder.
- Arrange to have a requisition put on Agresso as soon as possible.

## ***Organisations providing support***

Below are contact details of organisations from whom you can obtain quotations of cost. If the support is needed for a staff member you may wish to contact NRCPD or Action on Hearing Loss whereas support for students will be provided by MPA.

### ***The National Registers of Communication Professionals with Deaf and Deafblind People (NRCPD)***

The National Registers of Communication Professionals with Deaf and Deafblind People (NRCPD) regulates communication professionals who work with deaf and deafblind people. Their job is to safeguard the wellbeing and interests of people who rely on those professionals and can be contacted if support is needed for staff.

#### **Their contact details are:**

**Telephone**      **0191 323 3376**  
**SMS**                **07526 173 329**  
**Email**                **[enquiries@nrcpd.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@nrcpd.org.uk)**

### ***RNID (formerly Action on Hearing Loss)***

RNID provides support for people with hearing loss and tinnitus and they may be contacted if staff need support. RNID provides communication support based on identified communication needs. They can also offer advice on the most suitable type of communication support and book communication support on your behalf.

**Their contact details are:**

**Telephone**

**028 9023 9619**

**SMS**

**07587130502 (text only)**

**Email**

**information.nireland@rnid.org.uk**

## **6 ICT Support systems**

### ***What sort of equipment can deaf learners find useful?***

Staff should make the learning environment and curriculum accessible to all potential deaf learners and specifically help individual learners to access courses and, where necessary, the physical premises.

Ideally, the Lecturer should discuss a learner's needs with them before they begin their course. It may be necessary to get advice from your local advisory service, as some learners may not be aware of the range of equipment available or how it can help them.

Remember that different teaching situations and teaching strategies will require different types of equipment to enable deaf learners to access a class.

Below is an outline of some of the support systems available and additional information regarding how the equipment can help deaf learners.

### ***Radio Microphone Systems - What are they and how do they work?***

These systems are designed for use in classrooms or similar settings. They can help deaf learners hear the lecturer or other learners, at a distance. Learners will need to be wearing hearing aids to benefit from them. Some also work with 'cochlear implants'. The lecturer, and anyone else that the learner wants to listen to, will need to wear

a clip-on microphone. The deaf learner will need to wear a receiver. The receiver can also be used with headphones or a neckloop. As would be expected, radio microphone systems need to be professionally fitted.

## ***Sound Field Systems - What are they and how do they work?***

A sound field system amplifies the lecturer's voice at a low level and distributes it around the room from speakers mounted above head height. Learners seated anywhere in the classroom will be able to hear equally well. They can also use a radio aid to help them hear more clearly. Sound field systems can be helpful for hearing and deaf learners. They can also reduce voice strain and vocal fatigue for the lecturer.

## ***Hearing Loop and Infrared Systems - What are they and how do they work?***

A loop system helps deaf people who use a hearing aid or loop listener, to hear sound more clearly by reducing or cutting out background noise. A loop system can be used to pick up sound in a range of situations, for example a television, video, conversations, or the lecturer's voice. Anyone sitting in the area of the loop can pick up sound if they switch their hearing aid - or loop listening aid - to the 'T' setting.

Electrical equipment and wiring can cause interference for hearing aid wearers using a loop system. Hearing aid users outside the room fitted with a loop may also be able to overhear conversations if their hearing aids are switched to 'T'. As an alternative you could fit an infrared system.

To hear sound deaf learners will need to use an infrared receiver which the College would need to maintain and supply. Infrared systems are not usually prone to interference unless the receivers are in direct sunlight. Several systems can be used at the same time in rooms next to each other. They are also suitable for confidential meetings.

There are two types of infrared receivers, one for learners who wear hearing aids and one for those who don't wear hearing aids.

## ***Portable Hearing Loops and Infrared Systems - What are they and how do they work?***

Portable loops work in the same way as permanently fitted loop systems. However, they cover a smaller area and can be packed away after use. They are useful if you do not need a permanent system fitted or the loop is needed in different rooms. You should be aware that the signal quality provided by a portable loop may not be as good as that from a professionally fitted system. You can also get portable infrared systems which have similar features to permanently fitted systems, but like portable loops they can cover a smaller area and can be packed away after use.

## **7 Portable Loop Systems**

### ***Portable Loop System Procedures***

#### ***Procedure on how to request a portable loop system***

Both the portable hearing loop systems and the infrared portable hearing loops, are available via the IT Helpdesk. The normal Helpdesk request process (Ticket) will apply and should include details of who the device is for, what location and duration of loan (start and end date). A secure location will be required for the loaned equipment. IT Helpdesk staff will advise of any conditions that apply.

#### ***Procedure on how to report a fault with a loop system***

Labels are attached to each portable loop system indicating that if there are any technical issues then the IT helpdesk should be contacted. The helpdesk number is Ext 6565. This provides a mechanism for reporting faults and/or receiving assistance with the unit. If after an IT technician has provided assistance and the unit fails to work and a visitor to the College wishes to make a complaint, the College's Complaints Procedure will apply.

#### ***How to use a Portable Loop System***

Guidance on how to use the [Portable Loop System](#) and the [Classroom Portable Loop System](#) can be found by clicking on this link to the College's Intranet.

# Loop Systems available in the College Campuses

Property Name		Details
Tower Building	Induction Loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>C104</b> - Student Services - Portable Loop unit;</li> <li>• <b>C150</b> - Careers Academy - Fixed Loop under Desk;</li> <li>• <b>C170</b> - Library – 2 x Portable Loop unit;</li> <li>• <b>C261</b> – HR Reception - Portable Loop unit;</li> <li>• <b>C221A</b> - Training Unit reception – Fixed loop under desk;</li> <li>• <b>C221C</b> - IT Services reception – Fixed loop under desk;</li> <li>• <b>C270</b> – Finance Reception - Fixed Loop installed.</li> </ul>
Tower Courtyard (Annex)	Induction Loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>E104</b> – Lounge – Linked to audio system TV</li> <li>• <b>E105</b> – Teaching Space - Linked to audio system / Screen</li> <li>• <b>E105A</b> – Bedroom – Linked to audio system TV</li> <li>• <b>E106</b> – Hub Classroom - Linked to audio system / Screen</li> <li>• <b>E108A</b> – Reception desk - Fixed Loop under Desk;</li> </ul>

<b>Property Name</b>		<b>Details</b>
Strand Building	Induction Loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>B101</b> – Main Reception - Fixed loop system under desk;</li> <li>• <b>B103</b> – Admissions desk – Portable Loop unit;</li> <li>• <b>B103</b> - Admissions desk - Phone calls – Text phone</li> </ul>
Lawrence Building	Induction Loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>A106</b> – Lecture Theatre – Fixed loop system</li> <li>• <b>A117</b> – Classroom amplifier with its mic attachment</li> </ul>
Foyle Building	Induction Loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>F104</b> - Theatre - Permanent with mic attached;</li> <li>• <b>F501</b> - HB Reception - Fixed loop under desk</li> <li>• <b>F601</b> - HB Reception - Fixed loop under desk</li> </ul>
Springtown Centre	Induction Loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>S112</b> - Conference - Fixed Loop device;</li> </ul>
Limavady Main Building	Induction Loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library LRC;</li> <li>• Reception Desk Area;</li> <li>• <b>A4</b> - Training Kitchen;</li> <li>• <b>E08</b> - Lecture Theatre</li> </ul>
West Wing Limavady	Induction Loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>WO1</b> – Classroom – Fixed loop unit;</li> </ul>
Benevenagh Building Limavady	Induction Loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>A5</b> – Classroom – Fixed loop unit;</li> <li>• <b>A7</b> - Beauty Salon – Fixed loop unit;</li> <li>• <b>A8</b> - Hair Salon – Fixed loop unit;</li> <li>• <b>D7</b> - Classroom – Fixed loop unit.</li> </ul>

<b>Property Name</b>		<b>Details</b>
Greystone Campus (Limavady)	Induction Loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reception Desk Area – Fixed loop unit.</li> </ul>
Strabane Campus	Induction Loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>H102</b> - Reception Desk Area - Fixed loop unit;</li> <li>• <b>H161</b> - Library LRC Desk Area - Fixed loop unit;</li> <li>• <b>H189</b> - Beauty Cabin Reception - Fixed loop unit.</li> </ul>
Estates Store (Tower) Spares for issue	Induction Loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portable loop case 1;</li> <li>• Portable loop case 2;</li> <li>• 2 x Portable loop unit – Desk mounted;</li> <li>• Fixed system unit – Spare Inc. Mic.</li> </ul>
Northland Building	Induction Loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>D306</b> – Lecture Theatre – Fixed loop unit</li> <li>• <b>D308</b> – Boardroom – Fixed loop unit</li> </ul>

## 8 Communication Tips

### ***Communication Tips if you have a hearing loss***

The following are communication tips to help you if you have a hearing loss:

- ◆ Be open: tell the person you're speaking to that you have a hearing loss;
- ◆ Ask people to get your attention before they start talking to you;
- ◆ Get a better view: stand a reasonable distance from the person so you can see their face and lips. Gestures and facial expressions will help you understand what they're saying;
- ◆ If necessary, ask people to slow down and speak more clearly;
- ◆ If you don't catch what someone says, just ask them to say it again or in a different way;
- ◆ Keep calm: if you get anxious, you might find it harder to follow what's being said;
- ◆ Play to your strengths: if your hearing is better in one ear, try turning that side towards the person speaking to you;
- ◆ Learn to lipread: everyone does it a bit, especially in noisy places;
- ◆ Be kind to yourself! No one hears correctly all the time.

## ***Communication Tips when speaking to someone with a hearing loss***

The following are communication tips to help you when speaking to someone with a hearing loss:

- ◆ Always ask: even if someone's wearing a hearing aid, ask if they need to lipread you;
- ◆ Make sure you have the person's attention before you start speaking;
- ◆ Find a place to talk that has good lighting, away from noise and distractions;
- ◆ Turn your face towards them so they can easily see your lip movements;
- ◆ Speak clearly, not too slowly, and use normal lip movements, facial expressions and gestures;
- ◆ Make sure what you're saying is being understood;
- ◆ If someone doesn't understand what you've said, try saying it in a different way;
- ◆ Keep your voice down: it's uncomfortable for a hearing aid user if you shout and it looks aggressive;
- ◆ Get to the point: use plain language and don't waffle;
- ◆ If you're talking to one person with hearing loss and one without, focus on both of them.

## ***Communication Tips for Lecturers of Hearing Impaired Students***

**Investigate sound field and FM systems. These technologies are suitable for the classroom.**

**Find out what works for the student.** Open communication is essential. Speak to them. Under what circumstances do they experience difficulty? You might find if you change a few small things it could make a world of difference.

**Decrease the distance** between you and the listener. This is the single most effective way to increase understanding. Moving a little closer can make a big difference.

**Don't eat, drink, or chew gum while speaking.**

**Wait until passing noises subside.** Wait for that plane to pass overhead or for the students to settle down.

**Don't talk while students are retrieving material.** First of all, people make noise when they gather material. And the hearing impaired student cannot rummage through things and hear you at the same time because they are not looking at you.

**Be sure the listener is ready to hear you.** They will need a moment to focus because understanding speech requires more concentration for them. To see why this is so, think of listening to someone with a thick accent; it's much more difficult to understand their first few words if you are unprepared to listen.

**Face them so they can see your lips,** your entire face, and hands and body gestures. These all provide valuable cues and can help fill in for sounds they are not getting. Try to avoid bushy moustache or other facial hair that obscures the lips. Avoid shadows.

When addressing the student, **say their name first.**

**Lighting** should be above or in front of you, never coming from behind you. Don't stand in front of the window while talking to them. As discussed earlier, they need to observe facial and body gestures. This is particularly important if the listener is further away, as in a classroom.

Face them and **talk directly to them** so the volume of your voice doesn't fluctuate. Turning away from someone while talking, sharply decreases the volume. Talking into the supply cabinet is even worse. Don't talk while writing on the board (this is tough on all students) and try not to talk while moving around so volume level and visual cues don't fluctuate.

**Speak louder and enunciate clearly**, but don't exaggerate sounds and don't shout. Exaggerating can distort sounds as well as the shape of the lips while speaking. Shouting can be very disruptive to the hearing impaired person for two reasons: first, the hearing impaired person, depending on the degree of hearing loss, may dwell in silence where ambient sounds we take for granted are severely reduced or absent. A sudden loud sound can be startling. Second, there is a reduced listening comfort range between what can be heard and what becomes uncomfortably loud.

**Rephrase, don't repeat.** Vary the words. Some words are more difficult to understand than others and/or may be more difficult to lipread.

**Introduce topics clearly, as well as transitions.** For example, "John, (pause), let's consider Phil's problem. He misses the last train. What are his options?" When presenting new or complex subject matter, good organization and clear transitions will aid all your students' understanding. This is critically important. Why? It's

related to the way we listen and absorb information. If we're prepared, it goes more smoothly.

### **Be sensitive to signs of confusion or uncertainty.**

**In group conversations, try to have only one person speak at a time.** The person who is about to speak, if at all possible, should provide a subtle visual cue such as a hand gesture. The hearing impaired person can't understand one voice over another and needs to be facing the speaker for maximum clarity. In more formal settings, such as book clubs, the leader should indicate who is to speak by pointing and saying his or her name.

**In group discussions, arrange the seating** so the student can see and hear as clearly as possible.

Be aware that the student's **hearing ability may fluctuate from day to day (or hour to hour).** Fatigue, background sounds that you are unaware of, or health conditions such as ear infection, can impede clear hearing. They may not be bored or tuning you out.

Be sensitive to **student fatigue.** Try to understand what this student is going through. It's hard work straining to listen and to understand, trying to fill in the gaps

Announcements made over **public address systems** are particularly difficult to understand. Perhaps someone can translate for the hearing impaired student.

### **Speak clearly with good diction.**

**Give good directions,** repeating key elements when necessary or writing them on the board.

**Switch to visuals** frequently (handouts, overheads, posters, etc.) to provide breaks from listening.

But be aware that **overhead projectors are noisy (if using these)**. Don't speak while you are turned to the overhead. Turn off all other unnecessary equipment and any other potential distractions.

**Seat the student about a third of the way back** in the middle of the room (away from the windows and noisy hallways) so they can hear and see clearly without having to look up to see you.

**Print new vocabulary** on the board.

Be aware of **situations when the student will not be able to lipread** and prepare beforehand. For example, if you are going to present a slide show with the lights out, some options might be to try for a captioned set of slides, provide them with a transcript if one is available, or to seat the student next to you.

Institute a **buddy system** to always let them know what they're doing, what page they're on, and possibly to take notes for them. The Lecturer should be considerate of the "buddy" and make sure they don't miss out on crucial information while helping.

**Assignments and homework** should be printed on the interactive whiteboard or passed out as handouts. Daily and weekly **agendas** are very helpful in maintaining a strong context.

Be aware that it is **impossible to lipread and take notes at the same time**.

If you are **reading from the interactive whiteboard** or flipchart, **stand next to it** so they can lipread and see the printed material easily. Make it easy for the student to focus their attention in one area of the room at a time. Avoid presenting too many visual stimuli at the same time.

Learn the basics of **hearing aids**, their strengths and their limitations; i.e., under what circumstances they will experience difficulty.

Find out what **assistive listening devices** may be appropriate and how they work.

## **9 Classroom Strategies for Lecturers of Hearing Impaired Students**

The following includes some common situations you may face in your classroom and some suggested strategies for handling them.

### **There are a lot of students in the classroom...**

- Try to devise or agree a set of hand signals and/or gestures to get the students' attention.
- Try to set up a system which pairs a hearing person with a deaf or hard of hearing person to assist with questions in the classroom.
- Deaf people will be aware of situational changes. If everyone in the class is facing forward and appears to be getting ready for work, the deaf person will do the same.
- Establish routines for beginning and ending of class.
  - For example: first, take attendance; second, check homework; third, share information, etc.
  - This allows everyone in the class to attend to the content and not worry about the circumstances of the environment.

### **The deaf person appears bored...**

- Check on the student's understanding of what is going on in the class.
- Check to see if the goals and objectives for participation and learning are clear.

- Check the level of participation of the deaf students. They may be unsure of how to participate in the class and need some direction from the lecturer in order to become more involved.
- Arrange materials and assignments so that all students experience frequent small successes. That will make them eager to be involved in the class.
- Use visual enhancements as much as possible -- charts, graphs, overheads, video tapes, etc.
- Make sure that arrangement of chairs is conducive to class interaction.
- The deaf or hard of hearing person may simply not be interested.

### **The interpreter didn't show up...**

- Don't panic.
- Arrange for another student to take notes for the deaf person.
- Show a captioned movie or video tape.
- Change seating arrangement (if possible) to allow the deaf or hard of hearing person to sit closer to you.

### **I am giving a written test, but I know that English is not the student's first language...**

- Give the test orally.
- Rely on the integrity of the interpreter to sign the test without giving away any of the answers.
- Give the test as a take-home test to allow sufficient time.

### **I am using slides as part of my presentation so I must turn off the overhead lights...**

- Think ahead and obtain a small light on a stand that will illuminate only the interpreter.
- Leave just the back lights on in the class.

**I want to make sure that the deaf and/or hard of hearing person really understands what is going on in my class...**

- Avoid asking questions that require a simple yes or no answer. Ask open ended questions like "What do you think," or "What is your opinion?" These types of questions allow the Lecturer to see if the question was accurately understood.
- If you think your question was not understood, rephrase it using different words.
- Use as much visual stimulation as possible.
- Provide outlines of what will be covered in class.
- Encourage class participation on the part of the deaf and/or hard of hearing person.

## **10 Reasonable Adjustments - Considerations**

If there is a student who is deaf or hard of hearing in your classroom, you must first discuss with the student what accommodations can be made. From this you might be able to determine how you can modify the environment for the student through physical, instructional and social means.

The following are suggestions for accommodations as given by Smith, T. E. C., Polloway, E. A., Patton, J. R. and Dowdy, C. A. (2001). Teaching students with special needs in inclusive settings. Allyn & Bacon: Boston, MA.

### ***Physical Modifications:***

- Seat students near the Lecturer or a person who is presenting the information.
- Seat students where they can use their residual hearing and where there is the least amount of distraction.
- Seat students where they can see other students for class discussions.
- Seat students where they can see the interpreter, the Lecturer and the visual aids in the same line of vision.
- Physical environment accommodations can be made depending upon the students' need and College facilities which are: "carpeting, rubber tips on chair and table legs, and proper maintenance of ventilation systems, lighting, doors, and windows." These help to reduce the unnecessary and distracting noises in the classroom.

## ***Pre-instructional Considerations:***

- Make sure that there is enough lighting in the classroom. Also, think about which lighting is appropriate for the student who has an interpreter when the room has to be darkened due to the use of overhead projectors and televisions.
- Provide visual reminders whenever possible, i.e. how much time is left to do an assignment.

When planning, try to use cooperative activities to involve the students in the classroom as much as possible. Also, be sure to include

- a section on provisions for the deaf and hard of hearing students in your lesson planning.
- Use the overhead projectors as much as you can so that the students can see you and the visual aids at the same time.
- Homework assignment books for the students would be helpful for both Lecturers and students to ensure that they understand their assignments.

## ***Curriculum Modifications:***

- Keep your directions when doing an activity or assignment clear and concise.
- Keep your face visible to students -- avoid walking around the classroom, turning your back to the students and standing in front of bright lights.
- Use gestures and facial expressions when possible.
- Check for students' understanding and encourage them to ask questions for clarification.
- Repeat comments of other speakers in the classroom during discussion.

- Preview new vocabulary and concepts before presenting new information in class.
- Use a variety of visually oriented presentations.
- Emphasise the main points in your presentations.
- Provide summaries, outlines, or scripts to students when viewing the videotapes or films.

### ***Social Modifications:***

- Create an environment that is positive and reassuring to everyone in the classroom.
- Use cooperative learning and hands-on activities to develop active participation and bonding in the classroom.
- If the students feel they don't understand, they should feel comfortable asking you.

It is also essential that Lecturers try, in as much as they can, to help other students to understand the nature of hearing loss by explaining how to communicate best with the deaf or hard of hearing student. If possible, request that the deaf and/or hard of hearing students explain how to do these things if they are comfortable doing so.

## **11 Use of Hearing Dogs**

Hearing Dogs for Deaf People is a national charity and a centre of excellence in the training of hearing dogs to alert deaf people to everyday household sounds and danger signals in the home, work place and in public buildings. The College will give consideration to hearing dogs as they do to customers with guide dogs.

## 12 Access to Work (NI)

**Does your hearing affect you at work? If your answer is 'yes', Access to Work (NI) could help pay for communication and equipment support.**



### ***Communication support – it's your right***

It's vital that you are able to access communication support if you are deaf or have a hearing loss. Don't be shy – it's your right to have equal access.

Access to Work (NI) can help people with disabilities who wish to take up employment, or who are in work and experience difficulties related to their disability. Support is available from Disability Employment Service if you have acquired a disability or if you need support due to a disability. Access to Work (NI) also helps employers who wish to recruit or retain people with disabilities in employment.



### ***How it Works***

Access to Work (NI) is designed to overcome the practical problems caused by disability. It offers advice and help in a flexible way that can be tailored to suit the needs of an individual in a particular job, or getting to and from work.

Access to Work (NI) can contribute towards the additional approved costs that arise, for example, towards the cost of communication support at interview, the provision of a support worker, provision of equipment, etc.

## ***Who can apply?***

Access to Work (NI) is open to people with disabilities wishing to take up work or people who are in work and are experiencing disability related employment barriers. Additional information on the Access to Work (NI) programme is available through Employment Service Advisers based in local Jobs & Benefits offices/Job Centres. Please click here to obtain the [contact details](#) of offices in Northern Ireland.

## ***How do I apply?***

In the first instance it will be necessary to inform your line manager / HR Services of your intention to apply to Access to Work (NI) who will support you in every way possible.

To apply for assistance through Access to Work (NI) you should contact an Employment Service Adviser in your local Jobs & Benefits office or Job Centre. The Access to Work (NI) application must be made by the disabled person. The Employment Service Adviser will refer the application to an Access to Work (NI) Adviser who will normally visit the disabled person's place of work and advise on the most cost effective solution.

## ***What funding is available?***

Funding varies depending on individual needs but is available for as long as it is required up to a maximum of three years. After that, if support is required to continue, it will be considered under the rules of the programme in operation at that time.

Adapted from NI Direct website September 2020

# **13 College Accessible Information Policy**

## ***Introduction***

Accessible information is information presented in a format that can be easily used and understood by its intended audience. The provision of good quality information is central to the delivery of effective and efficient public services. Everyone should have access to appropriate information so that they can access services and exercise their rights.

## ***Aim***

The North West Regional College is committed to Equality of Opportunity and to the principle of making oral and written information as accessible as possible. We aim to ensure that thought is given to providing information in a format appropriate to meeting a range of information needs, including: people with hearing impairments, sight impairments, learning difficulties, literacy difficulties, physical disabilities and people whose first language is not English.

The full policy is available at the following link

<http://nwrc-web/portal/staff/tools/az/default.aspx?letter=A>

# 14 Additional Support Organisations for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People

*All of the below organisations have a contact in Northern Ireland*

## RNID

Harvester House, 4 - 8 Adelaide Street, Belfast BT2 8GA  
**Telephone** 028 9023 9619  
**SMS** 07587130502 (text only)  
[information.nireland@rnid.org.uk](mailto:information.nireland@rnid.org.uk)

## Association of Lipspeakers

Professional body representing lipspeakers  
[alsinfo@lipspeaking.co.uk](mailto:alsinfo@lipspeaking.co.uk) [www.lipspeaking.co.uk](http://www.lipspeaking.co.uk)

## British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD)

Represents the interests of teachers of deaf children and young people in the UK  
[exec@batod.org.uk](mailto:exec@batod.org.uk) for general queries and advice  
[www.batod.org.uk](http://www.batod.org.uk)

## British Deaf Association (BDA)

Campaigns for the rights of sign language users and works with communities across the UK

Weavers Road, Unit 5C, Linfield Road, Belfast BT12 5GH  
**Telephone** 028 9043 7480  
[busdev.e.niscot@bda.uk](mailto:busdev.e.niscot@bda.uk) [www.bda.org.uk](http://www.bda.org.uk)

## **British Society for Mental Health and Deafness**

Promotes the development of accessible mental health services for people who are deaf  
c/o 12 Wessington Mews, Derby DE22 2XH  
[info@bsmhd.org.uk](mailto:info@bsmhd.org.uk) [www.bsmhd.org.uk](http://www.bsmhd.org.uk)

## **Deafblind UK**

Champions the rights of all people who are deafblind and provides a variety of services.  
National Centre for Deafblindness, 19 Rainbow Court, Paston Ridings, Peterborough PE4 7UP  
**Telephone / Textphone** 01733 358 100  
[info@deafblind.org.uk](mailto:info@deafblind.org.uk) [www.deafblind.org.uk](http://www.deafblind.org.uk)

## **The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)**

Supports deaf children, young people and their families to overcome the challenges of childhood deafness  
The NICVA Building, 61 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast BT15 2GB  
**Telephone** 028 9035 2011 (v)  
[nioffice@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:nioffice@ndcs.org.uk) [www.ndcs.org.uk](http://www.ndcs.org.uk)

## **The National Registers for Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind people (NRCPD)**

Holds the national registers of qualified sign language interpreters and other communication professionals in the UK  
c/o Suite D, Second Floor, Richard Annand VC House, Unit 18 Mandale Business Park, Belmont, Durham DH1 1TH  
**Telephone** 0191 323 3376      **Text** 07526 173329  
[enquiries@nrcpd.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@nrcpd.org.uk) [www.nrcpd.org.uk](http://www.nrcpd.org.uk)

## Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists

The professional body for speech and language therapists in the UK

Arthur House, 41 Arthur Street, Belfast BT1 4GB

Main switchboard

**Telephone** 028 9044 6385

[info@rcslt.org](mailto:info@rcslt.org) [www.rcslt.org/](http://www.rcslt.org/)

## Sense

Supports and campaigns for children and adults who are deafblind or have sensory impairments.

Sense NI, The Manor House, 51 Mallusk Road, Newtownabbey BT36 4RU

**Telephone** 028 9083 3430

[nienquiries@sense.org.uk](mailto:nienquiries@sense.org.uk) [www.sense.org.uk](http://www.sense.org.uk)

## Signature

The awarding body for British and Irish Sign Language courses around the UK and publisher of information about interpreter training programmes and exams

Mersey House, Mandale Business Park, Belmont, Durham DH1 1TH

**Telephone** 0191 383 1155      **Text** 07974 121594

[enquiries@signature.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@signature.org.uk) [www.signature.org.uk](http://www.signature.org.uk)

## NI contact

[Lynn.vest@signature.org.uk](mailto:Lynn.vest@signature.org.uk)

**Telephone** 0191 383 7901

## **Further information from RNID**

The helpline offers a wide range of information on many aspects of hearing loss, including communication training and services. Please contact them to find out more about their free leaflets and factsheets. Alternatively, you can download them for free at [www.rnid.org.uk/factsheets](http://www.rnid.org.uk/factsheets)

