



## **Feedback from BSL using students Review & Recommendations (October 2021)**

**Period covered:** 01/07/2017 to 01/07/2021

A report under this section is to include, by reference to relevant plans:

An account of measures taken and outcomes attained

- Update covering the period between 31/07/2020 to 31/07/2021
- A series of recommendations

### **A) An account of measures taken and outcomes attained**

This report follows on from the [interim report](#) which was released in September 2020 which includes findings and recommendations prior to August 2020.

This report provides feedback directly from current and prospective students who use, or will use, British Sign Language within a post school educational setting.

The following questionnaire compiled by Charlotte Addison, BSL Officer from Deaf Action, was created to gather qualitative information from student experiences of post compulsory education relating to the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015.

This report summarises the information collected, provides direct quotes from participants and offers a set of new and updated recommendations for FE/HE institutions to better support their BSL using students.

## **The questions**

- 1.** Does your college/university support BSL students with accessing coronavirus information?
- 2.** Do you know who your College/University Lead BSL Officer is?
- 3.** Access of communication from your College/University:
  - a. What is your preferred method of communication for information provided from your college/university?
  - b. Should your college/university provide BSL access for all information, or should they only do this for information that is relevant to you?
  - c. Are you confident enough to ask your college/university to provide their information in BSL for you?
- 4.** Have you received information relating to changes towards your study and assessments caused by the impact of Covid-19?
- 5.** How has your college/university work been going?
- 6.** Do you feel that your college/university has supported you during your studies?
- 7.** Have you been involved in any engagement relating to your college/university's BSL plan?
- 8.** Are you motivated to engage with your BSL Plan?
- 9.** Do you think that being directly engaged with your BSL Plan is useful?  
Good/Bad?
- 10.** Do you think your college/university's BSL plan will make a positive difference to you?
- 11.** What gaps do you think your college/university BSL plan has, if there are any?
- 12.** Is it easy to find out who is responsible for managing your college/university's BSL plan?
- 13.** What good experiences do you have from your college/university?
- 14.** What bad experiences do you have from your college/university?
- 15.** Do you find the BSL (Scotland) Act website useful?
- 16.** Do you find the BSL (Scotland) Act Facebook page useful?
- 17.** Do you find the BSL Students Information Hub Facebook Group useful?
- 18.** Is there any other support or resources you would like to have?

To capture responses from a diverse group, we offered a choice of questionnaire formats through:

- Direct text messaging
- Facebook Polls
- Facebook posts and comments
- One to one online interview (in English and BSL)

These methods allowed for individual communication preferences to be reflected as students could choose how to receive the questions and provide their replies in either English or BSL (in video format).

Demographic of students providing feedback to the Scottish Government:

- Aged between 16 – 30.
- Current enrolled students in college and university.
- Prospective students enrolling in college or university in August 2020.
- Future students – including those interested in joining college/university when they leave school.
- Permissions have been granted for their information to be used in this progress report.
- Identified as students who use BSL.

## **Update**

Our previous feedback was gained from a focus on students aged 16 – 30, but in this report, we have focussed on all students above the age of 16 years with no set upper age limit. From September 2020 our aim has been to capture and encompass a variety of experiences from students aged 16 and above.

Additionally, our reporting process has been refined with the addition of Microsoft Forms which has the functionality to provide questions and information in both BSL and English.

This has streamlined our questionnaire processes from - direct text messaging, Facebook polls, Facebook posts and comments, and one to one online interviews (in English and BSL).

Microsoft Forms provides a reliable and confidential reporting process, and the questionnaire was distributed and promoted through BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 Facebook, BSL Student Hub Facebook and for some BSL students, a link was sent directly to them.

## **1. Does your college/university support BSL students with accessing coronavirus information?**

Four students stated that they did not receive any information or support from their college/university at all.

Three students stated that their college/university provided an online BSL interpreter.

- Their college/university kept the student updated on what is happening in the current situation and what to expect soon.
- Two students felt the support received was very good, but they had issues with poor Wi-Fi connectivity. This impacted on their opportunities to communicate and work online, due to communication breakdowns occurring because of this
- Their lecturers took initiative to explain what was happening with future lectures.

Five students received emails in English from their college/university. The students fed back that they felt:

- Information was quite long to take in. They felt it would have been more beneficial to receive the information in BSL.
- Information was insufficient to gain their full understanding as none of this was provided in BSL.
- That every time new information is released from their college/university, they should translate information into BSL and send it on to students.

Students from two different colleges/universities gave examples of good practice in which they said:

- They are given full access to a BSL interpreter and notetaker in all online settings, and students are also given structured time during their learning experiences to make sure they are not disadvantaged in not being able to access a typical classroom face to face setting.

Feedback from a number of students frequently suggested a lack of support for BSL students. The confusion and disruption caused by the impact of Covid-19 have particularly affected BSL students as colleges and universities shifted their focus on to making adaptations in their daily work and to transitioning to online and blended learning. BSL students stated that the BSL (Scotland) Act seemed to be a low priority and some students were not receiving even basic information in BSL.

## **Update**

Three students responded to the questionnaire for this year from 2020 to 2021. They report continued difficulties with access at their respective institutions and report weaknesses in the provision of information regarding Covid-19.

Further issues have been raised concerning pupil transitions from school to college in where a distinct lack of communication from the college/ university has been reported. In one instance, a school provided support towards a pupil in applying for a college, but the college didn't communicate very well with the pupil's parents, which left them feeling very unsure about what was happening. The parents fed back that there is a significant need for better communication.

### **Recommendation**

Feedback from students frequently suggested a lack of support for BSL students. The continued disruption has negatively impacted BSL students as colleges and universities focus on how to make adaptations in their daily work and make transitions to online teaching. BSL students stated that the BSL (Scotland) Act continues to be a low priority and some students were not receiving even basic information in BSL.

- Improved collaboration is recommended throughout the university/college BSL network. The creation of 'Best Practice' guidelines would allow colleges and universities to support each other and build on the experiences of establishments with more established BSL practices.
- Wider work needs to be done to empower parents, guardians, carers and pupils to be more confident in requesting access to full information regarding their child's transition into college/university.
- Colleges and universities need to be aware of their responsibilities when receiving an application from a student requiring access in BSL. Communication between all parties must be considered e.g., between college/ university and school, and between academic settings, pupils and their families.

Questionnaire responses reveal a continued need for improvements in communication between staff and students using BSL.

## **2. Do you know who your College/University Lead BSL Officer is?**

This question was posted via Facebook Poll in the private 'BSL Information Hub for BSL Students' Facebook group. Students were given the choice of three answers: Yes, No or Not Sure.

- Total of ten replies were received
- Six students replied no stating they do not know who their BSL Lead Officer is
- Four students replied that they were unsure

In response to this, Deaf Action provided students with a short BSL video to explain how to find their college/university's BSL Lead Officer from the BSL (Scotland) Act website.

It will be interesting to see how this feedback compares to that of the colleges and universities, and how these establishments feel they engage with BSL students. Students feel that BSL Lead Officers need to have a good understanding of BSL culture to help them to engage better. It will be interesting to find out which department the BSL Lead Officer works within such as the equality services, disability services, in policy, or in a different department. If they are within the disability service, then they should have established relationships with BSL students. There will be some colleges and universities who face challenges because they do not have any enrolled BSL students.

### **Update**

Feedback strongly supports that many students are still unsure who the BSL Lead Officer is within their college/university.

An example of reported good practice – One HE/FE institute has a BSL Working Group involving BSL students who meet every four months regularly. The meaningful involvement of their BSL students has helped to improve their BSL Plan further.

### **Recommendations**

- BSL Lead Officers need to set up a BSL Working Group within their establishment. This can help familiarise students with the BSL Lead Officer and give them an opportunity to input into the BSL Plan's development and implementation.

- Continued awareness raising so students can locate and communicate with the BSL Lead Officer within their academic setting.
- Universities and colleges should continue to be offered training about BSL culture, BSL and Deaf awareness. This will support them to establish a BSL Working Group and help to improve understanding of a typical BSL student's communication, social and emotional needs.
- Continued support for the development of good relationships between staff and students.

### **3. Access of communication from your College/University**

All three questions below were posed through Facebook polls.

#### **a. What is your preferred method of communication for information provided from your college/university?**

Students had three options to answer with: BSL and English, English only, or BSL only.

- Total of nine replies were received
- Eight students prefer to have information provided in both BSL and English
- One student preferred English as their main method of communication

#### **b. Should your college/university provide BSL access for all information, or should they only do this for information that is relevant to you?**

Students had two options to answer with: the college/university should provide full information no matter what, or alternatively, the college/university should only provide information that is relevant

- Total of three replies were received
- All three students stated that they should be provided with BSL access for full information

#### **c. Are you confident enough to ask your college/university to provide their information in BSL for you?**

Students had three options to answer with: Yes, No, or Unsure.

- Total of two replies were received
- One student replied Yes
- One student replied Unsure

## **Update**

Feedback shows that students would prefer to have all information given to them in BSL, and one student reported that they have the confidence to ask for BSL to be provided.

## **Recommendations**

- It is strongly recommended that all colleges and universities strive to provide information in both BSL and English to give the students a choice to access in their preferred language, which will also ensure that they access important information effectively.
- Colleges and universities should set up and run BSL Working Groups regularly in which BSL students are encouraged to join, so they can be given opportunity to learn which staff hold responsibility in the implementation of their BSL Plan. This will also help to empower them to have the confidence to ask for information to be provided in BSL, especially if they prefer this over English.
- BSL Working Groups, when BSL students are meaningfully involved, will help the college/university to improve their BSL Plan further.
- Colleges and universities should provide information in BSL when new students start at the establishment. This should take place in advance of their arrival and be presented from their first day onwards. This would ensure that academic settings meet their responsibilities with respect to health and safety. For example, students should be aware of fire evacuation points and exits in case of an emergency situation.
- BSL students should be consulted on course material and study translations so that they receive information that is relevant and important to them.



- Students with BSL as their first and preferred language should be confident to request information in their chosen language. Academic settings should be receptive to these requests and aware of their responsibilities under Equality and BSL legislation.

#### **4. Have you received information relating to changes towards your study and assessments caused by the impact of Covid-19?**

Discussions took place on the BSL Information Hub for Students Facebook group, which gave BSL students an opportunity to talk about what had happened with their assessments. The discussion also provided an opportunity for other students who, as noted in question one, felt they did not receive information relating to Covid-19 and the impact it would have on their studies and assessment. The discussion received good support and comments:

Four students took part in discussions about their assessments:

The following comments were received:

- *I finished all my assessments.*
- *Our graded unit got cancelled due to the need for contact-based assessments so we are getting estimated grades instead.*
- *We had a face-to-face role play exam get cancelled which was then changed to a video submission which I was happy about – it meant I didn't have to answer on the spot questions.*

#### **Update**

Feedback has shown that some students feel supported whilst others feel they could have been supported more in this area. The college/university should provide information in BSL or use BSL interpreters to deliver information about BSL student's assessments. Information in their chosen language will help BSL students to have confidence and knowledge about what to expect in their assessments.

Good practice has been reported in where colleges and universities provided information about upcoming assessments in BSL. These colleges and universities have shown a commitment to improving communication with BSL students to ensure the assessment is understood and they have used a BSL interpreter to effectively communicate between the BSL student and lecturer.

### **Recommendations**

- Create 'Best Practice' guidelines based on the processes at colleges/universities that provide exemplary BSL access.
- Empower students to raise requests and understand how their college/university can assist prior and during assessments.
- BSL information should be provided to BSL students to ensure that they have equal access to information about their assessment.
- Provide BSL resources showing students how to prepare for their assessments.

### **5. How has your college/university work been going?**

Eight students stated that they receive excellent support from their college/university

- *I started university straight from school, contacted the disability service and said I was deaf, and they arranged interpreters and notetakers, I didn't have to arrange that myself, I was provided with the service. It went really smoothly.*
- *One of the disability service staff had level 1 BSL. They would always book an interpreter, but it meant if something came up, I could pop in and manage to communicate with them directly.*
- *It took me about 6 weeks to settle down, I was really uncertain at the start of lockdown, having to use Zoom, but I got used to it.*

### **Update**

Feedback has shown diverse responses. Some students are satisfied with their provision whilst others have felt the support received has been inconsistent.

One student reported that she had been upset when her essay had been delayed due to the translation time required to translate between BSL to English. This can take longer than many people expect. The student then asked for a meeting with both the disability service and lecturer, she had hoped that the disability service would support her and would book an appropriately qualified BSL interpreter. She was provided with an interpreter who was less qualified than required (level 3) and was asked if she could lip read.

Another student reported that her academic setting did not prioritise her meeting when the interpreter was unavailable. She was offered an alternative time to suit the interpreter but, when she explained that she was not able to come at this amended time, the meeting was cancelled. There had been no effort to find an alternative interpreter that was available for the meeting.

### **Recommendations**

- Create 'Best Practice' guidelines based on the processes at colleges/universities that provide exemplary BSL access.
- Encourage and support the building of good relationships between students and staff.
- Communication will be effective if the disability services, learning teams, student information services and the BSL Lead Officers communicate and work together well. This will make a big difference to the support that the BSL student receives.
- Continue to provide Deaf and BSL Awareness training.
- To provide Hearing Awareness training to BSL students
- BSL students have the right to ask for BSL interpreters to be provided in meetings, and they also have the right to ask for BSL interpreters to be changed if they aren't happy with the service they provide.
- Meet BSL students' needs.

**6. Do you feel that your college/university has supported you during your studies?**

One student responded:

- *Half and half. They have provided me with support but through freelance interpreters and this means I was getting different interpreters each week which meant I had to use my time to explain to the interpreters or they would stop class time to have the lecturer explain them.*

Seven students responded yes, with one example cited:

- *if I do not understand something, I will ask the lecturer (through an interpreter) and the lecturer will explain it, so I can get on with it.*

**7. Have you been involved in any engagement with your college/university's BSL plan?**

Two students said yes, they have been involved in engagement with their college/university's BSL plan.

Six students said no, they haven't had any involvement towards their college/university's BSL Plan. One student cited:

- *I was not asked to participate, and I think my university just duplicated another university's plan, so there was not any discussion with me.*

**8. Are you motivated to engage with your BSL Plan?**

Five students stated that they felt motivated to engage with their college/university BSL plan, with one saying:

- *There are group meetings with the Deaf students where we can discuss it.*

Two students said they felt unsure, with one saying:

- *I am 50/50. I feel like in my last year of study, I want to focus on that. I don't want any distractions, and because I don't like feeling under pressure.*

Another student responded that they did not really feel motivated to engage with their college's BSL Plan.

Establishments that have cohorts of BSL students appeared to have achieved a good level of input into the BSL plan and the plan reflected the views of a diverse group. For example, one student felt the university's BSL plan was too individual because he was the only BSL student in that university. This student was concerned that this could impact on future BSL students who may have different requirements from him. This reinforces the importance of having a peer group within college/university to input into the BSL plan.

Some students feel that they lack the confidence to ask to be involved in the BSL plan or to ask for information in BSL, potentially these students have become accustomed to the college/university organising and directing the support. A more beneficial approach would be a two-way relationship where students feel more assertive and able to share their knowledge with the establishment for the benefit of all.

### **Update**

One further student responded that they have felt motivated in engaging well with their college/university's BSL plan.

### **Recommendations**

- It is strongly recommended that college and universities consult BSL students in order to develop and implement the BSL plan for their institution. This can be achieved through a BSL Working Group. It is acknowledged that some universities and colleges do not have BSL students to consult with, so it is recommended that those establishment join other colleges or universities' BSL Working Groups.

- Active involvement of BSL students in their BSL plan will greatly benefit the college/university and help to improve access.
- It is recommended that colleges and universities persevere when students are reluctant to attend BSL Working Groups and consult with students as to why they don't wish to attend.
- Provide clear explanations to BSL students regarding the purpose of the BSL Working Group and what benefits it can bring them.
- It is advisable to engage with a peer group of BSL students and not just involve one BSL student in the BSL Plan's consultation.
- Future collaboration and team approach is recommended for the future of BSL Plan developments.
- Continue to hold initiatives to empower and inform BSL students so they are confident to ask for support wherever required. Establishments should encourage these requests.

**9. Do you think that being directly engaged with your BSL Plan is useful? Good/Bad?**

A lot of students stated that they found engagement with the BSL plan very useful. One student said:

- *I think it's useful because I can look at it and know what to expect, what they have to provide, like interpreters, and access.*

Two students however held apathy towards the BSL plan and preferred not to be involved.

Feedback from other students mentioned the importance of having the right person involved in the plan management and development. Realistically, it is difficult to find a person with cultural BSL knowledge to fulfil that role so colleges/universities should listen to BSL students' experience to help improve their BSL Plan.

**Recommendations**

- Continue to work with BSL students to promote the benefits of the BSL Plan, for them and for future students.
- Support and encourage good relationships between the BSL students and the college/university, the staff, BSL interpreters and disability service. These relationships can improve awareness, access and the development of the college/university's BSL Plan.
- Remind and reinforce to BSL students that their college/university find a lot of value in having BSL students involved in their BSL Working Groups.

**10. Do you think your college/university's BSL plan will make a positive difference for you?**

Eight students responded yes. They stated that it makes a positive difference to them and felt that it made post school education more accessible. They felt fully supported and that they receive the same opportunities as everyone else.

One student stated that they felt there was a difference in attitudes between his previous university and his new university. He felt that that the new university was more positive, supportive, and made sure that he had access to interpreters. Comparatively, his previous university did not ask him what he needed for full access.

It appears that colleges and universities with a larger number of BSL students, and where these students have peers, are more likely to more understand how to support and provide for the student's needs. Students from these colleges/universities are more likely to have the confidence to ask for interpreter provision and would feel confident to request a change in interpreter if it was required. It is encouraging that students felt aware of their rights to full and equal access within the college/university setting.

**Recommendations**

- Colleges and Universities to work with new BSL students at point of entry into their setting and collaborate to understand what they require for access.
- Provide information to student in their preferred format.

- Continuously improve BSL plans.

### **11. What gaps do you think your college/university BSL plan has, if there are any?**

Five students feel that their BSL Plans have gaps:

- *I think it needs to be more known if they have a plan, maybe by contacting deaf students individually via email to say "We have this plan in place".*
- *We need skilled interpreters with focus on a specific subject.*
- *We need to encourage BSL to be used more around campus.*
- *Would be good if a free course in BSL could be offered to my classmates who might want to learn, that would encourage them to sign with me, it would be nice to have that.*

### **Recommendations**

- Students need to be aware of their rights to have full access to BSL interpreters, and the booking process should be made clearer.
- BSL interpreters should have the right level of BSL skills, and students must be aware of the right to request alternative interpreters.
- Deaf Action and Queen Margaret University have worked in collaboration to provide a bespoke BSL course curriculum which can be used in Universities and Colleges throughout Scotland. This valuable resource which teaches Introductory BSL from a linguistic perspective will be uploaded to the British Sign Language Scotland Act 2015 Website. Higher and Further Education institutions will be able to download and use these resources with students wishing to learn BSL. QMU will use these resources in 2021 with students on Primary Teacher courses and with Audiology students. This is a promising development towards inclusion for all.
- Colleges and Universities to inform students about where they can access the institution's BSL Plan.



## **12. Is it easy to find out who is responsible for managing your college/university's BSL plan?**

The interviews seemed to show that most of students do not know who is responsible for the BSL Plan management within their college/university. Other students are unsure who the named individual is but have been able to guess via emails and support. Some students are confident that they would be able to find out who their responsible person is if they ask their disability service.

It has been shown that not all students know whom their BSL Lead Officer is within their establishment. Ideally, students and BSL Lead Officers would work together. Students may need to accept responsibility for finding out who is responsible for the BSL Plan within their institution.

### **Recommendations**

- Promote and support the development of good relationships between BSL students and the academic setting.
- Continue to work with students to promote the benefit of the BSL plan, for them and for future students.
- Set up BSL Working Groups with the college/ university or join a larger steering group across several colleges and universities.
- Provide support and empowerment to students to accept responsibility and to feel able to make requests.

## **13. What good experiences do you have from your college/university?**

Eight students said they have had good experiences, with two students citing:

- *Having interpreters when students need them to talk with lecturers and college staff. This brings ease of communication.*

- *I have been able to plan my study, book interpreters, and be able to take responsibility for that, so that's been good. It was not until my 4<sup>th</sup> year that I realised I could book interpreters for university work that was outside of classroom time. Before then I was nervous to ask because I was concerned about budgets, but when I did ask, they said of course! And booked the interpreter.*

#### **14. What bad experiences do you have from your college/university?**

Two students said they have had bad experiences relating to communication with college/university staff, in which they cited:

- *Lack of Deaf Awareness*
- *Not prepared for deaf students.*
- *Poor communication between disability service and lecturers.*

Five students have had bad experiences with using BSL interpreters.

- *Unskilled interpreters in specific subject, kinda slow to catch up with the lecturers and fingerspelling words they do not know how to sign.*
- *Having no interpreter. That was a struggle and I have to catch up with lecture next time.*
- *They came to interpret my course, I could see it was too high a level for them, and they struggled with it, especially the technical jargon.*
- *My interpreters were only signing brief information, not relaying everything the lecturer was saying.*

#### **Update**

The differences between BSL translation and BSL interpretation remains a current issue. Universities and colleges need to be aware that these are different disciplines and may require different communication professionals, and different lengths of time to complete.

Colleges and Universities should be aware of BSL interpreter skill levels and be mindful that students will be seriously disadvantaged when the BSL interpreter does not understand what the student is saying.

Students have reported that they requested that the university provide support on how to prepare for an interview. The university failed to provide this in BSL as requested, and instead only provided guidance in English.

## **Recommendations**

- Promote opportunities to develop BSL student empowerment so that students are aware of their rights with respect to the BSL plan and full interpreter access. Students should be aware that they can request preferred interpreters. Students need to be aware of their right to full access to interpreters, and the booking process should be made clear.
- Promote awareness to staff and student that BSL translation and BSL interpretation are different skills. Not all communication professionals have capacity to provide both.
- Promote Deaf and BSL Awareness within colleges/universities.
- Staff who are responsible for booking interpreters should have a good knowledge of interpreter levels, qualifications, and registration status with agency.
- Colleges and universities should ask students how they feel about the whole college/university experience and how services are meeting their needs (or not). This is preferable to asking them only about their thoughts on aspects of BSL which can make students feel like commodities and make them less likely to volunteer to engage and have involvement in their BSL Plan.
- Provide BSL accessible information on how to prepare for interviews.
- Meet BSL students' needs – be mindful that extra time will most likely be needed for study content translation from BSL into English. BSL students may request extra resources and information in BSL.

- Check with BSL interpreter to see if they have any issues.
- Check with BSL interpreters to see if BSL students are happy with their access to communication at college/university. Through building these relationships, students will feel more comfortable in requesting what they need to be successful at university/ college.

**15. Do you find the BSL (Scotland) Act website useful?**

Three students stated that yes, they find the BSL Scotland Act website useful.

One student stated that he has seen some of the website and that he thinks it is good. However, he had not looked at the information sections, just pictures and video clips.

**16. Do you find the BSL (Scotland) Act Facebook page useful?**

A lot of students stated that they found the BSL (Scotland) Act Facebook page to be very useful.

- *When Coronavirus happened months ago, I wanted to know what was happening, and the videos on the Facebook page were useful, I learned from them.*

**17. Do you find the BSL Students Information Hub Facebook Group useful?**

Six students responded that they find BSL Students Information Hub Facebook Group to be useful, with two saying:

- *Good opportunity to share or contact another deaf student about their college/university experiences bad but nothing negative.*
- *It has taught me a lot of things I did not know about.*

Two students responded that they do not use Facebook much and have not seen this group.

### **Recommendations**

- Build a community of BSL students to encourage support and advice between BSL peers.
- Share information throughout the BSL community for future BSL students relating to colleges and universities. Access to this information may raise aspirations and confidence throughout the community.
- Empower BSL students through face to face/online workshops and develop online resources to encourage them to carry out their own research and initiatives.

### **18. Is there any other support or resources you would like to have?**

A few students suggested ways to support students and what new resources could be developed, saying:

- *I feel like when I study there needs to be more security around deaf people as I personally am worried I won't get the support I need and miss out on lots, I also have the fear of being bullied from being deaf so I think tougher action needs to be in place if that was to happen.*
- *I think all the audio videos should have English subtitles, but if there's BSL then extra subtitles can be distracting. If there's no subtitles, there should be an interpreter on screen.*

### **Recommendations**

- All BSL students starting college/university would benefit from a BSL-friendly resource giving advice on what to expect when starting their course (including information on the application process, open days, funding, interpreter access).

- Schools, colleges, universities should work together throughout the application process.
- Promote early meetings between BSL Students and their college/university's support service to help them feel confident and assured that the right support will be in place before their course starts.
- Students need to be aware of their rights to fully access BSL interpreters, and the booking process should be made clear.
- The Student Information website ([www.studentinformation.gov.scot](http://www.studentinformation.gov.scot)) should be made BSL accessible with BSL videos and resources.
- Build a community of BSL students to encourage sharing of support and advice between BSL peers.

**Student Information Website**      [www.studentinformation.gov.scot](http://www.studentinformation.gov.scot)

Deaf Action was consulted to provide recommendations on the Student Information website whilst this was in the beta phase. At this stage, the website did not have any BSL content and there were no plans to add BSL. Deaf Action recommended that BSL content would greatly improve the accessibility of the website for those using BSL as their first and preferred language.

### **Update**

Unfortunately, no further developments have been made since 2020 when Deaf Action made the recommendation that the website needs to be made BSL accessible.

SAAS provided BSL translation on their own website which has been good and had several positive responses from BSL students.

### **Recommendations**

- Provide BSL on the Student Information website which will be an immense help for BSL students, parents and others who seek to access information and research on possible future studies. This promotes equality of access and full inclusion.
- Set up a steering group which includes staff from SAAS, Student Information services and BSL students. SAAS and Student Information services will greatly benefit from hearing BSL students' experiences. This would steer improvements to the website and allow for improved access.
- Updates to the website should be translated into BSL.