



west lothian
college

British Sign Language Plan 2018-2020

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Section 1:

Introduction

The Scottish Government published the first British Sign Language (BSL) National Plan on 24 October 2017 which sets out the Government's vision for making a difference to the lives of D/Deaf and Deafblind BSL users across Scotland.

"The Scottish Government wants to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL Users to live, work and visit"

West Lothian College supports this vision and sets out our own vision, goals and actions through this (draft) BSL Plan. The plan sets out draft actions we will take in the period 2018-2020.

The Scottish Government BSL National Plan was developed through extensive engagement with Deaf and Deafblind BSL users and those who work with them. This local plan is framed around the same long-term goals as the national plan, where these are relevant to the work of the College. We are confident that this plan will make a difference to the lives of D/Deaf and Deafblind BSL users accessing services at West Lothian College.

Throughout the plan, we refer to 'BSL users'. This covers all people whose first or preferred language is BSL, including those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss.

The College recognises that BSL is a language in its own right, with its own grammar, syntax and vocabulary. It has its own dialects and rich variation. It is a language which enables many of our D/Deaf and Deafblind citizens to learn, work, and live life to the full, and to make their contribution to our communities, our culture and our economy.

About West Lothian College

West Lothian College is an award winning provider of further education based in Livingston, West Lothian. The College offers the widest range of academic and vocational qualifications in the area, offering a diverse curriculum to approximately 8000 learners.

West Lothian College operates out of its main campus in Livingston as well as having offices in several other regions across the country including: Glasgow, Dundee, Inverness and Edinburgh. With a vibrant, modern and innovative learning environment, the College is well equipped to ensure that students have the best facilities and resources to help develop their learning and skills.

West Lothian College is committed to the provision of equal opportunities in all aspects of college life. We have a range of policies which ensure that staff, learners and visitors are treated equally regardless of colour, race, nationality, ethnic or

national origin, religion or belief, disability, gender or gender reassignment, age and sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership.

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Consultation on the draft BSL Plan

The College consults regularly with our communities on all aspects of our equality and diversity work and we have engaged in many events that have raised awareness among staff and students on mental health, disabilities and LGBTi. We have engaged with the See Hear framework, Disability Go and are working towards achievement of the LGBT Youth Charter.

The College has collaborated with West Lothian Council, Deaf Action, Edinburgh College and Advance HE to gather feedback to help shape our plan. We are committed to gathering continuous feedback over the next 12-18 months with a view to publishing a refreshed plan in 2020 which includes local actions, based on that feedback, and taking account of the national progress report which is due to be published in October 2020.

West Lothian College will engage with learners, who are BSL users, to gather feedback to improve access to our services. We will work closely with our Student Association and use feedback from Office Bearers and Class Ambassadors to support achievement of the action plan.

The BSL Plan has been published in BSL and English for consultation. Both versions of the plan can be accessed at

www.west-lothian.ac.uk/aboutus/bslplan

How to comment on this plan

The College welcomes continuous feedback on our plan which you can give by:

Viewing the video on YouTube at www.youtube.co.uk and then sending your comments to bslviews@west-lothian.ac.uk or by contacting us through contactSCOTLAND-BSL

Or

commenting in English by email to bslviews@west-lothian.ac.uk

BSL Draft Plan/QLS//V1/100718

Please contact the Lead Officer if you wish to comment on the Plan or to be involved in developing our future actions. Contact details are listed above.

Section 2:

Executive Summary

West Lothian College has a strong reputation for partnership working across our communities and we will seek to use existing, and new, partnerships to realise the long term goals set out in the BSL National Plan.

The College BSL Plan shares the goals for all public services set out in the BSL National Plan and in particular will:

- Promote the use of contactSCOTLAND-BSL to staff, students and other users of college services
- Work with BSL and other stakeholders to develop information and resources that are beneficial and accessible to BSL users
- Raise staff awareness, knowledge and understanding of BSL user needs through partnership working with Education Scotland, Advance HE and Deaf Action
- Work in partnership with the Student Association to enable BSL users to participate in the wider life and work of the College

Section 3:

West Lothian College BSL Plan 2018-20

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

Actions

Action point	Deadline	Lead area
Analyse existing data we have about students and prospective students who use BSL in our college and identify and fill information gaps so that we can establish baselines and measure our progress	Dec 2018	Student Systems
Improve quality and accessibility of information on services for students and prospective students who use BSL through effective use of feedback from BSL users	Jan 2019	Marketing
Ensure accessibility of information via the College	Sept 2018	Marketing

Website for BSL users		
Promote the use of the Scottish Government's contactSCOTLAND-BSL service	Sept 2018	Marketing
Provide assistance to students who use BSL to help them complete SAAS application forms.	Sept 2018	Finance/Support for Learning
Prioritise Deaf Awareness Training for front-line staff, lecturers with D/deaf students and students in class-groups with D/deaf students.	Oct 2018	Learning and Development
Work with local Deaf organisations and with Deaf Action to develop a programme of training for front line college staff	June 2020	Learning and Development
Conduct a campus facilities impact assessment and prepare an action plan to ensure all facilities are accessible to BSL users	June 2019	Facilities
Review quality processes to ensure learning and teaching and assessment practices, including examinations and graduation, are inclusive of BSL users and provide equal opportunities for BSL users to succeed.	June 2019	Quality/Student Systems

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)”

Actions

Action point	Deadline	Lead area
Provide accessible information for schools about what BSL users can expect from the College	Aug 2019	Marketing/Schools
Ensure full access to open days for prospective students who use BSL	Dec 2018	Marketing/Schools
Provide support throughout the student journey for students who use BSL, including completing application & enrolment forms, interviews and applying for Disabled Students Allowance	Dec 2018	Support for Learning
Establish effective partnerships with schools, Education Scotland, Universities and other relevant partners to ensure smooth transitions for BSL users from school to college to University	June 2020	Schools/Support for Learning
Provide appropriate and reasonable support facilities, including access to interpreters, to ensure equal opportunities for success	June 2019	Support for Learning

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”

Actions

Action point	Deadline	Lead area
Ensure BSL users can access information about funding, support and childcare	Dec 2018	Marketing/Finance/ Support for Learning

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”

Action point	Deadline	Lead area
Expand BSL training course offering to improve access to training for parents and young people	June 2020	HAC/Marketing
Engagement activities with schools to be developed to be inclusive for BSL users	June 2020	Schools Liaison

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”

Actions

Action point	Deadline	Lead area
Raise awareness of the UK Government's 'Access to Work' scheme for students who use BSL so that they can benefit from the support it provides when they enter the world of work	Dec 2018	Marketing
Ensure BSL users can access Skills Development Scotland services and other information relating to moving on from College into the workplace, careers, volunteering and University	Dec 2018	Marketing
Develop partnerships with employers to ensure BSL users have equal access to vocational work opportunities while studying at college	June 2020	Curriculum Centres/Employer Engagement
Develop the HR recruitment process to facilitate and enable applications from BSL users	June 2020	HR

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”

Actions

Action point	Deadline	Lead area
Develop the website and the Student Association microsite to be accessible for BSL users	June 2019	Marketing
Ensure BSL users have full access to health, mental health and wellbeing services	June 2020	Support for Learning
Develop Support for Learning service to ensure BSL users have full access to appropriate guidance and counselling services while in college	June 2020	Support for Learning
Work with the Student Association and Curriculum centres to ensure BSL users have full access to wider college facilities and services that support good mental and physical health	June 2020	Support for Learning

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”

Actions

Action point	Deadline	Lead area
Develop website information to ensure information on public transport links are accessible and well-publicised for BSL users	June 2019	Marketing

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”

Action point	Deadline	Lead area
Work in partnership with the Student Association to ensure all groups and societies are inclusive for BSL users	June 2019	Quality
Work in partnership with the Student Association to establish a West Lothian College BSL Culture Club	June 2020	Quality

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

Action point	Deadline	Lead area
Work in partnership with the Student Association and SPARQS to develop the skills that enable BSL users to participate in college election campaigns, as officer bearers, college board members and as voters.	June 2020	Quality

Provide training and development for Trade Union Representatives to enable effective support for members who are BSL users	June 2020	Learning and Development
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Section 4

Monitoring and Review

West Lothian College will monitor progress on the BSL Plan through the Equalities Committee. The Equalities Committee meets on a monthly basis and reports on progress to the Senior Management Team. Progress on our BSL Action Plan will be formally reported on annually.

The West Lothian College BSL Plan will be reviewed and refreshed in 2020 in light of the findings of the National Plan Progress Report.