



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

British Sign Language (BSL) Plan

2018–2024





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SECTION 2:

Introduction

2.1 Introduction

This British Sign Language (BSL) plan has been created for the University of Edinburgh following the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015. The Government aims to encourage more people to use BSL for work, study and leisure. The University has established a BSL working group to develop the first University of Edinburgh British Sign Language Plan and monitor its implementation which will report to the University Executive each October.

The University recognises that BSL is an endangered language used by approximately 12,500 Scottish deaf people and their families (Scotland's Census, 2011). We acknowledge that as providers of excellent Higher Education, employment, and cultural and scientific opportunities our activities can do much to support the revival of the language. We note that the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 refers to BSL and also to the tactile form of BSL used by some deafblind people.

In drawing up the University of Edinburgh BSL Plan we referred to the points in Section 3 of the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015. That is, we will consider to what extent we can carry out University functions using BSL, we will develop the use of BSL for University functions, we will take regard of any comments or representations about the use of BSL and listen to the guidance about the plans issued by Scottish Ministers.

2.2 Name and contact details of lead officer

Gavin Douglas
Deputy Secretary, Student Experience

Email: bsl.plan@ed.ac.uk

2.3 Where to find the BSL version of this plan

The BSL version of the plan is on the University website. Each point of the plan is presented in both BSL and written English.

www.ed.ac.uk/about/british-sign-language-plan

SECTION 3:

Summary and welcome

3.1 Short summary of the plan

The University of Edinburgh's first six-year British Sign Language Plan has targets in all 10 areas of the BSL National Plan. The plan has 54 action points which cover every area of the University's work. The University commits to employing a BSL Officer and a BSL Teacher. In the Moray House School of Education and Sport (MHSES) the University plans to explore opening two programmes of initial teacher education to fluent BSL users, deaf and hearing, as a contribution to raise standards in sign bilingual education for deaf children, and to allow BSL to be taught as a school language. Many parts of the University have been involved in drawing up this plan to ensure we become more welcoming to BSL users who are students, members of staff or visitors.

3.2 Message from the Principal

The University of Edinburgh warmly welcomes the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 and shares the Scottish Government's aim to make Scotland the best place for deaf British Sign Language users to work, study and visit.



The University is well placed to support the Government's aims and aspirations for BSL users. We can look to increase the numbers of BSL users who choose to study at the University (ensuring they are well supported when they do), and we can capitalise on the expertise of our academic community – for example through seeking to introduce new teacher training programmes for BSL users at the Moray House School of Education and Sport. We are also committed, as one of Edinburgh's major employers, to encourage more BSL users to apply to work here and to help them progress in their chosen career.

Although the numbers of BSL users at the University are still low, we are immensely proud of our current BSL students and our BSL alumni, including Lilian Lawson who studied zoology at the University in the 1970s and was awarded an honorary doctorate for her work with deaf communities and parliament in 2017.

This is a bold and comprehensive plan, which covers every area of the University's work. I welcome it, and I am pleased to endorse it.

Professor Peter Mathieson
MB, BS, PhD, FRCP, FRCPE, FMedSci
Principal and Vice-Chancellor

SECTION 4:

Aims and implementation

4.1 Excellent higher education

The aim of the University of Edinburgh, as set out in the Strategic Vision 2025, is to provide a unique Edinburgh offer for all our students, and to benefit society as a whole. We see deaf and hearing BSL users as a part of this vision, which ensures that:

- students develop as researchers;
- they have opportunities to develop outside their core discipline;
- they feel a strong sense of community in Edinburgh;
- they experience being taught by excellent staff from around the world;
- they have opportunities to progress to postgraduate studies;
- they have opportunities to meet and learn from international students;
- they have the opportunity to participate in distance learning experiences;
- they benefit from the world-leading interdisciplinary research at the University;
- they enjoy the estate;
- they have opportunities to learn from industry, the public and third sectors; and
- they prepare for graduate-level employment.

Although the number of deaf BSL users is not high at the University at present, we are making a commitment through this planning framework to increase their number. We are proud of past deaf alumni, including Lilian Lawson who studied zoology at the University in the 1970s and was awarded an honorary doctorate for her work with deaf communities and parliament in 2017. Many more deaf BSL users have graduated from the University. The language was first studied in the 1980s at the Moray House College of Education, now our School of Education and Sport.

4.2 Our contribution to the long-term goals in the BSL National Plan

The University of Edinburgh BSL Plan refers to all 10 areas of the BSL National Plan, which can be found here: www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/10/3540

These are:

1. Information and services in the public sector
2. Family support, early learning and childcare
3. School education
4. Post-school education
5. Training, work and social security
6. Health, mental health and wellbeing
7. Transport
8. Culture and the arts (we are including science here)
9. Justice
10. Democracy.

4.3 Involvement of all parts of the University

The BSL plan includes actions to be taken by all three academic Colleges in the University: the College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences (CAHSS); the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine (CMVM); and the College of Science & Engineering (CSE). In addition, the plan contains actions for the University Secretary's Group which includes Human Resources (HR), Student Recruitment and Admissions (SRA), and Student Experience services, for example. There are also actions relating to the work of the Corporate Services group, which includes Accommodation, Catering and Events, Estates, and the Research Support Office (RSO), for example. Finally, there are actions relating to Information Services, which includes libraries and IT infrastructure.

This BSL plan has been informed by the Strategic Vision 2025 for the University as well as the Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2017–21. Links to these documents are here:

Strategic Vision 2025: edin.ac/strategic-vision-2025

Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2017–21: edin.ac/equality-outcomes

4.4 Implementation

This is the first BSL plan for the University of Edinburgh, as required by the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015. The BSL plan sets out actions we will take over the period 2018–2024. Our plan follows the BSL National Plan, published 24 October 2017, which was developed through extensive engagement with deaf and deafblind BSL users and those who work with them.

The University of Edinburgh plan is framed around the same long-term goals as the national plan, where these are relevant to the work of the University. The University of Edinburgh BSL Plan covers the 10 areas of the BSL National Plan and also addresses the University's Strategic Plan 2016–19 and the wider Strategic Vision 2025. Our plan is organised by the 10 sections of the BSL National Plan.

The University confirms our commitment here to protecting and supporting BSL, including in its tactile form used by deafblind people. The BSL working group has been established to develop this first BSL university plan, drawing representatives from across the University, including academic and administrative staff and students. Three deaf BSL users have been active on this working group: Dr Audrey Cameron representing MHSES, Poppie Bowie, a student on MSc Transformative Learning & Teaching from the same School, and Dr Lilian Lawson, an alumna of the University and an honorary graduate. Other hearing fluent BSL users are represented on the BSL working group.

The consultation about the draft University BSL plan was open to all on our website from August to September 2018. The draft was in BSL and English and responses could also be made in either language. The responses were considered by the BSL working group and amendments proposed to the plan.

The University of Edinburgh has a commitment to continued engagement in order to implement the actions in the plan in a timely manner, and to consider an annual progress report at the highest level shared with the University Executive. Funding for the plan will be found by departments across the University with some centrally funded actions particularly supporting staff learning BSL. The section of the University website where the plan is housed will contain annual updates and reviews in plain English and BSL. We welcome continuing commentary from the public, staff and students about the progress of implementation of our BSL plan.

The University of Edinburgh will contribute to the national progress report in 2020, reporting to the Government.

If you have any questions about the University's plan, please contact the BSL working group at: bsl.plan@ed.ac.uk

British Sign Language users can contact us via: www.contactsotland-bsl.org

SECTION 5:

The University of Edinburgh BSL Plan

We will commit to the following strategies and evidence of progress:

Objective

A. Information and services in BSL

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.”

Action

1. Analyse existing evidence about students, staff and prospective students who use BSL in our University; identify and fill key information gaps so that we can establish baselines and measure our progress in increasing the number of BSL users.

Timescale

By 2020/21

Action by

BSL Officer with HR and Admissions

Responsibility of

Director of Student Disability Service (SDS)

Action

2. Provide accessible information about what BSL users can expect from the University including accessible plain English and BSL clips on the website.

Timescale

By 2019/20

Action by

BSL Officer

Responsibility of

Director of SDS

Action

3. Promote the use of the Scottish Government's nationally funded BSL online interpreting video relay services called contactSCOTLAND-BSL, which allows two-way conversations between BSL users and public and sector services.

Timescale

By 2019

Action by

BSL Officer with Centre for Open Learning (COL)

Responsibility of

Director of SDS

Action

4. Subject to resourcing being made available, key members of staff working with students and members of the public in the following eight teams will be prioritised to learn BSL in work time to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Levels 4 – 6 over the life of the first plan: indicatively this should include Undergraduate and Postgraduate Student Services offices in MHSES; Moray House Library; SDS; the Arcadia Nurseries; the Students' Association; the Centre for Sport & Exercise; Accommodation, Catering and Events; and COL. Existing COL BSL courses may be utilised where appropriate. The BSL Officer will work with COL to explore opportunities to develop this provision with reference to the course planning and approval cycle.

Timescale

2019/20 onwards. Further teams will be reviewed in year two of the first plan.

Action by

BSL Officer with COL

Responsibility of

Deputy Secretary, Student Experience



<i>Action</i>	5. Where staff across the University work with students or members of the public, new job descriptions will include a desirable characteristic to have BSL skills. Priority for action will be the above eight teams.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2019/20
<i>Action by</i>	BSL Officer with all managers (across the three Colleges and three Groups)
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Deputy Secretary, Student Experience
<i>Action</i>	6. Encourage any other member of University staff to learn BSL for free in their own time through COL, prioritising those working with members of the public or students.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2019/20
<i>Action by</i>	BSL Officer with COL
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Deputy Head of Short Courses (Languages for All)
<i>Action</i>	7. Signpost all University staff who work with students and members of the public to BSL awareness training, and encourage them to take up face-to-face training and online revision opportunities. This will include how to work with a BSL/English interpreter and how to use the ContactSCOTLAND-BSL service. This will also be offered to new members of the University staff.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2019
<i>Action by</i>	BSL Officer with COL
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Deputy Secretary, Student Experience
<i>Action</i>	8. Set up a University staff/students BSL network to allow people learning BSL, especially in the priority eight teams, to practise together.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2019/20
<i>Action by</i>	BSL Officer with BSL teaching colleagues
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Deputy Secretary, Student Experience
<i>Action</i>	9. Invite continuous feedback from students/prospective students and staff who use BSL over the coming 18 months after adopting this plan.
<i>Timescale</i>	By early 2020
<i>Action by</i>	BSL Officer with SDS and BSL working group
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Deputy Secretary, Student Experience
<i>Action</i>	10. Commit to reviewing and refreshing this plan which includes more local actions based on that feedback after the national progress report (due October 2020).
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2020/21
<i>Action by</i>	BSL Officer with BSL working group
<i>Responsibility of</i>	University Executive

Objective**B. 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 deaf or deafblind child and their family offered the right information and support at the right time to engage with BSL.”

<i>Action</i>	11. Employ a deaf apprentice fluent in BSL at the Arcadia Nurseries, so that the team know how to communicate with deaf and deafblind BSL users, parents and children.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2020/21
<i>Action by</i>	BSL Officer with BSL working group
<i>Responsibility of</i>	University Executive
<i>Action</i>	12. Ensure that Bilingualism Matters events held in Edinburgh are always available interpreted into BSL when requested.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2019
<i>Action by</i>	Bilingualism Matters
<i>Responsibility of</i>	BSL Officer

Objective**C. 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.”

<i>Action</i>	13. We will explore two routes for fluent BSL users, deaf and hearing, to become qualified school teachers: the MSc Transformative Learning & Teaching (TLT) and a BSL pathway in the MA Primary undergraduate programme running alongside the Gaelic programme.
<i>Timescale</i>	MSc TLT by 2019/20 MA Primary Education with fluent BSL by 2021/22
<i>Action by</i>	MHSES with General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) and Scottish Funding Council (SFC)
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Head of CAHSS
<i>Action</i>	14. We will explore sustainable long-term funding for the BSL Glossary Project at the Scottish Sensory Centre (SSC) at a sufficient level to employ a Development Officer.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2019/20
<i>Action by</i>	SSC Co-ordinator with RSO
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Head of MHSES
<i>Action</i>	15. We will explore the viability of a distance learning advanced BSL course at the SSC for teachers of deaf children.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2020/21
<i>Action by</i>	SSC Co-ordinator with RSO and COL
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Head of MHSES

<i>Action</i>	16. We will, if we can secure the appropriate funding, monitor the BSL skills of teachers of deaf children and specialist support staff working with deaf children in Scottish schools and local authority services.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2019/20
<i>Action by</i>	SSC Co-ordinator with Consortium for Research in Deaf Education, GTCS and Scottish Government
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Head of MHSES
<i>Action</i>	17. We will seek funding to provide at least one immersion BSL week-long course for Scottish teachers every year using University facilities and fundraising expertise.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2020/21
<i>Action by</i>	SSC Co-ordinator and RSO with BSL Teaching to be confirmed via COL
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Head of MHSES
<i>Action</i>	18. The Scottish Deaf Teachers' Group has identified demand for courses in the areas of: recruiting, training and retaining BSL-using staff; developing a BSL curriculum as a second/third language in the Broad General Education; developing a Deaf Studies curriculum; improving the assessment and monitoring of deaf pupils' BSL skills; and working with deaf BSL users to establish tactile BSL in deafblind children. The SSC will explore this demand further and subject to demand and resourcing, seek to develop courses in these areas.
<i>Timescale</i>	From 2019/20 to 2023/24
<i>Action by</i>	SSC Co-ordinator with the Scottish Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, Deaf Teachers Group and RSO
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Head of MHSES
<i>Action</i>	19. CALL Scotland will arrange the translation of the three nominated best Scottish children's picture books each year to add to their accessible books project.
<i>Timescale</i>	From 2018/19
<i>Action by</i>	CALL with BSL Officer and Scottish Book Trust
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Head of MHSES

Objective**D. 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)."

<i>Action</i>	20. We will take action to ensure that students and prospective students who use BSL are properly supported. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing accessible information about what BSL users can expect from the University; • Providing quality access to open days for prospective students who use BSL; • Offer assistance to students who use BSL to help them apply for Disabled Student Allowances; • Providing support and access throughout the student journey for students who use BSL, e.g. SMS contacts, personal tutor has fluent BSL skills or BSL/English interpreter booked;
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<i>Timescale</i>	By 2019
<i>Action by</i>	SDS with SRA, Schools and BSL Officer
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Director of Student Wellbeing
<i>Action</i>	21. Take on board guidance and advice produced by the SFC and others to ensure that across the Colleges and University, staff are aware of their responsibilities towards BSL users, and that students who use BSL know what to expect.
<i>Timescale</i>	From 2019
<i>Action by</i>	BSL working group with SDS
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Deputy Secretary, Student Experience
<i>Action</i>	22. Offer teaching staff and hearing peers deaf and BSL awareness training early in their programmes when there are deaf- and BSL-using students on their courses.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2019/20
<i>Action by</i>	SDS with BSL Officer
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Director of Student Wellbeing
<i>Action</i>	23. Support the development and implementation of systems so that deaf students see all videos on their courses with subtitles.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2019
<i>Action by</i>	All Schools and SDS with BSL Officer
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Director of SDS
<i>Action</i>	24. Plan a three-day summer school for deaf BSL users and other deaf students to attract students to our University.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2019/20
<i>Action by</i>	SDS with BSL Officer and Accommodation, Catering and Events
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Director of Student Wellbeing
<i>Action</i>	25. Investigate barriers which BSL users and deaf students may face in undergraduate degrees in medicine, veterinary medicine and law, providing solutions and encouraging deaf applicants.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2022/23
<i>Action by</i>	School of Law and CMVM with BSL Officer and Admissions
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Deputy Secretary, Student Experience
<i>Action</i>	26. Provide BSL/English interpretation for anyone who books it for student graduation events, including appropriate seating arrangements and responsive communication with people requesting it.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2019
<i>Action by</i>	Student Administrative Services with BSL Officer
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Director of Student Systems and Administration

Objective**E. 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.”

- Action* 27. Inform careers staff about SCQF BSL qualifications. Provide online and face-to-face careers advice via BSL/English interpreters for University students and graduates, including guidance about SCQF BSL levels.
- Timescale* From 2019/20
- Action by* Careers Service
- Responsibility of* Director of the Careers Service
- Action* 28. The University will appoint a BSL Officer to take forward the work of this plan.
- Timescale* From 2019
- Action by* Student Disability Service
- Responsibility of* Deputy Secretary, Student Experience
- Action* 29. With careful consideration of approval cycles and available resource, COL and the BSL Officer will establish how best to deliver the BSL provision as outlined in this plan.
- Timescale* From 2019
- Action by* BSL Officer and COL
- Responsibility of* Deputy Head of Short Courses (Languages for All)
- Action* 30. We will encourage BSL users to apply for jobs by providing BSL guidance on the jobs web page explaining person specifications and application procedures.
- Timescale* From 2019/20
- Action by* HR with BSL Officer
- Responsibility of* Senior HR Partner for Resourcing
- Action* 31. In posts where BSL is a requirement, a BSL clip will summarise the job details on the University website, and applicants may submit a weblink to a BSL video clip in their application.
- Timescale* From 2020/21
- Action by* HR with BSL Officer
- Responsibility of* HR
- Action* 32. Incorporate plans for work placements and modern apprenticeships for BSL users in areas of the University where there are staff with SCQF BSL Level 5 or above into the next revision of the University’s Youth and Employment Strategy.
- Timescale* From 2021/22
- Action by* BSL Officer with three Colleges and Service Groups
- Responsibility of* HR Resourcing team

- Action* 33. Raise awareness of the UK Government’s Access to Work scheme for students who use BSL towards the end of their course, so that they can benefit from the support it provides when they enter the world of work.
- Timescale* From 2019/20
- Action by* SDS and Careers Service
- Responsibility of* Director of the Careers Service
- Action* 34. Provide information on how Access to Work operates within the Support for Disabled Staff Policy and provide appropriate information to teams recruiting BSL users.
- Timescale* From 2019/20
- Action by* Staff Disability Service with HR and BSL Officer
- Responsibility of* HR
- Action* 35. Identify any additional policy or guidance areas required to support deaf students, staff and visitors and integrate actions from this plan into University policies.
- Timescale* From 2018/19
- Action by* BSL Officer with Director of Academic Services
- Responsibility of* Deputy Secretary, Student Experience

Objective**F. Health, 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.”

- Action* 36. Ensure that students who use BSL are able to access the Advice Place’s basic services, such as safer sex and free sanitary products, and investigate opportunities to provide a full advice service, for example through appointments with an interpreter.
- Timescale* By 2019/20
- Action by* Students’ Association
- Responsibility of* BSL Officer
- Action* 37. Provide face-to-face counselling for BSL users by liaison with a specialist deaf counselling service, finding suitable counselling rooms on or near the University areas.
- Timescale* By 2019
- Action by* Counselling Service with the NHS
- Responsibility of* Director of Student Wellbeing
- Action* 38. Investigate the provision of cheaper residential fees for fluent BSL users who commit to using BSL in their shared University accommodation and support voluntary promotion of BSL there for interested students.
- Timescale* By 2022/23
- Action by* Accommodation, Catering and Events team with BSL Officer
- Responsibility of* Director of Corporate Services

<i>Action</i>	39. Following points 4 and 7 of the plan (pages 9 and 10) relating to the Centre for Sport & Exercise staff, promote their activities using BSL.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2021/22
<i>Action by</i>	Centre for Sport & Exercise with BSL Officer
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Director of Centre for Sport & Exercise

Objective G. 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.”

<i>Action</i>	40. Continue to work with internal stakeholders and local transport providers to ensure that travel information is visual, current, accessible and well-publicised.
<i>Timescale</i>	From 2018/19 and throughout life of the plan
<i>Action by</i>	Estates Management Group with BSL Officer
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Director of Estates

Objective H. Culture, science, social science 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.”

<i>Action</i>	41. Support student-led societies, volunteering groups, and sports clubs in making their activities more inclusive of BSL users.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2020/21
<i>Action by</i>	Students' Association; Edinburgh University Sports Union; Centre for Sport & Exercise; and Accommodation, Catering and Events team with BSL Officer
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Deputy Secretary, Student Experience

<i>Action</i>	42. We will ensure that ethics committees across the University include advice where appropriate from deaf BSL users internal or external to the University when the research involves working with deaf people, BSL users or has implications for deaf people.
<i>Timescale</i>	By 2019/20
<i>Action by</i>	Research Ethics & Integrity Review Group with School Ethics Committee Convenors
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Research Policy Group

<i>Action</i>	43. We will provide BSL translation and interpreting, produced by qualified BSL/English interpreters or translators, for at least one University exhibition and scientific or cultural event each year. We will publicise the events using BSL clips on our website, information monitors, and through deaf community media.
<i>Timescale</i>	From 2019/20
<i>Action by</i>	Head of Museums with BSL Officer and Edinburgh Science Festival
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Director of Library and University Collections

<i>Action</i>	44. We will support the lecture series Edsign organised jointly by the Universities of Edinburgh, Heriot Watt and Queen Margaret by providing live streaming.
<i>Timescale</i>	From 2018/19
<i>Action by</i>	Institute of Education, Teaching & Leadership (IETL) with Multimedia team
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Head of MHSES

<i>Action</i>	45. COL will incorporate plans to offer free BSL taster courses for University staff and students into its planning and course approval process across 2018/19. We will scope the provision of regular free lunchtime introductory sessions to BSL and deaf culture through the BSL Officer.
<i>Timescale</i>	From 2019/20
<i>Action by</i>	COL with BSL Officer
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Deputy Head of Short Courses (Languages for All)

<i>Action</i>	46. The Students' Association – including the student-led Tandem committee – will work with the University's BSL Officer and BSL Tutor to investigate offering regular BSL cafes to enable students to improve their BSL skills in an informal setting.
<i>Timescale</i>	From 2019/20
<i>Action by</i>	Students' Association Participation Officer with BSL Officer, BSL Tutor and BSL Society
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Deputy Secretary, Student Experience

<i>Action</i>	47. We will explore the development of an accredited BSL poetry and storytelling course available for students with SCQF BSL Level 6 and above. This would be part of MA Primary Education with fluent BSL, open to other suitably qualified students or members of the public through professional learning.
<i>Timescale</i>	From 2022/23
<i>Action by</i>	IETL and School of Education Professional Learning
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Head of MHSES

<i>Action</i>	48. Investigate the possibility of development of accredited BSL and deaf culture courses available to undergraduate students in Years 1 and 2 of their degrees, ensuring that BSL language, culture or linguistics lecturers are fluent in BSL and have appropriate cultural knowledge.
<i>Timescale</i>	From 2019/20
<i>Action by</i>	School of Literatures, Languages & Cultures (LLC) with MHSES and COL
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Head of School LLC

<i>Action</i>	49. Plan a guide for Colleges and Schools about how to organise academic conferences to include deaf BSL-using academics.
<i>Timescale</i>	From 2019/20
<i>Action by</i>	IETL and SSC
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Head of MHSES

<i>Action</i>	50. Develop merchandise at the University Visitor Centre which celebrates BSL as a language and the University's connection with it.
<i>Timescale</i>	From 2020/21
<i>Action by</i>	BSL Officer with Visitor Centre Manager
<i>Responsibility of</i>	Director of Communications and Marketing

Objective**I. Justice**

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

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

Action

51. Research current and existing barriers to participation for deaf students in student life and the student experience at the University of Edinburgh by gathering qualitative and quantitative data.

Timescale

By 2019/20

Action by

BSL Officer with BSL working group and Accommodation, Catering and Events Residence Life team

Responsibility of

Deputy Secretary, Student Experience

Objective**J. 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

52. Encourage staff and students who use BSL to take an active and full part in the committees and structures of the University, providing appropriate BSL/English interpreting.

Timescale

By 2019/20

Action by

Heads of Schools with BSL Officer

Responsibility of

Deputy Secretary, Student Experience

Action

53. Initiate a system for deaf BSL users to upload video clips through the University complaints procedure, and respond to BSL complaints in BSL within 20 days as the procedure states for all.

Timescale

By 2019/20

Action by

Investigations Manager with BSL Officer

Responsibility of

Deputy Secretary, Student Experience

Action

54. The Students' Association will explore ways to ensure students who use BSL are able to engage in our democratic structures, including Student Council meetings and elections hustings.

Timescale

By 2019

Action by

Students' Association

Responsibility of

BSL Officer



SECTION 6:

Review and renewal

- The final version of this plan was published in May 2019 in English and BSL on the University website. Copies are available in print throughout the University.
- We will review the University's BSL plan each year, reporting to the University Executive through the Deputy Secretary, Student Experience. In the second year of the plan (2019/20) we will carry out a review of progress because the Government will review the BSL National Plan in 2020 and they would like an early review of all local plans. In year six of the University BSL plan (2023/24), we will review the first plan and consult on the next one. This cycle of review and renewal will continue into future plans.
- Please contact us if you would like to continue to be involved as we further develop and implement the actions in our plan.

Contact email for the BSL working group:

bsl.plan@ed.ac.uk

- After the launch of the first University of Edinburgh BSL plan in November 2018, if you would like to discuss the plan using BSL, please email Dr Audrey Cameron or Rachel O'Neill to arrange a time to Skype or Facetime:
audrey.m.cameron@ed.ac.uk
rachel.oneill@ed.ac.uk
- You can read more about the BSL working group, chaired from November 2018 by Dr Audrey Cameron, on this website:
edin.ac/bsl-working-group



This publication is available in alternative formats on request.
Please contact communications.office@ed.ac.uk

For a version in British Sign Language visit: [edin.ac/bsl-plan](https://www.ed.ac.uk/bsl-plan)

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