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**University of Edinburgh Student Disability Service**

**Deaf and hearing impaired students:**

**Participation in group discussions**

**Strategies**

If possible, have a quiet discussion with the student to check what particular strategies work for them.  Also, they may have specialised amplification equipment which could involve positioning a microphone in an appropriate central place.

**Acoustics**

Be aware that breaking into small groups in the same room can cause difficulties because of background noise.

**Managing Inclusion**

Group discussions can be quick-fired and hard to follow. Deaf students can lag behind because it’s hard to know who is speaking. People frequently interrupt each other and talk over the top of each other, which makes the situation doubly hard.

Use techniques to include the student without drawing unnecessary attention to them:

* Use horseshoe or circle so that student can see faces of all contributors.
* Allow only one speaker at a time (eg put hand up or ‘pass the conch’). It can feel slow and stilted at first, but it actually benefits everyone.
* Clearly repeat contributions which may have been missed (trying not to draw attention to the student).
* Explain jokes or asides you have seen go by quickly.