

BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTIC
ACCESS WORKING GROUP

**SCOPING STUDY:
LINGUISTIC ACCESS TO EDUCATION
FOR DEAF PUPILS AND STUDENTS
IN SCOTLAND**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are very grateful to the many individuals who have contributed their time and commitment to this study. Appendix 2 lists the main organisations who have taken part.

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ISBN: 978-0-7559-5849-8 (Web only)

The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Produced for the Scottish Government by RR Donnelley B56660 02/09

Published by the Scottish Government, February, 2009

CONTENTS

1. **INTRODUCTION** (including glossary of abbreviations) **1**
2. **METHODS** **4**
 - Statistical information
 - Qualitative information
 - Documentary information

THE LINGUISTIC ACCESS CONTEXT FOR DEAF PUPILS AND STUDENTS IN SCOTLAND

3. **LANGUAGE APPROACHES USED WITH DEAF PUPILS IN SCOTLAND** **7**
 - Monolingual approaches
 - Bilingual approaches
 - 'No specific policy'
 - Regional variation
4. **LINGUISTIC ACCESS FOR DEAF STUDENTS IN FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION** **11**

THE SCHOOL SECTOR: LINGUISTIC ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR DEAF PUPILS

NUMBERS OF PUPILS AND PROFESSIONALS

5. **THE NUMBER OF DEAF PUPILS** **13**
 - Scottish Government Statistics
 - ADPS statistics
 - Presenting statistics on the population of deaf pupils
 - Statistics relating to educational attainment
 - Recommendations
6. **THE NUMBER OF PROFESSIONALS WHO PROVIDE LINGUISTIC ACCESS AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR DEAF PUPILS IN SCHOOLS** **17**
 - Numbers of teachers of deaf children
 - Numbers of other professionals

QUALIFICATIONS OF STAFF

7. **THE QUALIFICATIONS OF PROFESSIONALS WHO PROVIDE LINGUISTIC ACCESS AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR DEAF PUPILS IN SCHOOLS** **25**
 - Qualifications of Teachers of Deaf Children (including recommendations)
 - Qualifications of other professionals (including recommendations)

CONTENTS (continued)

PRE-SCHOOL ISSUES

8. PRE-SCHOOL ISSUES	37
■ Background	
■ Languages used with pre-school deaf children in Scotland	
■ UNHS in Scotland	
■ Early intervention	
■ Training, qualifications and resources for early linguistic development	
■ Early cochlear implantation	
■ Linguistic assessments	
■ Recommendations	

SCHOOL: LINGUISTIC ASSESSMENT AND LINGUISTIC ACCESS ISSUES

9. SCHOOL YEARS: LINGUISTIC ASSESSMENTS	45
■ Spoken language/literacy assessments	
■ Audiology assessments	
■ Late diagnosis	
■ Lipreading assessments	
■ BSL assessments	
■ 'CEM Centre' assessments	
■ Assessments of linguistic strategies	
■ Assessments within the Additional Support for Learning process	
■ Recommendations	
10. SCHOOL YEARS: ACCESS ISSUES	51
■ The impact of some key legislative and policy developments	
■ Staffing issues	
■ Transition issues	
■ Acoustic environments	
■ Pupils with cochlear implants	
■ Risk of isolation in mainstream situations	
■ Exam/assessments issues	
■ Recommendations	

ACHIEVEMENTS OF DEAF PUPILS IN SCOTLAND (ADPS): UNEXPLORED DATA

11. THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF DEAF PUPILS IN SCOTLAND (ADPS): UNEXPLORED AREAS	62
CASE EXAMPLE	64

CONTENTS (continued)

THE FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION SECTORS: LINGUISTIC ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR DEAF STUDENTS

NUMBERS OF STUDENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

12. THE NUMBER OF DEAF STUDENTS IN FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION 66

- Limitations to information about numbers of deaf students
- The number of deaf students in further education
- The number of deaf students at university
- Recommendations

13. THE NUMBER OF PROFESSIONALS WHO PROVIDE LINGUISTIC ACCESS SERVICES FOR DEAF STUDENTS 75

- A new survey
- Recommendation

OTHER ISSUES RELEVANT TO BOTH FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

14. ISSUES RELEVANT TO BOTH FE AND HE SECTORS: MISCELLANEOUS 76

- Assessment
- Common transition issues
- The general impact of disability legislation
- Cost of good quality linguistic access
- Outputs of working groups aimed at furthering linguistic access for deaf students
- Recommendations

15. ISSUES RELEVANT TO BOTH FE AND HE SECTORS: LANGUAGE SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS 83

- General issues
- BSL/English interpreters
- Notetakers
- Lipspeakers
- 'Communication Support Workers'
- Recommendations

ISSUES SPECIFIC TO FURTHER EDUCATION

16. ISSUES SPECIFIC TO FE 94

- Assessments
- Access to SQA examinations
- Recommendations

ISSUES SPECIFIC TO HIGHER EDUCATION

17. ISSUES SPECIFIC TO HE 100

- Assessment: Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Other issues
- Recommendations

CONTENTS (continued)

18. OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROVISION	106
19. FULL LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS	107

REFERENCES

APPENDICES

Appendix 1:	Language approaches used in Scottish Schools, 2001-2004
Appendix 2:	Groups and individuals consulted for this scoping study
Appendix 3:	Routes for demonstration of competency in BSL and in BSL/English interpreting
Appendix 4:	Schools survey questionnaire
Appendix 5:	Relevant SQA Qualifications
Appendix 6:	Calculation of ELS funding in FE
Appendix 7:	Proposed SQA qualification progression route for BSL Tutors

1.

INTRODUCTION

This study, conducted by Marian Grimes on behalf of the Scottish Sensory Centre (SSC), in conjunction with the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS), forms part of a wider mapping exercise undertaken by the Scottish Government's BSL and Linguistic Access Working Group.

It provides current information about, and explores the complexities of, linguistic access to education for deaf pupils and students in Scotland. It includes the following elements:

- A description of the current linguistic access arrangements for deaf pupils in school and for deaf students in further and higher education.
- A record of the availability of statistics (and any gaps) on:
 - the number of deaf children and young people in the different educational sectors;
 - the numbers, location and qualifications of Language Service Professionals working in education (communication support workers, BSL/English interpreters, notetakers, lipspeakers, etc);
 - the levels of BSL held by associated professionals (teachers of the deaf, lecturers).
- A description of current activity which incorporates the aim of improving linguistic access in education.
- A list of recommendations to improve linguistic access across all education sectors.

The resulting report is larger than was originally anticipated. The explanation for this lies in the context of the study as well as the wealth of data collected.

Developments in legislation, policy, research, technology and practice, in all educational sectors, are converging to create unique linguistic access opportunities for deaf pupils and students. In gathering data within this context, it became clear that the wide range, complexity and distinctiveness of each sector's emerging information, warranted as full a representation as possible within the scope of the study. It was also decided, after some debate, to include a section on pre-school education, given the importance of the foundations of language – and of recent developments in this area.

As much statistical information as possible is included, set within an exploration of underlying complexities and of issues which emerged from interviews with key informants. While the report is designed to have coherence as a whole, expressed in the accompanying Executive Summary, it is also organised so that detailed information on individual sectors can largely stand alone. It is hoped that this will increase its accessibility for those with specific interests in individual sectors.

TERMINOLOGY

Throughout the report, the word 'deaf' is used as a generic term to refer to all levels and types of hearing loss and deafness. Occasionally, where there is specific reference to cultural and linguistic minority, a capital 'D' is used.

Specialist visiting services are sometimes known as 'HI services', and are referred to as such in this report.

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADPS	The Achievements of Deaf Pupils in Scotland Project
ASL	Additional Support for Learning
BATOD	British Association of Teachers of the Deaf
BDA	British Deaf Association
BSL	British Sign Language
BSLLAWG	BSL and Linguistic Access Working Group
CACDP	Formerly an abbreviation of the 'Council for the Advancement in Communication with Deaf People' (known by the initials only since the end of 2006)
CEM Centre	Curriculum Evaluation and Management Centre
CHESS	The Consortium of Higher Education Support Services with deaf and hearing impaired students
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CSP	Co-ordinated Support Plan
CSW	Communication Support Worker
DCAL	Deafness Cognition and Language Research Centre
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DSA	Disabled Students' Allowance
DSWG	Deaf Students Working Group
ELS	Extended Learning Support
ENT	Electronic Notetaker
F&HE	Further and Higher Education
FACE	Furthering Access to College Education for Deaf Students
FE	Further Education
GTCS	General Teaching Council for Scotland
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HELS	Higher Education and Learner Support
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HI	Hearing Impairment
HMIE	HM Inspectorate of Education
HND	Higher National Diploma

IEP	Individualised Education Plan
LSP	Language Support Professional
NATED	National Association for Tertiary Education of Deaf People
NDCS	National Deaf Children's Society
NQ	National Qualification
NT	National Test
PDA	Professional Development Award
PHIS	Public Health Institute of Scotland
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census
QI	Quality Indicators
RNID	Royal National Institute for Deaf People
RoN	Record of Needs
SAAS	Student Awards Agency for Scotland
SACSW	Scottish Association of Communication Support Workers
SaLT	Speech and Language Therapist
SASLI	Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters
SCoD	Scottish Council on Deafness
ScotXed	Scottish Exchange of Educational Data
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SCTTL	Scottish Course for Training Teachers of Lipreading
SDA	Scottish Deaf Association
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SFC	Scottish Funding Council
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
SSC	Scottish Sensory Centre
TC	Total Communication
ToD	Teacher of Deaf Children
UCLAN	The University of Central Lancashire
UNHS	Universal Newborn Hearing Screening

2.

METHODS

2.1. STATISTICAL INFORMATION

2.1.1. INFORMATION ALREADY AVAILABLE

Relevant statistical information about numbers of deaf pupils and students was identified and explored, including data produced by central sources: the Scottish Government, the Scottish Funding Council and the Higher Education Statistics Agency. Statistical information from recent research projects, such as the 'Achievements of Deaf Pupils in Scotland' (ADPS) project (see Section 11) and the 'Deaf Students in Scottish Higher Education' project (Brennan et al, 2005) was also examined.

It had been hoped that it would be possible to access data from relevant surveys recently undertaken by, respectively, the Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters (SASLI) and the National Association of Tertiary Education for deaf people (NATED). However, it proved impossible to access data from either survey, due to both ethical and practical reasons.

2.1.2. NEW INFORMATION

Surveys undertaken

In order to provide up-to-date data, specifically tailored to the remit of this study, two surveys were undertaken, and one was piloted:

a) Staff roles and qualifications within schools and services for deaf pupils

A questionnaire was designed to elicit the numbers, location and qualifications of professionals who facilitate linguistic access for deaf pupils in schools.

Categories of tick-box options relating to staff roles and qualifications were initially drawn from relevant information provided within past ADPS survey returns. We are grateful to the individual heads of HI services, and to SASLI, who provided feedback on an initial draft of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was distributed by both email and by post. There were some complications and delays due to the effects of a national postal strike and of the autumn school break – the length and dates of which vary among local authorities.

Data was inputted, and basic descriptive analysis undertaken, using Excel software.

b) Audiology services: transition between paediatric and adult services

A short email survey was conducted among heads of audiology services across Scotland, as a response to an emergent issue about transition services for students at colleges and universities. Relevant questions were constructed in consultation with a member of the Scottish Government's Audiology Advisory Group, and the Health Department assisted with contacts.

As the numbers were small (7/14), analysis was undertaken manually.

c) Survey pilot: staff roles and qualifications in further and higher education (F&HE)

When it became apparent that the NATED survey information on F&HE staff roles and qualifications would not be available to this study, it was decided to undertake a new survey among learning support advisors in further and higher education institutions. Content of the survey instrument was adapted from the schools survey questionnaire. After discussion with a representative of the Disabled Students Stakeholder Group, it was decided to create and distribute a web-based format.

It has been possible to pilot the questionnaire within the timescale of this project. We are grateful to the specialist advisors from further and higher education and, again, to SASLI, for their involvement in the pilot.

It is intended that the survey will be distributed by the Scottish Sensory Centre (SSC) in early 2008, with help from the BRITE Centre and from the Disabled Students Stakeholder Group. The SSC will present analysed data to the BSL & Linguistic Access Working group as soon as is possible.

Previously unpublished ADPS data

It was possible to provide previously unpublished data from the ADPS project database, now held by the SSC. This involved exporting data from a Filemaker database for basic analysis using Excel software.

2.2. QUALITATIVE INFORMATION

Given the time and resource constraints of the project, it was agreed with the Scottish Government that a wide range of key informants would be identified, on the basis of knowledge and experience of their sector, to provide informed perspectives on the main issues within each category of provision.

While not a representative sample, a wide range of individuals and groups were in a position to provide key insights into current challenges and opportunities, and other emergent themes. The project remit was used as the basis for interview schedules, which were adapted to suit the particular sector concerned and, sometimes, to address relevant issues as they emerged.

Interviews were undertaken by the project researcher via a range of modes: face to face; telephone and email. Face to face and telephone interviews were audio-recorded, with permission, whenever feasible, in order to ensure accuracy of reporting.

Interviewees were selected on the basis of representing local and/or national perspectives, depending on the issue being explored. Appendix 2 provides a list of organisations and representatives consulted.

Interview data was coded manually, using themes which were explicit and implicit within the study remit, as well as emergent themes identified during the data collection process.

2.3. DOCUMENTARY INFORMATION

Information from other relevant literature, including research reports, policy documents, position papers and articles were identified and explored.

3.

LANGUAGE APPROACHES USED WITH DEAF PUPILS IN SCOTLAND

Deaf Education/Hearing Impairment Services across the UK offer an array of specific approaches, the labels for which can sometimes be confusing. Further details on the UK situation can be found at: BATOD (2006), Gregory (2005) and Gregory et al (1998).

The Achievements of Deaf Pupils in Scotland (ADPS) project collected information on language approaches used with individual pupils and language policies of services up to (2000/2005). Appendix 1 uses this data to summarise the languages and language modes included in approaches used in Scotland. These approaches, as with the rest of the UK, can be divided into monolingual and bilingual groupings.

Tables 1 and 2 provide detail on the approaches used in Scotland between 2001 and 2005 as the basis of service policies (also ADPS data). The term 'service' is used to denote 45 administratively autonomous services, among 32 local authorities, which could be schools for deaf children, units within mainstream schools or visiting services. Where a visiting service represents a whole local authority's provision, this is noted.

3.1. MONOLINGUAL APPROACHES

There are a number of English-only approaches, which are based on the premise that deaf children and hearing children develop language in the same way. It has traditionally been accepted that there is likely to be some language delay (Brennan, 1999), although the impact of Universal Newborn Hearing Screening (UNHS) and developments in early cochlear implantation are being monitored carefully by a large-scale UK research project (Positive Support, 2007). Interventions are focused on enhancing access to spoken language, including the use of technology to maximise audition. Approaches vary in the extent to which they include the use of visual cues, such as lipreading and individual signs. Table 1 lists the monolingual approaches used in Scotland, ordered by the degree to which they use visual cues – least first (source ADPS). It shows that a minority of services reported a monolingual approach, and no local authorities reported exclusion of the use of visual cues in their full provision.

TABLE 1		
Type of approach	Description	No. of services in Scotland reporting this approach as overall policy in 2005
'Natural aural'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Spoken English, with specific emphasis on optimising children's residual hearing ■ Use of everyday interactions rather than a 'structured oral' approach ■ visual cues not encouraged 	1 unit in mainstream school 1 school
'Spoken English monolingual'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Spoken English only, but more pragmatic use of lipreading as a visual cue ■ No use of signs ■ Also known as 'oral/aural' or 'oral/auditory' methods 	2 visiting services 2 units
'Total Communication' (Spoken English with Sign Supported English**)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Uses spoken English with or without additional visual cues as deemed appropriate to individuals, including the use of some signs borrowed from BSL 	4 local authorities

**Sign Supported English is used here to mean the use of spoken English, reinforced by some sign vocabulary. Individual signs, but not grammatical features, are borrowed from BSL.

It is expected that specialist staff who support the development of spoken English will facilitate a rich linguistic environment, requiring competency in assessment of spoken language and literacy development. Competencies are also required in areas such as applied audiology and in the assessment of, and facilitation of access to, spoken and written English. Staff who work within specific monolingual philosophies are also likely to receive training and resources from relevant independent organisations.

3.2. BILINGUAL APPROACHES

In the UK, a declared sign bilingual approach, defined by the Sign Bilingual Consortium (Swanwick and Gregory, 2007), is based on the premise that deaf children's linguistic aptitudes and linguistic/cultural requirements are more diverse than those of hearing children. It recognises a distinction between deaf and hearing communities and between British Sign Language (BSL) and English; it assumes individual, planned language routes for curriculum access, with the relative dominance of British Sign Language (BSL) or English dependant upon ongoing assessment. The employment of deaf staff is seen as vital.

Bilingual approaches are a relatively recent development and it is only latterly that significant funding has become available for research and development in this area. Flexible use of terminology leads to an apparent overlap with a version of 'Total Communication' (TC) that includes some degree of BSL: more information is needed before it is possible to identify the extent to which the distinctive philosophical and practice base of such a TC approach is akin to that of sign bilingualism. The situation is further complicated by the fact that, in practice, variations in terminology may sometimes be pragmatically related to limitations in available BSL-related resources, in terms of staff BSL skills and of assessment tools.

For these reasons, Table 2 embraces both sign bilingual and TC approaches which include BSL to some extent. The table shows that, while a minority of services (including three local authorities) report a sign bilingual approach, a large proportion of local authorities declare some degree of bilingualism in their language and communication policies.

TABLE 2		
Type of approach	Description	No. of services in Scotland reporting this approach as overall policy in 2005
'Sign Bilingual' approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Declared use of both BSL and English ■ The differences between the two languages are recognised ■ The aim is for age-appropriate language development ■ Sign Supported English may be used in some circumstances (eg in structured literacy programmes or as a pragmatic response to limited staff skills) 	1 (nationally-funded) school 3 local authorities 1 secondary unit/visiting service
'Total Communication' (Spoken English with Sign Supported English and some use of BSL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Description as for the monolingual version of Total Communication, but with some use of BSL, as deemed appropriate (this may be limited by staff capacity) 	12 local authorities (including 3 secondary units) 1 prim/sec school 1 primary school

As with any other bilingual framework, a sign-bilingual approach requires the provision of rich linguistic resources in both languages, including staff competency in assessment of pupil linguistic aptitudes and abilities. Implementing individualised programmes entails availability of staff skilled in supporting spoken and written language development (as per the monolingual approach, above) as well as staff with similarly high levels of skill in BSL, and its development and assessment. Interpreting skills are also required by those providing in-class English/BSL interpretation in mainstream. As described above, the extent to which individual TC services in this category manifest characteristics of sign-bilingualism, is unclear from the available data.

3.3. 'NO SPECIFIC POLICY'

Between 2000 and 2005 almost a fifth of Scottish deaf children were supported by services declaring 'no specific policy' in relation to language and communication; most noted that they aim to meet the individual requirements of all children with additional needs.

3.4. REGIONAL VARIATION

A recent article used ADPS data to explore the relationship between language approaches with individual pupils, service policies and staff qualifications. While the article indicated that local authorities reported a desire to provide a child-centred approach to language(s)/ language mode(s) use with individual children, it demonstrated regionally-variable spectrums of choice in terms of resources available. One of its conclusions was that the breadth of linguistic options available to deaf children and their families may have been determined more by the region in which they were educated than by their specific linguistic requirements (Grimes et al, 2007:546). Later sections in this report will explore this issue further.

4.

LINGUISTIC ACCESS FOR DEAF STUDENTS IN FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

The notion of 'language approach' is less relevant in further and higher education, in so far as it is generally assumed that the whole linguistic access spectrum, from amplification to BSL/English interpretation, will be available to any student who is accepted by any institution. There are currently 43 colleges offering further and higher education courses and 20 HE institutions, funded by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

Historically, a small number of institutions in Scotland were resourced to provide specialist access services for deaf students (eg James Watt college in Greenock and Telford college in Edinburgh). Policy and legislation over recent years has raised expectations that all institutions will provide whatever is required by an individual student, so that they are not disadvantaged by their deafness in accessing the course and institution of their choice.

As will be explored later, it is rare, in Scotland, that a deaf student will be offered the kind of specialist teacher (or tutor) support he or she may have received from a teacher of deaf children at school, whether or not they may have lower linguistic skills than their peers.

Students will usually be expected to be aware of, and to be able to make choices between, a range of options involving assistive technology and/or specialist Language Support Professionals.

A recent study, funded by the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (now the Scottish Funding Council), explored the linguistic access situations of deaf students in Scottish higher education in 2004. The report was published in 2006 (Brennan et al, 2005). Chapter 12 of the report provides an overview of the complexities of access strategies and key linguistic access issues (op cit: 148-177). The description is presented within a linguistic rather than a medical framework: by first or preferred language and shared experience rather than by level of hearing loss.

Simplistically speaking, linguistic access options can be summarised as in Table 3. How far these options are available in Scotland is explored within sections on further and higher education.

TABLE 3 Linguistic access options which may be required by deaf students in further and higher education

Options for all deaf students	Specific options for students whose first/preferred language is BSL	Specific options for students whose first/preferred language is English or another spoken language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use of electronic notetaker ■ Use of manual notetaker ■ Use of speech to text reporter ■ Specialist tutorial support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use of BSL/English interpreter ■ Service of bilingual professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Personal amplification (hearing aids, cochlear implants, radio aids) ■ Environmental amplification (soundfield systems, infra-red and loop systems) ■ Good acoustic conditions ■ Lipreading ■ Use of lipspeaker ■ Use of Sign Supported English communicator

It is more than likely that the range of access provision available will be different from that which a new student left behind in school. Furthermore, as noted above, the linguistic range of provision at school level is geographically variable. Therefore the extent to which school-leavers will previously have had access to a full linguistic spectrum will also be dependent on which specialist school they went to and/or which service provided support and access at their mainstream school.

5.

THE NUMBER OF DEAF PUPILS

5.1. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT STATISTICS

The Scottish Government's ScotXed programme supports the collection of statistical information about numbers of deaf children in school education via the annual school census. The definition of the population included has changed in recent years, in response to policy and legislative developments. Up to and including 2001/2002, the population included only those who had a Record of Needs (RoN) and for whom the 'main difficulty' was deafness. In 2002/2003 the group was widened to encompass those who did not have RoNs, but who did have an Individualised Education Plan (IEP), again for whom the 'main difficulty' was deafness. In 2004, the Additional Support for Learning Act (Scotland, 2004) changed the framework within which numbers of deaf children are reported, replacing the concept of 'special educational needs' with that of 'additional support needs', and broadening the population to include all deaf pupils with specified records, whether or not deafness is their 'main difficulty'.

The Scottish Government and Learning and Teaching Scotland provide guidance on eligibility for IEPs. However, local authorities have created a variety of systems for recording additional support needs, and it is likely that this creates regional variations. For example, staged intervention systems can vary from three to five stages among authorities. Also, some are able to moderate the implementation of their particular staged systems across schools and some have not yet got moderation systems in place. In the latter cases, it is possible that there will be variations in eligibility for IEPs at individual school level. Further study will be helpful in identifying how far there are inconsistencies at both school and regional levels. National networks of Additional Support for Learning Officers and Educational Psychologists would provide useful sources of information.

In November 2005, within the new ASL framework, RoNs started to be phased out and new 'Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs)' were introduced. The School Census statistics reflect this transition period for the first time in 2006. Also, until RoNs are phased out, figures will show both RoNs and CSPs, in addition to IEPs.

These changes are likely to largely explain the significant variations in the numbers reported annually since 2000, as shown in Table 1.

5.2. ADPS STATISTICS

Section 11 provides basic information on the ADPS project, which collected statistics on deaf pupils between 2000 and 2005. The deaf pupil population was defined by the level of service received, in recognition of the fact that mild and unilateral hearing losses can sometime impact on learning (Most, 2004) and that conventional descriptors can be sometimes misleading (Brett, 2003). The target population (known as 'Group A') included all pupils who either attended a school for deaf pupils or a mainstream school with a unit for deaf pupils, or were visited by a teacher of deaf children twice a year or more.

Table 4 shows that the ADPS population was consistently higher than that identified by the, then, Scottish Executive, during 2000/2004. Even when pupils with mild and unilateral hearing loss are excluded from the ADPS data, there was still a significant gap.

Year	Scottish Executive/Scottish Government data*		ADPS data		
	Criteria for inclusion in deaf pupil population*	Total no. of deaf pupils reported	Criteria for inclusion in deaf pupil population	Total no. of deaf pupils reported (survey return rates)	Total excluding pupils with mild/unilateral deafness and non-returns/info not available
2000/1	Has Record of Needs, for which deafness is the 'main difficulty'	576	Attends school or unit for deaf children, or receives service from ToD twice a year or more	1408 (99.4%)	908
2001/2	As for 2000/1	572	As above	1379 (99.6%)	882
2002/3	Has Record of Needs or IEP, within which deafness is the 'main difficulty'	728	As above	1311 (98.6%)	835
2003/4	As for 2002/3	657	As above	1283 (87.4%) ***	751***
2004/5	As for 2002/3	639	As above	Not yet available	Not yet available
2005/6	As for 2002/3	624	n/a	n/a	n/a
2006/7 (impact of Additional Support for Learning legislation)	Has Record of Needs, Co-ordinated Support Plan or IEP, where deafness is a 'reason for support'**	837	n/a	n/a	n/a

* Figures from Scottish Government statistical publications:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education>

** There can be more than one reason for support

*** In year 4, a lower return rate and complexities over tracking pupil migrations may have caused a slight under-reporting affect

5.3. PRESENTING STATISTICS ON THE POPULATION OF DEAF CHILDREN

The variations and caveats detailed above suggest a need for care in contextualising available statistics about the number of deaf children in Scotland.

It may be that additional sources of data could be exploited: for example, statistical information from paediatric audiology clinics. It was not possible to explore this within the limits of this study, but is something to consider in future.

5.4. STATISTICS RELATING TO EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Deaf pupils perform similarly to hearing pupils in non-verbal performance intelligence tests (Marschark, 2006). However, deaf pupils have persistently under-attained educationally compared to their hearing peers (Powers et al, 1998). The situation was recently demonstrated by ADPS to be no different in Scotland (ADPS, 2006).

As there is a symbiotic relationship between language and cognition, it is reasonable to assume that good linguistic access will enable deaf pupils' achievement levels to converge with those of hearing pupils. ScotXed specifications, planned as far as 2008 (ScotXed, 2007), show that a limited number of data fields will enable exploration of factors relating to linguistic access: existence of hearing impairment; types of placement (special school, unit or mainstream); existence of 'communication adaptation'; 'sign language' as an option within 'home and additional languages'. There are no plans to include specialist subset information, such as: hearing loss levels, specific language approaches or specialist access arrangements. By contrast, since 2005, there have been a small range of linguistic access options within the field of Gaelic education, which enable exploration of extent of curricular access via Gaelic.

A large amount of ADPS data remains unexplored (see section 11 for details); funding is being sought to analyse these unexplored areas. Since this data was collected, there have been no published data on achievements of Scottish deaf pupils (a fact recently highlighted within a members' debate in the Scottish Parliament [Scottish Parliament, 2007]). As with the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) in England, it is possible for researchers to apply to access attainment data relating to Scottish pupils identified by ScotXed as hearing impaired (for details of the procedure for requesting access, see Scottish Government, 2007a).

However, neither ScotXed nor PLASC support the collection of specialised data which would enable exploration of a key range of influencing factors, such as hearing loss level etc. The nature of the systems also preclude the possibility of responding quickly to changes in specialist developments, such as rapidly changing advances in technology and advances in linguistic assessments of both BSL and English etc; it takes at least 18 months for any agreed changes to be adopted.

It had previously been hoped that ADPS would, with new funding, be able to collaborate with ScotXed by sharing relevant ScotXed data and by supplementing this with in-depth, specialist information collected through the ADPS annual survey. This would have enabled the definition of a country's population of deaf children and detailed tracking of factors influencing attainment, over time.

In England, a consortium of organisations and Universities is currently exploring the possibility of establishing just such an arrangement throughout the UK. The group includes representatives from the National Deaf Children’s Society (NDCS), the British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD), Birmingham University and University College London. A pilot project is underway in one English area, and the group hope to raise funds to begin implementing across the UK within the next year. The group are aware that a way will need to be found to ensure that the complexities of the distinctive features of the Scottish system (as well as, to a lesser extent, Wales and Northern Ireland) are fully considered and addressed.

5.5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is a need for detailed knowledge of the population of deaf pupils, in order to track the impact of relevant developments in policy, legislation, technology and linguistics. A project similar to ADPS could collaborate with ScotXed to share and complement data. It is essential that there is Scottish representation on the consortium which is currently planning UK-wide data collection.
- Consideration could be given to exploiting data on numbers of deaf children and young people held by audiology departments across Scotland.
- Consistency is needed in the criteria for opening deaf pupil IEPs among individual schools and local authorities. Investigation of the current picture across the country would be helpful. National networks of Additional Support for Learning Officers and of Educational Psychologists could be usefully exploited in such a study.
- Caution is needed in referring to currently available statistics on deaf pupils; there is a need to clearly state the definition of the group quoted.

6.

THE NUMBER OF PROFESSIONALS WHO PROVIDE LINGUISTIC ACCESS AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR DEAF PUPILS IN SCHOOLS

The Scottish Government does not routinely collect details of the numbers of specialist professionals working with deaf pupils. In order to obtain current information for this study, a questionnaire was distributed to all specialist deaf education/HI services and schools throughout Scotland. As there was also a requirement to produce information on qualifications, it was necessary to ask Heads of Services to complete a series of questions for each member of staff. Appendix 4 shows the survey questions asked.

As local authority services re-organise, the nature of deaf education services is becoming increasingly complex. Some local authorities subsume deaf education services under generic provision; in these cases, some retain a formal co-ordinator and some do not. Some subdivide provision into generic network teams across a region. Pragmatic decisions were taken as to whether subdivisions were categorised as autonomous services or not – depending on practical ease of obtaining information. In returns from some services which cover more than one category of service, it was not possible to distinguish in which specific category a teacher was located. For these situations, aggregate categories were created (eg: ‘visiting service plus resource base’).

All 40 services returned survey data on numbers of staff. We are very grateful to Heads of Services for taking the time to participate so fully in the survey. Data on qualifications was less complete, while still representing a high rate of return: two provided information on numbers only and some did not provide information on qualifications for all staff.

It was not feasible, within the time and resources available, to collect other than the most basic information about staff in the current survey, and so more detailed information from most recent ADPS data is also included where possible.

6.1. NUMBERS OF TEACHERS OF DEAF CHILDREN (ToDs)

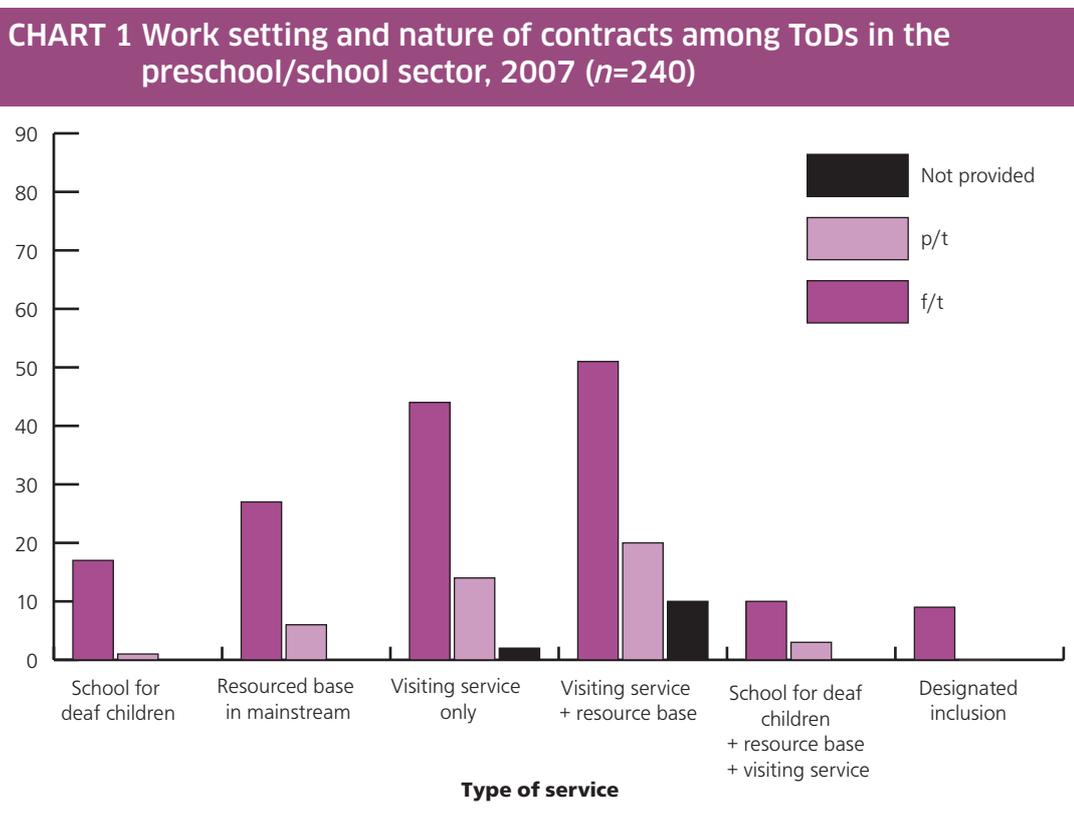
6.1.1. SCOPING STUDY SURVEY 2007 DATA

A total of 240 ToDs were reported to be working with deaf children across Scotland. As with data collected by ADPS in 2003, most of these are full time and located in visiting services (chart 1).

Information on 248 ToDs was collected in the 2003 survey. It was understood, at the time, that this represented a return rate of 82%. Thus it appears that there are fewer ToDs now than there were four years ago.

However, it may be that complexity in the developing frameworks of local Additional Support for Learning provision is causing distortion to the statistics. A high number of Learning Support Teachers (45) was reported to be working with deaf children in 2007. This is likely to reflect a move, in some areas, to more generic frameworks of provision. Eight of the 45 had obtained, or were in the process of acquiring, a specialist postgraduate qualification in deaf education. The 2007 ToD figure of 240 includes these eight.

It was clear that, in some areas, any teacher with a designated role in working with deaf children was categorised as a ToD, whether or not they had a specialist qualification; in other areas a similar teacher was classed as a Learning Support Teacher. Thus an unknown number of the remaining 37 Learning Support Teachers could conceivably have been previously categorised as unqualified ToDs.



All ToDs were reported as being hearing except four staff. Of these four, two were categorised as being deaf and two as hard of hearing. Both deaf staff, and neither hard of hearing staff, were reported as using BSL to some extent with pupils. A more detailed exploration shows that each of the four was categorised differently in their specific language use with pupils.

Deaf ToD 1: 'only or mainly uses BSL'

Deaf ToD2: 'uses both English (spoken and/or sign supported) and BSL'

Hard of hearing ToD 1: 'only or mainly uses English (both spoken and sign supported)'

Hard of hearing ToD 2: 'only or mainly uses spoken English'

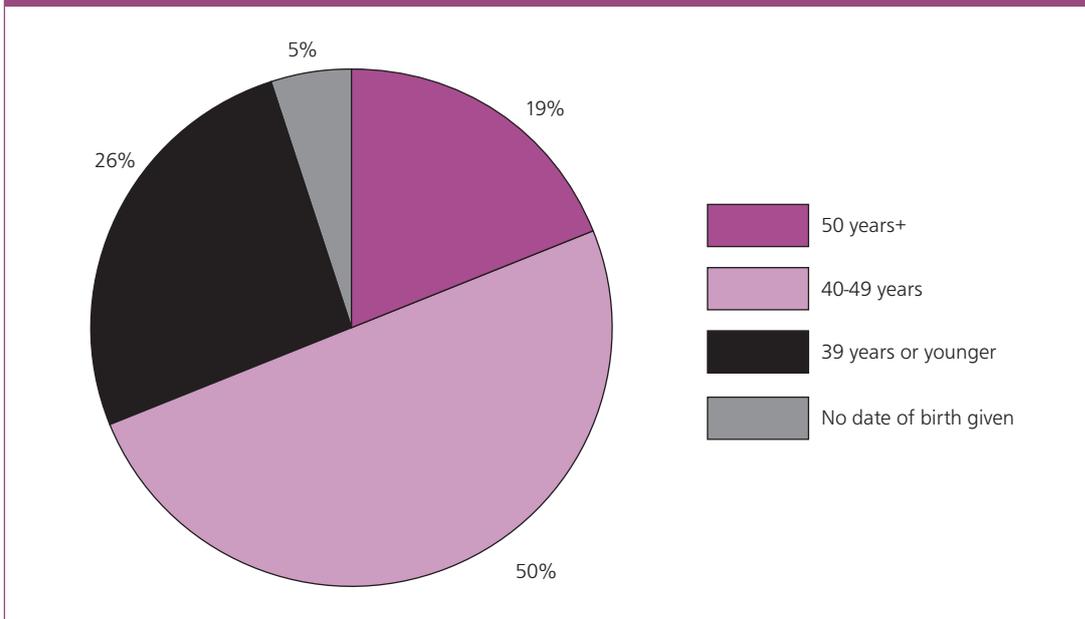
6.1.2. ADPS DATA (2003)

In 2003 ADPS received survey returns from 248 ToDs within the school sector. The vast majority were hearing. Of the rest, four were reported as being deaf, two as hard of hearing and one as having a monaural hearing loss.

As already noted, the majority of ToDs worked in visiting services and most were full-time.

Chart 2 demonstrates that, in 2003, the majority of ToDs (69%) were over 40 years old and a fifth were over 50 years old. Data was also collected about the availability of promoted post structures within the profession. Although 42% of the respondents did not answer this question, 28% reported that no promoted post structure was available to them and many others commented that structures were very limited. Both of these findings raise issues about the need to attract young teachers to the profession and about the lack of incentive available – particularly in the light of the fact that there is no financial reward for qualifying as a ToD.

CHART 2 Age range of ToDs 2003 (n=255 [including 7 based in FE colleges])



Other data collected in the 2003 ToD survey includes: caseload/class sizes; subject specialisms; ethnic background; length of time on post; promotion possibilities; qualifications held; training undertaken and various aspects of chartered teacher status.

6.1.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- There are indications that there are less ToDs than there were four years ago. However, variations in frameworks of service provision mean that it is not possible to be categorical about this. In some areas, generic titles such as 'Learning Support Teachers' have replaced the more specialist ToD title. It would be useful to monitor the implications of this, with respect to the specialist knowledge, understanding and skills required to meet linguistic access needs of deaf pupils.
- The number of deaf and hard of hearing ToDs is very small, and is less than it was four years ago. Incentives could be considered to attract more deaf teachers into the profession.
- The age profile of the ToD population in Scotland and limitations in specialist promotional structures, are causes for concern. There is a need to consider incentives to attract new teachers into the ToD profession: for example, financial incentives offered elsewhere in the UK.
- It would be useful to have updated information on ToD/pupil ratios, to explore the current extent of resourcing differences between local authorities.

6.2. NUMBERS OF OTHER PROFESSIONALS

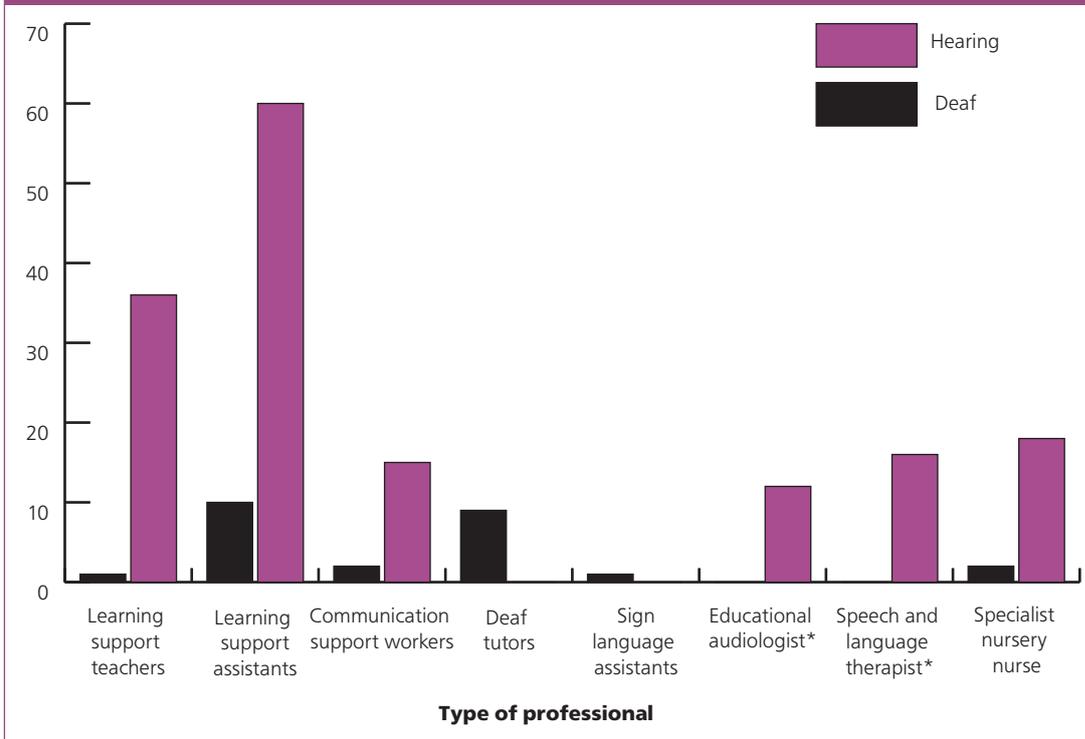
6.2.1. SCOPING STUDY SURVEY 2007 DATA

Chart 3 shows that the majority of other professionals working with deaf pupils are in generic support roles, rather than in roles which explicitly relate to linguistic access (63%, excluding nursery staff). Section 7.2 indicates what is known about the extent of specific qualifications relating to linguistic access among these learning support staff.

As noted beneath the chart, there is likely to be under-reporting of Speech and Language Therapists, because they tend to be employed, at least in part, by health boards, rather than by local authority education departments. This fact also initially affected the data reported on educational audiologists: an initial under-report was identified, and successfully addressed, because of anecdotal information received. It was not possible to similarly address the under-report of Speech and Language Therapists, within the scope of this project.

The small number of qualified educational audiologists is a cause for concern, because of the importance of audition as an access strategy for the majority of deaf children, among those who wear hearing aids as well as those who have implants. Only 12 trained staff are employed throughout Scotland, and only three of these are outwith the central belt. Although, as already noted, the cochlear implant centre provides support to implanted children across Scotland, they express concern at the regional variation in local staff who are qualified to provide necessary ongoing intensive support.

CHART 3 Numbers of 'other professionals' working with deaf pupils in Scotland, 2007 (n=182)

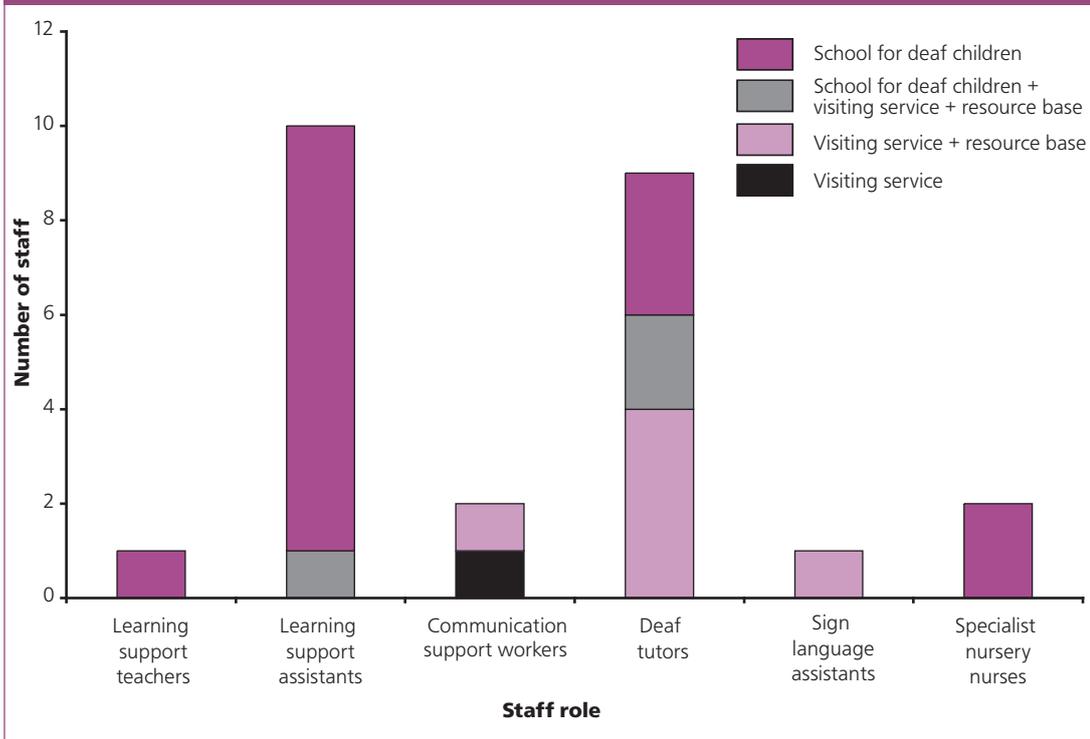


* There is likely to be some under-reporting of Speech and Language Therapists

**A further 2 ToDs are in the early stages of Educational Audiology training, and have been included in the ToD numbers

Thirteen percent (25) of the total number of these other professionals are deaf. Chart 4 shows the breakdown of this number in terms of the type of service they work for. It shows that the majority (60%) work in schools for deaf children; only one works for a solely visiting service.

CHART 4 Location of deaf 'other professionals' working with deaf pupils in 2007 (n=25)



6.2.2. ADPS DATA ON THE RANGE OF SPECIALIST SUPPORT AND ACCESS PROFESSIONALS (INCLUDES ToDs) (2004/2005)

ADPS did not collect head-count data on professionals other than ToDs. However, detailed data was collected, on an individual pupil basis, on the types and qualifications of all professionals, within visiting services, who provided access and support to pupils, and on the number of hours supplied.

As yet, little of these data is explored. For the purposes of this study, it was necessary to narrow the focus to pupils with the greatest degree of hearing loss in the most recent year of data collection, in order to analyse and present most relevant data within the resources available. Information was provided on 241 out of the 307 pupils in this category for whom returns were completed in 2004/2005.

As respondents completed details of the titles of professionals in an open field (as opposed to tick-box choices) a variety of titles were used for the same role (eg Learning Support Assistant; Additional Needs Assistant; SEN Assistant etc). It was necessary to manually conflate these titles to provide a clear picture.

Also, when viewing findings from this data, it is important to note that a number of the same kind of professional may provide support to the same pupil; one pupil may, for example, have support from 3 ToDs. At the same time, one professional is likely to provide support to more than one pupil. Therefore this data cannot be directly compared with the 2007 'headcount' survey data. Bearing these complications in mind, Table 5 illustrates the range of professionals who provided linguistic access and support to severely deaf/profoundly deaf/cochlear implanted pupils who received a visiting service in 2004/2005 (ie, staff working with pupils in special schools for deaf pupils are not included). It shows that ToDs were the professionals most likely to provide a service, followed by Speech and Language Therapists and then Learning Support Assistants.

The table also shows the average number of hours of access/support provided per pupil per term (assuming a term length of 13 weeks). Although Speech and Language Therapists provided one of the highest instances of service, the table confirms, as would be expected, that they spend a relatively small amount of time with pupils. Their role is more likely to be in the form of one to one assessment outside of the classroom. As a contrast, the highest average number of hours was provided by the Learning Support Assistants, who are likely to be providing an in-class service. As with the 2007 survey, the qualifications reported of these staff, detailed in Section 7.2, below, may give some indication of the extent to which the role specifically addresses linguistic access issues.

An in-class service is also most likely to be provided by the relatively small numbers of Communication Support Workers and Specialist Support Assistants, who also provided relatively high numbers of hours of support. ToDs may provide a combination of in-class and 1:1 or small group tuition: they show high levels of instances of service as well as high number of hours.

6.2.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- At present there are only 12 trained educational audiologists covering 32 local authorities in Scotland. There is a particular need to consider the relevant capacity of services outwith the central belt.
- The majority of professionals, other than ToDs, who work with deaf pupils, have generic 'learning support' titles. More information is needed in order to ascertain the nature and extent of specific linguistic access and support provided by them. Section 7.2 provides information on specific qualifications.
- The majority of the 25 'other professionals' deaf staff are located in schools for deaf children. There is a particular lack of deaf staff within visiting services who provide services to deaf children in mainstream schools. This is also an area for further consideration.

Table 5 Quantity of additional linguistic support/access provided by educational professionals to severely/profoundly deaf and cochlear implanted pupils who received a specialist visiting service in 2004/2005 (n=241*)

Job title	Number of instances of staff providing support/access**	Average hours per instance of support/access per term
BSL Interpreter	1	13
Communication Support Worker	9	155.6
Deaf Assistant	1	18
Deaf Sign Language Assistant	2	13
Educational Audiologist	22	2
Educational Psychologist	21	1.6
Learning Support (level unspecified)	1	39
Learning Support Assistant	80	157
Learning Support Teacher	18	46.6
Nursery Nurse	8	65 (5 hours per week)
Sign Language Assistant	3	12
Signing tutor	6	19.5
Specialist Nursery Nurse	2	42
Specialist Support Assistant	8	54.75
Speech & Language Assistant	1	3.6
Speech & Language Therapist	114	10.25
Teacher	7	52
ToD	203	82.78
ToD: CI team	11	2

* 66 other questionnaire returns for pupils in these hearing loss categories did not provide information on access/support

**Caution: An 'instance' represents a commitment of service by one professional to one pupil in 2004/2005. The instances do not equate to the number of pupils (more than one of the same type of professionals may have worked with an individual pupil). The totals for each category of professional are also likely to be higher than the actual number in that category, as one member of staff may have worked with a number of pupils.

7.

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF PROFESSIONALS WHO PROVIDE LINGUISTIC ACCESS AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR DEAF PUPILS IN SCHOOLS

‘SCoD urges the Scottish Executive and employers to ensure that all who work directly with deaf young people have high-level linguistic skills so that full communication can take place.’

SCoD Position Statement on Education (SCoD, 2005)

7.1. QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS OF DEAF CHILDREN (ToDs)

Recent legislation (Scotland, 2005) has made it compulsory for teachers who work ‘wholly or mainly’ with deaf pupils to have an appropriate qualification. Implementation guidelines to local authorities define the qualification in terms of a range of competencies (Scottish Government, 2007b).

Competencies relating directly to linguistic access include: basic audiology; linguistic assessment; language and literacy development; linguistic potential and barriers to development; understanding of key differences between BSL and English and between modes of both languages; knowledge of key linguistic strategies.

Information on possession of postgraduate qualification in deaf education (or equivalent) was given for 231 of the 240 ToDs (including the 8 qualified Learning Support Teachers). 159 of these possessed a specialist ToD postgraduate qualification (or equivalent) and a further 9 were reported to be working towards the qualification. This amounted to a total of 168 (73%) qualified or in training. This is the same percentage as that reported in 2003. However, it may be that there are more staff enrolled on ToD training courses, as the survey did not ask for details of current training – the 9 who provided this information volunteered it as additional detail.

Also, given the age profile skew towards older staff, as already noted, there is an unknown number of recently-employed staff who have replaced those who have retired. One service indicated that this was a particular reason why a relatively high proportion of staff were in training rather than qualified.

7.1.1. ToD QUALIFICATIONS RELATING TO DEAF CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO SPOKEN/WRITTEN LANGUAGE

It can be taken for granted that most ToDs have English language skills to at least Higher level (initial teacher training demands this level of English, although).

It can also be assumed that those who have a specialist ToD qualification will also have received training in basic audiology and in deaf children's English language development and assessment. Educational Audiologists will obviously have a higher degree of knowledge, understanding and skills in audiology.

7.1.1.1. SCOPING STUDY SURVEY 2007 DATA

The level of skills and knowledge in these areas which is normally part of a postgraduate qualification in deaf education can be assumed for 73% of 231 ToDs at the moment (bearing in mind that 9 of these are in training).

One ToD reported a professional qualification in notetaking for deaf people, compared to two in 2003.

7.1.1.2. ADPS DATA (2003)

The ADPS 2003 teacher survey additionally asked for details of qualifications and current training in 'language/linguistics' and for details of other areas relating to accessing spoken language (audiology, notetaking and lipreading/teaching lipreading).

- Only 3 ToDs reported specific qualifications/training in language/linguistics – in the form of delivery of spoken language assessments (Derbyshire Language Scheme and Reynell Development Language Scales). One ToD reported a qualification in teaching speech-reading and 13 had additional training/qualifications in audiology. Two reported specialist qualifications in notetaking. However, it is important to bear in mind that:
 - The data do not include details of previous un-certificated training;
 - Staff may often 'cascade' training (eg in use of language assessments or hearing aid technology);
 - As explained above, training in key areas is usually included in specialist ToD training.

It is also the case that other professionals are likely to specialise in specific aspects and collaborate with ToDs: for example, speech and language therapists in assessments and monitoring of spoken language development.

Qualifications in sign systems which support spoken English

Information was reported on qualifications in the use of manually coded systems, which 'borrow' individual signs from BSL, but not grammatical features, to support spoken English. Respondents were asked to specify the sign system and to detail qualifications and current training.

There are a limited number of types of accreditation in the use of manually coded English systems – the training for which is usually of short duration (each course of the main training provider cited, WPSE, is 12 hours in length, over a period of three days). 18 teachers reported some level of certification in the limited number of available systems. Table 6 shows the break-down of the type of system.

Table 6 Sign System qualifications of ToDs in 2003		
Type of system	Key features of system	Number of ToDs with a qualification/current training in this system
Signed English	Spoken English with the addition of standardised markers, generated signs and finger spelling to reproduce the components of grammatical English. Information available at: http://www.wpse.org.uk/	10 (almost all quoted WPSE certification)
Paget Gorman	A specific version of signed English. Information available at: http://www.pgss.org/	5
Makaton	A basic, staged, communication programme of signs and symbols to accompany speech, designed primarily for use with hearing children and adults with learning difficulties. Information available at: http://www.makaton.org	2
Both Makaton and Paget Gorman		1

Almost two-thirds of these staff (11) were concentrated in two local authorities and one school for deaf children. The remaining seven teachers were the only representatives of their services to report sign system qualifications. Only one teacher out of the eleven ‘no specific policy’ services had one of these qualifications – in Signed English.

It may be that staff have ‘cascaded’ training to colleagues; as already noted, training courses in manually-coded English tend to be of limited length, and are always based on English, which is most likely to be the first language of the trainee. Therefore, there may be some level of under-reporting of knowledge and skills.

7.1.2. ToD QUALIFICATIONS RELATING TO DEAF CHILDREN’S ACCESS TO BSL

‘Opportunities should be provided for staff to obtain education and appropriate qualifications in BSL. In situations where a teacher without the relevant linguistic skills is nevertheless employed, appropriate interpreting arrangements should be put in place.’

SCoD Position Statement on Education (SCoD, 2005)

BSL is a full, visual-spatial language in its own right, as distinct from the sign systems, listed above, which support spoken English, and which require a small number of hours of training.

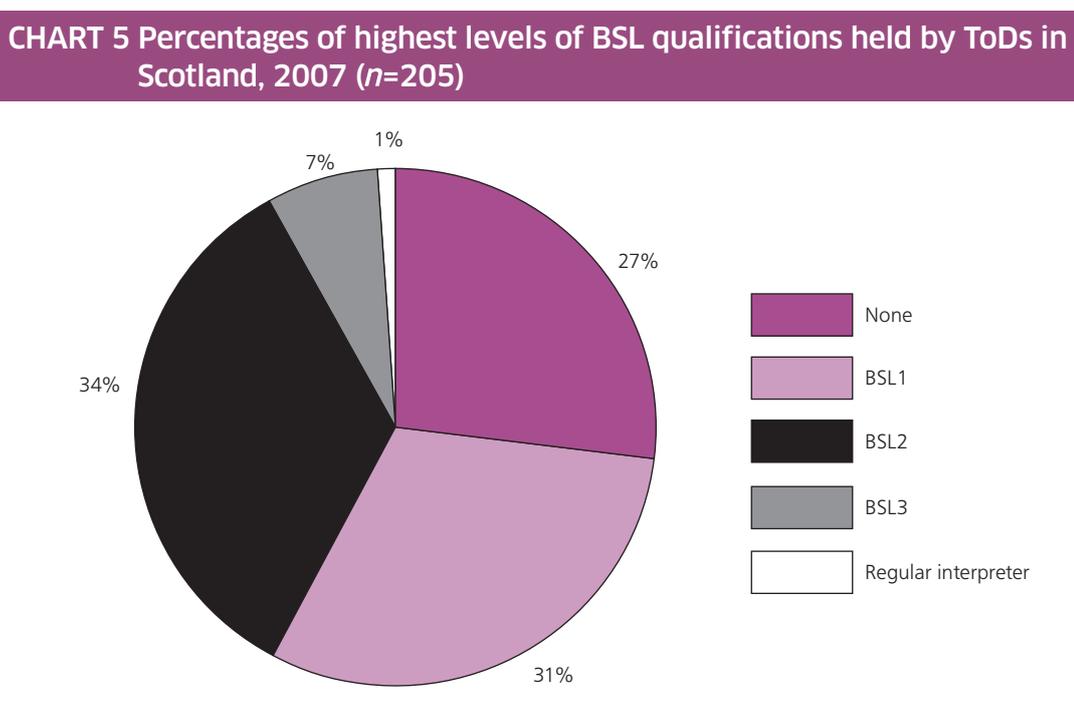
Appendix 3 provides details of accreditation in BSL language fluency and in BSL/English interpreting. As can be seen, the lengths of training required for completion through to level 3 (advanced) fluency vary from 260 hours (CACDP) to 360 hours (BDA). See also section 15.2.2., which addresses the availability of provision at advanced levels.

The ToD qualification guidelines to local authorities specify that all teachers of deaf children should hold a minimum of Level 1 (Foundation) BSL, specifying that ‘teachers working with learners who use BSL (should) become qualified at an appropriate level in the language. This may be to level 1, 2 or 3, as appropriate’ (op cit: para 17). There is therefore an implication, in the guidance, that it may sometimes be appropriate for a teacher to have a low level of competence in the language of access of the pupil they are supporting. The NDCS and the BDA are both currently campaigning for staff who provide direct linguistic support to deaf pupils to be qualified to a minimum of Level 3 (NDCS, 2007; BDA, 2007).

The BDA is considering developing specifically tailored BSL curricula (language and linguistics) for professionals working with deaf children, including teachers.

7.1.2.1. SCOPING STUDY SURVEY 2007 DATA

Respondents provided details on BSL qualifications of 233 ToDs (including the 8 qualified Learning Support Teachers). Chart 5 shows that 8% have accredited advanced of fluency at level 3, and a further three are registered interpreters. None was reported to have Level 4. This is double the percentage of advanced level ascertained in 2003. However, just over a quarter have no qualifications in BSL and a further two thirds have maximum of basic or intermediate level of fluency. It may be that some with intermediate qualifications have higher levels of fluency which have not yet been examined and accredited, due to shortages of training courses.



7.1.2.2. ADPS DATA (2003)

While four years old, ADPS data provides more depth of information about qualifications and more possibilities for cross-referencing with service and pupil data. Table 7, uses ADPS data to explore the relationship between service policies and levels of BSL of teachers of deaf children in 2003. See Appendix 1 for explanations of the policy categories. Overall, out of 255 responses (including 7 within FE) only 11 reported BSL qualification at advanced level, 4 of whom were BSL/English interpreters – one of the latter describing themselves as ‘lapsed’. All but one of those at advanced level were employed by services which included BSL in their language policy categorisation. Teachers in services which declared ‘no specific policy’ and in services with explicitly monolingual policies (Natural Aural, spoken/written English and TC/a) had particularly low levels of BSL.

Table 7 BSL qualifications among ToDs in specialist educational services for deaf pupils in Scotland (2003)*

Type of language policy (average no./% pupils covered in 2001/2004)	Nature of services	Highest levels of BSL qualifications* of teachers of deaf children in individual services (numbers of 2003 teacher questionnaire returns/possible number of returns)
No specific policy (240/19%)	9 local authorities††	1] 2 Stage 2 (2/2) 2] 2 Stage 1; 1 ‘lapsed interpreter’ (7/10) 3] 2 Stage 1 (3/5) 4] 1 Stage 2; 2 Stage 1 (5/9) 5] 3 Stage 1 (9/10) 6] 2 Stage 2; 1 Stage 1† (5/5) 7] 1 Stage 2; 1 Stage 1 (5/11) 8] 1 Stage 1 (1/1) 9] 0 (0/4)
	1 preschl/primary service 1 preschl/primary service	- 1 Stage 1 (1/1) - 1 Stage 1 (8/14)
Natural Aural (57/5%)	1 unit	- 0 (6/8)
	1 visiting service	- 2 Stage 2; 3 Stage 1 (9/9)
Spoken/written English monolingual (139/12%)	1 visiting service+ 1 unit**	- 1 Stage 2; 1 Stage 1 (9/9) - 0 (1/7)
	1 unit+ 1 preschl/primary visiting**	- 1 Stage 2; 1 Stage 1 (2/2) - 0 (5/5)
TC/a (57/5%)	4 local authorities††	1-2] 2 Stage 2 (5/9 - covering 2 local authorities) 3] 1 Stage 1 (1/1) 4] 2 Stage 1 (2/2)

Table 7 BSL qualifications among ToDs in specialist educational services for deaf pupils in Scotland (2003)* – continued

Type of language policy (average no./% pupils covered in 2001/2004)	Nature of services	Highest levels of BSL qualifications* of teachers of deaf children in individual services (numbers of 2003 teacher questionnaire returns/possible number of returns)
TC/c (567/45%)	11 local authorities†† 1 unit 1 school 1 school	1] 2 Stage 2; 8 Stage 1† (12/13) 2] 2 Stage 2; 2 Stage 1† (5/5) 3] 1 Stage 3; 3 Stage 2; 1 Stage 1† (13/13) 4-6] 2 Stage 3; 3 Stage 2; 8 Stage 1† (17/18 – covering 3 local authorities) 7] 2 Stage 2; 4 Stage 1† (9/11) 8] 2 Stage 2; 12 Stage 1† (22/25) 9] 1 interpreter; 1 Stage 3; 5 Stage 2; 1 Stage 1 (11/11) 10] 1 Stage 1 (1/1) 11] 2 Stage 2; 2 Stage 1 (7/7) - 1 Stage 2 (1/1) - 1 Stage 3; 4 Stage 2; 2 Stage 1† (17/17) - 2 Stage 2 (4/8)
BSL/English bilingual (192/15%)	3 local authorities†† 1 school 1 unit	1] 1 interpreter; 2 Stage 2; 2 Stage 1 (8/13) 2] 1 interpreter; 4 Stage 1 (9/9) 3] 1 Stage 1 (1/1) - 7 Stage 2†; 7 Stage 1† (15/19) - 2 Stage 3; 2 Stage 2†; 2 Stage 1 (8/8)

* 'Stages' equate to the CACDP levels as detailed in Appendix 1

** both services joined by + are located in the same local authority

† at least one of these is in training for the next level of qualification

†† indicates that the policy covers all the specialist educational provision for deaf children in that local authority

Table from Grimes et al, 2007:544

7.1.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- More detail is needed on the national picture regarding specific training and qualifications relating to linguistic assessments and language planning (both spoken language and BSL).
- A focus is needed, at both national and local authority levels, on the generally low levels of BSL qualifications among ToDs, and on the wide geographical variation, which indicates variation in linguistic choice.
- There is a need for the Scottish Government to re-consider the implication, in the competency framework guidance for the mandatory ToD qualification, that it may sometimes be appropriate for local authorities to employ ToDs who have low levels of fluency in BSL, when supporting a pupil who uses BSL.

- Few teachers in few services have any form of qualification in English-based sign systems. Yet there is widespread use of Sign Supported English (ie within the 'T/Ca' and 'T/Cb'. Services in table 7) and some reported use of Signed English. There appears to be a need for more study on the use of such systems in Scotland: for example, the extent to which the use of SSE may be related to limited availability of advanced levels of BSL training, rather than being a linguistic strategy. There also needs to be guidance on relevant training and qualifications, appropriate to the application of the system as a specific strategy.

7.2. QUALIFICATIONS OF OTHER PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH DEAF PUPILS

7.2.1. SCOPING STUDY SURVEY 2007 DATA

BSL qualifications

Chart 6 shows the highest levels of BSL qualification of each type of professional, other than ToDs, who work with deaf pupils in schools. Registration status as a BSL/English interpreter is classed as the highest level, although it also indicates additional skills in interpreting (see Appendix 3).

As with the data on ToDs, above, these data should be seen in the context of:

- The fact that information on current training was not specifically requested;
- The paucity of BSL training opportunities at advanced level.

Bearing these factors in mind, the level of BSL qualification among staff is generally low, as it is with ToDs. Out of 173 staff:

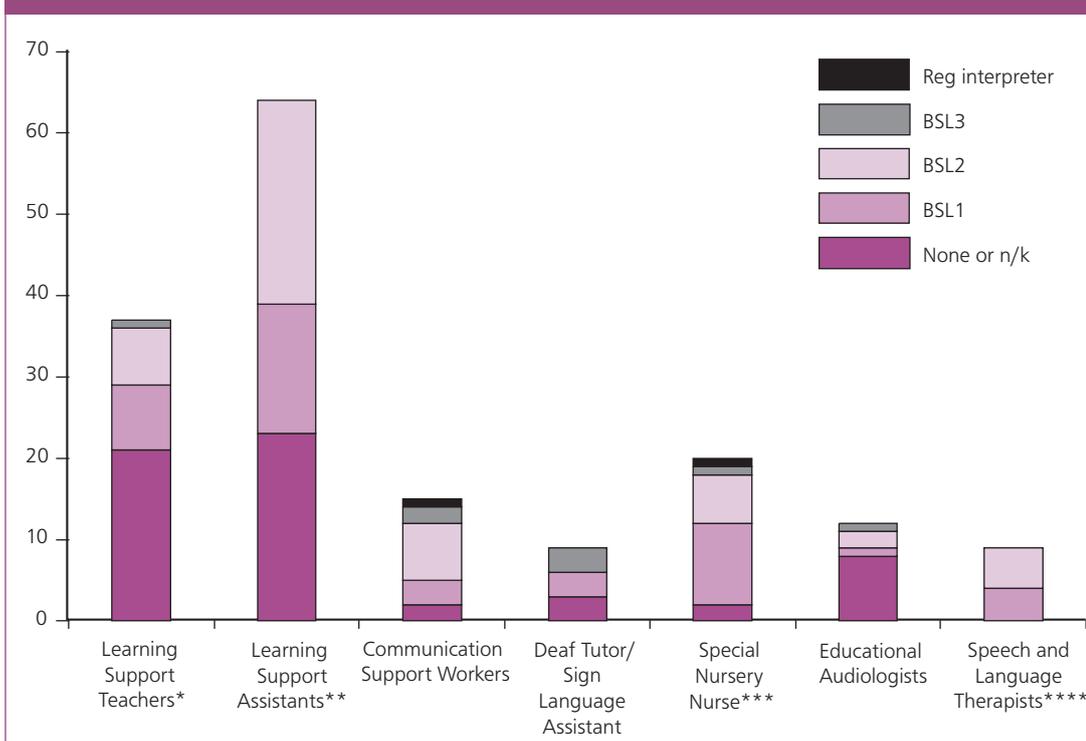
- Two are registered BSL/English interpreters (one Communication Support Worker and one specialist nursery nurse);
- Eight have advanced level 3: a Learning Support Teacher; 2 Communication Support Workers; 3 Deaf Tutors; a specialist Nursery Nurse and an Educational Audiologist.

The generally low levels have significance in relation to the relatively high numbers of Learning Support teachers and assistants working with deaf pupils, as noted above, and especial significance for those working directly with pupils who use BSL. Of particular note are the following details, which include additional relevant information on work setting and language used:

- 58% of the 37 Learning Support Teachers (excluding the 8 counted as ToDs) have no BSL qualifications. Of the twenty who work in schools for deaf children, eighteen have levels 1 or 2 BSL qualification, and one has level 3. Among the seventeen who work in other settings, none report that they are currently using BSL and three (18%) have basic levels (maximum level 2)
- 77% (10) of the Communication Support Worker staff have maximum level 2 BSL. As at least 82% (14) use BSL to some extent in their work with deaf pupils, and are likely to provide some amount of BSL/English interpretation, this is of concern. The percentage may actually be higher than this, as information on language was not provided on the three remaining staff. See also later sections on Communication Support Workers (sections 10.2.4 and 15.5)

- As has already been demonstrated, Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) provide a high amount of in-class support for deaf pupils. The title alone does not indicate the nature of any linguistic access/support provided, nor the amount of direction they may receive from a specialist professional, such as a ToD. There are indications that, in 2007, a higher proportion of staff in this role have qualifications in basic levels of BSL competency than was the case in 2005. However, no LSAs in either 2005 or 2007 were reported to have BSL qualifications above Level 2 (although two in 2007 were reported to be training for advanced/interpreting level at Heriot Watt University and one in training for level 3). Meanwhile, 39% (27) of the LSAs currently use BSL with deaf pupils and a further 13% are reported to use SSE (language information was not provided for 33%). Again there are likely to be a number of these who are expected to provide BSL/English interpretation (see also 10.2.3, below)
- As noted earlier, there is likely to be a significant under-reporting of Speech and Language Therapists. Just over half (9) of the 17 reported, have either a level 1 or a level 2 BSL qualification

CHART 6 Proportions of highest levels of BSL qualifications held by 'other professionals' working with deaf pupils in Scotland, 2007 (n=173)



* 54% (20) of the Learning Support Teachers are in schools for deaf children. The 8 Learning Support Teachers with a postgraduate diploma in deaf education were excluded, as they were counted within the ToD total.

** One of the level 2 staff is training for level 3 and two for advanced level/interpreting

*** One of the level 2 staff is training for advanced level/interpreting

**** There is likely to be some under-reporting of Speech and Language Therapists

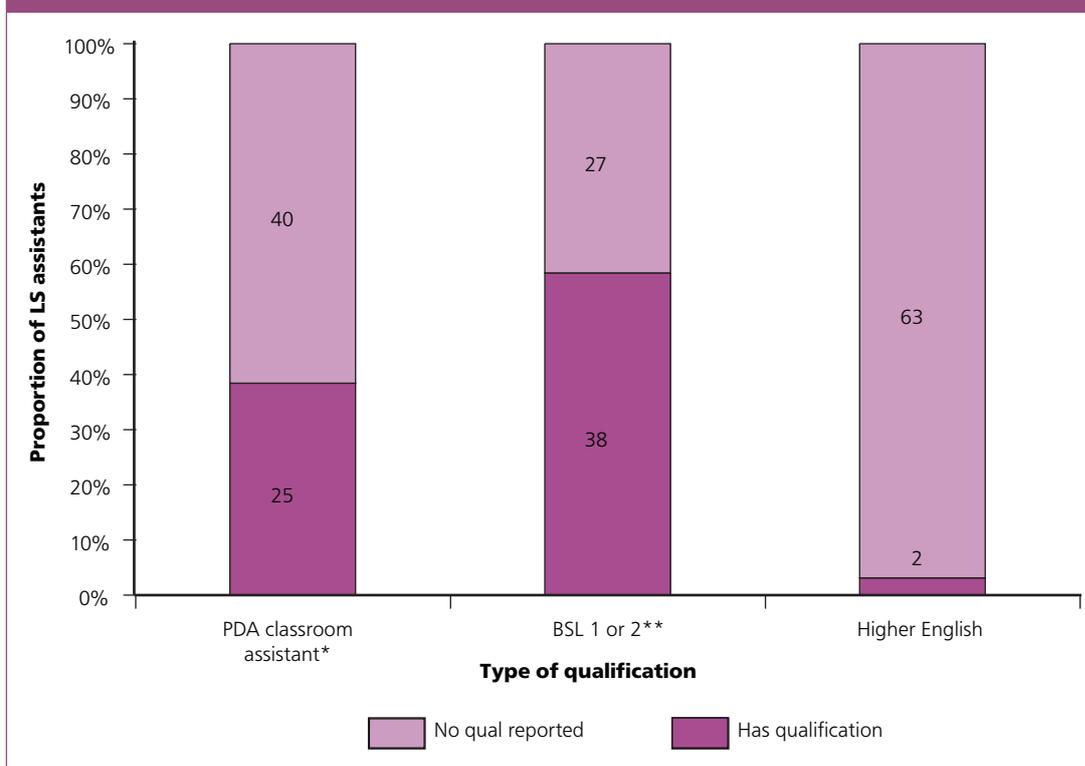
Other Qualifications: Learning Support Teachers (LSTs)

Again, it should be borne in mind that that 8 LSTs were counted as ToDs, in this report, because of their postgraduate qualifications in deaf education. Of the remaining 37, in addition to the BSL qualifications noted above, 11 of the LSTs reported postgraduate diplomas in Special Educational Needs (or equivalent). So, there is little indication of specialist qualifications and experience relating to linguistic access among LSTs – particularly among those working in mainstream settings.

Other qualifications: Learning Support Assistants (LSAs)

38% of the 65 LSAs have an SQA Professional Development Award for classroom assistants. Just over a quarter of them have no BSL qualification and 97% are not reported to have Higher English, although a significant proportion of these were 'not known' responses. A summary of this is provided in Chart 7. In addition, 2 reported nursery nurse qualifications and one a BSc.

CHART 7 Qualifications of Learning Support Assistants who work with deaf pupils in Scotland, 2007 (n=65)



* Two of the unqualified staff were reported to be in training for the PDA

**One of the Level 2 staff was reported to training for level 3 and two for advanced level/interpreting

Other qualifications: Communication Support Workers

In addition to the BSL qualifications, 4 were reported to hold the PDA for classrooms assistants. None was reported to have Higher English.

Other qualifications: Deaf Tutors (+ 1 Deaf Sign Language Assistant)

In addition to BSL qualifications, the following qualifications were reported:

- 3 of the 10 staff reported qualifications as Sign Language Tutors, one of whom also reported a diploma in training BSL tutors;

- 1 accreditation as a BSL assessor and a certificate in counselling;
- 1 Edexcel qualification in Communication Support Work;
- 2 PDA qualifications for classroom assistants.

It is likely that the impact of recent injection of funding into tutor training will be noticeable among this group.

Other qualifications: Specialist Nursery Nurses

In addition to BSL qualifications, the following qualifications were reported among the 20 staff:

- 3 PDA qualifications for classroom assistants;
- 2 Higher English;
- 3 HNC in Childcare and Education;
- 1 HNC Supporting Special Learning Needs;
- 1 SNEB Certificate in Childcare

There were no details of training for Educational Audiologists or Speech and Language Therapists, other than the specific professional training and BSL qualifications already mentioned.

7.2.2. MOST RECENT ADPS DATA (2004/2005)

As explained above, the ADPS data on support provided to individual pupils does not yet allow for a headcount of staff. However, it is still possible to get a picture of the range of qualifications among staff who provided linguistic access/support during the five years of the project.

ADPS Teacher Survey data has already been explored, above, in relation to ToD qualifications. ADPS data on Speech and Language Therapists (SALTs) qualifications, shows that, as with the 2007 data, they are usually employed by the health service; therefore the detail of their qualifications was not necessarily available to ToD respondents in the ADPS pupil survey. Often the phrase 'appropriate qualification' would be entered. However, some references were made to SALT graduate and postgraduate qualifications. In addition, one SaLT was reported as having a 'Certificate in BSL/English Interpreting Studies' and there were two incidences of BSL Level 2 and one of BSL Level 1.

Table 8 show ADPS information on qualifications of a selection of other staff who provided significant levels of support/access to severely deaf/profoundly deaf/cochlear implanted pupils in 2004/2005. These data do not include staff who work in schools for deaf children. Again the totals do not necessarily represent total number of staff, as the same member of staff may appear twice (as having provided a service to more than one pupil).

As with the 2007 information, this data shows little evidence of qualification relating specifically to linguistic access for deaf pupils, among Learning Support Teachers and Assistants, apart from a small number of BSL qualifications at basic and intermediate levels of language fluency.

The title 'Communication Support Workers' (CSW) more clearly suggests a specific, specialised access service. However, as with the 2007 data, it is of concern that there is only one instance of a CSW who is training in interpreting skills, and none of the others have qualifications above intermediate level in BSL language fluency. It is likely that attendance on an audiology module provided training in basic technical support for pupils who use audition for access (for example, maintenance of amplification equipment etc). There is no evidence of notetaker qualifications.

Table 8 Qualifications of specific access/support staff who provided a service to profoundly deaf/severely deaf/cochlear implanted pupils who received a visiting service in 2004/2005 Learning Support Assistants (n=80*)

Qualification	Instances of qualification
BSL Stage 1	5
BSL Stage 2	6
Experience in school for SLD	1
HNC in child care	2
HNC Supporting Special Learning Needs	2
In service delivered by service for sensory impaired	1
NNEB	1
no formal qualifications	1
Not known	2
Nursery Nurse	1
PDA	7
Qualified Teacher	1
Communication Support Workers (n=9*)	
Qualification	Instances of qualification
Audiology module	4
BSL Stage 2	8
NDCS qualification	3
SASLI registered trainee interpreter	1
Speech & Language therapy	4
West of Scotland Deaf Children's Society 'support of deaf child'	1
Learning Support Teachers (n=18*)	
Qualification	Instances of qualification
SEN qualifications	1
Diploma in support for learning	3
Deaf Education Module	2
Inclusive practice certificates	1
Appropriate qualification	1
Teaching diploma	1
Nursery Nurses (n=8*)	
Qualification	Instances of qualification
BSL Stage 1	3
BSL Stage 2	3
NNEB/SSNEB	6
Specialist knowledge of deaf children	1

* As with table 5, these totals represent the number of commitments of service provided by one professional to one pupil throughout 2004/2005

7.2.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is a need for an exploration of the specific nature of in-class linguistic access provided to deaf pupils by Learning Support staff and by staff known as Communication Support Workers across Scotland. It would seem helpful to have clearer and more consistent role definitions, alongside recommended specialist qualifications and training, which distinctly match the specialist nature of the posts.

8.

PRE-SCHOOL ISSUES: INFORMED CHOICE AND ASSESSMENTS

8.1. BACKGROUND

It is generally agreed that early childhood is a critical period for language development, and parents of deaf children report that choice about language and communication is one of the most important decisions they have to make (DfES, 2006:27). Deaf infants, like hearing infants are 'little linguists' (Brennan, 1999). SCoD has position papers on preschool as well as on school education, both of which stress the importance of linguistic access: 'The key to early support should be seen as linguistic access' (SCoD, 2005).

The advent of Universal Newborn Hearing Screening (UNHS) means that professionals are in contact with families when babies are as young as a few weeks old. At this age, 'knowledge about the deaf child's strengths and weaknesses as a language learner is simply too limited to allow an exclusive choice for either signed or spoken language' (Knors, 2007). The implication of this statement is that, therefore, it would be beneficial to provide a rich environment of both sign and spoken languages after diagnosis.

Also, a series of recent developments have increased the potential for more deaf children to develop language at the same rate as their hearing peers:

- early diagnosis following the roll-out of UNHS (both spoken and signed language development);
- developments in cochlear implantation – more sophisticated devices and increased possibilities for implanting at earlier ages (spoken language development);
- resources released following the recognition of BSL as a minority language (signed language development).

However, recommending that both signed and spoken languages are pro-actively offered to families of newly diagnosed deaf babies remains controversial; some of the main arguments can be summarised as follows:

On one hand, there are arguments that:

- Early diagnosis and early fitting of hearing aids/early cochlear implantation enables greater access to spoken language than ever before. Therefore audition should be maximised, without a need to introduce BSL, to give the best chance for the development of age-appropriate spoken language.
- Over 90% of deaf babies are born to hearing parents and therefore the main language at home for the vast majority is English, or, in a minority of cases, another spoken language.
- There are not the resources available to provide a rich environment in BSL – both in terms of hearing professionals with advanced skills and in terms of Deaf early years professionals who are native BSL users.
- English is the majority language of the country and of the curriculum, and so deaf children need to fully focus on spoken English from the start, to enable them to cope as well as they can.
- Using a sign language and identifying with other deaf people creates separation from majority culture. It is necessary to relate to hearing people in adult life at work and in accessing services, without needing to have recourse to language service professionals such as BSL/English interpreters.
- A concern that using sign language will be detrimental to the development of spoken language and to achievement of educational potential.
- Educational achievements of cochlear implanted children are generally likely to be greater than those of profoundly deaf children who do not have implants.

On the other hand, there are arguments that:

- Sign language can be naturally acquired by deaf babies at the same rate as hearing children acquire spoken language. It is not detrimental, and can be beneficial to, the development of spoken or written English (including early diagnosed children with cochlear implants).
- Deaf infants can develop a signed language even where the sign level of parents/carers starts relatively low.
- Some deaf children have greater aptitudes for sign language than for spoken language; for these children, delay in exposure to BSL will be specifically detrimental. However, it is not possible to identify these children in early infancy.
- Developing two or more languages from infancy is beneficial rather than detrimental, generally.
- Viewing BSL as a positive alternative rather than a last resort will empower a child to later make their own linguistic access choices from a position of strength. Delay in learning BSL will disadvantage this option.
- Limiting access to BSL will restrict later chances of benefiting from a natural identification with both deaf and hearing cultures, and increase likelihood of cultural isolation.
- There is new opportunity to provide BSL environments, following enhanced funding for BSL Tutor training and for production of BSL assessment and development resources.

There is UK-wide evidence that underpinning conceptualisations of deafness itself (linguistic deficit or linguistic difference) can affect not only the range of choices available to families, but the attitude with which they are presented (Young et al, 2006). Furthermore, the medical environment surrounding early diagnosis and amplification can lead to an immediate expectation of 'cure' – of 'catching it in time' - which encourages a deficit rather than a linguistic perspective (op cit).

As has already been demonstrated, language policies of local authority services vary among local authorities and staff in individual services have developed different positions in response to the above arguments. Thus, even where BSL is offered as a linguistic choice, it could be offered in a discouraging rather than encouraging way and/or the resources for supporting the family in developing the language may be so limited that it is not a realistic possibility.

Underpinning this is a positioning of BSL within a communication support context, rather than a linguistic framework, in key documentation relating to language diversity within education (Scottish Executive, 2006:13). An explicit listing of BSL as part of the 'rich diversity of language' within Scotland would provide a lead in reframing it as a language rather than as a means of remedying a deficit.

NDCS, in collaboration with Manchester University, recently produced guidelines on the provision of 'informed choice' to parents of deaf children, including language and communication choices (DfES, 2006:27).

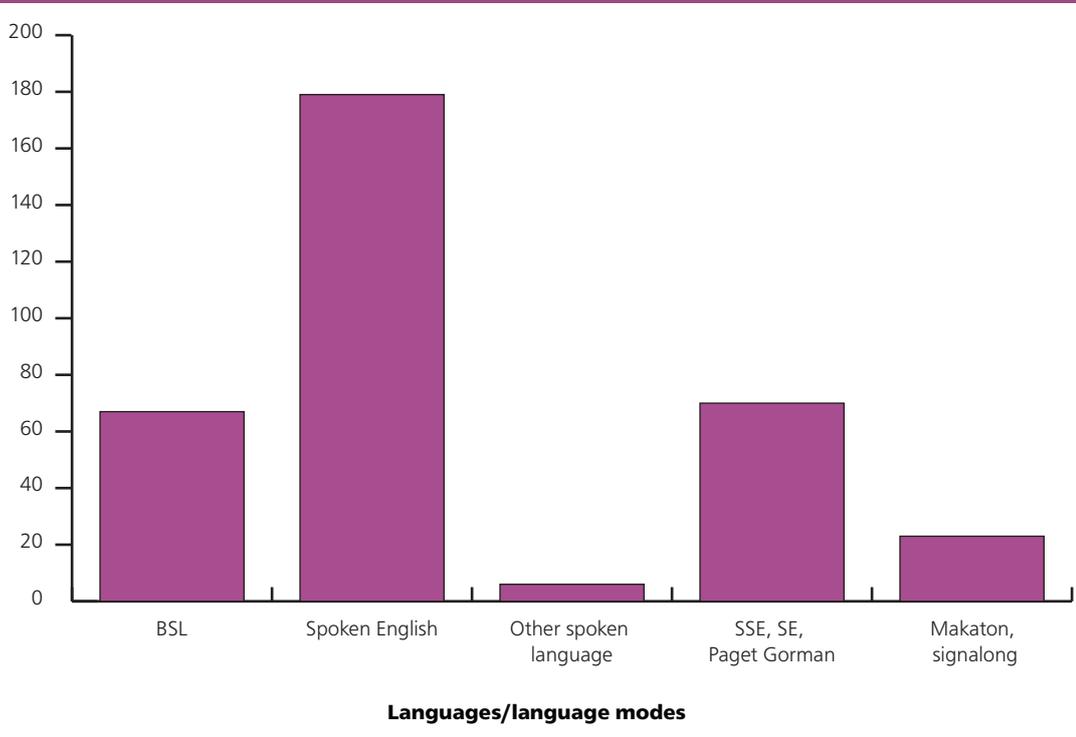
In the light of these developments and dilemmas, this section aims to explore briefly what is known about linguistic choices and assessments offered to deaf preschool children and their families in Scotland.

8.2. LANGUAGES USED WITH PRE-SCHOOL DEAF CHILDREN IN SCOTLAND (ADPS, 2001)

ADPS has data on languages used with preschool children at home and among a range of professionals working with the child. For most years, the data is unexplored. In 2001, out of 211 survey responses (88% response rate), ToDs reported that the main home language of 94% of the preschool deaf children was English. 4% of families used BSL and the others used equal levels of Urdu and Punjabi.

Records were completed for 179 deaf preschool children on the languages used by parents and professionals with the child. Table 8 shows that all of the children were exposed to English and 37% (67) of them were exposed to BSL to some extent. Data are also available on the break-down of extent of usage of individual languages/modes by each type of professional.

CHART 8 Languages/language modes used by parents and professionals with deaf preschool children in 2001 (n=179)



8.3. UNHS IN SCOTLAND

All Scottish Health Boards have been screening in the newborn period since 2005. However, a recent clinical audit of NHS Audiology Services in Scotland found that, while 'UNHS is a successful national programme', there were regional variations in service and a need for standardisation of protocols, monitoring arrangements, information and communication systems (Davis et al, 2007:36).

Crosshouse cochlear implant service reports geographical variation in the number of infant referrals coming from Health Boards, suggesting variation in referral procedures.

Although the audiology audit made reference to early intervention, SaLT services and Family Support Services, audition was not placed in the context of a spectrum of linguistic choices and permutations.

8.4. EARLY INTERVENTION

There is currently no national framework for early intervention. At the time of writing, NDCS is currently campaigning for this to be addressed.

Where babies are identified through UNHS, they are likely to receive hearing aids at around 4 months. Concerns are expressed in the audiology audit report that amplification should be offered earlier than this where there is very early confirmation of deafness (Davis et al, 2007:46).

ToDS (who may be Educational Audiologists in some areas) are most likely to be the key professionals working with parents right from the time of diagnosis. Therefore ToDs are key advisors to parents about language choices and development.

Speech and Language Therapists (SaLTs) are also key professionals, and the audiology audit reports that all 'they often formed an underpinning role in the early intervention services' (op cit: 39). The experience of one informant suggested that it is possible for there to be a degree of tension between ToDs and SaLTs, as to who is appointed as key worker.

It was reported that at least one service has a Deaf Support worker as well as Educational Audiologist who work together with families of deaf babies and toddlers. There is not a consistent provision of professional consultancy in age-appropriate BSL linguistic issues.

8.5. TRAINING, QUALIFICATIONS AND RESOURCES FOR EARLY LINGUISTIC INTERVENTION

Visiting deaf education/HI services have recently needed to boost training in the language development of newborn babies; such early stages of development were not previously part of the training for professionals. At least one person in each local authority visiting service is responsible for early intervention.

Informants reported that most services use resources from the DCFS Early Support Pack Monitoring Protocol (DCFS, 2006). The pack covers detail on stages in linguistic development. Most comprehensive detail is provided on spoken English; BSL is included, but to a lesser extent.

There is only one accredited university programme which focuses on early years and deafness, based at Oxford Brookes University but available as distance learning. It is apparently common for Scottish local authorities to fund ToDs to undertake the programme. The programme addresses spoken language development only and does not include any information on early sign language development.

In 2003, ADPS data showed that only 5 out of the 28 Scottish services which provided primary intervention for families of newly diagnosed children employed teaching staff with advanced levels of BSL fluency. As noted, a small number of services also had a Deaf native BSL-user.

8.6. EARLY COCHLEAR IMPLANTATION

The Scottish cochlear implantation programme is based at Crosshouse hospital in Kilmarnock, and staff at the centre assess babies and children from all over the country. Cochlear implantation is possible at increasingly earlier ages; babies from some areas are less than one year old when assessed.

Referrals for assessments come direct from medical consultants (and, occasionally, GPs); ToDs and SaLTs are encouraged to be involved. 'Entry stage' for eligibility is bilateral severe-to-profound sensorineural loss, profound at high frequencies (2-4Kh), where the child is receiving limited benefit from hearing aids. Most parents who come for assessment state that they would like their child to have an implant and most who are assessed fall within the entry stage criteria.

The Crosshouse team work with all services, which means collaborating with staff who work within a range of language approach policies, some of which include BSL or SSE to varying degrees (see Section 3 and Appendix 1). The implant centre emphasises spoken language development and views the introduction of BSL as not needed where a baby is diagnosed neo-natally and referred for implantation in early years. Depending on a range of factors, some families already use spoken language only. Where a child has used signing prior to implantation, the centre expects to see a (sometimes gradual) change in emphasis towards an oral/aural approach post implant, as it is felt that this will give the best chance of developing age-appropriate spoken language. Some of these children do continue to favour signing after implantation; it is understood by the centre that they already had well-established sign skills prior to implant, but whether or not they have had formal BSL assessments is dependent on local capacity.

The aforementioned audiology audit contains a section on cochlear implantation. The section reports concerns expressed by the implant centre in relation to variable language approaches in local services – stating that some local authority services have ‘a fixed policy on “mode of communication”’, which is detrimental to the development of spoken language and that parents are often disallowed choice (Davis et al, 2007:39). Denial of choice is a matter of concern. While concerns have already been raised in this report about geographical variations in linguistic choice, evidence has pointed to the lack of availability of adequately resourced sign bilingual approaches rather than to a lack of resources for spoken language development, *per se* (see also Section 3 and Appendix 1). Therefore there appears to be a need for further exploration of the ways in which ‘informed choice’ is interpreted and implemented among services.

Further exploration and clarification would be helpful, but the situation may, to some extent at least, exemplify the fact that, for various reasons, people hold opposing views among the arguments set out in 8.1., above. When there is a plea for ‘unbiased advice’, what is meant by ‘unbiased’ is not always clear (eg Davis et al, 20007:46). The way that deafness is conceptualised and the fear that developing sign language will be detrimental to the development of spoken language may well underpin a tendency to define choice as an ‘either spoken language or sign language’ scenario. It certainly can be said that there are ongoing challenges in providing rich environments in both languages. It is of interest that the Ear Foundation has developed training on working with implanted children in sign bilingual settings. The Scottish Sensory Centre hosted a training day in January 2008.

It appears that there is a pressing need to take stock of what is known, in open and honest debate, in order to make the most of unprecedented opportunities for deaf children’s linguistic and social development from diagnosis onwards – and for their access to education.

8.7. LINGUISTIC ASSESSMENTS (ADPS, 2001)

There is ADPS data on linguistic assessments used with deaf preschool children during the period 2000/2005. Much of the data are unexplored, but Table 9 shows a summary of type of assessments used in 2001. It shows that most assessments were informal and that most linguistic assessments related to spoken English. Detail is also available on the names of the formal assessments carried out and on which professionals administered each assessment.

Table 8 Types of assessment done by services with deaf preschool children in Scotland: 2001 (n=179)

	Formal	Informal	Both formal and informal	Not known	Total
Spoken English productive skills	22	64	9	3	89
Spoken English receptive skills	19	59	3	10	88
BSL productive skills	4	8	0	2	14
BSL receptive skills	5	7	0	1	13
Communicative competence	16	32	3	14	62
Development	22	6	1	30	68
Total	88	186	16	60	

According to informants, most services are now likely to use assessments from the DCSF Monitoring Protocol (DCSF, 2006). Individual heads of service report that they adapt materials from the pack and devise informal assessments using, for example, video analysis. Interviewees also reported that other formal and informal assessments are used with older preschool children

8.7.1. SPOKEN LANGUAGE ASSESSMENTS (ADPS, 2004/2005)

ADPS data shows that a wide range of assessments were used across Scotland between 2000 and 2005. As with the 2001 data in table 9, most recent unpublished data (2004/2005) shows a combination of informal and formal assessments, varying between services. Most common formal assessments reported were Reynell Developmental Language Scale; BPVS; Tait Video Analysis; Derbyshire Language Scheme and CELF UK. It would be interesting to know how the patterns have changed since the introduction of UNHS and the Monitoring Protocol mentioned above.

As already noted, there is little data on the extent of demonstrable expertise among professionals in the administration of spoken language assessments and follow-on development programmes. It is expected that SaLTs provide expertise in this area in addition to ToDs.

The Crosshouse cochlear implant team use spoken language assessments, which include both preverbal and verbal skills. Assessments are completed every 3 months of the first year and then at 18 months, 2 years, 3 years, 4 years and 5 years.

8.7.2. BSL ASSESSMENTS (SCOPING STUDY SURVEY, 2007)

The Deafness, Cognition and Language Research Centre (DCAL) produce the only formal assessments available. They are also working on standardisation of the MacArthur Communicative Development Inventory in BSL. Correspondence with DCAL indicated that few professionals in Scotland are able to administer the BSL tests:

Assessment in BSL Production

Only 2 people in Scotland are currently trained to use the BSL Production Test (out of 60 people trained throughout the UK), although a training course is due to run via SSC in January 2008. Test administrators must have at least Level 2 BSL and have been on training course.

Assessment in BSL Reception

Eight BSL Receptive Skills Tests, aimed at children aged 3-11 years, have been sold in Scotland since 1999, when the test was published, out of several hundred sold throughout the UK. There are no training requirements for this test.

SQA are currently considering future provision of a PDA in BSL language development of preschool children.

8.8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The preschool period is particularly important for language development, both signed and spoken. However, few services provide rich environments in both, and it is not universally accepted that both are needed.

Huge strides have been made in the provision of services to facilitate early development of spoken language, including significant technological advances and accredited postgraduate training for professionals, and yet concerns have been expressed that some services do not provide sufficiently rich spoken language environments. Meanwhile there is evidence of low capacity in BSL skills and in provision of BSL assessments and resources among visiting services, despite evidence of benefits in developing both languages.

There is a need to address evidence about BSL, in the contexts of standpoints based on the arguments as set out in 8.1. It is suggested that open and honest debate is needed, about the implications of local authority variations in language approach perspectives and in resources relating to fully informed linguistic choices.

- In particular, further research and discussion is needed on strategies to maximise conditions for developing both languages where deafness is diagnosed early, especially where a child receives a cochlear implant in early years.
- There is a need for Health Boards to address concerns about geographical variation in the provision of UNHS and early intervention services, as outlined in the recent clinical audit of audiology services (Davis et al, 2007).
- There is a need for more availability of BSL assessments, and more trained staff to administer them.
- It would be beneficial if a Scottish version of the Early Support Pack Monitoring Protocol could be developed and implemented within a national framework of provision. The development of a specialist PDA and the involvement of professional BSL consultants would enhance the linguistic balance of such a framework.

9.

SCHOOL YEARS: LINGUISTIC ASSESSMENTS

There is evidence that some pupils move between languages and language modes as they progress through the education system. Some studies have shown migrations from approaches using sign to oral/aural approaches (Watson, Archbold & Nikolopolous, 2006); others indicate moves from oral/aural to signing programmes (eg Akamatsu et al, 2000).

Therefore, it could again be assumed that it is beneficial to provide an environment where a spectrum of linguistic assessments are available and ongoing, so that staff can support pupil moves between languages modes as they progress through school. In this case, it will be important to develop and maintain a positive view of both languages and various modes, where it is possible that a move from oral/aural to a sign approach can be experienced as a positive move, rather than simply as a deficiency or failure. As already noted, in 8.1., above, an explicit national reframing of BSL, from a deficit to a linguistic context, would help to support the kind of positive view required. The possibility of BSL being included as a curriculum subject, with examinations at Standard Grade and Higher levels, is currently being explored; it is likely that such developments would help to raise the profile of BSL significantly.

ADPS did not collect the same detail of linguistic assessments for school pupils as for preschool children. Much of the evidence of assessments in this section is therefore based on interviews with a small sample of school services, which does not necessarily reflect the national picture.

9.1. SPOKEN LANGUAGE/LITERACY ASSESSMENTS

(Scoping Study Survey, 2007, and ADPS, 2001)

A similar range of commercially-available spoken language assessments was reported by interviewees as that reported for preschool children: for example, TROG, STASS, BPVS, Derbyshire Language Scheme. The cochlear implant team use both informal and formal, commercial assessments, which they sometimes adapt. The Scottish Sensory Centre are offering a one-day course in STASS in January. There was some evidence that there is a need for more standardised assessments suited to school-age deaf children – particularly upper primary.

SaLTs tend to be employed by the Health Boards rather than by the local authority education service. There was some evidence that this can create challenges in collaborative work – for example the fact that the deaf education/HI service may buy in a SaLT service, but have no control over which children are seen, or the focus of language assessments. It is apparent that inter-agency relationships need to be particularly robust to withstand the barriers which can develop.

As the pupil progresses through primary, baseline and 5-14 National Test (NT) assessments appear to be the main means of assessing reading and writing skills, and there can be pressure from local authorities do so. However, there were varying views as to the universal suitability of these for deaf pupils.

Between 2000 and 2005, ADPS collected annual information on reading tests administered to deaf pupils. Again, most is unexplored, but information produced in 2001 showed that NTs were a significant means of assessing reading ability of deaf pupils. Table 9 shows that 30% of the 722 reports of NTs in Reading were cited as the sole evidence for estimating reading age. For the other 70%, NTs were used in conjunction with other tests. A range of other types of reading tests were cited for the other 70%, and for those where other tests alone were cited as evidence.

Table 9 Most common means of testing reading ability in school among ADPS 'Group A' pupils (2000/2001)			
Total number of pupils where a 5-14 NT result in reading was reported	NT as the only evidence of reading age estimate	NTs plus other tests* as evidence of reading age estimate	Other reading tests* as sole evidence of reading age estimate
722	231 (30% of 722)	491 (70% of 722)	355

*43 different tests were cited, the most common of which were : Burt Word Test; Schonell Reading Test; Weschler Objective Reading Dimension; NEFR Nelson; Salford Test; Edinburgh Reading Test

See Section 10.9.1, below, for an exploration of what is known about linguistic access arrangements for 5-14 National Tests generally.

9.2. AUDIOLOGY ASSESSMENTS

As already noted, the training of Educational Audiologists provides unique knowledge and skills in the application of audiology to language development and educational contexts. As there are only 11 Educational Audiologists employed among 32 local authorities, this is likely to mean under-capacity in some local authorities for assessments of audition in classroom situations.

The recent clinical audit of audiology services noted geographical variation in the provision of paediatric audiology services. There are various recommendations aimed at addressing the imbalances and addressing the overall quality of paediatric services across the country (Davis et al, 2007)

See also information below on acoustic environments.

9.3. LATE DIAGNOSIS

The cochlear implant centre reports that they are still coming across examples of late diagnosis, so that, in some cases, referrals for implantation are happening after children have reached school age. See 8.6., above, for exploration of some key issues, which mostly relate to school-age as well as preschool children.

9.4. LIPREADING ASSESSMENTS (ADPS, 2000/2004)

The extent of informal assessment of pupil lipreading skills by ToDs and SaLTs, across Scotland, is not known. Table 10 shows available ADPS data on SQA lipreading qualifications obtained by pupils between 2000 and 2004. The numbers are too small to draw conclusions about trends, but it does seem strange that there were no reports of qualifications at all in 2003/2004. As lipreading is likely to be a significant access strategy for pupils, it is interesting that the uptake is generally so small. It may be that some services play down lipreading skills in order to concentrate on maximising audition (see Section 3, above). There is also the fact that lipreading requires knowledge of the vocabulary being spoken as well as lip-patterns, making it a more challenging exercise for pupils with limited vocabulary. It would be interesting to explore characteristics of the pupils who have achieved the award and how far it was useful to them in accessing information in the classroom.

One service reported that a SaLT was, at that time, doing the lipreading module with pupils.

Qualification	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	Total
SQA Intermediate 1 NQ unit	6	7	11		19

The Scottish Course for Training Teachers of Lipreading (SCTTL) currently facilitates lipreading courses, as rehabilitation provision for adults with acquired hearing loss. Therefore lipreading, per se, is actually only part of the course content, and they do not tend to use the SQA lipreading module with these adult groups.

However, SCTTL 'firmly believe that lipreading would be beneficial to a large number of children' (extract from interview), and SCTTL is currently devising a course to train people to teach lipreading to children; it is intended that the course is aimed at ToDs, educational audiologists etc.

9.5. BSL ASSESSMENT (ADPS, 2000/2004)

See Section 8.7.2., above regarding availability of BSL productive and receptive assessments, and the low availability/administration capacity in Scotland. One head of service felt there was a pressing need to have more formal assessments of BSL available, particularly where pupils are from hearing families.

In terms of BSL qualifications among pupils, table 11 shows ADPS data on numbers of pupils who achieved CACDP and SQA qualifications in BSL between 2000 and 2004.

Numbers are too small to show significant trends across the years, but the overall predominance of CACDP rather than SQA assessments is marked. SQA is currently updating the National Qualification units in BSL, and it will be interesting to see whether the uptake increases accordingly.

The drop in numbers qualifying at higher levels is also significant. There are likely to be a number of reasons for this, but it undoubtedly at least partly reflects the reduced availability of provision in proportion to the level of the course. One FE specialist advisor reported that this lack of training at advanced levels limits the capacity of some FE students in accessing information (see Table 11, below).

Table 11 Qualifications in British Sign Language among ADPS Group A deaf pupils in Scotland, 2000/2004						
Type of qualification	Exam board	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	Total
BSL Stage/Level 1	CACDP	6	18	13	12	49
BSL Stage/Level 2	CACDP	1	10	5	5	21
BSL Stage/Level 3	CACDP				1	1
Intro to BSL (Access 3 NQ unit)	SQA			2		2
Language: BSL Intermediate 1 NQ unit	SQA			2		2
Other BSL qualification		6	1	1		7

9.6. CEM CENTRE ASSESSMENTS

Durham University's Curriculum, Evaluation and Management (CEM) Centre offer 'value-added' assessments which track and feed back progress in a number of aspects of primary and secondary schooling, including reading, vocabulary and non-verbal ability. Some Scottish local authorities have used these assessments in the recent past, and they have had particular relevance to deaf children, as a small CEM Centre project focused on creating fair assessments for pupils with a wide range of hearing loss. Information on hearing loss levels, language and communication was collected and the assessments could be administered in either spoken English or BSL. In 2002, ADPS subsidised CEM Centre assessments for all services/schools that opted in to a one-off offer.

Although this sub-project no longer exists, one head of service indicated that they were re-visiting the idea of buying into CEM Centre assessments.

9.7. ASSESSMENTS OF LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES

The distinction between facilitating access to the class curriculum and providing direct specialist teaching support can be particularly blurred in primary mainstream situations. However, in secondary schools, it is more likely that pupils will be able to make such distinctions themselves. Later sections will focus on the difference between the clearly defined strategies and services provided in post-school education and the more general and less defined roles and strategies provided in schools.

However, it is worth mentioning here that there is no standard process for assessing specific pupil linguistic strategies within the variety of sub-environments in secondary schools. As with the situation in FE and HE, a pupil may get most benefit from using different strategies in different types of classes: amplification in one class; BSL/English interpreting in another; notetaking in another – and may also require general as well as subject-specific language support.

9.8. ASSESSMENTS WITHIN THE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING PROCESS

As described in 5.1., above, there are inconsistencies between local authorities in systems for opening Individualised Education Plans (IEPs), as ongoing assessment and planning tools.

The next section, on school access, will address issues around eligibility for the Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP) process.

9.9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Some pupils will wish/need to move between languages and language modes as they progress through schooling. It will be beneficial for all areas to provide a spectrum of linguistic assessments and access provision and a positive view of both signed and spoken languages.
- There may be a need to strengthen inter-agency collaboration between ToDs and SaLTs in the provision and application of language assessments.
- More standardised assessments may be needed for the assessment of deaf children's spoken language – particularly in upper primary – and more dialogue about characteristics, value and application of specific, commercially-available tests.
- There is a need to further explore both the suitability of 5-14 National Tests as a means of assessing literacy skills of deaf pupils, and the nature of arrangements which are currently being made to facilitate access.
- There is a need for more educational audiologists, so that every area has high quality capacity for applied audiology assessment within the classroom situations. There are also relevant recommendations from the recent clinical audit of audiology services, addressing geographical variations of hospital-based services.
- There are still some children whose deafness is not being diagnosed until school age. There is a need to address the reasons for this and strategies to ensure that problem areas are resolved.

- Lipreading as a linguistic access strategy for pupils is relatively unexplored. It will be interesting to monitor development of the proposed SCTTL course for teaching lipreading to children.
- As with the pre-school situation, there is a need for more availability of BSL assessments, and more trained staff to administer them. It will be interesting to monitor the uptake of updated SQA NQ units in BSL for schools.
- There is no standard process for negotiating, assessing and recording specific linguistic strategies with pupils in secondary school situations. More exploration of this area is needed, particularly, but not exclusively, relating to transition to post-school education.

10.

SCHOOL YEARS: ACCESS ISSUES

10.1. THE IMPACT OF SOME KEY LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

10.1.1. NEW REGULATIONS REGARDING ToD QUALIFICATION

As already demonstrated, ToDs are key providers and facilitators of linguistic access to deaf pupils. The new regulations for ToD qualification, and accompanying guidance (Scottish Government, 2007b) were intended to guarantee a high standard of knowledge, understanding and skills among ToDs (see Section 7.1., above), and have been greeted positively because of this.

However, in addition to issues already raised about the shortage of qualified ToDs and the need to build in financial incentives to encourage young teachers to join the profession, the following concerns emerged from informants:

- The competencies may be accumulated via in-service training. While the general principle of the new regulations was welcomed, fears were expressed by a number of interviewees, that localised interpretations of current guidelines could lead to unacceptably wide variations between local authorities in the breadth and standards of competence accepted. The greatest fear was that this may have a knock-on affect on consistency of standards of linguistic access provided to deaf pupils. The in-service training option counter to the teacher training policy of the British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD), which states that a mandatory qualification should not be gained by accumulating free-standing units and that trainees should demonstrate practice competence in more than one type of educational provision (BATOD, 1995).
- There are no clear means by which the standards of specific competencies will be set and monitored, as yet, as HMIE do not inspect compliance with policy guidelines (although, see 10.1.3., below).
- The regulations do not cover staff who work with pupils less than 'wholly or mainly'. Informants expressed concern that, occasionally, learning support teachers, without knowledge or experience in deaf education, are designated to provide specialist access/support to deaf pupils, including those with cochlear implants. In these cases the teachers would be expected to provide support to a range of children, deaf and hearing, and therefore the employing local authorities would not be subject to the regulations (see also Section 7.1., above).

10.1.2. THE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING (ASL) ACT

As explained in 5.1., above, the new Additional Support for Learning Act (Scotland, 2004), has replaced the 'SEN' framework with that of 'ASL'. The phasing out of Records of Needs (RoNs) and the introduction of Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs), has led to concerns that many deaf children, who would previously have been eligible for RoNs, will not be eligible for CSPs.

Concerns centre on fears that the linguistic access/support services of deaf pupils who do not qualify for a CSP will be less secure because there is less legal redress. There are anecdotal reports of some local authorities giving the impression that possession of a CSP will give more guarantee of service. More than one member of visiting services interviewed expressed concern that support and access services for deaf pupils may be vulnerable to resource constraints because they are so dependent on people: 'linguistic access is fragile because it's personnel-dependant'. Some concerns were expressed about the potential co-ordinating role of educational psychologists, who may not have a background in deaf issues.

However, the Enquire service, which provides advice to parents on the implementation of the Act, understands that the quantity and quality of support and access services will not be dependent on a CSP. Where there are disputes about support and access, mediation is available to all children with additional support needs and their families, although those with CSPs are able to take dispute resolution to a higher legal level.

HMIE are currently reviewing the implementation of the Act, but only in terms of progress with the implementation of the Code of Practice. Initial findings suggest regional variation in implementation; implications for deaf pupils will need to be explored.

10.1.3. HMIE DEVELOPMENTS

HMIE has recently published a key report for local authority staff at all levels of education services, which largely focuses on issues around deaf pupils' linguistic access to learning (HMIE, 2007). It is intended as an aid to self-evaluation of provision and was produced in partnership with the National Deaf Children's Society. The report aims to:

- report on quality of education currently experienced by deaf children in Scottish schools;
- provide examples of good practice;
- identify signs for improvement.

The report will provide the criteria against which provision for deaf pupils will be inspected. Alongside this, the HMIE service is increasing its capacity to explore more specific detail of access and support services provided to deaf pupils than they have previously been able to do. For example, they have appointed an associate inspector who is both a ToD and a BSL/English interpreter.

10.2. STAFFING ISSUES

10.2.1. THE ToD ROLE: SUPPORT AND ACCESS

Visiting service informants reported that ToD work is a mixture of access (eg notetaking or interpreting) and teaching support (eg assisting with task or differentiating the curriculum). As well as providing support in the classroom, ToDs withdraw pupils for 1:1 and small group work, to varying degrees.

In response to a general question about access vs support, some services reported that the distinction is relatively clear: access services are offered to pupils where a child is able in the subject, and support offered when there are language or cognitive issues. However, others reported that effectively transferring responsibility for a pupil's learning to the class teacher could be a real challenge - a temptation to continue to provide individual management of learning, when a negotiated access service (such as notetaking, amplification, interpreting etc) might encourage more independence and be less intrusive for a pupil.

More than one service reported that some secondary pupils reject the service of support/access staff due to embarrassment of having a 1:1 adult in the class – it's 'not cool'. One head of service felt that this was not an issue in their service because pupils were clear about the strategies used and that ToDs have become 'part of the wallpaper' in classrooms. In this case, as with some other services, ToDs have an agreement with the class teacher that they work with other pupils in the class when the deaf pupil is working independently.

On the other hand, there were some reports of difficulties in persuading class teachers to include deaf pupils, which then becomes a particularly challenging part of the ToD role.

10.2.2. DEAF STAFF

The importance of employing deaf staff was raised by a number of people, in terms of role models for pupils and in terms of native use of BSL. The HMIE report, referred to in 10.1.3, above, pinpoints the significance of deaf staff as one of its 'Signposts to Excellence'.

10.2.3. LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS

As detailed in Section 7.2., above, Learning Support Assistants (or equivalent title – eg classroom assistants) provide a high proportion of in-class support for deaf pupils. Visiting services report that they can be asked to take on specific access tasks, but also to implement ToD-created programmes and to keep the pupil on task. It was reported that pupils can be particularly dependent on learning support assistants in primary school. It was hard to get a clear picture of the role of assistants in secondary situations.

One service reported that they employ 'inclusion classroom assistants', who work with mainstream children with moderate and conductive hearing losses. Their role is to keep other children on task, thus giving the classroom teacher extra time to spend with deaf child (demonstrating 1:1 etc). They have found that mainstream schools are very supportive of this development.

10.2.4. COMMUNICATION SUPPORT WORKERS (CSWS)

As also demonstrated in Section 7.2., a few school services employ staff known as CSWs. It is likely that they have more specific access function than learning support assistants, but there is also likely to be at least some overlap.

In one authority a SASLI-registered 'Education Communication Worker' is employed to provide in-class BSL/English interpretation.

One head of service felt she preferred to have learning support assistants who had LSP skills rather than LSPs per se, because the role is more flexible: providing learning support as well as access – and in being able to be left in charge of a child.

See also Section 15.5 for details of the CSW role within further and higher education.

10.3. TRANSITION ISSUES

Benefits of identifying and negotiating specific linguistic access strategies in secondary situations have already been raised, in terms of facilitating pupil independence as well as in preparation for post-school education (and employment) situations.

One head of service thought that the implementation of the ASL Act would be beneficial, in terms of a formal start to transition planning at 14 years.

There were some examples of specific planning: school links courses with local FE colleges (although provision of access services for taster courses could be problematic) and seminar-type days for older pupils. One ToD commented that she felt planning sessions should start in S3, but thought there may be problems persuading pupils to opt into the sessions.

The BRITE Centre website contains a multi-media guide for deaf students which defines access strategies and staff roles. In addition to being a resource for ToDs to use with individuals and groups, the BRITE Centre reports that parents and pupils like the fact that pupils can use it in private in their own time.

(<http://www.brite.ac.uk/resources/deaf/index.html>)

One well-established FE service for deaf pupils reported that deaf students were increasingly likely to know what services they wanted. Other FE services, as well as school services, reported that lack of preparation was a major issue - particularly in relation to the need for addressing the support/management/access distinctions in upper secondary. The fact that only a small minority of FE and HE institutions provide specialist tutorial support for deaf students is pertinent and will be addressed later.

See also Section 14.2 for more exploration of transition issues.

10.4. ACOUSTIC ENVIRONMENTS

The Disability Discrimination Act has provided a legal incentive for local authorities to create good acoustic environments for the large number of deaf pupils who make use of audition. However, it seems that some areas in Scotland are better than others at providing such high quality environments. Some new-build schools have been designed with good acoustics in mind, and soundfield systems have been installed in many primary schools. However, informants reported that provision can sometimes be tokenistic (eg assuming carpets and blinds are sufficient).

There are particular problems in secondary situations, where lack of staff awareness and size of buildings are major issues. There are only isolated examples of soundfield systems in secondary schools.

In addition, the open plan nature of some primaries also creates a challenge.

There is at least one service which encourages pupils to take home radio aids in order to boost communication strategies with family and friends outside of school. It was reported, however, that few services are known to allow such loans.

Again, the lack of educational audiologists in many areas is an issue, in terms of the application of audiological expertise to classroom situations.

NDCS has produced an 'acoustic toolkit' for schools and local authorities, which can be used as a guideline, available at: <http://www.ndcs.org.uk/document.rm?id=2663>

10.5. PUPILS WITH COCHLEAR IMPLANTS

The cochlear implant centre team consists of 3 full-time SaLTs and 3 full-time ToDs, who are regionally based. They aim to liaise with local ToDs and to provide advice when needed. Language assessment information is shared.

Heads of service reported good academic results among the early diagnosed/early implanted children. One described a primary resource base serving pupils with and without implants. Here, all ToDs have Level 3 BSL. The implanted pupils all access the curriculum via audition/spoken English and all are achieving age-appropriate National Test levels – as is one of the BSL-using pupils.

10.6. SUBTITLING

Despite strides in technology, it does not seem to be prevalent that educational DVDs are subtitled. DVDs are often part of curriculum coursework, but there were reports of:

- not enough warning to allow ToD to make arrangements for DVDs to be subtitled or to enable advance viewing;
- difficulties in persuading some class teachers to use subtitled versions.

One service has appointed a technology officer to subtitle DVDs.

10.7. BSL TRANSLATION

There is little evidence of BSL translations of key DVDs, for those pupils who wish to access information in BSL.

10.8. RISK OF ISOLATION IN MAINSTREAM SITUATIONS

In many cases a deaf child may be the only deaf child in a class – or in a school. There were examples of schools making good efforts to include individual deaf pupils – particularly at primary stage (for example assemblies on topics related to deafness, involving the pupil and ensuring that other pupils use the radio aid microphone; pupils and staff undertaking BSL qualifications; teachers willing to consider a variety of approaches etc).

Services reported arranging opportunities for deaf pupils to meet socially, but some reported difficulties in setting up meetings.

One service described two instances of pupils going to a specialist grammar school in England because they had problems in coping with this isolation – and finding great support and confidence from being in an environment with other deaf pupils.

Particular concerns were expressed about:

- isolated BSL-using pupils in mainstream situations (both in terms of staff capacity to provide quality BSL/English interpretation and in terms of lack of peer group);
- pupils who are neither fluent in spoken English or BSL.

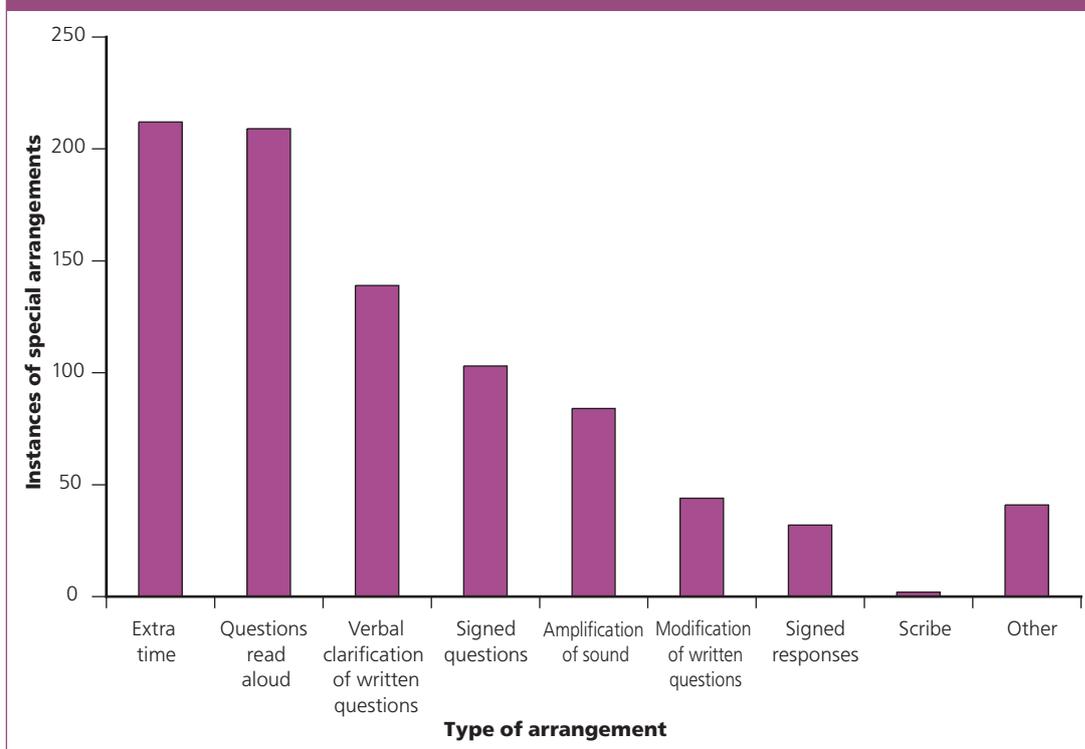
10.9. EXAM/ASSESSMENT ISSUES

10.9.1. 5-14 ASSESSMENTS

While there are clear guidelines from SQA about arrangements which may be made to access certificated examinations taken from mid-secondary level upwards, the situation for accessing 5-14 tests is rather vague, with teachers simply being informed that pupils can receive whatever access arrangements are normally provided in class. However, it is not necessarily easy to separate out access arrangements from specialist teaching support in primary/lower secondary. Some report the challenge of choosing specific tests to reflect what the ToD already knows about the pupil, without providing unfair advantage by selecting tests which the teacher knows will be easier.

As with the data in reading, the only analysed ADPS data on special access arrangements for 5-14 National Tests (Reading Writing and Maths) is from 2001. The list of tick-box options was chosen to mirror options provided in SQA examinations. Chart 9 shows that the most common types of access arrangement were 'extra time' and 'questions read aloud'. It would be interesting to explore the detail of data in later years to look for any changes in trends over time for each of the three areas of testing – and also to explore the circumstances in which questions are read aloud, in terms of pupil linguistic strategy.

CHART 9 Instances of special arrangements made for all 5-14 National Tests among ADPS Group A pupils, 2000-2001 (total instances $n=866$)



One of the most significant features of the special arrangement data is the fact that no information on special arrangements was provided for 73% of the 2176 National Test assessment results reported in 2000/2001 (again this applies to all three National Test subjects: Reading Writing and Maths). In this first year of ADPS data collection, there was no tick-box option for 'no arrangements made', as there was in later years. It would be interesting to compare with later years to explore whether the low response rate for this section of the survey does indeed reflect low levels of access arrangements made in National Test situations.

It seems, therefore, that there may be a need to address practice and possible developments in providing linguistic access arrangements for non-certificated tests administered in school.

10.9.2. SQA EXAMINATIONS

SQA produces guidelines on special arrangements for accessing examinations. The most recent version was published in 2004 (SQA, 2004), and an updated version is in publication at the time of writing. No major changes will be included, but it is intended that it will highlight Disability Equality Duty implications and that it will be in a more accessible format.

Chart 10 shows ADPS data on instances of special arrangements used by pupils in Standard Grade exams in 2000/2001, for direct comparison with Chart 9 above, relating to 5-14 National Tests.

A high proportion of 'extra time' is common to both, but there are significantly lower proportions of 'questions read aloud', 'verbal clarification of written questions' and 'amplification of sound'. There is a slightly higher proportion of 'scribe'. It would be interesting to explore the significance of these differences, particularly in the light of the above discussion relating to provision of access for 5-14 assessments.

Data on Standard Grade arrangements are available for 4 years (see: http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/adps/survey/00-04/certificated_qualifications/SGrade_specarr_summary_00-04.pdf).

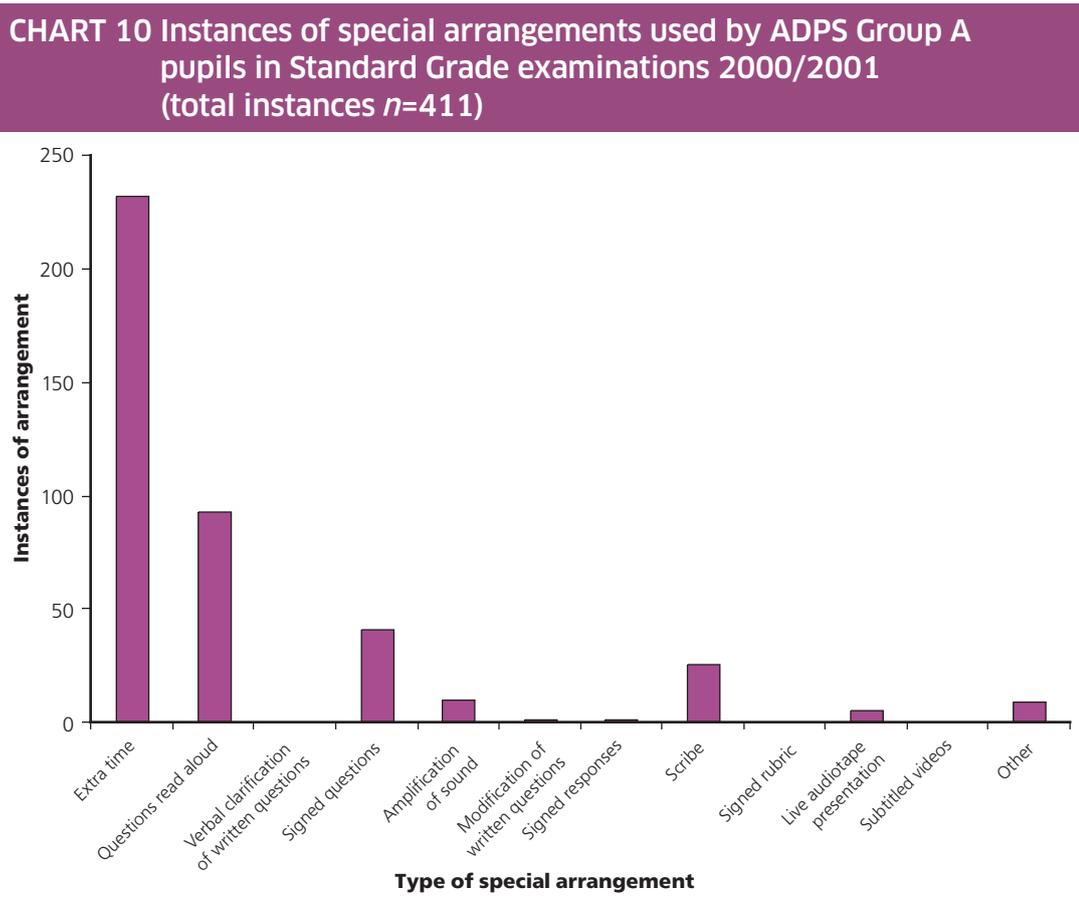
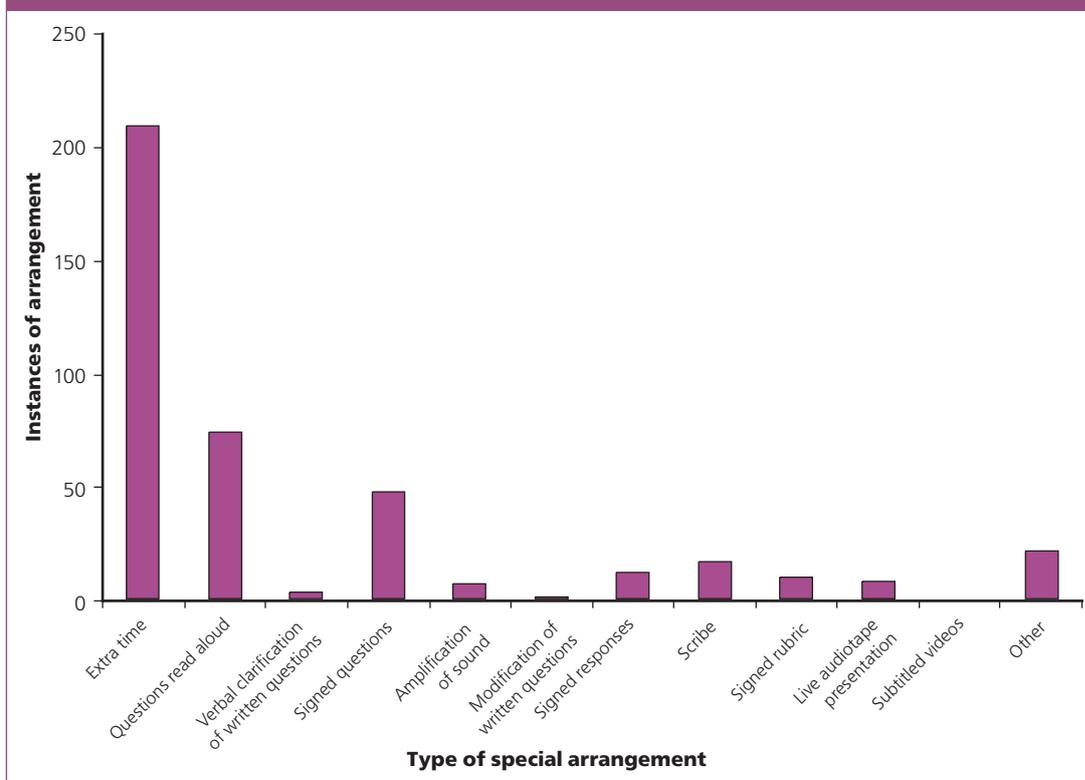


Chart 11 shows these data averaged out over the four years. It shows little difference from the picture in 2000/2001, apart from the higher proportion of 'signed responses' as the new arrangement began to be increasingly taken up.

CHART 11 Instances of special arrangements used by ADPS Group A pupils in Standard Grade examinations 2000/2004 (average instances across four years $n=401$)



SQA assessment policy

The SQA assessment policy is about to be reviewed in the light of implications of the Disability Discrimination Act. An 'impact assessment' will be starting soon: for example, looking at accessibility aspects of listening/speaking/writing in modern languages. The impact assessments will take place over the next couple of years, and external consultants are likely to be used.

Accessibility of English in SQA exams

Modification of exam papers for individual deaf students is not allowed, as it is for some exam boards in England. Exam setters receive guidance and are expected to use BATOD/NATED guidelines. However, it is intended that the impact assessment will re-evaluate the situation by reviewing how far English can be a barrier to deaf candidates.

It is deemed possible that BATOD trained modifiers will become part of the process in future, although it is not yet clear which stage of the process. It is likely that the BSLLAWG and SCoD will be approached for help and support during the review process.

Signed questions and responses

The standardisation of signing in examinations is an ongoing issue: for example, establishing means of ensuring that pupils are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged by the personnel used (ToDs, BSL/English interpreters) or the lack of familiarity and suitability of sign vocabulary.

Pragmatic solutions are being found in individual settings: one school described how staff without interpreting training sign the papers, after a preparation session with a BSL/English interpreter.

Concerns have been expressed that SQA's collaborative pilot project with the University of East Anglia and RNID to produce 'Avatar' computer-graphic 'signers' is seen to be an inappropriate solution to the standardising of signed questions. Staff from SCoD and from the Universities of Edinburgh and Heriot Watt have formally expressed anxieties that the 'Avatars' inevitably miss vital aspects of BSL.

Meanwhile the SSC BSL Glossary project continues to produce BSL/English glossaries of maths and science terminology. The glossaries are pioneering in their depth – as both reference and teaching tools.

10.10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is a need to address concerns that the guidance provided for new ToD qualification regulations allows for accumulation of competencies via in-service training. Concerns centre around: the likelihood that local interpretations will lead to variations in standards; the lack of specific means of monitoring quality and the fact that 'generic' learning support staff can be responsible for a ToD service with deaf pupils, but fall outwith the regulations.
- There is a need to further monitor the impact of the ASL Act in terms of the planning and provision of access and support to deaf pupils, particularly in relation to any impact on services provided to pupils who do not qualify for CSPs.
- It is hoped that the HMIE/NDCS self-evaluation 'Count us in' report will be used to encourage and support good practice in the development of linguistic access services in schools.
- As the ToD role constantly develops in mainstream situations, there is a need to continue to address and explore the definition of, and relationships between: management of pupil learning; provision of direct linguistic access services, and provision of teaching support. The situation in secondary schools is worthy of particular attention, including the lead up to transition.

The model of a ToD being a resource for the class teacher and other pupils, when the deaf pupil is working independently, may be useful experience to share.

- There needs to be more clarification about the specific roles of learning support assistants and CSWs in terms of linguistic access provided; there is also a need to address relevant training and qualifications.
- As mentioned in other sections, there is also a need to address regional variations in numbers and types of access and support staff (eg ToDs, educational audiologists) and in access related qualifications held (eg notetaking; advanced BSL fluency; BSL/English interpretation, etc).
- The regional variation in standard of acoustic environments in schools should be addressed, making use of the NDCS 'Acoustic Toolkit'.
- All services should consider the benefits of allowing pupils to take home radio aids, whenever pupils would find this useful.

- There is a need for deaf people to be encouraged into professions at various levels within school education.
- DVDs relating to school coursework should automatically be subtitled and recorders purchased by schools should have the facility to record subtitled TV programmes. This needs to be built into the culture of schools. BSL translations of key DVDs are also needed.
- There are concerns about isolation of deaf pupils in mainstream situations. There is a continued need to share inclusive practice and to enable deaf pupils to meet each other.
- There is a need to address practice and comparisons in providing linguistic access arrangements for both 5-14 tests and SQA exams administered in school.
- The results of the forthcoming SQA 'impact assessment' of exam access are likely to lead to improvements in a number of ways, including accessibility of English. It will be interesting to keep in touch with developments.
- Ongoing work is needed on the practice and standardisation of the provision of signed questions in exams. It is hoped that SQA takes on board the expressed concerns about the piloting of Avatar 'signers'.

11.

THE ADPS PROJECT: UNEXPLORED AREAS

The Achievements of Deaf Pupils in Scotland (ADPS) project was set up in 2000 by the late Dr Mary Brennan as a response to concerns about educational under-achievements among deaf pupils. From October 2000 to March 2005 the project was funded by the Scottish Government (then the Scottish Executive) and was located within the Scottish Sensory Centre at the University of Edinburgh. Its main aim was to collect detailed information about deaf pupils in Scotland and their achievements.

A national database was established, which enabled the development and storage of a detailed record for each deaf preschool and school child. Information was gathered from teachers of deaf children and was entered on a yearly basis.

During the lifetime of the project, specific findings were made available in the following ways:

- On the project website at:
<http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/adps/survey/index.shtml>;
- Through presentations and reports to individual local authority deaf education/HI services, Deaf Children's Societies etc, including the distribution of individually-tailored selections of data to local services in CD format;
- Through conference presentations;
- Through articles in relevant journals and magazines.

It was hoped that further finance would be found for the continuation of the project after March 2005 and for analysis of remaining data. Although various sources were explored, it did not prove possible; data collection ceased in 2005 and large amounts of data from 2000/2005 remain unexplored.

The wide range of types of information, and the fact that groups can be tracked over the five years, makes the resource uniquely valuable to further research relating to linguistic access of preschool children and school pupils. Categories of information include:

Category/data field	Pre-school	School
Child/young person basic information (incl gender, dob, postcode, ethnicity)	✓	✓
Learning difficulties, visual impairments, medical difficulties etc	✓	✓
Hearing loss levels	✓	✓
Onset and cause of deafness	✓	✓
Aids to hearing (eg acoustic aids, cochlear implant, bone conduction, radio aids, environmental aids etc)	✓	✓
Language used at home	✓	✓
Language/language approach	✓	✓
Extent of use of languages/modes used by parents and individual professionals with child	✓	
Placement	✓	✓
Family support	✓	
3-5 curriculum info	✓	
Attainments and achievements		✓

RECOMMENDATION

- It is suggested that further consideration is given to the exploitation of unexplored ADPS data, from 2000/2005, as a resource for future research studies relating to linguistic access of preschool children and school pupils.

CASE EXAMPLE

The mother of an implanted lower primary school child, 'P', was in contact during the research period of this study (a 'happenstance' contact, previously unknown to the researcher). Her description of her experience is included, as it illustrates so many of the complex issues raised in the preschool and school sections of the report, and the way parents need to navigate their way through these complexities.

P was diagnosed at three and a half years and implant 'switch on' was two years later. There were indications that P had had at least some hearing at birth, which had declined significantly. Mum generally found great support from the local ToD and SaLT post-diagnosis. She appreciated their observations on social interaction as well as on educational access. P uses a combination of cochlear implant and hearing aid.

Both parents felt that P was already an 'oral' child at diagnosis, and were not keen to explore use of BSL, thinking that it might interfere with language development (mum and dad have continued to provide a lot of spoken language development work with P at home). The SaLT originally suggested the use of some signs to support English. This was very quickly dropped, as it was felt that it was confusing. P is currently achieving above age-appropriate results in school tests, and integrates well with hearing pupils in 1:1 and small group situations, where the FM system is particularly beneficial. P sometimes struggles in other group situations (especially outside of school) and can become bored and disruptive if feeling excluded. Any parental interest in learning BSL has been difficult because of practicalities. Mum feels BSL might possibly be useful in the future, for noisy situations and for situations where P cannot use hearing equipment. She also feels that it could be useful socially, should P choose to mix with other BSL-users.

Mum feels there is a need for P to meet other deaf children and they join in organised events whenever possible. It has proved hard to organise contact with other deaf children within school – again because of practicalities.

Mum and dad had to take responsibility for persuading the local authority to provide a radio aid at nursery (borrowed one from NDCS) and, later, for helping to manage the equipment on a daily basis before the school day and when problems arise within school. There is no local educational audiologist and they have had to build up their own knowledge to ensure that adequate assistance is provided.

Mum observes that P uses lipreading if it's noisy, using mostly audition when it's quiet. However, P is 'not very competent lipreader' and lipreading only seems to help when P is struggling to hear.

A ToD currently visits three times a week, taking P and one or two others to a quiet area for small group language/listening games. She has also assisted with school assembly sessions focused around deaf issues. P was recently discharged from the local authority SaLT service, but still receives occasional monitoring from the Cochlear Implant Centre SaLT. There is a learning support assistant within P's class, but she is not specifically assigned to P. Mum expressed some frustration that the only specialised training the assistant has received is on the basics of the implant and on radio aid technology. If any other issues arise, the school usually phones mum. Therefore, while the school has made various efforts related to the NDCS 'Deaf Friendly Pledge', she feels there is a still need for staff training.

P had a Record of Needs, but they have been told that P will not now qualify for a Co-ordinated Support Plan. They are worried about the implications of services having been so reduced because P is meeting/exceeding educational targets and are concerned that the reduced services may lead to a slippage in P's progress in the future – particularly thinking ahead to secondary school.

The parents feel that they have had to become contentious in order to maintain adequate levels of access and support for the present and for the future.

12.

THE NUMBER OF DEAF STUDENTS IN FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

12.1. LIMITATIONS TO INFORMATION ABOUT NUMBERS OF DEAF STUDENTS IN FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Ascertaining the size of the populations of deaf students in both further and higher education is problematic. In both sectors, collection of data is done by self-reporting, which means that statistics are limited to those who are prepared to disclose hearing loss. Furthermore, where deafness has already been disclosed previously for a continuing student, the institution may not report the student as being deaf in subsequent years. Both of these factors can result in under-reporting in any one year.

Disclosure procedures do not appear to be consistent across institutions and this can also cause under-reporting: for example, where a student comes straight from school. Even where a student discloses, more than one informant reported that it is not always guaranteed that the information will be properly recorded. A former FE student at a recent Deaf Action seminar in Edinburgh described how, in 2006, she disclosed her deafness on a form when she started a course, but received no access services until one week before the end of the course because the information was not passed on.

Distortion in the other direction can occur where students report hearing loss situations which are of such a mild nature that it is unlikely that there will be any affect on access to learning. A recent unpublished study undertaken in Manchester by Rachel O'Neill demonstrated that this situation is not uncommon. The SFC do not keep data on the level of hearing loss, so it is currently impossible to check this among the Scottish population.

Another issue to take into account is the increased prevalence of acquired hearing loss among older age groups. Therefore there is likely to be a greater proportion of people with acquired hearing loss in provision which attracts high numbers of students in older age-bands.

Bearing these factors in mind, the following sections provide most recent statistics available on the number of deaf students in further and higher education in Scotland.

12.2. THE NUMBER OF DEAF STUDENTS IN FURTHER EDUCATION

The Scottish Funding Council publish a wide range of statistics on their Infact on-line database (Scottish Funding Council, 2007a). The tables in this section are all compiled from a combination of on-line data and specific data on students who self-reported as 'deaf/hearing impaired' in 2005/2006. We are grateful to statistics staff at SFC for their assistance with the latter data.

There were 1,911 'deaf/hearing impaired' students reported by the SFC as enrolled in FE programmes in 2005/2006. Some students enrolled on more than one programme, amounting to a total of 2,482 enrolments among the deaf student population. Additional enrolments can be for a number of reasons (changing courses, undertaking more than one part-time course etc): the proportion of students who did this among the deaf population (1.3) was almost exactly the same as that for the total population (1.29) in 2005/2006.

Table 13 shows the break-down of the total number of deaf students among individual colleges. It shows that there are wide variations in numbers between colleges. To some extent, this reflects the variations in size of the colleges, as is shown by the percentages of total populations of each college. The proportion of students who reported as deaf/HI averages out as 0.5% across all colleges, the highest being John Wheatley College with 1.8%.

It is difficult to know how far the participation rate of deaf students matches the incidence of deafness in the general population, because of the varying incidence of hearing loss across age ranges.

Colleges with an established tradition of attracting deaf students are not among the colleges with the highest proportions of students reporting as deaf /HI (for example Telford College, James Watt College and Motherwell College). However, Section 16.1.2., below, shows that a different picture emerges when Extended Learning Support funding is taken into account.

A significantly higher proportion of deaf/HI enrolments, compared to the total student population (16% compared to 7%), were on courses which were funded for students with learning difficulties. It is not clear how far this includes courses which are designed for deaf students, rather than for students with a cognitive learning disability (eg adult literacy courses for deaf people; courses for tutors of sign language etc).

Table 13 Number of college students in Scotland who self-reported as deaf/hearing impaired in 2005/2006

	Total student headcount	Deaf/Hi student headcount	Percentage of deaf/Hi students	No. of deaf/Hi enrolments
Aberdeen College	25,538	107	0.4	160
Adam Smith College	22,336	135	0.6	180
Angus College	7,762	73	0.9	91
Anniesland College	6,778	43	0.6	49
Ayr College	7,292	46	0.6	70
Banff & Buchan College of Further Education	12,709	129	1.0	166
Borders College	6,139	51	0.8	72
Cardonald College	9,191	17	0.2	24
Central College of Commerce	6,801	17	0.2	19
Clydebank College	7,714	43	0.6	53
Coatbridge College	4,671	27	0.6	40
Cumbernauld College	6,174	33	0.5	52
Dumfries and Galloway College	7,219	59	0.8	86
Dundee College	17,431	60	0.3	89
Edinburgh's Telford College	15,883	59	0.4	77
Elmwood College	4,286	34	0.8	50
Forth Valley College	16,175	23	0.1	26
Glasgow College of Nautical Studies	7,193	60	0.8	66
Glasgow Metropolitan College	11,213	58	0.5	69
Inverness College	4,557	24	0.5	25
James Watt College of Further & Higher Education	18,319	48	0.3	55
Jewel and Esk Valley College	7,536	41	0.5	51
John Wheatley College	4,850	89	1.8	124
Kilmarnock College	7,442	49	0.6	66
Langside College	9,819	39	0.4	45
Lauder College	11,226	36	0.3	38
Lewis Castle College	1,954	12	0.6	14
Moray College	4,293	38	0.9	43
Motherwell College	14,825	88	0.6	98
The North Highland College	6,093	68	1.1	89
Newbattle Abbey College	108	0	0	0
North Glasgow College	7,905	*	0.06	*
Oatridge Agricultural College	2,443	*	0.2	*
Orkney College	1,494	12	0.8	12
Perth College	6,026	68	1.1	81
Reid Kerr College	12,090	77	0.6	117
Sabhal Mor Ostaig	688	10	1.5	13
Shetland College of Further Education	4,070	19	0.5	31
South Lanarkshire College	4,530	33	0.7	42
Stevenson College	11,677	34	0.3	38
Stow College	8,440	33	0.4	41
The Barony College	2,364	0	0	0
West Lothian College	6,276	9	0.1	11
Total	361,530	1911	0.5 (average %)	2482

*Total number is 5 or less

Table 14 compares selected qualification aims of enrolments of all students and deaf/HI students. The figures in this table suggest that there may be evidence of underachievement among the deaf group. A slightly higher proportion of deaf students undertook courses with no recognised qualification and twice the percentage enrolled on National Certificate modules which did not lead to an award. At the higher end of the award spectrum, not one deaf student enrolled on a degree course, compared to 636 hearing enrolments, and half the proportion of all students undertook HND courses (2% of deaf student enrolments compared to 4% of the all-student total). This may, at least in part, relate to the well-documented evidence of general under-achievement at school level, as reported in Section 5.4.

It would have been helpful to have been able to compare the full range of courses undertaken by deaf students with all student enrolments within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). This would have given a clearer picture of differences in levels.

Table 14 Qualification aim of enrolments in Scottish colleges 2005/2006

Qualification aim	All student enrolments (n)	Deaf/HI student enrolments (n)
Course not leading to recognised qualification	35% (158,197)	40% (992)
National Certificate Modules, not leading to a qualification	11% (69,821)	20% (504)
Higher National Diploma (HND)	4% (16,450)	2% (52)
Degree (hons and ordinary)	0.1% (636)	0% (0)
Other types and levels of qualifications	49.9% (201,517)	38% (934)
Totals	100% (446,621)	100% (2482)

Table 15 shows outcomes of deaf student enrolments in 2005/2006 compared to those of the overall population of college students in that year. There were two areas where there were differences of any significance: 5% fewer deaf students successfully achieved a qualification and 6% more deaf students completed a non-assessed course. Again this suggests that there may be a slight underachievement among the deaf student population. It would be useful to further explore these data to identify levels of courses and factors which affected these differences. There is an inference, from a recent research project, that, if access and support is better, students take higher level courses (O'Neill and Jones, 2007). It would be interesting to explore this in further study.

Table 15 Outcome of deaf /HI student enrolments in Scottish colleges, 2005/2006		
Outcome description	Number (%) of all student enrolments	Number (%) of deaf/HI student enrolments
Completed programme/course, student assessed and qualification achieved	158,103 (37%)	787 (32%)
Completed programme/course, student assessed but failed to achieve qualification	33039 (8%)	219 (9%)
Completed programme/course, student not assessed although programme/course designed to be assessed	9181 (2%)	83 (3%)
Completed programme/course, student not assessed as programme/course not designed to be assessed	144,932 (34%)	1016 (40%)
Continuing onto next year of programme/course (including students on continuing Spanning course)	35500 (8%)	212 (9%)
Enrolled on programme/course but never attended	2749 (0.6%)	1
Not Provided/unknown/deceased	109 (0.02%)	1
Transferred to another programme/course within the college	2758 (0.6%)	8 (0.3%)
Withdrawn from programme/course and commenced employment	3260 (0.8%)	14 (0.6%)
Withdrawn from programme/course and now studying in an HEI	165 (0.0003%)	
Withdrawn from programme/course and now studying elsewhere (not an HEI)	419 (0.1%)	
Withdrawn from programme/course and destination unknown	37383 (9%)	141 (6%)
Total	427,598	2482

12.3. THE NUMBER OF DEAF STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY

Statistical information on students at university in Scotland is collected by the UK Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). It reports on enrolments rather than on 'headcount' data. It does not report on students in HE-level programmes within further education colleges.

Tables 16 and 17 show the total number of students and of all students who self reported as deaf/hearing impaired in each of the 5 academic years of the period 2001/2006. Table 18 demonstrates that the numbers of both groups has steadily increased over the five year period, with a very slightly, and gradually, increasing proportion of deaf students (0.25% to 0.3%).

Table 16 All students* 2001/2002-2005/2006 at Scottish HE Institutions by age bands**

Academic Year	Age						Total
	17 years and under	18-20 years	21-24 years	25-29 years	30 years and over	Unknown	
2001/2002	9116	64742	44915	20932	56508	769	196,982
2002/2003	8978	65265	46506	20621	55674	320	197,364
2003/2004	8674	66467	48274	21882	59635	222	205,154
2004/2005	8488	65951	50608	23490	61875	186	210,598
2005/2006	8549	66692	52068	25380	62881	261	215,831

Table 17 Deaf/hearing impaired students* 2001/2002-2005/2006 at Scottish HE Institutions by age bands**

Academic Year	Age						Total
	17 years and under	18-20 years	21-24 years	25-29 years	30 years and over	Unknown	
2001/2002	20	145	82	36	208	0	491
2002/2003	18	164	93	33	194	1	503
2003/2004	14	140	106	35	264	0	559
2004/2005	19	126	111	49	302	0	607
2005/2006	18	139	104	57	322	1	641

Table 18 Percentage of deaf/hearing impaired students* in HE institutions**

Academic Year	All student total	Deaf student total	Deaf students as % of all student total
2001/2002	196,982	491	0.25
2002/2003	197,364	503	0.25
2003/2004	205,154	559	0.27
2004/2005	210,598	607	0.29
2005/2006	215,831	641	0.3

Source for all three tables: HESA Student Records 2001/2002-2005/2006

* The HESA Student Record contains information about individual enrolments, which, because a student can be enrolled on more than one programme of study, will exceed the number of students.

**The figures do not include students on HE-level programmes in FE colleges.

When the relatively small deaf student population is broken down into smaller groupings, there are more likely to be fluctuations than there are in the total population of students. However, it is still interesting to note the different age range patterns between the two groups, over the five year period. Charts 12 and 13 show that there is a consistently greater proportion of deaf students aged over 30, than there is among the general student population. This appears to have been at the expense of the proportion of deaf students in the 21-24 years age groups and, increasingly, in the 18-20 years age range.

CHART 12 Age groups of all students in Scottish HE institutions, 2001/2006
(ave $n=205,186$)

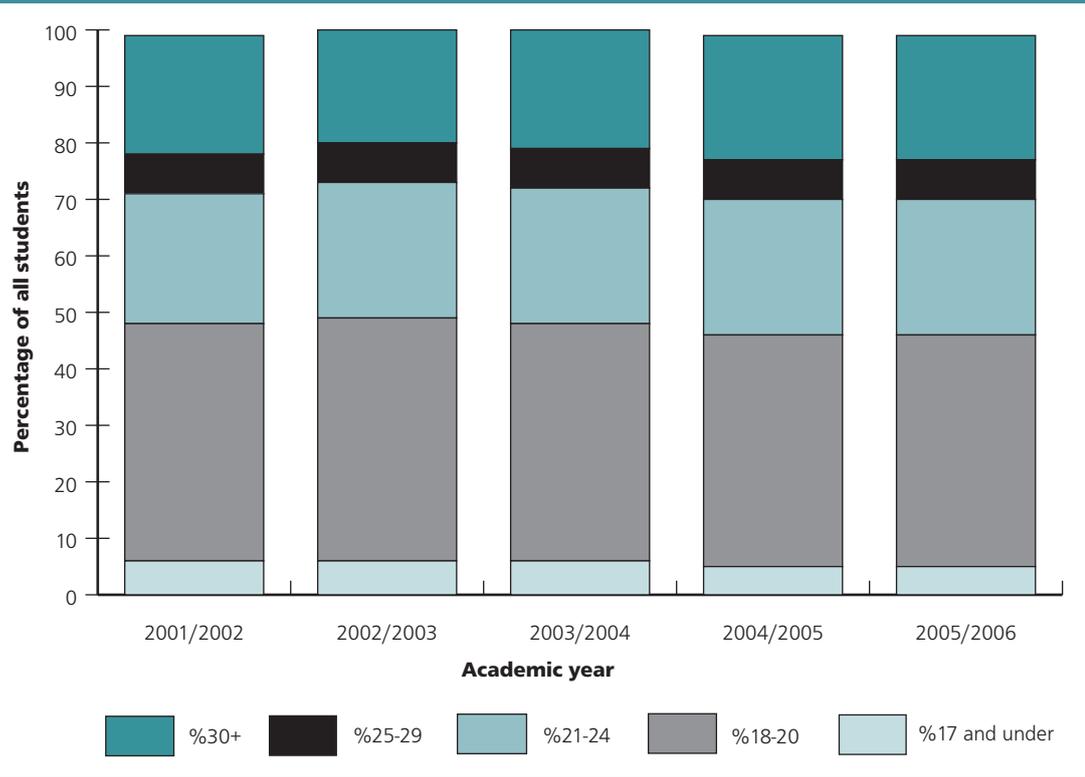
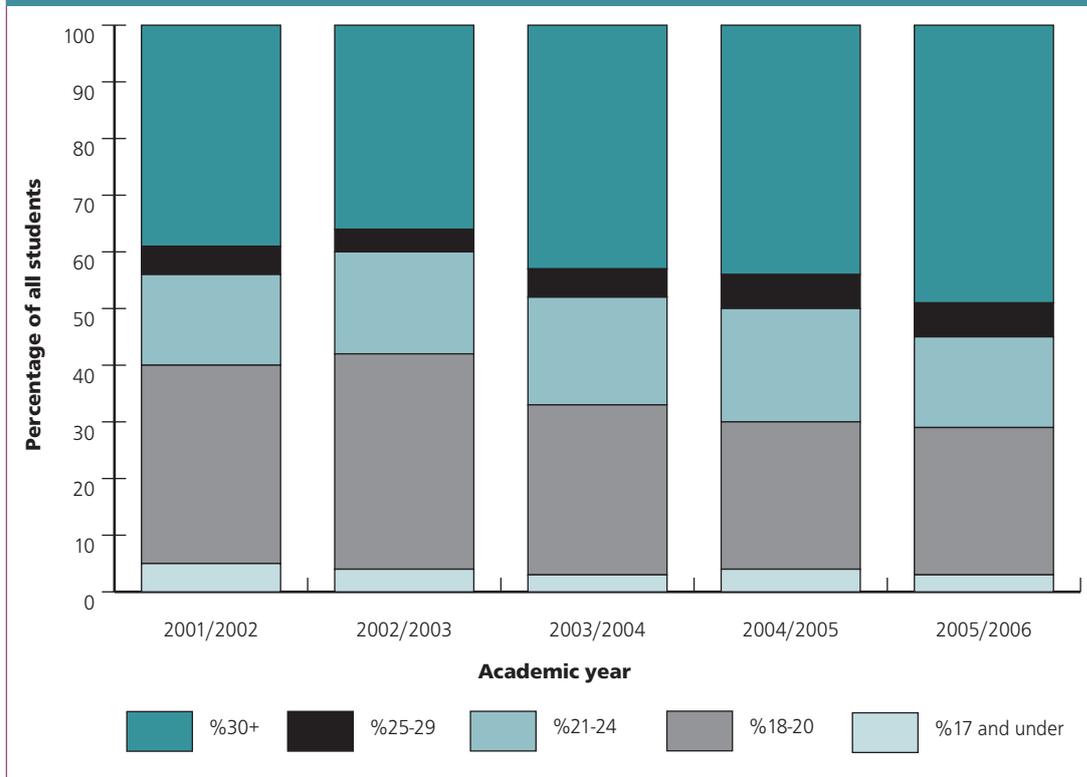


CHART 13 Age groups of deaf/hearing impaired students in Scottish HE institutions, 2001/2006 (ave n=560)



Tables 19 and 20, show that a consistently slightly lower proportion of deaf students are registered on postgraduate compared to undergraduate programmes.

Table 19 Proportion of all students enrolled on postgraduate programmes in HE institutions in Scotland (2001/2006)

Year	No. undergrad	No. postgrad	% students on postgrad progs
2001/2002	152,407	44575	23
2002/2003	151,701	45663	23
2003/2004	156,408	48746	24
2004/2005	160,700	49898	24
2005/2006	161,845	53986	25

Table 20 Proportion of deaf/HI students enrolled on postgraduate programmes in HE institutions in Scotland (2001/2006)			
Year	No. deaf/HI undergrad	No. deaf/HI postgrad	% deaf/HI students on postgrad progs
2001/2002	418	73	15
2002/2003	428	75	15
2003/2004	464	95	17
2004/2005	490	117	20
2005/2006	525	116	18

It has already been shown that a relatively high proportion of deaf HE students were in the 30+ age group between 2001/2006. Table 21 shows that a comparatively high percentage of these over-30s were on undergraduate, rather than postgraduate programmes.

Table 21 Proportions of all students aged 30+, and of deaf/HI students aged 30+, enrolled on undergraduate programmes in Scotland (2001/2006)				
Year	Total students aged 30+	% of these enrolled on undergraduate programmes	Total deaf/HI students aged 30+	% of these enrolled on undergraduate programmes
2001/2002	56508	57	208	79
2002/2003	55674	56	194	79
2003/2004	59635	55	264	76
2004/2005	61875	58	302	73
2005/2006	62881	56	322	77

12.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Caution is needed when reporting statistics on the number of students in further and higher education; reports need to be contextualised by explanation of likely distortions.
- More exploration is needed of the following:
 - indications that there may be some underachievement among deaf students;
 - the possibility that deaf students may undertake higher levels of courses where access and support services are of higher quality;
 - indications that the proportion of deaf people in HE is very slightly increasing;
 - indications that there is consistently a greater proportion of deaf students in HE institutions aged over 30 than there is in the total population of students in HE institutions, and that these students are less likely to be on postgraduate programmes than their hearing peers.

13.

THE NUMBER OF PROFESSIONALS WHO PROVIDE LINGUISTIC ACCESS SERVICES FOR DEAF STUDENTS IN FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

It was hoped to have been able to access most recent data collected by the National Association for Tertiary Education for Deaf People (NATED) for this section. However, this proved to be impossible within the short timeframe of this study, due to length of time needed for necessary permissions. Also, the data are from 2003/2004.

Therefore it was decided to design and distribute a new web-based survey, which will collect current details of numbers and qualifications of language support professionals in FE and HE. At the time of writing, the survey is being piloted and it is hoped that it can be distributed early in 2008. The BRITE Centre and the Disabled Students Stakeholder group have offered to help with distribution.

Although it is not possible to report results in this report, Rachel O'Neill, of the Scottish Sensory Centre, will co-ordinate the reporting of statistics to the BSL and Linguistic Access Working group in the new year.

Section 15 addresses general issues relating to Language Support Professionals in both sectors.

RECOMMENDATION

- Results of the proposed SSC web-based survey of numbers and qualifications of Language Support Professionals will be reported to the BSL and Linguistic Access Working Group.

14.

ISSUES RELEVANT TO BOTH FE AND HE SECTORS: MISCELLANEOUS

14.1. ASSESSMENT

The FE and HE systems for assessing access requirements and allocating funding to meet those requirements are very different. Therefore later sections will address each sector's situations separately. However, the following two sub-sections are common to both.

14.1.1. ASSESSMENT AS A PROCESS

For a range of reasons, it is vital that assessment is seen as a process and not a one-off event at the start of a course. For example: a student may not have been aware of access choices available, and therefore will need to try out options before being clear which strategy or strategies are most suitable; the class environments may change during the year, which may impact on the types of strategies which will be most appropriate for different situations (small-group seminars, large lectures, workshops, 1:1 sessions etc); the course content may be within the capabilities of the students, but some barriers with English may arise as the course progresses.

The National Association of Tertiary Education for Deaf Students (NATED) has long recognised these facts, and has produced an assessment pack which provides a framework of indicators for staff and students to address together, as the student progresses through the course.

The NATED pack is widely used in England, but not in Scotland. While colleges are likely to open personal learning plans for deaf students, little is known about how well such plans address their linguistic access situations across Scotland.

14.1.2. EQUALITY FORWARD STUDY ON ASSESSMENT STRUCTURES

Equality Forward is funded by the Scottish Funding Council to promote equality and fairness in Scottish further and higher education. An Equality Forward research project has been commissioned by the SFC and the Scottish Government to undertake a study into structures which assess the additional support needs of students. The project, funded by the SFC, will look at:

- the evidence about the capacity for the current arrangements to meet demand for assessments for additional support needs;

- ways in which the current structures supporting the organisation of assessments could be improved in future, to ensure that all students receive the support they are entitled to in a timely, fair and convenient way;
- the priority recommendations to the SFC and the Scottish Government about how these structures can be improved.

The study is due to report in April 2008.

A link has been formed between the research and this scoping study, so that the findings relating to assessment can be taken into account.

14.2. COMMON TRANSITION ISSUES

14.2.1. THE NEED FOR TRANSITION PROVISION

Section 3, above, has demonstrated that the linguistic access arrangements in schools are geographically variable, and largely different to the arrangements available in further and higher education. Both hearing and deaf students have the challenge of adjusting to a larger-scale institution with different styles of tuition from school. Many deaf students have added challenges of adapting to an unfamiliar range of choices and services. This may be their first experience of, for example, electronic notetaking or BSL/English interpreting. One college reported the fact that even those who do sign are not likely to have a high enough level of BSL grammar, syntax and vocabulary, because of the lack of advanced levels of BSL tuition within schools. Brennan et al report that sometimes students choose to learn BSL after arriving in post-school education, to improve their access to the content of lectures via BSL/English interpreters (Brennan et al, 2005:102).

As described above, some schools and visiting services undertake transition programmes with students, including school-links courses in college and individual 'taster' sessions with new types of access services in universities. Scottish Deaf Association and NDCS have both been involved in providing short, residential school-leavers' courses. However, there has been nothing in Scotland which equates to the specific transition/Access programmes specifically for deaf students which have proved to be very well received (eg the RNID's 'Headstart' programme; UCLAN's 'Year Zero') in England. Brennan et al's study recommended that an Access course for deaf students should be considered (Brennan et al, 2005:111).

14.2.2. AUDIOLOGY TRANSITION

The majority of deaf students use audition, to varying extents, to access learning. Brennan et al's study specifically raised concerns about the fact that, around the time that new students were going through general transition challenges, they also faced detrimental disruption to their audiology services for the following reasons:

- Evidence showed that the move from the remit of paediatric audiology clinics to that of adult clinics often meant long waiting times for a service (up to 105 weeks was quoted). During that time, a student's primary source of access may have been cut off or seriously impaired.
- There was also evidence that unqualified assessors in colleges were sometimes making erroneous judgements about students' audiological requirements.

- Students were having to return radio aid equipment to their local authorities when they left the remit of the local service – this meant that many did not have the equipment at crucial times, such as at job and college interviews.
- Generally, links between education services, audiology clinics and disability officers in colleges and universities were patchy and dependant upon individual goodwill. (Brennan et al, 2005:94-98)

Just before Brennan’s research, a large-scale audiology needs assessment had been undertaken and a report published by the Public Health Institute of Scotland (PHIS, 2003). One of the recommendations had been that there should be a phased transition from paediatric to adult services, ‘tailored to the special needs of individual young people and should include liaison with education, social work and employment services.’ (PHIS, 2003).

Audiology services have gone through a process of modernisation in response to the report, so it was hoped that this recommendation, alongside a commitment to prioritising FE and HE students with a dedicated transition worker and ‘fast-track’ services, would significantly improve the situation at transition and throughout the student experience.

However, there is anecdotal evidence that the audiology transition situation is still very variable for students: in an interview for this study, one experienced audiologist reported continued waiting list problems, with consequent detriment to access during this waiting time. Significantly, the very recently published clinical audit of audiology services highlights the inconsistencies in relevant services provided by individual Health Boards (Davis et al, 2007).

On the basis of this, it was decided to undertake a short email survey of audiology services for this study. Heads of audiology services were asked the following three questions:

- a) Is there a transition policy in place?
- b) Is there a designated member of staff who provides transition support?
- c) Are you able to 'fast-track' audiology services for deaf students in further and higher education?

If so, how does this work?

It should be said that the email was sent just at the time that the clinical audit report on audiology services was reporting back on their findings, and so this was possibly not the most opportune time to ask for more information. However, just less than half of the services (7 out of 15) responded.

All seven respondents stated that they had an established transition policy, or were in the process of developing one. They also all reported that they had a transition worker in place, including one very small service in which one worker provided a service throughout.

They all indicated some kind of fast-track or high priority system for students. Four said simply that they would prioritise students, and the small, one-worker service said that 'transition is not really an issue' because of the individual attention they were able to give throughout. The two remaining responses gave more detail as follows:

Service 1

'We have an open access repair service for anyone each day, a very good paediatric to adult transition service run by a highly specialised audiologist and our paediatrician. If we were asked to see someone urgently from further education, we most likely would, but if we don't know anything about them, this might be more difficult... If they had an immediate problem we could try and help at open repairs, but if they had a digital aid that was broken, and they were not from here, we would know nothing about them. We would do what we could though... My own service has a waiting time of around 12 weeks (for in-depth initial assessment).'

Service 2

'We continue to support our children/young adults throughout full-time education. There is a transition clinic when children leave school they are offered continued review appointments at a "young adult Hearing Therapy" clinic regardless of whether or not they are moving on to work or further and higher education. There is a designated staff member to provide transition support and the individual can still contact the designated paediatric audiologist as appropriate. We have previously fast tracked services for students of further and higher education as we view their needs as a priority. This would be by either giving them the first available appointment with the relevant audiologist or by creating an appointment if one wasn't readily available.'

Four out of the seven who responded were among the seven services highlighted in the clinical audit report as 'successfully implementing modernisation'. None of the respondents featured among the services who gave most cause for concern.

Therefore, while this short survey indicates positive developments among a significant number of audiology services, there is a need to further explore the situation across Scotland.

There is also a need to address the recommendation from Brennan et al's report that a centralised audiology resource is needed to provide: a specifically-tailored audiology assessment service, up-to-date information to institutions about equipment, and a loan service of certain items, such as radio aids, which are constantly upgraded as technology rapidly develops. It was suggested that this should be part of a service which would provide impartial guidance on installation of environmental equipment, in co-operation with other services and commercial companies (Brennan et al, 2005:194).

Such a resource would be helpful for the kind of situation cited by an informant, who is an experienced assessor. In this situation, Disabled Students Allowance assessments were being held up because GP letters were being requested by the Student Award Agency for Scotland (SAAS) in addition to audiology reports; it was understood that this was because SAAS was not able to interpret the evidence.

14.3. THE GENERAL IMPACT OF DISABILITY LEGISLATION

14.3.1. GENERAL ISSUES

One Access Centre co-ordinator, with a national overview from her role in relevant advisory groups and committees, reported that, generally, institutions are demonstrably more aware of their responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act, including implementation of Disability Equality Schemes. She indicated that there is evidence that, in some places, recent disability legislation is impacting favourably on the accessibility of some provision to deaf students.

In one college, a wide range of specific developments were reported, as a result of recent legislation. It is significant that this college has a well established specialist service for deaf students, able to advise college management on how to apply the legislation to the specific situations of deaf students. The following list describes the developments reported:

- Increased number of course and unit materials produced in Plain English and also available electronically and on the web (web-based materials are designed to conform to accessibility criteria);
- Development of unit materials must take account of the needs of varying student's needs and so are available in electronic format and able to be adapted to other formats fairly quickly;
- Unit materials are produced in plain English for a Deaf student which also assists another student with a different support need;
- Record of change/adaptation document is attached to each new unit under development and also when existing units are developed which enables progress towards accessibility to be documented;
- Increased use of Whiteboard technology provides more visual information which can be retained for student review and a phased introduction of interactive whiteboard will facilitate access for all students;
- Development of Web 2 technology including use of texting, blogs and discussion boards, to provide greater opportunities for students to interact and contribute to their curriculum;
- Deaf students have been using texting with their mobile phones to contact support staff. College is now piloting a commercial texting system to communicate with all students;
- College support staff create glossaries of technical terms with appropriate explanations for Deaf students;
- Promotion of the use of video in lectures as a form of notetaking for sign language users where appropriate;
- Recognition that Deaf students may also need an electronic notetaker in the class as well as a CSW;
- Deaf Awareness sessions delivered for staff teaching on specific courses where Deaf Students are enrolled;

- More staff are open to suggestions and adapt to working with CSW and Deaf students with support;
- Teaching and learning methods are more varied and use of electronic formats has improved the delivery of some subjects and topics;
- The provision of an Introduction to Counselling Course delivered in Sign Language, and the course materials produced in BSL and Plain English;
- An awareness that sometimes 1 CSW is not sufficient work with 2 or more students due to varying educational, cultural and language experiences;
- Increased volume of assessments produced on-line, which enables greater accessibility;
- Alternative assessment arrangements provide increased access for Deaf students (but some further work needs to be done on access to Communication Units).

However, as is demonstrated throughout this report, interpretations of specific responsibilities to deaf students vary widely among institutions.

Evidence reported in other parts of this report has suggested that a proportion of deaf students leave school without adequate information about access and support strategies and services. There was also an indication that some deaf students are aware of their increased rights and more able to express their needs than in the past. It was suggested that deaf organisations, and individual school services, are playing their part in raising awareness and expectations among some young deaf people.

14.3.2. ACOUSTIC ENVIRONMENTS

Good acoustic environments are essential for the high proportion of deaf students who use audition as a main access strategy. There was evidence that many institutions are taking account of acoustic conditions in room refurbishments and are installing amplification systems in at least some key lecture and seminar rooms. In one college, a specific review of accessibility of acoustic environments had been undertaken, with resulting adaptations to public rooms and halls of residence. However, there were also reports of poor provision in terms of: limited extent of amplification facilities; limited maintenance of equipment and lack of monitoring of usage.

14.4. COST OF QUALITY LINGUISTIC ACCESS

As noted in the school section, providing quality linguistic access is relatively expensive, as so much of it is revenue expenditure rather than one-off capital payments for equipment or physical adjustments. Arranging quality Language Service Professionals can easily cost upwards of £15,000 for a year where a student is full-time. Recent increase in the the Non-Medical Personnel Helpers Allowance part of the DSA fund to £20,000 is a big step forward in HE. It is important that this is also recognised in FE.

14.5. OUTPUTS OF WORKING GROUPS AIMED AT FURTHERING LINGUISTIC ACCESS FOR DEAF STUDENTS

The 'FACE' group and web resources

In recognition of the need to improve services for deaf students, the 'Furthering Access to College Education for deaf students (FACE) group was formed some years ago. The group has produced a web guide for institutions on the range of linguistic access strategies, services and equipment likely to be used by deaf students in both further and higher education:

<http://www.facefordeafstudents.org.uk/>

The guide is designed to complement the aforementioned BRITE Centre web-guide, which provides direct advice to deaf students:

<http://www.brite.ac.uk/resources/deaf.htm>

The Deaf Students' Working Group: A Centre for Linguistic Access

Following the publication of Brennan et al's study in 2005, Equality Forward took responsibility for facilitating the report's recommendations. A national working group was formed to take forward plans, known as the 'Deaf Students' Working Group' (DSWG). The main recommendation of the report was the establishment of a Centre for Linguistic Access, which would address the many indicators that a national resource is required to provide information, guidance, direct services, training, resources and research. The DSWG is currently focusing on this aim.

14.6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Assessment of linguistic access requirements should be seen as a process from application through to programme exit, rather than being seen as a one-off event at the start of the programme.
- The findings of this scoping study can usefully inform Equality Forward's current research into assessment structures for students with additional support needs.
- Access programmes specifically for deaf students should be considered, along the lines of RNID's 'Headstart' programme, and to include the full range of linguistic access strategies. Opportunities to enhance BSL skills and linguistic knowledge would be useful for those who opt to use BSL.
- Recent increase in DSA maximum amount is to be welcomed. It is hoped that the further education sector also recognises the cost of providing quality access and support services for deaf students.
- There is a need to ensure that all audiology services across Scotland are implementing good practice, relevant to needs of deaf students, in the transition between paediatric and adult services, using recommendations of the recent Needs Assessment.
- Equality Forward's 'Deaf Students Working Group' is currently considering the establishment of A Centre for Linguistic Access. Such a Centre would provide a much needed centralised resource, which will address a number of key issues raised in this report, including services and advice relating to the provision of audiology and environmental equipment, specifically tailored to the needs of deaf students.

It would also provide a forum for sharing information about positive developments within individual institutions.

15.

ISSUES RELEVANT TO BOTH FE AND HE SECTORS: LANGUAGE SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

15.1 GENERAL ISSUES

Table 3 in Section 4, above, shows the services LSPs provide, within the framework of linguistic access options available to deaf students.

Although the web-based survey of the number and qualifications of Language Support Professionals (LSPs) in F&HE will not report until next year (see Section 10, above), much evidence was collected from interviewees on relevant issues and challenges. It should be said that some of this evidence often also applies to the school sector, but in the context of the predominance of the ToD role in providing services.

As will be described, shortage of appropriately qualified staff is compounded by: lack of professional registration for some types of LSP; lack of knowledge in institutions about what constitutes a quality service, and lack of standardised conditions and pay rates for staff.

There was evidence that some institutions, in both sectors, have made concentrated efforts to set appropriate standards of expectations, conditions and pay scales specifically for LSPs, and to establish means of ensuring that good contacts are made in order to employ and/or buy in trained staff when needed. However, there was contrary evidence for other institutions: at one college it is apparently normal practice for students from a Stage 2 class to be asked to interpret for deaf students.

In some situations, there were reports of inappropriately low rates of pay for skilled staff. There were also isolated incidences of inappropriately *high* rates of pay for under-qualified staff – on a ‘better than nothing’ principle – which could reduce incentive to undertake necessary further training.

The aforementioned web-based survey will also elicit specific information on how staff are recruited and employed. There was evidence, from interviews, that some further education colleges use agencies (eg local Communication Support agencies); others employ freelance individuals on a short-term contractual basis and others recruit and employ staff within the institution.

There were reports of reluctance to give open ended contracts to LSPs because of fluctuations in deaf student numbers from year to year, leading to lack of security for LSP appointments. As with the underpayment problems, this further reduces the incentive to attract new people into LSP roles.

In the end, the people who lose out most, when quantity and quality of services is poor, are students requiring a high quality professional LSP service. A number of respondents reported evidence of students dropping out of courses, and others being put off attending courses, because the quality of LSP service offered was so low.

The Access Lead Specialism team of the Scottish Further Education Unit are intending to explore issues in relation to qualifications of LSPs and support tutors. Again, the proposed Centre for Linguistic Access would provide a good source of advice and guidance to both FE and HE sectors.

15.2. BSL/ENGLISH INTERPRETERS

15.2.1. SHORTAGE OF REGISTERED STAFF

Appendix 3 shows the qualifications and levels of registration required by BSL/English interpreters in Scotland. It shows that there is a clear distinction between training and qualifications in language fluency and in those relating to skills in interpreting between the two languages of BSL and English. As with interpretation situations between two spoken languages, it is expected that those providing a BSL/English interpreting service have high levels of fluency in both languages, as well as training and accredited skills in translation and interpretation.

Registration systems operated by CACDP (formerly known as the Council for the Advancement in Communication with Deaf People) and the Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters (SASLI) not only provide a means of guaranteeing agreed professional standards of service, but also lead to clear expectations of working conditions (including health and safety issues), and professional support and training.

The shortage of appropriately qualified BSL/English interpreters in F&HE was a consistent message throughout the collection of information for this part of the scoping exercise. Comments such as: 'it goes without saying' and 'the biggest problem' were used regularly when referring to this issue.

At the time of writing there are only 49 registered members registered by the SASLI and 9 Associate (trainee) members. There are also known to be 2 BSL/English interpreters in Scotland who are not SASLI-registered, but who are registered with CACDP (formerly known as the Council for the Advancement in Communication with Deaf People).

Thus, there are only currently 60 BSL/English interpreters in Scotland who are sufficiently trained and qualified to provide a BSL/English interpreting service of any kind, across all situations where interpretation is needed. The RNID verbally reported that their Communication Support agency currently supplies 15 appropriately registered BSL/English interpreters to F&HE students in Scotland – mostly within HE.

It is known that it can sometimes be hard to attract interpreters into educational situations: the length of commitment needed, and the pressures to take on roles other than straightforward interpreting, means an even more limited pool of possible interpreters than that suggested by the total number in Scotland. In a recent seminar at Deaf Action, Edinburgh University's Rachel O'Neill suggested the need to consider the development of a specialist career path for BSL/English interpreters in educational interpreting. There is overlap here with the issues raised in the section on Communication Support Workers (section 15.5, below) – in particular the fact that unqualified interpreters are often employed to provide a BSL/English interpreting service, and also that the job can be different in nature to other types of interpreting assignment. These issues apply whether the posts concerned are entitled 'Interpreter', 'Communicator' or 'Communication Support Worker'.

15.2.2. ACCESS TO INTERPRETER TRAINING

It has been well recognised that shortage of training opportunities is a major reason for the lack of registered BSL/English interpreters.

Underpinning the shortage of training opportunities has been the dearth of trained Tutors of BSL. The Scottish Government-funded 'Training of Trainers' ('ToTs') course, based at Heriot Watt University, has provided a means to begin addressing the long-term situation, by training Tutors of BSL and equipping them with the skills to train others. However, it will take a while before the impact of this filters down into increased provision of advanced-level BSL courses (the ultimate aim being to eventually double the numbers of BSL/English interpreters in Scotland). Future provision for those wishing to train as BSL Tutors includes a BSL Tutor pathway within the proposed SQA PDA in BSL Studies (see details below and in Appendix 6).

Appendix 3 contains a summary of all levels of BSL training available through CACDP, BDA and SQA. Currently there are very few advanced training courses in BSL Advanced/Level 3, and only one CACDP Level 4, the latter provided by 'Actual Sign' in Glasgow, which has only recently become available. This means a thin supply of people for interpreter training (which is also available at Heriot Watt).

Even for those eligible to apply, interpreter training is expensive and there are few grants available for people wishing to apply; most of those attending are seconded by employers.

It is hoped that a proposed 'apprenticeship' model of interpreter training will help to 'fast track' those with language fluency skills to registered status.

It is also hoped that current collaborative developments between Moray House, Heriot Watt and SQA will radically increase the range of types and levels of BSL training available in Scotland, particularly strengthening provision at advanced levels. Proposals include:

- A BSL degree at Heriot Watt University;
- An SQA PDA in BSL Studies: it is hoped that this will open up possibilities of delivery of SVQ 4 in BSL in FE colleges throughout Scotland (exploiting the availability of graduates from the ToTs course). There are various pathways possible within this PDA, including one for those aspiring to be interpreters (see Appendix 6);

- Extending the range of BSL courses at SCQF levels 5 & 6 (equivalent of Standard Grade and Higher levels).

15.3. NOTETAKERS

In the experience of the Scottish representative of the Association of Notetakers, many colleges and universities in Scotland are not aware of professional notetaking for deaf students: 'they think that deaf students either use an interpreter or lipread one hundred percent'.

15.3.1. ELECTRONIC NOTETAKERS (ENTS)

In order to guarantee a high level of professional competence, CACDP expect that ENTs will have achieved the 'Level 3 Certificate for LSPs Working with Deaf and Deafblind People (Notetaking)'. This replaces the previous qualification, which was at Level 2.

SASLI understands that there are 11 ENTs at this level currently working in Scotland. The Association of notetakers report 8 Scottish members at this level.

The SQA is in the process of establishing an award in electronic notetaking. One course has taken place within the last year, at the SSC, and it is understood that the award will become part of the SQA's provision in the near future. The SSC hopes that there will be at least two courses provided annually. The Association of Notetakers do not currently recognise this qualification, as the qualifying typing speed is less than that required by CACDP.

It is understood that ENTs tend to work for agencies (RNID, Deaf Connections, Deaf Action etc), which means that standard rates apply.

The RNID currently has six qualified ENTs working for them in Scotland, and two who are 'working towards the qualification'. Most of the work of these eight is within five universities in the central belt.

The RNID workers are required to follow a code of ethics and the Communication Services co-ordinator expressed concern that this does not always apply to other notetakers. They also raised the issue that the notetakers are expected to have enhanced disclosure, because deaf students are classified as 'vulnerable adults'.

There is evidence of inconsistency in working conditions and pay rates among those institutions that employ non-agency notetakers. Advertisements have been seen for pay ranging from £8 to £20 per hour. One agency notetaker stated that she was 'fairly sure that employers don't know much about notetaking and need to be educated'.

15.3.2. MANUAL NOTETAKERS

The same CACDP qualification is available for manual as for electronic notetaking, by taking a manual-option route through the course.

There is no equivalent SQA route for manual notetaking.

The Association of Notetakers does not know of any qualified manual notetakers working in Scotland. They, and other interviewees, reported that manual notetakers in F&HE tend to be other students who are qualified in the subject (usually at a higher level) who are paid £6-£10 per hour and are untrained. One Communication Support Worker said they had noticed a growing trend, among institutions, to pay untrained hearing students to photocopy their own notes for fellow deaf students.

15.3.3. REGISTRATION

As noted already, registration not only provides a means of guaranteeing an agreed professional standard of service, but also leads to clear expectations of working conditions (including health and safety issues) and professional support and training.

At present SASLI does not have a register of notetakers. CACDP plans to have a register for both manual and electronic notetakers from April 2008.

15.4 LIPSPEAKERS

CACDP registers lipspeakers at level 2 and level 3. Registration level is dependant upon the equivalent level of the CACDP Certificate in Lipspeaking held by the lipspeaker.

It is understood that there is little current demand for lipspeakers within F&HE in Scotland. The RNID report that they have not been asked to provide one in these sectors for over two years. One registered speaker interviewed felt that most situations lent themselves more to notetaking or interpreting, other than isolated examples where a speaker might be moving about within a group - for example, guided tours. It may also be the case that few students who use lipreading to access information know that such a service exists and/or that lecturers and fellow students are generally better now at ensuring good lipreading conditions. However, there is little hard evidence to support these suggestions.

15.5. 'COMMUNICATION SUPPORT WORKERS'

During interviews, it became clear that the role and, indeed, the very existence of 'Communication Support Workers' ('CSWs') or 'Communicators', as a distinct category of Language Support Professional, is a contested issue. Key concerns were that professional standards in the roles they undertake (BSL/English interpreting, notetaking etc) may often be compromised by a perceived need for role flexibility and a 'better than nothing' meeting of demand, where resources are scarce. Because this impacts directly on all the other LSP roles, and on the role of specialist support tutor, and because of indications of the significant numbers of workers involved in F&HE, it was decided to provide as full an exploration of issues as was possible within this study.

Throughout this section, the abbreviation CSW will be used to denote workers who have a job title of Communication Support Worker, Communicator or other equivalent title. As will be described, this does not, in itself, denote a clearly-defined LSP role. In fact, it should be borne in mind that pressures to employ under-qualified staff and to request role flexibility can also apply to posts entitled 'interpreter'. The proposed survey of F&HE professionals will be helpful in establishing the job titles and qualifications of staff within relevant posts.

15.5.1. THE ROLE OF THE CSW: THE CURRENT SITUATION

Definitions of the role of CSWs usually state that they provide a full range of access and support services for deaf students and pupils: BSL/English interpreting; manually coded English (eg SSE) communication; notetaking; lipspeaking; language modification etc.

See for example:

- FACE: <http://www.facefordeafstudents.org.uk/>
- RNID: http://www.rnid.org.uk/information_resources/communicating_better/communication_support/communication_support_workers/
- 'Learn Direct' Careers Advice: <http://www.learn-direct-advice.co.uk/helpwithyourcareer/jobprofiles/profiles/profile1334/>

The tasks of BSL/English interpreting and of notetaking invariably feature high on the lists, and some also list lipspeaking, language modification and study support as part of the job.

The CACP prefers to use the term 'Educational Communication Support Workers' (ECSWs), as the only qualification which has ever been available (see below) has been aimed at those working within education.

The role of the CSW dates back to the late 1980s, as a pragmatic response to the lack of individually qualified staff to fulfill necessary access and support roles within post-16 education – and the perceived need for a professional with the adaptability to be able to change role to suit an individual deaf student's shifting requirements (see Green and Nickerson, 1992).

Controversy over the role has existed ever since. The argument that a multi-skilled, adaptable professional is required in educational situations is countered by concerns that, without adequate regulation of professional standards, quality is inevitably compromised; if a student requires two different types of access support, this does not reduce the requirement for a high standard in both types of service. However, at the same time, the institution may see the need for flexibility and versatility as paramount. One experienced college co-ordinator of services stressed the value of CSWs because of their willingness to do a range of tasks.

The lack of resolution over these competing forces means that a job title 'Communication Support Worker' does not, in itself, indicate the types of linguistic access roles or standards of qualifications expected. The ambiguity leads to vagueness and confusion.

It also makes the task of ascertaining the numbers of CSWs, and the access services they provide, doubly difficult: apart from difficulty in establishing the services they are supplying, the secretary of the newly formed Scottish Association of CSWs (SACSW) pointed out that there are a number of other professionals with arbitrarily generic titles, whose job functions are sometimes the same as those of CSWs (eg learning support assistants etc). This applies within the school as well as the post-school sectors. Section 6.2 (chart 4), above, shows that there is a deaf Communication Support Worker in the schools sector, which suggests a slightly different role again.

Bearing this in mind, between 200 and 300 CSWs are estimated by SACSWS to be working in Scotland, approx half of whom are assumed to be in education. The SACSWS secretary estimates this number from anecdotal evidence, as well as from the fact that over 200 Scotland based CSWs responded to a feature on the television programme See Hear.

Currently, no CSWs in Scotland are fully registered with SASLI as BSL/English interpreter and only one has associate (trainee) status.

Therefore, only one out of an estimated 100 educational CSWs has recognised interpreting skills. The SACSWS understands, from anecdotal evidence, that most CSWs are currently providing interpreting services, for at least part of their time, with a maximum of BSL Level 2.

In their description of the role of CSWs, the RNID are careful to point out that, 'CSWs are not registered interpreters and their services are not offered by RNID Communication Services' (see above weblink).

Likely future developments are discussed later in this section.

15.5.2. TRAINING AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS: THE CURRENT SITUATION

Accredited training

The Edexcel Communication Support Worker Award is the only accredited training course which assumes the multi-skilled model (Edexcel is an English exam board). There has been ongoing debate about the content of the training, given the arguments above, and there has been constant pressure to increase the expectations of standards of BSL competence, interpreting skills and qualification in notetaking, lipspeaking etc. For various reasons, there has been recent confusion over the availability of the qualification in England. The CACDP website gives current information at:

<http://www.cacdp.org.uk/learners/Career-Options/educational-csws.pdf>

This CSW qualification has never been available in Scotland and there is no equivalent SQA award.

Code of Practice

NATED is currently up-dating a CSW Code of Practice.

The SACSWS secretary stated that the lack of formal structures for quality standards is 'the biggest complaint we get from support workers'.

Registration

As noted above, registration not only provides a means of guaranteeing an agreed professional standard of service, but also leads to clear expectations of working conditions (including health and safety issues) and professional support and training.

The two organisations which provide national registers of BSL/English interpreters are SASLI (Scotland) and CACDP (UK). Neither organisation has a CSW register.

Professional Association

Various attempts have been made to establish support networks in order to address some of the professional challenges inherent in the CSW role. The SACSW was recently formed in response to the perceived need for CSWs to assert a more independent development.

The UK-wide parent association, the ACSW, is 'looking towards' making membership dependant upon possession of the Edexcel CSW qualification or a minimum of Level 3 BSL and an accredited deaf awareness qualification. In recognition of the fact that few Scottish CSWs had the minimum requirements, it was agreed that these requirements could be waived in Scotland for a year, in order to raise awareness and build up a network.

15.5.3. WORKING CONDITIONS

The lack of agreed standards and lack of clarity over the role leads to varying expectations and varying employment conditions among institutions.

As already described, there are pressures for versatility. There are also financial pressures, as the cost of employing qualified professionals is likely to exceed the funding available in further education (see below).

Therefore it is perhaps unsurprising that there were reports of CSWs being asked to do widely-varying ranges of tasks: BSL/English interpreting; translating notes into BSL; producing BSL videos; professional notetaking; modifying of English; arranging exam access; being an advocate etc. In short, there can be a pressure from employers to 'do everything' (SACSW secretary).

Health and safety issues were raised, in the context of long hours expected without breaks – with the likely impact of a consequent reduction in quality of service provided to the student.

Institutions may look towards RNID or the Scottish Deaf Association for advice but most will follow the guideline each council have for general support workers and use that; they refuse to take into account the training and skill involved as a CSW' (SACSW secretary).

Variations in reports of rates of pay ranged from £6 (just over the minimum wage) through to £19 per hour. Examples were given of some areas where level of pay was equated with that for classroom assistants (approximately £9 per hour). As a contrast, one college was reported as advertising a pay rate of £35k for a CSW post requiring Level 2 in BSL.

One recent example was given of a college-based CSW, who returned to work after the summer holiday to find that their pay rate had been reduced from £19 to £12 per hour – but was still expected to do the same job

RNID currently recommended the following CSW pay rates over the phone to individuals who enquire:

CSW with level 2 BSL: up to £15 per hour

CSW with level 3 BSL: up to £18 per hour

Qualifications relating to other tasks which may be expected (such as notetaking and lipspeaking etc) are not included in advice given, due to the complexities of varying permutations of role, as described above.

Examples were given of students dropping out because levels of interpretation of CSWs were so poor, with people having as little as BSL Level 1 being employed. One CSW interviewee described how he was recently asked to interpret for a student in further education and to 'assist (the student) with his writing'. The rate of pay offered was £8 per hour. He refused the job, but later discovered that someone with BSL Level 1 had accepted the post, and that the student had subsequently withdrawn from the course.

15.5.4. TRAINING AND REGISTRATION: LIKELY DEVELOPMENTS

Training and qualification

CACDP report that Edexcel are currently revamping the CSW accredited training course. CACDP are involved in the development. At the time of writing, the process is reported as being stalled, because of the need to fit the qualification to National Occupational Standards (NOS) for classroom support workers. The NOS are being developed by the Training and Development Agency and by Lifelong Learning UK for, respectively, pre and post 16 providers.

If the plans work out, it is expected that the new course will offer the following:

- A qualification in Educational Support Work with Deaf Learners in either schools or further education (from Edexcel);
- A qualification in Facilitating Communication (from CACDP).

A choice of 'facilitating' units would be offered by CACDP to enable different routes to qualification, depending on whether the worker intends to mainly work with BSL users or spoken English users, and whether they mainly provide (or intend to provide) notetaking/lipspeaking etc services. If they wish to provide a wide range of services, they would be able to take additional units accordingly. At the time of writing, two of the facilitating units are still to be accredited.

The concept of 'BSL/English communication facilitation', as opposed to 'BSL/English interpretation' is introduced at Level 3 (see Appendix 3 for detail of comparative levels of other BSL provision). Consequently, there is an implication that there is some degree of trade-off between quality of interpretation and range of services offered by the same worker.

More detail is available at:

<http://www.cacdp.org.uk/learners/Career-Options/educational-csws.pdf>

There is also an implication that there will need to be a standardised means for CSWs to be defined by the role(s) they perform. An institution needs to clearly be able to identify/distinguish the range of services a worker is expected to provide – and an individual worker needs to be able to clearly identify the range and level of competencies within their qualification.

It would seem to be timely for an appropriate training/qualification development in Scotland (eg within the SQA's Professional Development Award provision), which would take account of the distinct nature of the Scottish situation.

Registration

Both SASLI and CACDP are currently considering the possibility of establishing respective registers of CSWs.

15.6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is a general need to consider the establishment of shared pools of specialist LSPs and support tutors, because of the fluctuating numbers of deaf students within individual institutions, and the diversity of their individual access and support requirements. The proposed Centre for Linguistic Access could have a key role here.
- It would be useful to establish the number of deaf adults working in F/HE, at all levels.
- There is a general need for institutions to provide consistent and appropriate rates of pay for specialist LSPs and support tutors. The proposed Centre for Linguistic Access would be able to provide ongoing information and advice.

BSL/English interpreters

- There continues to be an acute shortage of BSL/English interpreters. Advantage needs to be taken of the opportunities afforded by:
 - the existence of a newly graduated group of BSL Tutor trainers;
 - a raft of SQA/Heriot Watt/Edinburgh University proposals to boost all levels and types of BSL training, particularly at advanced and degree levels;
 - the possibility of introducing a 'fast-track' apprenticeship route for interpreter training.
- The possibility of establishing a specialist career route in educational interpreting should be considered, in light of the distinct nature of interpreting within educational situations.

Notetakers

- Both institutions and deaf students themselves need to be made aware of the importance of using appropriately qualified professionals to take notes for deaf students.
- Appropriate, standardised pay scales and working conditions should be implemented across Scottish institutions.
- The above would raise demand for professionally qualified notetakers, leading to a sharp increase in demand for relevant training opportunities in Scotland. There is likely to be more demand for electronic notetakers than for manual notetakers.
- It will be interesting to monitor the effects of the new CACDP professional register of notetakers and implications for the potential of developing of a Scottish register.

Lipspeakers

- More information is needed on the potential value of lipspeaking in F&HE.

Communication Support Workers

- There is a pressing need to clarify the role of the CSW and the standards and appropriate employment conditions expected.

There is a particular need to resolve the dilemma caused by the demand for a single professional to adapt to different access and support roles, and the need for professional standards needed to meet the requirements of the tasks expected (eg BSL/English interpreting, notetaking etc).

In Scottish F&HE, the balance currently appears to be tipped towards a high expectation of adaptability and a low expectation of professional standards.

- CACDP and Edexcel aim to resolve the dilemma by creating a qualification with the flexibility to 'mix and match' specialised pathways leading to particular functions or roles. There is a need for an adaptation, or equivalent development, in Scotland to take account of the distinctiveness of the Scottish situation.
- The lack of clarity of the CSW role currently mitigates against the establishment of a professional register. Once the role becomes clearly defined, the establishment of a professional register will be beneficial to CSWs, deaf students and employers.

16.

ISSUES SPECIFIC TO FURTHER EDUCATION

16.1. ASSESSMENT

16.1.1. THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The BRITE Centre is responsible for building the capacity of Scottish further education colleges to identify 'technological support needs' of students with additional needs (including deaf students) and to 'implement support strategies', particularly in relation to assistive technology. Although the focus is on technology, BRITE also take into account access requirements and services relating to access/support professionals.

The BRITE Centre aims to train at least one learning support co-ordinator (or equivalent title) in each college, to assess access and support requirements and to facilitate appropriate services and resources. The BRITE Centre website lists participating colleges (<http://www.brite.ac.uk/resources.htm>).

The training covers a wide variety of types of additional need and encourages assessors to be open in attitude. Assessors are encouraged to use the framework provided by the Quality Indicators for Assessment Needs Toolkit (Disabled Students Stakeholder Group, 2005).

However, as the training and toolkit both cover such a wide range of student groups, there is inevitably little detail on the complexities of deaf student linguistic access requirements. Therefore the depth and nature of assessment is very dependent on the knowledge and experience which an individual assessor already has, and wide variations between colleges are reported, in both assessments and in budget management. For example, inexperienced assessors are unlikely to understand the reasons why a deaf student may have subject aptitude and ability but not have the required level of English – and consequently may initiate inappropriate strategies for addressing this. Also, they may not fully understand that students coming straight from school will not always have experience of - or be aware of – the full range of access services which are available.

Brennan et al's study, in 2005, highlighted the need for a supplementary set of indicators to address the complexities of deaf students' situations, in line with the NATED assessment pack mentioned in 11.1.1., above. It is understood that the BRITE Centre is currently collaborating over the possible development of such a supplementary toolkit.

One college, which attracts a high proportion of deaf students, reported that they have always managed to find funding for the best access services they can provide for each deaf student. Assessment is undertaken by an assessor with experience in working with deaf students. Funding is initially approved by the head of Support for Learning, and ratified by the Vice Principal. As a contrast it was reported that some other colleges do not find a way to provide funding and tell students that they need to approach charities to fund their access services. There is also anecdotal evidence that some deaf students are simply not being assessed at all.

It was not possible, within this study, to explore how well colleges provide linguistic access to the assessment process itself but, again, it is likely that this will depend on the knowledge and experience of key staff within the individual college: one college with a specialist background reported that they ensure that linguistic/communication requirements are checked before interviews and that appropriate access services are provided.

16.1.2. ASSESSMENT AND FUNDING

The current situation

Mainstream provision

Students indicate their deafness on the college application form and this information is passed on to the learning support co-ordinator (although, as noted above, there is evidence that information does not get passed on in some circumstances). The assessment process is expected to be paid for through SFC core funding.

If the learning support co-ordinator assesses that access services are needed, they apply to SFC for Extended Learning Support, which is a weighting mechanism.

Simplistically, the weighting is 1.5, but there are a number of variables within the formula used to calculate the actual amount of additional money paid to the college. Appendix 6 contains detail of the how the calculation is worked out; the information was supplied by the SFC statistics department to assist this study.

This type of system means that the amount of money paid to the college for access services and resources is not dependent on the estimated cost of actual access services required, but on the type and length of the course. As can be seen from one of the examples in Appendix 1, the college would receive an extra £5,700 to cover the cost of access services for a deaf student on a full-time science course.

This is well below the cost of employing a full-time electronic notetaking service or a full-time BSL/English interpreter – and sometimes a student would require both at once. There is also the Additional Support Needs for Learning Allowance which provides additional support towards study and travel related expenses to student who incur additional personal expenditure as a result of their disability. This funding is available to student who are receiving ELS.

The ELS weighting system in FE means that funding for deaf students is always going to be dependant to some extent on subsidy from other sources – in particular from surplus amounts where student needs are less expensive than the additional ELS amount paid to the college. Because of this, it is likely to be harder for smaller colleges to 'balance the books'.

As a contrast, as will be explained in a later section, the DSA funding for deaf HE students is calculated on the basis of an estimate of the actual costs of the specific services required by an individual student.

It is unclear how far individual colleges are able to claim bursary amounts to supplement individual funding for deaf students, under the category of 'study support':

http://www.sfc.ac.uk/information/info_circulars/sfc/2007/sfc1407/GuidanceBursaries.pdf

'Discrete' provision

Some deaf students may also be registered on courses which attract a different sort of funding, known as 'DG18' funding. This applies to separate provision for students with learning difficulties. It is still weighted, but on the basis of 1.8 rather than the 1.5 of ELS. As noted already, it is not clear how far this includes courses which are designed for deaf students, rather than for students with a cognitive learning disability (eg adult literacy courses for deaf people; courses for tutors of sign language etc).

The 'needs-led' pilot and ELS

Until now, the assessor has needed to categorise the student as being 'deaf/hearing impaired' to trigger this funding. At the time of writing, a new system of 'needs-led assessments' is being piloted in 10 colleges. The aim is to bring the framework of assessment into line with those used in schools and in HE. This means that ELS funding will not be triggered simply by categorising a student as deaf/hearing impaired, but by the fact that access services are required.

However, the ELS funding mechanism, and therefore the issues of funding shortfall, as just described, will remain the same.

Number of deaf students attracting ELS funding

Table 22 shows that remarkably low percentages of deaf students are attracting ELS funding. In 9.2., above, it was demonstrated that colleges which have traditionally provided specific services for deaf students in the past are not attracting higher percentages of deaf students now, compared to other colleges. However, the ELS table demonstrates that two colleges particularly known for providing specialised services for deaf students, Motherwell and Glasgow Metropolitan, have the highest proportions of ELS funding for deaf students. As a contrast, the colleges with the highest numbers of deaf students have few or no students with ELS funding.

It may be that some colleges are providing access but finding other sources of funding (such as individual bursary funding from the SFC [from the Scottish Funding Council, 2007b:33]), but the dearth of ELS funding in many colleges may indicate that colleges with less knowledge about deafness are less likely to provide access services to deaf students.

Worthy of further investigation is the fact that further detail of the statistics show that of those receiving ELS funding, 13 were HND students, and therefore eligible for DSA.

Table 22 Deaf/HI FE student enrolments and additional funded hours under ELS in 2005/06

Name of college	Total number of student enrolments	Number of deaf/HI student enrolments	No. HI enrolments with additional funded hours for ELS*
Aberdeen College	25,538	160	7 (4%)
Adam Smith College	22,336	180	7 (4%)
Angus College	7,762	91	6 (7%)
Anniesland College	6,778	49	2 (4%)
Ayr College	7,292	70	4 (6%)
Banff & Buchan College of Further Education	12,709	166	0 (0%)
Borders College	6,139	72	0 (0%)
Cardonald College	9,191	24	5 (21%)
Central College of Commerce	6,801	19	1 (5%)
Clydebank College	7,714	53	1 (2%)
Coatbridge College	4,671	40	4 (10%)
Cumbernauld College	6,174	52	3 (6%)
Dumfries and Galloway College	7,219	86	5 (6%)
Dundee College	17,431	89	16 (18%)
Edinburgh's Telford College	15,883	77	12 (16%)
Elmwood College	4,286	50	2 (4%)
Forth Valley College	16,175	26	5 (19%)
Glasgow College of Nautical Studies	7,193	66	8 (12%)
Glasgow Metropolitan College	11,213	69	20 (29%)
Inverness College	4,557	25	2 (8%)
James Watt College of F&HE	18,319	55	8 (15%)
Jewel and Esk Valley College	7,536	51	1 (2%)
John Wheatley College	4,850	124	5 (4%)
Kilmarnock College	7,442	66	4 (6%)
Langside College	9,819	45	0 (0%)
Lauder College	11,226	38	1 (3%)
Lews Castle College	1,954	14	1 (7%)
Moray College	4,293	43	2 (5%)
Motherwell College	14,825	98	22 (22%)
The North Highland College	6,093	89	0 (0%)
Newbattle Abbey College	108	0	n/a
North Glasgow College	7,905	4	0 (0%)
Oatridge Agricultural College	2,443	5	0 (0%)
Orkney College	1,494	12	0 (0%)
Perth College	6,026	81	4 (5%)
Reid Kerr College	12,090	117	9 (8%)
Sabhal Mor Ostaig	688	13	0 (0%)
Shetland College of Further Education	4,070	31	0 (0%)
South Lanarkshire College	4,530	42	5 (12%)
Stevenson College	11,677	38	2 (5%)
Stow College	8,440	41	0 (0%)
The Barony College	2,364	0	n/a
West Lothian College	6,276	11	0 (0%)
Grand Count	359,530	2482	174(7%)

*ELS = Extended Learning Support

16.1.2. QUALITY CONTROL OF THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND OF ACCESS/SUPPORT PROVISION

The 10 colleges in the needs-led pilot have, apparently, opted not to use the Quality Indicator toolkit, preferring instead to use the individual professional judgement of Support for Learning staff within each college. As has been demonstrated, the situation is already geographically variable for deaf students, given the lack of quality indicators relating to deafness. It could be argued that adding more subjectivity to the process is likely to further exacerbate the variability.

At the time of writing, the SFC and the 10 colleges are negotiating these issues. The colleges have suggested that concerns about geographic variation will be addressed by the HMIE reviews, as they include review of the use of students Personal Learning and Support Plans (PLSPs). However, reviews are undertaken infrequently, and examples of inspections on website invariably focus solely on physical and technical aspects of accessibility for disabled students - therefore not apparently address the quality of linguistic access provided to deaf students (<http://www.hmie.gov.uk>).

Interview respondents reported varying examples of monitoring and review procedures. There was an indication that written forms may often be the main means of eliciting views, rather than individual review meetings. In some institutions, the learning support staff to student ratio may be so high that regular, individual attention is impossible. However, it can be argued that the distinctive nature of deaf students' situations creates the need for a standard review procedure which is specifically-tailored, and which involves 1:1 monitoring meetings. The NATED assessment process builds in such reviews at regular intervals during the course.

16.1.3. UNMET NEED

The statistics do not show a higher withdrawal rate for deaf students compared to all students. Nevertheless, there is much anecdotal evidence of deaf students being put off attending further education because of lack of resources.

Although discrimination legislation covers admissions, one school/FE transition worker reported that it was 'quite common', in their experience, for individual colleges to tell deaf young people that they can only have a place if an interpreter can be found.

16.2. ACCESS TO SQA EXAMINATIONS

Some issues relating to SQA examinations within schools also apply to further education situations (see latter sub-sections of 10.9.2., above (SQA assessment policy; accessibility of English in SQA exams; signed questions and responses).

16.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is a need for specialist support tutors for deaf students, to address English language issues specific to the situations of deaf learners.
- A supplementary 'QI Toolkit', along the lines of the NATED pack, is needed to address the complexities of assessing deaf students' linguistic access requirements. A centralised resource for advice and information would help to ensure consistency across colleges.

- All colleges should ensure that access requirements for assessment interviews are checked out, and that relevant arrangements are made.
- There is a need for consistent practice in ensuring that information on disclosed hearing loss is passed on to learning support teams.
- The wide variation among colleges in proportions of deaf students receiving ELS funding should be further investigated.
- In particular, it may be the case that colleges with less knowledge about deafness are providing less access services to deaf students. This could be explored, although all further education colleges who provide HE level courses should be aware that HE students can apply for DSA funding. Students undertaking a HE course at college would apply to SAAS for their fees and any maintenance support for which they may be eligible, during this process information is made available as to the purpose of the DSA allowance.
- There is a need to address the fact that there is likely to be a considerable shortfall between the amount of weighted ELS funding and the cost of providing linguistic access, where LSPs and specialist support tutors are involved.
- All further education colleges who provide HE-level courses should be aware that HE students can apply for DSA funding.
- There needs to be a robust means of monitoring the quality of assessments and of linguistic access provided through the lifetime of the courses provided across Scotland. HMIE need to take into account the complexities of linguistic access for deaf students during college reviews.
- There is anecdotal evidence that deaf students can be deterred from attending further education provision due to poor resourcing of courses. A fuller investigation of unmet need would shed further light on this.

SQA examinations (as per school section)

- The results of the forthcoming SQA 'impact assessment' of exam access are likely to lead to improvements in a number of ways, including accessibility of English. It will be interesting to keep in touch with developments.
- Ongoing work is needed on the practice and standardisation of the provision of signed questions in exams. It is hoped that SQA takes on board the expressed concerns about the use of Avatar 'signers'.

17.

ISSUES SPECIFIC TO HIGHER EDUCATION

17.1. ASSESSMENT: DISABLED STUDENTS' ALLOWANCE (DSA)

The DSA is the main means by which linguistic access is funded for deaf HE students throughout the UK.

During the writing of this report, the maximum amount of the Non-Medical Personnel Helpers part of the DSA increased by 60% to £20,000 pa. This is very good news for deaf HE students and for HEIs, as it should take the pressure off problems in having to find top-up funding to meet shortfalls, as noted in 11.5., above.

The 'Deaf Students in Higher Education' study showed that, in 2003, assessment for DSA in Scotland was patchy and variable in quality. Particular concerns were raised about: the shortage of assessors; the variable skills and knowledge relating to deafness; the need for a specialist set of quality indicators to supplement those in the 'QI Toolkit' and the need to extend the categories of students eligible for DSA (Brennan et al, 2005:91).

The Disabled Students Stakeholder Group assisted by BRITE Centre developed the QI Toolkit. Previously, most assessments had been done by Access Centres, in addition to a list of individuals and organisations which was held by the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS). The Toolkit aimed to make it possible for all institutions offering HE courses (both colleges and HEIs) to undertake their own assessments, with minimum standards of quality guaranteed.

17.1.1. VALIDATION OF DSA ASSESSMENT CENTRES

Access Centres are still deemed to have the most expertise in assessing deaf students, particularly in Motherwell and Edinburgh, where assessors with specific knowledge and experience in deafness are employed. However, there are now only 3 Access Centres in Scotland; previously there were 4, but Aberdeen recently closed.

The validation process

Currently, 30 universities and colleges are validated to do their own DSA assessments. A sub-group of the Disabled Students Stakeholder Group is responsible for the validating. The group is chaired by a member of the Scottish Government's Higher Education Learning Support (HELS) team. HEIs apply for approval by completing a form and sending examples of assessments, using the QI Toolkit format.

When an institution is validated, it is the place that is validated, rather than the individual person who made the application. Thus, an experienced person may move to a different university or college, but have to apply again on behalf of the new institution, if it is not already validated.

Currently validated HEIs

Staff at HEIs provided details on the 30 validated institutions for this scoping study, in order to investigate indications of expertise in assessing deaf students. We are grateful to them for this help. The findings are as follows:

- 6 were assessed for specific groups other than deaf students (eg dyslexic students);
- the others were approved for all but, within these:
 - one indicated specific expertise in assessing deaf students;
 - one specified that they did not have the expertise to assess deaf students;
 - the others were approved for all groups, but some stated that they would send 'more complex cases' to an Access Centre or to an external organisation. Examples of external organisations included: Tayside Association for the Deaf and North East Deaf Society.

In terms of staff training reported, the vast majority said they had BRITE training, and many others reported 'SEN' training – both of which are generic in nature and unlikely to provide insight into the complexities of linguistic access for deaf students.

References to expertise in deafness represented a wide range of types and levels of evidence of knowledge: many stated they had received deaf awareness training as part of CPD and some assessors reported that they had worked in Social Work Departments where they had 'responsibility for young people with hearing impairments'. The other individual instances were as follows:

- one member of staff was undertaking BSL training (unspecified level) and running deaf awareness;
- one technology advisor had 'considerable knowledge of sensory impairments';
- one person possessed a 'diploma in education of deaf and partially hearing children' and involvement in web resources for deaf students.

Implications

Although much has been done to clarify and standardise the criteria and process for assessing student requirements funded by DSA, the situation for assessors of deaf students remains unclear and apparently variable. For example, with reference to the information on currently-validated HEIs:

- there is no guarantee that a technology advisor has any knowledge or understanding about Language Support Professionals;
- there is no guarantee that a person learning BSL has any knowledge or expertise in services for deaf students who primary access through English (amplification, lipreading, notetaking etc);
- there is no standard curricula for deaf awareness courses, and some CPD courses are necessarily very short to fit the small amount of time available. Therefore there is no indication of the level and amount of skills and knowledge which have been gleaned from attendance on deaf awareness courses;
- there is no recognised criteria against which external organisations, or freelance individuals, can demonstrate their expertise.

It may be that the generic nature of the validation application form means that there is understatement of capacity to assess deaf students; there are no headings under which experience relevant to assessing deaf students is requested. However, it does seem that an HEI can be validated for all students without having to demonstrate particular expertise in linguistic access arrangements for deaf students: it appears to be left up to the HEI to decide what constitutes relevant experience, and to decide whether or not they need to bring in external expertise. One experienced HEI-based service co-ordinator reported concerns about students who have arrived to their institution complaining of poor experiences of linguistic access assessment and services in other HEIs.

Therefore it appears that there is little quality assurance in relation to the complexities of deaf student situations and a need for clearer criteria, against which HEIs can be validated on their capacity to assess deaf students.

In England, assessors wishing to use the aforementioned NATED assessment pack need to demonstrate a range of knowledge, skills and understanding across the full spectrum of linguistic access before they are approved to use it. A similar system could be considered.

17.1.2. ISSUES RAISED ABOUT ASSESSMENTS CURRENTLY BEING UNDERTAKEN

Quality control of deaf student assessments

All the assessors use the same, generic Toolkit format, which is designed to be open and to cover all aspects of assessments. However, without a supplementary set of indicators, the extent to which the format addresses the complexities of deaf student requirements will depend very much on the specific knowledge and skills of the individual assessor. Assessors interviewed for this study emphasised the degree of subjectivity this allows and the lack of quality control.

A related issue is the lack of standardised review process: there is a need to consider assessment as an ongoing process. Access and support requirements of deaf students are likely to change during the course; there is a need to be responsive to this and to ascertain how far the arrangements provided through DSA are valued. Assessors report that disability advisors often do not have the capacity to provide such detailed review. The NATED assessment builds ongoing monitoring and evaluation into the assessment process.

Institutions will all have systems in place to monitor quality of provision generally, but they are unlikely to have the capacity to monitor the complexities of deaf students' situations without specific guidance.

English language issues

One experienced assessor particularly expressed concerns about the danger of overlooking or not understanding the nature of English language challenges often faced by deaf students. She reported that, in her experience, there is a tendency for HEIs to use dyslexia support tutors for tutorials, who are not likely to have insight into the very different language situations of deaf students.

The fact that there are few tutors of deaf students in Scotland (unlike England) compounds this problem.

Support networks for DSA assessors

A network of DSA assessors (DSANET) plan meetings once a term and staff report that there is email contact in between. A web-based network, 'Sharepoint', also exists.

In addition, the Scottish Government's Higher Education and Learner Support department (HELS) have considered setting up forums for network and discussion about validation.

It may be that these networks could be tapped if specialist linguistic access resources are planned.

17.1.3. EXTENSION OF DSA CATEGORIES

In addition to recent increase in maximum level of DSA, eligibility of DSA has been extended to some of the categories of students previously excluded. However, students on access courses still don't qualify. This is likely to be raised in a forthcoming review process.

17.2. OTHER ISSUES

17.2.1. DISABLED STUDENTS' PREMIUM

Disabled Students' Premium is paid to institutions to cover additional costs of including disabled students which are not met by individual student DSA funding. Previously the fund was calculated on the basis of number of students in that institution with DSA funding.

It is now based on the overall number of students in the institution.

While this is an improvement in some ways, it can still disproportionately disadvantage some institutions. This can particularly apply to smaller places, some of which – for examples colleges of art - can typically have a relatively high proportion of deaf students.

However, the rise in DSA amount may counteract this disadvantage.

17.2.2. 'CHESS'

'CHESS' stands for, 'The Consortium of Higher Education Support Services with deaf and hearing impaired students'. It is an English-based organisation which exists to 'increase choice and quality of provision for deaf and hearing impaired students entering and undergoing higher education'

(<http://www.shu.ac.uk/sas/disability/specific/deaf/chess.html>)

CHESS report little activity in Scotland; although it is not a member-based organisation, meetings on key issues are invariably held in England. It may be worth considering a generation of interest by hosting a meeting in Scotland on an issue of particular interest.

17.2.3. ISOLATION

Although it was not specifically within the remit of this study, observations about isolation were sometimes proffered. A self-consciousness about being deaf – eg requesting a notetaker not to sit nearby; wearing in-ear hearing aids if at all possible – and lack of social contact with peers, was noted on a number of occasions. A central resource would be well – placed to be a focal point for deaf student networks, which would help to address this issue

17.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is a need for the HEI DSA validation process to take more account of the specific situations of deaf students. Clearer criteria are needed against which it can be judged whether or not institutions need to use external expertise.
- Clearer criteria are also needed for assessing whether an external agency or individual has the necessary expertise to undertake assessments, taking account of the full spectrum of linguistic access options. The system of approval for use of the NATED assessment pack could be used as a model.
- A supplementary 'QI Toolkit', along the lines of the NATED pack, would be useful in addressing the complexities of assessing deaf students' linguistic access requirements. A centralised resource for advice and information would help to ensure consistency across colleges.
- There is a need for specialist support tutors for deaf students, to address English language issues specific to the situations of deaf learners.
- The proposed Centre for Linguistic Access would provide a centralised resource for information, advice and expertise on the above issues. It could also provide a focal point for student networks and organisations such as CHESS.
- Students on Access courses are still not eligible to apply for DSA; this decision should be reconsidered.

- There is a need for robust quality control of support and access services supplied throughout the lifetime of the course, with inbuilt review, so that provision can be adapted to suit changes in circumstances and student preference.
- The impact of the increase in DSA funding on imbalances inherent in the Disabled Students' Premium should be monitored.

18.

OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

The remit of this study only included education provided within the school, further and higher education sectors in Scotland. It is recognised that deaf people also access, or may wish to access, other educational provision. For example, it is already known that many deaf people value learning opportunities within: adult and community education services, The Open University and the University of the Third Age. All of these provide vital routes to educational achievement. It is hoped that future study may address these areas.

18.1. RECOMMENDATION

- The remit of this study only included education provided within the school, further and higher education sectors in Scotland. It is recognised that many deaf adults also access, or may wish to access, other educational provision. It is hoped that future study may address such provision.

19.

FULL LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

THE SCHOOL SECTOR

SECTION 5: THE NUMBER OF DEAF PUPILS

- There is a need for detailed knowledge of the population of deaf pupils, in order to track the impact of relevant developments in policy, legislation, technology and linguistics. A project similar to ADPS could collaborate with ScotXed to share and complement data. It is essential that there is Scottish representation on the consortium which is currently planning UK-wide data collection.
- Consideration could be given to exploiting data on numbers of deaf children and young people held by audiology departments across Scotland.
- Consistency is needed in the criteria for opening deaf pupil IEPs among individual schools and local authorities. Investigation of the current picture across the country would be helpful. National networks of Additional Support for Learning Officers and of Educational Psychologists could be usefully exploited in such a study.
- Caution is needed in referring to currently available statistics on deaf pupils; there is a need to clearly state the definition of the group quoted.

SECTION 6: THE NUMBER OF PROFESSIONALS WHO PROVIDE LINGUISTIC ACCESS SERVICES FOR DEAF PUPILS

6.1. TEACHERS OF DEAF CHILDREN

- There are indications that there are less ToDs than there were four years ago. However, variations in frameworks of service provision mean that it is not possible to be categorical about this. In some areas, generic titles such as 'Learning Support Teachers' have replaced the more specialist ToD title. It would be useful to monitor the implications of this, with respect to the specialist knowledge, understanding and skills required to meet linguistic access needs of deaf pupils.
- The number of deaf and hard of hearing ToDs is very small, and is less than it was four years ago. Incentives could be considered to attract more deaf teachers into the profession.

- The age profile of the ToD population in Scotland, and limitations in specialist promotional structures, are causes for concern. There is a need to consider incentives to attract new teachers into the ToD profession: for example, financial incentives offered elsewhere in the UK.
- It would be useful to have updated information on ToD/pupil ratios, to explore the current extent of resourcing differences between local authorities.

6.2. OTHER PROFESSIONALS

- At present there are only 12 trained educational audiologists covering 32 local authorities in Scotland. There is a particular need to consider the capacity of services, in this profession, outwith the central belt.
- The majority of professionals, other than ToDs, who work with deaf pupils, have generic 'learning support' titles. More information is needed in order to ascertain the nature and extent of specific linguistic access and support provided by them, The following section provides information on specific qualifications.
- The majority of the 25 'other professionals' deaf staff are located in schools for deaf children. There is a particular lack of deaf staff within visiting services who provide services to deaf children in mainstream schools. This is also an area for further consideration.

SECTION 7: THE QUALIFICATIONS OF SPECIALIST SUPPORT AND ACCESS PROFESSIONALS WHO WORK WITH DEAF PUPILS

7.1. TEACHERS OF DEAF CHILDREN

- More detail is needed on the national picture regarding specific training and qualifications relating to linguistic assessments and language planning (both spoken language and BSL).
- A focus is needed, at both national and local authority levels, on the generally low levels of BSL qualifications among ToDs, and on the wide geographical variation, which indicates variation in linguistic choice.
- There is a need for the Scottish Government to re-consider the implication, in the competency framework guidance for the mandatory ToD qualification, that it may sometimes be appropriate for local authorities to employ ToDs who have low levels of fluency in BSL, when supporting a pupil who uses BSL.
- Few teachers in few services have any form of qualification in English-based sign systems. Yet there is widespread use of Sign Supported English (ie within the 'T/Ca' and 'T/Cb'. Services in table 7) and some reported use of Signed English. There appears to be a need for more study on the use of such systems in Scotland: for example, the extent to which the use of SSE may be related to limited availability of advanced levels of BSL training, rather than being a linguistic strategy. There also needs to be guidance on relevant training and qualifications, appropriate to the application of the system as a specific strategy.

7.2. OTHER PROFESSIONALS

- There is a need for an exploration of the specific nature of in-class linguistic access provided to deaf pupils by Learning Support staff and by staff known as Communication Support Workers across Scotland. It would be helpful to have clearer and more consistent role definitions, alongside recommended specialist qualifications and training, which clearly match the specialist nature of the posts.

SECTION 8: PRESCHOOL ISSUES: INFORMED CHOICE AND ASSESSMENTS

- The preschool period is particularly important for language development, both signed and spoken. However, few services provide rich environments in both, and it is not universally accepted that both are needed.

Huge strides have been made in the provision of services to facilitate early development of spoken language, including significant technological advances and accredited postgraduate training for professionals, and yet concerns have been expressed that some services do not provide sufficiently rich spoken language environments. Meanwhile there is evidence of low capacity in BSL skills and in provision of BSL assessments and resources among visiting services, despite evidence of benefits in developing both languages.

There is a need to address evidence about BSL, in the contexts of standpoints based on the arguments as set out in 8.1. It is suggested that open and honest debate is needed, about the implications of local authority variations in language approach perspectives and in resources relating to fully informed linguistic choices.

- In particular, further research and discussion is needed on strategies to maximise conditions for developing both languages where deafness is diagnosed early, especially where a child receives a cochlear implant in early years.
- There is a need for Health Boards to address concerns about geographical variation in the provision of UNHS and early intervention services, as outlined in the recent clinical audit of audiology services (Davis et al, 2007).
- There is a need for more availability of BSL assessments, and more trained staff to administer them.
- It would be beneficial if a Scottish version of the Early Support Pack Monitoring Protocol could be developed and implemented within a national framework of provision. The development of a specialist PDA and the involvement of professional BSL consultants would enhance the linguistic balance of such a framework..

SECTION 9: SCHOOL YEARS: LINGUISTIC ASSESSMENTS

- Some pupils will wish/need to move between languages and language modes as they progress through schooling. It will be beneficial for all areas to provide a spectrum of linguistic assessments and access provision and a positive view of both signed and spoken languages.
- There may be a need to strengthen inter-agency collaboration between ToDs and SaLTs in the provision and application of language assessments.

- More standardised assessments may be needed for the assessment of deaf children’s spoken language – particularly in upper primary – and more dialogue about characteristics, value and application of specific, commercially-available tests.
- There is a need to further explore both the suitability of 5-14 National Tests as a means of assessing literacy skills of deaf pupils, and the nature of arrangements which are currently being made to facilitate access.
- There is a need for more educational audiologists, so that every area has high quality capacity for applied audiology assessment within the classroom situations. There are also relevant recommendation from the recent clinical audit of audiology services, addressing geographical variations of hospital-based services.
- There are still some children whose deafness is not being diagnosed until school age. There is a need to address the reasons for this and strategies to ensure that problem areas are resolved.
- Lipreading as a linguistic access strategy for pupils is relatively unexplored. It will be interesting to monitor development of the proposed SCTTL module for teaching lipreading to children.
- As with the preschool situation, there is a need for more availability of BSL assessments, and more trained staff to administer them. It will be interesting to monitor the uptake of updated SQA NQ units in BSL for schools.
- There is no standard process for negotiating, assessing and recording specific linguistic strategies with pupils in secondary school situations. More exploration of this area is needed, particularly, but not exclusively, relating to transition to post-school education.

SECTION 10: SCHOOL YEARS: ACCESS ISSUES

- There is a need to address concerns that the guidance provided for new ToD qualification regulations allows for accumulation of competencies via in-service training. Concerns centre around: the likelihood that local interpretations will lead to variations in standards; the lack of specific means of monitoring quality and the fact that ‘generic’ learning support staff can be responsible for a ToD service with deaf pupils, but fall outwith the regulations.
- There is a need to further monitor the impact of the ASL Act in terms of the planning and provision of access and support to deaf pupils, particularly in relation to any impact on services provided to pupils who do not qualify for CSPs.
- It is hoped that the HMIE/NDCS self-evaluation ‘Count us in’ report will be used to encourage and support good practice in the development of linguistic access services in schools.
- As the ToD role constantly develops in mainstream situations, there is a need to continue to address and explore the definition of, and relationships between: management of pupil learning; provision of direct linguistic access services, and provision of teaching support. The situation in secondary schools is worthy of particular attention, including the lead up to transition.

The model of a ToD being a resource for the class teacher and other pupils, when the deaf pupil is working independently, may be useful experience to share.

- There needs to be more clarification about the specific roles of learning support assistants and CSWs in terms of linguistic access provided; there is also a need to address relevant training and qualifications.
- As mentioned in other sections, there is also a need to address regional variations in numbers and types of access and support staff (eg, ToDs, educational audiologists) and in access-related qualifications held (eg, notetaking; advanced BSL fluency; BSL/English interpretation, etc).
- The regional variation in standard of acoustic environments in schools should be addressed, making use of the NDCS 'Acoustic Toolkit'.
- All services should consider the benefits of allowing pupils to take home radio aids, whenever pupils would find this useful.
- There is a need for deaf people to be encouraged into professions at various levels within school education.
- DVDs relating to school coursework should automatically be subtitled and recorders purchased by schools should have the facility to record subtitled TV programmes. This needs to be built into the culture of schools. BSL translations of key DVDs are also needed.
- There are concerns about isolation of deaf pupils in mainstream situations. There is a continued need to share inclusive practice and to enable deaf pupils to meet each other.
- There is a need to address practice and comparisons in providing linguistic access arrangements for both 5-14 tests and SQA exams administered in school.
- The results of the forthcoming SQA 'impact assessment' of exam access are likely to lead to improvements in a number of ways, including accessibility of English. It will be interesting to keep in touch with developments.
- Ongoing work is needed on the practice and standardisation of the provision of signed questions in exams. It is hoped that SQA takes on board the expressed concerns about the piloting of Avatar 'signers'

SECTION 11: ADPS: UNEXPLORED AREAS

- It is suggested that further consideration is given to the exploitation of unexplored ADPS data, from 2000/2005, as a resource for future research studies relating to linguistic access of preschool children and school pupils.

FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

SECTION 12: THE NUMBER OF DEAF STUDENTS IN FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

- Caution is needed when reporting statistics on the number of students in further and higher education; reports need to be contextualised by explanation of likely distortions.
- More exploration is needed of the following:
 - indications that there may be some underachievement among deaf students;
 - the possibility that deaf students may undertake higher levels of courses where access and support services are of higher quality;
 - indications that the proportion of deaf people in HE is very slightly increasing;
 - indications that there is consistently a greater proportion of deaf students in HE institutions aged over 30 than there is in the total population of students in HE institutions, and that these students are less likely to be on postgraduate programmes than their hearing peers.

SECTION 13: THE NUMBER OF PROFESSIONALS WHO PROVIDE LINGUISTIC ACCESS SERVICES FOR DEAF STUDENTS IN FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION.

- Results of the proposed SSC web-based survey of numbers and qualifications of Language Support Professionals will be reported to the BSL and Linguistic Access Working group

SECTION 14: ISSUES RELEVANT TO BOTH FE AND HE: MISCELLANEOUS

- Assessment of linguistic access requirements should be seen as a process from application through to programme exit, rather than being seen as a one-off event at the start of the programme.
- The findings of this scoping study can usefully inform Equality Forward's current research into assessment structures for students with additional support needs.
- Access programmes specifically for deaf students should be considered, along the lines of RNID's 'Headstart' programme, and to include the full range of linguistic access strategies. Opportunities to enhance BSL skills and linguistic knowledge would be useful for those who opt to use BSL.
- Recent increase in DSA maximum amount is to be welcomed. It is hoped that the further education sector also recognises the cost of providing quality access and support services for deaf students.
- There is a need to ensure that all audiology services across Scotland are implementing good practice, relevant to needs of deaf students, in the transition between paediatric and adult services, using recommendations of the recent Needs Assessment.

- Equality Forward's 'Deaf Students Working Group' is currently considering the establishment of A Centre for Linguistic Access. Such a Centre would provide a much-needed centralised resource, which will address a number of key issues raised in this report, including services and advice relating to the provision of audiology and environmental equipment, specifically tailored to the needs of deaf students.

It would also provide a forum for sharing information about positive developments within individual institutions.

SECTION 15: ISSUES RELEVANT TO BOTH FE AND HE: LANGUAGE SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

- There is a general need to consider the establishment of shared pools of specialist LSPs and support tutors, because of the fluctuating numbers of deaf students within individual institutions, and the diversity of their individual access and support requirements. The proposed Centre for Linguistic Access could have a key role here.
- There is a general need for institutions to provide consistent and appropriate rates of pay for specialist LSPs and support tutors. The proposed Centre for Linguistic Access would be able to provide ongoing information and advice.

15.2. BSL/ENGLISH INTERPRETERS

- There continues to be an acute shortage of BSL/English interpreters. Advantage needs to be taken of the opportunities afforded by:
 - the existence of a newly-graduated group of BSL Tutor trainers;
 - a raft of SQA/Heriot Watt/Edinburgh University proposals to boost all levels and types of BSL training, particularly at advanced and degree levels;
 - the possibility of introducing a 'fast-track' apprenticeship route for interpreter training.
- The possibility of establishing a specialist career route in educational interpreting should be considered, in light of the distinct nature of interpreting within educational situations.

15.3. NOTETAKERS

- Both institutions and deaf students themselves need to be made aware of the importance of using appropriately qualified professionals to take notes for deaf students.
- Appropriate, standardised pay scales and working conditions should be implemented across Scottish institutions.
- The above would raise demand for professionally qualified notetakers, leading to a sharp increase in demand for relevant training opportunities in Scotland. There is likely to be more demand for electronic notetakers than for manual notetakers.
- It will be interesting to monitor the effects of the new CACDP professional register of notetakers and implications for the potential of developing of a Scottish register.

15.4. LIPSPEAKERS

- More information is needed on the potential value of lipspeaking in F&HE.

15.5. COMMUNICATION SUPPORT WORKERS

- There is a pressing need to clarify the role of the CSW and the standards and appropriate employment conditions expected.

There is a particular need to resolve the dilemma caused by the demand for a single professional to adapt to different access and support roles, and the need for professional standards needed to meet the requirements of the tasks expected (eg BSL/English interpreting, notetaking etc).

In Scottish F&HE, the balance currently appears to be tipped towards a high expectation of adaptability and a low expectation of professional standards.

- CACDP and Edexcel aim to resolve the dilemma by creating a qualification with the flexibility to 'mix and match' specialised pathways leading to particular functions or roles. There is a need for an adaptation, or equivalent development, in Scotland to take account of the distinctiveness of the Scottish situation.
- The lack of clarity of the CSW role currently mitigates against the establishment of a professional register. Once the role becomes clearly defined, the establishment of a professional register will be beneficial to CSWs, deaf students and employers.

SECTION 16: ISSUES SPECIFIC TO FURTHER EDUCATION

- There is a need for specialist support tutors for deaf students, to address English language issues specific to the situations of deaf learners.
- A supplementary 'QI Toolkit', along the lines of the NATED pack, is needed to address the complexities of assessing deaf students' linguistic access requirements. A centralised resource for advice and information would help to ensure consistency across colleges.
- All colleges should ensure that access requirements for assessment interviews are checked out, and that relevant arrangements are made.
- There is a need for consistent practice in ensuring that information on disclosed hearing loss is passed on to learning support teams.
- The wide variation among colleges in proportions of deaf students receiving ELS funding should be further investigated.
- In particular, it may be the case that colleges with less knowledge about deafness are providing less access services to deaf students. This could be explored.
- There is a need to address the fact that there is likely to be a considerable shortfall between the amount of weighted ELS funding and the cost of providing linguistic access, where LSPs and specialist support tutors are involved.
- All further education colleges who provide HE-level courses should be aware that HE students can apply for DSA funding.
- There needs to be a robust means of monitoring the quality of assessments and of linguistic access provided through the lifetime of the courses provided across Scotland. HMIE need to take into account the complexities of linguistic access for deaf students during college reviews.

- There is anecdotal evidence that deaf students can be deterred from attending further education provision due to poor resourcing of courses. A fuller investigation of unmet need would shed further light on this.

SQA examinations (as per school section)

- results of the forthcoming SQA 'impact assessment' of exam access are likely to lead to improvements in a number of ways, including accessibility of English. It will be interesting to keep in touch with developments.
- Ongoing work is needed on the practice and standardisation of the provision of signed questions in exams. It is hoped that SQA takes on board the expressed concerns about the use of Avatar 'signers'.

SECTION 17: ISSUES SPECIFIC TO HIGHER EDUCATION

- There is a need for the HEI DSA validation process to take more account of the specific situations of deaf students. Clearer criteria are needed against which it can be judged whether or not institutions need to use external expertise.
- Clearer criteria are also needed for assessing whether an external agency or individual has the necessary expertise to undertake assessments, taking account of the full spectrum of linguistic access options. The system of approval for use of the NATED assessment pack could be used as a model.
- A supplementary 'QI Toolkit', along the lines of the NATED pack, would be useful in addressing the complexities of assessing deaf students' linguistic access requirements. A centralised resource for advice and information would help to ensure consistency across colleges.
- There is a need for specialist support tutors for deaf students, to address English language issues specific to the situations of deaf learners.
- The proposed Centre for Linguistic Access would provide a centralised resource for information, advice and expertise on the above issues. It could also provide a focal point for student networks and organisations such as CHES.
- Students on Access courses are still not eligible to apply for DSA; this decision should be reconsidered.
- There is a need for robust quality control of support and access services supplied throughout the lifetime of the course, with inbuilt review, so that provision can be adapted to suit changes in circumstances and student preference.
- The impact of the increase in DSA funding on imbalances inherent in the Disabled Students' Premium should be monitored.

SECTION 18: OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

- The remit of this study only included education provided within the school, further and higher education sectors in Scotland. It is recognised that many deaf adults also access, or may wish to access, other educational provision. It is hoped that future study may address such provision.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

LANGUAGE APPROACHES USED IN SCOTTISH SCHOOLS, 2001/2004*

Type of approach	Languages/language modes included
Spoken/written English only	Spoken English, written English
BSL/English bilingual	Spoken English, written English, British Sign Language.
Total Communication A (TC/a) (combining English and Sign Supported English)	Spoken English, written English, sign supported English.
Total Communication B (TC/b) (combining English and Signed English)	Spoken English, written English, signed English or Paget Gorman.
Total Communication C (TC/c) (combining either TC/a or TC/b with some use of BSL)	Spoken English, written English, British Sign Language, sign supported English and/or signed English or Paget Gorman.
Simplified/augmented systems (Any combination including Makaton and/or Signalong and/or a Symbol System)	Makaton and/or Signalong and/or symbol system. May also include any combination of: spoken English, written English, sign supported English, signed English, Paget Gorman, other (eg body signs).

*From: Grimes, Thoutenhoofd and Byrne, 2007:537

NB A small number of pupils in Scotland were also reported as being exposed to other languages/modes at school as follows: Gaelic, Swedish, Punjabi, Danish Sign Language and Fingerspelling.

APPENDIX 2

GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED FOR THIS SCOPING STUDY

Scottish Government: Support for Learning (school and post-school) and School Education
Scottish Funding Council: Statistics and Funding Policy sections
HM Inspectorate of Education
Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
Scottish Cochlear Implant Centre
Scottish Qualifications Authority (National Qualifications and Higher National levels)
Education Audiology representative
National Deaf Children's Society
HI Services Heads of Service Forum
Equality Forward
The British Deaf Association
The BRITE Initiative
Scottish Further Education Unit
Access Centre representatives
Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters
RNID
Scottish Council on Deafness
Council for the Advancement in Communication with Deaf People
Scottish Course to Train Tutors of Lipreading
Moray House School of Education
The Association of Notetakers
Scottish Association of Communication Support Workers
Student Awards Agency for Scotland
Deafness, Cognition and Language Research Centre
Disabled Students' Stakeholder Group
SKILL Scotland
Furthering Access to College Education for Deaf Students (FACE)
Consortium of Higher Education Support Services for Deaf Students (CHESS)
National Association of Tertiary Education for Deaf Students (NATED)
Heads of Audiology Services
Scottish Sensory Centre
Enquire
Learning Support Advisor representatives in further and higher institutions

APPENDIX 3

ROUTES FOR DEMONSTRATION OF COMPETENCY IN BSL AND IN BSL/ENGLISH INTERPRETING

a) Competency in BSL fluency					
CACDP* Qualification	BDA** qualification	SCQF*** level (or nearest)	Title of nearest equivalent SQA Qualification	Examples of Scottish qualifications at same level, or nearest equivalent	
	Introduction to BSL (20 hours) Tailor made courses '...to raise awareness of BSL and its history's place in the lives of Deaf people...'				
BSL Level 1 (50 hours) '...to enable learners to communicate with deaf people on a range of topics that involve simple, everyday language.'	Foundation Level BSL (40 hours) '...the opportunity to develop their everyday sign language use...'	4	Language: BSL 1 (Intermediate 1)	Intermediate 1 General Standard Grade SVQ1	
BSL Level 2 (90 hours) '...to enable learners to develop an ability to communicate...in a range of familiar contexts, participating in longer and more open-ended exchanges than at Level 1'	Intermediate Level BSL (180 hours) '...the opportunity to further develop their everyday sign language, incorporating BSL grammar at greater depth...'	5	Language: BSL 2 (Intermediate 2)	Intermediate 2 Credit Standard Grade SVQ 2	
BSL Level 3 (120 hours) '...able to understand and express information, ideas and opinions about a variety of subjects'	Advanced Level BSL (120 hours) '...the opportunity to further develop their sign language skills incorporating BSL grammar at an advanced level that could deal with most domain areas...'	Level 6	Language: BSL 3 (Higher) Linguistic Features of BSL (Higher)	Higher SVQ3	
NVQ3 in BSL (portfolio) '...can be used as evidence of the language skills needed in order to operate independently and at an advanced level in the target language...'		Level 6	n/a	SVQ3	
NVQ4 in BSL (portfolio) '...can be used as evidence of near-native fluency in the language...'		Level 7	n/a	Not yet clearly defined	

* Council for the Advancement and Communication with Deaf People Source of information: <http://www.cacdp.org.uk/cacdp-qualifications.html>

** British Deaf Association (Source of information: http://bda.org.uk/BSL_Academy_Courses-i-107.html)

*** Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

b) Competency in BSL/English interpreting
(NB SASLI is currently reviewing membership categories and routes to registration)

SASLI registration category	Eligibility	CACDP training route	SQA training route	Other route	SCQF** level
Associate membership	Minimum 'B' pass: Certificate in BSL/English Interpreting Studies: (Heriot Watt Univ)†		Higher National Certificate in Higher Education	APL from specialist degree programmes in England/Wales/ N Ireland	7
Full registration	Completion of SASLI Assessment Programmes	NVQ Level 4 in BSL Interpreting and pass level	SASLI Assessment Programme (current discussions between SASLI and SQA re the possibility of mapping this onto the SCQF	APL from specialist degree programmes in England/Wales/ N Ireland	Not yet clearly defined

* Council for the Advancement and Communication with Deaf People

** Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

*** British Deaf Association

† Heriot Watt University (HWU) no longer offer this course. It has been replaced by a Graduate Diploma in BSL/English Interpreting Studies (SCQF 10). The first group of students are expected to graduate in 2008/2009. SASLI and HWU are currently considering how this qualification maps onto the SASLI register.

§ The qualification levels do not compare exactly, but the nearest equivalent is shown.

APPENDIX 4: SCHOOL SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE



THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S BSL AND LINGUISTIC ACCESS
WORKING GROUP

SURVEY OF STAFF ROLES AND QUALIFICATIONS:
SERVICES AND SCHOOLS FOR DEAF* PUPILS

We would be very grateful if you could do the following:

- indicate, below, the type of service you provide;
- complete one of the following pages for each member of staff who works in a school situation with deaf pupils (6 tick-box questions for each person).

Name of school or service: _____

(This is for admin purposes only. The service/school will not be identified in any data published from this study.)

Description of your service

(Please check/tick box as appropriate, or specify in 'other')

Visiting service plus resourced base(s)

Visiting service only

Resource base within mainstream school

School for deaf children

Other (please specify): _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP

The word 'deaf' is used throughout to refer to the widest range of hearing loss

Staff member 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, etc (circle as needed)

a) What is the role of this member of staff?

PLEASE PUT AN 'X' IN ONLY ONE COLUMN

ToD	Learning Support Teacher/Support for Learning Teacher (or equivalent title)	Educational Audiologist	Speech and Language Therapist	Auxiliary/ Classroom assistant (or equivalent title)	Communication Support Worker/ Communicator (or equivalent title)	Sign Language Assistant	Deaf Tutor	Specialist Nursery Nurse

Other role (please specify): _____

b) Is this member of staff part of your service, or separate from it? (please check/tick box as appropriate)

Part of my service

Separate from my service

Other (please specify): _____

c) What are his/her specialist qualifications?

(please check/tick box as appropriate or put a ? beside box where not sure)

- PG Dip in Deaf Education/HI (or equivalent) _____
- PG Dip in SEN/SFL (or equivalent) _____
- PG in Educational Audiology _____
- Degree/PG in Speech & Language Therapy _____
- Edexcel Communication Support Worker Award (or equivalent) _____
- CACDP Certificate in LipSpeaking _____
- SQA/CACDP Certificate in Notetaking (or equivalent) _____
- PDA Classroom Assistant (or equivalent) _____
- BSL Level/Stage 1 _____
- BSL Level/Stage 2 _____
- BSL Level/Stage 3 _____
- BSL Level/Stage 4 _____
- Registered BSL/English Interpreter status _____
- Higher English (or equivalent) _____
- Qualifications not known _____

Other qualification(s) (please specify): _____

d) Is the member of staff deaf or hearing? (please check/tick box as appropriate):

Hearing

Deaf

Hard of Hearing

e) What language(s) does the member of staff use in their work with deaf pupils? (please check/tick box as appropriate)

Only or mainly uses spoken English

Only or mainly uses English (both spoken & sign supported)

Only or mainly uses BSL

Uses both English (spoken and/or sign supported) and BSL

Other (please specify): _____

f) Are they full time or part time? (please check/tick box as appropriate)

Full time

Part time

APPENDIX 5

RELEVANT SQA QUALIFICATIONS

National Qualifications/Units

These are all free-standing units, which are internally assessed. There are no full courses with external exams. They are all listed under the category: 'SEN/hearing impaired'.

More details of each unit can be accessed by searching for the unit code in the SQA website.

Unit title	Unit level	Unit code
Deaf Awareness	09 (Access 3)	EG2V
History and Development of BSL	12 (Higher)	EG2W
Language Structure 1*	08 (Access 2)	E7KW
Language Structure 2*	09 (Access 3)	E7KX
Language Structure 3*	10 (Intermediate 1)	E7KY
Language: intro to BSL	09 (Access 3)	EG2P
Language: BSL	10 (Intermediate 1)	D13T
Language: BSL	11 (Intermediate 2)	D13T
Language: BSL	12 (Higher)	D13T
Linguistic Features of BSL	12 (Higher)	EG2X
Lipreading Skills	10 (Intermediate 1)	E7M3
Productive skills related to speech	10 (Intermediate 1)	E7M2

* Describes as 'specialist and needs-related modules which enable the student to acquire and reinforce the language structure skills required for communication in basic English...intended for those hearing-impaired students who have special needs related to language development.'

Long-term plans for the BSL suite of qualifications:

- SVQs in BSL at Levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5;
- Up-dated National Qualification units in BSL for schools;
- PDA in BSL Studies;
- PDA in BSL language development of preschool children.

Electronic notetaking

There are plans for a qualification in electronic notetaking.

APPENDIX 6

CALCULATION OF EXTENDED LEARNING SUPPORT (ELS) FUNDING IN FURTHER EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND

Regular funding for all students

One student unit of measurement (SUM) is equal to 40 hours of learning.

There are 18 different subject areas (Science, Art, Computing, Special Programmes, etc) and each has a subject weighting that takes account of the relative cost of delivering activity in these areas.

For example, science has a weight of 0.96 whilst Engineering has a weight of 1.26.

The student's SUMs are multiplied by the subject weight to get a Weighted SUMs (WSUMs) total. A WSUM in 2006/2007 was worth about £190.

WSUMs are the basis for the vast majority of funding in Scotland's colleges.

Examples of ELS calculations

a) **Student 1** is doing a full time course in Science worth 20 SUMs and the student requires extended learning support.

The funding for this student therefore = 20 SUMs X 0.96 (science weight) = 19.2 WSUMs X £190 (cost per WSUM) = £3,648

The student, however, required Extended Learning Support and therefore the college receives additional funding.

The additional funding = 20 SUMs X 1.5 (ELS weight) = 30 WSUMs X £190 (cost per WSUM) = £5,700

The total funding for this student = £3,648 + £5,700 = £9,348.

b) **Student 2** is doing a part time Engineering course worth 4 SUMs (160 hours) and requires extended learning support.

The funding for this student = 4 SUMs X 1.26 (Engineering weight) = 5.04 WSUMs X £190 (cost per WSUM) = £957.60

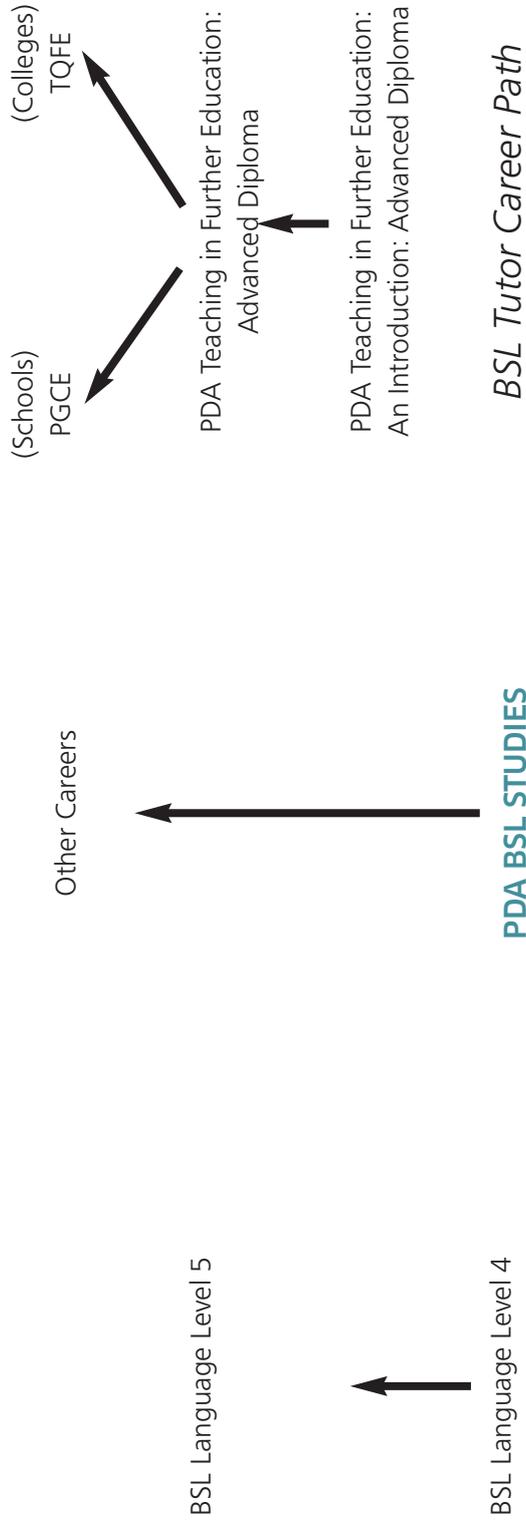
The student, however, required Extended Learning Support and therefore the college receives additional funding.

The additional funding = 4 SUMs X 1.5 (ELS weight) = 6 WSUMs X £190 (cost per WSUM) = £1,140

The total funding for this student = £957.60 + £1,140 = £2,097.60.

APPENDIX 7

PROPOSED SQA QUALIFICATION PROGRESSION ROUTE FOR BSL TUTORS



BSL Tutor Career Path



**The Scottish
Government**

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ISBN: 978-0-7559-5849-8 (Web only)

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RR Donnelley B56660 02/09