

INTRODUCING A DEAF STUDENTS' JOURNEY

Team

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Open to university students and staff

A DEAF STUDENTS' JOURNEY

Join us for our workshop at the Holiday Inn Birmingham City Centre, led by Deaf students and researchers about their experiences in higher education and how to better support Deaf students at university

13th January 1-4pm
FREE to attend!

For more information, please contact deafcovidHE@outlook.com

GROUND RULES FOR THE SESSION

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- If you have any questions throughout the session, you can ask as you go along.
 - We are using interpreters. Please wait for us to point to you before you start to speak/ sign.
 - Please respect everyone within the session regardless of their opinion. Some confidential information may be shared during our session, please keep this private within the room.

AIM OF THIS WORKSHOP

Demonstrate the barriers that deaf students are having to face

Understand life within the university as deaf student

Improved Deaf Awareness

Share a snapshot of findings from the research project

THE RESEARCH PROJECT BACKGROUND

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- Pre-pandemic 46% of deaf students didn't have their support in place at the start of their course (NDCS, 2019).
 - Social distancing measures have had particularly severe impacts on deaf people due to their specific communication requirements (Action on Hearing Loss, 2020).
 - ESRC funded research -takes a comprehensive view of the issues- students, academics, managers, disability support staff.
 - What happened? What impact on deaf students? what was learned/improved from lockdown? what can universities do better in the future?
 - Co-produced workshops-deaf students best placed to raise awareness/demand change

SOME OF OUR KEY FINDINGS- A SUMMARY

Diversity: Age, sexuality, level of study, communication choice (Gender and ethnicity)

- 71% of students have seen their needs change because of the pandemic due to:
- The format of delivery (Zoom, Blackboard Collaborate, Microsoft Teams...)
- Access to equipment- 38% of students applied for DSA (Disabled Students Allowance) for the first time.
- Increased mental health concerns

SOME OF OUR KEY FINDINGS- PLATFORMS AND ACCESSIBILITY

MS Teams was both the most preferred platform (64%), yet also the one that causes the most accessibility issues (57%).

- Options for Deaf students are few and far- Even the best platforms cause significant issues.
 - "Teams at the time was the only platform that had automatic captions."
- This is particularly true for BSL Users- "The participants on Teams are too small and it's too difficult to see the interpreters."
- I remember having to use Blackboard Collaborate, and that was clunky and awful, and there [were] no captions."

SOME OF OUR KEY FINDINGS- DSA BUDGET

- Concerns about DSA budget in providing physical and emotional support (i.e., notetakers, interpreters, Radio-Aids)
 - "I want them to understand that they are creating barriers ... if the full amount was given, the barriers would be reduced"
 - "Full funding should be provided to encourage deaf people to go to university and for it to be less stressful for them"

SOME OF OUR KEY FINDINGS- LEARNING AND TEACHING

- 64% of students have made complaints, with only half responded to "appropriately".
- 96% of students had to use access and inclusion staff, such as Disability Support Services within their institution, to request changes or complain

Overall, Online Learning has negatively affected:

- Learning
- Access to lecturers
- Grades
- Peer Relationships
- Mental Health and Wellbeing

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR DEAF PEOPLE?



- We are not being offered the same standard of education.
- Increased burden of organisation: "Apply for DSA, book interpreter, tell lecturer my needs from them it's a LOT!"
- Increased need for notetaking, interpreting, equipment, personal mentors (58%)
- Increased need to access mental health services

UNDERSTAND OUR **JOURNEY** AS DEAF STUDENT IN UNIVERSITY



Important to see deaf student as whole person and talk with them to see what access is best for them and give them choices and ideas ...

USE THE CORRECT TERMINOLOGY

You will be working with the people at your table. Please sort the following terms into columns based on what you think is the right terminology, wrong terminology and terminology that it depends on the person.

Partial Hearing

Hard of Hearing

Deaf Mute

Deafened

Hard of Hearing

Hearing Impairment

Hearing Loss

Hearing Disability

Deaf

USE THE CORRECT TERMINOLOGY

INCORRECT TERM

- Hearing Impairment
- Hearing Disability
- Deaf and Dumb
- Deaf Mute

CORRECT TERMS

- Deaf
- Hard of Hearing

"IT DEPENDS!" TERMS

- Partial Hearing
- Hearing Loss
- Deafened

It's important to note that whilst these terms are looked down upon within the deaf community, even the "correct" terms can be subjective. Deaf people often self-describe differently, which is why it's important to communicate with the deaf person about how they would refer to themselves.

THE DEAF COMMUNITY IS DIVERSE

Some may prefer to use sign language

Some may prefer to speak

Some may prefer to speak and use sign language

Some born deaf

Some became deaf later in life

Some use hearing aids, cochlear implants or none

Some may not accept them as being deaf until later

Some already accept their own deaf identity

Some people come from different ethnic backgrounds or cultures

Some may be from the LGBTQ+ community

IMPORTANT TO SUPPORT THEIR JOURNEY AS A POSITIVE ONE

BREAK TIME – 20 MINUTES

We are going to pause here for twenty minutes to allow you to grab a drink.



CASE STUDIES



We ask that you now discuss your given case study in your breakout group, and work together to answer the following questions:

- *What are the issues for each student?*
- *How can we improve this for future Deaf students to enable a smooth journey from the start, the same level as any other hearing students?*
- *What could you do to include Deaf students more at the University?*

We will then feedback to everyone with your thoughts and ideas.

FEEDBACK



CASE THREE

Roxanne is hard-of-hearing and wants to learn sign language, but their university provides extraordinarily little support for BSL lessons. She managed to find some lessons externally after an extensive search, but they are expensive. Roxanne feels lonely and isolated.

CASE FOUR

- Abdu's lectures are mostly online, and his lecturers do not know how to turn the captions on. Sometimes, they have even refused to enable them.

CASE ONE

Marvin who uses BSL, has still not received his timetable for the new semester and is now only a week away from his first lecture.

CASE EIGHT

Mark's main method of communication is BSL, and he relies on an interpreter to help him communicate with his teachers and peers. In a group activity, one of Mark's peers was impatient and started the task. He reminded her that he needs to wait for his interpreter to arrive, but she continued to exclude Mark from the group and not wait for the interpreter. Mark feels isolated and frustrated.

CASE TWO

- When Amy meets with her disability advisor at university, they label her “hearing impaired” and she finds this offensive. Staff did not ask her how she would like to be referred as.

CASE NINE

- Within the first semester of university, Olivia has made some new friends, but they are all hearing. She finds it hard to socialise as a group as she often must ask them to repeat what they are saying. Sometimes when she asks them, they will say “never mind” or “I’ll tell you later” but this makes her feel left out and isolated.

TOP TIPS!

Students should meet with staff well in advance prior to starting University to discuss their needs and preferred terms

Timetables should be shared with University as earlier as possible so support staff can be organized

All staff should undergo deaf awareness training

Hearing students should be offered the opportunity to understand being deaf

Support staff should have access to materials at least three working days prior to the session and staff should ensure that their accommodations are met.

TOP TIPS!

All videos should have accurate subtitles which are checked; not just transcript on the side

Removal of masks or use of clear mask when speaking to a student who communicates via lip-reading

Disabled people do not have homogenous experiences – listen to individual students, their needs and preferences

During online teaching, ensure all cameras are turned on when speaking.

Don't be afraid to speak to us! We don't have a contagious disease!

Learn BSL and other communication techniques

Support Staff should ensure interpreters are booked in advance, as they require a large notice period.

LEARNING ABOUT THE DEAF EXPERIENCE



QUESTIONS?



SUMMARY

WHAT WILL
YOU TAKE
FROM
TODAY?

EVALUATION

- Please take a minute to provide some feedback on our workshop by answering a few short questions on our evaluation form, which is in your bag.
- If you know anybody that would like to attend another workshop like this one, there is a QR code in your bag that will let them sign up. It is on the 30th of January.
- If you are a deaf student, teaching staff, or disability support services and have a spare five minutes, please consider completing our short survey for our research project <https://deafstudentsurvey.questionpro.com/t/AUPBLZsWcF>

We would really appreciate it.