

Lead Scotland response to Scottish Government BSL Draft National Plan

We would like to see more measurable actions and commitments in place to ensure a complete culture shift and increased emphasis on supporting BSL users moving into post-school education.

Often different bodies/organisations are aware of their duties, but they are misinterpreted or not carried out due to budgeting restrictions. Careers advice & guidance and related information needs to be made available in BSL across the whole spectrum of post-school destinations. All college and university websites should have their information available in BSL as standard and should offer a welcoming open culture of supporting BSL users. Better marketing campaigns should be created of BSL users accessing not just educational services, but the related social activities associated with post-school education.

Transition planning needs to happen sooner and the right support needs to be arranged much earlier as we often hear about delays in accessing the right support or DSA funding in time to start college/university. There needs to be increased funding made available to train more BSL interpreters as there is a current lack of qualified interpreters across Scotland, which in turn impacts on the quality of education BSL users receive at college and university. We would like to see the recommendations of the recent Equality & Human Rights Committee's report into disabled & BSL users' experiences of Scottish universities implemented across Scotland, including improved CPD and awareness raising amongst all staff, especially academics.

We would like to see targets set around improving school leaver attainment and destinations for BSL users, as data suggests deaf/Deaf young people are falling behind their peers and not being given the same opportunities to access higher education due to lower levels of attainment at school. We would like to see the recommendation made in the Widening Access Commission report around carrying out further work to identify which other groups of students are disadvantaged taken forward, as there was a lack of focus on the barriers disabled students face in accessing higher education. We believe the intersectionality of disability and social economic status should be given particular attention by the new commissioner.