



SRUC: Winner of the 2017
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SRUC - Scottish Rural College

British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2018-2014

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SECTION 1 – Introduction

1.1 Overview

This is the BSL Plan for SRUC – Scotland’s Rural College. It outlines the actions that we will take during the period of 2018-2024, as required by the BSL (Scotland) Act.

This document follows the Scottish Governments BSL National Plan, which was published on 24th October 2017 and created through wide-ranging engagement with the Deaf and Deafblind BSL Community/Users and the network that support them.

It is in keeping with the same long-term goals as the National Plan, where these are relevant to the work of SRUC.

**Where we refer to ‘BSL Users’ we mean D/deaf and/or Deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language.*

1.2 College Context

SRUC is a specialist institution offering courses at all levels from college and University level study, through to postgraduate and research opportunities. Our courses relate to the ways in which we make use of the land and natural resources around us – from agriculture to veterinary nursing, and a huge variety of exciting and relevant topics in between. We also have a cross Scotland and North of England Consulting service and undertake extensive applied research.

SRUC has six campuses in locations across Scotland which are now 3 Faculties North – Aberdeen and Cupar, Central – Kings Buildings and Oatridge and South – Barony and Ayr Campus. Each has something different to offer in terms of environment and resources but all are firmly rooted in the SRUC ethos of putting your experience as a student at the centre of everything we do. Our college has 2500 full-time students, 6000 distance learners and 1286 staff.

We are committed to providing an inclusive and equitable environment that fosters a positive learning experience for our students, staff and the rest of the SRUC college community.

This commitment is reinforced in the college’s Mission statement: Committed to excellence in the advancement, communication and translation of knowledge throughout the rural sector. SRUC’s Shared Values were created by staff to shape the way we behave within the organisation and to describe how we deliver our services to customers and stakeholders.

Our Shared Values are summed up by the acronym RISE:

We will RISE to our values; RESPECT everyone's contributions, INNOVATE for success and SUPPORT each other to EXCEL in everything we do.

RISE provides direction for all levels across all areas of SRUC, and as such the values have been placed at the core of everything we do. They are particularly important in areas such as leadership, performance, personal development and communication.

1.3 Current BSL Provision

The college's current BSL provision reflects our responsibilities to enable access for disabled people under the Equality Act, including those who are BSL users. The current resource is managed by the Learner Engagement Team and Study Skills and includes the following:

- Providing confidential guidance and advice for disabled students and staff including potential students.
- Providing a personalised Needs Assessment for disabled students.
- Supporting applications for the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)
- Arranging a BSL/Scribe Note Taker or other support for students (on/off Campus)
- With permission, sharing the personalised reasonable adjustments with key college staff.
- Delivering Deaf Awareness Training for college staff.
- Providing a range of assistive technology and associated training for both students and staff.
- Working in partnership with BSL interpreters, Deaf Action and local providers.
- Ensuring that key staff have completed an on-line/in person Deaf Awareness training and have an understanding of BSL.

The college Property and Estates Group (PEG) prioritises improvements to the accessibility of campus facilities for disabled people. This includes the provision of alert systems in college buildings, linked to emergency alarm activation for those who are D/hard of hearing.

SRUCSA – the college's Students Association is committed to supporting and promoting the BSL National Plan at key events.

1.4

Commenting on the BSL Draft Plan

All comments on this draft BSL Plan are welcome. Please respond by the 12th October 2018 to enable your feedback be considered before the completed publication of our BSL Plan, in English and BSL, by 24th October 2018. Please send

any comments or suggestions to colin.peebles@sruc.ac.uk Chair, Equalities, Human Rights and Inclusion Committee.

British Sign Language users can contact us via [contactScotland-BSL](https://www.contactscotland-bsl.org/)

*[contactScotland-BSL](https://www.contactscotland-bsl.org/) is the Scottish Government's nationally funded BSL online interpreting video relay service which enables BSL users to contact public services and for these services to contact BSL users, with the support of an interpreter

SECTION 2 – Summary of BSL Plan

2.1 Our Aim

This BSL Plan is one of SRUC Policies and Procedures which the college has in place to support our commitment to Equality and Human Rights.

It outlines how the college intends to meet the statutory obligations of the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015.

SRUC is committed to:

- Promoting and supporting the use of BSL, including in its tactile form
- Widening Access to support and resources for Deaf and Deaf-blind people
- Involving BSL users in developing and providing feedback on our BSL plans
- Implementing actions and providing updates on our progress
- Contributing to the National Progress Report in 2020
- Review this plan, including identifying additional 'local' actions where appropriate, following publication of the National Progress Report.

2.2 Key Actions

- Encourage regular feedback from BSL student/staff users with regards to their college experience and the wider college community.
- Raise Awareness and promote the use of the Scottish Governments BSL online interpreting video relay service; [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](https://www.contactscotland-bsl.org/)
- Create a central resource that holds BSL information, including the colleges BSL Plan, [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](https://www.contactscotland-bsl.org/) information and links to their service.
- Provide BSL interpreters for key college events such as, Principals Welcome and Graduation.
- Promote Deaf Awareness training for staff/students whilst enabling access to staff development in BSL for staff in front facing services.
- Include the costs of interpreting services into annual departmental budgets including BSL training costs.

- Ensure that all key information on the college’s website is accessible for BSL users. This includes pre-entry/on course/SRUCSA/support resources, policies and procedures where required.
- Ensure that BSL users are supported fully during all elements of the student journey including pre-exit guidance.
- Ensure that all BSL users have access to all student services; finance, careers, study skills and learner engagement.
- Ensure that key staff information such as vacancies, staff development, policies and procedures and accessible for BSL users.
- Provide accessible information for mental health and wellbeing services for staff/students who are BSL users.

After the first two years of the plan, we will take the opportunity to reflect on progress made and agree actions for 2020-22 which progress the promotion of BSL in our Consulting services and develop the accessibility of Deaf and BSL users of these.

SECTION3 – Contribution to our Long Term Goals of the BSL National Plan

SRUC share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“Across the Scottish public sector, information and services will be accessible to BSL users”

Our Actions

By 2024, we will:

3.1. 1 Monitor and review current and future evidence on BSL users in the college community, including transitioning school pupils, students/staff and visitors.

3.1. 2 Survey BSL users to gather feedback and implement changes and update our response.

3.1 3 Continually promote the use of the Scottish Governments BSL online interpreting video relay service, contactSCOTLAND-BSL

3.1 4 Create a central web resource for all BSL information which includes the colleges BSL Plan, contactSCOTLAND-BSL details including the links to the BSL interpretation services.

3.1.5 Maximise the provision of BSL interpreters for key public college events including Graduation

3.1.6 Deliver Deaf Awareness training for students/staff and promote access to BSL training, particularly for staff in front facing roles.

3.1.7 Promote the use of BSL to staff and students by providing awareness raising sessions informally.

3.1.8 Provide sufficient funds that cover BSL interpretation and associated staff development costs.

3.1.9 Review the budget for BSL video communication when updating or sourcing new digital systems.

3.1.10 Ensure that the colleges BSL Plan is linked to our annual Outcome Agreements for the Scottish Funding Council (SFC)

3.1.11 Engage with guidance from the Scottish Government, SFC, Deaf Action to support the monitoring and reviewing of the colleges BSL plan.

3.2 Post –School Education

SRUC share the long-term goal for post-school education outlined in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will be able to maximise their potential at school, will be supported to transition to post-school education if they wish to do so, and will receive the support they need to do well in their chosen subjects (s)”

By 2024, we will:

3.2.1 Ensure that all relevant information on the colleges website is accessible to BSL users, including specific course/support/ policies where required.

3.2.2 Widen access to Applicant/Open days for prospective students/applicants who use BSL

3.2.3 Provide accessible feedback for BSL applicants who are unsuccessful

3.2.4 Ensure BSL users are supported throughout the student journey pre-entry – pre-exit

3.2.5 Monitor the provision of BSL classes for students with limited knowledge of communicating out with their local community.

3.2.6 Ensure that students who are BSL users have access to all student support services including student finance/careers

3.2.7 Ensure that the e-learning team and other online teaching and assessment systems have the resources for BSL video output

3.2.8 Ensure that all teaching and assessment resources that require audio output are available in BSL for Deaf students and BSL users

3.2.9 Ensure that college staff are fully aware of their responsibilities towards BSL users, and that students who use BSL are aware of resources/services available

3.3 Family Support, Early Learning and Childcare

SRUC share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“The getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach will be fully embedded, with a D/deaf or Deafblind child and their family offered the right information and support at the right time to engage with BSL”

Our Actions

By 2024, we will:

3.3.1 Ensure that the colleges sports and exercise events for children where required are accessible for BSL users.

3.4 School Education

SRUC share the long-term goal for school education set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“Children and young people who use BSL will get the support they need at all stages of their learning, so that they can reach their full potential; parents who use BSL will have the same opportunities as other parents to be fully involved in their child’s education; and more pupils will be able to learn BSL at school”

Our Actions

By 2024, we will:

3.4.1 Promote staff development training opportunities to BSL users

3.4.2 Deliver Deaf awareness training and market opportunities for those who want to learn BSL.

3.4.3 Work in partnership with feeder schools to raise awareness of the college's provision and resources for BSL users to help support their transition from school to college

3.5 Training, Work and Social Security

SRUC share the long-term goal for training, work and social security set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will be supported to develop the skills they need to become valued members of the Scottish workforce, so that they can fulfil their potential, and improve Scotland's economic performance. They will be provided with support to enable them to progress in their chosen career”

Our Actions

By 2024, we will:

3.5.1 Provide support to staff and students who are BSL users to access Careers, apply for employment opportunities and further training if required.

3.5.2 Promote and raise awareness of the UK Government 'Access to Work scheme.

3.5.3 Ensure that the college's website is accessible to BSL users, including employment opportunities, staff development, policies and procedures.

3.6 Health (Including social care), Mental Health and Wellbeing

SRUC share the long term goal for health, mental health and wellbeing set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

Our Actions

By 2024, we will:

3.6.1 Ensure that the Colleges health, mental health and well being services, and guidance and support information are accessible to staff and students and the college community who are BSL users.

3.7 Culture and the Arts

SRUC share the long-term goal for the culture and the arts set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland, an equal opportunity to enjoy and contribute to culture, and are encouraged to share BSL and Deaf Culture with the people of Scotland”

Our Actions

By 2024, we will

3.7.1 Ensure that the colleges community activities, social clubs, SRUCSA activity information is accessible to BSL users

3.7.2 Ensure that all Marketing and Recruitment information includes the statement ‘please contact us if you require a BSL interpreter’

3.7.3 For events that run over a period of 3 days ensure that on one evening an interpreter is booked

3.8 Democracy

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

“BSL users will be fully involved in the democracy set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

BSL users will be fully involved in democratic and public life in Scotland, as active and informed citizens, as voters, as elected politicians and as board members of our public bodies”

Our Actions

By 2024, we will,

3.8.1 Raise awareness of activity and opportunities for BSL users to become members of College Committees and staff and student groups.

3.8.2 Work in partnership with SRUCSA (Student Association) to ensure that all election campaigns are accessible and provide BSL Interpreters for election campaigns where required.

What happens next?

- A draft of this plan is available for initial consultation in September and a BSL version of the final draft plan will be available on the SRUC website at this time
- A final draft version will be present to the EHIC for comment by October and a final version published by October 2018 in English and BSL
- SRUC are working in partnership with Fife Council and have attended and engaged in consultation with the Deaf Community at Kirkcaldy Town House, City Chambers on the 28th June 2018.
- Should you wish to comment or be involved as we develop and implement our action plan please contact alison.boyle@sruc.ac.uk (Learner Engagement Manager)
- Your ongoing feedback is important as this plan is dynamic and SRUC will make desired updates during its lifetime to ensure it remains fit for purpose and intent.