



**British Sign Language Plan
2024–2030**



The BSL translation of this document is available on our [website](#).

Contents

Contact us.....	2
1. Introduction.....	3
2. Context in Scotland.....	3
3. BSL Users at SRUC and engagement about our BSL plan.....	4
4. Scope and limitations.....	4
5. Progress against SRUC’s BSL plan 2018 – 2024.....	5
6. Actions under SRUC’s BSL Plan 2024 – 2030.....	6
6.2. Priority area 1 – delivering our BSL Plan 2024- 2030.....	6
6.3. Priority area 2 – BSL accessibility.....	6
6.4. Priority area 3 – Children, young people and their families.....	7
6.5. Priority area 4 – Access to employment.....	7
6.6. Priority area 5 – Health and wellbeing.....	7
6.7. Priority area 6 – Celebrating BSL culture.....	7
6.8. Priority area 7 – BSL data.....	8
6.9. Priority area 8 – Transport.....	8
6.10. Priority area 9 – Justice.....	8
6.11. Priority area 10 – Democratic participation.....	8

Contact us

Contact SRUC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead for more information about this plan or to request this document in an alternative format or community language.

Telephone: 0131 535 4069

Email: louise.baggott@sruc.ac.uk

British Sign Language: BSL users can contact us via an online British Sign Language (BSL)/ English interpreter. The BSL translation of this document is available on our [website](#)



Contact us via an online
Sign Language Interpreter
Contact Scotland BSL

This document is formatted with proper headings and alt text to support use of assistive technology.

More information about Scotland's Rural College is available on our website www.sruc.ac.uk.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Scotland's Rural College's (SRUC) British Sign Language (BSL) plan 2024 – 2030 sets out how we will strategically support the ambitions of the [Scottish Government's BSL National Plan 2023 – 2029](#). We share the ambition that Scotland is the best place in the world to live, work, learn and visit for BSL users.
- 1.2. SRUC is committed to embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion across our work as an employer, tertiary education and research institution, and service provider. This commitment is further embedded in our vision to be Scotland's enterprise university at the heart of our sustainable natural economy.
- 1.3. At SRUC we aim to support and empower our BSL community to engage in work, learning and collaboration at all our campuses and other premises. We will achieve this by collaborating with our employees, students and building relationships with local stakeholders including local authorities and BSL communities.
- 1.4. Throughout SRUC's BSL plan we refer to BSL users. In line with Scottish Government, we use the term 'BSL user' to cover all people whose first or preferred language is BSL, including those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss. We also accept that the majority of BSL users are deaf and deafblind, as well as the fact that there are many deaf and deafblind people who do not use BSL

2. Context in Scotland

- 2.1. The British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 came into force in October 2015. Listed public authorities are required under the Act to develop a local BSL Plan every 6 years.
- 2.2. This is SRUC's second BSL Plan developed in support of the Scottish Government's renewed BSL Plan published in November 2023. SRUC's BSL Plan includes actions against the themes included in the National Plan where the themes are relevant to the work of SRUC.

3. BSL Users at SRUC and engagement about our BSL plan

- 3.1. It is essential that we work with our local BSL community to understand the barriers experienced by BSL users when working or studying in the tertiary education system, and the wider sector we work in. In developing our revised BSL plan we have:
- Listened to and consulted with our employees and students to understand their lived experience. We received input from people who are deaf and/ or hard of hearing.
 - Consulted with other Scottish institutions to understand the experiences of their BSL communities in relation to working and studying in further and higher education, and to learn from each other.
 - Undertaken desk research to understand the experiences of BSL users and actions that have had a positive impact
 - Attended an engagement event hosted by the British Deaf Association (Scottish branch) for the D/deaf community to engage with local authorities and the NHS.
 - Engaged with our senior leadership team to embed our actions into other strategies and projects.
- 3.2. We have low numbers of employees and student BSL users therefore our direct community is small. We do capture relevant student data and will be able to capture relevant employee data from April 2024.

4. Scope and limitations

- 4.1. The delivery of our BSL Plan relies on a whole institution approach to student support, inclusive communication and partnership working across SRUC's teams and communities.
- 4.2. We acknowledge that there are national challenges that may affect the success of our local BSL plan, such as the limited availability of qualified interpreters in parts of Scotland where SRUC is based.

5. Progress against SRUC's BSL plan 2018 – 2024

- 5.1. SRUC made good progress against the actions under our first BSL Plan despite the impact of the global pandemic. All the actions that were not progress or completed under our first BSL plan have been carried forward into our renewed BSL plan 2024–2030.
- 5.2. Our ability to measure the impact of these actions is limited due to the extremely low number of employees and student BSL users.
- 5.3. Key actions completed under SRUC's BSL Plan 2018 – 2024 include:
 - BSL interpreters are included at Graduation events as standard.
 - ContactScotland BSL details are included on the 'contact us' section of our website. Our standardised employee email signatures include the contactScotland BSL logo and link to further information. This new email format is included in employee induction information.
 - Our blended delivery methods for SRUC programmes means that classes are recorded, and the standard use of transcripts and captioning provide accessible content. The purchase of Brickfields provides further accessibility to our virtual learning environment (Moodle). We will continue to offer added person-centred support for individual learners as needed. Audits of teaching materials has also started.
 - We have delivered four 'introduction to BSL' evening courses (20 hours per course). Feedback on this course has been positive and we have an employee led BSL community formed of people who completed that training.
 - Our course revalidation process requires that educational programmes undergo an equality impact assessment. This supports colleagues to consider how BSL can be embedded in the curriculum where appropriate.
 - SRUC captures student BSL data however numbers are often too low to report on or use in a meaningful way. Analysing and monitoring this data is now standard practice when reporting on student demographics and outcomes.

6. Actions under SRUC's BSL Plan 2024 – 2030

6.1. The actions under our BSL Plan 2024-2030 are focused on the ten priority areas identified in the Scottish Government's BSL National Plan.

6.2. Priority area 1 – delivering our BSL Plan 2024- 2030

- On publication of this plan, we will form a BSL working group that will report into SRUC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee on a quarterly basis.
- The BSL working group will meet 2-3 times per year.
- The BSL working group will lead on SRUC wide internal communications about our renewed BSL plan and regulatory duties.
- There will be six monthly updates for students and employees on progress against our BSL Plan.

6.3. Priority area 2 – BSL accessibility

- We will continue to provide key information in BSL. By July 2027, this next phase of work will focus on our complaints process, employee recruitment process, and a range of student support information with a focus on 'day one' communication support.
- By January 2027, we will develop guidance for employees and students on available assistive technology and communication support tools, and how to access and use them.
- By December 2024, we will develop and embed standardised wording to include in meeting, event, or training invitations to ensure attendees know we offer communication support, and specifically BSL interpreting, and how to ask for it. We will monitor the update of support.

6.4. Priority area 3 – Children, young people, and their families

- By December 2026, we will undertake an audit of the student journey and identify opportunities to develop and review relevant policies, guidance, and resources. This will include improving our knowledge of Deaf clubs and communities local to our SRUC campuses.

6.5. Priority area 4 – Access to employment

- By January 2025, our recruitment information will be reviewed and translated into BSL.
- From May 2027, further employment related actions will be considered from 2027 in addition to the employment related actions noted under other priority areas.

6.6. Priority area 5 – Health and wellbeing

- From January 2025, BSL will be embedded in the action plan supporting our recently launched Student Mental Health Strategy.
- By December 2024, we will clarify the BSL provision through our employee support services.

6.7. Priority area 6 – Celebrating BSL culture

- From May 2025, the review of equality, diversity and inclusion training will include BSL training and resources. Training will prioritise employees directly supporting students who use BSL and that student's peers and local first aiders.
- We will continue to promote BSL through student and employee videos where possible. This will be reviewed annually.
- By July 2026, we will review our standard email signatures and consider adding signed employees' names.

6.8. Priority area 7 – BSL data

- From April 2024, we will start to gather employee data in relation to BSL as part of the launch of a new Human Resources system.
- By April 2025 and annually thereafter, external equality reports will include employee BSL data.

6.9. Priority area 8 – Transport

- SRUC does not consider this priority area to be relevant to the work of SRUC. We will keep this under review for the duration of the BSL plan.

6.10. Priority area 9 – Justice

- By April 2029, we will review the relevant policies to ensure communication support and specifically BSL is clearly provided – this includes SRUC’s complaints process, student disciplinary policies and relevant people policies.
- These policies and processes will also be translated into BSL where appropriate.

6.11. Priority area 10 – Democratic participation

- By December 2028, we will review the campaign processes for student representative roles, employee representative roles, and class representative roles to clarify the communication support provided by SRUC and the process for relevant translations provided for candidates and relevant communities.



SRUC

At the heart of the natural economy

SRUC is a company limited by guarantee (SC103046) and is a registered Scottish charity (SC003712). SAC Commercial Limited (SC148684) is an SRUC company. Registered Office: Peter Wilson Building, King's Buildings, West Mains Road, Edinburgh EH9 3JG.