

# Including Deaf People in Work

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# Programme

- Equality Act 2010
- Access to Work
- Integration and Inclusion in Work
- Making the Workplace Accessible
- Working with Interpreters



**DeafAction**  
Making the difference

# The Equality Act 2010

## An Introduction



SQA Approved  
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# What is the Equality Act?

- Replaced the individual anti-discrimination laws in one single act for simplification
  - > Sex Discrimination Act 1975
  - > Race Relations Act 1976
  - > Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Stronger laws were needed because the old equality laws did not make equality happen fast enough.

# Examples of Discrimination

- Many women are paid less than men for the same kind of work
- Clever children from poorer families do less well at school
- Disabled people are a lot more likely to have no job
- People of different races find it harder to get a job

## What it covers

- All organisations providing a service
  - E.g. community centres, shops, web-based services, care homes, private clubs/associations
- Protects people who have 'protected characteristics'

Can you guess what they are?

# The Nine Protected Characteristics



**The Equality Act 2010 makes sure that people that are not discriminated against due to:**

Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, or Sexual Orientation

# Definition of Disability



- You're disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities
- What does 'substantial' and 'long-term' mean?
- 'Substantial' is more than minor or trivial, eg it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed
- 'Long-term' means 12 months or more, eg a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection



# Deafness



- Is covered by this, as are all other degrees of sensory loss
- Although many Deaf people (BSL users) may not view themselves as having a disability, but rather as part of a linguistic minority, they are protected under this act, as deafness is *substantial and long term*
- The word 'deaf' can cover several groups

# Definitions of Deafness

- Deaf: usually refers to people born severely/profoundly deaf and use BSL as their first language. See themselves as part of the Deaf Community
- deaf: a term which can be used, generally, to include the whole range of people with deafness
- Hard of Hearing: used to describe people who experience a hearing loss after the acquisition of spoken language and for whom hearing aids will often give some benefit

# Definitions of Deafness

- Deafened: a term for people who have become profoundly deaf, either through illness or injury, after the acquisition of spoken language
- Deafblind: used to describe people who have both severe/profound hearing and sight loss

# Where are people protected in the Equality Act?



- Employment
- Education
- Access to goods, services and facilities
- Buying and renting land or property
- Functions of public bodies

- The Equality Act 2010 places duty on employers to make **reasonable adjustments** for their staff

# Reasonable Adjustments Examples



- Allocating some of your work to someone else
- Transferring you to another post or another place of work
- Making adjustments to the buildings where you work
- Being flexible about your hours
- Providing training
- Providing modified equipment
- Making instructions and manuals more accessible
- Providing accessible bathrooms and ramps

# 3 Requirements of Employers Duty to make Reasonable Adjustments



There are 3 main things Employers need to look at when finding out what reasonable adjustments could be put in place for an employee

- Changes to the ways in which things are done in the workplace
- Changes to overcome the barriers created by the physical features of the workplace
- To provide extra / auxiliary equipment

## Changes to the ways in which things are done in the workplace

- An employer has a policy that designated parking spaces are only offered to senior managers
- A worker who is not a manager, but has a mobility impairment and needs to park very close to the office, is given a designated car parking space
- This is likely to be a reasonable adjustment to the employers car parking policy





## Changes to overcome the barriers created by the physical features of the workplace

- Clear glass doors at the end of a corridor in a particular workplace present a hazard for a visually impaired worker
- Adding stick on signs or other indicators to the doors so that they become more visible is likely to be a reasonable adjustment for the employer to make



- To provide extra / auxiliary equipment



- **Auxiliary aids** and **auxiliary services** are where someone else or equipment is used to assist you, such as a sign language interpreter, screen reader or a support worker
- As this kind of support can be expensive, this is where **Access to Work** funding comes in to support employers with.
- The first 2 requirements are usually paid by employers because it is covered by their duty to make changes under the Equality Act 2010

# What is Access to Work?

- Access to Work was introduced in June 1994
- Is a National Programme delivered by Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- To help overcome barriers that disabled people come across when starting or staying in employment.
- Provides a grant to cover additional costs for “reasonable adjustments” which an employer must provide under the Equality Act 2010

- A flexible programme that focuses on the needs of the person
- Access to Work will look at
  - How much it will cost to make an adjustment
  - What resources are available to the employer
  - Whether it is practical and useful
- Deaf employees can use Access to Work funding to bring in support that will enable them to communicate with hearing people, such as British Sign Language interpreters. They can use funding to bring in communication support in job interviews too

# Benefits of Access to Work for Deaf People



- Encourages greater independence
- Promotes work as being the best route to inclusion for Deaf people
- Enables Deaf people to work on a more equal basis with hearing colleagues
- Encourages employers to recruit and continue to employ Deaf people by offering practical help
- Provides advice to Deaf people and their employers

# Importance of Equality

- Building a stronger, fairer and more cohesive society
- Changing attitudes and culture to be tolerant and inclusive
- Emphasising that equality is for everyone and is everyone's responsibility
- There is also a strong economic argument for equality. If people are not able to reach their full potential, the economy suffers
- Building a richer society which benefits us all

# Inclusion & Integration

# Meanings



- What is *integration*?



# Meanings



- What is *integration*?
- What is *inclusion*?

# Integration

- **...a matter of location... in a mainstream setting, usually with some additional support to access what was being offered, changing the person to fit in academic life.**

*Rieser, cited in French & Swain “Disabling Barriers – Enabling Environments”*

# Inclusion



- ...valuing the person irrespective of their degree of impairment, reconstructing the institution to remove barriers... so they can be valued, participate, interact and develop their potential.

*Rieser, cited in French & Swain “Disabling Barriers – Enabling Environments”*

# Integration vs Inclusion

- If a young Deaf person is ‘integrated’ in their school this usually means:
  - > Often taught in a separate classroom from their hearing peers
  - > The school makes minimal attempts to address any specific academic or social needs a child might have
  - > Child must adapt him/herself to the environment
  - > Child has little or no contact with his/her non disabled peers

# Integration vs Inclusion

- If the young Deaf person is ‘included’ in their school this usually means
  - The whole school considers what measures it must take for the school to be accessible to the Deaf young person
  - The Deaf young person participates in all classes with hearing peers, with communication and additional support being provided
  - The school and classroom environment adapts to the Deaf young person
  - The Deaf young person is made to feel valued

- Now apply this to Deaf people in work
- It is not enough for Deaf people to be integrated in work: we need to make sure that they are included as well
- I will be proving a few tips later on how we can make sure we do this

## Heard the one about...

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- Suppose there is a Deaf person and a hearing person in the room. They are going to share the room for 24 hours
- There may be a need to meet halfway!
  - > Respect
  - > Empathy
  - > Patience

# How can we include Deaf people at work?



- Include everyone
- Exclude nobody
- As an absolute, bare minimum, ensure topic is shared to everybody and broadcast intention
- E.g.
  - > *I'd like to speak to Philip about the new car*
  - > *\*points at Michael\* Me talk you – keys me lost!*

# “Listening”



- Passive & active listening are not options for Deaf BSL users
  - Lack of incidental learning & information gathering
    - Hearing people in work can often pick up information by overhearing conversation that wasn't directed at them
- BSL users can only “attend” to information sequentially – for example they can't read a computer screen and watch someone sign at the same time.
- Need to give BSL users the option to “opt in” or join conversations & discussions

# How to include Deaf people in work

- Employers and employees improve their Deaf Awareness – that's why you're here 😊
- Learn to communicate in Deaf people's native language – British Sign Language
- Learn new communication tactics to include Deaf people in work – I will provide a few tips

# Ensuring that the Work Place is accessible



In a typical office layout please consider

- Where the Deaf person's desk is situated – they don't like having their back to the door as they cannot hear people coming in
- They will usually prefer to sit somewhere where they can see the door
- Don't hide your face behind your computer screen, place yourself at an angle that the Deaf person can see you and communicate

- The Deaf person needs to be able to see the visual flashing fire alarm – not much good if their back is to it!
- Sometimes Deaf workers will need their interpreter next to them in work so they may need extra desk space, and position their desk accordingly to be able to see the interpreter
- If you are talking to a Deaf person and need to answer a phone call or respond to someone else, always let them know in advance, so they don't think you are ignoring them or being rude

- Lunch/rest breaks present opportunities for workers to socialise with each other and network. Deaf people can often find them isolating and difficult due to communication barriers, and often can sit alone
- Try and include them wherever possible – even pen and paper communication can go a long way!
- Deaf workers often miss out on small talk at work – never say **‘it isn’t important’, ‘never mind’, or ‘I’ll tell you later’**
- A room is an open forum – everyone should be aware of what is being discussed. **A private word should always be done in private**



# Working with Interpreters

- Some Deaf people in work use Access to Work to fund interpreting support to help them communicate with non signers and do their job
- Such as right now!
- If you have never worked with a BSL Interpreter before, it may seem daunting, but it doesn't need to be
- I will now give you a few tips on how to work along them effectively

# Working with Interpreters

- Make sure you talk to the Deaf person, not the interpreter
- Speak at a normal pace – don't change the way you speak
- When speaking in meetings and conferences, people have a tendency to speak too fast when they are nervous – the interpreter can't keep up so try and be aware of this

# Working with Interpreters

- The interpreter's role is to regulate interaction between you and the Deaf person
- Never ask the interpreter for their opinion – they are not there to influence dialogue between you and the Deaf person – they are there to relay information

# Working with Interpreters

- In work meetings – ensure that the Deaf person is appropriately placed so he/she can see the interpreter clearly. Ask them where they want to sit
- Light and glare from windows can be very distracting so use blinds/cover where appropriate, or move to a different room with better lighting
- If possible, provide scripts to the interpreter prior, such as PowerPoint slides. This allows them to interpret at a higher level than they would, unprepared

# Working with Interpreters

- Deaf people can find it challenging to take notes when watching an interpreter, so offer to write notes for them if possible.
- If you are providing a presentation, remember to give the Deaf person extra time to read the content on handouts and slides, then speak as they can't watch the interpreter and read simultaneously
- Don't become too reliant on interpreters to communicate – as they won't always be around, so learn how to communicate with Deaf people yourselves

## What next?

- Consider the need for *inclusion* – for both hearing and Deaf people
- Training opportunities such as learning BSL
- Consider your work policies, e.g.
  - > Communication
  - > Social Media
- Do not be afraid to try and communicate with Deaf people.