



SO YOU WANT TO WORK WITH DEAF PEOPLE

We hope this leaflet will give you food for thought. It is not a comprehensive guide to working with Deaf or hard of hearing people, but should give you some ideas. Contacts for further information are listed on the back page.

Did you know.....?

- There are different types of deafness, all with different needs and abilities.
- There are many different types of jobs working with and for deaf people.
- Some jobs working with deaf people need specific qualifications or experience.
- Some jobs may let you train whilst working.

Areas of work with deaf people.....

Education

- Nursery / Primary / Secondary
- Further and Higher
- Play work
- Teaching
- Classroom support work
- English language support

Communication Work

- British Sign Language Interpreting
- Communicators
- Lip-speakers
- Note-takers
- Speech to text reporters
- Deafblind guide-communicating

Medical and Health

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Audiology
- Hearing Therapy

- Counselling
- Psychology

Charity work

- Fundraising
- Research
- Information / Campaigns officers
- Equipment specialists

Social Work

- Specialist social workers with deaf people
- Social Work Assistants
- Advisors and family workers
- Information / equipment / assessment officers

Areas of work with deaf people (cont.).....

Deaf with additional needs

- Care / support work
- Advocacy
- Psychology / psychiatry

Leisure Services

- Sport
- Tourism
- Media

Administrative jobs

- Organisations for deaf people
- Communication / Interpreting agencies
- Educational establishments
- Citizens' Advice Bureaux

Legal work

- Social policy
- Legal advisors

We couldn't possibly cover every job in depth but we have picked some of the most popular areas of work to discuss further. We hope you find the following information useful when considering future career options.

Ideas to get you started.....

Education

There is currently a great demand for suitably qualified teachers for deaf children. Many of the children that have a hearing loss will require specialist teaching to achieve their educational potential. As well as a conventional teacher training qualification an additional course would be required before becoming a 'Teacher of the Deaf'. You must have experience of teaching before undergoing this training; however, the job is rewarding and challenging. It is best to contact the British Association of Teachers of the Deaf for more information (see "Useful Contacts").

Educational Communicators

With more deaf people going into further and higher education, there are new jobs being created constantly for those wanting to work as communicators, interpreters, note-takers, lipspeakers and English support tutors within colleges and universities. These jobs will usually require you to have some qualifications before you start working, such as a CACDP Note-takers certificate. The Edexcel Professional Development Award in Communication Support Work for d/Deaf Students is widely accepted as the only nationally recognised qualification to work with deaf people in the post-16 sector and is currently taught at City College Coventry. If you are interested in becoming a lipspeaker, information is available from the "Useful Contacts" section at the end of this fact sheet.

Sign Language Interpreting

To become a Sign Language Interpreter you will need to have a variety of qualifications and experience, both academic and vocational. You will need a good command of English, and qualifications in BSL (minimum of NVQ Level 4) and an appropriate interpreting qualification such as a Post graduate diploma or the full NVQ level 4 in interpreting. Typically, it could take 2-3 years to achieve entry level for interpreting courses, which could take from 3-6 years to complete. It therefore requires determination and patience to achieve these, but once qualified you will have the opportunity to work within a variety of settings, making this an attractive area of employment. Some domains such as legal or mental health work require further training and experience, as these are specialist areas.

Medical and Health

Speech and Language Therapy: To become a speech therapist usually requires training at degree level or above, typically for 3-4 years. Courses are offered nationally and it is best to contact the universities and colleges themselves to enquire about course content and duration. There are certainly many opportunities for work with deaf people in this area.

Audiology: There are a variety of careers available in the area of audiology. These include technical support and assessment, testing levels of hearing and fitting hearing aids. It is important to have a thorough understanding of the needs of the different groups of deaf and hard of hearing people, and be able to advise accordingly. Work could involve both adults and children, and may be based within hospitals, health centres or in the community. Training and qualifications will be needed for work in this area, and it is advisable to contact the British Society of Audiology for more information (for address see "Further Information").

Psychology and Counselling: Deaf people experience mental health problems just as hearing people do. In fact they are often more vulnerable to difficulties due to society's attitudes and a lack of appropriate services. Specialist psychologists and counsellors are therefore needed to work with them. You could be involved in research, counselling or mental health services specifically aimed at deaf and hard of hearing people. An understanding of deaf issues, British Sign Language and qualifications in psychology and counselling could lead into this type of work.

Charity Work

Charities are big business, employing a large workforce, and many offer a variety of job opportunities. If you have experience of fundraising, research or campaigning, you could obtain a rewarding career in this area. With relevant administrative experience and knowledge of deaf issues, you could apply for a number of jobs or voluntary work within the charities for deaf people. With training in technical support and equipment, you could also undertake advisory work for companies and individuals wanting to make use of modern technology.

Voluntary Work

Many organisations, particularly within the charitable sector, make use of volunteers. Undertaking voluntary work is not only extremely rewarding but can also provide a good indication of your suitability for work within a given field. Each organisation will have different schemes where volunteers are utilised as well as its own criteria with regard to volunteer work.

Social Work

Specialist Social Workers for deaf people are in demand, but you will need training to work in this field. Typically, training lasts for three years, leading to a degree in Social Work; the course is offered nationally by a variety of universities and colleges, and it is best to contact them direct to find out what they offer. In addition to this, you will also need signing skills of at least Stage Two level, and often need to have experience or relevant qualifications as well.

Social Work Assistants often do not need specific qualifications to start work, but opportunities for career development may be limited. There are many varieties of care jobs that do not require specialist training, and these often involve people with a level of hearing loss.

Some Social Services Departments also employ an Equipment Officer to deal exclusively with deaf and hard of hearing people who require environmental aids for daily living, for example a flashing light connected to the doorbell. Specific qualifications are not always required, however, City Lit University offer a BTEC Advanced Diploma for Technical Officers (see Useful Contacts for details); in addition an interest in this area and a knowledge of deaf issues are likely to be a pre-requisite for the job.

Sign Language Tutors

There are many sign language courses offered around the country at a variety of skill levels. The majority of sign language tutors are currently profoundly Deaf, often with British sign language as their first or preferred language. Having said that, in some areas a hearing person with an appropriate level of language qualifications and background may team-teach alongside a Deaf person. If you wish to enrol on a sign language course, it is worth contacting your local college or adult education centre to enquire about availability in your area. In order to become a sign language tutor, a certificate in basic adult education will be required; local colleges and Deaf associations run such courses.

Political and Legal work

With the introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act, and the Disability Rights Commission, there is likely to be an increase in the number of jobs where an understanding of legal acts and policies relating to disabled people is necessary. Such jobs often require personal experience or knowledge of specific disabilities to enable the employee to undertake advisory work, both in implementation of law and also the construction of policies and guidelines. If you are already interested in social policy and law, this is a viable direction in which to develop your skills.

Useful Contacts.....

Association of British Sign Language Tutors

39 Rowell Way
Chipping Norton
OX7 5BD

Association of Lipspeakers

Voice: 01538 722482
Text: 01538 722442
Fax: 01538 722442
dillip@lipspeaking.co.uk
www.lipspeaking.co.uk

Association of Sign Language Interpreters (ASLI)

<http://www.asli.org.uk>
E-mail: vicechair@asli.org.uk

British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD)

Voice/fax: 01494 464190
<http://www.batod.org.uk>
secretary@batod.org.uk

British Deaf Association (BDA)

Voice: 0870 7703300
Fax: 0207 5883527
<http://www.signcommunity.org.uk>
E-mail: helpline@signcommunity.org.uk

British Association of Audiologists

E-mail: jan.baat.org@ntlworld.com
<http://www.baat.org.uk>

British Society of Hearing Therapists

Tel / Textphone: 0117 9595151
Email: lisa.richards@tauntonsom-tr.swest.nhs.uk

Sign – The national charity for mental health & deafness

Voice: 01494687600
Fax: 01494 687622
Email: info@reachingdeafminds.org.uk
www.signcharity.org.uk

Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work

Voice: 0207 2782455

City College Coventry

The Butts
Coventry
Voice: 0247 6791000
Fax: 0247 679 1670

Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People

Voice: 0191 3831155
Text: 0191 3837915
Fax: 0191 3837914
<http://www.cacdp.org.uk>
Email: durham@cacdp.org.uk

Learn Direct

Information helpline for careers and learning opportunities
Text: 0161 9525920
Voice: 0800 100900

National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)

Text/voice: 0207 4908656
Fax: 0207 2515020
E-mail: ndcs@ndcs.org.uk

Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists

Voice: 020 73781200
Fax: 020 74637254
postmaster@rcslt.org.uk
www.rcslt.org.uk

Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)

Text: 0808 808 9000
Voice: 0808 808 0123
<http://www.rnid.org.uk>
E-mail: information@rnid.org.uk

Sense – National Deafblind Rubella Association

Text: 0207 2729648
Voice: 0207 5613383
Fax: 0207 2726012
<http://www.sense.org.uk>
E-mail: info@sense.org.uk

Technical Officers Association

info@toa.org.uk
www.toa.org.uk

The City Lit Centre for Deaf People

Voice: 0207 4055118
Fax: 02074055518
Email: CFDP@citylit.ac.uk

University of Bristol

Text: 0117 9546920
Voice: 0117 9546900
Fax: 0117 9546921

University of Central Lancashire

Voice: 01772 892400
Email: cenquiries@uclan.ac.uk

University of Wolverhampton

Text/voice: 01902 322664
Fax: 01902 322739

www.socialworkcareers.co.uk
www.deaf-uk-jobs.org.uk

Deaf Direct Head Office: The Bradbury Centre, 2 Sansome Walk, Worcester, WR1 1LH
Minicom: 01905746300 Telephone: 01905746301 Fax: 01905746302 SMS: 07743383834
Email: enquiries@deafdirect.org.uk Visit: www.deafdirect.org.uk