



Careers as a Language Service Professional (LSP)

Training and careers –
working with deaf people

Produced by the

Access to

Communication in

English Coalition

1 Introduction



Nine million people in the UK are deaf or hard of hearing. We use the term deaf people throughout this leaflet to refer to deaf, deafblind, deafened and hard of hearing people.

Some deaf people use British Sign Language (BSL) as their first language, but the majority use English. Many deaf people find wearing a hearing aid helpful. Some deaf people also find the services of a Language Service Professional (LSP) useful. LSPs are qualified individuals who aid a deaf person's communication and help hearing people communicate effectively with them.

LSPs are trained to work with deaf people in a wide variety of situations – for example, in their place of work, their college or university, at hospital appointments, or at conferences. The LSP ensures that the deaf person has full access to information at all times.

There has never been a greater need for qualified LSPs to work with deaf people whose first language is English. There are very few LSPs available across the UK, and this lack of provision is depriving deaf people of access to information and the social inclusion that hearing people take for granted.

The work of an LSP is varied, interesting and rewarding, and each assignment provides new challenges. There are opportunities for full-time, part-time and sessional work, both as an employed and a self-employed person.

This pack gives you more information about the varied roles of English-based LSPs and the training you need to qualify. To find out more about a particular LSP and the training required to become one, contact the relevant professional organisation. See **Useful organisations** on page 18.

The information about the content and length of the training courses is correct at the time of going to press. However, some courses leading to CACDP qualifications are currently being redesigned to make them more flexible, so do check with CACDP (page 18) or with course providers, as training requirements are likely to change in the future.

What are the various LSPs?

In this guide we look at the following LSPs:

- electronic and manual notetakers
- speech-to-text reporters
- lipspeakers
- deafblind communicator guides
- deafblind interpreters (manual)
- cued speech transliterators.

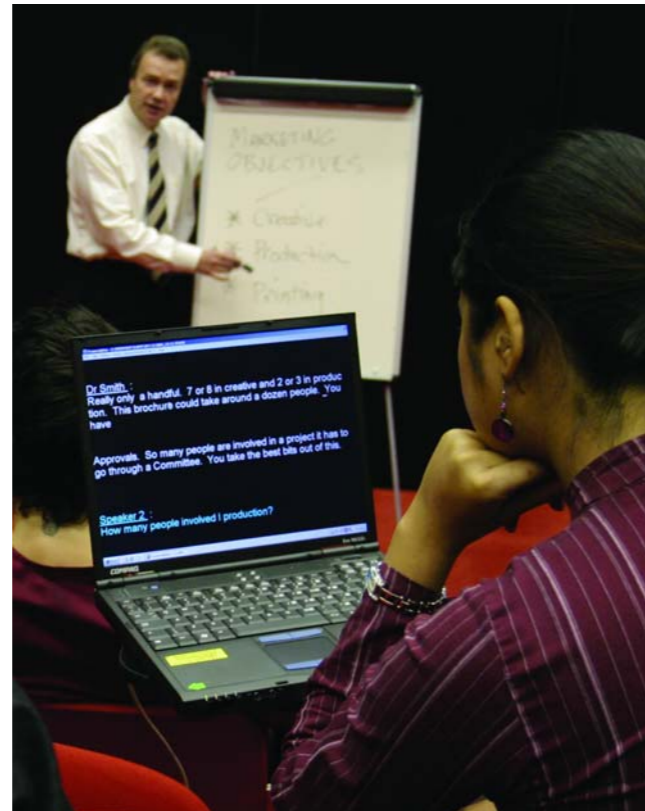
2 Electronic notetakers



Electronic notetakers offer a text-based solution to a deaf person's communication needs. An electronic notetaker provides a summary service rather than a verbatim (word for word) one. Using two linked laptops, loaded with specialist software, the operator takes typed notes of a meeting or lecture. The linked laptops enable the deaf user to ask questions, take their own notes, or interact with the speaker.

After the assignment, the deaf person can take the notes away straight away. Some clients will use an electronic notetaker at the same time as using a BSL/English interpreter or a lipspeaker, as it is impossible for the deaf person to take notes at the same time as watching these LSPs. Some deaf clients refer immediately to the notes typed by the operator on their laptop, to see what is being said.

Electronic notetakers work in many different settings, including further and higher education, employment, and in large and small meetings. Freelance notetakers may



buy their own laptops and software, but most electronic notetakers have them provided by their employer or by the agency that books them.

If you're thinking of training as an electronic notetaker, you should have excellent written English skills, including accurate spelling, and a good grasp of grammar.

Your accurate typing speed should be at least 60 words per minute.

Training

Colleges and universities throughout the UK hold courses in electronic notetaking. They last 60 hours, during which you will be trained in effective notetaking techniques, such as summarising the speaker's message without losing vital content, as well as learning to use the software.

Many electronic notetakers begin the training with no experience of working with deaf people, so an important part of the course is deaf awareness training to increase your understanding of deaf issues and improve your communication skills.

You need to build a portfolio of notes to demonstrate that you are able to offer a

high quality service. These notes will be taken in live assignments with deaf students in education or deaf adults in meetings. The course ends with a half-hour written examination to test your understanding of the role and responsibilities of an electronic notetaker.

For more information about courses in electronic notetaking, contact CACDP, RNID and Stereotype. See page 18 for details.



3 Manual notetakers

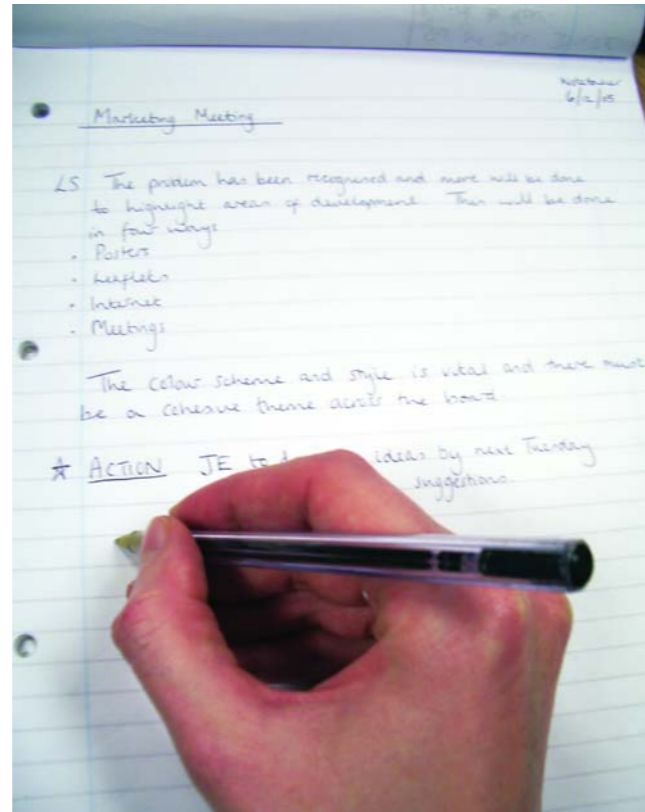


Many deaf people, particularly those still in education, use the services of a manual notetaker. A manual notetaker takes handwritten notes that a deaf person can read immediately and also take away with them for revision or reference. Like an electronic notetaker, the manual notetaker provides a summary of what is being said. Their skill is to produce notes which are consistently accurate and legible, and which provide all the vital information.

A manual notetaker should have clear, easily legible handwriting, and an excellent standard of written English and spelling.

Training

The training course for manual notetakers is similar to that for electronic notetakers, with the emphasis on producing clear, accurate



sets of handwritten notes. Feedback will be given on your handwriting, and on your ability to organise information on the page so that it is easy to read and makes sense. The assessment procedure is the same as that for electronic notetakers, with a short written exam to test your knowledge of the role and responsibilities, and a portfolio of notes taken over a period of time, showing your ability to work in a number of different areas and deliver a quality service.

For more information, about courses in manual notetaking, contact CACDP. See page 18 for details.

4 Speech-to-text reporters



A speech-to-text reporter (STTR) listens to what is being said and types it, word for word, onto an electronic shorthand keyboard (either Palantype or Stenograph) which is linked to their laptop. The special phonetic keyboard produces this information at very high speeds (over 200 words per minute). The text is instantly displayed either on the screen of a laptop for one deaf user, or projected onto a large screen for many users.

An STTR produces a verbatim transcript as it is being spoken. They also provide extra information such as {laughter} or {applause}, to keep the deaf person informed of everything in the meeting, including the mood.

Training

To become an STTR you will need training on the STTR keyboard and associated

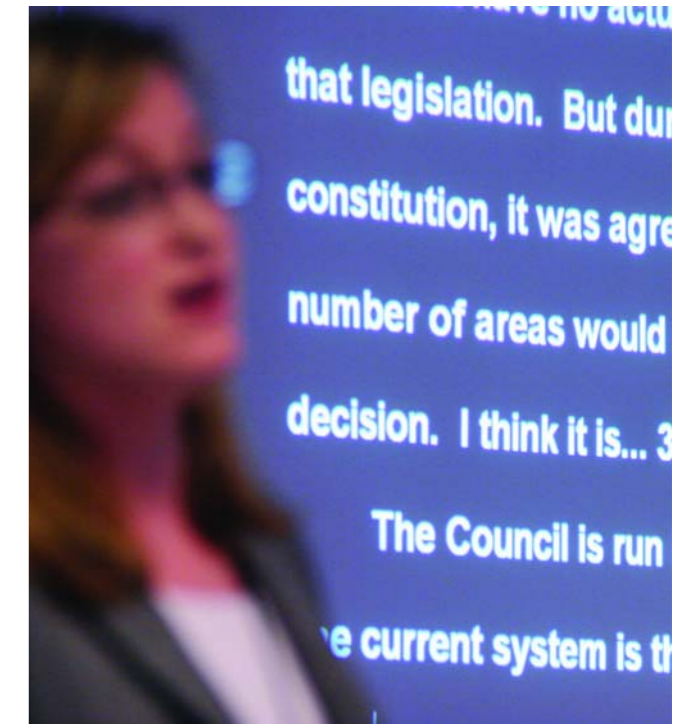


software, plus at least a further two years to gain general experience and build up your typing speed, accuracy and dictionary/vocabulary. Once you have attained suitable accuracy levels and a minimum speed of 180wpm in a live situation, you can apply for CACDP endorsement, which confirms that you have reached the required minimum standard to work with deaf people. Before applying for endorsement, you must also have completed the CACDP Level 1 qualification in deaf awareness and provide evidence from an approved body that your skills are of a sufficient standard.

CACDP endorsement means that you will be eligible to be a member of the register of CACDP. You will work to a code of conduct and ethics and you will be subject to the same complaints and disciplinary procedures as other registered LSPs.

For more information about speech-to-text reporting, contact the Association of

Verbatim Speech to Text Reporters (AVSTTR) or the British Institute of Verbatim Reporters (BIVR). See page 18 for details.



5 Lipspeakers



Lipspeakers work with people who prefer to communicate through lipreading and speech.

The deaf person may choose to use the services of a lipspeaker to aid their communication because not everybody is lipreadable. For example, people speak too fast or have unclear speech movements. Some men have beards or moustaches which makes them difficult to lipread. Sometimes, people may be too far away to be easily lipreadable, such as in a conference or classroom.

A lipreader has exceptionally clear speech movements. They will face the deaf person, and repeat what the speaker says, without using their voice, so that the deaf person can lipread them. The Lipspeaker uses the same rhythm and phrasing of speech as used by the speaker, and supports the message with facial expressions and natural gestures. If the lipreader requests it, the Lipspeaker will support words that are difficult to lipread with fingerspelling – a way of indicating the letters of the alphabet using different handshapes.



There are two levels of qualification in lipspoking.

Level 2

These Lipspeakers work in informal settings, such as hard of hearing clubs, routine doctors' appointments, or meetings that have been organised by charities run by deaf people. After you have gained at least 40 hours experience at Level 2, you can progress to Level 3.

Level 3

These Lipspeakers work in much more formal contexts, such as courts of law, social services, or in employment. These are all places where the level of language is likely to be complex and technical, and where speeds of speech are liable to be very fast. Extra skills are needed to cope with this sort of work, and it is important to get as much experience as possible at Level 2 before attempting Level 3.

Both levels of Lipspeaker work to a professional code of practice and ethics and are covered by a complaints and disciplinary procedure. They are expected to respect the confidentiality of their clients at all times.

Training

The Level 2 course is 60 hours, and is usually delivered over 10 days, which is spread out over three or four months. There is quite a lot of work to do outside the course hours. You need to attend lipreading

classes and hard of hearing clubs to learn how to communicate effectively with deaf people who are lipreading, and you will research the roles of various organisations run by, or for, deaf people. You will learn about technical aids and hearing aids, and about the conditions that are necessary for effective communication to take place. You will also learn lipspoking skills. Deaf and hearing tutors will support you and give you feedback as you gain more confidence.

At the end of the course you will take a half-hour practical examination. You need to answer questions on some of the dilemmas you might meet in the course of your work as a Lipspeaker, and lipspoke a short passage to a panel of two deaf people and one hearing person, to ensure you can lipspoke accurately. You have to complete Level 2 before you can go on to Level 3. Level 2 is a professional qualification in its own right.

For more information, about courses to train as a Level 2 Lipspeaker, contact CACDP or the Association of Lipspeakers. See page 18 for details.

6 Deafblind communicator guide



The term 'dual sensory impairment' describes all types and degrees of visual and hearing impairment. There are approximately 24,000 deafblind people in the UK. If older people who have hearing loss and visual impairments, such as cataracts, are included, the number could be as high as 250,000.

Two ways of working with deafblind people are as a **deafblind communicator guide** or as a **deafblind interpreter (manual)** (see below).

A **communicator guide** for deafblind people acts as the eyes and ears of their client. With the help of their communicator guide, a deafblind person can join in with the wider community, taking part in activities others take for granted, such as shopping, or visiting friends and family. A communicator guide enables the deafblind person to retain control over their lives and take part in social activities they enjoy.

A communicator guide must be reliable, punctual, and completely trustworthy.



As a guide, you will have access to details of a deafblind person's personal life, so it is essential that you keep this information confidential.

You may use a range of communication skills as a communicator guide, from speaking clearly, to tracing words on the deafblind person's hand, to using a manual alphabet. Some deafblind people use sign language, and people with signing skills can adapt them to meet the needs of a deafblind client.

Training

The course lasts a total of 60 hours, and covers:

- guiding skills
- communication skills
- professional issues
- information about service providers, technical aids and equipment that can aid a deafblind person in their daily lives.

At the end, there is a short written examination, to assess your knowledge, and a practical examination. This is assessed by a deafblind assessor and a hearing/sighted

assessor, to ensure your communication and guiding skills are of a high enough standard to guide a deafblind person safely in a range of environments. Once you have qualified as a communicator guide, you can go on to train as a deafblind interpreter (manual).

For more information about communicator guides, contact Deafblind UK, Sense and RNIB, who run Communicator guide training courses. See page 18 for contact details.

7 Deafblind interpreter (manual)



A **deafblind interpreter (manual)** relays what is said to a deafblind person by a third person. To do this, a deafblind interpreter uses the Deafblind Manual Alphabet to form letters on the deafblind person's hand, spelling out, at an appropriate speed, what the speaker is saying. The interpreter will also give the deafblind person other information, such as people's reactions to what is being said, or the movement of people in the room. If necessary, they will also communicate the deafblind person's responses to the third party.

Assignments for deafblind interpreters are in more formal settings than those of a communicator guide, and may include work in areas such as health, social services, solicitors, child protection, education or employment and training.



Training

The training course consists of two units. The first covers the professional background. A deafblind interpreter works to a professional code of practice and ethics, and is subject to a complaints and disciplinary procedure. They must be familiar with both of these. They will also be trained in how to deal with professional dilemmas that arise in the course of their work.

The second unit teaches the skills that are needed to be a deafblind interpreter. By the end of the course, the interpreter must be able to produce the Deafblind Manual Alphabet, with accurate spelling, at speeds of 40 words per minute, in order to relay spoken information word for word. They must also be able to paraphrase a speaker's message accurately at speeds of 30 wpm.

For information on where the deafblind interpreter (manual) qualification is taught, contact the Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP) See page 18 for contact details.

8 Cued Speech Transliterators



Cued Speech Transliterators (CSTs) silently repeat verbatim (word for word) all that is said using clear lip patterns, together with eight different handshapes called cues, at the rate of normal speech. This enables a deaf user to see a full visual representation of spoken language sound-for-sound. Cued Speech is particularly useful for indicating sounds that are not visible on the lips. CSTs work in any situation but are mainly used in education.

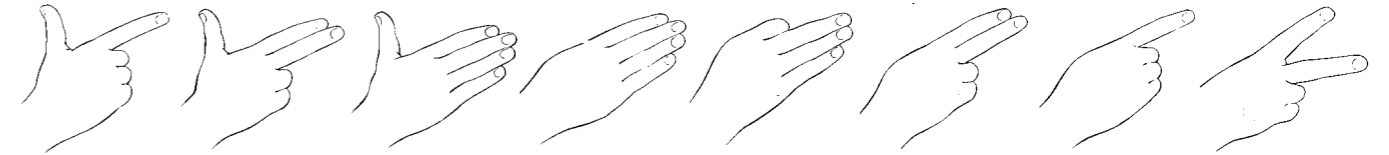
Training

For information on Cued Speech, contact The Cued Speech Association UK. They provide a range of training opportunities, from evening classes to five-day residential courses for beginners and intermediate students. There are two levels of examination. The association can also give you details about where Cued Speech is taught.

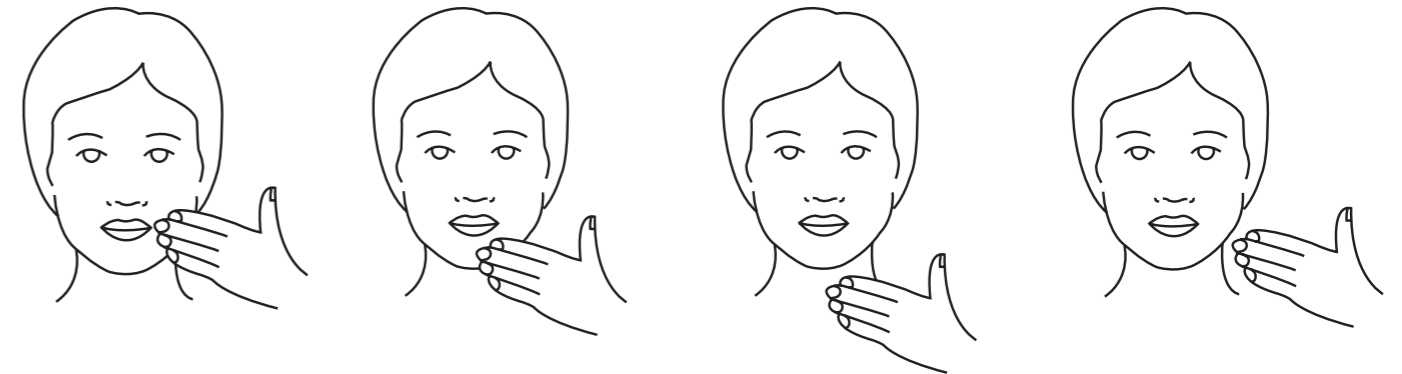


Training and examinations for transliterating are currently under development.

The cues are the eight handshapes (which clarify the consonant sounds):



plus the four positions near the mouth (which clarify the vowel sounds):



9 Useful organisations



Association of Lipspeakers (ALS)

ALS Information Office, 5 Furlong Close,
Upper Tean, Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire
ST10 4LB

Telephone 01538 722482

Fax/textphone 01538 722442

information@lipspeaking.co.uk

www.lipspeaking.org.uk

Association of Verbatim Speech-to-Text Reporters

c/o UK Council on Deafness, Westwood
Park, London Road, Colchester CO6 4BS

Telephone 01206 274075

Textphone 01206 274076

Fax 01206 274077

British Institute of Verbatim Reporters

sec@bivr.org.uk

www.bivr.org.uk

CACDP

Durham University Science Park, Block 4,
Stockton Road, Durham DH1 3UZ

Telephone 0191 383 1155

Textphone 0191 383 7915

Fax 0191 383 7914

durham@cacdp.org.uk

www.cacdp.org.uk

Cued Speech Association UK

9 Jawbone Hill, Dartmouth, Devon TQ6 9RW

Tel/textphone 01803 832 784

Fax 01803 835 311

info@cuedspeech.co.uk

www.cuedspeech.co.uk

Or write to PO Box 57 Dartmouth TQ6 9WW

Deafblind UK

National Centre for Deafblindness, John and
Lucille van Geest Place, Cygnet Road,
Hampton, Peterborough PE7 8FD

Tel/textphone 01733 358100

Fax 01733 358356

www.deafblind.org.uk

RNID

19-23 Featherstone Street,
London EC1Y 8SL

Telephone 020 7296 8000

Textphone 020 7296 8001

Fax 020 7296 8199

ace@rnid.org.uk

www.rnid.org.uk

Sense

11-13 Clifton Terrace, Finsbury Park, London
N4 3SR

Telephone 020 7272 7774

Textphone 020 7272 9648

Fax 020 7272 6012

info@sense.org.uk

www.sense.org.uk

Stereotype Ltd

2 Curzon Terrace, Litton Mill, near Buxton
SK17 8SR

Tel/textphone 01298 871100

Fax 01298 871641

info@stereotypenotetakingsoftware.com

www.stereotypenotetakingsoftware.com

There are a number of ways to find out more

www.rnid.org.uk

Information line

Telephone 0808 808 0123

Textphone 0808 808 9000

Or write to us

informationline@rnid.org.uk

19-23 Featherstone Street

London EC1Y 8SL

Fax 020 7296 8199

Full contact details of all organisations that support this campaign, including those organisations not actively involved in producing this report can be found at:

www.deafcouncil.org.uk/memdir.htm



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Cued Speech Association UK



United Kingdom Council
on Deafness



Changing the world for deaf
and hard of hearing people